



MEMOIRS
of my Religious Life
and **MINISTRY**

John W. Youngblood

Memoirs of My Religious Life And Ministry

By

John W. Youngblood



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Chapter One

This is a sketch history of the religious life and ministry of John W. Youngblood written by him when in his eighty-eighth year of age.

I was born October 20, 1860 in the state of Arkansas. My father, Doctor Franklin Youngblood, was a member of the Methodist Church. His father, George Bradley Youngblood, was a licensed exhorter in the Methodist Church, and had his children baptized by sprinkling when they were infants, and brought them up in the Methodist faith. My mother had been converted in early life in a Baptist revival meeting and had been baptized by a Baptist minister by immersion. We children were not baptized in infancy because my mother did not believe in infant baptism and my father honored her faith.

My parents were both very strict in their religious views. The Ten Commandments was their main platform. To them the Ten Commandments was the highest code of laws that ever had been given to man, and as they had been written by the finger of God himself on tables of stone, they were greater than any laws that had ever been written. The only exception was in regard to the fourth commandment. They believed that in some way or manner the Sabbath had been changed from the seventh to the first day of the

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week, and Sunday was now to be observed as a rest day the same as Saturday had been before Christ arose from the dead. This was the faith which I was taught. Not only my parents, but almost all the preachers, as well as I can remember, taught about the same thing. They would differ some in regard to the modes and the subjects of baptism and some other minor things, as they called it, but the old Stone Table Ten Commandment Law was their standard of righteousness.

Most of the preachers whom I knew used tobacco, and many of them drank whiskey, which was very plentiful in those days. There was a distillery in our neighborhood, and any adult person could buy it by the gallon or trade grain for it. The people seemed to think that since tobacco and whiskey were not named in the Ten Commandments, that there was no harm in using it in moderation.

Four different kinds of preachers preached in our school house—Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, and Christian. The Christian preachers were commonly called Campbellites in those days. Almost everybody went to church services regardless of who was going to preach, and there was very little contention among the preachers or members. When one would have a revival, the others would join in and help. Every fall when the weather was nice, the people would go together and make a big brush harbor and all the preachers and church members would work together and have what they called & union revival. Many would come and kneel at what we called the mourners' bench and get what the people generally called religion. Some would call it conversion. I do not remember ever having heard the term "salvation" used in those days, yet I truly believe that many did receive the forgiveness of their sins in those meetings. The Christians did not believe in a mourners' bench, but taught that sinners were forgiven in the act of baptism. They also

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taught “doing” religion instead of “getting” it. But the Methodists, Baptists, and others would say, “How can you do without something to do with?” They taught that we need to have heart-felt religion in our hearts to start with. But there was one thing that they were all agreed on, and that was that there was no person that did not sin; and they seemed to have plenty of Scripture to prove their point—and I think most of them practiced what they taught.

From my early youth I loved to hear preaching, singing, praying, and testifying in church. I never took much stock in the big shouting meetings. Somehow I did not enjoy them very well. But when I was only five years old my mother would take me to the chapel where the army chaplain would preach to the soldiers on Sunday, and I surely did like to hear the chaplain preach. And today I have in my memory many of the words and even sentences he spoke.

An old woman lived near to us whose husband was almost blind. She would come to our house and sing for me and tell me about Jesus. I can still remember some of the songs she would sing for me. I loved her very much.

As I grew older, my parents would take us children, to the meetings. We would sit by them on a long bench, with no back on it—and believe me, we were taught to be quiet. When we came home Father would ask me questions about the sermon, what the text was, and such like. If I could not remember, I would get a scolding; so I learned to listen and take notice to what was said. Also, Father would teach me not to criticize. He said, “Learn to take the good and be satisfied.”

I also took a great delight in music, especially in singing. By the time I was sixteen I was singing in church meetings. Sometimes I would be called on to lead the songs. By the time I was eighteen

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years of age I was attending singing schools and leading in singing classes, and soon began teaching singing classes. So I soon became known over most of that country as the Youngblood singing boy. I had many friends almost everywhere in the country where I lived.

Never in my life did I have much desire for worldly amusements, such as 4th of July picnics, dances, and such like. I went to two circus shows in my life and just a few picnics, and one dance. I took no part in the dance, and it broke up with a row. But I did enjoy our literary society where we had some very interesting debates on such subjects as: Women's Right to Vote, Temperance, Education, and such like. But my delight was in singing and religious meetings. I went to a few horse races, but never bet on a race. I liked to see horses run. The only thing that I ever gambled on was shooting matches. I had a good eyesight and a good rifle gun, and was a good marksman and always won more than I lost in the matches. But I gave up that habit one day when a poor man with a family shot with us all day, lost all his money, and went away looking very sad. He had left home that morning and came to the match leaving a very sick child in bed, and was sent for twice before he left the match. Right there and then I said I would quit, and did. Many of the church people would attend the horse races and the shooting matches, as there was nothing in the Ten Commandments against it.

Most generally I was looked upon as a very moral boy, and any of the different denominations would have accepted me on baptism, but I knew very well that I was not right with God and really I felt in my soul that if I should die I would be lost; and I also had doubts about many others who made a high profession, especially those who would do so much loud shouting, for I knew some of them were not keeping the Ten Commandments.

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Time went on, and in the fall of the year in which I was 21 years old the typhoid fever attacked our family. I and some other members of our family came very near dying with it, but by Christmas we were all better and my father and the family moved away to the Eureka Springs in Arkansas.

I took up lodging with a friend for the winter, but he died in a few weeks with T. B., then I went to a relative of mine. He leased his farm to his son and me for five years. The farm had a tenant house on it, and I was to have the free use of his house when I got married in the fall. My health was poor, but we sowed and planted and had a good prospect for a good all-around crop when I took down with an abscess in my left lung, which kept me bedfast for one whole month. Mr. Youngblood and his wife were both members of the Methodist church. They were good people and took good care of me. My own father and mother could not have given me better care. I loved them, and as soon as I was able would go to church with them; but I had lost my voice and was very much afflicted in my left lung.

At this time we had a very fine old pastor by the name of Windel. He was very good and kind. He took a great interest in me. He would ask me to come up and sit with them. He would pray for me to get well and get my voice back again, and would pray the Lord to make a preacher out of me. He would pray and preach that the church members should live holy and free from sin, and when anyone in the neighborhood would be sick he would visit them and pray for them. His preaching was on a higher standard than any I had ever heard before, and he seemed to enjoy and live to what he preached. I can truly say that his life and his preaching had more effect on me than any I had ever heard before. It seemed that he was

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nothing but kindness. I learned to love him and honor him very highly.

Chapter Two

Before I had been confined to my bed in the spring, my partner and I had planted our corn, sowed oats, millet, and had a good all-around crop. Also we had bought in on a field of wheat on the farm which had made a good yield. All was harvested except the corn, which was yet green in the field. My health was improving and we both were very well pleased with our good crop. We were planning to sow quite a lot of wheat in the fall, then both get married and settle down for life. Mr. Youngblood had promised to sell each of us forty acres of land at the end of our lease. I was to get the forty acres that had the tenant house on it, and his son another forty acres on the other side of the farm, and between us we would rent and care for the balance of the farm. The price had been agreed on but no deposit had been made on the purchase of the land. We were taking each other's word in good faith.

A revival meeting had been held in a big brush harbor near us, and my partner and his sister, a young girl about sixteen years of age, had both got religion. There was great joy in the home. Father, mother, son, and daughter all had heart-felt religion, the good old Methodist kind. The only thing lacking was for me to get religion and then all would be well.

About this time (I think it was about the middle of August) a big Methodist revival meeting began at the Montgomery chapel in

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the north part of the county about twenty miles from where we were living, and our pastor Brother Windel was to be the main preacher, although the district presiding elder was expected to be there to hold quarterly conference during the meeting. So my partner and I decided to go and attend the meeting and then sow our wheat when we came back.

We left home one morning on foot, and when we were about half of the way there someone overtook us driving a heavy one-horse surrey. We stepped out of the road to let him pass, but he recognized us and stopped. It was our old pastor, old Bro. Windel. He asked us where we were going. They asked us to ride with them, and they took us right to the chapel. We were both gladly received and had no lack of homes. We were treated very nicely. This old Brother Windel did almost all of the preaching, as it was one of his regular preaching places. Several came to the mourners' bench and got religion. My wife also made a start during this meeting. She was then living with her mother not far from where the meeting was held. We set the date of our marriage during this meeting.

A very strange thing happened during this meeting. There was a very fine old man in the neighborhood by the name of West, whom the people called Uncle John West. He was the father of Mr. Youngblood's wife. He had a son, Will West, who had left home about twenty years before this time and had gone to Texas. He had not written to any of his relatives to let them know where he was. His mother had died and his father mourned much because of him. During this meeting he came home. He had got religion in Texas and had become a very able preacher. When the meeting was over he came to Mr. Youngblood's home to see his sister, and preached a few times in our chapel. He had married in Texas. He had a big farm and a family and was doing well. He thought there was no place

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like Texas. In a very short time he had Mr. Youngblood all fired up with Texas fever, and in a few days he sold his farm for cash and I was left homeless. His son's girl had quit him, which caused him to lose his religion. I had no religion to lose, and was perhaps better off than my partner; but I had lost confidence in Mr. Youngblood. I was engaged with no place to take my girl when I got her. These things were hard on me. He never said one word to me, only told me that I would have to get another place to stay by the first of Nov. Since his son had lost his girl, he made no complaint for he had the Texas fever also, and was willing to go.

Had it not been for the confidence that I had in the old Brother Windel and his prayers for me, I might have turned against all kinds of religion. But even then the Lord was teaching me to trust in Him.

I found a place to stay and got work. In a very short time the widow of the man who had died with T. B., whom I had nursed the winter before, came to me and wanted to sell me the homestead they had taken. She said she could not live on it now. Her husband was dead and she could not take care of it. She made me a price on time payments and I bought it.

When the appointed day came, my girl and I were married, and I took her home. We had a big house. It had been a school house, and we let an old Baptist preacher preach there once a month for quite a while. I liked the old man quite well, but I was married then and had a wife to care for and thought I had no time for religion. The melody of my voice was gone and my health was poor. Times were hard, and I fell under a spirit of discouragement and tried not to think about religion.

This state of mind continued for about three years. We did not attend church services anywhere. My wife would sometimes want to go, but I would not take her and she could not go alone. We sold

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the place I bought from the widow and paid her in full in cash, and had some money left. Then we kept house for my wife's brother whose wife had died. I farmed part of my wife's old home place. I was full of malaria, having chills every third day. We had two children, one a young baby. Wife was in bed and a girl was hired to care for her and the children while I tried to work.

The weather was warm. Our other child, about two years old, slipped away from the house, went to the orchard, and filled her stomach with green apples. This brought on a bad case of cholera infantum. She grew worse and worse. We called the neighborhood doctor, who came and left a lot of medicine for her, which we gave as directed, but she still grew worse. We called him again. He came and left more medicine, but doubted that she would recover. Several children had already died of this plague. She continued to get worse and was very low, I sent for another doctor who was a young man about my age and with whom I was well acquainted. He lived about fifteen miles away.

He came, looked at her and said, "Poor little thing; she has only one chance in many to get well." He asked who had been treating her. We told him and he asked to see some of the medicine. We showed him what was left. He looked at it, tasted it, and then began to curse the doctor that had left it. I knew that his cursing the doctor was not doing my child any good. Finally he cooled down a little, and I said,

"John B.—, can you do anything for my child?"

He said, "I will do the best I can."

He opened his pill bags and took out some dark looking powders, put them in a large bottle, put water in, and shook it well. He told me to give her a teaspoonful every hour or oftener and not

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to give her any water or any other fluid of any kind whatever. Then he took out some white powder as white as flour, then some black powder and mixed it all up together. He told me to give her a teaspoonful of this about every two hours and to let him know in a couple of days if she should live that long. He got up and started away. I followed him out into the yard and said, "John B—, I want to know what this medicine is that you have left for my baby."

He said, "We are not supposed to tell. We have Latin names for almost everything; but you are a friend and I will tell you. The colored water is simply rain water with log wood mixed in it. It is to paint or color the stomach and bowels, for they are perfectly raw all the way through. The white powder is nothing but chalk. The black powder is nothing but animal charcoal ground fine. Either one is good to check the bowels. None of what I am giving her can possibly harm her, and may help her."

He went away and I went out in the woods in earnest prayer for my child. I made God some good promises if He would heal my dear sweet girl. And strange as it may seem to some, I got an assurance in my soul that she would get well. The next day she did not seem to be any better, but I had no doubt. The next day she seemed more restless, but was so weak she could not turn her head nor lift her arm. I told my wife's brother to go after the doctor, as he had requested. He looked at the child, then at me and said, "Wesley, this child is dying right now, and will not be alive when the doctor gets here."

I said, "She is not dying, and will not die. She will get well. I know she will."

He said, "Wesley, I thought you were a man of better judgment than this, but for your sake I will go."

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It was in the afternoon when he and the doctor came. The doctor examined her very closely and said he believed she was taking a turn for the better. He left more log wood rain water and told us to keep up the treatment just as we had been and to let him know about the case again in two days. He went away and I went to the woods for prayer and praise. The next day she could open her little eyes, and the next day all could see that she was coming to life again. The doctor came that day. When he examined her he said she had taken a very decided turn for the better.

She did get well and is living today. She is the mother of a large family. Now I know by experience that God does hear and answer the prayer of a poor sinner when he calls upon him with a humble spirit.

Chapter Three

My Experience

Soon after we were married, my wife's aunt gave her a small New Testament, which was the only book we had in our home for several years. I read it quite often and was very much interested in the many precious promises I found there, especially on divine healing, and would often wonder why the preachers did not preach on that subject. I could hardly read a chapter in the four gospels or the Acts of the Apostles but what I would read of healing, and it seemed very reasonable to me that God could do the same today. My wife's uncle who was a United Brethren preacher would visit us at times. He was a good man and good to comfort us in our afflictions, but he never told us that the Lord could heal us when we were sick. But when I believed the Lord had healed our dear little girl in answer to my earnest prayer, I became a firm believer in the New Testament teaching on that subject.

We were living to ourselves. Our little girl was getting along fine, and her sister younger than she was a fine healthy child. My wife and I were both poorly in health. We were not attending church services anywhere. My wife's uncle had a congregation about seven miles down the river below us, and the Methodist church that I had attended in my boyhood days was about seven miles near the river above us. I had only one horse and no wagon, so when my wife

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would speak about going to church I had many excuses to offer. But the main reason was: The good old Brother Windel whom I had loved in my boyhood days was not preaching at the old Methodist chapel anymore; and I knew that in her uncle's congregation there were some real hypocrites; and I was fully convinced that the greater portion of the members of both congregations were not living up to the teaching of the New Testament, and were no better than I was.

About this time a man came into our neighborhood who preached a new kind of doctrine. He was teaching holiness and healing, and the whole neighborhood was stirred. I went to hear the man. He surely did preach hard against sin and the devil. I heard him several times and managed to take my wife a few times. He preached divine healing strong, and preached sanctification as a second definite work of grace. When some of the old women began shouting and dancing around as they were accustomed to do he told them to shut up their hyena yells, and called them hypocrites, which I knew they were. He preached that when people got saved they were in the church of God without joining any man made church. He told the preachers that they ought to be ashamed to keep the people in such ignorance of the Word of God. He gave out papers called the "Gospel Trumpet," and used the song book, "Anthems from the Throne." He was a fine singer.

His teaching was accepted by many people, but most of the preachers were hard against his teaching, especially on the doctrine of sanctification as a second work of grace and divine healing as a part of the gospel message that the New Testament taught. But I did believe that what he taught was in harmony with the little Book we had.

He went away for about a year, during which time I was earnestly reading the little book and also the "Gospel Trumpet,"

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which I enjoyed very much. But the little Book was my guide, and the more I read it the more I desired to be saved. Time went on and summer came. I was plowing corn on a hot dreary day. I was not well, was having chills, and wife was not well. We had lost our twin baby boys not very long before this. Things looked dark and gloomy, and worst of all I was not saved. The horse with which I was plowing seemed to break down lots of corn. Night came. As we went to bed my heart was heavy. My sins were pressing hard upon my soul. I could not sleep my soul was so heavily burdened and the Lord would seem to say to me, “How long are you going to wait before you fulfil the promise you made to me when I healed your child?”

I said, “No longer, Lord.” I got up and awakened my wife. I told her to get up and pray with me. We knelt together by the side of the bed. I earnestly called upon the Lord to have mercy upon me and forgive all my sins. He heard the prayer of this poor man, and gave me the witness in my heart by the Holy Spirit that my sins were all forgiven and I was his child. I believed it with all my heart and this belief brought sweet heavenly peace to my soul. Then I could understand what the apostle Paul meant in Rom. 5:1 where he said, “Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” I was justified by faith and the believing brought peace and peace brought joy and gladness to my soul. I was a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Morning came. Breakfast was ready and we sat down. Something seemed to say to my heart, “A Christian man should ask God to bless his food.” I obeyed this inner voice. After breakfast was over I got my horse and went to the field to plow corn. I never saw the corn look so lovely in all my life and the old horse kept in the row so nicely and hardly ever broke a stalk. It seemed like I was

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in a new world. The flowers looked fresh and lovely, the birds sang so sweetly, and all nature seemed to be praising God. When noon came that same inner voice spoke to me again and I said grace. That was a happy day to me. Night came. After supper the inner voice spoke to me again and told me a Christian man ought to pray before retiring. I told my wife to give me the Testament. I read a chapter and we knelt and prayed. The days following were happy days. It seemed like we were in a new world, but the truth was, we had something new in us. My health began to improve, my voice began to get better, and soon I began to hum old songs. The hurting in my left lung where the abscess was began to go away, and I could plainly see God's blessings upon us day by day. Not long afterward my wife said she wished we could go to meeting somewhere. I agreed and told her to get ready Sunday and I would get her brother Ben's team and wagon and we would go down to her Uncle Jule's meeting.

We went. He preached a very good sermon that day, and then he asked for testimonies. I was the first one to testify. It was a surprise to them all.

A few days after that her uncle came to visit us and began urging us to join his church. I told him that I was already in God's church. He agreed with me but said we would have more influence if we would unite with some church, and gave some sectarian reasons. We did not have full light on the church question so we fell for it and promised to go down on a certain Sunday and join the church and be baptized.

We went. I led in prayer. Then they passed a plate of black and white beans around. The white beans meant acceptance and the black beans rejection. When the vote had been taken we were declared accepted unanimously. Then all came and shook hands

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with us. They called it giving us the right hand of fellowship. All seemed very happy. The next thing in order was to baptize us. We went to the river. The preacher asked me how we wanted to be baptized. He said they were like the Methodists, that they baptized by immersion, pouring, or sprinkling, and that we could choose the mode. I told him that if he was called and sent of God to preach the gospel and baptize that he ought to know how to do it, that I would like to be baptized like Jesus was and that I would leave it for him to decide.

He said that he believed Jesus knelt at the water's edge and John stooped down and took up water in his hands and poured on his head and that the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove alighted on the very spot where John applied the water. Then I remembered that my grandfather and my father and the dear old Brother Windel whom I loved so well all taught that way, and I had seen a picture in some book or Sunday School paper which showed it just that way; so my wife and I both knelt at the edge of the river. He took up water in his hands and poured it on our heads in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. I really believe that he was sincere, and we both felt satisfied at the time. He also baptized our two little girls the same way. We went home feeling good in our souls.

Chapter Four

We were church members then and could almost always find some way to get to the Sunday meetings. Not long after this we were told we must be sure and attend the next Sunday and stay for a church meeting in the afternoon. We were there, and Uncle Jule Scott dismissed. He told all the members to be sure and be at the church meeting. When we all met, he got up and read two charges. One was against an old man for taking God's name in vain, and the other against a young man for living with a married woman in adultery. Her husband was serving a term in the penitentiary. The old man got up very humbly and asked forgiveness, and all forgave him. The other denied the charge against him, and so the trial began. After all the evidence against him was given, he was told by the preacher to make his defense. The whole church was to be the jury. But instead of him getting up, another young man got up and said he was there to defend that man. Now this man was a rank infidel. Someone objected, but the preacher ruled in the man's favor and said that the church discipline allowed a person to choose their own defense. So the infidel made a long and quite an able defense. He was well learned and quite an able speaker. When the speaking was all over, the plate of beans was passed around. Every member was to take out a bean—white to clear and black to condemn. When the beans were counted, there was a majority of black beans; but

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according to the church discipline, it took a two-thirds majority to condemn and put a person out of the church, but a mere majority would take a person in, so the church had lost its case. Then the man got up and demanded a letter of recommendation of good standing, and the preacher gave it to him.

I then began to wonder what kind of a church I had gotten into. And beside this, there was a certain married woman in the church that I knew had a heart full of adultery, for before I was saved she had tried hard to bring me under her lustful spirit, and like young Joseph in Egypt, I had a hard time to keep her from forcing herself on me. And now I was in the same church with her and was supposed to fellowship her and take the Lord's Supper with her. There was no way to avoid it without causing another great stir in the church. Maybe if it had been brought before the church she would falsely accuse me and I would be condemned and she would come clear. So I began to wish that I had never joined that church. But since I was already in there was only one honorable way out, and that was to ask the preacher to give me a letter of recommendation, which I soon did, and we got out.

Soon after this we moved away from the river to a place I had bought not far from the old Methodist chapel where I had attended services and singing school in my boyhood days. The good old Brother Windel whom I loved so much was not there anymore, but a good old brother who lived at Buffalo, our county seat, came over once a month and preached for us. He had the general care of the church and looked after the baptizing, sacraments, and such like, and held a revival once a year, and sometimes oftener. He was a good man and taught that we must live a holy life, just like the old Brother Windel had taught. He, like Brother Windel, did not use tobacco in any form. He taught against all manner of worldly amusements and

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worldly dress. He really was a good old Methodist preacher, and I soon learned to love him as I had loved the old Brother Windel. There was also in the church a young married man that had been licensed to preach, but there was not much preach to him, though he was quite active in Sunday school work.

I had a wagon and team then of my own and we soon became regular attendants. I took part in the meetings, led in prayer and testified. My voice was getting better so I would lead the singing. We really enjoyed the meetings. It seemed like home folks. When the old brother from Buffalo came down I showed him my letter from the U. B. church and we were voted in by a voice vote and given the right hand of fellowship without any six- month probation. We felt we had made a good change. We were really treated very nicely, and soon some of the members began to urge me to take the pulpit and preach to them. The young local preacher seemed very anxious to have me do so. I told them I would try and do the best I could. So a date was set and it was announced that Brother Youngblood would preach on Sunday, 11 a. m.

The house was full. After Sunday school was over we had a little recess then came together by song service. I led in prayer. I was used to talking in public. I had spoken in many literary debates, taught singing school, spoke at Sunday school conventions and such like; but this was different to anything I had ever undertaken to do. I felt a deep burden on my soul for the salvation of souls such as I had never had before, and the thought that I was now going to speak to people in the name of God Almighty and give them a portion of His Word was weighty to me. My text was from Psalms: "Oh, how love I thy law." I began to speak and soon I was really lost in God and could see people weeping. My old aunt that used to call me a fool was weeping freely. My wife's brother who had never been

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converted was weeping. Many people were wiping tears from their eyes and my eyes were full of tears. My wife's brother's wife ran to him, threw her arms around his neck, weeping and saying, "Come, go and get saved." The young local preacher jumped up and began to shout, "The fire is falling, the fire is falling." I sat down thinking he would give an altar call, but he jumped up into the pulpit and began to preach, adding to what I had said. He kept at it for quite a while, and when he got through all eyes were dry. He gave a call at last but no one came forward.

We were living close to a school house and had Sunday school there in the afternoon. The people there wanted the young preacher to preach for them in the school house. The time was set. I got up and began to speak. Soon some of the people began to weep. One old lady in front of me was weeping very hard, also a young married woman sitting by her was very heavy with tears. I stopped preaching, looked right at them and said, "Come right along here to the altar and get saved." They rose up and came and knelt at the altar. I stepped down from the platform, knelt in front of them, and prayed for God to have mercy on them and save them. Then I told them to call on God for mercy. The young married woman began praying very earnestly and soon she was up on her feet shouting and praising God. I tried to get the old lady to pray but it seemed that she was bound. She would nod her head when I would talk to her but would not pray out. So after a while I dismissed the meeting with a promise from the old lady that she would keep on seeking the Lord until she got saved.

This young woman was my first convert. She lived faithful and died in the faith with victory in her soul. I expect to meet her in the glory world. So this closes this. I had been instrumental in the

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salvation of one soul, and many others were very much interested. All of my wife's people were very much interested.

Soon I began to receive invitations to preach at other places. I could get a hearty welcome almost anywhere in the country. My voice was almost normal again and it seemed like the more I preached the stronger my voice became. Things were really going good. I helped in many meetings. I had received the Holy Ghost baptism, sanctified wholly. I preached justification by faith and sanctification as a second work of grace and divine healing as a great privilege to all. I met very little opposition. My good Methodist brethren advised me to take out license, and I agreed. I went to the quarterly conference about twenty miles away, took the examination, and passed. I had been told that this would be a great benefit to me; but when the presiding elder gave me my license he said, "Now I have given you license to preach and exhort and go anywhere you wish, and you can organize Sunday Schools and prayer meetings, and when you get any conversions, give the names to your pastor. He will have them baptized and give the sacrament to them and look after them. When you have worked as a licensed preacher one year, if your work is satisfactory, then we will ordain you and give you authority to baptize and administer the sacraments. And I would advise you to get a discipline and study it and keep in harmony with its teaching." He said I could solemnize marriages as the state law of Mo. gave me that right, but to remember that I was under the rule of our pastor.

Well, I went home with my license to serve the Methodist church. After much consideration I failed to see where I was benefitted in the least. Really, I was hindered instead of being benefitted. But I got a Methodist discipline and began to study it. I saw that John Wesley, the man whom I was named after, was a

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sanctified man. I decided to make the best I could of my condition, so I kept on preaching salvation and God blessed my labors and blessed my soul.

Chapter Five

About this time some of my wife's folks took a notion to go to the Indian Territory and take up land and wanted me to go with them. I sold our place and went with the first band. We stopped at Vinita in February, rented a house and got work. I got permission to hold a meeting in the colored Baptist chapel. The interest was very good. All kinds of people attended the meeting, but no one got saved. I was preaching rather a new doctrine that they could not understand—holiness, sanctification, divine healing, and being born into the church instead of joining it was more than they could comprehend, but they did not oppose me. They treated me very nicely. When the weather faired up I took my family and moved west about twenty miles, rented a house, got work, and began to hold meetings in a school house close by. The interest was good from the first. A Methodist preacher who lived at Nowata about fifteen miles west, had a small congregation at this school house. He came once each month and preached on Sunday, took up his collection and went home. After I had been preaching there for about a week he came to his appointment and I went to hear him. His sermon was dry and stale, but he got his collection. After he dismissed I went and shook hands with him and told him my name. I told him I was holding a revival there and that the interest was very good and that I would be glad if he could stay for evening service. He said he had

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heard of the meeting but he must fill his appointment at Nowata that night. Then I took my letter of recommendation out of my pocket that good old pastor had given me before I left the state, which concluded by saying, “Bro. Youngblood, let ‘holiness unto the Lord’ be your motto.” I thought he might invite me to hold a meeting in his chapel. He read the letter and handed it back to me, and said, “Brother Youngblood, I am the pastor at Nowata, and I don’t allow sanctification nor divine healing taught in my congregation.” He turned away from me very coldly. As I left for home I saw him talking to some of his members. One of his members came to me as I was going to my horse, shook hands with me and left a silver dollar in my hand, saying, “Will see you tonight.” This was the first money I had ever had given me and I had been preaching over three years. I had never taken up a collection nor asked for a penny.

The old school house was crowded and the dear Lord did wonderfully anoint me in giving the Word to the people. I stayed at this place for about six months, during which time I preached in other places close by, but my main time was taken up at this place, working hard during the days and holding meetings at night. By the time I left most all of his congregation had accepted the truth and some were sanctified wholly.

At this time I was entirely out of sectarian bondage. I had no bosses over me, but was free to go where the Lord led, and to preach what the Lord would have me preach. I made the Lord a promise that I would never join another man made church. That was over fifty years ago, and I have kept my word.

Sometime along about the month of July my brother-in-law came from the state with his family. He had two good wagons and teams and wanted to rent a farm. The place which I had rented from the old Delaware Indian was a large farm, so I let him have it. He

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paid me for my crop. I loaded my family and started westward to look for a new place. I had seen in the "Gospel Trumpet," which I had been reading for about five years, a call for some church of God minister to come to Nowata and hold a meeting, and that he would be cared for and a hall would be furnished. The name and address was given. It was only about fifteen miles west, but I had never been there. We drove straight to that place and stayed all night.

The sister and her husband were very kind. She said she would rent a hall up town about a mile away and we could stay with them while we held the meeting. I prayed over the matter and the next morning I told her that I thought it best to get my family located first where the two little girls could be in school. I was allowed to have a house and lot in town or twenty acres in the country as a minister's home. I would go on and get located then come and hold a meeting in Nowata. She gave us some horse feed and something for noon lunch and we moved on westward.

We passed through Nowata. I watered my team at the public well and moved westward on the Nowata and Bartlesville road. After we passed through town it was almost all prairie, with just a house or two in sight.

When we had gone about two miles, I saw a man on the right side of the road nailing shingles on a new house. I drove up by the side of the house and said, "Hello, what do you think you are doing?" He said he was putting a roof on the house so he could sell it or lease it. I asked him to come down and talk with me about it. When he climbed down I asked him his price. He asked me if I was a citizen and said he was not allowed to sell to a noncitizen, but could lease to one. I told him that I was a gospel minister and was allowed twenty acres in the country or a lot in town. He said, yes, if I was a minister I had a right. I asked him if he was a Cherokee

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because he did not look like he had any Indian blood. He said he was not but his wife was a Cherokee and that gave him a right as a citizen. I told him that my wife had Cherokee blood and was enrolled in the Watts Association as a Cherokee claimant. He told me that I had a citizen's right the same as he had. I asked him what he was asking for that claim, but he directed my attention to a house across the valley which was his also.

He said. "I built that house and gave that man a five year lease, and he has been there now two years. He only has three years more and will sell his lease very cheap. If I sell this, I would like to sell that also, as I have a good farm at another place where I live."

I asked him how much went with the place and his reply was one hundred and sixty acres. Then I asked how much he wanted for both places. He paused a moment, then said he would take two hundred and fifty dollars cash for both places. I asked him if he would take payments on part because I could not pay that much cash. He refused but looked at my team and wagon and offered to take my team and wagon and fifty dollars. I told him I could not pay fifty dollars cash, but that I had a good accordion worth eight dollars which I would give with the team and (wagon. I showed him the accordion. He took it, sounded a few notes, and said it was a deal. He sat down and wrote me a quit claim bill of sale to both places, giving the boundary on all sides. We unloaded our household goods into the new house. He got into the wagon and drove away. That is the last I ever heard of him, but I think he was a good honest man.

Well, we were settled then. Two of my brothers-in-law came and bought all of my claim to both places except my house and twenty acres. I soon had the house covered and a well dug and was ready for the gospel. We were only two miles from town and school.

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I went to the sister who lived near town and told her that I was located and ready to hold the meeting. She rented a nice hall in town and the meeting began. The interest was very good. It lasted for several days. One of the Methodist preacher's members got saved and sanctified. Most of his members came to the meeting, but he never came. But the pastor of the North Methodist church came and gave good attention. I did not ask any of the sect preachers to preach. It was just the Holy Ghost and I, and the Holy Ghost was the leader.

When this meeting was over I was invited to hold a meeting in a school house about three miles away. At that place there was a number of Winbrenarian church of God people. They believed in one work of grace. They practiced feet washing and greeting with a kiss promiscuously. Most of them attended the meeting well, and the first time I preached there more than one woman reached out their lips to kiss me, but they soon learned better than that and seemed to like the truth very well.

When this meeting was over the neighbors began to talk to me about a meeting house for school and church services. I told them if they would buy the material I would build the house provided they would help me with the frame work. They gladly agreed and soon we had a nice meeting house of our own close to where I lived, and in a short time we had a nice little congregation of saints. I had but little opposition there, and soon people for several miles distant would come on Sundays to be in the Sunday school and preaching services. I was having calls and holding meetings at different places, some fifteen and twenty miles away. The Lord had surely led and located us in a good place. I always had plenty of farm and other work in the summer time to provide for my family. We had a garden and truck patch at home. Food was cheap—fifty pounds of good flour for 75 cents, the best beef steak for only 10 cents per lb., all

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the liver one would want free. We had two good cows that gave us all the milk and butter we needed. I would get a dollar per day for farm work and quit early enough to get ready for services. Our wood was hauled to us free. We were well loved, well supplied, and well satisfied. Most of our folk who had come from the state were satisfied and doing very well, and were receiving the truth well. I was well in body and my voice had become strong again.

I had been baptized again by immersion and was out of Babylon to stay. I took the "Gospel Trumpet" and gave out gospel literature. We used the Gospel Trumpet song books. Our children were going to school close to home. We were in a new rich country where there was a fairly good climate. But I had never been in a real church of God assembly or camp meeting. When I read in the "Gospel Trumpet" about the good camp meetings where so many were saved, sanctified, and healed, it made me long to be in one of those good meetings. And when Sister Young, who had been baptized by Brother Warner, would tell me what a wonderful preacher he was, my soul would be stirred within me.

Chapter Six

About this time a statement was published in the “Gospel Trumpet” about a church of God home and school in Arkansas where the ministers’ children could stay and go to school while the ministers were in the gospel work. I wrote a letter to the keeper of the home. He answered and sent a little paper published by the home. He said there was room for our two little girls, and they were going to have an assembly meeting there over the holidays and make plans to enlarge the home, and that they would be glad if I could come soon. The meeting was advertised in the “Gospel Trumpet.”

Since I had many kin folk in Arkansas, I decided to go. I sold my home and corn crop, fitted up a wagon, bought a team, shipped some of our household goods to my old uncle who lived at Aurora, Mo. loaded our four children into the wagon, and started for the Boston Mountains in Arkansas, leaving the work at Nowata in the care of a young preacher who had come out of the Methodist church under our teaching. He had got sanctified and healed. He was a very promising young preacher. His wife was also a good saved woman. They said they would look after the work there.

About the first of November, 1895, we bade farewell to the little congregation of saints that the Lord had given us, leaving many friends and loved ones, even wife’s dear old mother who was getting

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aged and was a very precious old saint. We told them all good-bye, and headed for the assembly meeting.

We had some bad weather on the way. We stopped at Rocky Dell in Arkansas and held about a ten day meeting with good interest. There we met a young church of God preacher who took us to his house at Gravett, Ark. when the meeting was over. We stayed with him a few days and he baptized my wife by immersion. Then we went on our way rejoicing and arrived at the home about the first of December.

We were gladly received by the church. The school was in progress. Several children were already there, and more were expected after the meeting was over. A young Swede brother was teaching the school. Also a man and his wife were there from Missouri. He could preach a little and she was a school teacher and had come to help in the school as soon as more children came. The old Brother Moody was the general manager of the home, and a Brother Lane was the pastor. A great time was expected when the brethren all got there for the assembly meeting, which was to begin Christmas Eve.

After we had stayed there two days and I had preached once to them, we left our two oldest children and went north about a hundred miles to where my sister lived whom I had not seen for many years. We held a few meetings in an old Baptist chapel near her home, but there came a big snow and not many attended. But my sister and a few others became very interested and we promised to return after the assembly meeting was over.

We started back to the home, arriving there the day before the meeting was to start. A big snow was on the ground. To our great surprise, the school house was burned down to the foundation with

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almost all the school books. It was quite a large frame building, but it was gone.

Several of the brother ministers had arrived. I had never seen any of them before. Bro. Candell, Bro. Wm. Wilson, a Brother Fly from California and others were there. They were glad to see me, as they had seen my name in the "Gospel Trumpet." But there seemed to be a deep sadness among them. I supposed it was because the school house had burned, as some of them had brought their children there for school as we had done. But when the meeting began I discerned that there was an evil spirit present. None of the brethren seemed to have any liberty. I kept very quiet as I had never been in a church of God ministers' meeting before.

The meeting went on for several days. I heard someone say, "I wonder if Brother Youngblood knows what the trouble is here?" Again I heard someone say, "I wonder which side he will take if he finds out what the trouble is all about?" One night no one seemed to move out to preach the Word, and an inner voice seemed to say to me, "Get up and speak the words that I give you."

I got up, stepped into the pulpit and began with Rev. 2:1. I do not remember ever having preached from these Scriptures before. When I finished speaking they all knew where I stood and for what I stood. The ice was broken and the other brethren began to praise God for victory. We had a few Holy Ghost sermons and I began to think the devil was defeated. But about this time Elder Lane the pastor got up and said, "Brethren, I want you all to know that this home and all these buildings are on my land and I hold the deed and I am the pastor here, and I request that you brethren close this meeting and vacate my property at once." He added, "You have let the school house burn down and there will be no more school."

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The meeting was dismissed, but an old brother was there by the name of Odell. He was an old church of God minister, but had not preached any in the meeting. He has some songs in the "Select Hymns" song book. He came to us and said, "Brethren, I have a large house up on the hill. Come up and finish the meeting there." We went up and had some good meetings. He had a married daughter who got saved.

After this meeting was over we loaded our children and baggage into the wagon and started north. The young man who was teaching the school came with us. He was surely a fine young Christian man. Bro. Wm. Wilson and Brother Moody followed on soon afterward, and we all met at Aurora, Mo. Bro. Wm. Wilson rented a hall there and began a series of meetings. I helped him for a while, then we went to my sister's and had a real good meeting in the old Baptist chapel. My sister came out of the Methodist church, got sanctified, and I baptized her and another woman who was saved in the meeting. We had to cut the ice to get into the water, but it never hurt any of us.

About this time we received a letter from the Indian Territory that my wife's mother had had a severe stroke, so we hastened back to see her. She was very poorly. We prayed for her and she soon began to get better.

When the warm weather came we went back to our old home country and held several meetings. We met dear old Bro. Bolds and his family. In the fall we went to the camp meeting at Vichy, Mo. This was a wonderful meeting. Several of the brethren from the Trumpet office were there; but dear Brother Warner, the one we had so longed to see, had gone home to be with Jesus. When this meeting was over we came back west to Ash Grove and was in another good camp meeting. We spent the remainder of that winter holding

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meetings in south west, Mo. and northwest Arkansas, also the summer following. Then we went to Springfield, Mo. and stayed there one winter and held meetings in our rented house. In the spring we moved to Harold, Mo., bought a house, and stayed there two years. We had a good camp meeting the second year. It lasted twenty-one days. Many preachers were with us and the Lord raised up a good congregation of saints there. When this meeting was over we went back to our own home country and Brother and Sister Ostis Wilson looked after the work at Harold and Graydon Springs. We rented a place close to Buffalo, the county seat of Dallas County, close to a school house. There we held meetings, and in two years the Lord had raised up a very nice congregation. Then we bought a small farm and stayed two years on it, then sold it for a good profit and bought a better farm, working and holding meetings all the time until the summer of 1908.

About the first of June I saw in the "Gospel Trumpet" a call for a church of God minister to go to Phoenix, Arizona and hold some tent meetings. I wrote and told them I would go if the fare could be sent me to go on. The fare came in a few days, and on June 15, 1908 I left home. I went by Anthony, Kans. to visit my sister there, and went to the saints' chapel. Brother Helms was the pastor there. I preached on Sunday and they wanted me to stay longer. In a few days the crowd was too big for the chapel. My sister's husband had a brother who was janitor at the high school. He invited me to go to the high school auditorium where there was plenty of room. Bro. Helms consented, so we moved to the high school. I preached there every night, and had good liberty in giving the Word of God to the people. I preached there until about the first of July.

The meeting at Phoenix was to begin July 4th. They had put up the big tent the day before, but the police came and made them

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take it down the day I arrived. Brother Ira Stover's father and his family were living in a very large house with a wide hallway extending the full length of the building. The saints put seats in this hall way and we had some very good meetings. We had several street meetings also. I went to Prescott, Ariz. to try to get a place for the big tent, but they would not allow it put up in the city. Then a brother who lived close to Phoenix took me to Globe, Ariz. but we could not put it up there. Then I went to the sheriff and got permission to preach on the court house steps. I preached there for about a week. Large crowds gathered in the evening at six o'clock to hear the Word. Then the good Lord gave us a nice hall seated and lighted for ten days. The interest was good. Several got saved. Then we were invited to a school house just below Globe a short distance. I preached there about a week and some got saved there. I baptized six there and then went on down to Salt River and baptized four more. The father and mother had got saved at the meeting up at Globe and the son and daughter at their home.

We returned to Phoenix where I received a letter from my wife saying she was not very well and wanted me to either return home or send for her and the children to come to me. I began to pack my grip. Sister Rider asked what the trouble was. When I explained, she wanted me to send for her. I told her I did not have enough money to bring them all. She said the Lord had plenty of money and asked me how much it would take. I told her it would take sixty dollars, so she said the money would be ready by the next day. So the next day I wired her tickets for the whole family, and they were soon there. We rented a furnished house and were at home. I can truly say that we never were better provided for before or since than we were at Phoenix. Sis. Rider would come to our houses and look in the kitchen and the pantry to see what we needed, then get in her surrey

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and go to town to get it for us. She would often say, “While you people are here you shall have just as good care as any of us.”

We surely did enjoy our stay at Phoenix, and some very precious saints were there, but the Lord’s ways are not like our ways. I was the Lord’s man and subject to His leadings. We stayed there that winter. The next summer was exceedingly warm. The heat almost overcame me at time, so I decided to go to California, and about the first of October I was ready to go.

I bade farewell to my family and saints and took the train for Los Angeles, arriving there in time to help put up the big tent and get the camp in order. Many saints were there from different parts of the state, and plenty of good able ministers. Some of them I had met before, but others I had never met before. The meeting was very precious. I had several invitations to hold meetings at different places. When the meeting was over I went to San Diego where Brother C. L. Walker was pastor. I stayed over Sunday with him and preached at the chapel Sunday morning and night. They gave me a very liberal offering, for which I was very thankful. Then I returned to Los Angeles, went to Sawtell and rented a house, then sent for my family. They were soon there.

I took them down to Santa Monica to see the big Pacific Ocean. My wife looked out over the water and said, “Now I have followed you to this ocean, and if you go any further, don’t send for me.”

I said, “All right, we’ll make California our home the remainder of our days.”

There were a few saints at Sawtelle. They rented a hall and began holding meetings. The change from the hot climate of Arizona to the cool foggy Pacific coast caused most of my family to

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take bad colds. As I had been invited to go to Pomona to make my home, I decided to make the change. I came first and bought a tent house and a lot to put it on, then sent for my family. They arrived in a short time. I got work and all were very well satisfied. A small group of saints were here but no preacher. The saints were holding services in a rented hall on West Second St. Two blind sisters were here printing literature for blind people in the Brail System. They were very earnest workers. We held our meetings in this hall for about one year, then it was condemned and wrecked. It was a two-story frame building between two brick buildings. When this took place the blind girls moved to Anderson, Indiana and we rented the old First Baptist church house on Fourth and Park Streets where the Nazarene people now hold their meetings. We stayed there one year. When it was sold to the Nazarenes, we rented their old chapel on East Second St. for one year. Then it was sold and we rented a dwelling house on Ninth and Parcells. There we decided to build a meeting house of our own, so we went to work and soon had a very nice chapel built on the corner of Main and Ninth Streets. Interest in the meetings began to increase and for about a year the work here in Pomona prospered very much.

At that time no other people in Pomona went by the name "Church of God." We were the only people called by that name. I have been living in Pomona thirty-eight years. We have lately moved our chapel to 750 South Eleanor St. where we have our regular worship. Good Holy Ghost ministers preach the Word of God to us and our meetings are very precious. While there are at this time here in Pomona about four different bodies of people who go by the name Church of God, I am sure that the true and living God has but one people and Christ has but one body, the church. Therefore we continue to teach as we have always taught that while there are lords many and gods many we know but one true and living

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God; and while there many false Christ's, we know only the one true and living Christ who gave himself for our sins that we might live in and through Him; and while there are many different kinds of churches, we know but one true church, the one for which Christ gave himself, the one which he sanctified and cleansed and made pure and holy without spot or blemish; and while it is true that there are many false spirits in the world today, there is just one Holy Spirit; and while there are many church creeds or disciplines, the New Testament is our discipline and the Holy Ghost our guide and leader.

Again we invite you to come to our meetings.

Now in conclusion I shall say that our lives and our teaching wherever we have lived have been open to all men. We are now quite aged, and our lives are nearing the end of the way. We have made mistakes sometimes, it is true, but our aim and purpose in life has been good. And while the sun may have scorched and the summer wind blasted much of the seed that with care we have sown, the Lord who has watched while our weary toil lasted will surely reward us for what we have done.

We have sown in the morning and sown in the noonday,

And sown in the evening with sorrow and care;

We have toiled and have suffered in storms and in tempests

With no one but Jesus our burdens to bear.

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Now our labors are ending, we shall soon be ascending

To join with the angels and saints up on high.

Our time is drawing nearer and our hope growing clearer,

And we shall soon be at home in the sweet by and by.

The End

