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My Old Kentucky Home

or Experiences from Life

Rev. P. P. Belew

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By

Rev. P. P. Belew

Author of: "Light on the Tongues Question;"
"Evangelistic Sermons and Other Messages"

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PREFACE

When the writer has delivered this message in his evangelistic campaigns the reaction of the congregations has been so favorable that it has been decided to put the matter in printed form. An attempt has been made to narrate only such things as, it is hoped, will be of general interest and helpful to the reader. No detailed account is given. Such is neither necessary nor desirable. There are some things in my past sinful life that I would rather not make public; and, if Satan does not make them known, I shall not tell on myself.

The critical reader will notice a frequent use of the personal pronoun "I." This has been done in the interest of easy expression; and is no doubt better than the substitution of "we," which is sometimes misleading and may savor of false modesty. However, my purpose is not to attract attention to myself, but to glorify God and encourage my fellowmen in His service. If this is done I shall feel amply repaid for my time and effort.

The message is sent forth with a prayer that God may speed its circulation and bless its mission.

P. P. B.

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A Sketch of My Life

CHAPTER ONE

EARLY LIFE

The writer was born in a cabin on top of a hill near Dry Ridge, Grant County, Kentucky, in 1894. The reader may better understand my disposition if I tell him it was the windy month of March. It was the last day of March, however, and it was by only a few hours that I escaped being an April fool package.

Perry Landrum, a neighbor who divided his time between farming and milling, was a close friend to my father, James W. Belew, Jr. My mother, Belle Morris Belew, had some years previous to my birth taken a great liking to a boy preacher named Pascal Porter. And when I, the seventh child and fifth son, was born they seemed to have had my name made to order. It thus happened that I have worn the name Pascal Perry Belew. Diligent research has enabled me to add a semblance more of dignity to the name. Blaise Pascal was a French mathematician and philosopher, Matthew Perry, an American commodore, opened Japan to commerce, and Belew was a Gallic sun god.

My father died before I was one year of age. I, of course, have no recollection of him, and never knew a father's care. I have many times felt its need and have had to learn much by unhappy experience that could have been different if father had lived.

Father died in debt, and the creditors soon took almost everything that we had. My oldest brother had committed suicide at the age of fourteen before I was born; and now mother and the six remaining children were doomed to experience the rigors of a poverty stricken life.

The mortgage on the farm having been foreclosed, we moved just over the line into Pendleton County to a village called Knoxville. The main thoroughfare of this hamlet was a dusty road, which stretched in pensive quietness some fifteen miles, from Dry Ridge on the West to Demossville on the East. To my childish mind this seemed a great distance; and a trip to Dry Ridge, which was five miles from my home, was a rare treat indeed. The locust tree, so well known in Kentucky, was plentiful in Knoxville; and when in full bloom it filled the atmosphere of the village with a delightful aroma that would grace the court of a king. Among the buildings of the village was one that had been designed and used for a storeroom. It was built from rough lumber, the cracks in the outer wall and in the ceiling overhead being closed by nailing over them strips of lumber three inches wide. Mother purchased this building and three acres of land for one hundred fifty dollars. Denudation and erosion had so completely done their work that less than an acre of the land could be cultivated; and even this small portion, like Gaul, was divided into three parts. These spots, which were separated from each other by clay banks and ravines, became familiarly known to us as "the garden," "the near patch," and "the far patch" or the "fur" patch, as we pronounced the word.

One of my earliest recollections is that of sitting on mother's lap with my head reclined against her bosom listening to her breathe as she talked to others or sang to me on the old cabin porch. More than thirty years have passed away and ten thousand changes have occurred since those glad hours. My two sisters have married and reared families of their own. Two of my brothers have married and died leaving families. Mother has passed into "the more excellent glory." The old house has long since been torn away. And I, now hundreds of miles from the old habitation, am the father of a beautiful family of children myself. But my mind leaps back over the flight of years as if it were yesterday that I passed through those experiences which now linger as hallowed memories.

After the indebtedness against father's estate was settled about all that was left to call our own was the above described property, a few household effects, a horse, a cow, and some chickens. Soon the stress of circumstances forced us to sell the horse and not long afterward the cow. What a parting it was! The horse that father had worked and the family had become attached to and the cow whose milk and butter had meant so much to us! Live stock was cheap in those days, and I think it was twenty-five dollars we got for the horse and eighteen or twenty dollars for the cow. The good man that bought the cow said: "Mrs. Belew, if I make a dollar on the sale of this cow you shall have it." He made two dollars and gave it to her. Again and again I have heard mother refer with grateful appreciation to this act of kindness.

It was an occasion of great rejoicing when in the late autumn Uncle John Franks, a prosperous farmer who had married a sister of my father, would "kill hogs" and give us a large sack full of fresh meat. And what a treat it was to occasionally visit them and enjoy Aunt Molly's good meals and the other comforts of her nice warm home! She usually gave me a lunch between the early morning breakfast and the noon meal. I can see her to this day as she moved about the house and yet hear her say: "Pascal, don't you want something to eat?" Having been taught by mother never to ask for anything to eat, I would answer, "I don't care." Smilingly she would say, "I don't either," and then prepare me a most appetizing spread.

Mother used to work into the late hours of the night, sometimes with insufficient fuel to keep her warm, in order, as she expressed it, "to provide something to keep soul and body together." We many times sat down to our table with nothing to eat but cornbread and coffee, and sometimes did not have even that. Children from other families wore better clothes to school than I did; and the fried chicken, cake, pie, and such like with which their lunch baskets were filled pre-

sented an appetizing contrast to the rough food which I carried in my "bucket." When other children ate red apples or nice bananas at recess; or when I attended an ice cream festival, which the stingy church members frequently put on to finance the work of the church, the best that I could do was to stand by hungry and wish that fate had decreed me a more favorable position in life. Being reared under such circumstances I quite naturally developed what the psychologists call an inferiority complex. And to this day, no matter how important my mission, I can seldom approach one of my superiors without feeling that I am intruding. If any one chances to ignore me, it is easy for me to forgive and to accept his judgment of my worth as correct. I could not wish another to suffer as I have done; but I have met a few persons of the superiority complex who I thought could have benefited by a limited amount of that experience which I have had in such abundance.

My brothers became addicted to drink. I have many times seen them so drunk that they were apparently dead. Being disgusted by such practices and influenced by mother, when very young, like Hannibal of Carthage who when nine years of age was led by his father to a pagan altar and swore eternal vengeance toward the Romans, I vowed that I would never drink alcoholic liquors. And to this day I have consistently kept that pledge. Knowing what I do of the suffering caused by liquor, I have neither confidence in nor respect for the abominable wretches that would perpetrate the nefarious traffic. May God speed the day when the hydra-headed monster will be legally and actually dead throughout the world.

I was about ten years of age when mother sold the old property. I well remember that she took three dollars of the money and got me a suit of clothes. It was the best suit I had ever worn and was the last one that she ever bought me. About one year later I started to buy my own clothes and did so ever afterward. It was for the sum of one hundred dollars that mother transferred to another the title to the old

home, the last that she ever owned in this world. Farewell, mother of mine! Your lot was a hard one. A thousand times was your heart broken; your sorrows were many and your burdens were great. May you repose forever in that city which hath foundations and whose builder and ruler is God.

CHAPTER TWO

COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

The instinct of love and desire for companionship are inherent in humanity and as old as the race. Love is of God, pure courtship is not sinful, and marriage is ordained by the Most High. In the very beginning God said: "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him." All persons who are true to type and normal in their lives have love for the opposite sex and a desire for matrimony and family ties.

The young people of my community had somewhat of a social center at the home of "Buck" McMillen. In fact we gathered there so frequently and in such numbers that his front yard was conspicuous for its lack of grass. "Buck" used to lie on the floor and lean his head against the wall while we chased in and out or sat by the fire and talked. Sometimes we had special music, and it was common on such occasions for "Buck" to sing an old-time number. At other times we boys would "chip in" to pay for the peanuts and candy and have a "peanut eating." I had an unmarried brother five years my senior who was in reputation among the young people for his wit and humor; and his presence was very much desired on these occasions to assist in funmaking. Great changes have occurred since those days. Several of the old crowd have crossed the great divide, some of them still live in the same community, others have gone elsewhere, and I am going up and down the land preaching salvation which I did not possess at that time.

Courtship constitutes an interesting part of life, but, like most other things, has its disadvantages.

In the first place, it is expensive. It was the exacting demands of courtship that necessitated my first pair of long trousers. Those were the good old days before little boys

wore long pants and young ladies wore knee dresses. A certain girl about fifteen years of age, whom I had been watching with a jealous eye and wishing for the opportunity and courage to call upon, lengthened her skirts. In those days such an act was considered an infallible sign that a young lady was ready to receive attention from young men. Having some mis-giving that I could realize my aspiration in my youthful attire and fearing that someone else would put in his "claim," I resolved to get me a garb that would give me more of a man's appearance. Accordingly I immediately got me a suit of clothes with long trousers. It was a cheap outfit, poor in texture and green in color. But what it lacked in quality was made up in quantity. I had the trousers shortened but not by cutting off any goods. They were turned up inside five or six inches and stitched; so that, if I should outgrow them, the "hem" could be let out. Another good feature of this arrangement was that the trousers never hanged up on my legs. The weight of the excess goods was such that when I stood up they automatically and instantly fell to my shoes.

Again, courtship has its embarrassments. I learned this the first date I ever filled with a girl. She fed me plum pie. We did not use a fork to eat pie in those days, but lifted it to our mouths in our hands much as we did bread; and ere I could reach my mouth with the appetizing morsel a portion of the colored filling fell down the bosom of my shirt.

I have always possessed a wholesome fear of dogs. And I remember at least one occasion when this fear reacted so energetically to a false stimulus that its revelation became embarrassing indeed. The report that a rabid dog had made its appearance had been circulated through the community where I lived. That night a boy friend and myself had called upon two girls and were returning afoot with this report fresh in mind. Upon reaching a certain point on the country road we heard something moving through the weeds very near to us. Horror of horrors! Could it be the mad dog? And with the alacrity that a jackrabbit moves on a Kansas prairie when pressed for its life by a greyhound we mounted two gateposts

which stood nearby. After a few minutes' conference in the air we ventured a hazard. Alighting from the heights of complete security we made our way a few hundred yards up the road to the home of my friend. There we secured a shotgun, a heavy club, a lantern and returned to make short work of the deadly monster. We had climbed upon the gate and I was holding the lantern so that my friend could take deliberate aim when he discovered that instead of its being a dog that we had heard it was his uncle's broken winged goose! The knowledge of the episode reached the young lady's father, who was a Baptist minister and somewhat of a tease; and when I again called upon his daughter and sat down in the parlor for a pleasant visit, he came to the door and recited a poem of "The Gander who Sought to give us Flight!"

It was after I was saved and preaching the gospel that I met Miss Sally B. Coulston, of Bracht, Kentucky, who became my wife. I had met her younger sister May a short time before when I had preached in a Sunday evening service at Bracht. And it was through calling at the Coulston home to see May that I became acquainted with Sally B. She was a beautiful girl of eighteen with golden hair and a wonderfully fair complexion. My love for the esthetic soon convinced me that it was this attractive blond in whom I was interested rather than her younger sister. I had kept company with May only a short time and felt neither obligation nor desire to do so longer; and having learned the art of exchange by trading horses, I decided to try my skill in trading girls. The "trade" went through and was mutually satisfactory to all concerned. Since I had found the "pearl of great price," I made haste to claim the treasure; and she seemed as willing to accept as I was to propose. It was on the morning of June 17, 1914, at Covington, Kentucky, that we embarked on the high sea of matrimony. I have easily lived up to all that I promised her, but I never promised much. I borrowed ten dollars from a friend to make the venture; and as to purchasing furniture and setting up housekeeping, I had little or no thought of that. Mother and I were keeping house at that

time; and, inasmuch as I was the chief supporter of the home, I thought there could be no valid objection to my adding another to the household. Therefore, I brought Queen Bee into the old hive to constitute the "right" angle of the family triangle. I was then just twenty years of age.

Not being content with changing just the maiden name of my bride, I sought and obtained the rare privilege of changing her middle name also. The name Sally never appealed to me especially; and, as the letter B seemed incomplete, I obtained her consent to call her Beatrice. It thus happened that she has since worn that name.

Starting as we did with nothing, the earlier years of our married life was fraught with great privation and sacrifice. I was serving my apprenticeship in the ministry; and not many people are willing to act as targets for a young preacher to shoot at and pay him for his practice too. Consequently, I have held meetings which did not pay my expenses much less support my family.

Our first three children died in infancy. Two of their little bodies lie on the green slopes of old Kentucky, the third one rests beneath the lonesome pine in the Ozarks of Missouri; but they are safe in the keeping of Him who said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not for of such is the kingdom of God." I shall see them again in the splendor of immortality on the morning of the first resurrection.

Once while passing through great adversity God graciously spoke to me through this verse in His Word: "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." It was as refreshing to my languishing spirit as cold water is to a thirsty soul. And while I have no accomplishments of which to boast, and believe that even now I am just in the sunrise of my day of usefulness; yet God has greatly turned the afflictions of those days. In His good providence I have acquired an education and preached the gospel through many States of this nation. And He has given us a beautiful home and five happy, healthy, intelligent children to compensate for the loss of former years. To Him be the glory and everlasting praise.

CHAPTER THREE

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

My mother was a Campbellite and a strong advocate of salvation by water; but she liked to attend the Methodist revivals at Knoxville, which were conducted in those days by Rev. Henry Maxwell, Rev. L. L. Pickett, and others of like faith. It was during such meetings, when I was very young, that my first impressions of God and religion were formed. Having been taught that God would give a person what he asked for, I began asking. I prayed for a hobby horse, and someone got it for me. Then I prayed for things which could not be reasonably expected, and not getting them, desisted from the practice of prayer.

My first real conviction for sin was at the age of eleven. For several years past the Methodist Church had conducted few regular services and no revivals, and spiritual life in the community was almost if not entirely extinct. Then some holiness people, who were affiliated with the work of which Rev. Martin Wells Knapp was a leader, began meetings in the little church. When they were invited to lodge in the home of someone, they accepted the invitation; if they received no such invitation, they slept upon the church floor. They ate with grateful appreciation such food as was given them, and fasted and praised God when they had no food. And when they sang the songs of Zion it seemed that the angels must have leaned forward to catch the sweet strains of their victorious singing. Their preaching made one feel that heaven had no top and hell had no bottom.

I did not get saved in those meetings. I had been exposed to the unscriptural and ignorant teaching that a child is not responsible for its sins until it becomes twelve years of age. And while I can not say that I fully believed it, yet it did have something to do with my not yielding to God. However,

the conviction that I was lost stayed with me. I quit some naughty things which I had been doing and began to read the New Testament and pray *in secret*. I was convinced of the way of salvation, and have always been glad that I learned the truth before error fixed itself in my mind.

When thirteen years of age, I attended a series of meetings conducted by the Knoxville Christian Church. It was in this church that mother held her membership. During these meetings my sense of spiritual need again became acute and the excuse of irresponsibility having been swept away when I passed the "age limit," I resolved to get right with God. The only expressions asked for in these meetings were to join the church or renew your church covenant. My teaching at the holiness meetings had convinced me that there was a "more excellent way" of getting religion, therefore, I sought recourse in prayer. I well remember the grove to which I repaired and almost the spot where I kneeled. There I asked God to pardon by sins and pledged to Him a life of obedience. I did not immediately received the witness to my acceptance; but that night when I publicly acknowledged Christ by uniting with the church my soul was filled with a sense of peace and security. When I asked God to remove the embarrassment which I felt in going forward, it vanished at once. In all my Christian experience I have never had a more ready answer to prayer. After being baptized by immersion I was enrolled as a member of the church—and left alone to work out my own salvation. For days my soul reposed in the glad confidence that I was God's child. It was then that it first dawned upon me that I should preach the gospel.

But the atmosphere in my home was not conducive to godliness, the community environment was bad, none of the churches seemed to have any spiritual life; consequently, I gave up the fight. It would be almost as reasonable to expect a young child to live in a refrigerator as it is to expect a new convert to survive in the frigid atmosphere of a spiritually dead church. I do not know exactly when my relationship with God was broken. I gradually "dried up" in soul and

awoke to the fact that I was backslidden. Let those that will "stick to the old church"; but having learned by sad experience the futility and danger of such a course, I am forever committed to the policy of an organized church for the promotion *and conservation* of Scriptural holiness.

While I did not long retain my justification, the memory of it lingered as a restraining influence. The first falsehood that I told thereafter was some two years later concerning my age while trying to secure a position in Covington, Kentucky. I never did get low enough to drink booze and "cuss," and used to argue for religion when I was far from possessing it. But little by little the minions of hell fastened the manacles of sin so thoroughly about me that I seemed to be hopelessly bound.

In the late summer of 1913 a series of special meetings were being conducted at the Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church. I was a regular attendant at the meeting and on the particular night of which I speak was standing outside (a practice of which I am now justly ashamed) listening through the open window. There was no response to the appeal of the evangelist; and the pastor made some closing remarks in which he referred to the case of a man with whom the Spirit of the Lord had ceased to strive. I do not recall that the incident made any great impression upon me at the time. But the next day while I was working alone in a tobacco field, which some one has rightly called the Devil's chewing gum patch, as suddenly as a bolt from the blue and as distinctly as I ever heard the voice of man, God spoke to me. And this is what He said: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." My feelings at that moment no tongue can describe. Under the floodlight of Holy Ghost conviction I was all but overcome with a fearful sense of my lost estate. If I had been disposed to doubt the fact of eternal punishment, I could not have done so now. My guilty distance from standards of right seemed to be that of infinity. The sins of my backslidden and ungodly life stood out before me as the darkest in all the catalogue of human transgressions. I seemed as a

miserable fugitive from justice who had at last been apprehended and was deserving of and near to the direst damnation. With trembling voice and weeping eyes I pleaded with the Christ of Calvary for mercy. But I was yet unwilling to abandon my sinful career, and even the compassionate Christ cannot pardon an impenitent sinner. Satan immediately said: "You have waited too long. Your opportunity is gone. You have sinned away your day of grace, and God will not hear you." My near frantic soul was engrossed in black despair. In my desperation I fled from the field, for God was there; and to a guilty soul the presence of God is as terrible as hell itself.

In a vain attempt to break the nightmare of conviction I plunged anew into worldly pleasure, and but for the long-suffering of God would today be in hell. For two long months life seemed unbearable. Heat was a vivid reminder of the hell fire which awaited me, and everything seemed to speak of eternity. I longed for release from my awful gloom and was afraid for the Spirit to leave me lest He might not return; yet clinged to a life of sin. My call to the ministry made it yet more difficult to yield. It was very clear to me that if I became a Christian I would have to preach the gospel; and Satan was always present to show me the impossibility of my doing so. I had barely completed the fourth grade in a country school and was now an ignorant young man of nineteen with no funds and little opportunity to acquire an education. How could I preach? Oh, the anguish and struggle of those dark hours!

One day I was again working alone in the same field where conviction had seized me. I was weeping and praying as I worked. My call to the ministry now seemed to be all that stood in my way. I was willing to forsake my sins. I would live a righteous life and help to support the church, but preach I could not. But as I grew more desperate in my seeking my courage arose. If I tried to preach and could not it would only be an honest failure; but if I disobeyed God and refused to try I was lost forever. Then with a firm reliance

upon Him who helps the willing, I made a final and vigorous effort to conquer my own unwillingness and agreed to undertake the most solemn and fearfully responsible work in which mortals can engage. Instantly the burden of my sins rolled away. My weeping was turned into laughter and my gloom into joy. And there in God's great temple of nature I sang songs of triumph and praised Him for victory.

But my struggle was not over. I was ignorant of the Devil's devices. I did not understand the process of temptation and under the tempter's fearful probing cast away my confidence. When I relinquished my faith I, of course, lost my peace of soul and lapsed again into darkness. However, in a few days I learned that a holiness meeting was being conducted a few miles from my home in the Blackburn Chapel schoolhouse. In company with another young man I attended one night, and what a meeting it was! A gracious revival spirit was manifest. The saints had the glory; and when they prayed the place may not have been shaken, but I was. The preaching had the heavenward pull and the singing was victorious. It was the first time I ever heard the song "I Would Not Be Denied," and when they had sung the third stanza:

"Old Satan said my Lord was gone,
And would not hear my prayer;
But praise the Lord the work is done,
And Christ the Lord is here."

my soul took courage. I saw that the impressions which had disturbed my serenity of soul were the malicious whisperings of Satan and felt that I should testify with the others to the saving grace of God. But the young man with me was unsaved and I was in the rear of the building where the Devil works hard; so I stifled my conscience and went home with a heavy heart.

I resolved to attend the meeting again the next night and publicly acknowledge Jesus Christ at the altar; but it was a rainy night and when I reached the schoolhouse it

was dark and empty. I went again the following night but the meeting had closed! Having learned that Rev. J. L. Thornton, one of the preachers that conducted the meeting, lived some ten miles from my home, I decided to visit him in the interest of my soul. This I did on the following Sunday afternoon.

Our roads in Kentucky were not surveyed in a direct course, as is generally done in the middle western states, but meandered through the hills so as to follow as far as possible the line of least resistance. After a long drive over such roads and several inquiries I reached his home, which stood several hundred yards from the public road, and immediately made known my mission.

Brother Thornton was just ready to start to Sunday School and invited me to attend with him. Not wanting to interrupt his plans, I went. It was at the Mt. Calvary Holiness Christian Church, which was then located about three miles east of Sherman, Kentucky. The church is now located near Flingsville and is known as the Liberty Pilgrim Holiness Church. There being no preaching that day, immediately after Sunday School we returned to the home of Brother Thornton to engage in the conference for which I had come to see him. With that hospitality for which the South is so well known my horse was placed in the barn and fed. Then, too, I had come to complete the work of getting right with God and knew not how long it might take. We then repaired to the house and it was the most wonderful home that I had ever seen. Not from the standpoint of beautiful architecture and rich furnishings, but because God was there. This good man, his wife, and all their children gathered about unworthy me and lifted their voices in a volume of prayer which I am sure was heard on the other shore. Never before had such interest been taken in me. Nor did it require coaxing to get me to pray. Dissatisfied with the world and tired of sin, I was seeking that rest of soul which only God can give.

But even earnest prayer will not suffice for that simple trust which God requires of the seeking heart. We arose

from our knees, and there by that wonderful fireside, as this man of God explained to me more fully the way of faith, the burden rolled away and my soul was filled with a deep measure of that peace which passes understanding. I started for home immediately; and brighter by far than the sparks which my horse's feet occasionally struck from the stone road was the fire of God which burned in my being. I had discovered a new world. The stars came out on dress parade, the trees seemed to clap their hands for joy, and all creation rejoiced with me. As the wheels of my buggy hummed a tune down that country road my soul gave expression to its feeling in singing:

“O what a change from a world of despair,
Glory divine with my Saviour to share;
Where once was gloom now 'tis light everywhere,
O what a change! O what a change!

“O what a change! Now His face I can see,
Once hid from view now 'tis glorious to me;
Once bound with sin, What a joy to be free,
O what a change! O what a change!”

That was on the evening of Oct. 26, 1913, and from that day down to this hour I have enjoyed sweet fellowship with God. On Nov. 11 following in a cottage prayer meeting after making a full and complete consecration of my all to God, I was graciously baptized with the Holy Ghost. The years following have been times of precious victory and He now abides as my Sanctifier.

Brother Thornton has since gone to his reward. Peace to his memory! His wise counsel in a critical hour helped to rescue me from the slough of despond. His hospitable home stood as a haven of rest to my weary soul. His beautiful fellowship, deep piety, and holy influence will never be forgotten. Enjoy thy rest, brother beloved! When the battles of life are over we shall meet again on the golden shore of eternal day.

CHAPTER FOUR

STARTING RIGHT

The old adage, "Well begun is half done" may not be altogether true, but it contains a great deal of truth when applied to the art of holy living. Pure religion is more than just assenting to the truth of Christianity. It is the union of the soul with Christ so that His life giving energy and holy principles permeate all the ramifications of one's daily life. Many fail to retain this blessed and vital union; either because they fail to observe the means of grace or do not assume their Christian duties. You that would "never fail" are exhorted to "give diligence to make your calling and election sure." And to him that would grow in grace the apostle says: "Exercise thyself unto godliness."

Hitherto my efforts to be a Christian had been half secret and futile. But now I resolved to be bold for my Lord at any cost. And since with all my heart I turned from serving Satan with all my might I turned to serving God. I was the youngest member of an unsaved household, but felt it my duty to conduct family devotion; and I accepted the responsibility as a sacred trust which Christ confers upon those who will take up the cross and follow Him.

As I reached home at a late hour the night that I was saved, I retired without telling the good news to anyone except mother. But when we had gathered around the table for breakfast the next morning and one of my brothers, in harmony with our practice, reached for the bread; I asked him to wait a minute and bowing my head expressed thanks to God and invoked His blessings upon the food. Mother burst into weeping and my brother with a look of surprise which I shall not attempt to describe said: "That sounds pretty good. Where did you learn it?" After breakfast I read a

chapter from the Bible and prayed; and my soul was greatly strengthened in the way of the Lord as I thus implored His help and leading. Then mother prayed. I had never heard her pray before, nor had anyone else; for, although she had been a church member for years past, she had never attempted to pray in the presence of another.

That same day I was employed by a farmer whom I had known and worked with for several years; and we discussed the subject of religion the greater part of the forenoon. He was a man of strong physique and jovial mien, but when I said grace at his table over the noon meal he trembled as an aspen and his wife wept as a child.

Having learned through Brother Thornton the night that I was saved that a young minister of the Holiness Christian Church had recently moved into my community, I called upon him the next night to form his acquaintance. True Christians were scarce in that locality, and the young man seemed as pleased to meet me as I was to find him. He was a good singer, able in prayer, and possessed considerable native ability as a preacher. We at once started meetings in the homes of the people and the country became stirred. The news spread that I had got religion, the crowds came, the spirit of revival filled the atmosphere, and others found God. It was in one of these services that I was sanctified.

Strange enough, those who had commended me as a fine young man when I was leading a sinful life, now circulated the report that I had gone crazy. I did not have time to deny the rumor; the fire of God was burning fervently within my bosom and I was busy campaigning for souls. Mother seemed somewhat in sympathy with me at first; but when the battle waxed hotter she became a bit antagonistic and tried to take refuge in her church membership and theory of salvation by water. However, she soon afterward sought God and at the time of her death was a member of the Pilgrim Holiness Church. My oldest brother presented me with a beautiful Bible and wrote me a letter which clearly indicated that God was dealing with him. My other two brothers were

brought under deep conviction for sin, but none of them yielded. The two that were the most deeply convicted have since died tragic deaths. One of them repented upon his death-bed and the other died under circumstances that made repentance impossible.

After getting right with God I felt, as John Wesley said, that I desired a league defensive and offensive with every soldier of Jesus Christ. I had little respect for free-lance religion then and have less respect for it now. I believe that the person who affiliates himself with a spiritual church is more likely to abide faithful to God than the one who considers church membership as unimportant. If I have made progress in spiritual things it is due in part to the responsibilities of the Lord's work which I have assumed. I have found in the holiness people a wonderful brotherhood; through the years my fellowship with them has not once been broken. I feel now as I felt then that:

"I am glad I ever found them,
For they led me to the right;
And I'm going *to stay* among them,
Daily walking in the light."

Since there was no spiritual church in my community I joined the Mt. Calvary Holiness Christian Church, which was located some ten miles from my home. Upon the recommendation of the brethren Rev. A. M. Ewing, the Presiding Elder of the district in which this church was located, issued me a Local Preacher's License Dec. 6, 1913.

About this time my young colleague was invited to preach Saturday night and over Sunday at a mission in Stuartsville, Kentucky. He asked me to accompany him and take charge of the Sunday morning service, which invitation was accepted. I had exhorted in prayermeeting and helped to "fill in" at other services, but had never attempted an out and out preaching service and knew nothing of pulpit preparation. But I looked over the sixth chapter of Romans and decided to use it in my Sunday morning service. I read it to the little audi-

ence but can hardly say that I *used* it. I talked *from* it, however, for my remarks went wide of its meaning. My leading statement was a broadside directed at the dress of young ladies, and there was not one present. I probably talked less than five minutes and brevity was the outstanding merit of the attempt. My failure was complete and I sat down chagrined beyond description. I received seventy-five cents for that "sermon" and have always known that it was not worth it.

We were now conducting services at Knoxville in the old Methodist Church. There it was that I had listened to the holy men of old. There it was that I had formed my first impressions of religion and received my first conviction of sin. And there it was that I was destined to make my first "hit" as a preacher. It was soon after the Stuartsville fiasco that I made this second effort in my home town. A good crowd had assembled to hear me. God gave me a message and greatly blessed me in its delivery. At the close of the service a man whom I had known all my life grasped my hand and said: "I did not think that was in you." He had thought correctly; it had not been there long, but was "put in" for the occasion.

CHAPTER FIVE

PIONEER EVANGELISM

Soon after the writer was married he started with his bride to go "everywhere preaching the word." But had he waited for calls to organized churches he might have been waiting still. During the first two years of his active ministry he received only two or three official invitations to conduct meetings for established churches. Instead of waiting for something to turn up he went out and turned it up. He felt the call of God burning upon his soul and made it his business to seek out opportunities for preaching the gospel. During this period he preached in abandoned churches, school-houses, halls, barns, anywhere he could get a building to preach in, a place to stay, and a crowd to listen. And he sometimes took chances on the last two conditions. But if he has developed any preaching ability, it is due as much to such constant effort as it is to hard study.

Pendleton County, Kentucky, was one scene of my labors in those early days. Two meetings which I remember in particular were at Bethel and Catawaba. Rev. H. V. Cummins, a young minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, assisted me in those meetings. The Bethel meeting was a very unpretentious affair; and among the few incidents which I recall are those of an old man with bushy whiskers who prefaced almost every one of his statements with the phrase, "as the sayin' is"; the ill behavior of some boys which made the name of the place sound as irony; and the very sad experience of a young man that requested prayer in the meeting and within two weeks died drunk.

At Catawaba God gave us a revival and the Devil furnished opposition a plenty. We were holding the meeting at the Baptist Church, which had no pastor and few members;

but a part of the few "showed their teeth" when the battle got hot. The man that had the most authority and probably less grace than anyone else in the church requested us to close at once. Among other things he said: "Boys, I will be honest with you. You are doing more harm than you are good." The harm to which he had reference consisted in souls finding God and the resultant demonstration. This was at the close of a Sunday morning service. It was our intention to close with the evening service, but we were unwilling to close so unceremoniously as he wished us to do, so we refused his request. But those who oppose holiness do not scruple to employ foul means to accomplish their purpose. During the afternoon the grown son of this church mogul, intending to lock us out, demanded the key of the lady that took care of the church. But she had found God during the meetings and would not surrender the key to him. Determined to succeed if possible in his diabolical attempt to forestall the service, his implacable animosity found expression in another direction. Climbing in through a window, he took off the stove door, tore down the pipe, and hid them. Albeit the invincible janitress would not be defeated. She found and replaced the stovepipe, improvised doors from lamp reflectors, and we had service. We were vividly reminded of Isaiah's vision of the temple when "the house was filled with smoke," but we had a victorious closing none the less.

Some time later the young man that perpetrated the deed which we just narrated fell to the street from a train as it passed over a bridge and was taken up dead. I do not know, of course, whether the sad incident was a divine judgment or just an accident; but it should certainly be a warning to others not to resist the proffered mercy of God.

Grant County, Kentucky, was another field of action for me in those days. At Dowingsville a merchant gave us the use of an old church building which he had been using to store certain kinds of merchandise in. We moved the barrels of salt to one end of the building, piled some other things on these barrels, placed our seats, and started meeting.

During "protracted meetings" in Kentucky at that time the preacher rotated his place of entertainment much as Ichabod Crane did his boarding house. He thought little of changing his bed every night or two; and if he had enough clothes and books to weight down his suitcase, his inconvenience was just that much greater.

At Dowingsville we had stayed at one home several days, and feeling that it was an imposition, resolved to stay no longer. Accordingly we took our suitcase to meeting, hoping that someone would invite us to their home for the night, but the invitation was not received. Among the articles of merchandise which we had piled up in the building were a carpet and some curtains for a harvesting machine. These curtains were made from heavy tarpaulin and had wood strips riveted to them, but we pressed them into service in lieu of blankets, improvised the carpet into a mattress, and lay down for the night but not to sweet dreams.

Not far distant from this place we conducted a meeting at the Mt. Pisgah Methodist Church. Like the Pisgah of the Bible and the poet's vision it was a "lofty height." The road leading to it from the East was one of the steepest, roughest, and most rocky that I have ever seen; and our chief mode of conveyance to and from meeting was a huge road wagon drawn by two invincible steeds. But the people came, and God gave a revival. Among the converts was a large landholder and tobacco grower who was also called to preach. He had a large amount of tobacco in the barn, and feeling that it would not be right to sell others that which it was wrong for him to use, he carried it out in the open and burned it. Whereupon the secular press branded him as a religious maniac. His act was possibly extreme, but the world would be in a far better condition if all the obnoxious weed were consumed in a "stink offering." I have no more charity for the detestable tobacco trusts, bent on enslaving and demoralizing the youth of the land, than I have for the liquor traffic.

During this itinerary of Grant County I conducted a meeting at the Stuartsville Mission where I had made my first

endeavor to preach. But the failure of the first attempt was a mild affair compared to the tragedy of this meeting. I later apologized and asked forgiveness and even now am justly ashamed of the fiasco; and would omit it from this sketch but for the hope that it may help others.

The revival was progressing nicely with a packed house and souls finding God, until I left off preaching the gospel to correct some inconsistencies of the Christians. The practices which I condemned were undoubtedly wrong, but my method of dealing with them served only to make things worse. A generous application of liniment vigorously "rubbed in" will cure some ailments. But if the ailment is only minor, and caustic liniment is used, and especially if the rubbing process is overworked, the treatment may aggravate rather than cure the disease. Likewise the gospel balsam faithfully applied with hands of love moved by a compassionate heart is the certain remedy for spiritual ills. But if the healing balm is strongly tintured with the acid of human prejudice and applied with the wire brush of zeal without knowledge, the results may be evil.

It was this latter method of treatment which I employed at this place. Instead of preaching with proper emphasis against sin in the concrete I diverted my attention to a few evils in the abstract and flailed them beyond all propriety. Then I appointed a service for the "guilty to confess," and finally refused to preach if a certain man attended the meeting. Of course, this search for "hypocrites" destroyed the revival spirit and killed the meeting. The attendance waned till only a very few were present for the formal closing. Despite the sadness of it all the experience has been of great value to me. The experiment may have killed the patient but it taught the "doctor" something; and he is thankful to heaven that he desisted from such charlatanism in the early days of his practice. Among the lessons I learned were the following:

First, if it is impossible to do some good, at least try not to do harm. A "kill or cure" treatment may be justifiable under some circumstances, but the individual that has "make

or break" as his slogan will frequently break, and eventually break beyond repair. Christ denounced sin with utter vehemence, and yet it was said of Him, "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory." Some adjustments are too difficult for even a holiness preacher to make. It takes God to make them; and if we are not able to assist Him in the matter, certainly we should not hinder Him.

In the second place, it convinced me of the futility, even the harm, of trying to force confessions. Popery is as reprehensible in a holiness preacher as it is in a Roman Catholic. Protestantism guarantees to every individual the right to think for himself in the matter of Christian duty, and most intelligent human beings will insist on having that right. No man, even though he is a preacher, has the right to act as conscience for another. It is the preacher's duty to turn the light of truth on the pathway of his fellowmen and earnestly exhort them to walk therein; but certainly he should not attempt to drive them to do so. With many people a suggestion is more effective than a human command. One should confess his sins to God and sometimes to others, even some public confessions are wholesome. But a confession obtained by duress has no moral value; and a mechanically arranged confession meeting is almost certain to result in harm.

In the third place, it broke me from riding hobbies and making issues out of nonessentials. This everlasting fiddling on one string is of the Devil, or from some other source not divine. Certainly its screeching sounds do not represent the music of heaven. The gospel violin has four strings, and few, if any, have sufficient skill to produce harmony and good music without the systematic use of them all. The manifest lack of unity that exists in some places is due to this "off hand" fiddling. Brother, string up your old fiddle, get it tuned, and do some practicing! The majority of the congregation like harmony and will "catch the tune," if you will make one. Strike all four strings and bring out some music. Hitherto your discordant medleys have been only distracting.

Finally, it has increased my stock of charity. Some good people who love God devotedly do some very "bone-head" things. The unsympathetic critic dubs them as back-slidden, but we do well to remember that absolute perfection is not found among men. Humanity at best is very lopsided. In the physical one shoulder is higher than the other, one eye is a little out of proportion to the other in size, one foot is larger than the other, and so on. What wonder then that we are so prone to err in judgment and consequently in practice. Then one's temperament and training have much to do with the quality of his actions. There is an excitable class of people who think that it is necessary to use a sledgehammer to break a peanut hull or a cannon to kill a snowbird. They are not without grace, but need to remodel their concept and get a new perspective. If only someone can help them to find the golden mean, they may be saved to Christ and the church. Let us remember that "to err is human, but to forgive is divine."

From Dec. 6, 1913, till August, 1915, I had "functioned" with only a local preacher's license. But having now reached the point of eligibility I with four others was put through the routine of examinations and admitted to the Indiana Conference of the Holiness Christian Church. Frankfort, Indiana, was the seat of the conference, and my hundred seventy-five mile journey to that city was the longest that I had ever made at that time. I had now reached Judea and was destined to make my appearance in Samaria soon.

Not long after this conference Rev. I. J. Snyder arranged for me to conduct some meetings in the State of Ohio, at Morrow, London, and in the country seven miles from Sidney. Brother Snyder and I preached together in the London meeting, and God gave us a revival. The meeting near Sidney was also a good meeting. But I have always remembered the Morrow meeting as one of the blackest, most difficult, and least profitable of my ministry. Only once or twice did I even have any degree of liberty in preaching; the rest of the time I fought "as one that beateth the air." Indeed there

was nothing else to "beat," for the crowd would not come. Eventually, however, I terminated the farce and beat a hasty retreat from the city.

Having completed my labors in Ohio for the time being, a young man from Springfield, who possessed some ability as a singer, and I went to Covington, Kentucky, where we attempted to start a mission. The attempt did not succeed, but the effort was a blessing to my own soul. During this endeavor was the first and only time that I ever prayed eight hours in one stretch. I was working on union time; but there was this difference between other union laborers and me—they stopped to eat dinner and I had no dinner to eat.

While my wife was visiting her mother at Bracht, Kentucky, this young man and I were doing light housekeeping, with emphasis on the word "light." And having completed her visit she was ready to assume her place in the "party" and wrote me for carfare to come. Her carfare was sixty-five cents. I had a very meager sum of money, but in order to provide her with a contingent fund, I sent her a whole dollar! I advised her, however, of my stringent circumstances and asked her to be saving! On my way to the Union Station in Cincinnati, where I was to meet her, I counted my money and found that I had enough for bridge fare and one cent over. Being hungry, I stopped at a restaurant and bought a bun with the extra penny; and the Christ who satisfied the multitude with a few loaves and fishes appeased my hunger with that lone bun.

Upon meeting my wife I was made to feel that Solomon was correct in saying "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord." Especially was I impressed with the truth of this statement in view of the interesting information which she gave me. In addition to the thirty-five cents "contingent fund," which had been carefully guarded, she had a dollar; in her traveling bag she had a quart jar of preserves and several messes of fresh meat; and the tray of her trunk was filled with potatoes. Instead of walking back to Covington, as I had intended, we rode the

street car. But the trunk, how would we get it home? It did not seem advisable in our circumstances to hire it hauled, so the young man and I carried it from Third and Central in Cincinnati to Sixth Street in Covington. The way was long and the potatoes weighted down the trunk, but the cargo was precious.

Many of the difficulties we encountered there before we gave up the struggle have faded from my mind, but the memory of one meal we ate, never! It consisted of potatoes cooked without seasoning and no bread. But the writer has never been conscious of a greater appreciation than he possessed that day. When he said grace words failed utterly to express the thanks which he felt in his heart. Since then he has many times sat down to sumptuous dinners of the most appetizingly prepared foods, and for these he has been profoundly thankful; but never has he felt so deep a sense of appreciation for food as when he ate that rude yet wonderful meal. Even now its memory lingers as one of the nearest points to heaven that he ever approached.

CHAPTER SIX

PASTORAL AND SCHOOL WORK

The writer united with the Church of the Nazarene at Newport, Kentucky, in January, 1916. The church with which I had been affiliated for a few years had treated me with great kindness, and we severed our relations on the best of terms. May God bless every denomination in the great holiness movement. They have my very best wishes for their prosperity, but I was divinely and definitely led into the Church of the Nazarene. Until after I had decided to join it, I had never attended one of its services nor conversed with one of its members. I knew nothing of the church paper and had considerable trouble in locating the Publishing House, so that I could secure a church manual. But I had become possessed with a great love for the church and had an intense longing to be identified with it. I thus came to it whole heartedly and have never doubted that my coming was of God. The first copy of the Herald of Holiness that I ever saw convinced me that it was the greatest paper in the world, and I have since had no reason to change my opinion of it. Nor have I been disappointed in the church. I love its Scriptural position, its holy manhood, its wonderful fellowship, its noble freedom, its unsurpassed vision, its Pentecostal aggressiveness, and its mighty swing. Long live the church of my choice!

“For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my toils and care be given
Till toils and care shall end.”

Having settled the matter of my church relationship, I was desirous of entering the pastorate and completing the course of study for ordination. Rev. G. O. Crow, who was

then Superintendent of the Missouri District, advised me of the prospects for work upon his district and invited me to attend the assembly. I accepted the invitation, but due to a misunderstanding reached St. Louis a month before the assembly was to convene. Having learned through Rev. J. E. Linza, who was then pastor of the Maplewood Church of the Nazarene, that a campmeeting was in session at Des Arc, Missouri, I resolved to attend. Des Arc was at that time the seat of a small holiness school which was successively called Southeastern Missouri Holiness University, Missouri Holiness College, Nazarene Bible Institute, and finally ceased to exist. At the time of which I speak it was known as Missouri Holiness College, and was in charge of Rev. C. I. Deboard and Rev. I. B. Sipes. Soon after my arrival these brethren approached me concerning attending school that year. It required no argument to convince me that I needed the schooling, but how to get it was a question too great for me. I had a wife to support and had but seven dollars in money, and had borrowed that. But the brethren encouraged me to believe that it could be done. They promised me some janitor work at the school and said that arrangements could be made for me to preach at some point accessible from the school. The plan upon which we agreed provided that I was to do a certain amount of janitor work and pay forty dollars in money in return for which my wife and I were to receive tuition and a room furnished for light housekeeping.

Five miles distant from the school was Gad's Hill. As far as the writer knows, this place has been famous for only two things. One was a train robbery by Jesse and Frank James, the other is the Church of the Nazarene. The church was at this time without a pastor. And in harmony with my practice of making an opening where such did not already exist, I invited myself to preach for them the first Sunday following the Des Arc Campmeeting. God placed his approval upon the services. I preached with all my might, and the people made many favorable comments; then returning to Des Arc, I began my school work on faith. But in a few

days I received a letter extending me an invitation to devote half time to the pastorate of the Gad's Hill church. This church went by the name of Beulah, and I certainly felt that I was in Beulah when I received the call. At the District Assembly I was appointed to devote the remaining half of my time to the pastorate of a little church at Millspring, which was just twenty miles from the school. After an eight month's pastorate at Millspring I was transferred to Fredericktown for the rest of the assembly year to occupy the pulpit which had been made vacant by the resignation of the former pastor.

For my eight months' labor at Millspring I received forty dollars, a part of which was paid in groceries and canned fruit. The remuneration at Gad's Hill averaged less than three dollars per week. One member of this church usually gave a dollar in the offering, *when he was present*. Call it scheming if you wish, but I have called for an extra number in song or prolonged the announcements till he entered the house before we passed the plates.

Another experience at Gad's Hill serves to illustrate how a preacher's prosperity may be overestimated. My wife had no hat to wear in public. And in order to accompany me to my Sunday appointments, she had on several occasions taken advantage of her school friends' generous offer to lend her a hat. It thus happened that she wore a variety of hats to meeting. One of the lady attendants at the church noticed this, and remarked: "I'll not give Brother Belew any money. Every time his wife comes down here she wears a different hat!"

The reader may judge for himself that our hardships that year were many and great. Much of the time we were driven to the necessity of eating cornbread and colored beans for breakfast. The fuel with which we heated our room was green sycamore wood cut from the Ozarks. My wife had a serious illness which came very near costing her life. But in spite of it all, God helped me to make high grades in

school, though I frequently arose at four in the morning in order to do so.

The writer has since attended much larger schools, but he has never found one where the presence of God was more manifest. I recall my experiences there as among the most hallowed of my life. I am now hushed into reverence by the tender recollections of those days when I drank from that wonderful spring whose crystalline waters gushed forth in mountain purity and walked through the now vacant and silent rooms which once echoed with prayer and praise to God. The old school is defunct, but her influence lives secure. Most of the students were there for business, and the majority of them have proved their worth. Anna Lee Cox is a missionary to Africa; J. W. Roach is now District Superintendent; Luther Roach is a pastor in St. Louis; Will Deboard and M. M. Summers are pastors in California; Lacy Kegley is a beautiful Christian nurse; besides others of an earlier day such as Ora V. Lovelace and more whose names are in the book of life.

Following my work in the Ozarks I served as pastor of the church at Caruthersville, Missouri, for one year, at the close of which I was ordained by General Superintendent Goodwin on Oct. 6, 1918. Immediately after this I accepted a call to the church at Vincennes, Indiana. My next two pastorates were at Ashland, Kentucky, and Georgetown, Illinois. At each of these places the blessing of God was upon my life and labors.

Later I organized a small church at Upland, Indiana, and accepted the pastorate of it with the privilege of attending Taylor University. There I completed my high school studies and took some college work. While at Taylor it was my good fortune to receive first prize in the Taylor contest in oratory. My theme, which was by the rules of the contest related to Bishop Taylor, was "The Influence of a Holy Life." I was conscious of God's help in its preparation and delivery, and give Him the glory for my success. I both needed and appreciated the fifteen dollars, which was given me as the

prize; but I appreciated the honor far more than I did the money. Dr. John Paul became the president of Taylor University the year I became a student in the institution. I have since enjoyed the privilege of preaching through a camp-meeting with Dr. Paul.

My last pastorate was at Marion, Indiana, where I also did my last school work. Here I put in some of the most strenuous labors of my life. In addition to my pastoral duties, I carried a heavy course in Marion College, and put on some large evangelistic campaigns.

Possibly my greatest achievement in this pastorate was to save the church property. The creditors were threatening to sell the building from over our heads. Our membership was small and composed of very poor people, "but God stepped in." We raised as much money in the town as we could, and then put on a strong evangelistic campaign in the church. The result was that we had a revival, financed it splendidly, and raised hundreds of dollars on our church debt.

It was during another revival effort in this church that there occurred the most miraculous case of healing that the writer as ever witnessed. The evangelist, Rev. James H. Garrison, and I were called out to pray for a lady who was seriously ill. We found her lying in a coma, and to all appearance in the shadow of death. In faith we committed her to the mercy of God, Who instantly saved her soul and healed her body. She arose with a shout and immediately left her bed and assumed the duties of the household. My faith received such an impetus through this miracle of grace that I felt, as John Wesley once said, that I had "lived a day."

It was with some regret that at the close of this meeting the writer gave up the pastorate to devote his time to the work of evangelism.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LATER LABORS

Since Feb. 12, 1925, my time has been devoted exclusively to the work of evangelism. The battle has raged almost incessantly and through many States of the nation. From wayside places to New York City, and from home mission campaigns to campmeetings I have preached the Gospel that saves men from sin. The fighting has been good all along the line, the people have rallied nobly around the standard, and the victories have been great. Sinners have been converted, Christians have been sanctified, churches have been organized, and thousands of dollars have been raised for the work of the Lord. "This is the Lord's doing," and I can only say, "Behold what God hath wrought."

Some people may have suffered a loss of reputation when they got right with God, but it was not so with me. "By the grace of God I am what I am." Whatever position I now hold in life or may ever hold I owe it to the wonderful grace of God. When I was saved at the age of nineteen I barely had a fourth grade education, but have since received collegiate training. As a sinner I could scarcely speak a correct sentence of English, but now have some knowledge of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. When God found me I had been in only two States and knew very little about them, but I have since traveled extensively in this country and some in Canada, seen many of the nation's wonders, and visited the metropolis of the world. It has been my good fortune to labor with some of the strongest men in the holiness movement, and a number of persons that were reached through my humble efforts have been called into the ministry. And for every friend that I lost in making the change God has given me a hundred instead. Does it pay to serve God? How can I do

less than render to Him my eternal allegiance and profoundest homage?

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, by all.”

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE INFLUENCE OF A HOLY LIFE

[When a student in Taylor University the writer was awarded first prize in the Taylor Contest for the composition and delivery of this oration.]

In a complex state of society such as we have human life without influence is impossible. Directly and indirectly, consciously and unconsciously each one is wielding sway over his fellows. If his life is useful, none but God can compute its wholesome effects. Especially is this true when the heart is touched by the Divine Hand and the will is yielded to the will of its Maker. Thus the peasant comes forth from his thatch-roofed cabin to set in motion influences that will never die; and the man of no promise scales the ladder of fame and causes the barren wastes of fruitless lives to rejoice and blossom as the rose.

One of the most useful lives that ever graced a fallen world was that of Bishop William Taylor. Born of good parentage and converted when young, under God he became perhaps the most potent human factor for righteousness of his day. Employing a Bible phrase, he began at Jerusalem, advanced to Judea, Samaria, and finally to the uttermost parts of the earth. The world was his parish, and wherever he went his service was attended with the most gracious results. Beginning as a circuit rider, he rose to the office of Bishop, and became the greatest missionary of the time.

He was appointed a field in California, and emigrated there during the great gold rush. Much of the State where great cities now stand was then a vast and open expanse. Cutting the timber with his own hands he built his home, which stood for the weary as an oasis in the desert. He was handicapped by a small salary and confronted with exorbitant prices and seemingly insurmountable difficulties yet he over-

came and accomplished a wonderful work. For seven years in the open air from the plaza, from a goods box, from whiskey barrels, to miners, to gamblers, to drunkards, to outcasts, to the influential, and by the bedside of the unfortunate with no uncertain sound he declared the whole counsel of God.

Following this for three years he evangelized in the old States and in Canada, leading thousands to Christ and building again the wastes of Zion. Then came the call to the regions beyond.

In Australia during three years of his ministry more than eleven thousand members were added to the church and many were called to preach.

In South Africa at one religious awakening twelve hundred colonists were brought to a sense of their responsibility to God, and this awakening spread from kraal to kraal till more than seven thousand natives were converted.

In India he won more than five thousand souls in one year. There he began his system of self-supporting missions, and in six and one-half years had fifty missionaries, fifty-seven native local preachers, and two thousand forty laymen, who supported the cause.

In South America he continued the same policy, and with the promise of only hard work, sacrifice, and a martyr's crown he assembled a band of noble men and women, cultured and refined, who willingly sailed as third class passengers, and when on the field unselfishly wrought and achieved for God.

After his election as Bishop, he entered Central Africa and established a chain of thirty-six mission stations along the Congo. Well did the natives call him the "Flaming Torch."

Bishop William Taylor was a prince of men. Having wrestled, like Jacob, until he received the Holy Spirit he had power with God and power with humanity. At the mention of his name as Bishop for Africa he was elected by an overwhelming majority. He believed that he was called to the humanly impossible, and his achievements warrant that belief. So truth-laden and unctuous was his preaching that

heathen were saved under a single discourse. Believing firmly in the providence of God, he neither sought position nor shirked responsibility, but considered a conviction of duty paramount to every other consideration; nor would he ask exemption from or mitigation of any severe discipline that was necessary to build character for eternity. He was interested in civic righteousness as well as religious, and during the Civil War in America, published and circulated in Great Britain a tract, which President Hayes said was of more value to our cause than a regiment of soldiers at the front. His usefulness was greatly augmented by his power of adaptation and tactful yet uncompromising methods. Whether dealing with the heathen on the foreign field or the cultured at home he knew how to impress them for God. He looked not down on the poor nor up to the rich, but loved and respected both. Magnanimous in soul, pure in motive, and inflexible in purpose, his success was most glorious. From the frozen land of Canada to the volcanic peaks of South America, from the coral strands of Asia to the pastoral fields of Australia, and from the crowded cities of Europe to the deadly jungles of Africa thousands will arise in the judgment and call him blessed. Taylor University, standing to defend the faith and propagate in all lands the message for which he gave his life, is a fitting memorial to the vast significance of his godly career.

After having preached the Gospel for sixty years, made more than sixty voyages at sea, and written many books, on May 18, 1902, amid the fragrant blossoms of sunny California this author, preacher, and missionary forever closed his mortal eyes to the scenes of this life, and his wonderful spirit was wafted by a convoy of angels beyond the bright blue to the home of God. He died as only a righteous man can die. His ashes rest in peaceful quiet, and most surely do his works follow him; but not till the din of war is silenced and the golden beams of heaven's sunlight play in cloudless splendor around a world, redeemed and sinless can we properly appreciate the influence of that holy life.

CHAPTER NINE

CHRISTIAN PEACE

[This is an abridgement of an oration which the writer composed and delivered in a contest when he was a student in Marion College at Marion, Indiana. He does not claim that all the conclusions are correct, but simply gives them here as he stated them at that time.]

Ever since that night long ago when the herald angels sang in strains of love over the Infant born in Bethlehem's manger, the dream of the world has been for "Peace on earth and good will toward men." Yet, notwithstanding the lapse of twenty centuries, the spirit of militarism survives and large armies are maintained for the perpetuation of this nefarious traffic. Scarcely has there ceased to fall upon our ears the thundering echoes of the most destructive and horri-fying war that the world has ever seen. Sixty million men were mobilized of whom ten millions died and twenty millions were wounded. The cost exceeded two hundred billions of dollars and the atrocities were so great that one wonders whether another such catastrophe would not destroy civilization entirely.

A glance at a world thus torn by war, shot through by strife, and staggering beneath the burden of militarism evinces that all efforts down to the present time have failed to produce a universal and lasting peace. It is also evident that the realization of such peace will require greater co-operation of the nations than has hitherto been known; and, we believe, fundamental changes in the government of many peoples.

There should be established in all countries where such does not exist a republic, a government that derives its authority from the consent of those governed instead of the

iron will of an illdisposed despot. Down forever with any system of ruling that makes it possible to disturb the peace of the world at the sheer mandate of a conceited autocrat! Give the people a voice; let speak those upon whom fall the burdens of war, and the system will be forever abolished.

For the violation of international law let there be affixed a penalty varying according to the offense from a monetary fine to the suspension of diplomatic relations. Such a plan would displace war as surely as the peaceful settlement between individuals has displaced the historic wager of battle and the amicable relations of the United States have displaced the inter-tribal wars of barbaric days.

Again there should be disarmament and a proclamation of amnesty by all nations. Any plan for peace based upon militarism is a failure. The means destroy the end. And a nation that does not respect a treaty will not take up arms to prevent war unless its own interests are involved. "The way to peace is through agreement, not through force." The truth of this is grounded in psychology and is not without precedent in history. The application of this principle by the great William Penn wrote into history the fact that no Quaker blood was shed by the Indians. The application of this principle promotes the cordial relations that exist between the United States and Canada, which stretches in peaceful quiet four thousand miles along our border. No warships are maintained on the Great Lakes or the Saint Lawrence, and for one hundred years the peace of the two countries has been as deep as the waters that roll between. On the contrary the departed scepters, the fallen thrones, and the national chaos of warlike peoples testify to the fact that, "They that take the sword perish with the sword."

The successful consummation of this plan will require an extensive program of education. Let peace publications pour in upon the conscience of a guilty world like snowflakes from a winter's storm. When the press ceases to dignify war, and begins to characterize it as an unspeakable monster to be banished from the land; when statesmen and ministers alike

condemn it, and cease to eulogize the individual that hangs the greatest number of scalps to his girdle; when the public is taught to regard it as an infamous relic of barbaric days, much will have been done to curb the spirit of war and pave the way for lasting peace. No phase of education is so important a factor in the promotion of peace as the dissemination of the Gospel. In the language of our late president we must "diminish among peoples the disposition to resort to force," and what would so tend to diminish that disposition as the faithful and persistent enunciation and application of the principles of the Gospel. Substitute the philosophy of Jesus for the "blood and iron policies" of the past and the problem will be solved once for all.

We protest against America's being drawn into any alliance with the Old World that might involve us in a foreign war; yet we must concede that through invention and commerce the various nations have been brought into such close proximity that isolation is no longer to be thought of. America must, one way or the other, enter the arena of the world's struggles. Will she throw her influence on the side of right and seek to lead the world to peace? Never in history have circumstances been more favorable for this mighty movement. The clock in the steeple of time strikes twelve in the day of opportunity. The world wearied with autocracy, is looking toward the masses for redress and will hail with gladness the freedom that democracy offers. In the light of facts shall we sit in stoic silence while war stalks through the land and the fairest fall in the fray? Must this God dishonoring, conscience murdering, life destroying, soul damning regime continue? Forbid it almighty God! The overburdened and oppressed taxpayers sigh for its abolition. The blood of ten million heroes, shed as a sacrifice to the god of war, cries out against it. The sobbing spirits of the world's motherhood, bereaved and broken-hearted, beg for peace. The blighted hopes of five million cripples, now a misery to themselves and a care to government, demand a change. The infinite value of the world's youth echoes its protest. Then let us arise

enmasse for the inauguration of this great plan to banish war to the realm of remotest possibility. An aroused public conscience banished piracy from the seas, abolished slavery forever, and wrote into the constitution of the United States the eighteenth amendment. May it again crystallize for the extermination of this evil of the centuries.

Finally, may we not cease to pray that God will grant peace among the nations and that His love may shine with undimmed splendor into the hearts and lives of men until that glad hour when there shall descend in clouds of glory and gorgeous splendors of eternal majesty Christ the Prince of Peace. Then "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together and the lion shall eat straw like the ox." Righteousness shall reign from shore to shore, and "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."