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**FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT**  
**By O. C. Thrall**

This Digital Edition From  
The Booklet Entitled:  
FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT AND  
FROM THE POWER OF SATAN UNTO GOD

We Desire To Relate Some Personal  
Experiences And Miracles Of Divine  
Grace Which Have Occurred Through  
Many Years Of Mission, Pastoral,  
And Evangelistic Work

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## FOREWORD

Rev. and Mrs. Thrall have had a ministry which has been blessed and owned of the Lord during the days of their pastorates. And now, in the sunset of life, they have again brought forth fruit through their various writings in their old age. Brother Thrall has produced several writings. These have passed through many editions here at the Fountain Press. The book has sold pretty well over the nation and now he comes up with this book which ought to be read by every person who is sincerely seeking "the better country". It is our prayer that this book will find many, many readers and that it will be a blessing in the Kingdom of God to His Saints everywhere.

God has made this man's writings a blessing to multitudes and we think that this will be one that will be abundantly blessed because of God's anointing on this man's life and His very presence is felt as you read the pages of this book.

Yours For A Deeply Spiritual Life,  
Dr. Henry Shilling, President,  
Transylvania Bible  
School, Freeport, Pa.

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## INTRODUCTION

All of God's work in bringing sinners into fellowship with Himself is a work of divine grace. The first work is Holy Ghost conviction. The wonderful light which comes with true conviction will make us to know beyond all doubt that we are hell-bound.

Such conviction will also bring us to genuine repentance and a confession of past and present sins and the necessity of forsaking everyone. The next step that God requires is restitution. If you have ever lied about a person, if you have ever stolen anything or committed any other crime, you will have to make it right as far as possible in this life, or meet it in the judgment. Recently we met a business man who said he once stole a pencil and had to make it right before he found peace. We knew a boy who walked several miles to confess he stole a lollipop.

You will read in this book that the writer had to do several things before he found glorious peace with God. Remember all secret sins are known to God and must' be utterly abandoned. You will not be able to do all this in your own strength, but if you are honest and sincere as sure as there is a God in Heaven, He will! forgive all your sins and make you a candidate for true holiness without which no soul will make it through to the Glory World. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." II Tim. 3:16.

Seeking "True Holiness" (Eph. 4:24) is expressed in the verse of a song by Mrs. M. J. Harris, a saint of other days.

"Tho, the way seemed straight and narrow,  
All I claimed was swept away;  
My ambitions, plans, and wishes,  
At my feet in ashes lay.

"Then God's fire upon the altar  
Of my heart was set aflame;  
I shall never cease to praise Him,  
Glory, Glory, to His Name."

\* \* \* \* \*

## 01 -- PARENTAGE

My father, Elbert Thrall, was born at Black Creek, N. Y. of English descent. My mother was a descendant of the early Holland Dutch in Pennsylvania. She was the daughter of Rev. Samuel Grove, an old time Methodist preacher. She dedicated me at birth for a preacher of the gospel. This I never knew until I had been preaching many years.

Father was a good man in many ways, a very industrious man, a good provider, jovial at times but stern in discipline. He never told us but once to do a thing. We never played ball or any other games on Sunday, and never went visiting the neighbors on Sunday. Occasionally he went to church with mother, yet I never heard my father pray. My mother had a great influence over him, and perhaps married him, as many girls do, thinking he would get saved later, but poor mother never lived to see this accomplished.

Their first home, a very humble one, was established in Titusville, Pa. where my older sister and I were born. Titusville at this time (1870-72) was a village, surrounded by forest, hills and oil derricks.

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## 02 -- FIRST TRAGEDY IN LIFE

While I was still a babe, my parents moved to a farm in New York state, a few miles West of Cuba Lake. At Black Creek, on the old Genesee Canal, now extinct, twins were born and named Samuel and Sarah Ella. On this farm mentioned above occurred the first tragedy of my life, when between six and seven years of age, while mother and children were visiting Uncle Win. Nottingham, a retired lawyer, we remained over night. The next morning I noticed a small pearl handled knife on the dresser. I never thought of stealing it, but took it out back of the house to whittle a little. Mother came in and announced we were going home. I ran into the house to put the knife back, but grandmother was in the room, and mother was urging us to hurry. I was confused and slipped the knife into my pocket thinking I would take it back later. This is where I made a mistake. Had I confessed and explained to her, everything would have been cleared up, but instead I went home.

Next day father and mother went to town. My older sister saw me with the knife and I told her I found it under the apple tree. She admired it so much that I said, "If you will never show it to anyone, I will give it to you." My conscience was somewhat relieved, but I found that by covering up a mistake in lying, was indeed disastrous. When father and Mother returned she ran to the gate exclaiming, "see what brother gave me." I knew then I was in for trouble. When father inquired where I got it, I stuck to the lie about finding it under the apple tree, nor could he make me say anything different. I think, however, that he already knew, as he told me I had stolen it, and commanded me to take it back, tell them I stole it and ask forgiveness.

I went to the home, feeling too afraid to explain and afraid of being whipped anyway. As I knocked at the door my big Uncle William came to the door. Handing him the knife I said, "Pa sent your knife home" and hurried away.

I met my father who said, "Did you take the knife back?"

"Yes sir."

"Did you ask them to forgive you?"

"Yes sir."

He then said, "Now you go home and get a certain strap ready, and when I get back I am going to hang you."

Terrified, I ran home screaming to my mother, crying, "Pa is goings' to hang me."

One thing that added to my horror, was the fact that some time before, while out in the field with father, I heard the long wailing whistle of a locomotive and not knowing what it was I asked father. He said, "They are hanging a man in Chicago." I felt awful every time I heard that whistle. Trembling with fear I got the strap and concluded to hang myself thinking father might be rough with me, however, my courage failed and I returned to the house with the strap.

I have often wondered why mother held out no ray of hope. Seeing I was sick and weak she sent me to bed, but I can assure you I never closed my eyes. A horrible death was too near at hand. Father called me and had a noose in the strap. I was more terrified than ever but did not beg for my life, as I thought the end was at hand, but that was not true.

Night after night I had horrible dreams. If I got to sleep at all, I would dream of a man coming out of the cellar with a rope to hang me, or a man in the closet to kill me with a big knife. I would wake up wet with sweat. After some time I felt I would rather be killed than endure this awful suffering any longer, but I never said a word to a soul.

But one night hearing a noise in the closet, perhaps a mouse, I got out of bed feeling I was going to my death, and going to the closet reached in but nothing happened. Somewhat bolder I entered the closet exploring it to the end. Well, I was still alive and greatly relieved. The terror gradually decreased.

I have often thought that was cruel of my father, and I think so yet. The sad part of this tragedy is, that I never confided in my father again, and very little with my mother, though she was very good to us, often tacking brother Sam and me in bed, and kneeling, she prayed with us.

Some time after this affair, Sam and I thought it about time to learn to swear like other men we knew. Starting out to the barn one Sunday morning, we were repeating such words as we had

heard. We met father coming out of the barn. Again that terrifying feeling came over me, as we expected to get a threshing at least. However, he said, "You boys follow me."

We followed him to the house, where much to our surprise and comfort he told us to go upstairs to our room, get down on our knees, and ask God to forgive us. Sunday morning or mother's prayers must have affected him somewhat. We went upstairs dutifully kneeling at our bedside, rather confused and looking at each other to begin. Sam's twin sister came into the room, and I said, "What do you want?" Get out of here." She answered, "Pa sent me up to see if you were praying." I replied, "You tell him we just got through." We certainly did not get converted there, but I further seared my conscience, yet was happy to get off easily.

\* \* \* \* \*

### 03 -- MOVING TO MICHIGAN

Soon after this we moved to Big Rapids, Michigan, on the Muskegon River, about fifty miles north of Grand Rapids. This was a thriving little town of about 6,000 population in the lumbering days, when multiplied millions of beautiful, stately virgin pine trees were cut into logs, and hauled by train and teams to the river banks, where they were heaped in great piles on the skidways, to be floated down the river in the spring. Like the oil boom in Pennsylvania a few became rich.

Several factories of different kinds lined the banks of the river, which were run by water power below the big dams. This gave employment to hundreds of men. One of my uncles, a promising young man, hung out his first gilt lettered shingle: "C. H. Thrall, Attorney at Law." He must have been successful for he later but one of the finest houses in town. It was through his influence that several families moved to Big Rapids, including my father, Uncle Ira Thrall, Uncle Nottingham, Calvin Nottingham, also lawyers, the Wipples, Metcalfs, and others from near Cuba, N. Y.

My father and Uncle Ira's first job, was cooking on the large log rafts that were floated down the river. Schools were dismissed when the rafts went over the dam, shooting spray high in the air. This was an exciting time, long to be remembered.

We record one special thrill. An Indian balancing himself on the end of a large log, with a pikepole, went: over the dam. Of course he knew enough to stand at the rear end of the log, and so went safely through high swirling rapids without diving under, and steering clear of the dangerous whirl pool, which the diving logs had dug through the years. Here is where later I also nearly lost my life.

A few years ago we held a meeting in Big Rapids: In driving over the river bridge, we were surprised to note that the river was so small a stream.

\* \* \* \* \*

### 04 -- FIGHTING

I do not like this subject too well, but I wish to relate a little incident which helped me get rid of some of my cowardly nature. One of my little home jobs was to carry milk to my Uncle Ira's each evening. On one of these trips I passed a crowd of boys playing ball. One of the larger boys, a sort of bully, came over to the walk and kicked my pail, spilling milk over me. I was angry and said, "I will fix you when I come back." He answered, "You are a coward and you won't come back this way." Pointing to a nearby alley, I said, "You be over in that alley and find out whether I will come back or not."

I never even told my aunt how the milk got spilled for I had too much on my mind. Oh how I hated to go down that alley. [ I think I almost prayed he would not be there, for I knew I would get a good beating up. Nevertheless, I decided to take a beating rather than to be called a coward, and I decided I would do all I could to him while he was doing it. The baseball crowd and one girl had assembled and one of the boys put a chip on my shoulder, and dared my opponent to knock it off.

He did so, but I told him I would not fight for a little thing like that. The boys began to cry, coward! coward! I thought if I could strike first and hit him in the eye, it would set him back some at least. They put the chip on my shoulder again and he knocked it off again. Quick as a flash, and with all my might, I struck him square in the eye. He put his hand up to his eye, and staggered a little. In an instant I struck him again in the nose and he staggered more. With all my strength I jumped forward and struck him under the chin. It stretched him out on the grass, and he turned over on his face, perhaps thinking I would jump on him. I was not interested in whose side the girl was on until she said, "Kick him, kick him good." I replied, "No, I never strike a man when he is down, if he wants any more let him get up."

He did not get up at once, but I waited a few minutes and he sat up, a sorry looking individual. One eye was closed, his hair was disheveled, and blood running from his nose over his shirt and clothes. I confess that I felt a lot better than I did when coming down the alley. None of this crowd ever picked on me again, but shortly two boys hid in a cornfield beside the road and waited for me. This time it was a running fight, the first and last of its kind. I knew the two could whip me, and I was ashamed of running, but I kept my eye on the road for a good stone. I saw one, picked it up turning cried, "Halt! or I will drop you."

They kept coming and I threw it, hitting one boy on the head. He dropped right in front of a policeman's house. I was frightened, but looking back I saw the wife with water and a cloth, wiping the boy's face. He was still on the ground, and expecting to be arrested I hurried home and hid in the barn until near supper time. Strange to say I never heard a word about it. I think, however, the policeman's wife saw the whole affair, and knowing I gave them fair warning, never told anyone. God bless her memory.

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## 05 -- SCHOOL DAYS

I hated school but was too proud to fail in my classes, and learned easily in my early grades, which left me plenty of time for fun, which some of the teachers did not seem to appreciate.

One instance I vividly recall -- the teacher on dismissing school asked me to remain. I could not remember doing anything wrong, but when I heard her lock the door in the main entrance, I began to get a little jittery, and when she came in and picked up an old fashioned hickory pointer, and started down the aisle with a severe look on her face, I jumped like a startled rabbit, skipping over the top of the desks barefoot. (A boy who wore shoes in those summer days was a "sissy".)

She got real angry and red in the face, because she could not get around the seats fast enough. If she had only thought to take off her shoes she might have (done a better job. One of my good friends, Sheridan King, whose fine family of seven are all now dead, opened a back window and called me to come. Now that is the kind of a friend to have. Just as I was about to leap out, she seized me by the suspenders and jerked me back. My head struck on the top of a desk. It did not hurt me very much, but I groaned and staggered.

She loosened her grip and the poor victim jumped and ran again. This time out into the vestibule and noticed the key was in the door, but she was so close I did not have time to unlock it. Thinking if I could perhaps run a little faster I could take another trip around and make it. I did and made my escape to a much appreciated freedom. The next morning I met her with a smile. She seemed even more kind than usual, and gave me a chair by the platform near her. I think she was a little ashamed of getting so angry, and chasing a little boy all around the school room.

Another time she took a good grip on my hand, declaring she would take me over to the Professor at the central school. I walked gently along, but thinking the interview might not be profitable for me, and feeling her hand relax, I gave a sudden jerk and ran home. It was a good thing she did not follow, providential I thought, as father had warned me, that if the teacher had occasion to punish me, he would give me another when I arrived home.

When in the seventh grade, I became acquainted with a family who had a large, fierce collie dog. No wonder he was ugly, for they kept him chained up all the time, in the hot sun or cold rain storm without shelter. They were afraid of him and used a pole to push his food and water to him. (Good case for the Humane Society). I saw he was a keen, well bred animal, and asked them if I might take him to drive cattle to pasture. They said, he will surely bite you. I answered, "I will take a chance."

They all ran into the house when I approached the dog. Quietly going up to him I said, "Want to get loose old boy?" He assented with a friendly wag of his tail. I unsnapped the chain and he bounded around me, a very happy dog and we were immediately friends. He made a fine cow dog. If a cow entered a place where a gate was open or the bars down. he would bring it out fast and soon learned to run ahead of the herd and "stand in the gap" until the herd passed, which is more than some preachers wilt do.

One day he followed me to school. I let him go with me to the second floor, quietly opened the door a trifle, waited until the teacher was: not looking, slipped in with the dog close at my heels and he sat down in the aisle beside me. Of course there was a little commotion among the students. I was tending strictly to my lessons, when the teacher said, "Is that your dog?" I replied, "No mam." She said to a big boy, "George, put that dog out." When George proudly started to



obey, the dog growled and showed his teeth. George backed up, and the teacher told him to go out and get the janitor.

Not wanting to get the dog into trouble, I said, "Perhaps I could get him out." She said, "You might try it." I don't think she cared much if the dog did bite me. He followed me out like a little lamb, without me even speaking to him. I took him downstairs and sent him home. The teacher looked suspiciously at me when I returned, but I was not worried, as I had told the truth, and given the students a little change to break the monotony.

In spite of all my meanness and deviltry, I really had respect for girls, and thought they were next to angels in purity, and never said a word to them that I would not want my mother to hear. I believe I inherited this from my mother. Praise God for a good praying mother! There was a girl in school, however, that I did not like. Though I never spoke evil of her I did lay awake nights thinking how to get even with her. The boys got the idea of clipping a little piece of ribbon, with which practically all of the girls did up their hair. They would print the girl's initial on the same for a souvenir. A girl who sat directly in front of me, Martha Tafford by name, had a nice ribbon, so I had to do like the rest of the boys and clip off a piece. This was my first attempt and she reported it to the teacher, who reproved me publicly.

Finally I thought out a scheme which might work. The seats tipped up from the front with a piece of rubber on the iron frame to keep from making a noise when they slammed down. When an opportunity arrived I cut off the rubber and placed an old army musket cap at each end of the seat, raised up the seat and went out. returning just in time to see the seat go down and Martha up. The noise and smoke exceeded all my expectations. If Martha should be alive and see this I trust she will forgive me. However. I think I later made up for it by saving her brother from drowning.

Going early into the school room one noon. I found the teacher with her head on the desk crying. She did not hear me come in, and I quietly retired from the room. Now I am going to open my heart and tell the reader something I have never told anyone but my wife. I felt so sorry for her I wanted to put my arm around her and promise her I would be a good boy hereafter. However, I went quietly out. but that was the last time I played any pranks in her room, I suppose she wondered at my reformation, but she never found out.

\* \* \* \* \*

## 06 -- DARK SHADOWS

The greatest tragedy that can overtake a united family, is when the shadow of death casts its dark wings over the household. My dear mother, who had been ailing two or three years with malaria, developed tuberculosis, from which she suffered much. Her mother, wife of Rev. Samuel Grove, came from Tidioute, Pa., to visit her. It was suggested that a warmer climate might be beneficial. They finally concluded to take her to Florida, where Edwin Thrall, my father's brother lived.

She took Olive, our youngest sister aged three years, born in Big Rapids, with her. She stopped with her mother in Tidioute, where she was taken worse and sent for father. She seemed

much better and father returned, but in a short time they sent a message stating mother was much worse. Father immediately started for Tidioute. We never saw our dear mother again, as she passed away before father arrived there.

She was buried on my thirteenth birthday, beside her only brother and two sisters in Tionesta, Pa. Her mother now lies beside her, in the cemetery beside the Allegheny River. Some notable saints are buried here, including "Clifford Barrett, the happy Alleghenian, gone to glory washed in the Blood of the Lamb." The above epitaph is engraved upon his tombstone, and I have never met a person who doubted it. How different from a large monument in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, cemetery the ungodly statement, "The end of the Trail." Thank God for a salvation which can make the vilest sinner clean, Praise the Lord!

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## 07 -- FATHER'S SECOND MARRIAGE

Soon after my mother's death, the Carriage & Wagon Company sent father to the west coast as salesman, and general manager for the company. He settled in Eugene, Oregon, traveled through the states of Washington, Oregon and California, establishing retail connections in various cities. This Was a new venture for the company. They requested father to buy the best team of horses he could find. They also shipped him one of their finest carriages. He thus traveled, having his sample with him, as there were no automobiles as yet. He was very successful and made plenty of money, also appointing agents for the company.

In a year or so he returned to Big Rapids and married a very nice school teacher, whom we knew only by sight. Evidently she did not want to take on the responsibility of so large a family at once, for they took none of the children with them, and some of the children, including myself felt reluctant to take on a stepmother. If it had been the one I found crying in the school room, I think I would have felt different, but again fate was against me.

We five children were scattered, among our near relatives, some of whom I will refer to later. I was sent to live with a cousin and her husband, a fine young" married couple, George and Flora Storms. She was the daughter of a lawyer named Nottingham. I still recall him singing, "We'll rise with the lark, and from morning till dark, we'll do what we have to do." And, that is exactly what they did, but they never gave me any hard work, and I spent some time trapping in the woods.

They lived about five miles out and on a hot dusty morning I led father's thoroughbred cow to their farm, arriving tired and hungry. There was no one at home and the doors were locked. I wandered around all day, a lonely, heartsick, motherless boy. They did not arrive home until late in the night, and found me asleep on the floor of a small open porch, with a small rug over me. They put me in a small room, with only one chair and a straw tick on the floor. I was sobbing quietly with my face to the wall as I did not want them to hear me.

Mr. Storms came in my room, crawled in bed with me, putting his arm around me. He did not speak and I pretended to go to sleep, my pretensions became a fact, and I did not know when he

left, but one thing I do know, I loved that man all my life. They were both very kind to me, and many years after, I had the pleasure of visiting and praying with them.

I recall just now another incident. We were returning from town with the ox team, when I noticed a large hornet's nest on a little tree. Picking up an ear of corn left in the wagon, and wanting to see how close I could come, I threw and struck it square in the middle. That swarm of hornets came out to kill. I, sitting on a board across the back of the wagon, jumped overboard and started running into the brush on the other side of the road. The team started to run away, yet I do not think any were stung very badly, being in a hurry and very active. I did not think to warn them, and doubtless it would have done no good. However, they had the pleasure of telling the neighbors of the attack, and perhaps they were more careful in after years.

My first job on this farm was keeping a team of oxen out of the corn field, as there was no fence between the corn and the meadow. I cut and trimmed a long branch from a tree and hid in the corn, which was quite high. When they came near, I ran out and lashed them half way across the field. After a few trips like that I put my hat on a stick a little way back in the corn, giving me time to enjoy myself down by the creel. Thus I learned that you can teach an ox more than gee and haw.

One of the pleasures I had, was riding a horse to town for the mail, with no saddle, but a blanket strapped on, wondering how fast he could go I spurred him up a little with my bare toe. He must have been going some, for a neighbor called up and wanted to know if someone was dead. These dear ones never said a word about it to me, but that was my last trip for the mail.

When school time came again arrangements were made for me to live in town with an old couple, where I could do chores for my board. They were very poor and the husband was sick in bed. I had plenty of salt pork beans and bread, but no pastry of any kind. At night the wife gave me a piece of lighted candle about three inches long, escorted me to the stair door and gave directions for finding my room.

It was a large old house, unfinished upstairs. The cold winter wind whistled around the house. There was no heat upstairs, and very little below. I found my bed, but scarcely enough covering to keep warm. I covered my head, shivering, and with that terrible loneliness wondered if there was a God after all.

I was still wearing my summer clothes and had to hustle around to keep from freezing, but I never complained, but how glad I was when the sun came out.

Finally the old man died and I went to live with Uncle Ira Thrall, where my sister Olive and Ella now lived. This was much better, but no love in the home so far as I was concerned, except with my sisters. He hated religion especially the Free Methodists. One of these preachers of the old type called to talk with him. When the minister approached religion, uncle stopped him. He asked to pray and uncle said, "No sir." The fearless preacher dropped on his knees and began to pray, uncle opened the door grabbed him by the collar and seat of the pants and pitched him out. My aunt warned my sister if she ever went to the Free Methodist Church she would whip her. They thought they had some excuse because of a preacher who had fallen some years before.

Preachers, for the sake of your soul and others, beware of the first subtle approach of inordinate affection. Men, perhaps mightier than you, have fallen. We recall while in a revival meeting years after of inquiring how this man died. The Pastor said that he died: of a broken heart. How sad! yet the scripture hath said, "A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. We trust he made it through.

I lived nearly two years with this uncle. When spring came he suggested I herd cattle, as Big Rapids was making such strides, cattle could no longer run loose. Uncle had two cows to start with. This was O. K. with me as I had quite an ambition to become a cowboy, so with the help of my uncle I soon had quite a herd. In fact I was making more money than some of the men in the factories. I herded cattle from April until in November.

My aunt had sort of been keeping my money for me, and when I went to get it after the herding season was over, she took a lot of time telling me how careful I should be with it. I was in a hurry because I had already bargained for a second hand 22 caliber rifle, which I bought before I got home. This uncle told me if I would go to school and college, he would send me to West Point Military Academy. It did not appeal to me. Too strenuous a program for me.

I came home from school one day and heard my little sister screaming. I rushed into the house and found my aunt had shut her in the cellar, through a trap door, just a hole in the ground, no walls, no windows. I asked about the trouble. She replied; "She was sassy to me." I said, "If, she needed to be punished, all right, but you are not going to frighten her to death, let her up." I started for the trap door and she stood upon it. I was only fifteen years old, but I said, "You get off or I will knock you off."

Uncle had taught me one thing. Never break your word. This was his religion. I guess aunt thought I had at least learned that much, and she stepped off. Olive came crawling up the few steps, a pitiful looking motherless little girl, hair disheveled, cobwebs, tears running down her frightened pale, face. Before she could get clear out of the hole, aunt grabbed her, dragged her into another room and began to pound her. I could stand it no longer. She locked the door, but I kicked it open with my heel and broke the lock, telling her not to strike her again.

I had an awful temper as well as she. She said, "Your uncle will fix you when he gets home." I had no doubt of that whatever, and decided to get out, but I had nowhere to go, and I did some fast thinking. I had a cheap little 22 revolver, but no ammunition for which I am thankful. I got it out and let aunt "catch" me polishing it up. She inquired, "Young man what are you going to do with that gun?" I replied, "Never you mind what I am going to do with that gun." She evidently thought I might shoot her husband, and that was just what I wanted her to think. She did not tell him, at least not then. However, a few weeks later he made arrangements for me to live in my father's house, where my board would apply on the rent.

I left in the winter time. with snow on the ground, and all my earthly goods in a little box on my sled. This place was another trial to me. This house was occupied by an elderly widow and her two sons and a hired girl. The sons worked in the woods, and one of them returned home each Sunday. The mother smoked the strongest kind of tobacco. I did not take any notion to the hired girl, however, she persuaded me to go to a dance with her. When I saw the way she was swinging

around with the boys, I said to myself, "If that is what you enjoy, good-bye," and left the dance hall without seeing her home. Thank God that was my first and last dance. How our schools can allow dancing is more than we can understand.

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## 08 -- BROTHERLY LOVE

This elderly smoking woman passed away, the people moved out and with my uncle's consent another neighbor with two boys, near my age, moved in. She was a real mother to me and my brother Sam, who also came to board with her. Sam and I never got along together. He was a little wild cat to fight, and would always try to get "even" with anyone who displeased him, and I confess I was of the same caliber.

One day while I was away he put some gun powder in the lock of my desk, blew the lock off and rummaged around, seeming to think he had a right to anything that was mine in a sort of brotherly way. When I returned I said to the lady of the house, "Who did that?" She answered, "Your brother did that." Sam sat there and never said a word, neither did I, but I gave him a good looking over, and he well knew he had something coming. He eyed me like a hawk for several days. We slept in the same room but different beds. He would not go to bed until after I did, and always got up earlier than I. After about two weeks I awoke one morning and Sam was sound asleep on his back and snoring. My time had come, and again I did some fast thinking.

The first thought that came to my mind was, "Oh, gun powder." Quickly dressing, I got my powder flask, and carefully pulling down the covers, put a little pile on his stomach. Then putting the key in the outside of the door, lighted an old fashioned sulfur noiseless match, and touched off the powder. The old: fashioned powder made an awful smoke. At the same time I slipped out and locked the door. By his yells, you would think he died and missed Heaven. Soon he heard me laughing and found he was still on earth.

This should have satisfied him, but no, he had to get even. Snatching my gun off the wall, he smashed a panel out of the door, breaking the stock off the gun. Then he started coming through with the barrel of the gun. Thinking he had gone far enough, and thinking he might get vicious if he got out, I ran and got a dipper and pail of ice cold water, splashing it over him in order to cool him down. He was not dressed yet, so I ate a bite and went to school. I learned later the powder only burned a little hole in his shirt and blistered him very little. We had not yet learned the scripture, "Let brotherly love continue". However, when we met at night not a word was said about the affair, and I judge we both thought we were about even.

My uncle Churchill, the lawyer, somehow became interested in me. Perhaps because I was his brother's non. He loaned me \$150, with which we rented 120 acres of good pasture land, so that I could go to school. During school vacation when he took two or three weeks vacation, he had me take over his office to do the best I could until his return. I also at times slept in his home. He knew I carried a gun and was fearless, a far cry from the little boy who was going to be hung.

When a client came in, I could at least tell them about the time uncle would return, or take information to pass on to him. The rows of big books staggered me, but I learned if a client came, he had to tell the absolute truth so the attorney could make out a good defense for him, like we have to deal with God if we want our sins forgiven. If the lawyer did not have the answer to the man's problem, he would perhaps tell him he was very busy and to call again. In the meantime, he would go to his Blackstone or some other good authority to get the answer, like we go to the dictionary or encyclopedia.

This good uncle offered to pay all my expenses through high school and college, and later take me into partnership with him if I would continue in school. I never had two suits of clothes until I was old enough to earn them myself. I was already looking poorly dressed, and after waiting several weeks, I told him I needed some clothes. He said, "All right, you go to school and I will see you have them." A few weeks went by and of course I looked worse. Going to his office again, he told me the same thing, and back to school I went. A few weeks went by, and how I hated to go again, but I swallowed my pride and went the third time, not feeling too good. He said the same thing over again. I replied, "Uncle, I am not going to school until I get some clothes." He answered, "Then don't expect any more help from me." I said, "All right, good-bye," and walked out.

I was certainly out; out of school, out of decent clothes, out of work and out of a friend. Why he tried me so severely I never found out. Perhaps he was trying to find out if I had lawyer stuff in me. I think now it was providential, as I perhaps would never have been really saved. He died at the age of 47.

Percy Markham was a foreman in the Pioneer printing office. He was also a good neighbor, and suggested I learn the printing business. They printed the Daily Pioneer, also a weekly paper. In this building, they also had a job department with Ed Mather, a fine man, as foreman. It was quite an honor in those days for a 16 year old to work in a printing office, and, as I was still getting my board for the rent of father's house, I decided to make the application.

Percy Markham ushered me into the presence of the "great man" who was also owner and general manager. The first question he asked was, "Do you use tobacco?" I was glad I could truthfully say "No sir" to Mr. Chas. Gay, an honorable man. "Well," he said, "we will take you on. I like your looks." I was sure surprised about the "looks", but he was a real friend to me, as were all the workers, both men and women. The editor was W. F. Slawson, a member of the Congregational Church, which I was attending at the time. Percy Markham was manager of the newspaper department, Ed Mather of the job department. There were two extra ladies employed as type setters, and I mean "ladies". There was no loose talk. The type was all set by hand, one letter at a time. The newspapers were printed on an old fashioned press about six feet high and ten feet long, run by water power.

It was part of my business to run this press and I had to stand on a platform two feet high. I liked the work so well I used to go down on Sunday to practice. An apprentice to the trade was called a "printer's devil", perhaps because he was so dirty, having to wash the forms from the press, clean the inky rollers and oil the press when necessary, besides doing the janitor work. The first job I did on Sunday was in the job department, printing my calling card thus. "O. C. Thrall,

Pioneer Devil." However, none of the force ever called me that, and I never heard a word of disapproval from any source.

In fact when Uncle Churchill, who used to get his work done there, inquired "how the boy was getting along," Mr. Gay replied, "He is one of the best men we ever had in the shop." My sister long afterward told me this, I was at least glad that uncle heard it. I have a sad feeling as I realize the entire force and my uncle included are gone, where I cannot say, but I deeply regret that I was not a Christian while there.

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## 09 -- GIVEN UP TO DIE

The next tragedy of my life occurred after I had been in the print shop less than three years. I began to get so weak and sickly it was a task for me to walk back and forth to work. As I continued to get worse, I went to a specialist who gave me a thorough examination. After he had finished, I said, "I want you to tell me the truth about my condition." He replied, "I will, you will not live a year and not that long unless you get out of the printing office. You have lead poisoning and T. B. Medicine will do you no good, you are too far gone. Only one thing will prolong yore' life perhaps, and that is to get out in the sunshine and fresh air, and in the pine woods. Staying out doors as much as possible." These last remarks were like throwing a life line to a drowning soul, for I thought it would be fine to live like that, for I loved to be in the woods, to fish and hunt; dogs and guns were my idols. For nearly three years I did little else. I took a pie tin for a spider and plate, mixed salt and pepper together in a little shaker, took a little corn meal and bacon in my game bag, fishing tackle but no pole, and a light wool blanket. Also a little belt axe and hunting knife, thus, with dog and gun, a 32 Smith and Wesson revolver, and all alone I really felt quite happy. This proved to be the very medicine I needed, and I gradually began to mend. I would camp in deserted, old log cabins, remains of old lumber camps, or make a little shelter with the bark of a fallen aged hemlock tree, from which you could pull off great slabs of bark that would shed rain.

On one occasion I was camping out near the remains of a lumber camp on Pickerel Lake. There was an old sod covered dugout in the side of a small hill, with a spring of cold bubbling water near at hand. In this dugout I built a nice bed with poles, sweet fern and tall grass. I also built a tiny furnace out of stone, pieces of brick and heavy tin. What more could a man desire? One day I had a very peculiar, fearful heaviness creep over me. I could not get interested in hunting or anything else. I felt sure some of my loved ones were dead. The feeling so increased that I finally left for home. After waiting for some time for some one to break the news, I finally made inquiry. No bad news and I felt relieved.

In the morning I started back to my camp. On arriving I found the whole thing had caved in. I think the center support had given way. This experience I felt was an act of divine providence, and I thanked God though I was far from being a Christian.

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## 10 -- OTHER NARROW ESCAPES

The first occurred when I was, about 12 years of age. With two other boys we went up the river picking blackberries. When our pails were filled, we started home along the river, when we came to the old skidway upon the high bank. Two of us were on the shore, the other on the bank with a pole trying to pry loose a defective log that had been left on the skidway. To our surprise and his horror the log was coming toward us. I know a log would often turn to the right or left on the skidway. I dropped my pail and jumped into the river, one end of the log stuck on shore, and the other end floated quickly out into the stream. I was within two seconds of death. If I had been two seconds later the log would have crushed me, as it was the log pinned me beneath the surface and I could not get my head to the top.

The boy with me sprang into the water but could not move the log. I could hear him calling to his brother who was transfixed with terror for a moment when he saw me disappear. Together they moved the log sufficiently for me to crawl out, by my digging my fingers into the sand. I am sure I could not have held my breath two seconds longer. My pail of berries was smashed flat. We dried our clothes and went home, with the understanding that we would not tell our mothers, as they were already prejudiced against us going to the river, because one or more were drowned almost every year. One boy I saved from drowning (not the Tafford boy) was drowned the next year and I was one of the pall bearers.

A few years later, I was down by the dam with some other lads, when one of them dared me to go over the dam. The water was high, and the current very swift through the shoot where the logs went over, with swift billowing waves three or four feet high rushing down the stream for some distance. There was also a small but dangerous whirlpool below the dam. One boy's body had been drowned remained in this whirlpool three or four days before they located it.

At the time of which I write, some sixty five or more years ago, it was something of a terrifying sight to the uninitiated. At the present time this is practically eliminated since the decline of the lumber business. We had never heard of anyone swimming over this dam, and I did not think he would try it, but someone suggested we take a small piece of board for safety, which we did. He went over first but remained under water so long we feared he was drowned, but soon he appeared and swam ashore. I went over diving deep, and the strong current twisted the board from my hands.

This was now a fight for life. My whole effort was to get to the surface for air. The boys thought for sure I was gone. When I reached the surface I was so exhausted I could take one good breath and go under again. However, I knew I could make it and took it as easy as possible, floating and treading water until I reached the abutment of the river bridge. Here I rested awhile then swam to the shore. This attempt was foolhardy rather than heroic.

While still at the boarding house, I loaded my gun and started out to hunt. Missing something I returned, set my gun down and went to my room to get it. When I came back one of the boys pointed the gun at me saying, "Watch me pick that button off your vest." I said, "Never mind picking that button off my vest." He had the hammer up and his finger on the trigger. I said, "Don't snap it down it wears on the firing pin." He handed me the gun, and upon breaking it open I found



the gun loaded. I had forgotten that it was loaded. I learned never to load a gun until I got to the hunting ground.

On another occasion I was hunting rabbits on an old logging road, where high brush covered both sides. The dog struck a hot trail and thinking I would have to shoot the rabbit as he jumped across the road, I stepped upon a log cocking both barrels of my shot gun. By the tonguing of the hound I knew the rabbit was circling farther away and would cross the road further on. Forgetting the hammers were up, I set the butt of the gun down on the log. It slipped off while still in my hand and BANG! went both barrels. Not a shot struck me but in a measure I realized how near hell I had been. We knew two men that were killed that very same way. I concluded it was a miracle that I escaped death, and I still believe that God answers prayer of a sincere Christian mother who really dedicates her children to the Lord. Praise the Lord!

I was not only foolhardy and careless with guns, but reckless. While hunting squirrels on a beautiful day with a friend Frank King, we were seated some distance apart. He was smoking a clay pipe. I pulled up my 22 rifle and taking careful aim shot the bowl off his pipe. He took it good-natured, but it might have put his eye out. He was a brother of the boy who years before tried to help me through the school house window. I am glad to report it did not disrupt our friendship.

While hunting up the river one day, I saw a man fishing with his bait can beside him. In order to introduce myself, I thought I would shoot a hole through his can. The can went spinning into the river, and as he was a big man I did not wait for an introduction, but went into my beloved woods, not too slow.

I will relate another incident of which I am ashamed. I hated my Uncle Ira who had sent me adrift in the winter time, and I stole two ducks he was fattening for Thanksgiving Day. Taking them to my boarding house I told them of the joke, and we had a nice enjoyable party. I will tell you later how the ducks came to life.

In the meantime I will relate another experience of which I am ashamed. It was a further experience with my Uncle Ira. My little sister, not so little at this time, was smitten with typhoid fever. I went at noon hour to see her as uncle would not be home. Aunt would not let me in, I said, "I am going to see her." She answered, "You cannot see her now as she is sleeping and you cannot disturb her." I think my sister heard her talking. I replied, "I will be back tonight and I will see her if I have to come through the side of the house."

That night I packed my loaded pistol in my overcoat pocket, a sort of "social security" project. My older sister came to the door with a lamp in her hand. No electric lights in "those good old days." Without an invitation I walked into the front room. My uncle sat reading the Daily Pioneer. I stopped in front of him, looking him in the eyes with my hand in my pocket and my finger on the trigger of the gun. Now believe me, I had not the slightest idea of killing him, but I thought if he got too rough I would shoot him in the arm or leg if necessary. I think my mother's prayers or a guardian angel must have been with me that night, for he never spoke a word to me or I to him. My sister was trembling with fear, so after talking with her a few moments I withdrew and went out as I came in, without speaking a word to my aunt or uncle.

Had I wounded my uncle, no doubt I would have been arrested, and the Lord only knows how my life might have turned out, perhaps with "everlasting shame and contempt". Praise God, I have never been arrested, or even received a ticket for breaking a traffic law or anything else. I will admit my foot has been too heavy on the accelerator a goodly number of times, but not when my wife was along.

At twenty-three years of age I married a Presbyterian lady. She was born in Canada of English parents. She said her father worked for the king of England. In what capacity I do not recall, but in America he wore a high hat and sported a gold headed cane. Her name was Joanna Rothwill. She was a good church worker, especially in the culinary department and could certainly fry oysters, make fine coffee, pies and cakes and play a good hand of cards, for pleasure only. She wore small diamond earrings, finger rings etc. She gave me a ring while I already wore a gold watch and chain, locket, tie pin and lodge emblem. She also had a hat with an expensive ostrich feather wound around the crown, but she had never been to a dance, never listened to smutty talk and no man would dare to insult her, but she was very proud, and I found out later, extremely jealous.

I had a good job and a beautiful, black driving and saddle horse. We often drove out to a lake taking a picnic dinner and a bottle of beer. Some of these escapes from death put me under conviction, although I had never heard that term used and did not know what conviction was until after I was saved, yet I knew well enough that I was hell bound but thought most people were going there anyway, and I would make one more.

I had a fierce temper, but did not know where it came from or how to get rid of it. I remember almost the last talk with mother. She warned me that if I did not get rid of my temper, I would end my days on the scaffold or in prison. How near I came God only knows, but I am still thanking Him every day for His great love and mercy.

Riding past the Presbyterian church one Sunday morning, with my gun over the saddle and seeing quite a number of people going into the church, I thought they were all on their way to Heaven and wished I was with them. How sadly I was disappointed you will hear later. Soon the judgments of God began to overtake me. First my horse was killed under me while going to see if Hank Whipple, one of my hunting pals, could go hunting with me the next day, Sunday. I felt very lonely for loved that faithful horse and had trained her so I could shoot from the saddle.

Next, the man I had clerked for five years went out of business, and again I was out of work. Things went from bad to worse and I had dreams and awful feelings, which I could not explain. Finally I told my wife in no uncertain language that Big Rapids was hooded and we had better move out.

We heard that Traverse City, Mich. was a thriving little town. I wanted to be a good man and start life over again. We packed all our goods, except a few for my wife to get along with, until I found work and could send for her. I took a small trunk with such things as I might need, and went to Traverse City a [iota] stranger, with seven dollars in my pocket.

Staying in a cheap hotel the first night, I arose early and started out to look for a place to live, and finally located three rooms and a good sized hall on a second floor for five dollars a month. Not having five dollars after paying my hotel bill, I told the man my situation and told him I would pay him in advance by the week, until I found work. He took a chance for which I was grateful, and I paid a week's rent in advance. Feeling better, I prayed, "O God, if there is a God who answers prayer, and will prove it to me, I will be a Christian." I did not know that all men are born deaf and dumb and blind spiritually, though they may be highly intellectual in mental attainment.

Something seemed to say to me, "Prove me and know that I am God." I said, "All right, Lord, I will do it." I desired clerking in a grocery store or driving a delivery wagon, as I had seven years of experience in that line. Weary and hungry, I went into a saloon and took a glass of beer. While drinking it, the thought came to me, "This is a fine way to start being a Christian." Feeling condemned, I set the glass down and said, "That is my last glass of beer." I have never touched it since.

Coming back to town, I met a man who spoke to me. I did not recognize him but he had lived in Big Rapids years before. He informed me he was doing landscape work and asked me if I wanted a job. I liked that word landscape, and told him work was just what I was looking for. His son worked with him and I surely got plenty of work wheeling sand, good enough for a beer sucker to become a Christian.

Well, I had a room with a newspaper for a mattress on the floor, with my coat for covering. Bread was five cents a loaf and strawberries four cents a box. I divided the bread into three pieces, the strawberries in three piles, one for breakfast, one for dinner, and one for supper. Once a week I treated myself to a dime's worth of bologna. Thus I lived for a whole month, weeping and seeking God a good share of the night. I became pretty thin on this kind of diet and a newspaper mattress.

When I thought I had enough money to pay the freight, I wrote my wife to ship the goods. When they arrived, I went to the depot and found I lacked one dollar in paying the bill. I returned to my room, fell on my knees and reminded God of His promise, "Prove me and know that I am God." I arose from my knees and going down to the sidewalk met the man I worked for. I was too proud to tell him I was broke, but getting desperate I asked him if he had a dollar to spare, stating my need. He reached into his pocket and handed me a silver dollar, asking me how I was going to get the goods into my rooms. I replied, "I don't know yet." He said, "It is a bad day for our work, so we will get my son and the team and move the goods to your rooms." That was the best news I had heard in a long time, and I really believed God had answered prayer. In about two hours the job was done, I was encouraged and really thanked God.

I then went to a loan company and borrowed \$25, and sent for my wife, who came and liked the arrangement of things.

I soon faced another problem. The landscape contractor was temporarily out of work also. Again I went to what I now called: "home," to pray. Getting alone with God, I again "put out the fleece" in regard to "proving God". I went down the street and saw a fine covered grocer's wagon.

A man was talking to the driver, asking him what he was doing on the wagon. He replied, "We are short of a man." I noted the name and address on the wagon, found the place on Main Street, and after a little conversation with the proprietor, I was hired on the spot and worked for him around two years. Then he sold out and went in business up into Saskatchewan, Canada.

Because of my wife being a Presbyterian, and not knowing one church from another, I joined with her, but without any change of heart, though I was somewhat reformed but had never heard of John Wesley or the doctrine of holiness. However, I seemed to be acceptable with the denomination and they had some very nice members. The pastor, Rev. Wright, was especially kind to me. In a short time they gave me a Sunday School class of young people, made me a ruling elder, and a delegate to their annual assembly, and much to my embarrassment, was announced to take the first morning devotional period. In praying for a scripture, I seemed led to take Romans 12:1, 2. I said, "Lord that is too strong for these people", and thumbed the Bible back and forth for something else, but finally concluded it was from the Lord and did the best I could. I do not recall getting any response, but I had a clear conscience.

As I have written, I hated school, but as I began to read and study the Bible, God gave me such a hunger for the Word and full salvation, that I did not like to be disturbed even to eat. I saw the possibility and necessity of holiness. They said, "You get that when you die." I also heard a young man testify, "I am glad that if you are once saved you can never be lost." I did not believe it, and recalled going into a Free Methodist Church when I was a lad of 12 years of age. I was coming home from town one night, and hearing quite a commotion in this church, slipped quietly in and sat in the very back seat near the door.

The meeting had been dismissed, and perhaps a dozen were up in front. Some were praising the Lord, others with hands up and tears running down their radiant faces, while some were walking back and forth with angelic smiles and holy laughter. I was amazed and thrilled as I had never seen anything like that before. Oh, how I wished I might get that, and was hoping someone would come and invite me up there and tell me how to get such a heavenly experience. However, no one came and I went out into the night and dark, wondering, wondering. Was not that too bad? And sad to say I never saw anything like it until I was converted about 18 years later.

Following this period of deep conviction, on Sunday afternoons I would take my Bible and go some distance into the woods to study and pray. God opened up the scriptures in a marvelous way. I refrained from Sabbath breaking, threw my tobacco and pipe in the river, gave up my lodge, in which I had life insurance. This started Mrs. Thrall on the war path. I stripped off my gold watch and chain, lodge pin, the ring my wife gave me, and began tithing. I took them out back of the barn and buried them. They are there yet unless someone has dug them up.

Now some readers will no doubt think as my wife did, that I was going crazy. No, I was just in a hurry to find God. God, through His word and Holy Spirit, revealed to me the truth in regard to these matters. Feeling much better, I now sought God with all my heart, often in the woods and on the river bank at night. I had never heard of confessing my sins or making restitutions. However, one night on the river bank, amid the pine trees, I told the Lord I would do anything in the world He asked if He would save me so that I would know that I was really saved.

I felt worse instead of better. I thought there was no use, I could do no more. I don't remember that I prayed the next morning. My heart was heavy and darkness was upon my soul. On my way to work, I heard a voice speak to me. I looked all around and up and down the street. Not a soul in sight. I said to myself, "Now perhaps I am going crazy, I had better let up a little on this, for I am hearing voices." In a moment, I heard the voice again. This time as I looked up, it came straight from Heaven right into my soul. No blessing, but the Lord showed me a little dishonest trick I had played on a customer in the store. It amounted to a few cents. The voice said, "I want you to go to that man, confess it and ask his forgiveness." I replied, "O Lord, I can never do that." Pride, pride PRIDE. The Lord spoke again, "Do you remember what you promised me last night?" I answered, "Yes, Lord, and I will do it." How quickly we forget our vows.

The man lived about a block from where I now stood. I went immediately and knocked at the door. He came to the door and humbly I confessed and asked forgiveness, which he readily gave. I only felt I had done my duty, but as I left his door, something unearthly thrilled my soul and body. It seemed I could hardly get my feet on the ground. With inexpressible joy I looked up and said, "Lord, I don't know much but I know I have struck the way that leads to Heaven." And I knew it just as well as I know it now.

A few days after, while in prayer, a deep darkness settled over my spirit which I could not understand. But as I tarried the Lord revealed a number of other things that needed to be adjusted. My heart fairly sank and I said, "Lord it is a good thing you did not show me these things first, for I never would have done them." I was getting honest with God. With that wonderful love and patience, "He leads His dear children along." I was not sanctified as yet, but the Lord was so greatly helping me in making restitutions that I made up my mind to keep at it until my sky was clear.

One time while seeking, believe it or not, I heard "Quack, Quack, Quack." I said, "O yes, uncle's ducks." They sure came to life all right. As the years had gone by I had forgotten about stealing them, but I said, "yes" to God, and kept at that business until God showed me nothing more. I knew writing to my uncle would never satisfy him. I must "beard the lion in his den" at my first opportunity. Praise God, the burden of sin was lifted, the sky was clear blue, and the victory was mine through the Redeeming Blood of God's dear Son. Praise the Trinity forever.

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## 11 -- TAKING UP MY CROSS

During this time, I was faithfully attending my Church and S. S. class and airing some of my views. The pastor stuck by me, and asked me to lead a prayer meeting for him as he was to be absent. I was reading a book by Rev. M. W. Knapp, "Out of Egypt Into Canaan." It contained a map depicting the journey of the Israelites. I drew a map of this and placing it conspicuously, gave them some of my experience wandering around in the wilderness, finally crossing the Red Sea. I showed them how I came up to the Jordan, through conversion, and expected soon to cross over into Canaan. It was a cool reception but I had taken up my cross. The next time the pastor asked me to take the prayer meeting, I sat back until it was time. As I walked up in front, about one third at least arose and walked out. I felt more sorry for them than myself.

Shortly after, while in prayer, the Lord whispered, "Will you witness for me anywhere?... Yes, Lord." "Any time?... Yes." That was all. On Saturday evening while going to the store, I was passing the Salvation Army on the street. The Lord said, "Here is a chance for you to witness for me." I knew none of them, but slipped into the ring and gave a brief testimony. Before reaching the store, I was so blessed I could not wait on customers. I hastened to the basement, praising God, until the blessing subsided.

Later the opportunity came to visit my sisters and Uncle Ira. My sisters were living in a cozy brick cottage. Ella my older sister, was teaching school and my younger sister Olive, attending school. I informed my older sister regarding my errand, and she desired to go with me. I consented and that night we went. It was dark and I knocked at the door and stepped aside. My uncle came to the door but did not see me. He invited sister in and I followed. Well, I was at least in the house, and walking up to my uncle I said, "Uncle, I have a little business to settle up with you. (No gun this trip, but I had the sword of the Spirit, praise God.) Years ago I stole two of your ducks, and have come to confess it, ask your forgiveness and pay for them," offering him the money. He said, "I not only forgive you for stealing the ducks, but I forgive you the debt also," and he refused the money. He knew more about religion than I gave him credit for.

Soon I began to approach the subject of salvation. He sensed what was coming and said, "Now if you want to visit that will be all right, but we'll have no talk about religion in this house." "Well I did not come to talk about religion, but salvation," and replied, "you know what I used to be, but God has taken all of that out of my heart," and I proceeded to tell him my experience.

When I had finished and arose to go and told him I might never see him again and wanted to ask a small favor of him, he dropped his head a moment and replied, "Well if it is anything reasonable and I can, I will do it." I said, "Uncle I would like to pray here," he said, "All right," and I dropped on my knees, and my sister followed. I need not tell you God came in power. Sister was crying, my aunt was crying and I was weeping and my uncle had tears in his eyes. When I arose to bid them farewell, he gripped my hand with much emotion and said, "Young man stick to it and if there is anything I can ever do for you, let me know."

A few years later I was again in, Big Rapids to visit my sisters. They informed me uncle was sick in bed. I called on him and about the first thing he said was, "Where are you staying?" I told him my grips were at the Western Hotel. He asked, "Will you do me a favor?" I answered, "Uncle I will do anything I possibly can for you." He replied, "Will you bring your grips and stay with us while you are in town?" I informed him I would be glad to do so. I read the Bible, prayed and talked salvation to him. He was very tender, and before leaving town, made arrangements for a Free Methodist preacher to call on him. I never saw him again as this sickness terminated his life, and only God knows the results.

A little later the Lord spoke to me again while in prayer and alone with God, I ran up against the heaviest cross of my life up to this time. The question was propounded to my innermost being, "Will you preach my gospel on the street?" This revealed again my awful pride and man-fearing spirit, and shook me to the foundation. After a hard struggle which fairly made me sweat, and thinking ahead for some time, the voice spoke again, "When?" ... "Any time Lord."

"Where?" ... "Any place Lord." "All right, tomorrow night I want you to go down to the corner of Main and Union Street and preach about the wise man which built upon the rock, and the foolish man who built his house upon the sand."

Well friends I felt as though I had a bag of sand upon my back all the next day. The burden seemed more than I could bear, but we had reached a place where we knew it was obey God or loose all. I had no sympathy from any direction, A policeman who lived in the same block (we had moved some time before from the rooms to a house on 7th Street) had heard me praying in the barn, where I often went in order not to disturb anyone. He told my wife she should put me in the asylum which was in the city, as I surely was crazy and might get dangerous any time, and to leave her doors unlocked so she could more easily escape.

I was not yet sanctified but was sure doing some "dying out", though I had never heard that expression. That night I took my Bible and pulling each foot loose from the sidewalk, went to my first appointment. No wonder I have never shrunk from any other appointment, as that was the hardest I have ever known. Perhaps it has saved me from crying over my appointment, like some preachers and wives I have known.

When I reached the corners appointed, all the audience I had was that policeman leaning against a telephone pole. The devil said, "Now you go out there on the street and he will take you." I felt pretty weak, but I said all right here I go. I kneeled down on the pavement and prayed. What I said in my prayer, I never could recall, but when I arose that policeman looked, as Brother Elmer McKay used to say "like a gnat on the buffalo's horn."

All fear left me, I felt bold as a lion, and had some degree of liberty. As the people began to gather, the more that came the better I felt. Praise God! I had the victory, and have preached hundreds of times on the street and in jails and other places, and always felt an inspiration.

During this time I was faithfully attending our regular Church services, Sunday .School and prayer meetings, the latter I liked as I had a chance to testify. Continuing to eagerly search the Scriptures I set an early hour in the morning to read, pray and study. I saw more clearly the necessity of being sanctified before death, and my hunger for this blessed experience greatly increased.

Shortly an incident occurred which proved to me the absolute necessity of being made holy through a Heaven born faith in the Blood of Christ, and being sanctified in this life. Under great provocation, I gave way for a few moments to a spirit of anger. Weeping bitterly I asked my wife to forgive me, and sadly retired to my temple of pines on the river bank. Brother, sister, awful despair nearly overcame me, for I thought that temper was gone forever. As I wept and prayed my way back to God, it seemed to me I saw angels in those tree tops, and even now, after many, many years I feel a thrill as I write these words. Praise God forever! I also saw the fallacy of the Calvinistic doctrine of "once in grace, always in grace," and I determined to seek holiness at any cost.

Every store that I worked in, up to this time sold tobacco. My wife was visiting relatives at this time in Chicago, and one night in prayer I was convicted for selling tobacco. I knew there was

more poison in a plug of tobacco than in a glass, of beer, and determined to quit it, but nevertheless there was a fight, as I knew it meant the loss of my work. It would embarrass my employer in getting another man, we were the best of friends, and often had picnics together on the lake shore and it would take a weeks wages to pay my wife's fare home. Finally as I was on my knees, and said Lord I have crossed over, selling tobacco is forever in the past.

In the morning I went early to my employer's home and broke the news. I certainly felt sorry for him, he turned pale and dropped his head, and said you know I will have to get someone who can do my work. I replied, "Yes, I know that and I will work until you can get another man, but I will not sell a pinch of tobacco."

Thus I had a whole week to testify to our tobacco customers. When Saturday night came and I had settled all my weekly bills, I had thirty cents left.

If people do not believe in the devil, let them take the old Bible track and they will soon be convinced. He said plainly, "Now what are you going to do, your rent is nearly due, your wife is in Chicago and you are out of work." I said, "Mr. Devil I will show you I can start this Christian life without a cent." I walked up to a little bank the Salvation Army had on the show case, and dropped in those three dimes. Well believe it or not, I have never had a worry about money since that date. That does not mean that I never had a need, no, indeed, but in many ways God has always supplied our needs, for which we give Him all the Glory. Amen!

Seeing in the paper the notice that the Salvation Army held holiness meetings on Sunday p.m. we were there right on time, and was a seeker for some time. One Sunday while earnestly seeking, there came upon me a peculiar experience. I felt I was just a skeleton with the skin pulled over my bones, and even my voice sounded hollow and deep. After the meeting they asked, how I felt. I answered, "I feel like the big bass (rum; nothing, absolutely empty." If I had only known that was the emptying out process, I am fully persuaded I would have been "Filled with the Holy Spirit", had I received the right instruction. The Captain said, "Brother Thrall you are a doubting Thomas, you are sanctified and I know you are." I replied, "Well I know I am not." He also said, "While praying your face came up before me, and I believe He wants you to join the Salvation Army." I answered, "All right Captain, all He has to do is show me."

When the meeting was over I went home disappointed, but bound to keep seeking. These dear people never said a word that I recall about confessing out the "carnal mind, the depraved nature, or the sin of unbelief." The most encouragement I received was from a dear old man who would just chuckle, and say, "You'll get it Brother, you'll get it." I had confidence that he had the experience, and believed I would get it.

Soon after while on my way to my own church, I came to a corner where I should turn to the left and go up to my church and S. S. class, when the Lord spoke to me thus. "I want you to go down to that little white building in Fernwood", which was in the opposite direction about a mile and a half away. Reader, I knew no more about that building than you do now, with the exception that I had driven past it. I did not stop to debate the matter a second, but turned on my heel and started.



There I heard the first Holy Ghost sermon. It really shot me all to pieces. My heart was open and tears running down my face. I was taking it as fast as he could shoot and looking for more. Praise God! from that day to this no holiness preacher has preached too close to suit me. I was so hungry I could hardly wait till the service was over. They gave no altar call, neither did they speak to me about my soul, though I stood with tears in my eyes until they all passed out. They shook hands and asked me to come again. Whether they were anxious for dinner or what I do not know, but with much disappointment and with a heavy heart, I started again towards the woods to pray, never thinking of dinner.

When out of sight of the people I seemingly became desperate. Taking off my hat and looking up into the Heavens, I said, "Lord I am going out to the woods to pray once more, and I will NEVER come back or see my wife again unless I receive the witness of the Spirit that my heart is clean." The devil was on hand and said, "You will starve to death out there in the woods." It seemed! could see myself out under the trees emaciated, starving, dying. I said, "All right Mr. Devil, I will starve to death, but I will never come back alive unless God does the work," and I meant it with all my soul. I took out my testament and said, "O Lord, am building for eternity on your word, give me something from your word." I opened my Testament and my eyes fell upon this scripture. John 15:3. "Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you." I believe it was the voice of God, and in an instant faith gripped this promise, and I said, "Lord I believe it." "The Glory of God," struck my soul and body. I never got to the woods. With joy unspeakable and full of glory I started running like a deer across lots for home. While on the run God spoke again, "This is what they had in that Free Methodist Church in Rig Rapids." I now knew where I belonged, as God made me a Free Methodist in two seconds or less, though I did not know there were any in that part of the country.

Well, praise God I was having fine sailing and hungry to get to our prayer meeting in order to testify (the Presbyterians had testimony meetings in those days). When I reached the church and an opportunity was given, I swung in, expecting some would be delighted. When I finished, a dear old lady, a prominent member of the church arose and pointing her finger at me said, "Young man the Bible says, 'He that saith he is without sin is a liar, and the truth is not in him'." This rather cooled my ardor, but I did not say anything neither did anyone else. Going home I told the Lord I did not know about that Scripture, but I know you gave me a clean heart. On reaching home I looked up the scripture, I John 1:8, 9, 10, that wonderful spiritual sandwich. I saw she not only misquoted the scripture, but took out the meat (or tried to) and gave me the crust.

Inquiring of my employer if there was a Free Methodist Church in the city, he replied, "No, but there are two or three families in the southern part of the city who have prayer meetings in their homes and a Free Methodist preacher comes every two weeks from some other town." He also said one of his customers who came into the store occasionally was a Free Methodist. I thought he must be mistaken, for he never asked me if I was a Christian or invited me to their meetings, nor gave any evidence that caused me to believe he was a Christian. However, the next time he came in the store, I asked him and he replied that he was. I asked him if they allowed strangers in their prayer meetings. He said, "O yes, glad to have you come."

I could hardly wait until Thursday night. I think I was the first one to pray, and when they began to say "Amen" and Praise the Lord", I began climbing Jacob's ladder into the Heavenlies.

Later I met Rev. C. G. Miller, an old time Free Methodist who came twice a week. People called him the barn-stormer, and I fell in love with him. He died wonderfully blessed and cried something to the effect that he was "going through the river of death alive, glory to God." Here we also met Ora Beebe, Sanders and others, whom we met again a few years ago while in revival meetings. My wife was getting stirred up, and took sides with the Presbyterians against me. The preacher told her he had seen folks like that before, and I would get over it in about three months. My wife had scattered it around that I was crazy and it even reached Big Rapids and other places.

One Sunday p.m. two fine Free Methodist: brethren came to our home and asked me to accompany them to a cottage prayer meeting, which I did. On my return my wife was furious, and insulting. I was calm and happy, which seemed to stir her the more. She rightly demanded to know where I had been. Of course I informed her. She said, Did you know they were bad people?" I replied, "No. but if they were that was a proper place to hold a meeting." (This answer was perhaps unwise.)

She then did something she had never done before, she gave me a slap on the face. I felt so good because I did not feel a tremor of anger, that I could not help praising God aloud. She danced around me striking me with her fist. With tears running down my face I began giving glory to God for His wonderful deliverance. I never even felt her blows. Finally she began to weep and throwing her arms around my neck cried, saying, "I did not mean to do that." I answered, "I know that and I have nothing against you and freely forgive you. Now let us kneel and ask God to forgive." She immediately dropped upon her knees and we had only prayed a short time when she sprang to her feet praising God and exclaimed, "Now I will go with you to the Free Methodist Church." This was a great victory as she had formerly said under pressure, "I will go to hell rather than the Free Methodist Church," and declared she would not feed a Free Methodist if they were starving, and up to this time she would not allow one in the house.

I never spoke publicly of this incident, but once in my life, and that recently as I thought it might encourage a soul that I knew was going through a similar experience, and relate it now for the encouragement of others and the glory of God.

She kept her word and went with me to the meeting, but the devil was still on her trail, as he always will be. This happened to be one of the Sundays the pastor was not there. My wife was as usual dressed in her regular togs, ostrich feather and all. A plain dressed pilgrim arose and publicly tore her all to pieces. I knew it was a lack of wisdom, and my wife declared she would never go again.

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## 12 -- MOVING TO CHICAGO

Having moved to Chicago where her near relatives lived, she still refused to attend church. These relatives wrote me a nice letter to the effect we could live with them until I could find work. This we did storing temporarily our goods. I found out the people who lived upstairs and owned the building where Catholics, and one the relatives of my wife who invited us was a Catholic. My

wife informed me of this, saying, "You must not let the folks here, hear you praying as it will cause a disturbance." I never said a word, but knew the enemy was trying to trap me. However, I thought of Daniel praying at his usual time before an open window. I said to myself, "I shall pray exactly as the Lord directs."

Our bedroom was in the back room of the apartment. On the second floor was a sort of balcony with a railing around it just above our window which was now open, so Daniel's experience just helped me out. I did not close the window, but kneeling began to pray softly, but the volume increased until I realized I had an audience, as the talking ceased, but I was not disturbed. The atmosphere in the family grew cold, with the suggestion that they hoped I would find work, and I certainly did also. I was out of money without a nickel for car fare so I traveled on foot for a few days.

A grocer on South Halsted Street needed a man, but said he had one in view, but asked me to leave my address, which I did. On this Sunday my wife had a beautiful Presbyterian Church picked out only two blocks away which we should attend. I went with her and she did not enjoy it at all. She said the preacher was proud and wore a corset. He did not pay any attention to either of us, perhaps because I did not wear a necktie. This suited me fine, and before the second Sunday, I had located the Old Dearborn Street Free Methodist Church eight miles away and attended there.

When I came back, my wife said the grocer phoned for me to come and see him relative to the job. I could see the folks were tried because I would not go see him on Sunday. I told them if God wanted me to have that job he would hold it for me until Monday morning.

I went down, hired out and went to work. The first thing I discovered was about an ounce of tea lead wound around the fork of the scales at the bulk butter and lard counter. That meant 15 ounces for a pound. I went immediately and told the proprietor I was out of that kind of business. He said, Well the clerks usually slapped on a little more for it to come out even. I told him I weighed things as if the Lord stood watching me. He said, "All right you may take it off."

At a later time a woman came in very angry and accused him of cheating her on a certain deal that I knew nothing of, but as she talked I saw she was in the right. She said, "I am through trading with you," and she was one of his best customers. He tried to explain again and turning to me asked, "Isn't that right Mr. Thrall?" I replied, "No sir, that is not right." He turned red in the face and the lady laughed. Then he laughed, fixed it up and the lady did not quit trading with him.

One day a street car killed the grocer's dog. A couple of clerks carried it through the store to bury it. Even the lady cashier went out to see the process. It came to me, they were going to ask me to pray over the grave. I said, "All right Lord and took off my apron." In a moment in came the cashier saying, they wanted me to pray.

I never said a word, but walked out, kneeled by the grave and I believe the Lord helped me to pray, not for the dog which had no soul, but for the mourners, who would soon be in their graves and in hell unless they found the Lord. I slipped back into the store. No customers came in, so the Lord worked it out all right, and one by one the mourners came in without a smile, and that was the

last time they tried any mockery with me. In fact one of them later said, "Mr. Thrall, I have a sister just like you." I replied, "God bless your sister, I wish you were like her."

I joined the Free Methodist Church under the ministry of Rev. W. J. Bone, a godly man who had been District Supt. His wife also was a fine holiness preacher. They suggested I take an exhorter's license. I told them I did not want one. I told them the same when they suggested giving me a local preacher's license. I became a member of a praying band called the Gospel Workers, composed of seven sanctified men. Two were Nazarenes and one a genuine Methodist. We held meetings three nights a week, three or four including jail and street meetings on Sundays.

On Saturday night, the weather permitting we held meetings in the "red light" district about 11 p.m. when that district teemed with wicked men and prostitutes, and too often some mother's precious boy or girl together. The trade mark of the harlots was usually to dress with red hat or coat. Strange to say some good and no doubt innocent people will follow this suggestive style, advocated by ungodly men and women of Paris and wicked Hollywood.

On a certain Sunday p.m. the band was holding a street meeting in this section of the city, when one of the party unwisely pointed at one of the dive keepers and made an insulting remark. The mob started for us and the workers scattered and ran, one for a policeman. I did not feel like running, but when I saw two stalwart men coming at me, I thought my time had come. Looking up and closing my eyes, I said, "Lord into thy hands I commit my spirit." No blow fell and when I opened my eyes there stood the two, one on each side of me. The big fellow reached out his hand, shook mine and said, if they had touched you we were going to fix them. God surely has some peculiar guardian angels.

Another time when the men's wives were with them, a lady worker said to me, "See that young man over there, I believe God is talking to him." I went over to him, feeling a real compassion for him. Putting my arm around him I said, "Well pal, how is it going with you?.... Not very well," he replied. I talked to him the best I knew how. Finally he said, "I am going to tell you something and if you ever tell anyone I will kill you." I replied, "Then don't tell me, for if it is anything I ought to tell I will." Soon he pulled up his sleeve saying, "There's the man that died for me." On his arm was tattooed a picture of Christ on the cross. He then confessed that he with others had struck a guard over the head with a heavy wrench and broken out of prison.

I, then tried to persuade him to get saved, make his Confession, ask forgiveness, return to prison, and take his medicine, which would be a thousand times better than being imprisoned in hell forever. He said, "Come with me, I want you to talk with the boys." He took me down the street into sort of underground place under a building. There were three or four other men who eyed me like a hawk. My guide raised his hand and said, "Never mind boys, he is all right."

I felt no fear and I believe the Lord helped me to talk to them. I never saw him again, but these workers told me that at the night service a tough looking fellow came to the altar broken up and then arose and went out. In a little while he came back, saying he had thrown his burglar tools into the river and he prayed through. Whether it was one of these men or not I do not know.

I was now feeling more than ever the call of God to full time ministry, but feeling strongly my lack of education and theological training also my wife being unsaved, I thought it absolutely impossible. I was now preaching in a mission every Sunday night, taking no money for this and besides I gave to the regular offerings. My wife did everything in her power to hinder me, saying, "I got you to Chicago to keep you away from that Free Methodist tribe, and now you are worse than ever."

I bought some fine study books from old time holiness preachers and was getting blessed in reading and studying them. One day they were all missing. I inquired where they were and she replied, "You are crazy enough without reading that kind of stuff, so I burned them up." Well thank God she could not burn up the blessing in my heart and I felt sorry for her because she was getting the worst of the situation. I never once rebelled against the will of God, but saw no way for full time to my call.

I found a much better employment and better wages driving a route for the Pure Food Co. I had a nice horse and a fine covered wagon with a slit in the front through which the lines passed. There was a sliding door and a small window in the rear about three inches wide and a foot long. There was no glass in this window. I had been reading a book, "The Life of J. W. Redfield," loaned to me by a sanctified woman. It wonderfully encouraged my heart, as our cases were quite similar. I read about him praying out in the woods and asking God if he must preach to let a bird come and alight upon his shoulder. The bird came and lighted on his shoulder.

On a certain day I went into a restaurant, got my lunch, returned to my wagon and was reading my Testament as usual. Thinking of Redfield's experience I said, "Lord if something like that happened to me I would know you wanted me to get out into the work." Before it had hardly been expressed a bird flew through that little window, circled swiftly around my head, flew out and left me trembling.

I dared no longer doubt, but informed my wife and made arrangements with the Company. We had already moved into an apartment right next to one of her nearest relatives, so I knew my wife would be well looked after. Soon the brother from the mission where I was preaching came up to see me. He asked, "Brother Thrall, what is this I hear about you?" I replied, "You are liable to hear almost anything." He said, "I hear you are going to leave your wife." I explained everything the best I could. He asked, "Would you be willing to come down to the mission and talk it over, bringing your wife along?" I said, "Certainly, I would be glad to."

When we arrived there were several members there. Again I explained everything without saying a word about my wife. I do not recall that my wife had ever been to the mission before. Every member took their stand against me. One lady arose to her feet and said, "If you go I won't believe you ever had any religion." I knew better than that but said nothing. My wife was crying and I told her to come home whenever she was ready. It was only about four blocks home and I went down the street crying, friendless and alone. Yet not alone for the blessed Comforter came to me.

While passing a building I noted in the store window a large picture. It depicted a scene I shall never forget. A young soldier in uniform had left a file of passing soldiers for a moment to

say a last farewell to his wife and little girl. The wife had her head on the table weeping and the little girl was clinging to him. Underneath the picture were these words, "DUTY CALLS"! I saw at a glance as it were, these soldiers might be going to their death, they had to obey orders, they had to eat what was provided, they had to dress according to orders of the army authorities and go wherever they were sent, however dangerous, leaving home, family and loved ones. The Lord spoke to my heart again, "Is not my warfare as important as this?" I said, "Yes, Lord." We blithely sing, Take Up Thy Cross and Follow Me, I Hear the Blessed Savior Call: but I fear we do not always obey the call.

Still pleading my circumstances and lack of ministerial training, I went down to a solitary place on Lake Michigan to meditate and pray. Opening my Bible my eyes fell upon this portion of the Scriptures, I Cor. 1:26-29. "For ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath called the foolish things of the world to confound the wise and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty and base things and the things that are despised, hath God chosen yea, and the things which are not, to bring to naught the things that are; That no flesh should glory in His presence." I said, "Lord that takes me in." Everything is clear to take up my Cross and follow Thee. Praise God forever!

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### 13 -- LAUNCHING OUT

Within two or three days we received from Rock Island, Illinois, an urgent invitation for a revival meeting, closing with these words, "Come over into Macedonia and help us." On arriving there I found my sister, Mrs. Ella Olney and a couple of other pilgrims had planned to open a new work in the suburbs. The meeting was to be held in an old school house with the original old fashioned desks and seats intact. It was being used as a union meeting house and a deacon had charge of the building.

I went over to see him, announcing that I was an old fashioned holiness preacher. "Well," said he, "I don't think I can let you use it." I replied, "That will be perfectly all right with me as I do not want anything, but the will of God regarding the matter, but as I may never see you again we had better have a word of prayer." Dropping on my knees I prayed and arose to go, as we shook hands he said, "Well, I have changed my mind and you can use the building." We had a very interesting and I thought profitable meeting.

There were several Catholic homes in the vicinity and a number of young men of the baser sort contributed somewhat to the interest of the meeting. As the weather was warm the windows were open, and the boys pulled up large weeds with roots and dirt and sent them sailing through the window at the preacher. They were poor shots and the preacher did not even get dust in his eyes, they even threw a cat in and finally one night five or six of them came inside and stood in the middle aisle about half way down the church.

We were having a good altar service, with two or three under a burden and two slain under the power of God. The leader of the gang, a husky, rough looking fellow came up in front, stepped

upon a seat and then upon the desk. Feeling responsible for the furnishings of the building I motioned for him to get down. He sneeringly ignored this and motioned for the others to come up. I was busy at the altar but prayed, Lord you will have to help me now, and Praise God he did. Stepping over the altar rail I grabbed him by the middle and jerked him down. He landed on his feet, facing the door with my other hand on the back of his neck. Believe it or not my arms felt like steel rods and I ran him down the aisle through his crowd and out the open door, telling him to come back whenever he felt like behaving himself. I then returned to his friends informing them that they would get the same if they did not act like gentlemen. The fracas was over so quickly it scarcely disturbed the altar service.

This was the last trouble we with them but a doctor who lived across the road came in one night and threw a pitcher of water over a man slain at the altar. The man never stirred, neither did it disturb the services. One night after the service the deacon walked part way home with me saying, "Brother Thrall you won't get offended if I give you a little advice, will you?" I replied, "If I do we will have a prayer meeting right here." "Well," he said, "the people here like you and we are having a good meeting, but I am afraid that this jumping upon the front seat when giving an altar call will drive people away."

I thanked him and told him I would try to take his advice unless the Lord put it upon me, I am sure he went home feeling much better. A few nights later I was upon the front seat before I knew it, the good deacon was right in front of me and I jumped again and landed in a vacant place beside him. Later he was at the altar and finally prayed through. In testifying he said, I feel like jumping like Brother Thrall.

In this meeting I became acquainted with a young man about my age called Peter Jascove, a converted Roman Catholic. He was not a man of schools but was filled with the Holy Spirit, disowned, cursed, cast out by his parents he became a wanderer, beating his way on freight trains over the country. Arriving at St. Louis, he was with two other men, and they went into a holiness mission out of curiosity. Sitting in the rear they had it all figured out that the preacher mesmerized the people. One said to the others, "Now you watch and see when he waves his hand over that way they begin to shout and when he waves his hand the other way they shout or praise the Lord."

After some debate Peter said, "I'll bet you a dollar they can't put that power over on me," and gritting his teeth and his fists clinched, he went to the altar determined they would not mesmerize him. Finally a saintly mother kneeled down and began praying for him. Looking up he saw this woman with tears running down her face and praying as if it were her own boy.

Peter never saw anything like that before and forgot all about the power and his companions. Soon he was crying like a baby and confessing his sins. Love and divine soul burden through the power of the Holy Spirit had conquered and Peter was gloriously converted. He remained at the mission a short time and was sanctified wholly. Would to God there were more Christians who knew something of real soul burden.

Peter was also called to preach and had been doing so for some time when I met him. We were in one accord in going out to preach and living by faith. Were not the disciples thus sent out? We had very little money and planned to go as far as our money would take us, get off and preach

on the streets or any place the Lord opened up. Previous to meeting Peter, I had promised the Lord I would preach if I had to sleep out of doors, eat dry bread and go from town to town preaching the old fashioned gospel.

God tried me out on that consecration right to the letter. We started out from Rock Island down the Mississippi River aboard a steamboat (an old stern wheeler) thinking of "Mark Twain" the river pilot and author of Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn, which we had read years previously. We enjoyed this trip and stopped off at Muscatine, Iowa. We traveled light like pilgrims on their way to the "Celestial City". We each carried a small grip, our overcoats and an umbrella in case of rain. We preached on the street, sleeping in the woods at night beside a little stream, with our overcoats over us. It was an ideal spot indeed and when the stars came out in the dome of the heavens our hearts were light and heaven seemed near as we prayed. However, we did not see the results we desired in this place.

Our next stop was at Columbus Junction. We left our grips and overcoats in a barber shop, went out to survey the town, and find a good preaching place, and started for the woods which we could see a couple of miles away, feeling rich with twenty-five cents between us. Walking down the street we saw an elderly lady sitting in a rocking chair on the porch. Just as we reached the gate the Lord said, "Go in and speak to that woman."

I saluted the lady as a Christian gentleman should, telling her we were preaching the old fashioned holiness gospel. She began to praise the Lord in no uncertain tone and stated she had been praying for three years, asking God to send a real holiness preacher to that place, as the churches were all so formal and lukewarm. She finally asked, "Where are you stopping?" I told her we had just arrived and were not located yet. She informed me she was a poor widow, that her son owned the house and with his family lived some distance away, but that occasionally he came home and occupied his own room upstairs, and she would be pleased to let us use it free of charge if we would take it. I was not long in accepting this generous offer as it seemed of the Lord.

When I had overtaken Peter who had walked ahead some little distance I told him that our hotel for the present would be an upstairs room in that home. We certainly appreciated that. In returning from the street meeting at night we met a man carrying a 20 pound sack of something. We talked to him about his soul and as we parted he offered the sack to us. Of course we refused it, telling him we wanted nothing of his goods, but wanted to see him saved. He replied, "Take it or I will throw it away, I am tired of carrying it." We inquired what it was, and he said, "Oh, some stuff I got at the bakery." We told him if he was going to throw it away we would take it. Going to our room for the night we asked the lady for a pitcher of water and a couple of glasses. The Lord had that sack packed with just what we needed and enough for two or three days, as we ate very sparingly and never took up any offerings at any time.

A couple of days later she asked us if we would come down and have a little breakfast and prayer together. She certainly enjoyed these little prayer meetings and her face lit up with a saintly beauty. One morning while in prayer, someone opened the door and rolled in a large cabbage. I exclaimed that shows what little faith we have as the Lord could just as easily have rolled in a barrel of flour.



The neighbors began to chide her for entertaining those tramp preachers. Peter said we had better go but the sister insisted we stay and I sided with the lady as we ate only a little breakfast at her home, and we could get a loaf of day old bread for a nickel that would last us the rest of the day.

One day we bought such a loaf and went up on a wooded hill to spend the day in meditation, study and prayer. We found a nice shady place to rest and pray.

Near noon while Peter was slicing the bread with his jack-knife my attention was called to a single bush some distance away. I had no idea what kind of bush it was, nor was I conscious of why I was going over to look at it. On reaching it I discovered the finest, largest, most luscious blackberries I have ever seen before or after. I shall never forget that wonderful real Thanksgiving dinner, bread heaped high with those fine juicy berries.

There was not another bush of it's kind anywhere around and we firmly believe that He whom we loved and obeyed, led us to this spot for a little treat and we certainly thanked Him. After a time we were thirsty and did not know where to find water. We heard a man whetting a scythe to mow hay or light brush and inquiring of him where we might find water he said, "Right over there in the shade of that tree you will find a jug full, help yourself." It was nice and cool and we again thanked God for supplying our every need. Amen!

When the neighbors saw this saintly woman would not send us away they began bringing in canned fruit, vegetables and groceries. We left her well stocked with supplies for a long time to come and for two years thereafter we sent her at Christmas time a certain amount of money in a nice letter. The third year the envelope came back marked "deceased". Our heart were sad but we trust to meet her in the Glory Land, with all the Blood washed throng redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb.

From Columbia Junction we went to Washington, Iowa, a fine little town. Going to the chief of police to get a permit to preach on the street, we were informed we would have to see the mayor and that he was out of town. We felt we had higher authority and in the evening went on the main street in front of a hotel where several people were gathered on a wide verandah.

Peter always wanted a strong box for a pulpit. He was on the box preaching like a house afire, when someone touched me on the shoulder and inquired if we had a permit to preach on the street? I asked, "Who are you?" He replied, "I am the Mayor of this town and you will have to stop." I said, "All right, he will be through in a minute." Of course Peter did not hear [;his and I kept saying "Amen" and "Praise the Lord. Soon the mayor approached me again and said, "You are blocking traffic here, you will have to move. Why don't you go over in the park across the road?" Peter had just stopped by this time and I announced to the crowd we would continue the meeting in the park. They seemed to be pleased and we started again in front of a band-stand.

We usually took turns preaching. No dead preaching will be effective in a street meeting, so when one ran out of breath the other took over. Peter was again on the box when an orchestra filed up the steps and began their music. Stepping up to the band master and tapping him on the

shoulder, I told him we had something more important for the people and stated out" mission. He immediately seated his orchestra and I occupied Peter's pulpit.

Then happened the miracle. We never hinted that we needed such a thing as money, but the people began throwing it at us. Peter began picking it up and I kept on preaching. Later we saw the reason for this display, but it was still hidden from us at that time.

A man invited us over for dinner saying, "My wife is not saved and I do not know how she will take it but you come over at 12 o'clock anyway." We were right there on time. He seated us in the front room and we could hear his wife berating her husband at a fierce rate for bringing "those preachers" to dinner. Peter looked at me and whispered, "Let's go!" I said, "No, let us stay." Soon the husband came and invited us to dinner. He seated us, but there was no wife in sight. We noticed the pantry door swung almost shut and concluded we had trapped his wife, and I concluded to keep her trapped as long as possible and talked to the husband about salvation, never referring to his wife. Then I would talk to Peter and we were some time eating our good dinner. We saw the husband was getting uneasy, and soon he said, "we will go into the parlor". He led the way, Peter following, and I slipped over to the pantry door, pushed it slightly further open and said, "Thank you, sister, for that good dinner, and the Lord bless you." Whether He did or not I am not able to report.

We had been sleeping in the band-stand with newspaper for a mattress, which recalls a similar experience in Traverse City, Michigan.

A little later while praying alone in the woods, to my great surprise and some embarrassment the Lord spoke to me saying, "Now you have kept your vows, you have gone from town to town preaching my gospel, you have slept out of doors, you have eaten dry bread, now I want you to go home." I cannot describe my feelings. I was having such a good time I did not care to go at the present time and I hated to disappoint Peter. He pleaded with me not to go as I knew he would, but it was all settled before I saw him, as I did not leave the woods until I was sure. Now I could see the reason for the miracle offering, I had my fare home.

When I arrived home I found my wife sick in bed. The first words she said were, "Oh pray for me that the Lord will heal me and if he does I will never object to your preaching again." Walking over to her bedside, in the name of Jesus we rebuked the disease. In a second of time she exclaimed, "Oh the Lord has healed me, I don't feel a pain." Immediately dressing, she went about her usual duties.

Nevertheless, the absolutely false story, stating I had left my Wife, made plenty of gossip. One preacher inferred that I may have run away with another woman. He is now out of the Free Methodist Church.

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We were still living in Hyde Park, a fine neighborhood about three blocks from the Chicago University and within a few blocks of Jackson Park on Lake Michigan and less than two blocks from Washington Park. Thinking it wiser to work near home, I concluded after prayer to look for work. Going down the street I felt led to apply at a good looking grocery store and market.

The proprietor said he needed a man and after asking me a few questions he seemed pleased at the prospect of getting a man who had experience along that line, then said to him, "I am a Christian and I do not mean I simply have my name on a church roll. I will not do any crooked work like some grocery men who put one grade of coffee into two or three cans and charge two or three different prices. If you do anything dishonest like that I would quit and you would be out of a clerk. Bad I would be out of work and that might not be too pleasant for either of us." He declared that he did an honest and straight business. The result was that I went to work for him and had secured employment in less than one hour after leaving home.

I was glad to be assigned to an order route, as it gave me a couple of streets running parallel. They were near the store and mostly fine apartment buildings or individual homes of prominent business men. Instead of going up one street and down the other, I went through the well kept alleys directly to the back doors. This gave me some time to talk with my customers regarding their spiritual condition and get back to the store right on time, but I admit I sometimes walked pretty fast.

I soon gained the confidence of my customers, as I always told the exact truth about every article I sold and guaranteed that if the article was not satisfactory it could be returned. There were two other clerks on order routes and I was outselling them both, as I not only took orders, but before going out on my route each morning I took note of any new goods, fruit, vegetables or other things I thought might please my customers. I noted also that the proprietor was having confidence in me and occasionally asked my advice.

At one time a salesman from a wholesale house was, trying to sell him a large order for canned pears, at a couple of cents lower per can than the usual price. He called me and asked my advice. I told him we had plenty of canned pears, that those on the shelves were getting fly specked and since there would soon be fresh fruit on the market it would leave him with a lot of old goods on hand. He did not order the goods. I really felt sorry for the salesman yet I felt I had done my duty.

One day we opened a box of fine looking pressed prunes. However, I found there were some worms in them and notified the owner thinking he would return them to the wholesale house. He said nothing nor did I but did not sell any of them. A lady came and seeing the prunes said, "They look nice, how much are they?" I replied, "They look nice but are wormy." Of course they were worse as you went down into the box. Finally I told one of the boys to weigh the box of prunes, dump them into the garbage, weigh the box, tell the cashier how many pounds there were and charge the same to me.

When we received a new supply of canned goods and customers inquired about the quality, if I did not know I would ask them to buy a can, let us know how they were and we would take their word for it. They would often recommend them to others.

One day one of the clerks was putting bulk strawberries into small boxes in the display window. I noticed he was placing most of the larger ones on top. I kindly said, "Jack please put the berries in the boxes as they come, not all the larger ones on the top." The proprietor who stood near by looked at me rather sternly, but said nothing.

A few days later a wealthy woman was driven up to the store in a fine looking car and bought vegetables, berries and other supplies. She said to the proprietor, "Do you know why I came down past these other stores to trade with you?" He replied, "No, I do not." She said "When I buy fruit and berries, I find them the same all the way through." I think he learned something there.

We carried two grades of eggs, storage and fresh, with about four cents difference in price. One morning I noticed we had no fresh eggs and asked the proprietor what we would do. He said, "we will give the larger ones out of the storage eggs." I replied, "That will not make them fresh and I cannot do that." I sold none either on my route or in the store. When a customer asked him for fresh eggs, he would say, "How many would you like?" and dipped into the storage crate.

He was very cool with me all the morning and at noon said, "Mr. Thrall I think I have the right to set my price on my own goods." I replied, "That is true you do and I will tell you what I will do. I will work for you until you can find another man, but while I am here I will never sell a storage egg for fresh." He hardly spoke to me unless necessary until the night when he approached me and said, "Mr. Thrall we have gotten along very nicely and I hate to see you lose your job." I replied, "That is true, we have gotten along nicely, but no job looks good to me where I have to violate my conscience." He replied, "Well, we will have some fresh eggs in the morning."

Later came the time to take the annual inventory, which was always done on Sunday. One of the boys said, "Well we have to work on Sunday tomorrow." I told him I would work until midnight, but never on Sunday. He said, "Oh we have to as we cannot do it any other time." I said nothing more, but when the proprietor handed the clerks their pay envelopes at closing time, he reminded each that they should come at the usual hour in the morning. I waited until the last to get my envelope, opening it and counting my money in order to give him time to ask me to come also, as I had my answer ready. However, he said nothing and I walked out. Monday morning when I returned no one said a word regarding the matter.

One of my customers was out when I called in the morning, so I said nothing, but took a chance and sent her what she usually bought on Monday with a little addition, expecting the delivery boy to bring back anything she did not want. She phoned the proprietor, thanking him and saying it was just what she wanted.

I am not writing these experiences boastfully, but to prove that a Christian man can live a life of Holiness unto the Lord anywhere, providing he has had a real death to the self life that delivers from a compromising, man-fearing, man-pleasing spirit and will trust God, job or no job. Praise the Lord! Why be a coward and lose respect for yourself and grieve the Holy Spirit out of your life.

The business on my route was continually increasing, as well as the confidence expressed by my customers and my employer. While away on a vacation and business trip, he gave me the keys to the office and safe saying, "I want you to look after things while I am gone."

A few days previous he had mixed and colored a tub of margarine especially for a woman who ran a boarding house. This at that time was against the law and I refused as nicely as I could to sell her any. She came in the store the next day after his return and pointing at me said, "There is the man who would not sell me margarine," and he said, "He did the right thing and there will be no more after this is gone."

I was called to officiate at the funeral of a customer's husband. I tried to get out of it, telling her I was not an ordained minister. She replied, "I do not care I would rather have you than any minister I know." I excused myself from work long enough to have my first funeral. Later I was urgently requested to baptize two children whose mother was in a dying condition and who soon passed away. We had prayed with her two or three times previously and she seemed to give evidence that she had made her peace with God.

Another of my customers was a fine looking Jewess, wife of a prominent wholesale clothing salesman. I had briefly talked real salvation to her at times and on a certain morning ,she informed me she was going to a maternity hospital and requested me to pray for her. I rather think she expected me to pray for her after she had gone, but I immediately kneeled down and prayed for her right there and hurried away. Sometime later while taking her order from the maid she came in with a bright little babe in her arms and said, "God certainly answered your prayer, the doctor said it was nothing less than a miracle the way I came through that ordeal." She thanked me and I told her to thank the Lord. for I believe He did it to prove to her that God answers prayer.

Another woman, a stranger to me came out to the back fence and asked me if I was a minister. I told her "no" but I was a Christian. She asked me to come in for a few minutes and began to tell me what a mean man her husband was and wanted me to pray for him. I asked her if she was saved and she admitted she was not. I then told. her it was her duty to get saved so that she could help her husband as she knew him better than anyone else, and told her I would pray for her first, which I did, also mentioning her husband.

Sunday was still a very busy day with the praying band, street meetings and jail meetings. I had been with a couple of workers to pray for the healing of a young lady whom they felt the Lord wanted to heal, but as I had no faith for her healing I refused to go again ,as I might hinder their faith.

Coming from a jail meeting one Sunday afternoon I went into a nearby mission and sat in the rear as the building was pretty well crowded. All at once a voice seemed to say, "Go call on that young lady." I said, "I am not going to call on that young lady," as I thought it was the enemy speaking to me. Endeavoring to keep my mind on the preaching I was unable to do so and felt uneasy. A gain the still, small voice, came in such a way that I realized it was the Lord.

I at once started for her home some distance away. The young lady was living with an aunt in a fine large home. When I arrived the aunt informed me her niece was very ill, but that a couple

of Christian Science women were trying to help her. [ asked if I might see her. As she ushered me to the room I saw the young lady looked terrible, her face fairly black with despair and I felt she was already smitten with death. Dear reader, I never felt so utterly helpless in my life, not knowing what to do or say, but stepping over to her bedside I asked, "Daughter is there anything I can do for you?" She feebly answered, "I wish you would pray for me." With a seemingly broken heart I prayed, not for her healing but that she might be fully prepared to meet God in life or death. When I arose the two women were gone. I believe that I felt a little of the compassion of Jesus for that poor soul and was willing to give my life for her.

I felt led to read a portion of the book of Revelation, including verse four of the twenty-first chapter. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away."

Oh, how Jesus came as she wept her way through to a full surrender to all the will of God. The change in her was beyond description. Her face and eyes shone with celestial light and glory. I bade her farewell and walked softly from that never to be forgotten scene, thanking God that I obeyed that "still, small voice." She died that night.

My sister Ella came from Big Rapids for a visit. She was a fine Christian woman, but as I have told you, my wife hated her and when I came from work one evening, my sister was gone. When I asked where she was, my wife replied, "I sent her on her way."

Later the pastor called and my wife slandered both my sister and myself. However, he persuaded her to come to church the following Sunday and she went with others as a seeker to the altar. I remained in one pew as I felt I had done all I could for her and did not wish to expose her publicly.

In a short time the pastor came to me and said, "Your wife wants you to come and pray for her." Of course I went, but simply told her she must obey God at any cost. Perhaps I made a mistake in not reminding her of several things back through the years that she needed to confess and make right, one of them very serious. I think she was too proud to thus humble herself. It was nothing concerning me. Of course she did not get saved, but her desire for me to pray for her convinced the pastor and workers that she really had confidence in me, even though she had slandered me behind my back.

Very few, with the exception of my sister, two or three preachers and Bishop Pearce knew of our affairs. One Free Methodist pastor said, "Brother Thrall I do not believe that God requires any Christian man to live with a woman like that." Another urged me to get a divorce. I never felt that was right and as we were both unsaved at the time of our marriage and as I at the time, was more wicked than she, my idols were guns, dogs and horses, I hunted nearly every Sunday. I entertained the hope that she might eventually be saved.

I was further encouraged when she told me a dream she had. She dreamed that together we were going up through the air and I had my arm around her. At times we would see a very black cloud and she was afraid. I would say, "Now don't be afraid, we will go right through the cloud."

She would then say to me, "If I ever get to Heaven it will be through you." This did not cure her pride and awful jealousy or eliminate the suffering that a number of people endured.

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## 15 -- MOVING TO COLORADO

In less than a year my wife developed a bad cough which no remedy seemed to help. We employed a doctor who diagnosed the case as tuberculosis which he said was serious and nothing would help, but a change of climate and suggested Colorado or Arizona. We finally decided to move to Colorado. We Sold most of our furnishings at a sacrifice and moved from Chicago to Denver, Colorado. Again we were strangers in a strange land. We arrived at night and went to a hotel. The next morning I started out to look for a place to live after having prayed about the matter.

My mind was so busy I did not think of the Rocky Mountains. Suddenly I looked up and there they were, majestic and inspiring, whose lofty peaks mantled in white pierced the sky. Gazing upon this scene I am not ashamed to confess that tears came to my eyes as I thought they were small compared with the "Rock of Ages Cleft for Me." Praise God, my loneliness fled away like a passing cloud and with this came the sweet assurance that God would see us through. We found a home-like looking place with the first floor for rent by two elderly ladies living upstairs. I could not tell them how long we would remain as it would depend upon Mrs. Thrall's health. They inquired if we brought stoves, beds etc. and we explained we had not. They said the furnishings for the rooms are all stored in a building in the rear and we were welcome to use them if we cared to move them in. This was surely providential and we were soon settled.

I could not leave my wife alone all day as she was in bed part of the time. I did most of the housework and part of the cooking. I sold goods for the Golden Rule Cutlery Co., including pocket knives for men and ladies, with their names under a transparent handle. I had about two hours in the morning and the same in the p.m. if the weather was favorable and my wife feeling able and willing to be alone.

I had good success and rarely made less than seven to ten dollars per day which was very good for those days. If a lady came to the door I did not stop to introduce myself or the Company, but handed her a sample, told her the price and about when it would be delivered Often they would want one for a relative or friend.

One morning a man came to the door and said, "My wife is away, I am just eating breakfast and I haven't any time." I replied, "That's all right you just sit down to the table and I will not take up five minutes of your time." Following him in I pulled a chair up to the table and sold him three of my best knives, I think in less than five minutes.

When the knives came from the factory I would use them a few days for samples, putting a half dozen or more on the table for the lady to examine. As she read the names, she would often remark, "Why I know that lady" or "she is one of my neighbors," and I would rest while she read the names and usually she wanted what her neighbor had. Occasionally I suggested they would

make good birthday or Christmas presents, thus helping them out as well as myself, usually selling more on my delivery day than my first trip,. This work also gave me an opportunity to testify and point souls to the Lamb of God who taketh away the "sin of the world." (Carnality.)

Denver is one of the finest cities I have ever lived in with broad, clean streets and beautiful scenery. From the dome of the capitol, one can with telescope see Pike's Peak more than seventy-five miles away. We also had the privilege of assisting some good holiness people in street meetings.

As my wife's health continued to decline instead of getting better, we employed a highly recommended specialist. He came every day for a time, gave her three examinations and declared there was nothing the matter with her lungs, that she had a weak heart which did not pump sufficient blood to the lungs, thus producing a congested condition and the cough. He also stated he could cure her, but she would have to leave this climate, as the altitude was too high for her. He prescribed a remedy composed of arsenic, nitroglycerin and digitalis. It sounded to me like a death-dealing potion, which it would certainly be if not proportioned exactly right.

She continued to gain and in about five months we were on the move again. This kind of physician would make no change whatever, and the ladies we rented of requested us to leave the furnishings in the rooms just as they were. Thus were God's promises fulfilled, which several months before he had given us, when in loneliness and tears we looked at the mighty Rockies and then to the "Rock of Ages." Praise God forever!

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## 16 -- MISSION WORK IN DAVENPORT, IOWA

Mrs. Thrall wanted to return to Chicago. We took inventory of our assets and found we had \$80 besides the goods we brought with us. This would not get us farther than Davenport, Iowa, across the Mississippi River from Rock Island, where my sister lived. That was too close to suit my wife, but I thought it providential.

A committee from the Free Methodist Conference called on me suggesting that I take a circuit in the Illinois conference. This at that time was conceded to be the best conference in the denomination. We knew some of the fine pastors and elders, but thought it unwise under the circumstances. They said, "We will inform the members to pay no attention to what your wife says." I smiled and said I would pray about it.

We were staying with my sister and husband a short time and contemplated starting a mission in Davenport. However, I went to a secluded spot down beside the river to pray about the matter. Almost immediately this portion of a long forgotten poem was strongly impressed upon my heart and mind.

"Have you looked for sheep in the desert,  
For those who have lost their way?  
Have you been to the wild waste places,



Where the Lost and wandering stray?  
Have you traveled the lonely highway,  
The dark and frousome street;  
It may be you'd find in the gloaming,  
The print of my wounded feet."

Davenport was a city of about 60,000, beautiful for situation, with a gradual incline rising up to what they called the Heights with many nice homes. There were also many saloons and rough places. We went to the authorities first, some of whom were Roman Catholics. They informed us they did not allow even the Salvation Army to hold street meetings as they made trouble. We told them if we opened a mission we would have to hold street meetings. One said, "What will you do if we put you in jail?" We replied, "We could not do anything until we got out and I don't think we will have any trouble on the street." They finally gave us a permit.

The next thing was to find a suitable building. We found one less than two blocks from the river, on four corners with a saloon on two of them just across the street. There were also many shanty boats with many children who had never been to a Sunday School. This we thought would be in a fine location and went at once to see the real estate man who had the renting of it. He was unusually friendly of course, but when he found we could not pay the rent in advance, he said, "I have a man who wants it, but if you will come in tomorrow we will let you know." We thanked him and walked out and the enemy almost persuaded us that would be the end of the proposition.

My sister had a real Christian friend whom she wanted me to call on. We called and found she belonged to the Salvation Army. I explained the situation and had prayer. As I arose to go she handed me two dollars, the first offering received on the new faith project. She also offered to help in the mission.

When we went to see the real estate man, he said, "Well I have decided to let you have the building." We thanked him and laying down the two dollars, all the money we had, told him that would bind the bargain and if at any time we were unable to pay the rent we would vacate the building. He gave us the keys! and we went on our way praising the Lord. We partitioned off the rear for living quarters and On the other side, with the help of others built a solid platform with a good pulpit and altar rail.

There were some good saints in Davenport who belonged to the Free Methodist Church in Rock Island, as there was no holiness church in Davenport. We worked in harmony with this church and the pastor, who with his wife were former members of that consecrated Vivian Dake Pentecost Band -- no relation to the "tongues" people.

We opened up with no advertising in the papers and the congregation began to increase. We gave no altar calls for three weeks, but the workers and myself would go out calling two by two. In the meantime I prayed secretly that God would give us the worst person in Davenport, as I thought this would be the best kind of advertisement of our work. The altar was well filled at the first call and during the service one of the workers pointed at a certain person and asked, "Do you know who that is?" I replied that I did not. He said, "That is the worst character in Davenport." I said, "Praise the Lord that is just what we have been praying for."

On Saturday nights when there were crowds out we held the entire service on the street. Occasionally if they did not stop we would shoot them on the run with barbed arrows of God's Word. We borrowed an old wagon with a box on it and put seats along one side where several workers could sit. We also put up corner posts with a light on each. This would attract the crowd.

Soon Rev. W. H. Marvin and wife, with his brother-in-law W. O. Magner and wife came to our help. The husbands were at this time attending the original Palmar Chiropractic Institute of Davenport. Rev. Marvin later became assistant Supt. of the Allegheny Wesleyan Conference. A great sorrow came to them in the death of a beautiful child about three years of age. The funeral was held in the mission. I shall never forget the broken hearted mother as she sat with tears running down her face and with uplifted hand quietly praised the Lord.

We were also very fortunate in having secured Mrs. E. J. Teft, a noble Christian woman as Sunday School Supt. She had already, with two or three workers been holding meetings on the street and in the jail. We had a goodly number of children from the "shanty boat" section who had never been to Sunday School. These children loved Sister Teft and would obediently do anything she suggested.

Surely God honored these faithful consecrated workers, full of faith and the Holy Ghost. Most of them have been gathered with the Blood washed company over there and we trust through the mercy, love and grace of God to "meet them in the morning." Amen!

On one occasion in a street meeting, a mother and ò daughter stopped to listen. They were all decked out in worldly apparel and on their way to the theater. Praise God they never got there but came to the mission and in a few days both were gloriously converted. The husband, a very strong man who worked in a foundry was very angry, declaring we had broken up his home, that his wife would no longer play cards, dance, go to the movies or even to Sunday picnics. He forbade her praying in the home and, would pull her over by the hair of her head and threatened to kill her with a butcher knife. He also told her he was going to thrash the ground with that preacher the first time he laid, eyes on him, even if he saw him in a street meeting.

They both came to the mission one day saying they had left him, being afraid he would kill the mother. We asked if she had told her husband; she said she had not. We told her she had, not left him, but only thought so and you two are going back home and live for God. "That is the only hope of seeing your husband saved." She replied, "I am afraid he will kill me." I asked her if she was not ready to die? She said, "Yes, but I don't want to die that way." We told her he would not harm her if she went back trusting God to keep her and was more kind to him than ever before, to be very prayerful and if you get out of the spirit and say one cross word to him, ask him to forgive you at once. We will be praying for you and I will come up and have a talk with him," he replied, "Don't you dare come up or he will surely carry out his threat." We told her to tell him if he would set the date we would be there as we did not want to take a thrashing on the street. Again she warned me and I said I would not come unless the Lord laid it upon my heart.

A few days later we were calling in that neighborhood .and felt led to go in. As we rapped the mother came to the door. She looked frightened. She motioned with her thumb that her husband

was in. We knew that as we could smell tobacco smoke. We said "Praise the Lord, have you got the victory? Is your husband in? Just then the daughter came in from the dining room and went through the same motions. I paid no attention to their silent signals but said, "How are you, keeping blessed?" They then asked me to stay for supper and I accepted the offer. When they told him, he put on his hat and coat and left the house. Of course I would not stay then, but talked a few minutes and prayed for him and others and departed. He could not persuade them to remain away from the meetings though he threatened dire consequences.

The next night they told me that when he went out, he went into the basement by an outside door and stood underneath the floor when I was praying. He was very angry and informed them if I ever came there again he would pitch me through the window and I knew he could easily do it. She again warned me not to come and I promised her I would not do so unless the Lord put it upon me.

I sent to Chicago for a zealous, fire baptized young man to help in revival meetings. As we returned from calling one afternoon we came past this man's house and I felt a strong urge to call again, not telling the young man a thing concerning the situation.

As we were ushered in, the ladies went through their smoke screen warnings. While introducing the young man we heard the husband open the back door and go out, but this time we surmised where he might be. When we were seated I asked the young man to tell the ladies his experience. This he did with considerable enthusiasm and the Lord surely helped him. I then asked him to pray and we left for the mission. That night when the ladies came to the mission they were much elated and their testimonies rang with victory.

The mother told how the husband came up from the basement white faced and lips trembling. She was frightened, but when he approached her, he began to weep and throwing his arms around her, asked forgiveness for all he had said and done, saying, "Wife if that is the kind of religion you have it is just what I need."

Some time later the mother and daughter came to the mission with a sporty looking young man, of whom at first sight I became suspicious, but thinking he might be a relative said nothing. For a few nights he came regularly with them to the meetings, but still we concluded there was something crooked about him. I hinted about my suspicions and the mother said, "Oh he is a fine young man with a good job in Chicago." When she said Chicago it fully confirmed my opinion of him and I said, "Sister M. I feel like warning you not to leave your daughter alone with that man for one moment." They were both quite indignant, but I felt I had done my duty.

The next night the three came to the service and he came to the altar. Kneeling before him the Holy Spirit gave me such a revelation of his black heart and evil intentions, that I took him by the arm and led him to the door. I do not exactly recall what I said to him, but opened the door and dismissed him.

The mother and daughter were greatly disturbed and I feared they might backslide, as they used me very cool. However, the next day they met him on the street. Perhaps they were looking for him, and found him staggering drunk, smoking a cigarette. The following day he was arrested and taken back to Chicago as a white slaver. The family felt different thereafter.

Two young men, one a backslider from the Salvation Army, the other a wild six foot fellow named Taylor, became convicted in the street meeting, followed us to the mission and both came to the altar. Taylor prayed a while, got up and started toward the door. We thought he was going out but he went to the stove, threw in his tobacco, cigarettes and a deck of cards and came back to pray. He had a voice they claimed you could hear two blocks, and forgetting everybody else he certainly used it.

During the altar service while some of the workers were under a burden, the "black maria" backed up to the door and three policeman strutted down the aisle and stood against the wall next to the platform. Men from the saloons packed the place like sardines in a can to see the place "pulled" as they thought. This was too good a chance to miss, and stepping upon the wide altar rail the Lord surely helped me to exhort that crowd to "flee from the wrath to come."

One of the policemen said to a worker, "Tell the Captain we want him." I heard the request and looking for an instant at the officer said, "You are next I am busy," and kept on exhorting. In the meantime, Taylor prayed through, jumped to his feet and exhorted in a mighty way. God, in a few minutes cut out another Holy Ghost worker who remained with us as long as we were in the mission. When things quieted down I went over to the officer and said, "What can I do for you?" He barked, "You can come up to police headquarters tomorrow morning at ten o'clock." I replied, "All right, good night," and left him. I presume the crowd was somewhat disappointed, but Taylor, one of the best of their kind, certainly gave them something to think about, and this crowd was more approachable afterward.

As I thought of making up my defense, there came to me the advice Jesus gave to His disciples when brought before the authorities, "Take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak neither do ye premeditate but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour speak ye, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Ghost." (Mark 13:11) It was some test, but I rejected every thought in regard to my defense though it was absolutely contrary to what little I had learned in my uncle's law office.

The Lord certainly helped me although they had the mayor of the city there, also, and we give God all the praise. The authorities never bothered us again though the saloon element got out a petition of forty or more signers declaring the mission was a nuisance.

A well dressed professional looking man came into the mission one night, and through the mercy, love and power of God was turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God. He lost a fortune in money, his dear wife had recently died, he was in deep despair and on his way to the river to commit suicide. Providentially he was passing the mission while they were singing a song that touched his heart. He came in and found the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," who also became friend and comforter. Praise the Lord! He stayed with us for some time and went away rejoicing. Before leaving he said, "Brother Thrall, you have no business in a place like this. You should be in a big church where you would get more money." I told him I had no desire for a big church where you would get more money, and felt I was in divine order, and, thought to myself, "I wonder where he and others would be had we been in a big church."

Another similar case occurred some time after this. A fine looking business man, Mr. F. began coming to the mission, and was under great mental and physical strain. He definitely sought the Lord several times, but received little help apparently. We always told seekers there was no real salvation without repentance, confessing and forsaking all sin, making restitution if necessary, which is usually the case, and absolute obedient to all the light God might show us, then trust in the precious atoning Blood of Jesus. So far as we were able to discern he seemed to have met all the requirements so far as he had the light, but yet did not get the victory.

I called one day to encourage him, and he said, "Brother Thrall, I felt I was going to lose my mind last night." We felt great concern for him, and told a few of the workers we feared he might lose his mind if he did not get help soon. He came to the altar again that night, but did not find relief. It was getting late and he with the workers filed out. I was locking the door and in shaking hands with him my heart was touched with the look of utter despair. I never let go of his hand or said a word, but unlocking the door led him to the altar. The faithful workers followed, and we had prayer for a short time earnestly, when suddenly he sprang to his feet praising God, beside himself with holy joy. He threw his arms around me swinging me around saying, "Brother Thrall you won't let me go would you?" Sad to say we sometimes let seekers go too soon. God help us.

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## 17 -- A PECULIAR EXPERIENCE IN THE MISSION

As my praying disturbed my wife to much, I often went down to the basement. Here was a little space about four feet square, where a former saloon keeper kept his barrel of beer cool, and pumped it up through the floor, While in one of these praying sessions, suddenly some awful power seemed to strike me on the head and go all through my body, and a fearful indescribable terror filled my soul. I did not tell my wife or anyone else except my sister Mrs. Ella Olney, a good sanctified woman. This horror would always leave me while preaching, and God was working in the Mission.

After several weeks while visiting my sister, another Spirit-filled woman from the Mission called. Soon we were praying, and both women were under real soul burden for me: Finally I became so weak I was prostrated on the floor, -- both the women still kneeling in prayer. Suddenly the Lord spoke to me and said, "Arise and stand upon thy feet." This I did immediately and said to the ladies, "Keep on praying God is coming." Then God spoke again and said, "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these things which thou hast seen, and in those things in which I will appear unto thee."

Unworthy as I am, through the years God has helped me with others, to see precious souls delivered from sin and from terrible assaults of satan.

From this experience springs the title of this book, "From darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." -- Acts 26:18

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## 18 -- TRANSFERRING THE MISSION

Some of the most spiritual members of the mission came to me and informed me of what I already feared; that my wife's influence would tear down the work faster than we could build it up. She seemed to have fully recovered from her physical disabilities, and they suggested that I go into evangelistic work. They also informed me about a nice cottage for rent up .on the Heights, within two blocks of where three of our members lived and said, "We will see that she lacks for nothing." I went up to investigate and found it a very nice house with a fine lawn and fruit trees. Believing this providential I paid a month's rent, thinking my wife would be charmed with the situation. When I returned she was angry and declared, she would not live there.

This was a heart breaking situation, but Rev. Willing, the Rock Island pastor, knowing the circumstances, agreed with his official board to take over the mission, and get a man and wife to take charge, as workers.

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## 19 -- EVANGELISTIC WORK

He also asked me to hold a revival meeting on one of his appointments several miles away. It was a mining village with some spirit-filled Christians. I sent for brother Taylor to help in street meetings, and we had a good attendance in both the street and church. A godly woman was greatly concerned for her unsaved son, and sent word for us to try and contact him.

I was entertained in the home of a fine couple named McCarthy, and walking down the street with him one morning he remarked, "Here comes Sister Pritchard's son." He introduced me to the fellow who was tall like Taylor. He promised to come to the meeting and bring other miners with him. In this mine they worked in pairs and Bill Pritchard's partner was a splendid specimen of manhood, but unsaved. One night, we felt a burden for these two boys, and during the altar service went back to them, pleading with them to get right with God and warning them of the danger of refusing.

Bill, finally, said, "I have tried it several times, but never got really saved, so it's no use to try." We said, "Bill, if you will mind God and come to the altar tonight, I will stick by you until you know beyond all doubt that you are saved." He came with others and earnestly prayed until midnight. At this hour the lights were turned off and all the people left except Bill and me. We prayed on in the dark alone, until Bill said, "It's no use, I might as well go home." I replied. "You remember what I told 'you. Have you got any place in your home where I can sleep?" He said. "You can sleep with me." This we did.

In the morning we had family prayer, but Bill did not get through, but felt worse instead of better and could not go to work. I suggested we go over to McCarthys, as I wished to give account of myself and knew the wife especially was a woman of faith and a burden bearer.

On the way Bill said, "The Lord has shown me something." We replied, "That is just like Him, what is it?" He then confessed that when the manager of the tool room left him to look after it a little while he took some money from the till. I said, "Will you go to him, confess it and make restitution?" He said he would be glad to get it off his mind. This is what real Holy Ghost conviction will do, and I know it well by bitter experience, and also know the blessing that comes through obeying the divine call. Praise God!

I went with him to the pool room. and he humbly made his confession, and it touched the heart of the pool room owner, which is usually the case. Bill also said, "If the Lord shows me anything more I will do it." This must be our attitude through all our Christian life. We then went to McCarthy's and informed the good sister that Bill came over to get saved and immediately we began to pray, as the spirit of prayer also came upon Bill, and we had not prayed long until he got to his feet filled with "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Bill now has a wonderful Christian wife and married daughter.

About the same hour Bill was saved, his pal was almost instantly killed. The miners heard an awful scream and the poor man was dead when they reached him. The very sad part of it was the fact he expected to leave the mine in three weeks and continue his studies in a certain engineering institution. It was reported on the morning of his death, while going to work, one of the miners taunted him, saying, "They got Bill last night and pretty near got you." They said he sneered and denied it. Oh, the blindness of a human soul without God. With Bill, we attended this funeral with a sad heart.

Bill, William Pritchard, and his fine family, still live in Peoria, Ill., and is largely responsible through their generosity, in getting this book before the public. We trust to meet them in that glorious Kingdom where sin, sickness, sorrow and death will be forever past. Praise God!

We relate one more sad incident which occurred in this meeting. A doctor estranged from his wife was living alone in their home. He was a good neighbor and lived across, the road from McCarthy's. This good sister had a burden for the doctor and requested me to call on him. It was early in the morning, but he received me very kindly. I had a good heart to heart talk with him and told him how Sister McCarthy was praying for him. He seemed to appreciate my visit, asking me to call again. However, he did not come out to the meetings and a few days later they found him dead in bed. Nevertheless, we had a profitable meeting here with a goodly number whom we trust to meet in Heaven, Amen!

After this meeting I returned to Davenport and found my wife had rented a room from people who were not friends of the mission. For some reason she finally decided to go back to her unsaved relatives.

I escorted her to the depot, and she stepping up to the ticket office said, "two tickets please." I inquired, "Who is going with you?" She replied, "You are!" I had no grips, change of clothes, or anything else, neither had I an opportunity to say farewell to my sister or finish the details concerning the transferring of the mission.

I thought she would change her plan about going, but she did not and I went back to the mission to weep and pray alone. I felt more sorry for her in her unsaved, rebellious condition, than for myself.

Rev. Marvin hearing I was in evangelistic work, wrote urging me to come and assist him in revival meetings, as he was now preaching in the Allegheny Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.

Leaving my sister's home, I started for Shippingport, Pa. on the Ohio river. Brother Marvin met me with horse and carriage, and we drove several miles to his home. We were in meetings from May until the last of October, and worked in perfect harmony with him and his good sanctified wife. We had several good meetings, of which I will write of the most interesting one which occurred at Shippingport.

Brother Marvin had secured the school house, as it was vacation time, and they were building a nice school building. We were to have the old one until they needed the seats. It seems someone had told the people to stay away from those fanatics.

Rev. Marvin suggested that as this was the opening up of a new holiness work, we should first call on every home in the village. There were two other churches, [ told Brother Marvin the calling was a very important part, but I have no burden upon me for this place and I feel that I must pray through for his meeting before I can do calling. I thought he was a little disappointed. and I did not blame him, but it was nearly a week before I informed him I was ready to call.

I said, "We will go to a certain man's house first." He said, "No, he is working in a factory and his wife is away from home." I said, "I cannot help that, I believe I have my directions." He replied, "What is the use of going when there is no one home?... I don't know, but there is where I must go first." When we had nearly reached his home we met him at a corner. Brother Marvin said, "Here he comes now." We caught him with both hands by the lapels of his coat, and poured God's word into his very soul. He broke down with tears and promised to attend the meetings. He was among the first ones saved.

The first night no one came to the meetings. We had a good time praying and singing and were about to close when a young man and lady, evidently out for a walk, came in and sat by the back door. We started all over again and they were very attentive and cordial as we shook hands and invited them back. The next night there were two couples out, so you see our congregation had doubled. The next night there were about fifteen and from then on the attendance increased rapidly until the building would not hold them.

The homemade altar and platform were filled with children, the entrance was crowded with people standing, while many were looking on through the windows. Of course the devil began to work, not in the congregation as they were mostly very orderly, but among some members of other churches who were evidently jealous.

Our tent in which we lived was pitched on the vacant lot of a man who called himself a Methodist. One Monday morning before Brother Marvin returned from home, this Methodist



deacon sent his little girl down to tell us we must move our tent off his land. The postmaster, a very friendly man, hearing of it, came to our tent and said, "You preachers bring your tent and put it up on my front lawn." We thanked him heartily for his kind offer, but told him we could not think of such a move, as it would ruin his nice lawn, and that we would find another place. He then said, "Well I am going over and talk to that man." What he said we never knew, but the little girl came again saying, "Papa says you don't have to move your tent." We replied, "You tell your papa if he wants the tent to remain here to come down himself and tell us. Otherwise we will move right after dinner." He soon came down with tobacco juice running out of his mouth, mumbled some sort of apology and we did not move our tent.

We had a little fireplace made of brick, stones, tin and one length of stove pipe. One day I was cooking a mess of beans when a few ashes sifted in. Brother Marvin thought I put in too much pepper, but he found it just right. Across the road was a deep swale with lots of blackberries. We inquired and were told no one picked them because there were so many large rattlesnakes. I went in and picked all we could eat, but I assure you I kept my eyes open, stepped carefully, listened for the warning rattle and trusted the Lord to protect me.

Would this not be a good idea for all professing Christians, traveling toward eternity through this miasmatic jungle of demon power, false doctrine and a decaying civilization?

We were also accused of stealing chickens. According to reports never had there been such a thing in the history of the village until these preachers came. They sent for the sheriff to investigate. Fortunately a woman saw two miners whom she knew, hanging around the hen house the night before. She also knew where the little private mine was located and informed the sheriff, who went to the place and found the stolen chickens in a box and two in a kettle cooking. This was the Lord's way of quickly clearing the preachers.

In spite of the opposition the interest and conviction deepened, but there was no real break. We were both well worn out and our preaching seemed like throwing feathers at them. Brother Marvin suggested we close while the attendance was good, but I objected although the meeting had been going on for about seven weeks. I said, "We will preach hell fire and brimstone every night." Four nights in succession Brother Marvin wanted to close. We told him we would rather leave our bones bleaching here than not see a revival now.

Ordinarily we took turns preaching while the other had the preliminaries. It was his turn to preach, and he was at the school house preparing while I was resting in the tent. Suddenly I felt a slight desire to pray and as my knees struck the rug, the fire and Glory of God struck my soul and body. I felt stronger than when the meeting began, and with it came the full assurance that God was coming in great power.

When I went into the meeting Brother Marvin noticed something unusual upon me. Going up to the platform I exclaimed, "Look up Brother Marvin, God is coming." He replied, "You preach, you preach." I said, "No, it is your turn to preach." He had not preached five minutes when the Holy Ghost came upon him and he was firing red hot bombs of God's truth into the crowd like thunder bolts from a clear sky.

I was to exhort and when he finished I did something I had never done before. As there was no room for an altar service, the Lord inspired me to say, "Every one here who believes we have been preaching God's truth and want this kind of real salvation, kneel down right where you are and pray until God answers your heart cry." I then knelt at the altar to pray and heard a commotion all over the building. The devil said to me they are all going out. I could not believe it, and looking up I saw something I had never seen before. Not a soul from the pulpit to the door was sitting up. The whole congregation was on their knees, and such groaning, sobbing and crying for mercy, and as a goodly number (I never counted them) broke through praising God and testifying to glorious victory it must have made the "angels in Heaven rejoice." As we have said, we did not count the converts. God alone can do that. However, Rev. Marvin wrote me later including the following; "If you could see the precious band of saints down here, you would never regret the battles we had." To this we can say "Amen!"

Before the close of this meeting, who should appear upon the scene unannounced, but my wife, with a boy carrying her grip and parrot, I had bought her for company. The bird was in a large cage, and she informed me that her large trunk was at the depot. We were still living in the tent, and Brother Marvin said, "There is only one thing we can do. We will have to take her up to nay house."

The next stroke came on Monday morning before Brother Marvin returned from his Sunday appointment. One of the trustees came and demanded the key to the school house, saying they needed the seats. Taking them to the new building, they covered them with canvas, and worked around them two weeks or more, according to reports. They also took the bell and locked up the building. When Brother Marvin returned he was astonished, and said, "Well I guess, they have got us now." I replied, "No I have announced a meeting for tonight. We will use the school house steps for a pulpit and those "picnic planks" for seats."

Some of the good citizens were incensed at the way we were being antagonized, and secured two large rooms in a big house, connected by an archway, filled the place with chairs and a stand for a pulpit, and informed us they had a "church" for us. We were very grateful for these kind friends and the meeting continued in a fine spirit, at least so far as we were concerned.

In less than a week a couple who rented a new store building, owned by a relative, came to us saying they were going to move and thought this relative would rent it to us. They also spearheaded the proposition and we got the building. Some of the disgruntled citizens tried to buy it, offering the owner \$100 more than the owner's price. He told them he would not sell it to them for any price. We remained a week longer helping them to get settled in the new building, then I was in this meeting nine weeks. They later organized a class and built a church and still later they requested me to come as pastor: this I felt I could not do.

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## 20 -- A CASE OF DIVINE HEALING

We desire to relate a remarkable case of divine healing. Reverend Marvin asked me to fill one of his Sunday appointments, and suggested we call on a saintly woman where together we had

called once before. She lived with her aged father and maiden daughter in a good sized log house. She asked me to call on a young couple whose youngest child was afflicted with meningitis and given up to die. The doctor was there for the last time on Wednesday and the child was unconscious. He said there was nothing more he could do, and that it would be useless for him to call again. This dear woman said. "I believe God wants to heal that child and I want you to go over and pray with them." I replied that my time was limited and as she had faith for the child; she was the person to go.

She told me what a fine young couple they were and urged me to go and at least pray for them. I told her [ I could do that and she showed me a short cut over the hill. I found as the lady said, a fine young couple and in talking to them about their souls, they were humble, honest and sincere as they confessed their unsaved condition. I think I felt a little of the compassion of Jesus as we prayed and wept together. Finally I said to them. "If God heals this child will you promise to seek God until you know beyond all doubt that you are saved and rear your children for God and eternity?" Weeping and broken hearted they gladly agreed. We prayed in a general way for the healing of the child, spoke some comforting words, shook hands and started for the door.

The Lord said to me, "You go and lay hands on the child and rebuke the disease in my name." The child was still unconscious, bent backward, it's eyes were open, but you could see nothing but the white portion, I obeyed the Lord and walked out without saying another word. I had gone but a little distance when the burden came upon me so heavily that I sank to the ground. I told nothing of this to the saintly woman or anyone else. Marvin told me later that I had left the house, but a few minutes when the child stretched out, opened his eyes and cried with a strong voice, "Ma, I'm hungry." In less than an hour the child was out playing with the other children. The doctor, the parents and others declared it a manifestation of God's healing power. I am sure we would see more of this divine work, had we more faith like the woman in the log house. Amen!

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## 21 -- ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Brother Marvin came to me one morning and said. "Brother Thrall, I am very sorry, but I have bad news for you. Your wife is up to her old tricks and has already tried to destroy the confidence of one of my best members, who believes you are a godly minister." I told him there was only one thing to do, move again and tell my wife our time was up and we would go to my sisters home in Kalamazoo, Michigan, until we decided what to do. I said nothing to Mrs. Thrall regarding her part in the transaction, as I knew it would be absolutely useless. This was a sad trip for me, leaving these good people, driving back to Shippingport, ferrying across the Ohio River and heading for Michigan, but my wife seemed to enjoy it.

When we reached my sister's home in Kalamazoo, We decided to move back to Chicago. I wrote Brother Brain, Supt. of our praying band (His wife ran a boarding and rooming house) regarding accommodations. He replied, "We have a good room and your wife can have the run of the whole house."

My first call was from the pastor at Platteville, Wisconsin, whom I had previously assisted in tent meetings in Illinois, which culminated in the building of a new church and parsonage. At Platteville, we had an extra good meeting, and the pastor recommended me to the district Elder, which resulted in having about a year's work cut out for me. At my next revival meeting, the pastor from Platteville came and informed me that my wife had arrived uninvited, with grips, baggage and parrot. They had rented two large rooms upstairs, with very little furniture.

I was keenly disappointed as I preferred Chicago as my base. I had friends there including the praying band, and I had also joined the Free Methodist Church, where I became acquainted with a goodly number of old fashioned saints in the Illinois Conference. Among these were Auntie Cook, J. M. Humphrey, whom we later had for a revival meeting, Amanda Smith and many others who were in the battle for "true holiness". Praise the Lord!

My next meeting was in Livingston, Wis. I was met at the depot by Rev. J. Turgenson, a fine, kindly old fashioned preacher. Rev. Stirdivant of Platteville assisted in this revival during the week. He was said to be at that time, one of the best evangelists in the state, and we worked together in perfect harmony. I was entertained in the home of the postmaster D. O. Eustice whose wife was a saintly Free Methodist. A very fine daughter also worked in the post office, but she was proud and seemed bitter against the true gospel.

One morning as her mother and I were having family devotions, she switched past me with her rustling skirts in a manner which seemed to infer that I was not welcome there. We continued to pray and she began to play the piano. However, she started coming to the meetings to criticize the preacher, as she admitted later. Her mother had prayed for years for her salvation and I had a burden for her soul. She got under awful conviction, and as the meeting continued I became completely exhausted, and as I crawled into bed one night I said. "O God, this is my last message." I really thought I was going to die. After praying for this daughter I tried to sleep, but the Lord quietly gave me a message, and I knew I would preach at least once more.

The next night a cold snow storm howled around the church and but few of the members were out. But as usual the spiritual cream of the church were there, and the daughter on the front seat. We saw something of the manifest power of God that night we shall never forget. All were on their feet crying, shouting and praising God. Among them was this proud young lady, whom the Lord suddenly converted and turned "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." Every night the following week she confessed out her pride, bitterness and many other traits of the "carnal mind", as the Holy Spirit revealed them to her, and gave her a heart hunger for "true holiness."

The following Sunday morning the Lord came again in a remarkable way. Suddenly the Holy Ghost fell upon some of the elderly saints, and this young lady, now sitting on the front seat, sprang to her feet and went sailing down the aisle as graceful as a bird on the wing, and returning with a glowing countenance gave a clear, Heaven inspired testimony to the sanctifying power of God. Her testimony evidently had more effect upon the congregation than our preaching. Praise God for another soul turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.

We have recently learned that this daughter, now Mrs. Ollie Eustice Kirkpatrick, is living with her daughter in Seattle, Washington and has two sons, both are Free Methodist ministers of excellent repute, Charles of the Washington Conference District Supt., and Eustice of the Illinois Conference, also District Supt. This no doubt being the result of having such a godly mother. We pray that God will give us more of such characters. Amen! This mother is now living and we have corresponded with her.

We desire to record one more incident which occurred in this remarkable revival. On a certain Sunday, I filled Rev. Stirdivant's pulpit at Platteville while he took over the service at Livingston.

During an altar service a large rough man who ran a little store and reportedly sold liquor "on the sly", came into the church angry and loudly cursing. He grabbed his wife who was at the altar (I believe with two daughters) some said by the hair of her head, and ordered them home. They lived over the store. When I returned Sister Eustice and Sister Livingston had met to pray about the matter. During prayer the Lord gave me a message for this man.

They advised me not to go, saying he was very wicked and had boasted that no Free Methodist preacher dared walk on his side of the street. I replied, "I believe the Lord wants me to go and I will go now, so you pray for me while I am gone." This they did, and I found him in the store with three or four other men. I said to him, "Could I see you privately a few moments?" He took a great chew of tobacco out of his mouth, slapped it into a filthy cuspidor, saying, "I suppose that's what you want to talk to me about." I replied, "No sir, it is something more important."

He led me into a back room and I said, "Take a chair." He sat down and I took another and placed it facing him with my knees close to his. Then looking him in the eye I said, "May I ask you a personal question?" He replied, "Go ahead." Still looking him in the eye I said, "What crime have you committed in your past life that you have never confessed or made right, which has made you so mean and ugly that you hate God and all good people?" The prayers of those two saintly women had knocked all the props from under him. He broke down and confessed that he shot a man in Texas and fled the country. He stated however, that the man he shot did not die. After further communication he called his wife. I will not attempt to describe the reconciliation which followed.

I strongly advised him to confess all his sins, give up his evil life. How far he went on this line I do not know, as I had to leave for another meeting sixteen miles away. I learned, however, that his wife and daughter were saved and he drove to this meeting with his family and another lady under deep conviction. The other lady was saved and he seemed really happy over this.

Our work included several meetings in Wisconsin, running on into September. Desiring neither to make this book too large nor weary the reader, we will relate but few of the interesting incidents of this meeting. The hardest and perhaps the least profitable, God alone knows, was held in a rather desolate part of the country in severe winter weather. The houses were few and far between. The place was called "hell's half acre" in which dwelt some apparently tough characters. The body of a murdered man had been found under a brush heap and the murderers had not been found as yet, although there were suspicions abroad.

The church was about the size of an old fashioned rural school building which badly needed painting and vandals, to show their disrespect, shot holes into the building, through the door and at least through one window.

It was not an inspiring situation, but we determined with the help of the Lord to do our best, and did not feel discouraged. In fact we really liked the challenge and we had plenty of that sort. At night we went to the church to build the fire and pray. One time while praying someone came shooting around the church. We continued to pray. They came stomping in and soon we smelled tobacco smoke. Asking the Lord to help us, I arose and saw three tough looking young men smoking cigarettes. I gave them a good looking over and said, "Put those cigarettes out, we don't allow smoking in this church.

They threw them on the floor and crushed out the fire with their feet. I said, "Boys, I used to carry a gun and was reckless and Godless like you fellows, God saved me from all that and we are glad to have you attend this meeting." I then told them a portion of my experience, warning them about making any disturbance in the service. They never said a word, but looked pretty fierce. People began coming in and they stomped out, but did no shooting.

The next night while walking to the church with the man where I was entertained, I noticed an old shack over in the woods and inquired who lived there? He replied, "He is one of the worst men in this part of the country," and informed me that he might have been at least implicated in the murder case. I replied, "Well, I will go over tomorrow evening and invite him out to the meeting." He said, "Don't go, he will only insult you and use the most vile language you ever heard." The next morning I went over and he did exactly as my host had said. I said nothing for a few moments, but silently prayed. The Lord revealed to me that he was a filthy, immoral, black hearted, sex crazy, devil driven man. I began to tell him where his trouble was and he stopped his vulgar talk. I warned him of his danger, invited him to the meeting and went to the church, but he never came.

The next night, thinking I might have been a little too hard on him I called again, and behold there sat my three tough young men. The man at once began his vile talk. I started to talk to him just as I did the first night, he saw I was going to expose him before the other men and he suddenly stopped. I had him trapped, so I began to talk to all of them.

It was getting late and time to go so I said we will have a word of prayer and kneeled down to pray. Well, they now had me trapped and the thought came to me, probably from the devil, that they might kill me and hide my body under a brush heap, but the Lord gave me a spirit of boldness and helped me to pray for them. I then invited them to the service and left, praising God for safety, getting out into the fresh air again and from the Satanic influence.

The three young men continued to come and all got under deep conviction. The last night one of them was shaking from head to foot, but refused to yield, perhaps thinking about what his friends might say and do. This is one of Satan's favorite weapons and has doubtless led tens-of-thousands into darkness, despair and damnation. We left with the feeling of sadness, but praying God to water the seed that had been sown in weakness, and bring forth fruitage for His everlasting Kingdom. Amen!

With the help of Rev. Stirdivant and George Taylor, also Sister Eustice and two or three that came for a short time from Livingston we endeavored to start a new work in Lancaster, Wisconsin. We had a large tent belonging to the Wisconsin Conference, and settled down for a long siege. I rented two rooms in a friend's home and sent for my wife.

There were two sad incidents connected with this meeting. First a fine young lady whose mother was Roman Catholic, was seeking God and under conviction. Her mother refused to let her attend the meeting. Her father was a Protestant. We pleaded with him in behalf of his daughter, but he said they had agreed that his wife should have charge of the girls and he the boys. We could not convince him of his error and his responsibility. In less than three weeks she was taken violently ill. We went to call upon her, but the mother refused to let us see her. She died about two days after screaming so loud the neighbors could hear her crying, "I'm lost. I'm lost." The Catholic priest took her into the church after she was dead. What heathenism!

The second case, even more sad, was a drowning accident. A doctor, his wife and beautiful daughter, who lived about a block from the tent meeting concluded it time to take their vacation in a summer home on the Mississippi River. The wife especially had ridiculed the meeting, saying, "The only song they can sing is, Throw out the Life Line." They took with them two other young ladies, one a school teacher. The three girls were just outside the cabin when the doctor and his wife heard a fearful scream, ran out and found the three struggling in deep water. The heroic doctor plunged in to assist them, and all four were drowned. The frantic mother, they said ran screaming and fairly insane up and down the river. This fearful tragedy shook the whole town. The funeral of the four was held on a beautiful July day on the court house lawn, where a large crowd assembled. This brought a solemnity that added interest to the tent meeting.

I wish to relate the experience of a young man and wife. He with his father and mother came to the meeting and all three were genuinely converted. The young man's wife, with some relatives went the same day to another meeting, some distance away and was also saved, after having quite a struggle regarding what her husband would say. How happy they were when they met at night, to find they were both converted. It pays to obey God. All four joined the Free Methodist Church with several others, including a fine Christian clasp leader.

We were requested by the district elder to hold a meeting at Werley, a small village about twenty miles distant. There was an old church building, but no parsonage and no members, as all had either moved away, died or left the church. The conference had to hold a meeting there at least once a year or the property reverted to the original owner. (The church has long ceased to accept property on such terms). I prayed about the matter for some time and finally concluded to "put out the fleece" I would go and faithfully call upon the people. If I found one soul burdened for the work there I would hold a meeting, otherwise no meeting. I took with me a fine young man; Anton Moller, converted in a former meeting and on fire for God. We had to go part way on a narrow gauge railroad, then hire a horse and buggy for the rest of the journey.

We called faithfully, but found no one particularly interested and one old lady said, "An angel from Heaven could not have a revival there, a number of preachers have tried it and failed." She acted as though she was well pleased with the situation and said, "I will tell you the whole

trouble." I concluded she was part of it and told her I did not care to hear it, but she rambled on and as we started to go said, "Well the trouble is they are all related and if you hurt one they all get mad." We did not wait to get more, but started for home.

A couple of days later we received a letter from a young lady, containing money and writing that she had been saved in that church and had a burden for the work, and eagerly requested us to go and hold a revival meeting. If I recall correctly she was either a student or teacher in the Evansville, Wisconsin Seminary. I never met her. Our fleece proposition had come to pass. We immediately sent the letter and money to a man unsaved who was at least not bitter toward the work, asking him to please get fuel for the stove and oil for the reflector side lamps, and to announce a meeting for a certain night.

When Brother Moller and I arrived we were surprised to find a very good congregation. The first thing we did was tell them what the old lady had said. We did not state the name. I then said, "If that is true, I am going to ask God to help me hit every one of you as fast as I can and if you get mad it will be all right with me but all wrong for you, as I have no time to waste, but if you want an old fashioned revival we will stick by you to the last ditch." We were there eight weeks and as it seemed it would be something permanent, we moved to Fennimore, about centrally located between Lancaster and Werley. We rented a place with a small house and barn, and Brother Moller and his good wife (formerly Lillian Howard) sanctified in a former meeting, came to work with us. She was a good singer and stood by the old time gospel. Antone, her husband had some money and bought a nice horse and buggy. Then the Lord had wonderfully worked out things for His glory and the meeting continued to increase in attendance and power.

My wife was still with us, but in poor health with little disposition to get to the meeting. One young married woman with children got under such conviction she could stand it no longer and drove to our little parsonage early to pray, and the gracious Lord heard her heart cry and wrought real delivery. She and her husband had cleared a little land and built a nice little home. They saved up \$400 for furniture, and told Rev. Stirdivant, who had come to assist in the meetings a few days, to tell the conference if they would send them a preacher they would apply the \$400 on the pastor's salary.

It was now conference time, but as people were getting saved, I wished to continue the meeting. He said "They will, doubtless send you back as pastor and you can then continue the meeting." I took his advice and he also advised me to join the conference. My name was not mentioned and Bishop Sellew arose and said, "I thought you had a man who was going to join the Conference?" The District Elder replied, "He is unable to take work."

I recalled then, that he had asked me if I could add Boscobel to my two appointments, and I told him it was impossible as I had no way of getting around except to walk and could not leave my invalid wife alone nights. Also, the year before he had asked me if I would take a little run down circuit of six members. I replied, "I would go anywhere." He then reported there was only one problem, "They were all poor but one woman who practically supported the work, but wore a wedding ring." I replied, "I would not consider that much of a problem." He asked, "What would you do?" I replied that either the ring would go or she would. Of course I meant in due time, but



that was the last I heard of that circuit. Perhaps this had a bearing on his decision. I never knew and never saw one of those circuits again.

I quietly slipped out not saying a word to a single soul, went to my room, packed my grip, took my overcoat and started for home. I paid my fare on the train to Boscobel, but had to walk 13 miles on a dirt road, on a hot day carrying a heavy grip and overcoat. After about a mile I saw a stone quarry in the side of a small hillside and going in had a time of victory and trusting God for all the future. I recall saying, "Lord I may never travel this road again and I am going to put a tract in every mail box." I have never gone over that road again. About five miles from home, being very weary, I sat down on an embankment beside the road to rest. Behind me was a large field of corn and having had nothing to eat since breakfast time, I thought of Jesus plucking grain with his disciples, and went into the field taking two ears of corn, ate it and felt refreshed.

On arriving home I found my wife alone. Brother and Sister Moller not having attended the conference, had driven home. Between my wife and myself we had less than one dollar, having put all of my money into expenses for the meetings. Here we were, no circuit, no meeting in view, no home, no money. Fortunately our rent was paid in advance, for which I was very thankful. In fact all my life, even before I was saved we never ran in debt but once when we burned out, but I had a good job then.

On Monday morning Rev. Stirdivant came to our home from Conference, or rather I should say, was sent of the Lord, and inquired what we were going to do. Telling him we did not know, he replied, "I know. You are going to Platteville with me, we have plenty of room upstairs in the parsonage. I have a call for a meeting in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and you can supply my work while I am away." Oshkosh was one of the larger appointments, but the appointed pastor's wife absolutely refused to return and they were left without a pastor. The kind brother who opened up his home for us, recommended me. I arrived on Saturday evening and went to the church an utter stranger and found the evangelist gone to another meeting.

They had a very nice church and parsonage. As I went into the pulpit Sunday morning, my heart went down like lead, and though no one had said a word to me, I saw that church split as clear as I could see aisles. I felt awful and decided to leave Monday morning and I said to the congregation, I am going to preach my farewell sermon this morning.

When I finished a dear old man with tears running down his face came forward, grasped my hand crying, "Brother Thrall, always preach farewell sermons," which is a good motto for any preacher. I was there four years. Rev. Endicott was the fine District Elder of this district and claimed my coming was providential.

There had been considerable fanaticism, some of which still prevailed. There were some good faithful saints, but some being perplexed, had left the church, some had become embittered. Others had victory. The leaders in the trouble at this time were a woman and one of her sons, who had once been very spiritual. This young man would let a yell out of him like a wild Indian, that seemed to almost raise some of the people out of their seats then run like a race horse around the church, falling before the pulpit on his back in a spread eagle manner. I like demonstrations, but I felt it was out of the Spirit. However I, never said a word to anyone as they had quite a number of

friends and relatives. While in prayer the Lord brought this scripture to my mind. "Be careful lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them."

The mother arose in class meeting one day and pointing at the altar said, "Do you mean to tell me that anyone can get saved at that altar until things are straightened up in this church?" I replied, "Sister anyone can be saved at that altar or anywhere else, if they forsake and confess their sins and straighten up their past sins as God shows them the light."

I did not give an altar call for three or four weeks. When I finally did, the whole church, excepting one person, came to the altar to pray. This mother and son began to pound the altar with their fists and drown out the others who were praying, by crying out "God drive out the Achan, Oh God, drive out the Achan." One by one all the other members slipped quietly out, and later I did the same. I soon called on her, asking her to tell me who the Achan was. She replied, "The spirit does not want me to tell you." I answered, "Well, when I find out I will surely do my duty the best I know how with the help of the Lord." She seemed satisfied and after praying I left the home.

Some time later, a very nice daughter of this sister came to the parsonage crying, saying she had a quarrel with the young man she was going with. He never came to church, and I understood he was a cigarette smoking, ungodly young man. I said to her, "I am going to advise you as I would my own daughter. If you were out of the spirit any way, go and ask him to forgive you, then tell him you are through with: him." She declared she would and after praying left for home.

The next Sunday while preaching I noticed the mother had' fire in her eyes and it did not look like holy fire to me. After dismissing the service I saw she lingered behind and as we did not wish to have any discussion with her on Sunday, I went behind the pulpit to pray. When I arose there she was blocking the doorway. As we shook hands, she said, "What did you tell Ruth when she was at the parsonage the other night?" I replied, "What did Ruth tell you I said?"

She told me and I said, "That is just exactly what I told her and I am going to make it stronger to you. I am surprised that you, a mother professing holiness, would allow your daughter to go with such an ungodly young man." She replied, "He is a believer." I replied, "So is the devil and you will live to regret it if you insist on your daughter marrying that man." The husband and relatives seemed' neutral in the matter, as this woman was boss over her home and especially the young people in the church, and continued the hunt for Achan.

One day I called and told her I had found the Achan. She asked, "Who is it?" I replied, "It is you". She was certainly taken back, but I explained to her that when we called and prayed with other members we had fellowship, but when I came to her house she loaded me up with her talk about others until I felt I needed a praying through time to get rid of the load. This ended the hunt for Achan.

Her daughter Ruth sought God, took off her ring and a gold watch she wore pinned on the outside of her dress. She got a great deal of help, but her mother finally prevailed and they were married. I do not wish to go into the sorrowful details, but in less than a year Ruth's father came to me in the church, and putting his arm around me crying, said, "Oh Brother Thrall, how I wish we had taken your advice." It brought sorrow on the whole church I believe. Sometime later the son

came and told me the Lord had revealed to him that he should marry a certain young Christian lady of the church and they were to go into missionary work. He also asked me to inform her. I said, "Are you sure the Lord revealed that to you?" He quickly answered in the affirmative, and I told him if God had shown him, it was his business and not mine. He died a few years later, the girl is married and visited us a couple of years ago.

The visit of this young lady calls to our mind her experience in the revival meeting that followed. I think we were there more than two months when this occurred. The altar was filled and others praying, when the Holy Ghost took over and God came in power. Of course there was considerable noise which was not entirely sweet music to a few neighbors. Hearing a loud rap on the vestibule door, we opened it and there stood a large policeman in uniform. He blustered out, "What's going on here." I replied, "If you want to talk to me come outside where we will not disturb the services." He followed me out and on the steps stood two men from homes near the church. We said to the officer, "We are having a revival meeting. Now you go back to headquarters and find out the law about disturbing a religious meeting." This was the last we heard of the officer or the neighbors.

During this time the young lady prayed through and went up and down the aisles exhorting with tears, in the power of the Holy Ghost. As the spirit in the meeting subsided somewhat she said, "Now if I keep this experience I know I will have to be sanctified." She immediately returned to the altar and the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost came upon her as a definite second work of grace. John Wesley thus exhorts his preachers: "As soon as ever persons are justified, remind them of going on to perfection. This is the very time, preferable to all others. But if we once suffer this fervor to subside, we shall find it hard enough to bring them again, even to this point."

Rev. Stirdivant, the invited evangelist, had come and the meeting continued in unusual power and interest. I think about sixteen were either saved or sanctified in this meeting and the church much encouraged. Later a young married woman, whose husband was unsaved and prejudiced, requested a prayer meeting at her home. There was much liberty and blessing of the Lord present. At the close of the meeting her husband appeared with an opened Bible in his hand, saying "Mister preacher will you please explain this scripture to us?" Taking the Bible we read "When thou prayest enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." The Holy Spirit had the answer at once and we replied, "It means exactly what it says. These people have been praying in secret and tonight the Lord has rewarded them openly." He retired to his room without a word and the Pilgrims returned to their homes in a jubilant spirit, praising the Lord.

In this meeting my wife joined the church and attended a few times as she was able. Her health rapidly declined and I had a nervous collapse, with the results that we both occupied the front room of the parsonage, Mrs. Thrall in an old fashioned spring rocking chair and me in bed. I was not able to do much for several weeks. The members of the church were more than kind in many ways, and a nurse, one of the converts in the revival, came and voluntarily took over. Soon I was much better. My wife seemed to improve, but could not lie down, as in similar cases of affliction and I thought it was heart trouble. However, the doctor pronounced it Bright's Disease. I think now it was both.

One night when a lady came to visit her, I went to the doctor's office to get a prescription filled. On my return she seemed much better and I sat in another room reading while the two were visiting. Suddenly she called me by name. That was her last word. As I rushed into the room, she passed away without a struggle. The lady with her phoned the doctor and some of the church members and I went upstairs alone to weep and pray. The morning before she died, we met in family prayers and she read the 139th Psalm. She is now buried in the Oshkosh Riverside Cemetery where now lie the bodies of most of those dear ones who were in that revival meeting.

We recall a little incident which occurred before we left Wisconsin. In attending a quarterly meeting, we met a member who lived at Waupun where a state prison was located. I hinted to him I would like to go through the prison, and he invited me to go home with him, which I did. Upon our arrival he went out to get groceries. The wife then inquired why I happened there. I told her and she said, "God does not send His servants around the country for nothing." Reaching upon the wall for a key, she handed it to me saying, "This key opens the door of that little building at the back of the lot. You go out there and find out what God wants you here for." Accepting her unusual invitation I went out to the building wondering if she was all right in her mind.

However, I prayed as she requested, but got no answer from Heaven. I stayed out there a reasonable length of time and thinking her husband would be home, I returned to the house. She inquired, "Did the Lord show you anything?" I replied that he did not. Her husband came in and I asked about the spiritual condition of the place. They informed me there had been a small group of fine blessed Christians, who used to hold meetings in different homes, but one by one they left and the meetings were discontinued. I suggested that her husband and I go one way, and she another, inviting these people to a prayer meeting at their home in the evening.

This we did and they insisted that I take charge of the meeting. We had a good attendance of hungry people, who liked the old fashioned gospel, and God honored this effort, by outpouring the Holy Spirit. After the meeting the wife again asked me if the Lord had showed me anything? I said, "Nothing special." In the morning after family prayer, I said, "Sister, the Lord had just revealed something to me." She asked what it was? I informed her that she was responsible for these meetings breaking up and that God wanted her to go to every one of those people and ask their forgiveness. She broke down, sobbing and said, "I will do it and I am going right after breakfast." We had prayer and I started for home.

I did not get to go through the prison, but I saw the Lord set an imprisoned, humbled woman free. In about three weeks we received a letter, stating how God was blessing her soul and also the praying band in a wonderful way. They urged me to come and hold, or rather turn loose a revival meeting. Well, that is the work of the Holy Spirit, when people meet conditions and obey God. Praise the Lord!

During my four years ministry in Oshkosh, we entertained the Wisconsin Conference, with W. B. Olmstead, appointed by the Bishop. Rev. F. L. Baker, Field Secretary of Conference Missionary Board, who traveled extensively in home and foreign lands was also present. Here I joined the Wisconsin Conference, and was reappointed supply, as the time limit for a preacher at that time was three years.

One of our good members was Sister Lewis, whose son was Rev. F. O. Lewis, for years district elder in the North Minnesota Conference. I shall never forget the first time I saw him. He came into the church one Sunday morning with his wife and family. They were all dressed very plain, the two little girls with braided "pig tails" long stockings etc. Their testimonies rang with victory and power and we fell in Christian love with the whole family.

Later Rev. F. L. Baker and myself were invited to help in a camp meeting in Minnesota. After my wife passed away, Rev. Lewis came again to visit his mother, and called on me saying, "I have a real conviction that you should come up to Minnesota and live with us a year until you regain your health; the pine woods, sunshine and fresh air will do you good, and we do not want to see you die." His kindly appeal sort of struck a chord in my soul, yet I declined. He still persisted and finally! told him if he would give me a little circuit no preacher wanted, and only one appointment, I would come after our Conference convened.

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## 22 -- WORK IN MINNESOTA

I received a post card stating, "Your appointment is South Haven, Minnesota." I could not find it on the map. Neither could the station, agent, but I finally found the location, about sixty miles North West of Minneapolis. Some of the Pilgrims came and helped me pack up, among them the friendly nurse. We shipped the goods not knowing there was a parsonage, or whether the church was in the country or in the town. Leaving these good people after four years in battles, victories and death scenes, the parting was somewhat lonesome and to be frank, I longed for some good Christian companion, like this friendly nurse to go with me.

I was not long in finding she had the same idea and her fine Christian mother also. This was a great comfort to me, but I decided to go alone, and get things settled. I waited about ten days for the goods to get there. When I arrived I found a nice old fashioned church with a bell, and a rather small, but neat parsonage with a narrow winding stairway to the second floor. The location was in a fine little village, with most of the business places nice. clean, brick buildings.

So far as the church was concerned, I got just what I asked for. There were thirteen members on the roll, yet I never found, but seven and only one lived in town and a former pastor had left six months before I arrived.

Being unable to get the bedsteads up the stairs alone, I went over to the only member in town, a blacksmith named Kite, and introduced myself. He just grunted and kept at his work. I saw his kite was grounded so I returned to the parsonage. The next day I went over to his shop again and asked him how they got the bedroom furniture up the narrow stairs? He just blurted out, "Don't know," and offered no help or suggestions. Praise God I never got impatient, but said to myself, "I will get you yet old man." I learned he had been pretty tough, a drinker and bad fighter before he was saved.

Going back to the parsonage I took out an upstairs window and even without a pulley, rigged up an affair so that I could tie a clothes line to a piece of furniture, pull it up to the window, and wrestle it through into the room. Thus I succeeded in doing the job alone.

Later needing a plane to do some work on the parsonage, and having seen two or three on his work bench, I gathered up enough courage to go again and borrow one for a few minutes. I guess he thought I was one of those borrowing pests (which thing I detest) and refused to loan it. Perhaps he thought I might run it on a nail, or keep it too long and I did not blame him, but still was determined to get him some way.

A few days later, seeing him leaving his shop for dinner, I called him across the street, "Hey, Brother Kite, tell your wife to put on another plate, I will be over for dinner." I had not seen his wife, but she had the extra plate on and seemed quite friendly. They had but one boy, about fourteen years of age and with his parents consent, we persuaded him to come to Sunday School. I would invite him over to the parsonage and give him a little treat of some kind. A couple of weeks later he came over with a box on his sled, containing groceries and canned fruit and home baked goods. Well, I knew they were on the way out and the kite would be flying again. I also learned the boy had been a problem in the home, school and neighborhood. God had transformed him and through him, the parents.

Then came the dreadful "flu" epidemic of 1918. People were dying all around. I saw three rough casket boxes on one porch. A doctor from Minneapolis, went to a home and found the body of a frozen baby on the floor and a thirteen year old girl dead in a rocking chair. Going into a bedroom he found both the parents dead in their bed. Doctors overworked and exhausted, died the same as their patients. A book could be written on these fearful tragedies. Preachers would not go into a house to hold a funeral, but stood outside of a window for a short burial service. Heart broken and alone I had two funerals, and trusting God, held them inside the homes. One was the son of a druggist, the other a soldier boy.

Mrs. Freeman telegraphed me that her daughter Ethel, my promised companion, was very ill with this awful disease and not expected to live. They told me I had better wear a mask as many were doing. I started at once, but did not wear a mask, and kissed Ethel even against her warning. There must have been something electrical in that kiss for she began to mend from that very hour. She was in bed in a front room for isolation from others who might call. The family were all absolutely tired to exhaustion. It was late in the evening and as there was a couch in the room, I suggested that if they would retire, I would be glad to sleep on the couch and call them if necessary, this I did fully dressed. Her rapid recovery seemed miraculous, and in about six weeks we were married in the church where she was saved and sanctified. In a few days we started by train for South Haven.

When we arrived I stopped at the barn on the back of the lot, set my grips down and looking at the barn, said, "Well, here we are." She looked at it and never said a word. I then took her to the parsonage and she was delighted with everything, even the winding stairway. About the first thing I did was to give her about all the money I had left, telling her to put it aside for her fare home any time she desired to go or was homesick.

Within two weeks we were invited to hold a revival meeting at Henriette, Minnesota. The people fell in love with Ethel, which made it easier for me. I will relate a couple of incidents which occurred in this meeting of five weeks.

A young man about eighteen years of age among the seekers seemed as timid and backward as girls used to be fifty years ago. He was not getting much help and would not even lift up his head or pray out loud. I was trying to help him when a woman came, and putting her arm around him said, "You don't have to pray out loud. I have been a member of this church for twenty years and have never prayed out loud." We said to the lady, "Then you ought to be on the other side of the altar as a seeker, instead of trying to help someone else."

After the service the pastor and his good wife tarried for some time. When he came to the parsonage, he said, "You certainly stirred up the devil tonight." I replied, "Well, I don't believe in stirring up something we can't cast out, what is the matter?" He said, "That woman you spoke to was the boy's mother. She says she will never darken the door of this church again, and she is one of the best members." I thought to myself, I would hate to have her for one of my best members, but to the pastor I simply said, "We will pray for her." My wife and I prayed every night, "Lord don't let that woman sleep one wink until she gets right with God." We also prayed the same in family devotions. In the meantime the young man continued to come and got wonderfully saved, and even reproved his mother.

The following Sunday she came back, and fairly running to the altar, she asked me to forgive her and turning to the audience did the same, exclaiming, "Oh I am so sorry, I want you all to forgive me. I have not slept a wink all this week. She then knelt at the altar, and you could hear her sobbing cries all over the church. The Pilgrims gathered around her and she prayed clear through and it fairly set the church a fire to hear her shout. She is now in the Glory World and her son is preaching the gospel.

We returned to South Haven very weary but happy. We began calling and as the churches were opened again, we had plenty to do. One of the men who had left the church was the very opposite of the blacksmith. A well-to-do farmer, a fine citizen, respected by all. His wife was a saintly, robust fine looking woman who stood loyally by the church. Her husband honored her stand and always drove her to our church, then went up to another church where he had a Sunday School class. He was so well liked we knew if we had a revival most of the young people and others would attend his church as it was a nicer building and more popular.

I met him on the street and told him exactly what we have just written here. He then told me why he left the church. It seems that in a former revival, they accused him of hindering the revival because he did not seek holiness and he evidently thought there were some who needed holiness as bad or worse than he did. He came to church a few times, loved the old fashioned gospel, sought God and became one of the best workers in the church. He had a car and used it freely in bringing people to the church. In midsummer we sent for a good holiness evangelist and held a tent meeting.

Things were just getting well under way when a severe rain and wind storm swept through the village. Our tent was blown down and badly damaged, but the church was intact, so we continued meetings in the church, but the attendance was not so good.

We went over to Fair View a few miles away, where we found some hungry people. We thought we might start holding prayer meetings. We had no horse or car. The class leader, Sister Partage, phoned that a certain man was moving to Minneapolis and had a good Model-T car for sale cheap. She asked my wife and I to go and look it over and if we could pay the balance at our convenience. We went to see it and it looked like new. We thought it providential, and exactly what we needed in our work, and phoned the class leader we would be much pleased to get the car. She said, "All right you shall have it." Some time passed and nothing more was said about the car, neither did we ask any questions.

Later, however, we learned that a young member of the church bought it. Later we, heard that it stalled on a railway crossing and he and his young wife barely escaped death as a train entirely demolished the car. We certainly thanked God that they escaped a tragic death. We were never used better by the public than at South Haven.

When Conference time came, much to our disappointment and the church as well we were appointed to Burtrum, Minnesota which was then considered the best appointment in the Conference. The South Haven Church got up a petition from the members and others as well, to reinstate us, but it was in vain, and we believe to this day a sad mistake.

Some called Burtrum a Free Methodist town. The postmaster, the two rural mail carriers, the justice of peace, four or five teachers in the school and even the dairyman were Free Methodist, mostly of the old type. One of the teachers was the daughter of the beloved Veteran Missionary, E. F. Ward.

They loved my wife, but thought I was a little too radical I judge. The class leader, a fine honorable Christian man, whose nice long drawn prayers did not inspire me too much, took me to task in a good Christian spirit saying, "It means much to keep the little flock together three years." I replied, "If that is all we could see done in three years I would dry up and die." I then said something to the effect that we might make a good team if he could hold me back a little, and I could prod him up a little. We had prayer and parted in a good spirit. Amen!

It was here we met one of the most remarkable young women, Miss Helen Potter whose parents lived in Burtrum. She was a school teacher of unquestionable moral fiber, but unsaved and a leader among a few other young ladies, who, one evening were discussing how to have a good time. Some of the girls wanted to go to a dance. Miss Potter said, "No, let us go to the Free Methodist Church. They are having a revival meeting and we can have more fun there." Fortunately, she went alone and got under fearful conviction, and recalled an occasion when she had promised God to seek salvation at the first opportunity.

This vow was made when teaching school far out on the prairie. One dark night she started across a lot to the home of a friend and got lost. This was a terrifying experience, in those days when wolves were quite numerous. She kneeled down and made the above vow. It was very dark, and suddenly a beast jumped on her back. She felt her doom had come, but as it frolicked around she discovered it was a dog and started to follow it, concluding it must have a home somewhere. However the dog ran out into the dark, not a glimmer of light anywhere. In despair she kneeled and



prayed again, renewing her vow. Back came the dog. She got a good hold and never released it until she reached the house.

In all her careless ways she believed the Lord had answered prayer and who could doubt it? One year the wolves were so ravenous the parents would not let their children go to school alone. I hunted them but never shot one. A man ran a small pack some distance with a large hound dog. When the wolves reached a piece of timber, they turned on him and he got back to his master badly torn.

When Sister Potter prayed clear through, her joy and victory knew no bounds. She shouted and ran into the pulpit exhorting the people under the influence of the Holy Ghost, which when lacking avails but little.

In this meeting she was also sanctified and called to preach. She was in debt for part of her schooling and told the Lord she could pay her indebtedness in four months, then she would take the first opportunity that opened to preach the gospel. At night kneeling by her bedside she opened her Bible where the Scripture reads, "Say not ye, there are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." (John. 4:35) Before she arose from her bedside she said; "Lord I will trust Thee, and go at the first opportunity." When the meeting closed, the evangelist and his wife urged her to go with them.

In the first meeting a man approached Miss Potter, saying, "The Lord told me to give you this," and handed her a check for the exact amount which she owed. It always pays to obey and keep our vows. She has been in our home many times, and nearly three months with my wife while I was away in evangelistic work. She still lives in Elkhart, Ind. Though on the retired list, her letters are flooded with victory and praise to God, who on that never to be forgotten day, transformed her like the apostle Paul, "From darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

It was here we preached eight weeks in a revival meeting every night and twice on Sunday, with the exception of a quarterly meeting, when our district Superintendent Rev. F. O. Lewis, was greatly used of God in preaching the old fashioned gospel, which under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, brings men to Christ and holiness of heart and life.

Burtrum was a nice village, with a goodly number of fine Pilgrims. The location was beautiful, with Buck Lake near at hand, where in those days you could go out and catch a mess of good fish for breakfast or at least for dinner. We left here with a sense of loneliness.

Our next and last circuit in Minnesota was at Henriette, where the good woman who could not pray out loud was delivered and her son called to preach. We rather anticipated a good time here as we had, a few years before had a revival meeting there. We found, however, that the devil was not chained up, yet as some Jehovah's Witnesses claim. In fact we had an inkling of it before reaching there. I had the same depression of spirit which came upon me when I preached "My farewell" sermon at Oshkosh, Wisconsin. I did not reveal this to my wife, but before the train reached our destination, my wife turned to me and said, "My, I feel awful, I feel like, going right on

through this place. Do not tell me the spiritual influence of a church does not reach beyond its walls."

In packing our goods to move we had a large box with handles on each end, in which we packed some bedding, cooking utensils, a few dishes and on top of all a hammer, saw, and screw driver. We first found the parsonage, took our skeleton key, walked in and went to work. Thus we did not trouble the members or waste our time in getting settled. I am sure the members also appreciated that.

However, a man who had been prominent in the church for many years, came to the parsonage telling us what a wretched woman his recently acquired wife was. The next day his wife came with the same complaint against her husband. We told each that we could make no decision until we met together with the official board, but assured both that we would certainly pray and endeavor to do the right thing regarding the matter. We did not like the spirit either one displayed, and at the first Sunday class meeting they were throwing sarcastic remarks at each other. After the meeting we went privately to each and requested them not to testify again in class meeting until their affairs were settled up. The man went directly to the class leader and informed him of what I had said. The class leader replied, "Well Brother, I have been thinking of that myself."

He wanted to get a divorce and would not be reconciled in any other way. We thought she was the best of the two but the church was divided in opinion and of course in no condition for a revival. My wife suggested we start a special Tuesday night prayer meeting, but I thought it best to call in the village and country-side before the cold winter weather came on, so the preacher and his wife were divided in opinion. Praise God we were divided in opinion only, with never a trace of unholy feelings. We decided she would take charge of the prayer meetings, while I did the calling and preaching, as she never wanted to preach when I was there. Without consulting my wife, when I announced the special prayer meeting, I said, "We do not want anyone to come until you get down on your knees and talk to God about it and do not come unless He tells you to do so." I have never made such an announcement before or since.

At the first meeting only one woman came, and she was the transformed sister who in our former revival meeting could not pray out loud. She and my wife got under the burden for the work. The next Tuesday night there were three. The attendance rapidly increased until the parsonage could not hold them. In the meantime I became an old fashioned circuit rider.

A barber in town had a lively saddle horse, which he was keeping in the parsonage barn, and permitted me to use. He was tricky and had run away a couple of times, but I had learned that if you love a dog or horse and they love you, they will do anything you require of them, that they understand, if they have not been abused.

I certainly enjoyed calling in the country and found it very profitable and health giving in the invigorating Minnesota climate. Well back to the prayer meetings. The congregation became so large that we transferred the meeting to the church and began a revival. We sent for a woman evangelist. In a couple of weeks she exclaimed, "I haven't seen anything like it for thirty-five years."

Then things began to cool off. She suggested sending for another young lady to help out. We did so and made another mistake. She was a fine looking girl but too worldly in dress. We talked kindly to her and informed her we were very sorry we could not use her as we always insisted on plain dress and she would confuse our young people. The elder lady evangelist seemed quite miffed and finally said, "I feel my time here is up." We felt the same even before she announced it.

Some time later we received a letter from the young lady that caused us to rejoice and thanked us for the stand we had taken, stating that her parents were plain old fashioned Free Methodists and that she had been brought up that way. Her parents and others had prayed her under Holy Ghost conviction. Now she was taking the old Bible "Highway" to the glory land and the Lord was wonderfully blessing her soul. Praise God the old gospel still works if we work together with it.

The congregation increased in attendance and power, while the interest began to increase also. A group of young people began coming, but about nine o'clock all would leave the services. We found they were going to a dance over a hardware store. My wife got three or four burden bearers, together and prayed that God would break that thing up. The second night the building burned to the ground.

The hotel keeper of a nice brick building, cleared out the dining room in the evening and invited the young people there. These praying women again got together as before. I will confess I was surprised when at early dawn of the third day, this hotel caught fire, leaving only the four walls standing. So far as we know the cause of the two fires was never determined, but we do know that even sinners talked of it as the judgments of God. I still have a snap shot of this early morning fire.

I will take space to write two more incidents that occurred after the meeting closed. We talked with a well to do farmer about his soul. He said, "I am going to get my hay in and fall work caught up then I am going on a fishing trip, after which I am coming to church." We warned him faithfully, but he followed his own plan, with the exception that he never came back alive, but fell from the boat and was drowned.

The other incident was that of a young man under deep conviction, who came to the parsonage stating his desire to be saved. He finally confessed that his father induced him to short weight their customers. We told him the only thing to do was to tell his father he was through with that kind of business. He also gave up dancing and other worldly things. The next night his two fine looking sisters persuaded him to go to a dance, telling him they would get someone else if he would not go with them. He said he would go with them for protection, but would not dance. This he did, I think with good intentions.

The next day he was blown to bits by a dynamite explosion that nearly wrecked a hardware store. I helped, or tried to, gather up the very few fragments of his body that could be found. We had his funeral in the church and I tried kindly and faithfully to warn the full house. At the grave they had to hold one of the sisters from jumping into the grave. She was hysterical and wanted to be buried with her dear brother. How sad. God help our young people is my prayer.

Again we strongly felt the call to evangelistic work, as sometimes we saw more souls saved in one meeting than in one year on a circuit. My wife also was in harmony with this. She was a good singer, loved music, (not instrumental in the church) and was a good altar worker on the old line. Folks loved her better than they did me, for which I was very grateful. At conference time we disclosed our desire to our district Superintendent and Bishop Pearce. We had known Rev. Pearce, as we had held two revival meetings in Titusville, Pennsylvania when he lived there. He was willing to consent, but the Henriette Pilgrims got up a petition, signed by the church, that for some reason they wanted us back. It was finally decided to let me off six months for evangelistic work, and for Sister Potter to assist my wife during that time. They were always close friends, however she like myself felt the urgent call to evangelism.

After three months she wrote me that she had so many calls, she felt she must heed the call, and how could I object. I was then in a good meeting with Rev. Fero, in Massillon, Ohio. Brother Fero's son was home at this. time from college and I felt slightly embarrassed at first, as I had no college education. He was a bright young man, but unsaved. So I was educated on some lines that he was not. He came to services every night and one morning at family prayer he broke down weeping and began to pray in earnest. I recall that he prayed, "O God, Brother Thrall, had knocked all the props from under me." What the props were I newer found out, but he prayed clear through and there was great rejoicing in the parsonage, as his fine parents had been praying for him a tong time.

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## 23 -- A SAD INCIDENT

A sad incident occurred in this revival. Two men had been in the meeting just preceding this one under deep conviction and drove every night several miles to attend. One of them declared he was going to get saved. We urged him to seek at once and faithfully warned him of the danger of putting it off. He said, "Don't you worry I am going to get saved before these meetings close."

One night there seemed to be unusual burden on a few for this man, and two or three met him at the door and pleaded with him to go to the altar, but he gave the same answer thousands have given, "not tonight." Before the meeting closed that night a fearful depression of sadness came over me, and when we reached the parsonage I said, "Brother Fero, someone crossed the deadline tonight." When the pastor inquired who I thought it was, I said I did not know whether it was here, at the church, at home, but I know someone had crossed the deadline. That night I wrote my wife of my apprehension.

The next night during the preliminaries, a lady came to the door and motioned for the pastor. She was much agitated and as the pastor returned he announced that the man that said "not tonight" was struck by a car an his way to church and in the hospital unconscious, and requested prayer for him. The pastor immediately called the church to prayer, but no one seemed to really get hold of God. As I kneeled to pray a voice seemed to whisper, "He will never regain consciousness." I said nothing of this to anyone until the meeting closed and we went to the parsonage. Then I told the pastor, that man would never regain consciousness. He died before

morning. The next night the altar was more than full. There was a goodly number saved or sanctified in that meeting, which we shall ever remember.

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## 24 -- DIVINE PROVIDENCE

At the close of this meeting we returned home and found Sister Potter had gone a week or so before. A young lady convert was staying with my wife. They were somewhat frightened one night, when a man tried to break in. He left footprints and part of the heel of a shoe under a window. They prayed for protection, and every night a very large dog slept on the porch until I returned. It always left after daylight. After I reached home it never came back and no one in the village had such a dog. My wife always believed the Lord sent it.

We finished out our term in Henriette, and went into evangelist work. We held revival meetings in Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York State, and many sought and found old time religion. I attended a quarterly meeting in Rushford, N. Y. preached twice and Rev. Albert Wilson the District Elder was short of a preacher at Warsaw, N. Y. He urged us to supply the work, for the balance of the year. After consulting with my wife we decided to do so, and at the close of the year, returned to evangelism. Warsaw was a fine little village with as nice a people found anywhere, and we had a good profitable time in the Lord the few months we were there.

We had our trunk and grips packed and three or four months meetings dated up ready to start the next morning, when Rev. Wilson called by phone from Buffalo, asking us to take Warsaw another year. I told him it was impossible, as I did not feel free to cancel dates and disappoint the pastors. He answered, "Will your wife take it?" I replied, "I don't know, we are all packed up and ready to go." Then came the startling question; "Will you be willing for her to take it?" Yes, if she feels it is of the Lord." "All right get her on the phone." To my surprise she took the challenge, and a little heavy hearted I started out alone, and filled our appointments. This self denial God honored and I do not recall a meeting in which the Lord did not work in a remarkable way.

My wife was also much blessed in her pastorate. After about three months I returned in time to find them in a quarterly meeting. Again they were short of a pastor, as the man appointed to Olean had for some reason left the work. After consulting my wife I concluded to supply the work for the rest of the year, as I only had to cancel one date, and we did not care to take a ten day meeting.

My wife and I were sixty miles apart, but that did not seem so far, so I bought a second hand car and about once in three or four weeks I would drive to Warsaw and help with the calling as she had no car. Likewise she would come to Olean occasionally and call with me. On one of these trips, after greeting each other she said, "I have a package in the hall for you." The package was Sister Potter, the evangelist, who turned out to be a very nice package to have around. In fact she helped us on several circuits. She could preach the strongest sermons and give the least offense of any evangelist I had met.

At conference time, much to our surprise, and with some regret, my wife and myself were appointed to Potomac Ave., Buffalo, N. Y., Free Methodist Church. We were glad to be together again, but rather desired evangelistic relation. Aside from this we realized that ordinarily, the larger the church the more worldly.

The first week the official board met, a young married woman, whose husband was a fine businessman was recommended for full membership. I answered, "Did not I notice she was wearing a wedding ring?" One man jumped to his feet, and looking me in the eye said, "What difference does that make?" I replied, "Gentlemen, it makes just this much difference with me. I have never taken anyone into the church, even on probation with a ring on, and furthermore I never intend to. I am not a trouble maker, my goods are not all unpacked and I can soon move on, but if I remain as pastor, I cannot violate our discipline, the Bible or my conscience, and will never take anyone into the church, wearing rings or jewelry." This was just what some of the more spiritual members were praying for and they stood by the old line of true holiness.

After things were somewhat adjusted, we secured the district elder, Rev. Albert Wilson for a revival meeting. The church was graciously revived and about eighteen including two probationers were added to the membership. One fine young lady and her lover, whom I refused to marry because they wanted a double ring service both took off their rings, prayed through to real victory and were among our closest friends.

Here occurred a sad affair in our own lives. We lost our only baby daughter in infancy. My dear wife took it very hard, as before the baby was born she often declared, "I just love that baby already." I grieved more because of my wife's sorrow than I did for little Mary Jane, named after Ethel's mother and mine. My wife was spared only in answer to prayer. I phoned Brother Wilson, who at this time was engaged in our annual camp meeting at Lime Lake, (Machias, N. Y.). He immediately called the camp to prayer and a few got under a real burden and prayed until they received the witness that she would be healed. Later one asked another, "Why didn't we pray for the baby?" That sounds to me like faith.

Ethel had not yet come from the hospital. That night was indeed a lonely night for me, as I sat alone with the little white casket in the room. However, as I kneeled to pray and consecrate my life anew, I could sincerely say, "Not my will but Thine be done." I can never forget the kindness of the church, or the undertaker, who had a photographer on hand to take a picture of the baby. He suggested that I sit and hold the baby in my arms. Thinking this might please my wife, I did so. Rev. H. L. Miner, an old friend, preached a comforting funeral message and I knew this was another soul "safe in the arms of Jesus." Praise the Lord.

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## 25 -- ONE HOUR IN ANOTHER MEETING

One or two car loads of our good members had for sometime been attending a mission in South Buffalo, Sunday p.m. They reported wonderful services and the blessing of God upon the people. They did not leave any of our services and as they had invited me to go several times, I took advantage of our quarterly meeting Sunday as I would not have to preach and went with them.

Zenas Miner had recently become their pastor. He invited me upon the platform and urged me to preach. I told him I had no message and kindly refused.

They had demonstrations that were certainly up to the reports. The building was an old wooden affair, and the leader of the meeting first told of a wonderful vision of a beautiful brick building they were going to build after the old one was torn down. The congregation was much elated. Then followed a testimony meeting, the spirit of which I could not sanction. There was much shouting and praising God, some testified to being saved, sanctified, healed and having "the Bible evidence" -- Tongues! I wanted to take my hat and get out, but the place was crowded and I did not wish to seem rude. Finally the leader, a stalwart man, asked for my testimony. I replied to the effect that God had saved, sanctified and healed me, but when you put the speaking in tongues as an evidence of the baptism of the Holy Ghost, you are deceived and on the wrong track, and there have been crooks among some of them. I was standing on the edge of the platform and the leader, highly flushed with anger, sprang from the front seat, shook his fist in front of my face and said some things that were anything but complimentary. I replied, "You called for my testimony and that's it."

The meeting broke up with much confusion that seemed almost like a small riot. I was, sorry and felt perhaps I had gone too far, but when I made my way through the crowd that was now going out, a well dressed Christian businessman shook hands with me saying, "I want to thank you for what you said as I was intending to put \$30,000 into a new building here, but now I will have nothing to do with the proposition as I now see what kind of people they are." The poor man's "vision" came to naught (insofar as he was concerned). He had also been accused of being a crook. My members seemed somewhat chagrined, but said nothing.

Monday their pastor, Brother Zenas Miner came to the parsonage declaring he had left the mission. Rev. H. P. Thomas, whose wife happened to attend this service, came with him. Brother and Sister Thomas were former teachers in Taylor University. Both became members of the Buffalo Church and with their little family were a great asset. He not only preached the whole gospel with power, but also taught the adult Sunday School class. They later joined the Oil City Conference, and though like myself are retired, they are still busy in church activities as opportunities are available. This faithful preacher recently passed to his reward.

The mission moved to another small place and a fine brick church was built by real holiness people. Rev. Charles Stalker, a Holy Ghost evangelist (who visited Evan Roberts of the great Welsh revival) held a meeting there which we attended with much spiritual profit. Praise the Lord.

When our time in Buffalo expired, we were appointed to Jamestown, New York, with my wife as supply. This church had over one hundred members. Here with these splendid Pilgrims, the Lord gave us three of the most pleasant and profitable years of our ministry. Bishop Walter A. Sellew, one of our most honored and efficient bishops, and his wife had resided in Jamestown for around thirty-five years, and had left their stamp upon the church, the city and the community. In his official duties he had visited practically every state in the United States, also Canada and a number of foreign countries. He was a humble spiritual man, an excellent executive who had the confidence of bankers and business men. He was also strict in his spiritual department. He never

did any secular work or traveled on Sunday, or even used his phone on the Sabbath day. He also told me that all things considered the Jamestown Church was in his opinion one of the best in the denomination, and had sent more missionaries into the field than any other of our churches.

Bishop Sellew also founded and for many years supervised the well known Gerry Homes for the aged and orphans.

It was indeed a privilege to have Bishop Sellew and his wife in our congregation, whenever official duties permitted. Sister Sellew was well fitted for a Bishop's wife. I well remember her smiling face as she nodded assent to the truth whenever the preacher seemed to have a hard time getting his message across. We often held prayer meetings, in their home.

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## 26 -- DEATH OF BISHOP SELLEW

The last time we saw Bishop Sellew was on a certain Friday night, when with his wife, Ethel and myself we were invited to dinner by Sister Tillie Carlson. He was going the next day to dedicate a church in Toronto, Canada, He had a bad cold and looked pale and worn. Owing to the inclement weather and his physical condition, we had some apprehension in regard to his going, and suggested that he phone and postpone the dedication.. He replied, "Well it has been announced and my wife will take good care of me." Upon his return he went down town on business during" a light rain.

The next morning I phoned and Sister Sellew informed me that the doctor had just been there, and said he had a serious case of pneumonia with little hope of recovery. He passed away that night. The funeral was held at the Jamestown Church. Rev. M. B. Miller preached the message, with a goodly number of ministers from other states and Canada participating. Another service was held in North Chili. New York. where the body was laid to rest in a cemetery hallowed by the dust of many saints who had passed on before.

We missed him much, but his good wife was soared, and it seemed the solemnity of the occasion was conducive to a revival spirit in the church. We recall one of the best when the official board secured evangelist, Miss Martha Williams, pastor at Olean, New York.

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## 27 -- A PLEASANT VACATION

It was here that we took a never to be forgotten vacation. Two school teachers, Miss Orpha Williams and Elizabeth Davis, members of the church, suggested that we take a trip through the New England states, they sharing the expenses. As they were close friends of my wife, we readily agreed. We drove first to Lake George, New York, a beauty spot, next to Ticonderoga. This historical fort was the scene of many bloody battles and was finally captured in 1737 by the American hero Ethan Allen and his "Green Mountain Boys", "In the name of the Great Jehovah and the Continental Congress."



Of course we had to take the thrilling trip through the Ausable Chasm. It seemed that most of the thrills came from the bumping of the boat upon the rocks as we went through the swift current of the very narrow, deep gorge. We judge it would be a fine place for the geologist. However, we assure you we had no time for such study on that trip.

A far more charming scene was the ferrying across beautiful Lake Champlain to Burlington, Vermont. The Lake was perfectly Calm, white gulls on silent wing soared overhead, beneath a cloudless sky, and there came flitting through my mind a verse of that inspiring song by W. B. Cornell.

"Far away in the depths of my spirit tonight,  
Rolls a melody sweeter than Psalm;  
In celestial like strains it unceasingly flows,  
O'er my soul like an infinite calm."

We secured a double cabin in the suburb of the city, where we enjoyed a restful Sabbath, attending the Free Methodist Church in Burlington. Rev. C. E. Anderson preached a good message.

We drove through the beautiful mountains, of Vermont; stopping at the capital city, Montpelier to visit friends. The state of Vermont is noted for its maple syrup. We then drove through the fascinating White Mountains of New Hampshire, one of the original 13 states. Mr. Washington 6,285 feet is the highest. There are 28 other peaks over 4,000 feet high. A portion of this magnificent scenery is called the "Switzerland of America." It has many fine, large farms. In 1931 it was estimated that there were 1,065 manufacturing establishments. There are many fine schools, colleges and universities, of which Dartmouth is the best known. Daniel Webster attended this college.

We continued on to the state of Maine where we spent the night in two nice cabins and in the morning started down the Atlantic shore for Boston. On the way we stopped at Hampton Beach where the girls went for a swim in the ocean.

The streets of Boston look like a great spider web on the map, but we found no trouble in driving through the well marked streets of the city. Here the girls visited Rev. James Ryder, a former friend and pastor.

Our next attraction was Plymouth, a world renowned place where the early Pilgrims landed and where stands the large monument with the one hundred and four names of this noble band who died the first year, also there stands a national monument eighty-one feet high dedicated in 1889 to the Pilgrims at a cost of \$200,000. There is also a fine statue of Massasoit, a noble Indian Chief who early in the adventures of the Pilgrims, made a treaty with them that lasted for fifty-four years. We left Plymouth with a mingled feeling of sadness, loyalty and inspiration as we thought of this brave and noble band, who counted not their lives dear unto themselves, that they might obtain freedom to worship God according to the Spirit of the Word and the dictates of their own conscience.

We next visited Princeton, that picturesque little village far out on Cape Cod, with its narrow streets and unique houses, the fascination of photographers, artists and tourists. Homeward bound we stopped at Falmouth, Rhode Island, on Nantucket Sound where we were royally entertained at the summer home of Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Bergquist, members of the Jamestown New York Church, who had previous to our trip invited us to visit them. We thoroughly enjoyed the friendship, the good rest and gathering shells on the beach as the tide receded.

We drove to Hartford, capital of the state of Connecticut. The old State House contains the rooms of the Hartford Historic Society, where many interesting relics and antiques are displayed. The early Dutch settlers were banished from Connecticut in 1654. In 1687 an attempt was made by the English Governor Andros to seize the Charter, which was thwarted by hiding it in the Charter oak tree. My cousin, formerly Miss Maud Nottingham, at this time Mrs. W. D. Monnier, quite a noted artist, whose husband was a well to do supervisor of schools, purchased the two large stone houses of Charter Oak Place, and occupied one of them, which included her studios of fine paintings.

We crossed the Hudson River at Kingston and drove through the beautiful Catskill Mountains by way of Grand Gorge. If you like the more wild life you find it in the Adirondacks, but the Catskills are charming. Two more nights in cabins and we arrived home at Jamestown, glad to meet our good Pilgrims again. We never traveled on Sunday except to church.

I recall a little incident at a wayside restaurant where we ate dinner, and of course we returned thanks at the table. The lady who waited on us said, "I have never heard anything like that in this place before." She was hungry for God and said she had once been saved. As we talked with her she broke down and with tears promised to seek God until she was reclaimed. There being no customers present, we prayed with her before leaving.

Not a thing happened to mar our trip, not even a flat tire. My wife especially enjoyed this trip.

We had three good years in Jamestown and our next appointment was Franklinville, New York. Here occurred one of the most heart breaking times of my life. We had been there less than a month when my wife was stricken with blood poisoning in her hand which rapidly spread and she was in the hospital for a month at Olean. Many were praying for her, but she continued to get worse and an operation seemed inevitable. Her arm was amputated above the elbow.

It was soon evident that the operation was not successful although she rallied into semi-consciousness for several hours. Even with labored breathing she was praising God and seemed to be looking clear through into eternity. While holding her hand and with every breath vibrant with "Praise God, God is so good," I heard her say, "I see my baby." While her earthly house was being dissolved, it seemed her spirit was expanding and becoming more alive until suddenly she breathed her last as on billows of glory her soul took its flight to the glory world.

Kind Christian friends, the Learns and Miss Martha Williams, their pastor and special friend of Ethel's went with me to the parsonage and stayed until after the funeral. There alone that

night I sat with my beloved dead. None can describe or understand except those who have gone through a like heart breaking experience.

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## 28 -- DISTRICT ELDER

Rev Albert Wilson, a dear friend preached the funeral sermon in the church, and at the request of her relatives we took the body to Oshkosh, Wisconsin where another service was held in the home church where she was, saved and sanctified and where we were united in holy wedlock thirteen years before. We laid her beside her mother where the whole seven of her sturdy family now await the resurrection morn.

My return from Oshkosh, Wisconsin, to Franklinville was a long and lonely trip. I arrived late in the evening, the parsonage was cold, the clock had stopped and Ethel's song book on the piano stood open just as she left it before going to the hospital, and my heart felt as cold as the house. I felt like getting into the car and driving anywhere to get rid of the grief and loneliness. I felt I could not even go upstairs to her room. However, in seeming despair I dropped upon my knees beside the couch to pray. I cannot describe it, but I wish to testify for the glory of God, and perhaps to help someone in a like situation, that the blessed Comforter came into my soul in a wonderful way. Suddenly an indescribable joy and victory filled my being. It was different from my conversion or when I was sanctified. It was a new experience which dispelled in a great measure the awful grief, leaving me with, shall I say, a sweet sorrow which seemed to draw me closer to the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief". Praise His name forever! Also a great peace came to me in realizing my dear wife was gathered with Christ whom she loved and with the blood washed saints and her cherished babe.

However, I tried to resign my pastorate, but they begged me to stay, saying, "We will be good to you."

They certainly kept their word, and I felt my ministry was in more tender and sympathetic spirit.

The following year I was married to one of the finest young preachers in the Genesee Conference, Miss Martha Williams, pastor at Olean, New York. We took a wedding trip up into the mountains, about eighteen miles from Renova, Pennsylvania. We were invited to stay in a two story cabin owned by Brother and Sister Wertz and occupied by them and their daughter, Mrs. Emma Calhoun. It was a beautiful location of about five acres surrounded by a variety of evergreen trees. There was considerable game, deer, grouse, wild turkeys and some bear, but we only saw the tracks of bear. We saw plenty of deer every day. We had a restful time, enhanced by the healing of Mrs. Emma Calhoun, who had been given up to die with cancer. She was given such strong medicines that she was unconscious at times. She prayed clear through into sanctifying grace and God gave her faith for her healing. That was over twenty-seven years ago, she is still living, driving her own car and called on us a few weeks ago. They were all Free Methodists.

Later her father, while attending church was much blessed and testified three times. When the meeting closed they went to awaken him, as they supposed, and found he had taken a higher flight into his eternal rest without a struggle. Amen! We have since gone to that sacred cabin two or three times.

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## 29 -- RETURN TO FRANKLINVILLE

We returned to my circuit at Franklinville, and Martha having held a revival at both Jamestown and Franklinville, fitted right into the situation, receiving a royal welcome.

We could not go all the way with the other churches, as we feared if we had a revival some of our converts might 'be likely to join a popular church and never get the all important experience of holiness. We decided, after much prayer, to withdraw from practically all affiliation with other churches, though they had some very fine people. The Lord set his seal to this decision and we started public meetings in the village park. We also kindly requested any of the members in whom the village did not, for some reason have confidence, owing to unpaid bills or quarrels, etc., to please refrain from testifying, unless they desired to make a public confession. God also set His seal to this. There is nothing like street meetings to make young converts fearless and strong in faith and endurance.

Our people began to take hold on God in prayer and fasting and we had one of the best revivals they had seen in years. In fact it ran for a year and a half, not every night of course. But in every service and prayer meeting if the Lord did not manifest Himself in some special way we appointed a day of fasting and prayer.

Farmers left their teams in the barn and attended the meetings. Sister May Armstrong was a great burden bearer, and others young and old began to travail in soul burden for the lost and backslidden. Some were saved the first time they ever entered a Free Methodist Church. Some were smitten as they passed the church and came in convicted by the Holy Spirit and were saved and sanctified. Whole families united with the church. One young man who: got on fire for God, located an old abandoned church building and started preaching there.

A fine young married lady came all decked out with jewelry. She quietly took it all off the first night, although nothing had been said about it in the service. She came to the altar, was wonderfully converted and soon sanctified. Her clear ringing testimony, tears and exhortation had a great influence for God and holiness. Forty new members were added to the church, most of them during this last year and a half of the revival. We praise God, and give Him all the glory for seeing such a goodly number "turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." A number have already entered the portals of eternal glory.

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## 30 -- THE TONGUES MOVEMENT

I would refrain from mentioning this subject, but conscience forbids. It was in our early Christian experience, around fifty years ago, while living in Chicago that we first came in contact with the so called Pentecostal movement. As our own Free Methodist Church was about eight miles distant, we occasionally during the week attended a very spiritual mission. On good authority it was stated that a colored man from California introduced the doctrine into this mission. It spread like wild fire, and in a few months there was at least half a dozen missions and one large church involved, mostly under different names.

Of course there was considerable debate going around relative to the validity of the movement. Seeing it in the Bible and knowing some people in whom I had perfect confidence had taken up with it, and being hungry for all God had for me, I went to three or four different missions to investigate. Having been a sort of "lone eagle" in finding my way through to God, I felt I must sift it to my own satisfaction. They strongly believed in Divine healing. I also had been wonderfully healed when given up to die, some time before meeting these people.

They also held street meetings and jail services, all of which I have always, approved, since my education in Brush Arbor, River Side Academy and Cemetery Ridge. After some fierce battles I came to the conclusion that this "tongues affair" was a false doctrine. First it was their worldly adornment, since this time, however, I must be frank, and assert that most of our holiness churches have fallen into this snare of Satan. Second: I went to a mission where the preacher spoke in tongues. A lady member of the mission arose and gave the interpretation of what he said. Immediately another woman jumped to her feet declaring that was not what he said at all, and gave an entirely different interpretation. Of course I knew one of them was mistaken and perhaps both. However, I did not tarry to learn the outcome.

Later while walking down the street with a former Free Methodist who had joined them, and whose son was a fine Free Methodist preacher, I said, "I am of the opinion this doctrine is of the devil." He was a tall man, and raising his long arm above his head replied, "Brother Thrall, you are possessed with the devil, let me cast him out." Calmly looking him in the eyes, I said, "All right, Brother, cast him out." Slowly his hand came down, and dropping his head he walked off never uttering a word. If I recall rightly that was the last time I ever saw him.

The Lord had occasionally used me in a small way in praying for the sick. One morning a woman who was quite a prominent worker in a "Tongues mission," phoned me requesting that I come and pray for a sick daughter. I had no desire whatever to go, but told her I would pray regarding the matter and let her know later. That night I sincerely prayed, but getting no conviction at all that I should go, I simply abandoned the idea. Nevertheless, the next morning in secret prayer, I felt definitely led to go. The Lord also gave me Scripture for her.

When I arrived she had three other ladies, one of which claimed to be a prophetess. I was surprised, but knew I had a message from the Lord and silently prayed to be led of the Holy Spirit. We first asked them if they were sure the Lord wanted them to send for me? they replied, "Oh yes, indeed." The woman of the house said, "I was praying in my room and the prophetess in another, and the Lord told us both to send for you." "Well," I said, "We will now read the Scriptures." When I finished reading, I asked, "Do you think that is of the Lord?" They answered, "Yes, yes that was fine." I then suggested that we kneel in prayer.

I kneeled as close to the woman of the house as I thought proper, and called on her to pray. She certainly did well, but just as I expected, soon began to speak in an "unknown tongue." She claimed she knew six different languages, but I felt she must have gotten them pretty well mixed up. I reached over and touching her on the shoulder said, "Sister stop that, that is of the devil..." In a moment we were all on our feet. They never said a word, as the Lord had them trapped.

He surely helped his unworthy servant to expound the Word in power. I think we must all have forgotten the sick daughter, at least I do not recall praying for her. I really felt sorry for them, but felt I had performed my duty in declaring, even as I do today, that speaking in an "unknown tongue" is no sure evidence that a person is really baptized with the blessed Holy Ghost. Regarding the gifts mentioned in I Cor. 12:29, we read as follows.

Are all Apostles? -- No.

Are all Prophets? -- No.

Are all Teachers? -- No.

Are all Workers of Miracles? -- No.

Have all the Gifts of Healing? -- No.

Do all speak with tongues? -- Yes, [incorrectly] say these Pentecostal folk.

Do all Interpret? -- No.

The Apostle Paul states: "I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an (unknown) tongue." I Cor. 14:19.

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## 31 -- REVIVAL IN ILLINOIS

During a revival meeting in Illinois, a group of five or six "tongues" people came in, evidently to take over the revival. The leader a Mrs. M... sat up in the amen corner next to the pulpit, continually crying glory-e-e, glory-e-e, glory-e-e. It sent a chill up my back that I knew was not of God. This was also a new work and I was practically alone with the exception of three or four Free Methodists and my sister, Mrs. Ella Olney. The church was well filled and occasionally the glory-e-e woman would go into the audience and lay hands on some person that they might receive the Holy Ghost. I knew there was trouble ahead.

The next morning I went very early over to the woods to pray, telling God that I could not stand it any longer and that either they or I must go. I fasted and prayed all day, but the heavens seemed closed and I could not get a message, and wondered if I had not better close the meeting. It was a weak and weary preacher that staggered through the dark to the meeting. As I opened the

door and started down the aisle, the first thing I heard was glory-e-e. That moment God flashed a message into my mind and soul like fire. "If ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth." (James 3:14.)

I made no announcements, not even a song and did not know where the Scripture was found, neither had I ever preached on the text. I cannot recall a word I said, but God greatly strengthened this poor mortal in spirit, soul and body, with the result that this "glory" woman was the first seeker at the altar. I will give her credit for praying very earnestly, but sort of gagged and the Lord revealed to me that she had a demon spirit. I said, "Sister do you want me to tell you frankly what your trouble is?" She replied, "Yes, I do." I said, "You have a demon spirit." Three of us went twice to her home, and prayed with her, but she was not delivered. However, she received much help.

I went to another meeting quite a number of miles away. We had a good meeting among some hungry hearts. Near the end of the meeting the people we had just left, sent a message telling me that another band of tongues people, with a man as a leader had come to the same church, and urged me to return at once. My sister told me that they informed the glory woman that she was all right and that I had gotten her to cast away her confidence. They also told me she got mad at her neighbor, shook her fist in her face and made some nasty remarks. She also said she was going to fix me if she ever saw me again.

Well if I am going to get fixed, I like to get it over with as soon as possible, so when I reached the meeting I looked over the crowd, and seeing this woman, I went over and asked her how it was with her soul? She twisted up her nose and said, "I wasn't as bad as you thought I was." I said, "I am glad to hear that, but what do you do with that old temper of yours?" She replied, "I just bite my tongue and plead the blood." I said, Sister, God has something better than that for you" and left her. The band was composed of all strangers to me, and the preacher brought a very good message on tongues. Six or seven came to the altar, among them a young man in my former meeting who did not get saved because of a crime he had committed against a girl and would not confess and make it right though I had kindly urged him to do so. I kneeled behind this young man, but said nothing, as I wished to see how the workers would deal with him.

They took him through a very superficial routine, such as "Do you believe in Jesus? Do you believe He died to save you?" The devil believes all that and more. Nothing was said about repentance, confession or restitution or cross bearing, but for a long time four workers urged him to "believe that Jesus saves you now." He did not even pray, at least you could not hear him. At least they got him to say yes, he believed, just mumbled it out. Then they urged him to stand up and testify. He stood up, hung his head and never said a word.

The four workers stood in front of him, and began to sing, "O Happy day that fixed my choice." When they got to the third verse, "Tis done, the great transaction's done," I saw the look of defeat and confusion on the young man's face, I could stand it no longer. Stepping between them I said, "Wait a minute this transaction is not done by a long way." They replied, "Well, he says he is saved." I answered, "Well, I don't care what he says or you either, and if you had the Holy Ghost you would know he is not saved." It broke up the meeting, but I thought I had done my duty, and that if a little preacher like me could break up a meeting where there were eight workers who claimed

to be filled with the Holy Ghost, there must have been something wrong. The band moved on in a couple of days.

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### 32 -- A REMARKABLE TESTIMONY

We heard a remarkable incident related by a foreign missionary, in a large church in Chicago. His wife was kidnapped by a fierce gang of bandits who lived in a secluded rendezvous. They demanded fifty thousand dollars for her release. Knowing he could not possibly raise this amount, he was of course in dire distress and did not know what to do. Pardon me, he did know what to do, with tears and groans he took it to the great Deliverer, who said to him, "Go up to their camp and I will deliver your wife from the bandits." He immediately started with two or three of his converts, who knew their hiding place and also their language. When they arrived the bandits came out heavily armed and looking very fierce. His converts fled leaving him alone. No not alone for he had with him God, who hath said "I will never leave or forsake thee."

Under a sudden impulse, evidently from the Lord, he pulled out his Bible and holding it aloft he began to speak in a strange language not knowing what he said. To his great surprise they threw down their arms and brought out his wife unharmed. They even sent an escort to lead them safely back to their mission. Surely this was a miracle of God's wonderful grace and love for one who believed God and lived near enough to hear from Heaven. Praise the Lord! I believe this was of the Lord.

A young Christian couple sent for their German grandmother, to come and live with them. The young couple were attending a real spiritual church. Though the grandmother could neither speak or understand English, they thought she might enjoy the spirit of the meeting, so they invited her to attend. When they arrived home, the grandmother was very happy and exclaimed, "I am so glad your minister spoke in German tonight." They informed her that she was mistaken, but she strongly insisted that she understood every word of the sermon.

Though the "Tongues" people, like every other false doctrine, have some fine moral members among them, the modern so called Pentecostal Churches, appear to have some kind of refined spiritualism.

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### 33 -- A DEMON CAST OUT

At another meeting in Rock Island, Ill. a little girl from a good Christian home came to the place where I was entertained, exclaiming, "Mamma wants you to come down right away, a woman needs help." When I arrived I found a pitiful looking woman, with a haunted look of fear in her eyes, her dark hair disheveled, and a little babe in her arms. I felt terribly helpless, but sat down and kindly began to question her regarding her spiritual condition. She seemed to have been clearly converted at one time, but was now fearfully in the dark. As I continued to question her she stuttered in a trembling, choked voice, "The Spirit does not want me to tell you."



This was my first case with a demon possessed person, and when I insisted she call upon Jesus for help, her face was distorted and fairly blue and her throat and neck suddenly swelled until it seemed she would choke. If ever I prayed silently to God for help it was then. As far as human help was concerned I was alone. The mother of the house was in another part of the home with the babe. I think it must have been two hours or more before she could pray and get a little help. I had gone as far as I knew how, but she was not delivered. Finally I told her there were some "Pentecostal" people in town who claimed to cast out demons and if she desired I would go and get two or three to come over, and she might get help. To be frank I also wanted to find out if it was true, as I had never witnessed anything of that kind.

I went to the place where they stayed, but they had gone. When I returned and told her, the despair written on her face touched my very soul, and a deep compassion fairly overcame me. I did not wish to look at her, so I sat to one side, the tears streaming down my face. I looked to the Lord and silently said, "Jesus if you were here you would cast the demon spirit out of her in a second." Much to my surprise the Lord said to me, "You cast it out in My name." I never said a word to the woman, but just arose and obeyed. She gave a fearful scream and straightened out in the rocking chair stiff as a rail and her arms above her head. She was white as a sheet and I thought she was dead. I became a little frightened and stepped back saying, "Lord I did not do anything." Suddenly she collapsed in the chair and sprang to her feet shouting and praising God, while another soul was turned "from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God." Praise His Holy Name forever.

I might add that she finally told me, after much questioning, that while coming to the home where I met her, she had to cross a river, and this spirit said to her, "Cast your baby in the river, throw it in you don't love it, throw it in." She said a great fear came over her and she had to clasp her child in her arms and run in order to keep from throwing her in the river.

We are of the opinion that demon power is responsible for much of the fearful crimes of today. We read in the papers nearly every day, of criminals, young and old, when arrested will declare, "I don't know why I did it, or I had a sudden urge." We believe that is often true, but where did that sudden urge come from? A greater authority gives the answer. Satan,--"The prince of the power of the air, the spirit-that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Eph. 2:2)

The present situation received a strong impulse in this direction, when parents fell for the utterly false philosophy, of letting the child have full expression of its natural instinct, and has been more deeply embedded by the children's hero, Roy Rogers, whom we trust innocently, introduced the two-gun, six or seven year old cowboy bandits. Surely parents should make an earnest endeavor to see their children genuinely converted to God in their very early youth, before they break your heart. You will also be responsible at the great judgment day.

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I loved the Indians. When I was a lad ten years of age, a few Indians camped in their tents in the edge of the woods, in Big Rapids Mich. They had a couple of boys about my age, and the fathers made, among other things bows and arrows. How I did envy those boys. I do not think it would have taken much coaxing to go with them when they moved away. However, my father among his few books had a "History of the Indian Wars." This book I read with avidity many times, with the result that finally embittered my mind against them, so that I fully decided that when I grew up I would be an Indian fighter, as they were not all at that time subdued.

I have in my possession an old pension certificate issued to my grandfather's brother, stating he was hired by the U. S. government to fight the Indians. While it is true that in the years of long ago, they were treacherous and cruel, yet remember they were fighting for their country, their wives, their children and their lives. If things continue as they are in our government, we may in the not to far future be doing the same. May God have mercy upon us.

A number of years ago Rev. and Mrs. Walter Janowsky, pastors of the Free Methodist Church in Salamanca, N. Y. had charge of the Seneca Indian work, on the Salamanca Indian Reservation. They invited my wife and myself to hold a revival meeting on the reservation. After much prayer we decided to accept the invitation. There was a very good attendance the first night, in the good sized Council-House.

It fell to the writer to preach the first message. I introduced myself by stating, "You Indians better get out your scalping knives, for you are going to get the strait truth from the Word of God." We found in general that was just what they wanted. As far as we can recall, Rev. H. E. Baker, a good live holiness evangelist, and his wife were among the first workers on this reservation, so they had gotten much real Bible truth and some were saved. We preached alternately and they surely appreciated Sister Thrall and the attendance increased rapidly.

One night there were two rows of chairs extending clear across the room, filled with seekers and a few workers. Most of them were Indians. When one prayed through to real victory, they immediately started to help others. They certainly knew when they struck fire and the community knew it also. Indians are naturally stoical, but they will surprise you when the Holy Spirit comes into their heart and life.

We recall a tall old Indian who came into the meeting one night all muffled up and carrying a lighted lantern. He came well up in front, blew out his light and made himself at home. He came every night looking very sober, saying nothing and did not come to the altar when the invitation was given. Finally one night in a testimony meeting he arose and said, "Holy Spirit tell me I must forgive my brudder." Night after night he would speak of things that the Spirit informed him he must do. We were thanking God because he struck a lot of things which we knew other Indians would have to confess.

One of the things was stealing coal. Oftimes several cars heaped up with coal were left on a nearby sidetrack. Some of the Indians would go at night kick some coal off and carry it home. Several other things were mentioned. One night the tall Indian arose with celestial light beaming from his face and testified thus, "Me do everything the Spirit tell me," then looking upward and placing his hands on his breast, with tears in his eyes exclaimed, "The Spirit couldn't wait no

longer he come right into my heart." Beloved, here is a great truth by an untutored Indian under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Oh, that sincere seekers of today would take this old Bible track, and thus escape the many false doctrines of the present day, when Satan comes as an angel of light. (2 Cor. 11:14.)

As in every good work and especially in revival meetings, the enemy begins to work. One prominent Seneca among the members got out his "scalping knife" and did considerable damage, even tried to get the Council-House closed against us, but Brother and Sister Janowsky were in too good standing with the Indians to allow this to occur. Sister Janowsky was fearful lest he might kidnap her baby for revenge. We told her that in answer to prayer, God could put a collar and chain on him and lead him around by the neck. This He evidently did for he humbled himself, confessed he was wrong, asked forgiveness and earnestly sought God. We considered him a man the Lord could use, if he kept true and blessed.

We are of the opinion that every fighter against "true holiness," is either spiritually ignorant, lacks full consecration or has some unconfessed sin in his life. If you doubt this assertion we would kindly suggest that you read Ps. 139:23-24. "Search me O God, and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." The writer has often had recourse to this wonderful Scripture. Praise the Lord!

There was an unusually fine looking Indian couple living near the Council-House, they came to us stating they had never been legally married. This is not unusual among unsaved Indians. They were very humble and contrite, desiring us to marry them publicly in the meeting. We suggested they get the pastor to perform the ceremony, which they did and if you ever saw a happy blessed couple it was these two lovers. They desired to go with us in evangelistic work and we would gladly have taken them but finance and the fact that they were needed on the reservation, deterred us from such a proposition. They were fine singers and often had invitations to sing over public radios. If we were in meetings within forty miles, they would come with one or two car loads of the Indians. Their singing in the Seneca language and testimonies in English were an inspiration to all concerned.

Two or three years later we held a meeting in this same place, under the supervision of Sister Margaret Noyes, who now with her daughter, Marie, are pastors of a work in Niagara Falls, but we must hasten along. We were holding a meeting for Rev. George Schroder, at Collins Center, N. Y., when Rev. Owl, pastor at the Indian school, on the Cattaraugus Indian Reservation, was holding what they called a revival meeting, using a different preacher every night. They sent for Sister Thrall, informing us they would have a good crowd and they certainly kept their word.

I do not recall being in a more crowded meeting. The church was good sized and when I say the church was well packed, I mean it was well packed. The balcony was crowded on both sides and in the entrance Indians were standing crowded, and even around the platform. There was no room for altar service. I have never forgotten the announcements Rev. Owl made before introducing Sister Thrall. He announced that Sister Blue Sky, a fine looking young woman would have charge of the singing. A chorus of well trained Indian ladies sang. He then announced that Brother Tall-chief and Brother Two-guns would take up the offering and that prayer meeting next day would be held at the home of Sister Red Eye.

The Holy Spirit was much in evidence, and at the conclusion of the service, Brother Owl said to my wife, "While you were preaching my heart was warm." Well, we believe other hearts were warmed as well. Several car loads from another place, sixty-five miles north were in attendance. We trust that God is still blessing those dear Indians, and that we shall meet many in the Glory World.

What true Christian can doubt that the judgments of God are already upon the earth and upon our great United States because of its wickedness. Even many of our so called holiness church members teetering around with high heels and other worldly attire are propagating man made programs and parties while they should be upon their knees imploring God for mercy and a real outpouring of the Holy Ghost in these perilous times.

All Heaven is on the side of His children who have really been born into the Kingdom of God and are walking in the light of holiness. I John 1:7 and I Peter 1:15

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35 -- FINIS BY MARTHA J. THRALL

[The reader is advised to bear in mind that the words "At present" used in the paragraph below were written perhaps well over 50 years ago -- and not "at present" in the year 2003, when this digital edition is being first published. -- DVM]

O. C. and I have labored together nearly thirty years, on circuits and in evangelistic work in eight states, ten conferences, Canada and Indian Reservations. We have endeavored to hold up the standard of Bible holiness and "Contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," and believe that God has given us some fruit that remains. We thank God for love, harmony and fellowship in our work and in our home. At present we are located in Pleasantville, Pa. Our address is simply R. D. 2, Titusville, Pa. With my sister Rev. Orpha Williams and her assistant Rev. Minnie Wertz, we have purchased a home near the Free Methodist Church, about 1/2 mile from the Oil City District camp ground. Here we enjoy Holy Ghost preaching, some shouts of victory and occasionally a visitation of His presence and glory upon His people, for which we praise the Lord.

Read Hebrews 12:21-29. Note the last verse, "For our God is a consuming fire." So the Bible standards are the same as they always have been. We must make our choice of Holy Ghost fire or hell fire.

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THE END