

Sketches of My Life



George Peek

Sketches of My Life

**By
George Peek
Richwood. W. Va.**

**Digitally Published by
THE GOSPEL TRUTH
www.churchofgodeveninglight.com**

Originally Published by
Faith Publishing House
1939



George Peek at the age of twenty-two years

Preface

The light of this world dawned upon me for the first time, February 18, 1872, at the home of my parents, William and Elizabeth Peek, in Macon County, North Carolina. I was the tenth of a family of twelve children. The names from the oldest down were: Keniday, Sarah, Mary Ann, Isaac, Montgomery, Juda, Zachariah, Laura, Millie, George, Dora, and Callie. All lived to raise families of their own except Sarah, who died at the age of 12. All four of my brothers have passed away, beginning at the oldest down to the youngest, who went to his reward one month ago. My sisters are all living, although some are very feeble. The whole family, father and mother included, have been and are religious. Isaac was a preacher.

My object in writing this book is not that people may hear about my good qualities and think of me as an example. If that were my aim, I surely would try to pull the veil over a good portion of my life, as I have been called and justly so, I guess, the black sheep of the family. My aim is to show men and women who are as bad or worse than I was, that God's mercy and grace is extended to the blackest among us. So I will tell the truth with no desire for honor for self, but a burning desire to honor my King. My prayers shall be that you may patiently scan the first few chapters of this book only to understand the power of God to redeem a fallen race; and as you

proceed, you may take note of the blessings God has granted me through the sacrifice of His dear Son, and as you conclude the reading of this book, you may have such a hungering and thirsting after God that you will take hold of His promises by Faith and receive the good things that God through Christ has provided for everyone.

Contents

Chapter	Page
1. Childhood Experiences and Impressions.....	1
2. Passed From Life to Death	4
3. Mental Training	7
4. A Sportsman	11
5. Passed From Death unto Life	14
6. A Modern Prodigal	17
7. Still on the Broad Road.....	21
8. Still on the Broad Road, Continued.....	24
9. The Modern Prodigal's Return	27
10. Following Coal Fields.....	31
11. Other Camps	36
12. Still on the Go, But Not Alone	40
13. In Business for Myself.....	43
14. The First I Ever Heard of Holiness.....	47
15. Burden for Souls and Decision to Trust God.....	50
16. My Zeal for Truth	54
17. Some of the Trials of Faith	58

18. While Living in the Vicinity of Clarksburg.....	62
19. Stirring the Nest.....	66
20. Being Persecuted by False Brethren	69
21. Further Explanation	73
22. Varied Experiences	77
23. Russellism Exposed	83
24. Some of the Thrills I Have Experienced.....	87
25. Cause of Deceptions	91
26. The Panic or Depression.....	95
27. Be Not Drunk With Wine, but Be Filled With the Spirit	101
28. The Glory of the Latter House.....	105

Chapter 1

Childhood Experiences and Impressions

My first trip from home that I remember was to my Uncle George and Aunt Millie Henderson, in Transylvania County, North Carolina. They were Mother's brother and Father's sister. Certain occurrences on that trip are just as clear to my mind as when they happened, sixty-three years ago. The reason I am definite about the date is this: sister Dora, two and one-half years my junior, took her first step in Uncle George's yard. I thought she was the greatest girl on earth.

We made the trip in a two horse wagon. It was in berry season as I well remember, the grown-ups broke off huckleberry and buckberry bushes laden with berries and piled them in the wagon for us children to eat. On the way, Father pointed out to us a large hemlock with a cedar growing out of the top. A little farther on we came to a solid rock with a picture of a cow and a calf by her side. It looked so life-like that it could have passed for the work of man. But it was far up above the trees, where human hands had never reached. Three years ago, while on my way to California with my wife and son, we stopped and camped by the rock for a week. It was the first time I had seen this 'Cow Rock,' as it is called, since I was three years old. The natives said the hemlock had just recently fallen.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

Another trip I made, that carried with it sorrows and joys, was when I was six years of age. Father and my oldest brother, Keniday, were taking some hogs from our place to his, a distance of some ten miles. Mother and Callie, a babe in Mother's arms, and myself rode on a horse. On the way, we had to ford the Sugar Fork River. The men had preceded us, and in crossing the river the hogs had been washed far down it. When Mother and I reached the middle of the river, the horse stumbled and threw Mother into it, with the baby and satchel of baby clothes. I held to the saddle until I reached the other side and turned to look for Mother. She had lost the baby in the fall and had just regained it. She was trying to keep it above the water, but the water was so swift that it was swirling up around her shoulders. When I saw her struggling to stand, I plunged into the river and started toward her, but she yelled and motioned for me to go back. I did, and finally she waded out. The satchel had floated down stream, and the men had found it and came back to see what was wrong. We went on and soon came to Mr. Gray's house, where we changed clothes and went on our way. We had no other trouble on our trip.

During our stay, Mr. Charley Parker, a neighbor of my brother's, took me to his house to see his boy, about my age. He then brought a sack of black walnuts and poured them on the hearth and gave us hammers and told us to help ourselves, which we did. They were the first black walnuts I had ever seen, and I certainly enjoyed them. Charley Parker had made a lasting impression on me, as my big friend.

I was still a mere child when my mother died, and I never learned to appreciate her as I should. I well remember some of her sufferings. She was given to spells of sick headache. Many a time I have wished that I could take and bear the suffering for her. She

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

finally passed away with one of these spells. The best friend I had in the world was gone. Although I caused her much grief, that I never did repay, I feel sure I shall meet her where there will be no more sorrows. I will have no condemnation, because Jesus has paid all my obligations. I have accepted Him as my substitute.

In closing this chapter I will insert one of the poems my sister taught me before I learned my letters:

“All things bright and beautiful, all things great and small,
All things wise and wonderful, the Lord God made them all.
Each little flower that opens, each little bird that sings.
He made their glowing colors, He made their tiny wings.
The rich man at his castle, the poor man at his gate,
He made them high and lowly and ordered their estate.
The purple headed mountains, the river running by,
The sunset and the morning, that brightens up the sky.
The tall trees in the green woods, the meadows where we play,
The rushes by the waters, we gather every day.
He gave us eyes to see them and lips that we might tell,
How great was God almighty, who made all things well.”

When we realize how easy it is for young people to learn and how difficult it is in later years, the parents should put forth every effort to fill their children’s hearts and minds with good things, before they are filled with poison. The Catholics say: “Give me a child till it is 10 or 12 years of age and it will always be Catholic.” An authority on child training said: “The time to start training a child is 20 years before it is born—with its grandmother.”

Chapter 2

Passed From Life To Death

“I was alive without the law once: but when the commandments came, sin revived and I died.” Up to the time I am now relating, I was innocent. The enemy, however, was on my track trying to ensnare me. I came in contact with a lad two years my senior. We were both full of life and mischief. If either of us suggested something as a banter, it was sure go.

My mother saw that we were so much alike there was no telling where we would land. She tried to break up our companionship, but failed. We would make excuses to get out together into some mischief. There was a boy in an adjoining neighborhood that we did not like very well. We were passing the house one day and the dog came tearing out at us. We whizzed a rock at it and the rock struck the house. There was a yelling from within that we could not understand, nor did we tarry to find out. We ran on up the road, and as it wound around the hill, we came around above the house where we could almost see down the chimney. The Enemy suggested, it would be funny to throw a rock down the chimney. Anything for fun, so away went the rock. It missed the mark but struck the board roof and cracked, almost like a shot-gun. We heard yelling from within but could not understand a word: but it was fun. So away went another rock and more yelling from within; another rock, and

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

so on until it ceased to thrill. Then we went our way up the creek until we came to a nice swimming hole. There we took a plunge, not expecting any backfiring from the little fun we had had down the road. But alas, here came two men and placed us under arrest. We looked at each other for comfort, but found none. They directed us on up the creek to the squire's house. As soon as we could step aside a little, we consulted each other as to what we should say. We decided to tell the truth and abide the consequence, as Mr. Holland, the man whose home we had rocked, was one of the men that had arrested us. He and the squire had a private consultation, so after giving us a good lecture turned us loose. Of course we were whipped; but hardly enough. If they had taken us back and made us beg forgiveness of the old lady for our conduct, it might have made a more lasting impression for good. This did not stop us. We soon bought us a deck of cards and with older boys learned to play. I also got hold of a twenty-two caliber pistol and the Holland boy saw me with it and indicted me.

Then I became a fugitive from Justice. I went to Gilmore County, Georgia, to my oldest brother, and lived with him six months. While there, I learned to make and drink moonshine whisky. However, I became homesick and went back. I had forgotten the pistol case and was going along the road near Corrundum Hill, when behold, a man placed me under arrest. It was the deputy sheriff. My father had worked for Mr. Bidwell, owner of the Corrundum mines, and he had always treated me very kindly; so I suggested that he would go my bond, and he did. When court convened, my father employed Frank Ray, for attorney. As Holland had not seen me conceal the pistol, he cleared me as far as the court was concerned. However, the guilt was still on the book of God's remembrance, and nothing but the atoning blood of Jesus could blot it out. I was drifting farther in sin.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

One day, a crowd of we boys gathered on the river bank to have a time, playing in the river. I always thought the devil knew I would be lost if he could drown me. So he put it into the head of a young fellow to decoy me in where I would drown. This young man was out in the river treading water just like he was wading. He holloed to us, "Come on in, it isn't deep." So I waded out. The bottom was level for a distance and then it went square off. When I came to the edge, the water was so muddy I couldn't see the bottom. Therefore, I stepped off just like stepping off a scaffold. Down I went, and up and down, until my cousin, George Dills, ran one hundred and fifty yards, plunged in, and drug me out. They rolled me on a barrel to get the water out of me. Every mean thing I ever did came before me while I was struggling for life. I realized I was doomed for eternal night if I died then. I thought seriously about my condition for a while. However, I shook off conviction and went on my way.

Chapter 3

Mental Training

My educational privileges were meager compared with those of today, as you no doubt will perceive before you get through with the grammatical blunders of this book. I am not complaining, but only wish to show the advancements made along this line, so that our young people may appreciate their opportunities and profit thereby. We usually had three months schooling a year. We walked from two to four miles and sat on benches made of split logs. The split side was turned up and holes were bored in the bottom side with pegs driven in for legs. Our light was obtained by cutting a piece of log out here and there. If there were any protection from bugs and bats it was a piece of greased paper pasted over the hole. Our equipment was the old blue-backed “Webster’s Spelling Book” and a slate. I had many and varied experiences during my school days, but will only relate two or three, that you may understand me better.

Very early in my schooling, on our way home one evening, a young man by the name of Joe Dandy Gibson, the oldest scholar in school and one that finally became my brother-in-law, and a girl named Mary Gibson, better known by the name, Mary Road, was in the company. There was snow on the ground and Joe persuaded me to throw Mary down in it. I tripped her and down she went, and then up and at me for a battle. The teacher had a long list of rules and

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

they all carried a penalty. The next morning he called us to answer to a charge of Misconduct. He said his witness was a little bird. He had the evidence so straight that we just pled guilty to the charge. Then he announced the penalty. As he was prosecutor, judge, and sheriff, he speedily executed sentence. He let all the scholars witness the execution for a warning, I suppose. He gave me three or four licks with a nice keen switch; then he gave Mary seven or eight; and last, but not least, he almost lifted poor Joe off the floor with some seventeen or eighteen lashes. I suppose he intended to give a stripe for every year.

Joe had a man's voice; and as the custom was to spell and read aloud, we called him 'the bumblebee.' The other children had voices like honeybees when compared to his. I don't see how we learned anything. It would set me wild now. It sounded like a pond full of Pedeet frogs, with a great big bull frog sitting on the bank croaking with all its might.

At another time on my way home from school, while passing a clay hole that had been dug in the ground, I spied a skunk which had fallen in the hole and couldn't get out. I hunted a stick and reached down and twisted its tail around the stick and lifted it out of the hole. As it was so beautiful, white and black spotted, I decided to take it home. So home I went, dragging it after me. I was so elated over my trophy that I did not even notice the perfume. Mother surely reminded me of the odor when I arrived there, and all my pleasure was spoiled. I don't remember what became of the poor kitten.

I will mention one other incident that occurred while I was yet a small lad, with not a thought of complaining; but that you may see that it was not all play with the children of those days. Our custom was to carry our corn to the mill as we went to school and then carry the meal back on our way home. On this particular day, sister Millie

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

and I had carried a bushel of corn apiece to the mill. As we came home that evening we forgot something, I don't remember what it was, and we decided it would be best for one of us to go back after it. We agreed that Millie should go back and I would carry both grists home. We put all of it into one sack. She helped me shoulder it and went back. I went on toward home. When I would get so tired that I had to rest, I would hunt for a log, stump, or rock to lay it on. Sometimes, however, I would have to rest before I could find one. Then, I would have to get down on the ground, roll it on my back and get up with it, for it was impossible for me to shoulder it, standing. I made it home all right; but it made a lasting impression on my mind, as it had such a pressing on my back.

We had to cut and carry wood, and hunt the cows, as they lived by ranging the woods except in real bad weather. We then carried fodder from the field to feed them. In the summer we had to do our part of the farming. The last school I attended was an eight months school. They called it a high school in Glenville, Jackson County, North Carolina. I guess it would not be classed very high in comparison to the schools of today, but it was high compared with the ones I had been used to. My brother, Montgomery, lived within four miles of the school, so he persuaded me to go to school. I was fifteen years of age and my three months schooling hadn't done me very much good. I accepted the challenge, and certainly haven't regretted it. I enjoyed the home and school. They were both the best obtainable. My brother's wife was a dear, good woman and a real mother to me. His oldest daughter, Mabelle, who was not so many years younger than I, was as dear to me as a sister; and perhaps more so because she has been, for many years, a real sister in the Lord. I would do my chores in the morning early, and then take my time walking the four miles, studying my lessons on the way. The same in the evening, then do my chores and usually study until ten o'clock

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

at night. Three of my double cousins—Kenida, Calhoon, and Isaac Henderson—went to the same school. They were very studious, fine young men; but I was determined that they should not beat me. They didn't that year; but they kept at it for years and became highly educated. My brother proposed that I return the next year, which would have changed the course of my life. It might have saved me from some of the wildest years of my life; however, I am not sure that it would have been better for me in the end. So I am satisfied that I am what I am. I realize that God has made the best He could out of the material He had to work with.

Chapter 4

A Sportsman

I thank God, that my boyhood days were not all drudgery, and neither all wickedness. I had some enjoyable times, largely fishing and hunting. My first fishing was on a small scale; but thrilling, nevertheless. Our spring stream, by the time it ran half-mile, became quite a creek. Mountain trout came up almost to the spring, so I became a fisherman when quite small.

I invented myself an outfit by cutting a stick and fastening a twine string to it, then bending a pin in a hook shape and fastening it to the line. Then I dug some worms, and away I went down the stream, fishing. I don't remember how long I fished, but I had gone only a couple hundred yards down the stream until, behold, a fish laid hold of my bait and I flipped it out on the bank. I was so elated over my catch that I didn't delay another minute, but made for the house to report and share my joy with the rest of the family. Before I reached the house though, I thought of the nice big strings of fish I had seen my older brothers bring in. The thought robbed me of my joy. I dropped the fish outside the gate and went on in as though nothing had happened. Finally I told them I had caught a fish, but they didn't believe me and asked me where it was. That was just what I wanted them to say, so I darted out and brought in the fish. It wasn't long until I was equipped with a better outfit and became

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

quite a fisher for trout, which were plentiful in the streams of western North Carolina at that time. I caught as many as one hundred in a day, sometimes; but the finest catch I ever had in the same length of time was in the Sugar Fork River, just below what was known as the narrows. In a deep hole, which had a whirlpool that circled so fast that a great coat of foam had gathered, where I did most of my fishing. I sat on a rock over this pool and caught twelve trout, from twelve to fourteen inches long and about as thick as your hand is wide (about four inches), in less than a half hour.

I also became much interested in hunting. My brother taught me to shoot squirrels with a muzzle loading rifle while in Gilmore County, Georgia; and I became quite efficient at taking their scalps. We also had quite a time catching opossums from persimmon trees and grapevines. My brother's wife was a prize opossum baker, which made the eating quite an enjoyable side-issue. After I came home, my sister's husband, who was one of my boy friends from away back, and I spent much of our time coon hunting. My Grandfather Henderson gave me a beautiful white and black spotted pup that lived to be 18 years old and made a wonderful coon dog. We went hunting one night, and the dog ran a coon up a large Hemlock tree on which were many limbs from the ground up. We had a small shotgun with us, which I stuck down the back of my coat collar and started up the tree in search for Mr. Coon. It was tall and thick limbed, so I went up and up, searching the limbs as I went, until I got away up where it was getting small and beginning to weave back and forth. I saw the coon right on the top twig, looking this way and that way as if fixing to jump. I drew my gun and leveled the barrel on him and fired. He dropped right on me; but, as luck would have it, he was too dead to bite or scratch. He had looked down as I pulled the trigger and I filled his forehead full of shot. He weighed twenty-five pounds.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

Another night when we were hunting on Stevens Creek the dog bayed a coon. The coon was in a nice smooth place. The creek was shallow and clear and it didn't look like a mouse could hide anywhere close. We stood there bragging on our luck of getting such a fine one; and did not try to kill it, meaning to let the dog try his courage on him. Sure enough, the dog jumped on him. There were just a few 'yowl, yowls' and 'growl, growls,' then everything stopped and the dog stood there looking stunned, and we worse. The coon had disappeared. After we came to our senses, we searched the ground and the creek bottom, punching into every crevice or crack we could find for yards around, but not a hair could we find of the coon. I don't believe in spooks or ghosts; but that puzzle has never been solved by my brother-in-law or myself unto this day. I had many other thrills hunting and fishing in my youthful days, but I would not expect you to get such a thrill in reading about it. So lest you get wearied with the book before you get to the part which I believe to be more profitable, I will let this suffice. I only trust that this may be an incentive for the young folks to seek innocent sports for thrills and not harmful ones.

Chapter 5

Passed From Death Unto Life

In chapter 2 I related the story of my near drowning, and how it made a great impression on me. But I was too busy to let God talk to me, so continued on my downward course until the Lord let the Enemy over-do his job.

Since he had failed in drowning me, he tried to take my life with Typhoid Fever. God, however, took advantage of my idleness and weakness to talk to me. The fever weakened me and broke my will power. I looked out into the dark—hope gone. So the Lord had a chance to talk to me, and I became willing to listen. As the weeks rolled by, the people began to shake their heads, looking as if they thought my case hopeless. I not only became willing for God to talk to me, but I began to talk to God; and one day God, through Jesus Christ, spoke peace to my soul. Immediately, I became willing to go to meet Him. So I called all the family out of the field and exhorted them to get ready to meet the Lord. They all thought I was going to die for sure then. I did too; but, oh, I felt so good that I would have been willing to just keep on dying, if that was what they called death. Oh, what a contrast between this and the horror that struck me when I thought I was going to drown. But God was not through with me. I began to mend and was soon up and around.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

Sometime after that I was baptized while the mush ice was floating, and then joined the Baptist church, as I knew of no other church and very little about the Bible. All my people belonged to the Baptist and couldn't choose differently because it was all there was close by at that time. I knew a few passages of scripture that mother had taught me. One was that the Ten Commandments taught that the seventh day was the Sabbath. When they called the day we used as the Sabbath the first day of the week, I was confused. If some Seven Day Adventist had come along then, I suppose I would have joined them. I never saw any of them until after I had learned the truth regarding the Sabbath—that it was fulfilled in Christ, when nailed to the cross; that the day we were keeping was the first day and our reason for keeping it should be in honor of Christ who arose from the dead, completing our redemption, on that day. Another thing we all were confused over was the doctrine of 'Class Communion.' Paul said, "Let every man examine himself, and so let him eat." We never could get clear on that. Of course, I, like thousands of others, thought I had all there was for me, and as I had no teaching along the line of Faith, I just went by feelings. When I felt like it, I would pray in secret; and for a time I had great pleasure in secret prayer and prospered while I kept it up; but sometimes I did not feel like it, and instead of praying that much harder, I would leave it off. Although brother Isaac was a preacher, one of my brothers-in-law was a deacon, and all the adults in the neighborhood were members; nobody ever suggested to me that I should go on unto perfection as taught in Hebrews 6:1, or present my body a living sacrifice as Romans 12: 1, 2 teaches. They seemed to think that I was all right as long as I didn't commit any gross sins. So I drifted along and soon became thoughtless and careless. But, as I did not plunge into violent sins, I was a very good Baptist long after I had lost the grace of God out of my heart. Finally, after I had become so hardened that I could

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

take the name of God in vain, curse and swear, the Deacon came to me and rebuked me for swearing, and asked me to go before the church and confess and ask pardon. I did not love the church members enough to humble myself before them, so I went on my course. I don't know what they did with their little finger, but I suppose they cut it off. The Word says, "If your hand or foot offend, cut it off." and I suppose they thought, if that be true, then if the little finger or toe would offend, it should be cut off, also. As I was a member of the body, the ax must fall or the whole would be contaminated. Anyway they did not finish fulfilling the Word as taught in Matt. 18:15-17, so what they did was of very small consequence to me then. I drifted on, sometimes with remorse of conscience and sometimes none, for several years, going deeper in sin. I got so seared that for two years I retained no thought of God in my mind for a minute, as I remember. I was away from home, among men who were interested only in making money and having a big time. I never saw inside of a meeting house, nor conversed with a Christian in those years. No one mentioned God, Christ, or the Church to me, except with an oath.

Chapter 6

A Modern Prodigal

Although I had no earthly goods from Father's house to spend in riotous living like the Prodigal of Old, yet I became a prodigal in a double sense. When I left school, I went to Sapphire Valley, North Carolina, and began to work as a laborer in the gold mines, living in a shanty, doing my own cooking and washing. Later I did the cooking for four men and worked my regular shift.

There was a young man there by the name of Cling Brownlin. He was a likeable fellow and we all became very fond of him. One day some officers came along and arrested him on a warrant that had been kept alive for ten or twelve years. He had shot his dad when only eight years of age, for abusing his mother, we learned.

They started with him to the county seat, to jail. Along the way he started to run and they shot him, just glancing him on the side; so of course, he could not walk any further. The sheriff left him at a farm house, with a deputy to guard him until he came back with a conveyance. The next day was Sunday and as we heard of the shooting and that he was at a farm house not far away, a number of we boys decided to go and see him. I don't think there was anyone in the crowd that had the least idea of doing any harm. I know I didn't. But when we got there, he walked out into the yard, the

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

deputy with him. We were scattered all around. One fellow had a little whisky and gave him a drink. Another was sitting on a stump whittling, and Cling reached down and took his knife out of his hand and started walking off. The deputy and all of us followed. Cling was barefooted, as he had walked out of the house in his stocking feet. As we marched on, he turned around and told the deputy not to follow him another step and the deputy didn't. I guess he thought we had come for the purpose of releasing him. We all went on after him as we had no other business. We overtook him down near the company store and one of the men and I bought him a pair of shoes. He went on over into Georgia. The next day the sheriff came and arrested us all. He took us before a squire and bound us all over to the grand jury. But we had a friend, a big farmer, who was supposed to be wealthy, by the name of Hooper. He volunteered to go our bail. The bond was fixed and he came and told us not to appear, that his property was fixed so they could not hurt him. I never heard any more of it.

From there, I went to Pine Mountain, Georgia, and went to work in the Corundum mines. I had two sisters living there, so I boarded with Millie Evans. Her husband was a boss at the mines. I stayed there around four years. I did almost everything that was to be done around the mine while there. The last year or so, I fired boilers or tended the pumps twelve hours a day. It was hard work, for we fired with four foot cord wood; and yet we had lots of fun. There were two of us on each shift, and we changed shifts at regular intervals. My buddy and I were often playing pranks on someone. I will only mention two.

When on the night shift we had a much better chance than we did on the day shift. It wasn't nearly so hard to keep steam. Men would often come there, wanting to sleep in the boiler house, as it

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

was nice and warm. Of course we never turned them away since there was nothing to hurt; therefore, nothing to lose. If we took a notion to have some fun when a young man came in, that night we would get a stick and put it under the weight that held the safety valve down. The other would commence to talk about the steam being too high and pretend to get awfully scared. "You had better get out of there," he would yell. The one with the stick would shove the weight up and let it drop. The steam would scream out. The weight would bounce up and down five or six times before it would get steady. We would run and yell. The fellow was sure to come out over that boiler and run like a wild man. We would roll and laugh until we were tired.

We played a real mean prank on our buddies on the other shift one morning. Just before the day shift was to come on, we got the steam up to the popping off stage and let the wood burn out until there was nothing but a large bed of coal. When we saw them coming, we filled the firebox full of big round black gum logs and shut the door, grabbed our dinner buckets and away we went. They told us later that they looked and saw the 'head of steam' we had and sat down to take it easy. But at last the steam started dropping. They opened the door and found nothing but black logs. They had to draw them and rekindle the fire. We had the laugh on them, but it was not very funny and we didn't feel very good over it, after all.

Since I have begun this book and wrote the preface, the temptation has come to me to cover up the worst of my life. But it would not be fair. As I said, I want those who read this to realize what a mighty God we serve. So I must tell you how low I sank.

I began to drink, and it became so much of a habit that when I kept company with a girl, I thought I must have a few drinks in me or I could not talk intelligently. I was very much interested in a

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

certain girl and was going to see her. I must have a few drinks, so I took quite a stock with me. Her father and brother drank with me and it was not long until we were all drunk. I carried on so unbecomingly that I was ashamed to go back. I don't know whether she would have entertained me if I had gone back, but I did not risk it. But that did not stop me. I would still get drunk; and have had more than one fight. It makes me feel awfully ashamed of myself as I write this, and God knows I would throw a veil over the whole matter, if I felt that it would be fair to the souls I would like to interest in this book. I thank God, with all my heart that it is covered with the blood, and that if anyone should read this, who has sunk as deep as I did in sin, he or she may believe what I say and look by faith to the Christ that delivered me, and take Him for their deliverer.

Chapter 7

Still On the Broad Road

I became acquainted with Gus Billingsley, a bridge worker, about this time. I liked him real well and we became quite chummy. I was about eighteen or nineteen years of age at that time. I was physically fit, there being only one man out of the two hundred at the mines that could lift with me. I was getting seventy-five cents per day.

Gus had a job as foreman on a long trestle at Orangeburg, South Carolina. He asked me to go with him, and offered me one dollar and seventy-five cents a day. I had no straps on me, and no reason why I should not go. I was anxious for a change and to see how big the world was. I, therefore, accepted the invitation and away we went. I had no idea, when we started, how long it would be until I would get to meet with my old associates again, my sisters included. But it proved to be seven years.

After this long absence I would not have known my youngest sister, if I had met her away from home. She was around thirteen when I left and very delicate. When I returned, she was nineteen and weighed 184 pounds. On our trip to our destination, about 250 miles, I got train sick. I had never ridden to any extent on a train before. Oh, how sick I was. I would have gotten off if I could, but if I had,

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

I doubt whether I would ever have gotten on again. However, I had to stay with my bargain and by the time we got through I was immune from even sea sickness. I have ridden thousands of miles on trains, and many miles on the water when the waves would splash against the sides of the ship and rock it until one could not stand; but never was I sick that way again.

We lived in camps and I stayed on the job until it was finished, it was not long until I had some real friends though they were rough like myself. One especially, Peter Wapka, a Swede, was our cook and you know I fared well. He and I took a couple of trips to Columbia, South Carolina on what we called a spree. We stayed until we went broke. If my money gave out before his, which it did the first time, he would not hear of me returning to the camp until he had spent his last dollar. I would share equally with him. We left the camp and traveled as far as Baltimore, Maryland together. I never saw him anymore. I trust he changed his course, as I did afterward, and that I am privileged to meet him in the glory world.

I chummed with another fellow a little, until one Saturday night we went to town together. I wanted several articles and visited several stores before I got all I wanted. I bought and paid for all I got. I don't remember all I did get; but as we went home he showed me what he had and it was more than I had. He did not spend a cent for his. I had not noticed him and was perfectly ignorant regarding what was going on, until he told me. While the clerks were busy with me, he would be slipping something under his coat or in his pocket. Two articles I remember he had, were an umbrella and a box of cigars. I never did any more shopping with him. I never cared any more for his company. I was afraid of him. Although I was as low as the devil wanted me to be, I felt myself above anything like that. A sin is a sin and I don't think God classifies them as great or small.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

I was full of sin, yet that was one class of sin that I abhorred. I give my father and mother the credit for it. Father was a man that lived on the square with everybody. He and Mother taught us to do the same. A little incident that occurred when I was only three or four years of age made quite an impression on me, and had somewhat to do with my feelings along that line, no doubt.

I had been to brother Isaac's and in playing around and through the house I had run across a knife handle with only three or four pieces of blades; one, a half inch long; and fit for nothing. I slipped it in my pocket and carried it home with me. It was not long until Mother saw it and inquired about where I got it. Of course, I told her the truth and after questioning Father, she found out that I had not asked for it. She made me walk every step of that two miles and carry that knife back, and tell them what I had done. I believe if all mothers would treat their children in like manner, there would be very little stealing.

Anyway, I did not have to carry stolen goods back when I got saved, like I have known of many people having to do. Yet I had plenty to do, as you will learn by reading to the end of this book.

Chapter 8

Still On the Broad Road

Leaving Orangeburg, I headed for a point on the Chesapeake Bay in Calvert County Md., and helped to build a mile of wharf, jutting out into the bay. Nothing unusual happened there, worth mentioning, except eating oysters and crabs. We could sit on the docks with a string, a piece of meat, and a small dip net fastened to a stick and catch a nail keg full of crabs in a little while. Tie the meat on the end of a string and drop it in the water and soon there would be two or three crabs hold of it. Just pull it up close to the top of the water, dip your net under them and empty them into the keg, and repeat. One incident occurred that was quite amusing.

We had a gang of Italians out a mile and a half in the bay to unload pile timber off a barge. There came a fierce wind and hit the barge in the stern. It went forward on its anchor and stood there trembling for a minute, then whirled around in the opposite direction. It was fun to see the Italians make a dive for the hatch. You could not get them out, until the wind ceased. On our way to shore the waves, which were rough, would strike the flat boat and rock it, and the Italians would fall flat. As soon as they came near the wharf, they began climbing the piles instead of waiting for the boat to land.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

I was there four months. Leaving there, I went to Richmond, Virginia; and went to work for Captain Billy Gill on the Atlantic Coast Line railroad; and was there four months. I kept time, pushed his negroes, and carried his whisky. I had chills and fever while there, beginning with one every other day, then one every day, and finally one in the morning and one at night. I went to the hospital and stayed two weeks and they starved it out of me. I played poker and dice for money while in Richmond, and left there broke. I rode the freight and blind baggage. At this time, Cox's army was between Baltimore and Washington. I went through these places on to Wilmington, Delaware and crawled in a box car to sleep. A night officer thought the bed too hard for me, so he took me out and gave me a cot to sleep on. I don't know whether he thought I walked in my sleep or not, but he locked the door. That was the only time I ever slept under a lock and key unless it was from the inside.

They turned me out next morning and I left the town and never saw it any more until I went back there years afterward to preach the Gospel to them. I went through Philadelphia, Harrisburg, Pittsburg, back through Cumberland, and up to Parsons, West Virginia. I tried all the way for work and found none till I got there. I struck a job on the Western Md. railroad, doing repair work on the bridges and trusties. Our headquarters was Elkins, W. Va. I stayed with this company about five years, boarding with the Rev. Potts at a Temperance hotel, and later with Jonas Nester. He and his wife treated me like their own child and called me their boy for years after. I loved those folks and thought Elkins the best place in the world for some years.

Later I went down the line to Roaring Creek Junction and worked on a new railroad from Womelsdorff, which is now called Colton, to Belington. I boarded with Arch Sidmore. I learned to love

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

them as I did my own people, and soon began to think that neighborhood was the garden spot of the world. There were different elements combined to make me feel that way. I was associating with a different class of people, altogether. Ever since I left my sisters, I had been associating with a class of people that thought of very little except making money or spending it for a high time. It was not that way in this neighborhood. Most people there seemed to be interested in their neighborhood's welfare.

I also met the girl that afterward became my wife, in this neighborhood. I had not kept company with a girl since the time I mentioned about getting drunk and being ashamed to go back. Now, however, I spent quite a bit of time with the young folks. Another, and the main element, that changed things with me, was the church. I had not been in a meeting house since I was fifteen or sixteen years old, and had gone to a meeting one night, so drunk I could hardly sit up, at the old Brush Creek church where I had once been a member. Some of my friends came and took me out, and kept me from being arrested. In Harding, most of the young people attended meetings; and I, in order to be with them, went to meeting although I had no thought at this time of changing my way of living.

Chapter 9

The Modern Prodigal's Return

My first religious service to attend since before I left home some five years ago was at Harding, W. Va. The leader was Hider Bennett. He was a Baptist, yet he conducted the meeting on the Methodist style. It was in a one room school house located near first opening of the Harding coal mine. I had had no thought of trying to get back to God, to my knowledge at this time; therefore, my going was not with any intent on my part, of bettering my condition. I had taken an interest in the young people since landing in W. Va., more especially the girls. I therefore, was prompted to go to meeting to be in their company. On this occasion, they had testimonies. As I desired to make a good showing among my associates, I had to be quiet and listen to the program. I had no thought, however, of making any advancements, and the testimonies closed. Mr. Bennett then said: "Is there anyone who desires to be a Christian, who would stand up and let it be known." I immediately arose as if lifted by some magic power and said, "I do." Should someone have said, one minute before I arose, that I would have done so, I would not have believed it. Then Mr. Bennett proposed that those who would pray for me at four o'clock the next day, should give me their hand. I never did have any idea why he suggested that hour. In fact, I did not think any more about the hour myself. I became so deeply

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

concerned, from the time I arose to my feet, that I thought of very little else for the next two weeks, but my miserable condition before God. I wanted to be by myself and as I was getting out ties for the mine at the time, it afforded me with that privilege. I hated my sinful life and saw myself only fit for torment. Oh, how miserable I was! I did not want anyone to bother me. I desired no human sympathy. I really felt like afflicting myself, for I despised my own self. I surely felt like the mind picture portrait in the first chapter of Isaiah. Wounds and bruises and putrefying sores from the top of my head to the sole of my feet. People can talk about being Christians and still sinning; but I don't believe such have ever had a real, genuine dose of conviction. If so, they have trifled with their conscience until it has become seared. Conviction made me hate sin so much that I would rather give place to a poisonous serpent than it. Yet for several years I did not know how to keep free from it, because I had very little knowledge of the Bible, and no human teacher that knew much more than I did. The Methodist had their place of worship on the Roaring Creek side of the river, with Mr. Skidmore as their leader. The Baptist had theirs at the school house on the Harding side, with Mr. Bennett as their leader. They met different hours and the same people constituted both congregations. You could not tell the Baptist from the Methodist, as there were no D. D.'s contending for the upper seat and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi. If it were not for the sectism preachers teaching division to hold their jobs, the saved people would naturally flow together. During my attendance at these services one day, Mr. Bennett asked me if I would lead in prayer, if he called on me. I said I would try. I never had made a pass at speaking in public in any form, except to recite a piece that I had learned by memory. I never would take any part in debates. So when he called on me, I dropped on my knees and that was all I knew of the prayer. Whether I said anything or not, I don't know—I had the

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

victory. It was never any burden for me to pray or testify after that. I not only changed my masters spiritually speaking, but I left the railroad and went to work in the mines.

Melvin Evans and I went to work together in the only opening there was at that time in the Harding Coal vane. I was somewhat fearful when I first went to work. Melvin related a story to me; and like the blind man who was restored to his sight, when asked who did it; said, "I know not, but one thing I do know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." Whether the story is true or false, it had the desired effect on me. The story was thus: A coal miner's wife had a dream one night, which impressed her that her husband would be in great danger in the mine that day. So she prevailed on him to stay home. The mine foreman, in making his round that day, passed this man's room. He heard a slate fall, and investigating, he found the ceiling of this fellow's room had fallen in. The man had lain down on the sofa, at home, to rest. The clock shelf was just over his head. A smoothing iron had been placed on the shelf with the clock. While this man slept, the nails gradually gave way and down came the clock, iron and shelf. The iron struck the fellow in the temple, killing him, and at the same time stopping the clock. That night as the foreman went home, he passed this fellow's house. He saw the crepe on the door, and making an investigation, found that the clock had stopped at exactly the same time he had made his round past the man's room and heard the slate fall. This story impressed me, that when a man's time comes, it is not worthwhile for him to try to dodge it. On the other hand, if a person's days were numbered, he would not be likely to go until his time came. I was not very uneasy after that, in the mines or out, although I have narrowly escaped death more than once. Melvin and I had a close call in this same place. One day we were backing up a cut that was eight feet deep across a twenty foot room. The driver brought us in a car and we

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

crawled out to rest and talk to him. While sitting there on our hunkers talking—rip went the coal and the whole cut came down. We had cut it back to a clay vein, and as there was a vein of slate up four feet on the face, there was nothing to hold it except the ends. If we had been under where we were two minutes before, we would have been like mice in a deadfall. God, knowing all things, sent the driver to call us out, just in time. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His merciful kindness to the children of men.

Chapter 10

Following Coal Fields

While working on the Belington end of the new railroad, I boarded with Mrs. Flanigan, a Catholic lady. Her son, James, and I became staunch friends. Later we decided to go to Thomas, W. Va., and work in the coal mines. We got boarding with a family by the name of Black. They set a good table; but, oh, what a crowd we did get mixed with. On Sundays it was more like the 4th of July than the Lord's Day—drinking, shooting, and carousing. So we made our sojourn short. Most of that time was spent, either in the mine or in our room. There was an incident or two that occurred while we were there that was real laughable, if they had not been so pathetic, or rather disgraceful. I will only mention one, lest you become disgusted with it all. Mr. and Mrs. Black and an old Englishman all got drunk one Sunday. They got into a mix-up and Mr. Black kicked over the table loaded with good things. Mrs. Black got busy and made him gather his belongings and go. She followed, calling him all manner of names till he would run her back. This went on for quite a while, back and forth; and all the town out watching and listening to the oaths and vulgarity. Finally, she came back and fell prostrate. Meanwhile, the old Englishman had gotten so drunk, that he was dead to the world. Along in the afternoon he began to revive and commenced yelling: "It's all over now." He was upstairs. After

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

a while he aroused Mrs. Black and she commenced yelling at him: "Dry up you coyote, or I'll come up there and drag you downstairs." He would bawl back at her: "Dry up down there, you bloody Irishman, or I'll come down there and smather you like a boog." Neither one of them was able to get to the other if they had so desired.

James and I had a close call while working in the mine one day. There was about eight inches of draw slate that had to be taken down. We would drive our room in 18 or 20 feet and then go back and knock the props and clean up the draw slate. One day we had pulled down the slate within 10 or 12 feet of the face of the coal and as that seemed solid we set a prop under the back edge about the center of the room and tightened it. Then shoving our car up to the face of the coal, went about our business. James lay on his shovel, backing up the cut making ready for a shot. I took my shovel and went to loading the car. All at once without even a click, the slate split from the post to the face of the coal and the whole half on the opposite side of the post dropped. It hit the pavement, shaking the whole room and blowing out both our lights, leaving us in total darkness. Both of us were scared almost speechless, as I thought surely he was killed and he thought I was. But finally we struck a match and found that neither one was hurt. Surely, we had reason to praise God for His merciful kindness to the children of men, and to realize that the angels of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear Him and delivereth them.

From there I went to the New England mines, near Fairmont, W. Va., and worked there for a while. Eugene V. Debbs came into the region and made several speeches, making it plain that coal companies were using us as strike breakers, by shoving all the cars and orders into the W. Va. coalfield and aiming to starve the poor

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

miners who were on strike, into submission. So we came out in sympathy with them. But in a week some of the men went back to work. In two weeks, nearly all that came out were back; so I, rather than go back without accomplishing what we came out for, left the mines.

I went in above Elkins on Chenoweth Creek and went to work on a portable sawmill. I enjoyed this work real well. I taught a singing school in the neighborhood. We also had singing in the camp. I was working there when the Maine was blown up and the Spanish War broke out. I enlisted and went to the camp at Kanawha City near Charleston.

We waded the mud there for two weeks, waiting for our equipment. Then we were ordered to embark for Chicamoga Park. There were four train loads of us; a battalion to each train. As we went through Lexington, Kentucky, the train stopped for some reason, for a few minutes. I was standing guard at the door, with orders that the soldiers should not get off. No one went out at the door but I saw piled crates of strawberries on the platform. After we were on our way again, someone brought me a box of strawberries and I ate them. Afterwards, I learned that some of the boys had climbed out of the windows and had pitched the berries in and I had been a partner to the crime by eating the berries. I was innocent in a way, because I knew nothing of the theft until too late. We went on to Chattanooga, Tennessee, and had to stay there on a siding for five hours, waiting till our turn came to unload. The hucksters were thick around our train, trying to sell pies, cakes and other things. Some of the boys would hide under the cars and while they were selling to the boys up in the windows, they would slip out and grab a pie or cake. There was an old colored lady with a basket. They kept grabbing her pies till they literally tore her basket up and took them

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

all. I was disgusted with that. I never saw where any fun came of that kind of ungodliness. Although I had been so low I was not fit to associate with respectable people, I thank God, I never got that low. Still God could and would save them, if they would repent. But they surely would have to confess to that old lady and pay her for the damage, if they had the opportunity. If not, they would have to be willing.

While at that camp, we spent six or more hours per day in hard drilling. Still some had plenty of time to get into all kinds of mischief. We had to take our turns at guard or fatigue duty. Men would bring wagons loaded with all manner of fruits and melons into the camp to sell. Sometimes a bunch of boys would agree among themselves and go to a wagon and begin to price the melons as if they were going to buy. At a given signal, they would all grab a melon and run. If it were close to the line or near where a guard was on duty, they would have an understanding with him and he would yell, "Halt," and then chase them over the hill or out in the woods where they would all sit down and eat together. Then the guard would return and report with a long face that they had dodged him. Some of the boys almost lived in the guard house for their mischief, and did not mind it, I am sure. Joe Boon, John M. Sayer, and I spent most of our leisure time in the Y. M. C. A. tent, reading the Moody Colportage library books, or writing. I wrote to my best girl once a week and looked anxiously for one in return, which was usually on time, as we had been engaged then about three or four years. We were all eager to get to Cuba. One evening on dress parade, the captains of our companies told us they had good news for us, but we should keep quiet until we were back in the company Row and then we could give vent to our feelings. They told us we were to strike Camp the next morning and go to the front. When we got in the company streets, the boys of company A. took a tall cedar

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

top for a flag and a large empty bread box for a drum with two or three to beat on it with sticks. They started the march up A, down B, and so on through the whole Regiment. Every man fell in line with anything he could get to make a noise—tin pans, buckets, tubs, or bells. If he could not find anything to rattle, he would yell to the top of his voice. There were 64000 troops in the barracks. They crowded our guard lines to find out what was the matter with the 1st W. Va. When they did understand, they did not bemean us for shouting. We were soldiers for our country and had a perfect right to shout. But many people will belittle others who make a noise, praising God because they are His soldiers and are marching forth to battle for him; against the enemy, the devil.

Chapter 11

Other Camps

We were disappointed in our hopes as we struck camp the next day and marched to Lytle, Georgia to entrain. The news came that peace was declared. We slept in our dog tents that night and marched back to our same old camp sight and pitched our tents again; but not for long. We soon got orders to move to Knoxville, Tennessee. There we were encamped for four months. There wasn't much excitement, although we were given our belts full of cartridges for the first time during our career, except for target practice. There was a colored regiment encamped about three miles from us. They refused to drill under white officers. We were called out to put them to work. We grabbed our Crag Gargasons and marched over to their camp. To our dismay, two or three other regiments had beaten us there and the colored boys had gone about their job.

My brother, Montgomery, visited me while there. It was the first time I had seen him since I left school, eleven years before. He knew some cousins of ours that lived there and we went to see if we could find them. Their names were John, James, and Beauford Henderson. We went to the city directory to locate them. We found about four pages of John's and Jim's but we found Beauford and through him located the others. We broke our camp there after four months and entrained for Columbus, Georgia, where we stayed four

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

months longer, waiting our turn to be mustered out. Very little excitement and just enough drilling for exercise. When our turn came to be mustered out, they offered to reenlist us for Philippian service; but I had become so tired of the monotony of camp life that my thoughts and face were turned toward home. I was even sick of the uniform, so as soon as I got my discharge, I hastened to Atlanta to a clothing store and fitted myself out with citizen's clothes.

I came up in North Carolina to my old home, where I met my kindred and old associates. I had been away from some of them seven years and some, eleven. I had a real enjoyable time for a month. My sister, Callie, and I visited our nieces and nephews; Mabelle, Theadocia, Gus, and Gumery Lee Peek. We all had our pictures taken together at the Cullowhee school, including a Reese girl with whom I had flirted in school at Glenville, North Carolina, and her brother. I value the picture very highly. My brother Isaac, the preacher, brought me as far as Sylvia, North Carolina by horse-back on my way back to W. Va. where my greatest attraction was. As we came down through the Cumberland Mountains, he sang the song:

“High o’er the hills, the mountains rise.
There, some ascend toward the skies;
Yet high above them I must dwell,
Or sink beneath the flames of hell.”

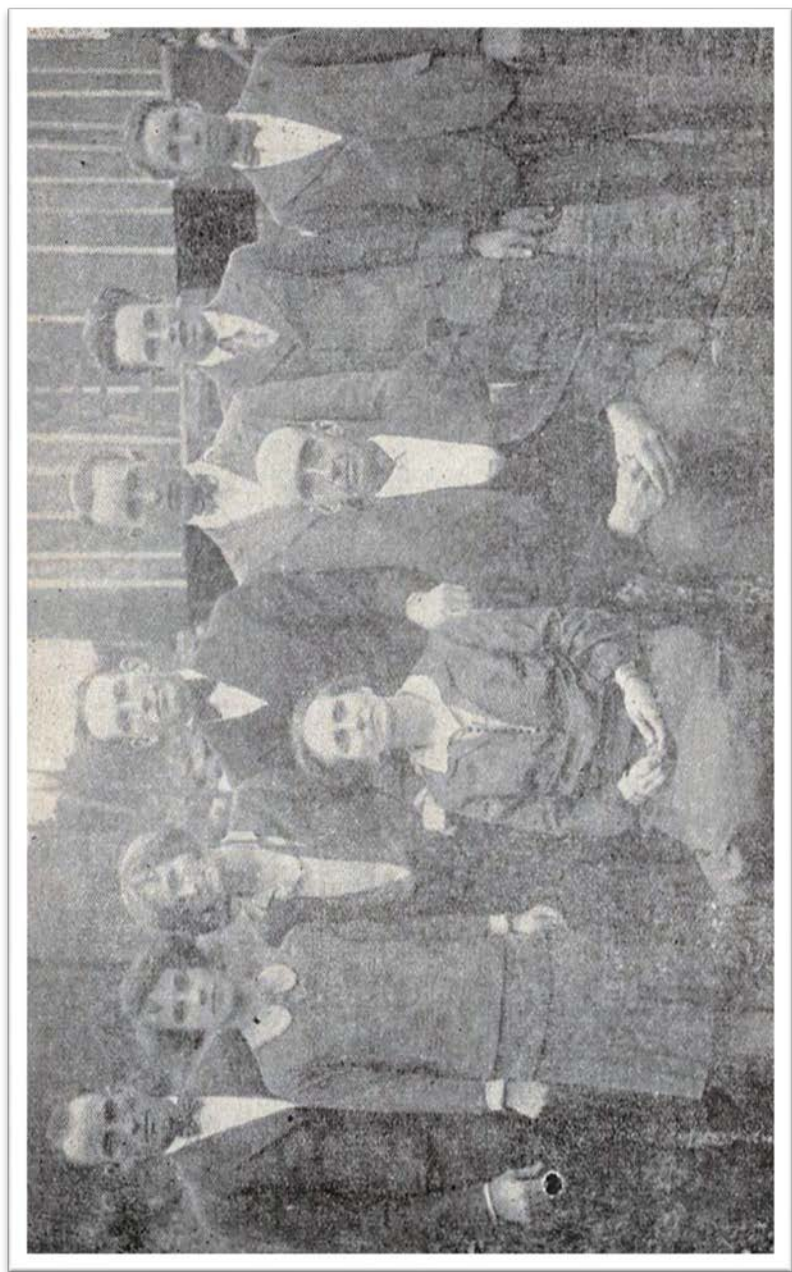
This made a lasting impression on me, which I’ll never outlive.

I came back to my old neighborhood where I had left my best girl, ten months ago. We had kept pretty close tab on each other through the mail. We had a real enjoyable time that summer, while together. I boarded at the Womelsdorff Hotel and worked in the mines. I didn’t like my boarding house very well and I had become tired of roving, so we talked matters over and decided to cast our

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

lots together and start housekeeping. I collected enough furniture to furnish three rooms and with her quilts and other belongings, we were very comfortably fixed. On the 29th day of October, 1899, we were married at the home of her parents, Johnathan and Adeline Boserman, at Kedron, W. Va.; and Miss Maude Boserman became Mrs. Maude Peek, until death separates us. The proprietors of the hotel where I boarded gave us our infare dinner, after which we went to our own apartments. In sixteen more days from this writing, we will have been married 39 years. With the exception of a few heated arguments, we have lived peaceably and contentedly, and are perfectly satisfied with the choice which we made 39 years ago. We have raised seven children: five boys; Percy L. Paul E., Phurah H., Preston G., Porter A.; and two girls; Pearl N. and Pauline A. All begin their given and sir names with P, making P. P., which in music means 'very soft.' They are all living at this writing; and regardless of what their initials stand for, all but one have found companions that are as intelligent as the average. They also seem to be satisfied with their choice. At least they have not discarded them; neither are they out looking for others, as far too many are doing these days. Our youngest boy is still single, but he has plenty of time yet to make his choice of a life companion before he is as old as his dad was when he made his. We also have 14 grandchildren. All of them are normal, for which we truly thank God with all our hearts. It is truly wonderful what the Lord has done for unworthy us, when we begin to ponder the past. I never had taken time to count the many blessings that God has bestowed on us during our sojourn here until I commenced this book, and though I am not half through counting, I am filled with gratitude and thanksgiving. Praise the Lord!

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE



George Peek, his wife, and their seven children

Chapter 12

Still On the Go, But Not Alone

I worked in the mines after I was married about two years. We moved from Womelsdorff to Montana mines, below Fairmont. There we enjoyed life very much. We had good neighbors and attended meeting on the Lord's Day. My work was three miles under the ground. I had to be at the pits mouth at five o'clock in the morning, to catch the first trip of empties. I was always on time. One morning on our way to work, some two miles underground, we ran into black damp and all our lights went out. There were one hundred and twenty-five men on the trip. The motorman tried to back out of the damp, but he had around one hundred cars and some of them got off the track. Our lamps were of the old style—open oil burners. We would get three or four of them together and strike a match and stick to them, but they would not burn. There was nothing left for us to do but to feel our way along the track and try to reach the opening. By the time we got back away from the damp where our lights would burn, some of the men were throwing up their breakfast. We got out however, without serious damage. Charlie Freeman, a good neighbor of mine, and I went to Enterprise and got a job and arranged to move the next day.

The mine foreman placed me in a wet heading, where I shot coal without minding it. We called it, 'bumping it of the hard.' I

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

made good wages. The doctor brought us an addition of twins to the family while there, a boy and girl. Oh, how proud we were of them. The heading I was working in kept dripping water until the water got so deep I had to abandon it. They gave me another, but it was so tough I could not make much. As it was no trouble to get a job those days, I packed my kit and went to Shinston. I was only there a short time until I moved to Flemington and worked at Rosemont. As the custom was with us in those days to piece-meal, I ruined my stomach. I got so I could not eat and too weak to load coal to do any good. So I left the mines and moved to Dartmore and went to work in a stone quarry. I only got \$1.85 per day. My job was to run the derrick and turn stone for the stone cutters. I learned that they received \$3.50 per day and the work looked easy to me, so I approached the boss and asked him to let me learn to cut stone. I promised that I would work for whatever he saw fit to give me. He said he could not spare me out of the quarry. I waited awhile and approached him again, with the same result. Opha Osburn was cutting stone and as I very often had some leisure time, I would take a hammer and be pecking on his stone. He saw I had some skill along that line and as he knew my desire to become a cutter, he made a proposition to me. He said if I would go with him to Elkins, we would contract stone work. He promised to give me \$2.00 a day and he would keep \$3.00, and we would divide the profits. No sooner had he offered than I accepted and away we went. We had no trouble to get work, building foundations for houses. As I had spent a good portion of five years in Elkins, most people there knew me and would come to me to get us to do work. We got along well and inside of two weeks I could lay as many stones as he. . I didn't say anything, but I was figuring. I saw that he was making twelve dollars a day much of the time. He still paid me off with two dollars and said nothing about the profits. I became perspicacious and decided

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

to go on my own merits. I went to Clarksburg and hired as a mason on the Waldo Hotel foundation where there were twenty-five old masons at work. I held the job down and never was questioned as to my experience as a mason. I was getting three-fifty a day, regular mason's wages at that time. I went with the same firm to the Horner Gaylor wholesale building in Glen Elk; and from there to a stone residence on Main Street near Elk Creek. From there I went to Elkins and helped to build the Odd Fellows' Home. I went from Elkins to Fairmont and went to work for George and Bill Ice. I moved my family to Uzz town, near the Fairmont railroad yards. There was so much noise that we had to talk to each other as if we were deaf. Day and night the engines would hoot, shove the cars over the scales, bump them against each other, and roll the coal off. We soon got used to it and liked the place very well. We rented from old Grandma Shears, as everybody called her, and learned to love her, as she treated us so nice. We went from there to Saterfield Street on Palatine side of Fairmont.

Chapter 13

In Business for Myself

Here I bought my first real estate, a couple of lots on the north side of the street—the roughest in the plot. I plunged in with might and main to open a quarry, and began to contract stone work. I worked from two to sixteen men in the quarry and on the walls. We soon had the dirt shale and stone worked back far enough to give me a house seat on the front of the lot. While moving the shale, we had to be very careful about our shooting, lest we damage property on the lower side of the street. We got along well until I hired a new man that came with a recommendation as a quarry foreman. The first day I left him in charge of the quarry. I was out a couple of blocks away starting a foundation for a house, when, behold, I heard a shot. I knew there was trouble and ran to the street in time to see a cloud of shale going toward the houses on the lower side of the street. I was so vexed that I discharged the man without waiting for any apology. Then I investigated and found a glass door broken out of one man's house where a rock had gone through it and landed on the bed near a child that was asleep. A rock had come down on another house and broken the carnish. So I had to act the part of a real diplomat to avert an upheaval. One of the men was just raving. He said that he was going to see if he couldn't have his property protected. I knew who his lawyer was, so I rushed to his office. He

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

was an ex-officer in the 1st W. Va. regiment, which I served in, so I thought he would befriend me, and he did. I went and related the facts to him and asked him to use his influence for me. While we were talking we spied this man coming up the street. He said, "Leave him to me." I slid out the back way. When our neighbor returned, he was a changed man and said all he wanted me to do was to repair his roof. I soon had the repairing all done and things moving along good again. I soon built me a house in front of the quarry and moved into it. I held that job down for nine years. We took stone out until the face of the quarry was thirty feet high and one hundred feet long. The first three years I had some trouble getting men that would give an honest day's work when left alone. The remainder of my stay there I had no trouble along that line. I learned the men of that section until I knew whom I could trust. I had men that stayed with me five years. During this time, in resetting our derrick, we had dug a ditch for a 'dead man'; as we called the timber used to fasten our guy ropes on. The ditch was away up above the quarry and as the derrick was down on the level, it made the line run about with the ground. We had neglected to cover the 'dead man' with rocks, as we were supposed to do; since we were grading dirt from off the rock just under the guy line. I took a board and set it on end under the rope, lifting it high out of our way. The men below hooked on a stone and swung it around. When the beam came opposite this line, the 'dead man' bounced out of the ground and struck me, landing me among the rocks thirty feet below. I did not know anything until I was half way to the hospital. I had quite a cut near my eye and a sprained foot that kept me on crutches quite a bit, for my carelessness. I was out of the hospital in a few days and the work went on as well as usual. The people that owed me just flocked in to pay their bills before I got back home, and the men seemed to work better than ever.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

The stork brought us a baby girl around midnight one night. I always kept a couple of teams of horses to haul stone. The same morning of the visit of the stork, one of my horses got in the feed room and got tangled in the bailed hay wires and fell with his head under the bottom stable log and died. That same morning, we put off a shot in the quarry, throwing a rock and breaking the fan to our forge. You know the old adage: "When it rains it pours."

I am going to relate an experience that I am ashamed of and would dodge if I felt clear in doing so. However, I said in the preface of this book that I was going to be fair and that my aim was not to glorify self, but to show God's mercy and long suffering to the human family. Also, to show His power to deliver from the lowest depths of shame and degradation. I had been following the Lord, like Peter, sometimes afar off for around seven years. Soon after my conversion at Harding, I quit using tobacco and had not tasted it since. I had no desire for it whatever. Of course, I lay everything mean on the devil because I feel sure that is the place it belongs. The devil set a trap for me and I fell in it. I had been trying to get another party to quit using the dirty weed. As I knew they did not want me to be bound with the same habit, I decided to make it impressive on them. I took a small flake of tobacco and placed it in my mouth in their presence, ignorant of the effect it was to have on me. Alas, when the poisonous stuff touched my tongue, it went all over me like a flash and I wanted it as bad as I ever had when using it regular. The work was done. I went right on using it, and as I considered it wrong for a Christian, I just dropped my profession. Then of course, there was no more pleasure in the company of Christians, for me. I changed my associates and began to visit the saloons. It was not long until I was drinking beer, playing cards, and shooting dice for money. I would also punch a machine that registered the blows for the drinks. The next was some of my workhands taking me home so

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

drunk they almost had to carry me. The first, and thank God the last, time my wife ever saw me under the influence of drink. My spell only lasted a year, but it was a long year to me and one void of pleasure of any kind. In fact, it was, I believe, the most miserable year of my life. I truly thank God, that He permitted it to be thus; because if I could have shaken off the misery and again found pleasure in the things of the world, I no doubt would have ended my life in the regions of despair.

Chapter 14

The First I Ever Heard of Holiness

During the time of which I now write, there was a Free Methodist camp meeting going on in East Park, one-half mile from my home. I don't know how I happened to go; but I found myself there, as miserable a man as ever lived, I suppose. I also found myself at the mourner's bench, as it was called in those days, and I couldn't explain how I got there, although I remember very well that I was bawling like a whipped dog. I truly felt meaner than any dog and realized I had whipped myself. Oh, how merciful and long suffering our God must be to take one who had plunged so deep into sin after having had peace with God as long as I had, and then lift him back on the plain of innocence as He did me, is more than I can understand. But thank God, through Christ, I know He did it for me. What He did for me, He will do for every soul that will seek His face.

My name, however, was still on the Methodist class book, as I had joined that body when I came to Fairmont; and 'once a member, always a member' I think was their method. I never had heard of Holiness or that there was anything more than the justified experience, up to this time that I know of. There was something, however, that took place in my life that caused me to hunger and thirst after more of God. This continued about a year when, as I have

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

always said and believed, God sent a little Holiness evangelist woman to help our pastor in a series of meetings. The first night she just gave her testimony and I said to myself, “She has just what I want.” The second night, she preached on Holiness and closed her remarks by saying: “You must desire the Spirit of God to lead and guide you so much that you can say with all the earnestness of your soul: ‘Lord by Thy grace, I will give up everything that would mar Thy pleasure in me. I will go where Thou leadest by Thy grace, regardless of the cost to the flesh. I will say what You will have me to say, if it leaves me friendless and homeless, to the best of my knowledge. Lord, I will be Thy obedient servant and move at Thy command. All I crave is to know Thy leadings.’ ” Then she invited any that desired to consecrate their all to God, to come forward. Six of us went forward and knelt at the bench. I don’t know what the others did, or received; but I know when I got down, that I talked to the Lord just like I would have talked to some human being and told Him I was determined, by His grace, to let Him have His way in my life. He also talked to me as clearly as any human voice could have spoken. I don’t know if it were audible to others, but it was to me and I left that bench satisfied, with peace and victory.

The first testimonial meeting I was in after this, I testified to the experience of Bible Holiness. There seemed to be very little response. In fact, there was little, if any, fellowship. There were 485 names on the church book, but at prayer and class meeting there would seldom be over 10 or 12. Most of them would go to a show, dance, or their lodge, rather than prayer or class meeting. I attended all the meetings regularly, trying to get food. I literally lived in my Bible, although I had never read it to any extent before. I often went 9 miles out in the country, to the Free Methodist meetings. They, at least, taught holiness and made plenty of noise. I became dissatisfied with my church relations and began to look for something better. I

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

read the New Testament through with one purpose in view; that was to learn all I could about the New Testament Church. I had been paying my assessment to the M. E. Church and I was getting no food. I went to the Free Methodist to get about all I got. So I decided that was not fair; and the Free Methodists had told me I could not keep my experience and stay in there. I had read also where it said, "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." I did not understand all that that meant, but I did not think I was equally yoked with all that belonged to that church, anyway. Therefore, I made up my mind to leave them; and thinking that I ought to belong to some joinable institution, I called for a letter. They tried to dissuade me from my decision, but they found that when I made up my mind, I was hard to change. They enquired what church I was going to join, and I told them I did not know, but that I liked the Free Methodist the best of any I knew of. Therefore, they wrote me a letter thus: "This is to certify that Brother George Peek, a member in good standing, is dismissed at his own request, to join the Free Methodist church." I carried that letter for eighteen months, looking for a church that was nearer on the Bible line than any I had yet seen. I was over several states during that time. I spent one winter in Knoxville, Tenn. and worshipped with the Apostolic Holiness people. In fact, I visited every new thing I could find, but none filled the specifications as I had read them in the Book. I came back home with my mind made up, at least in one sense, that I would never join anything, unless I found something nearer on the Bible line than anything I had seen so far.

Chapter 15

My Burden for Souls And Decision to Trust God

During the seven years I tried to live a justified life, I did little praying, except for myself. Neither did I feel the burden for others very deeply. In fact, it was all I could do to keep my own head above the waves, and some of the time I failed to do that. However, since I rolled my burdens and the keeping of my soul on Jesus, I had time to think of the welfare of others. I never had a call to preach like I've heard of other preachers having. That is; the Lord speaking clearly and definitely, saying, "Go preach." I haven't the least doubt that he calls some in that way. I have heard Him speak as definite and clear, different times, as I ever heard a human voice; but it was always when I had come to my wit's end, as it were. I have never been in doubt regarding my duty to my fellow men since Jesus took my burden on Himself and let me go free. In that memorable prayer in the 17th chapter of John, Jesus said, "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I sent them into the world." In Matt. 28:19, 20, Jesus said to these same brethren, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations . . . to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Paul said to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2, "The things that thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou unto faithful men, who shall be able to teach others." I consider it the duty of faithful men, to pass

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

the truth on to other faithful men, as it came down to us that way. The Lord gives us gifts, according to our ability; so our duty along this line is to the extent of our ability through Christ. My call was through burden for lost souls. The more I prayed for souls, the greater the burden; until I felt like Paul: “Woe is me, if I preach not the Gospel.”

My first effort toward preaching was at the Elmore Lumber Mill on the Middle Fork River, in the school house. I had very good success as far as I went, there were several conversions. I still knew but little about the New Testament Church, and did not know where to find it. When questioned regarding my affiliations, I would say, “I am out for God and Holiness.” So a Protestant Methodist preacher, hearing of my endeavors, came and joined in with me. When I got through with the meeting, I left the lambs in his care. No doubt that is what he desired; and expected it when he came. However, the Lord did not leave me in darkness, regarding the Church, long.

A few days later I was in Clarksburg. On the street one evening, I heard a man preaching. As it had been my method, for the past 18 months, to investigate everything with which I came into contact, I soon had a position by an electric light pole, close enough to hear distinctly. As the message went forth, I recognized the truth as I had found it in my Bible and my experience. When the service was through, I had made up my mind—I had found what I had been searching for, 18 months. I stepped up to one of the company and asked, “What church do you represent?” He said, “The Church of God.” I told him I had never heard of that before. He asked me if I ever read the Bible. I told him that I belonged to that too. As they were holding a series of meetings in a hall over Rian’s store on Main Street and were just on the street to advertise the meetings, I

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

followed them to the hall. I surely was an attentive student for a few nights; not with a thought of finding fault, for the first sermon and the fellowship of the brethren had convinced me that there was no poison there. But I was anxious to learn, especially in regard to the church. I had always been taught to join something and was listening to hear an invitation to join, which I would have accepted at the first opportunity. It did not turn out as I was expecting. Instead, I soon found out that I was already joined to them by a bond stronger than any pledge or treaty man could form—the bond of love. The Lord had added me to the Body, “the Church,” Acts 2:47, and needed no additions of men. From that day to this, I have never looked for another Body, because I learned that there was but one true Body, Eph. 4:4; hence, but one true Church, Col. 1: 18, 24. When I yielded my life to the Lord, and He, the Spirit of Truth came in, I became zealous for His cause. As He had accepted me as His child, He became responsible for my well-being. As He was all wise and all powerful, He had no need of human inventions; so I decided, there and then, to trust Him for my body as well as for my soul.

In relating this incident, I am not trying to bind this on other people; but simply relate what the good Lord did for me. I had in past years had many boils on me; and as many times had them opened or lanced. I had one on the back of my neck when I made my consecration. It was large and painful, and as I was digging coal, it made me grunt. Different ones offered to open it, but I thanked them for their kindness and declined. It finally became well of its own accord. I have never had another to this day. That was over 30 years ago.

My girl took Typhoid fever while I was holding that meeting at Elmore and my wife sent word for me to come home. When I arrived, the doctor had been there twice, and told my wife that he

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

would prescribe whisky if we were not such temperance folks. My wife's sister's child took the same disease at the same time and had the same doctor. When I got home, she told me what the doctor said. I was bitterly opposed to such a course, although to this time we had trusted our children in a doctor's care. I said, "If you say so, we will trust her in the hands of the Lord." She agreed and we never had the doctor any more. The doctor visited my wife's niece every day and it was down five weeks. Our girl was up and out in two weeks. So we were greatly encouraged to trust the Lord, which we have, ever since. And, thank God, He has never failed us to this day, as you will see when you read this volume. I believe we can afford to trust Him to the end.

Chapter 16

My Zeal for Truth

When I received the light on Holiness, it was so good to me and so plain, that I thought I could make it clear to anyone. Therefore, I found a way to broach the subject to everyone with whom I came into contact. I had many attentive listeners and some scorners. I never got discouraged. The Free Methodists agreed with me so readily along this line that when I got the light on the one true Church and found it so precious, I thought surely they would all accept the truth on that line, as I had counted them the best people I had ever met, to this time. I thought they were all seeking for all the light they could get; but alas, when I approached them on this subject, they threw up their hands in horror and warned their people against me. While I was in the fog on this line, it was Bro. Peek this and that; but now, oh, he is dangerous. I had struck their idol. In the past, I had given them fifty dollars on dedicating a small place of worship, so I asked them if I might preach in it. They said emphatically, “No!” There were, however, two exceptions—both class leaders. Brother Sheridan Vangilder never did turn a cold shoulder to me. We kept the ‘Unity of the Faith,’ and the last time I met him, he was contending for ‘the Faith which was once delivered to the saints.’

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

We rented a hall and had some meetings there but were not very successful. I finally sold my house and quarry and bought a little farm near Kingwood, in Preston County, and moved there. We only lived there two summers and I was not there near all that. We had a few meetings there in the school house and in private homes. Brother Henry Poling, a Free Methodist class leader, heard the truth on the one Church and accepted; and rejoiced in it until he went to his reward. The United Brethren preacher told some of our neighbors that we were good people and that the worst thing he had against us, was that we went around taking the best members out of the churches. We felt that to be rather a compliment instead of a fault, as God said, "Come out of Her, My people," Rev. 18:4. We were only helping to accomplish the Lord's will.

I worked at Clarksburg a lot, while living on the farm. We had meetings regularly in a room on West Pike St. I was batching two or three hundred yards from there. One day while I was laying concrete sidewalks, I got overheated. I went to the shanty and lay on my cot near the door. I was so sick that I would vomit until my whole frame would shake. An old gentleman, living near, came and offered his service. I asked him to go down to our place of worship and tell some of the brethren to come and pray for me, as it was about meeting time. Old Brother L. A. Kauffman and Brother A. H. Casto came, and as soon as they prayed, every pain, sickness and all left me and I was well. I put on my shoes and went up to this old gentleman's house to get some water. They asked me how I was and I told them I was well. The lady said that faith cure was a wonderful thing. But it was not Faith cure; but Divine cure or healing, in answer to the prayer of Faith.

Quite a number of times during these days, I would get too hot and take the sick headache; and as often, when with someone that

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

believed in the prayer of Faith, I was healed. So while on the farm, I was hoeing potatoes and became too hot. The thought came to me, of course from the Lord, that it was just as easy for the Lord to keep me from taking the headache as it was to heal it after I had taken it. I lifted my supplication to God, in the name of Jesus, that it might be done. The headache ceased, never to return. I have never to this day had another spell. On our trip to California, I bought a steering rig for my Hudson car. I tore the old one out and put the new one in. The sun shone so hot that I vomited all my dinner up, but I did not have a touch of headache; so surely I have something to praise God for. We disposed of our farm and bought property at Bridgeport, near Clarksburg. One morning my wife was complaining with the headache; but not thinking her serious, I went on to Clarksburg to my work. I finished my job around noon and caught a street car for home. When I stepped off the car, one of our neighbors approached me and asked, "Did you get the message?" I asked him what message. He said he sent me a telegram that my wife was about to die. I hastened on home and found six of our neighbors standing around the bed, expecting her to die every minute. She was shaking even the house with some kind of a spasm. Her hands were so cramped that it was impossible to open them. Her feet and hands were cold as clay and her head hot as fever could make it. The neighbors had wanted to go for the doctor but she had said, no, to pray and send for me. When I laid my hand on her head she opened her eyes and said, "Pray." I said, "All that believe in the power of the Lord to heal, agree with us in prayer." We bowed and I began to pray. Before I was through, my wife began to call on the Lord. In five minutes she came out of the bed praising the Lord, as nimble as she ever was. The women looked like they were scared. Some of the folks present were Protestant Methodist. They had prayer and testimonies once a week and as we had no meetings to hinder, we

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

would go. The neighbors began to testify about what the Lord had done for my wife and the preacher stopped the testimonies. Afterwards, I asked him why he stopped the testimonies and he said they were not the best for his church. The fact was, they were getting too much truth. He was afraid he could not hold them. The same spirit caused Rome to burn the Bibles in the dark ages. There will be an awful day of reckoning soon.

Chapter 17

Some Trials of Our Faith

During our sojourn on the farm, I had a call to go to Bedford, Va. to conduct a series of meetings. As I was working at Clarksburg and had but very little money ahead, it looked like quite a venture, so I took it to the Lord. Also, I wrote a couple of letters, to have them go before the Lord in earnest prayer, as I had been disgusted before I left denominationalism, with money beggars. I had promised the Lord to trust Him to supply my needs. If it should come to the place where I either had to beg the people, as I had seen so many do to my disgust, or quit preaching and go to work, I would do the latter. My wife was not sure that I should go, and she said she hoped, if it were not the Lord's will, I would have to walk back. I thought I had enough money to pay my fare down there so I started. I went as far as Roncevert and there had to lay over until the next morning to change trains. Brother Boggs, a minister of the same Faith, lived there; so I visited him and they asked me to stay over Sunday and preach for them. This was Friday, and as I had no set time to be at Bedford, I consented. They went out, scattered the news, and when the hour for services arrived, there was a good sized congregation. I preached four times and found they had division in the camp. They asked me to come back and try to get them together. I promised them, if they would send for Brother Foster to meet me

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

there, I would come back. I had a little money given me or I might have had to walk a part of the way to Roncevert.

I didn't walk, and arrived there in good time. I stayed two weeks and had a good meeting. One sister saw the light on the one church, and came out of the Apostolic movement and stood for the whole truth. I came back to Roncevert.

Brother Foster and Brother McCraw met me there and we did our best to get the saints together. We felt the Lord was through with us there, after a week, and left for home. I had sent my wife twenty-five dollars from Bedford and got home as well off as I started, and did not have to walk.

While at Bridgeport, I had a call to go to Wilmington, Delaware to hold a series of meetings, and also to Patton, Pa. I left home with just enough money to take me to Wilmington. I stayed there two weeks and closed the meeting to go on to Patton. Some of the saints from Sellyville, Delaware had attended the meeting and gave me six dollars. That was all I had when I closed the two weeks meeting. I was not immune from worry, and so was somewhat blue. I was billed to go to Patton, Pa. from there, and I knew it would take more than six dollars to pay my fare. The devil saw I was in a strait, and took advantage to get me to go back on the decision I had made when I started out to preach. He suggested that I let the brethren know my needs. I studied—was there anything in the scripture to justify such a course. I could get nothing only: “Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God.” Phil. 4:6. “My God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.” Phil. 4:19.

I rebuked the devil and said, “The Lord knows my need and if He wants the brethren to know, He can tell them, but I never will.”

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

I closed the meeting and went to the brother's house where my clothes were. Next morning I packed my cases, and started to the depot. This brother went along and another brother fell in with us as we walked. I went to the ticket window and enquired the fare to Patton, Pa. As I had to go over two or three roads, the agent had to look in two or three books. While he was doing this, one of these brothers slipped two dollars in my hand, and the other twenty-five dollars. So when the agent returned, he announced that the fare was twelve dollars. I only had half enough when I asked him, but before he returned, I had more than twice enough. I was made to rejoice in the Lord and impressed more fully that it pays to trust the Lord. I went on to Patton and preached two weeks. They gave me one hundred dollars more and a nice suit of clothes. This proved to me conclusively, that the Lord would take care of those that trust Him. David said, "Trust in the Lord and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed." This did not put an end to our tests while at Bridgeport, however. We had been trusting the Lord at this time, six years; and He had healed all our afflictions with scarcely an anxious thought. The test came, however, when our boy, the youngest in the family, was only a few months old. He took sick with something similar to Cholera Infantum. We prayed earnestly for his healing but saw no change. We asked the saints to agree with us; but instead of healing, he grew worse, changing to bloody flux. We fasted and prayed but he continued to grow worse. His bowels became locked. We would pray and the Lord would bless us. We would look for results, but would see the child still suffering. My wife would ask. "Well, what will we do?" I would say, "You know the Lord is able to heal it if it is His will." She would answer "yes." I would say, "If it is not His will for the child to get well, all the doctors in the world could not heal it." She would say, "I know it." Then she would brace up. The neighbors began to threaten to

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

prosecute me for manslaughter, if I let the child die without remedies. I weighed the problem. I knew I could give the child some innocent remedy and escape the law; but I had been preaching divine healing for six years and the Lord never had disappointed us. But now, if the Lord saw fit to withhold the divine touch and we resorted to remedies to escape the wrath of man, I would not be worthy of His blessings; and never could stand before a congregation and tell them the Lord was our Physician. No, I would not turn to the arm of flesh in the test; but would trust Him to the end. If He let the child die and they sent me to the Pen, when I did get out I would still preach divine healing. So the days and weeks passed. We sent a message to the Gospel Trumpet for prayer one Tuesday. On Friday, I was up to the Post Office looking for some word from them, but received none. The child's bowels had been locked eight days, and we had gone to the end of our row as far as we knew the Lord's will. This occurred about a year after the compromise in the Trumpet Movement, and Brother Orr had been sending me the Herald of Truth, since the first issue in Scotland. I knew he was publishing the truth, but to this time, I had tried to stand neutral. I was going toward home, walking on the railroad in a clear open space, studying what I ought to do regarding the sick boy, when a voice spoke to me as plain as any human could speak, and said, "You have always thought that Brother Orr was right in his stand, and you have tried the Gospel Trumpet people and nothing has been accomplished, now why not send him a telegram. I went home and told my wife about the voice. She said for me to send him a telegram. I sent him a night message explaining matters, and next morning the child's bowels came unlocked and he was well. In three days, we got a letter from Brother Orr, saying they had prayed for the child three times and felt the child was all right. He was in California at that time.

Chapter 18

While Living in the Vicinity of Clarksburg

Brother A. H. Casto and I were in perfect fellowship from the first time I met him. We learned to love each other as all saints really should. We were equally yoked, not with human ties or pledges; but with the Lord's yoke. In fact, all the saints in and near Clarksburg, as far as we knew them, seemed to love each other in deed and in truth; and were nearer in harmony with the teaching of the Word than any congregation I knew personally. All were prompt at services; and if anyone was absent, some of us would go and visit them immediately, as we felt sure they were sick or something unusual had happened. When we prayed for each other in sickness, we were healed. We had many precious seasons with the Lord.

Brother Casto and I worked together in temporal and spiritual work. We held a meeting at Oneal, and built a cellar at Marshville, at the same time. They were four miles apart. We would work nine hours per day, walk over the mountain and conduct services, then walk back. We had a good meeting. I believe 12 or 13 professed salvation that week. Brother Casto finally moved to Hartsel, Alabama. I surely would love to meet him again, if he is still living.

My wife and I went to Randolph County to visit her people, while living at Clarksburg. On our way back home, we stopped at

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

her Uncle Joe Bauserman's. I remembered that Brother Romey Johnson, who had helped me in a meeting at Clarksburg, lived there. I asked Uncle Joe where he lived and how he was. He told me that he lived over the hill about a mile, and that he was in the last stage of consumption. Two doctors had given him up. I went over to see him, and he looked more like a corpse than a living man. I had to get very close to hear him whisper. I felt a yearning to get help to him, that I seldom feel. I promised to go back that night. I went to Buchannan, W. Va. and asked Brother Rigger to meet us there. We invited some others that lived in the community, whom we believed had faith in the Lord to heal. So a little band of us gathered that night. We read some of the promises out of the dear old Book to him and then knelt in prayer. The Lord so blessed our souls that we all arose claiming healing for him. We went away and the next morning my wife and I went home. I went on to Nitro to work and did not hear any more of him until that fall. We went back to Uncle Joe's; and he told us Brother Johnson was up and out at work in two weeks after we prayed for him. I visited him, and he was red-faced and healthy looking. He could sing as if he had never had such a thing as T. B.

We tell this for no other purpose; but that the reader may hear and believe that the Lord is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. That He will and does heal the body as well as the soul. There are conditions to be met in both cases. If we expect the Lord to save or heal our souls, we have to repent of sin. That means to get so sick of sin that we will, by His grace, be careful not to do anything that will displease our loving Father. 2 Cor. 7:11 says: "That selfsame thing that ye sorrowed after a Godly sort. What carefulness it wrought in you, Yea, what clearing of yourselves." That is, straighten up your back life as far as it is possible. God is all wise. He knows if He would save a person, regardless of their crooked life, that men knew

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

they could make right and would not, they would have no confidence in them; therefore, He requires us to clear ourselves. The same if we desire healing for our bodies. We must have a willing heart to please the Lord. The Lord called healing for the body, the “children’s bread.” Some might think it would not do a sinner any good to seek the Lord for help in afflictions; and it would not, if he still desired to go on in his sins. If he is willing to forsake them, he has the promise in James 5:14-16: “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.” “The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up. If they have committed sins, they shall be forgiven them.” The Lord wants to be the physician for soul and body, to everyone that will use the remedy according to direction. But He said to the impotent man that was healed, “Go, and sin no more, lest a worse thing come on thee.” It’s dangerous to trifle with God’s mercy. I knew a man who was so afflicted that he could not lie down to rest. He had to sit up and lean forward, resting his head and body against something to get what sleep he received. Four of we brethren visited him. We found he belonged to a secret order and was taking medicine. There were great knots on the outside of his neck, all around it; and the doctors told him they were similar on the inside. We told him the Lord would heal him if he would obey Him. We showed him where the Lord said, “Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers.” “Come out from among them and I will be a Father unto you and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty,” 2 Cor. 6:14-18. We also showed him where the Word said, “Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord,” Jer. 17:5-8. He promised to give up his lodge, and to quit the doctors; so we laid hands on him and prayed. He shook like he had convulsions. The knots on the outside went away; and his mother told us that he lay down that night and slept like a baby. In two weeks he left his

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

mother's home, where he had gone to be cared for since he had been unable to care for himself, and moved to his home in another city. When he got there, the people of the lodge to which he belonged, persuaded him to pay his dues lest he should lose his insurance. He did, and it was not long until, like Asa, he became diseased in the feet and died. I refrain from giving the name, in sympathy for his kindred; but I can prove the truthfulness of this story by a number still living.

Chapter 19

Stirring The Nest

When the ‘Compromise’ came into the movement, the congregation at Clarksburg was scattered hither and thither, because some stood for and some against it. I moved my family to Mispa, near Cowen, W. Va. We had regular services with the few saints there. We also did some evangelistic work. We conducted a series of meetings over at the head of Beaver Creek. One service in that meeting out-stripped any single service I was ever in. The meeting began on Sunday. I asked a lady that night if she did not want to be saved. She said “Yes, but if I get saved, I want to be saved right. I don’t want to act the hypocrite like some are doing.” I said, “That is right, don’t act the hypocrite. It is too bad anyone would do that. Who is acting the hypocrite?” She said, “Sister Wilson,” so loudly that everyone in the house could hear. Everything passed off all right, though; so Monday night I spoke to her again. She was not so boisterous as before. We had day services Tuesday. It rained out side, and we felt the Lord truly reigned on the inside. After the preaching, the altar call was given and three or four came forward. In the bunch was a girl around ten or twelve years of age. When she prayed through, she went through the crowd shaking hands until she came to the lady I mentioned. She just laid her hand on her shoulder and looked her in the eye, with the tears streaming down her cheeks.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

This lady told the woman by her side to come on; and they both arose and went forward. They had not been there long until this lady arose and ran to Sister Wilson and grabbed her around the neck and said, "God bless you, you always were the best friend I had in the world. The devil made me say what I did." They continued going to the altar until everyone in the house who was not saved before, professed salvation. While we lived there, seven out of nine of us took the flu about the same time. I took it about midnight one night. I don't think I ever suffered any worse, for twenty-four hours. I sent for someone to come and pray for me; but all were too busy, or away, so no one came. It seemed I was suffering so that I could not collect my thoughts enough to pray. However, around midnight the next night, I got so miserable I just rolled out of the bed and began to call mightily on God, and the misery left me as quickly as it came.

I did not stay long at this place. We went back to Clarksburg out near the water-works, just off Chestnut Street. We rented a place and had regular meetings three times a week and added a few extras once in a while. It was not long until we had a nice sized congregation, mostly young converts. Everything seemed to be moving along well until I thought I was tied too tightly. Bro. Vore had been corresponding with E. J. Axup, at Newport News and he desired to come back to Clarksburg. He and I had been in some meetings together while I lived at Mispa. I liked him very much. He could picture a sermon as beautifully as most any one I knew. So Brother Vore and I sent for him. He came and soon wanted us to vote him in as pastor. I did not believe in that very much, and told him so. I believed the Lord ought to do the setting in the body, as it pleased Him. Taking the oversight not by constraint, but of a ready mind. Still he contended for it, and as I was wanting him to take the oversight, I yielded and we voted him in as pastor. He went to ruling with a rod of iron, not of Love. So he thundered and pounded until

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

everybody quit coming, except Vores and myself. Even my wife quit attending. I did not know what to do. I was working with my hands, helping to support him and his family. So one day a letter came from Brother Coe Long from Richwood, asking me to come and hold a series of meetings, stating that the congregation was mostly young converts, and if I could not come, to send some other good man. I had a job of work and Axup didn't have; neither did he want one. I thought he would be the one to go. I showed him the letter, and as the time was a week or more off, I kept working and praying for leadings from the Lord. The nearer the time came, the worse I felt about it. I felt God was going to hold me accountable for the souls of those people, if I let him go. I had seen the congregation there torn up. I was innocent of that crime, as I did not know any better; but now I knew better, so I could not escape the responsibility. I had to decide and face the consequences one way or the other.

Chapter 20

Being Persecuted by False Brethren

From the time Axup read the letter, he had been preparing for the trip, as he thought I wouldn't leave my job. I had another letter soon after this one from Detroit, Michigan, asking me to come and help in an assembly meeting, and I had let him read that. The night before starting to Richwood, I decided to go and face him and tell him the truth. He never had mentioned about going to me, but I knew he was preparing for the trip. I went up to his house and told him that I felt like God was holding me responsible to go. He immediately became enraged and talked so mean to me that I was glad to get away. The next morning I was on my way to Richwood. Axup went down to my house and talked so abusive about me to my wife that my girl, then around 12 or 13 years old, took up for me and bawled him out, until my wife had to stop her. He then wrote a letter to Brother Long, telling him I could not fill the office of a New Testament preacher because my wife and children were not what they should be. Brother Long did not tell me he had received it until the meeting was over.

After the meeting there, I went to Detroit. Axup had written three or four letters to people I had never seen there, bringing accusations against my family, that were untrue, to turn them against me. It did throw a damper on the meeting, because some believed

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

the report for a while. However, I am still in the battle for the Truth, and have the confidence and fellowship of those he tried to turn against me, which he hasn't. He went to California, but I saw a letter he had written to Vore, stating he had gone to the Pentecost and took his whole congregation with him. I am sorry for him and pray God will forgive him and deliver him from every imposition of the enemy of souls. I am not writing this to expose him, but that pastors may learn by my mistake, to be careful who they are allowing to take the oversight of the flocks that are entrusted to their care.

I left Clarksburg soon after this and moved to Richwood, where I now dwell. I have met and dealt with several deceitful preachers since then, and have been deceived with some for a while; but through the grace of God and past experience, I have never been completely ensnared, since. I have learned, at least, to try the spirits. "Prove all things and hold fast that which is good." Oh, how important it is in these days of deception, to have real discernment. We have plenty of the kind that go around with a beam in their eye, hunting for a mote in the other fellow's eye. The kind we need is that which will enable us to keep out of trouble. There have been three or four persons who have come to us since we have been here, posing as old-time saint preachers, who later proved to be out of harmony with the preachers of the old-time Truth. They failed also, to bring the old-time doctrine. One tried to introduce musical instruments. Some would take off their 'Superfluous Parifinalia,' as Brother Byrum called it, to get among those that opposed it. When going among those that allowed it, they would put it on. One came posing as one of us and tried to introduce the false idea that the devil was a de-throned arch-angel. Folks that have not been in touch with this Evening Light Reformation from its beginning, may not understand why we are opposed to these things; therefore, a few words of explanation may not be out of place here. The first

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

objection is, that the truth on these lines was a part of this reformation, and there was harmony among the saints for thirty years in regard to this doctrine. Can it be proven that these things were not held as sinful or even harmful? It was the innovations that caused friction and division which shouldn't have been. The neck tie was the first innovation, and therefore, caused the greatest stir. That was where the real fight started and finished. After the victory was won for the tie, it was no trouble to introduce and establish most anything the preachers desired. So I shall try to make it clear to you why we believe the wearing of it was, and is still, contrary to sound doctrine. I believe all will agree that there is a standard of dress for the saints of God, taught in the Word. Paul to the Romans (Rom. 12:2)—“Be not conformed to the world.” Paul in 1 Tim. 2:9, 10—“That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, not with gold, pearls, costly array.” 1 Peter 3:3—Whose adorning?—“Let it not be outward adorning, plating the hair, wearing gold or putting on of apparel.” You say, that is to the women. True, all except worldly adornment. However, men are called to preach the Word and that includes instructions on how women should dress. What is the standard of the sister's adornment? Is it a nice little feather in the hat, a modest ruffle on the sleeves to relieve its plainness? If you say yes, could you say nay, if a sister should desire a feather on each side of her hat, or a modest bow on both shoulders, or a ruffle on the bottom of the dress as well as on the sleeves? If not, then you could never object to three or four feathers, or a wing, or a whole bird; not if they chose to cover themselves with ribbon or ruffles from the floor up. The truth is, as you can surely see, that there can be no standard of adornment. The only standard is: no outward adorning, as taught in the Scriptures cited. Any article of dress that is necessary for comfort cannot be classed as adornment. I can't help feeling that you do agree with me that this is sound doctrine. If so, what would

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

you think of a preacher who would approach a sister and say, “Sister, you should not wear those things, they are adornment, or conforming to the world;” and at the same time he was wearing a neck tie? The sister would have a perfect right to say, “Hold on, Brother, we sisters claim the same freedom you brothers have taken.”

Chapter 21

Further Explanation

Why does the preacher wear the tie, anyway? Does it make him any more comfortable? Does it save him anything? They used to say it protected their shirt fronts, when they were accosted in regard to their large cravats. Others thought them too conspicuous and contended for a modest little bow. So no marvel that Brother Riggle preached his ‘Liberty of Conscience’ sermon. When we leave the Bible standard, there is nothing else left to do. Everyone take his own course.

A word regarding the musical instruments. Some say David was a man after God’s own heart, and that he used instruments. That is true—David also danced before the Lord. “Oh, yes,” says some of the Pentecost, “We practice that, too.”—and so it goes; one is just as legal as the other. David also offered burnt offerings before the Lord. In fact, David lived in the shadow. These things were all typical of something better. Paul, receiving a gift from Epaphroditus, said it was a “sacrifice well pleasing to God.”—Phil. 4:18. Peter 1:25—“Ye also as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, to offer spiritual sacrifices.” Heb. 13:15—“By him therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually;” that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name. Again, Paul said, “Be filled with the spirit, speaking to yourselves in Psalms and hymns,

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

and spiritual songs, singing, and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.” There is no hint in the New Testament that people should use instruments in worship. The last account given in the Bible regarding instruments is in Amos 6:1-6—“Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, that put far away the evil day, that stretch themselves on their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flocks. That chant to the sound of the viol and invent to themselves, instruments of music,” like David. Like the adornment, when we leave the Bible standard, there is no stopping. If you allow the organ, you must allow the harp, flute, cornet, bells, cymbals, stringed instruments, etc. If you allow them on the pretext that David was an example for us, you can’t object to dancing with all your might. If we can glorify God in that way, let us all get our instruments and learn to play, and send our children to dancing schools, and dance and play right. God does not want any mockery.

The devil a beautiful arch-angel? Where did such a doctrine originate? The preacher to whom I referred, quoted a passage in the 14th chapter of Isaiah, calling him Lucifer. Let us examine this scripture and see if it has any reference to an angel. Beginning with the 19th verse of the 13th chapter, the prophet describes the fall of ancient Babylon. Going on in the 14:1, he gives a reason for the fall. “For the Lord will have mercy on Jacob and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land.” (14:3-4). When they were delivered from their bondage, they would take up this Proverb against the King of Babylon, not an angel. 14:5, 6—“The Lord hath broken the King’s scepter. He who ruled the nations in anger is persecuted and none hindereth. The kings of the nations will say, Art thou become weak as we? Thy pomp is brought down.” 14:12—“How art thou fallen from heaven,” which means his position as exalted ruler of the world, “O, Lucifer?” 14:13—“For thou has said I will ascend into heaven.” He fell from his imaginary heaven. 15, 16—“Is the

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

man (not an angel) that made the earth tremble, that did shake kingdoms,” etc. It would not be worthwhile to go further with this subject, if it were not for the false doctrines that are linked with and dependent on this idea. They hasten to Rev. 12 and 20 to prove their theory. But they dodge the 13th and 17th chapters. Therefore, we will endeavor to clarify these scriptures. Chapter 12:3—“There appeared another wonder in heaven.” Not above the stars of God, as the Babylonian imagined himself; but the Ecclesiastical heaven, as we hope to make clear as we proceed. “Behold, a great Red Dragon (not Beelzebub, nor an arch-angel) having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads. The Dragon stood before the woman (the church) to destroy it.” 12:7—“There was war in (the Ecclesiastical) heaven. Michael, (Christ) and His messengers (Angels) fought. Their weapons were the Blood of the Lamb and the Word of their Testimony, (v. 11) against the Dragon. The Dragon and His (Messengers) angels fought. They (Christ’s messengers) overcame the Dragon.” Chapter 13:1—“A Beast rose out of the sea, having the same number of heads and horns as the Dragon.” 13:2—“The Dragon gave him (the Beast) his power and seat and great authority.” In chapter 17, the Beast appears carrying a woman (the Apostate Church). John interprets the heads and horns and woman. 17:9, 10—The heads are seven mountains, or Kings; five have fallen (or passed out of existence) one is (exists) now, the other is not yet come (inexistent). Verse 12—“The ten horns, which thou sawest, are ten kings which have received no kingdom as yet. The woman, which thou sawest, is that great city, which reigneth over the Kings of the earth.” The facts are, the Beast and the Dragon were symbols or types of the Roman Empires. The Dragon was Pagan, the Beast was Papal. History tells us that when John was on the isle of Patmos, there had already been five forms of the Roman Empire, that had passed away, representing the heads that had fallen. One form was

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

in existence, one head is, and that there was only one more, the one head that had not yet come, until the Empire was divided into ten minor Kingdoms. The 10 kings that had received no power as yet. The woman that sat on the Beast, interpreted as a great city, was the Roman Catholic Church, supported or held up by the Roman Empire, the Beast which was Papal. So you see, there is no such thing as the old devil represented by the Dragon. The 20th chapter is a rehearsal of the same conflict described in the 12th chapter with a little change in the type or symbol. Instead of the work of Christ's Kingdom being represented as Michael and His angels, it is represented as an Angel, which means a messenger, coming down out of heaven with the key (authority to lock or unlock) of the bottomless pit, and a great chain (the plan of salvation) in His hand. He laid hold (took the defensive side) of the old Dragon, (Pagan Rome) and bound him a thousand years. That is; he convinced the Romans of the one true God in contradiction to their plurality of Gods, as the Pagans taught. So he gave his power, seat and authority to the Beast. In Luke 10:18, 19 where Jesus said, I saw Satan as Lightning, fall from heaven," doesn't mean that He was up in God's heaven, but the exalted position that he had held over the minds and hearts of the human family since Adam's fall, till Christ came and broke his power and gave the disciples power over all the power of the enemy. I deem this sufficient proof that the devil was never in God's heaven.

Chapter 22

Varied Experiences

Many and varied have been our experiences since coming to Richwood twenty odd years ago. We have done considerable work with our hands during this time. We have never depended on the church for support. I have not been burdensome to them. It might be in order, like Paul, to ask their forgiveness of this wrong, 2 Cor. 12, 13, although it has only been in keeping with my decision and promise to God: that I would not beg the people, but trust Him for my support. I do not say I have taken the best course, but God has blessed and supplied me, so that I could not only support myself and family; but has enabled me to have some to give to them that needed. A preacher not long ago said, when I testified that I had never stuck my hat under any man's nose for collection, "Oh, yes, if I got a pension like Brother Peek, I would not have to do that." There were fifteen years of my life as a minister, while raising my family of seven children, that I did not get any pension. All that time, when at home, I conducted regular services wherever I lived, at least three times a week. I also did a lot of evangelistic work; and a good part of that time, rented a place to worship, either helping to, or paying the rent myself. Still I never had to beg. Many a time God has supplied us when it looked like we were at the end of our row, as it

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

were. I will only mention one more instance here, where He came to our rescue, besides what I have mentioned in previous chapters.

I had a note coming due, and although there were many that owed me for work, rent, or goods, I did not know where I could collect a dollar. The note was twenty-five dollars and as I had always tried to be prompt in meeting my obligations, I could not help being anxious about it, although God had always supplied me, and my trust was still in Him. To the very day the note came due, I had not one dollar and had no idea where one was to come from. I went to my mail box and there was a letter from a sister in Florida. It had a twenty-five dollar money order in it, and a note saying, "This is my tithe money, and I felt like the Lord would have me send it to you." I took it and paid off my note. I truly did thank God and took new courage.

We have had some exciting experiences. One night we went to prayer meeting across the river on the South Side. While in meeting, it rained very hard. After meeting, we started home the way we had come. When we got to where the bridge had been, behold, it was gone. We went up the river and crossed on a swinging bridge. When we got back to Oakford Avenue and Main Street, the brick were coming down it and piling up around the corner drug store, striking other brick and bouncing high in the air. It cleaned every brick off the avenue and piled them on Main Street. We went home on Cranberry Street, and there the water was gushing out of every hole in the hill above the house and came down like a good-sized river. It made us think of Noah's time when the fountains of the deep were broken up.

We have had several destructive fires since we came here. I will only mention one. At this time the buildings were mostly wooden structures. One morning around four o'clock the fire alarm sounded,

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

and we aroused ourselves to find that the fire was leaping out of a building somewhere near the Liberty Restaurant. It spread up Main Street and up and down Oakford Ave. The only equipment to fight the fire with, was a few hose and a pump at the lumber mill to force the water into the lines. They began to pour water on the bank building and there was no power left, and no hose for anywhere else, so the fire continued to spread. We begged for hose to try to check the fire at Walnut Street. There was none to be had. We turned to the springs and wells, and carried water in buckets and threw on the fronts of the buildings on the upper side of Walnut, trying to prevent it from crossing; but it caught in the carnish where we could not reach and soon made headway. They had bombed a building on the upper side of Main Street to try to clear an opening to check the fire. They had made kindling of it, and piled it against the next building, but it caught over and had the pile about half consumed. The fire had also crossed Oakford and caught high in the carnish of the drug store. The children had the goods packed to move out of our house. I had been helping to carry furniture into Walnut Street and had seen it burn even in the street, until I was heart sick. I told the children to leave the goods in the house. "If the Lord don't help us, it will be of no use to carry it farther," I said. About that time a change took place. I don't think anybody has any idea what it was, other than the Almighty intervened. The fire in the carnish, the kindling, and the houses up Oakford, which a few minutes before had been raging, ceased its fury and died out. Most people would rather give any freak of nature the credit for our deliverance than God; however, I rather credit Him with every good and perfect thing, Jas. 1:17.

My work in the ministry has been mostly single handed as far as other preachers are concerned, yet I have labored with a few whom I regarded as real men of God. Brother L. A. Kauffman was the first. He and I were together in several meetings. I considered

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

him my tutor, he being the one that brought me the light on the one Body, or Church. Since I have been in Richwood, Brother Liel Y. Janes came to our place and conducted a few services for us. I then went with him into Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Penn. I surely enjoyed every hour of our month's association together. I considered him a real example of meekness. No one ever manifested more humility in my presence than he. Then Brother John H. Strong and I have been associated together a lot, he at our place and I at his. I regard him as a real God-fearing man, and a splendid preacher. I have been associated with many other good preachers in a meeting or two, that I have learned to love. I never felt obligated to give my full time to the work here, as I have always felt especially qualified for evangelistic work. I would have welcomed a real man of God to take the oversight of the work here any time. However, to date, none have come; and I have felt considerable responsibility for the little flock at this place. The work has never been large enough to boast of; but one thing we are thankful for, is that the Lord has kept us free from 'compromise' of any type, and also from 'fanaticism.' We have had preachers of both types to try their hand, but they did not last long.

I have been in twenty-four states, mostly since I have lived in Richwood, and preached in eighteen. My home has been here for twenty odd years. When at home, we have always tried to do our duty in keeping the work moving. I have done quite a lot of evangelistic work in some of the adjoining counties, especially Webster and Kanawah. I have spent parts of two winters in Florida, one in Tenn., one in South Carolina, sometime in Virginia and North Carolina, and several trips to Ohio. I spent nine months in California and on the road. We went through North Carolina and was in some meetings there, and then to Tennessee to a camp meeting. We also visited Lookout Mountain, where the battle was fought above the

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

clouds during the rebellion of the states. Then we passed on through Arkansas and Oklahoma, stopping two weeks at Guthrie. There we met Brother Pruitt for the first time. We enjoyed our visit with the saints immensely. I was in a two weeks meeting with Brother Pruitt at Clovis, New Mexico on this trip. I have been with him in several camp meetings since. I consider him a fine brother, well balanced on the Word, a splendid preacher, and publisher of the truth.

From Clovis, we went on to the Pacific at San Diego, California and then up the coast to San Clemente. We camped there a week on the beach. We fished some, and watched and listened to the sea lions. Out about a mile from shore was a large rock. The lions literally covered it and yow, yowed, day and night. They sounded much like hounds running, or a bunch of boys taking their first lesson in band music. From there, we went to Glendale and met Bro. Eugene and his father, Bro. George Harmon, for the first time. We learned to love them and many other saints in California, sincerely. We were in many series of meetings with the saints there and at Whittier with Brother Zinn's congregation; and also, at Pomona, and San Bernardino. We certainly enjoyed our stay in California and intend, the Lord willing, to take another trip back there sometime.

We left in March, to return home. Sister Floyd packed us some rations to eat on our way. I never will forget the angel food cake she baked for us. It was about as large as an old fashioned grindstone; but not nearly so heavy. We ate angel food for three days. Sister Floyd is a dear good sister. We came through the Petrified Forest in southern Arizona. It looked like old tree trunks laying all around over the ground; however, the inside, when chipped off, was just like lime stone. We also came through the Painted Desert where there were acres of mounds like large hay stacks with layers of every imaginable color from top to bottom. They showed the marvelous

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

handiwork of God. Truly, we ought to sing, “What A Mighty God We Serve.”

We came through Albuquerque, New Mexico, and turned north through Colorado. There we struck a blinding snow storm and then a dust storm in Kansas. We drove one hundred miles through it. It was so thick you could hardly see to drive. We stayed at Wichita two nights and a day to clean up; and then came home.

Chapter 23

Russellism Exposed

I have heard of criminals falling in line with a posse,' to hunt for themselves, in order to deceive the public. The adversary has, for centuries, succeeded in deceiving thousands of seekers after righteousness by his avarious forms of religion. Through the long dark night of Catholicism, and the cloudy day of Protestantism, men have worshipped creeds instead of Christ. However, since the evening light is shining, and God's true ministers are exposing the creeds of men; also revealing the true Church, the one Body of Christ, the devil is shifting his tactics. He knows anxious seekers after the truth are hard to deceive longer with false religions or denominationalism; therefore, he is doing like the criminal: falling in with the posse, and trying to cover his motive by exposing the religions he formerly advocated. I have no ill will toward any individual, not even those whom Satan is using to destroy souls. But in order to expose the deceptions of the enemy, it becomes necessary to expose the tools he is using. I believe some sincere souls, like Paul before his awakening, think they are doing God service; when in truth, they are leading souls into a worse deception than the one they are exposing. There are intelligent, nice appearing young men and women, scattering literature edited by Judge Ruthford, and published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. I truly believe

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

they think they are pleasing the Lord, when in reality, they are poisoning the minds and hearts of those that adhere to their doctrine. Their exposure of false religions is truth, as every wide awake soul can see. The enemy, however, is using these truths; not to liberate souls, but as his nature is, to lead the seeker after truth into a greater deception. The deception he is endeavoring to lead souls into is first: that the deliverer has not yet taken upon his shoulder the Government, as foretold in Isaiah 9:6; therefore, we are not able to overcome sin for the devil is still loose. Second: that the Lord is soon to appear and bind the devil and set up a kingdom. That all who accept the Ruthford theory will then be delivered. The others will just die and that will be the end of it all. If the devil can get souls to believe these deceptions, he will have them just where he wants them. If they die before the Lord comes, they will be lost because they have neglected their soul's salvation in the time accepted. If the Lord comes while they live, they will find that instead of setting up a kingdom, He will deliver it up to God. Therefore, it will be too late to get into it then. Oh, such a soul destroying doctrine! The Lord said, if it is possible, they shall deceive the very 'elect.' I truly thank God for a few that have run for the prize, and have been elected; otherwise, the entire world would be deceived and lost. I pray that God will stir His elect to cry aloud against this master-piece of deception. Let us weigh these deceptions in the light of God's eternal truth.

Daniel says, In the days of these Kings or Kingdoms (meaning the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian, and Roman) that the God of heaven would set up a Kingdom that should break in pieces all these Kingdoms, and that it should stand forever (Dan. 2:31-44). These Kingdoms were world Empires, so far as was known. The Roman was the fourth and last one mentioned. The world was subject to the Pagan Roman Empire when Christ came on the scene.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

He began to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, Matt. 4:23; 9:35, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," Matt. 3:2; 4:17; not, would be two thousand years later, but is at hand. He spent three and one-half years teaching and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom; manifesting the power of God over all manner of sin, sickness, and devil possession—gathering material together for His Kingdom. After He suffered and paid the penalty for sin, He arose triumphant over death, hell, and the grave. We hear Him say, Matt. 28:18, 20, "All power in heaven and earth is given to me. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Luke 24:49, "but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Acts 1:8, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." John 14:26, "The comforter which is the Holy Ghost, will teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." So when the day of Pentecost was fully come, "the day foreordained of God," the Holy Ghost came upon the ones Jesus had gathered together, and taught, for the establishment of His Kingdom, Acts 2. That day the Kingdom was set up, and subjects of the Kingdom went everywhere preaching the Word and the Lord, the King, working with them; and signs followed. Thank God, they are still preaching the Word and signs following. Paul said, "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy is death." At Jesus' second advent, He will break the bands of death asunder and call every nation together, and the people to judgment; and therefore, destroy death. Then instead of setting up His Kingdom, He will deliver it up to God, the Father. Then He (Jesus) will be subject to God that God may be all in all, 1 Cor. 15:23-28. So that ought to put a hush on all

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

this “Millennial” and “Jesus Only” “Heresy.” Col. 1:13—“Who hath translated us out of the Kingdom of darkness (out of sin, the devil’s kingdom) into the Kingdom of His dear Son,” the Kingdom of heaven, Kingdom of God, where we land when we are born again and made new creatures. Thank God, the devil can’t deceive those that are in the Kingdom. Neither can he make those that have been delivered out of the Kingdom of darkness believe that we have to go on serving the enemy until some supposed Millennial.

Chapter 24

Some of the Thrills I Have Experienced

I have already mentioned some of the scenes of nature that have brought thrills to me; however, I will mention another or two. Within one mile of where I was raised, on the opposite side of the mountain, is a solid rock a quarter of a mile wide and a mile long, with a forty-five degree slope. We children used to go up there and pull off our shoes and go down it. There were some nice moss beds scattered around, where we would rest and play. Coming back up the rock, we would walk on our hands and feet. One day sister Laura and I were coming up the rock. I got on a part of the rock that was much steeper than the general slope. I looked up to see how I was getting along and it was so steep that I was scared. I stood there on my hands and feet trembling. Laura saw me and reached over from the crevice she was in, and assisted me to her side; or, no doubt, I would have collapsed and went tumbling down the rock. If I had, I wouldn't have stopped before I reached the bottom of the cliff, which was one-half mile below. We often loosened large rocks and started them bouncing down the cliff. They would jump a hundred yards at a bound, until they landed far below.

There is another mountain called 'Whitesides' some eight miles from our home. One side of that mountain is perpendicular, one mile high. Crowds of people used to go up there and have picnics on its

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

summit. I used to walk out on the edge and look down. Others would turn their heads in horror.

There is no section of the United States, where there is more thrilling scenery than in western North Carolina. Like the Psalmist David in the 19th Psalm, regarding the heavens declaring the glory of God and the firmament showing His handiwork, these scenes of nature cause one to stand in wonder, and declare, that truly, this is the handiwork of God, and is glorious to behold. David, in the 139th Psalm, 14th verse, proclaimed: “I am fearfully and wonderfully made”. One of the wonderful things in the construction of the human body is the fact that through the different senses our emotions are stirred, causing thrills, either of joy or sorrow. We all love and seek for the former kind. However, there is a wide range of opinions as to what real joy is. The condition of the heart makes the greatest difference. We all, to a certain degree, get thrills from viewing scenes of nature. The more our minds and hearts are set on the things of the world, the greater will be our enjoyment in the things of this life. In fact, we will enjoy many things while in that state that, after our hearts are changed, would bring sorrow rather than joy. This is one thing about which the adversary tries hard to hinder the earnest seeker after righteousness. He points out the many things that have brought earthly enjoyments, magnifying them many fold. Then he will make it appear to be a great sacrifice. He will minimize as much as possible, every enjoyment that will take its place. However, our heavenly Father does not want to diminish our enjoyment, but to multiply it. Salvation truly spoils us for the world or worldly enjoyments. I tell people and truly too, that I go to all the shows, theaters, dances, ball games, pool rooms, beer parlors, and such like that I want; and I also chew, smoke, and rub all the tobacco, and drink all the whisky I want because, thank God, Salvation took all the “want” out of me. That is why the poet of old, wrote:

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

“I am drinking at the fountain, where I ever would abide;
For I’ve tasted life’s pure river, and my soul is satisfied.

There’s no thirsting for life’s pleasures, nor adorning rich
and gay;

For I’ve found a richer treasure, one that fadeth not away.

Tell me not of heavy crosses, nor of burdens hard to bear;
For I’ve found this great salvation, makes each burden
light, appear.

And I love to follow Jesus, gladly counting all but dross;
Worldly honors all forsaking, for the glories of the cross.

Oh, the cross has wondrous glories, oft I’ve proved this to
be true;

When I’m in the way so narrow, I can see a path-way, thru’.

And how sweetly Jesus whispers, take the cross, thou
needest not fear;

For I’ve tried the way before thee, and the glory lingers near.”

Yes there are joys abundantly given in return for all we give up for Christ—many thrills that will surpass all we ever had in our sinful life. I want to mention two or three I have experienced that the world cannot duplicate. It did not take an excitement to produce them, either. They were not worked up, but sent down. I was conducting meeting at Wellsville, Ohio. On Sunday morning I walked into the pulpit as cool as I ever did. About the time I got ready to announce my text, the glory of God came upon us till every child of God in the house was melted to tears of joy. To me, it felt like rain drops of Glory flowing down over me and running off at the end of my fingers and toes. Nothing of earth could produce such thrills as these.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

At another time, a number of us drove to Chillicothe, Ohio to pray for Brother Strong. We arrived there late in the night and prayed for him. The Lord healed him, and the following day, he drove us out in the country to visit some saints. As we rode along, the Lord so filled me with His presence that I felt like He might be going to carry me away as He did Elijah.

I have had other experiences, such as these, but will speak of only one. This came upon me while asleep. We were having a series of meetings in our chapel here in Richwood. I was burdened considerably for the success of the meeting, and had been praying till late in the after part of the night. I went to sleep; but I don't think it had been very long until the glory of God so filled me that I thought I began to praise God to the top of my voice. I thought I was saying, "Glory to God," so loud that I could be heard clear across the town. Wave after wave of Glory thrilled me, until I felt I must give vent by yelling to the top of my voice. I suppose I did not, however, as no one seemed to know anything about it but me. I felt good over the experience for a week or more. The dear Lord knows just when we need a thrill. It would not do for us to live up in that atmosphere all the time, till the Lord is through with us here; then we expect a continuance of these or similar thrills. We thank Him for an earnest of our inheritance; however, it would be selfish for us to spend our time trying to work ourselves up to such a pitch, when we see souls all around us needing our assistance to help lift and carry their burdens and cares. May God keep us surrendered to His will.

Chapter 25

Causes of Deception

I appreciate the Lord's dealings with me as much, I believe, as anyone could. I also appreciate the operations of the Holy Spirit in my heart and life. I have no scriptural grounds, however, to hold up my experience as a standard for all to measure to. As I stated in a previous chapter regarding my refusing to have a boil opened and how I had never had another, that I did not wish to hold it as a standard for all. 1 Cor. 12:6, 7 says there are diversities of operations but the same spirit; the manifestation of the spirit, is given to every man, to profit with all. I speak of these things as a testimony of what the Lord has done for me. Paul did not tell of how the Lord struck him blind on his way to Damascus, that we might wait for the same, though he did say that there was no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon Him. What I write is in love to all, with a yearning in my soul to be a blessing to all. However, nothing short of the whole truth will suffice.

I have been acquainted with the Pentecostal movement for the past twenty-five years. I have been a close observer from the beginning; not as a critic, but as Paul instructed, 1 Thess. 5:21: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good." The first Pentecosts I ever met were a man and his wife, in a meeting I held in a

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

neighborhood back of Wolf Summit. The man was a slave to tobacco, yet when he prayed he would go off in a jabber. When his wife testified, she would do the same. They invited me to their home and I accepted the invitation. During my stay, I accosted him regarding his tobacco. He told me he had tried to quit it, but could not. "I understand," said I, "that we receive power after the Holy Ghost comes on us." (Acts 1:8). So I questioned the fact of his having the Holy Ghost. His wife tried to defend him by saying she reckoned the Lord would forgive. I said, "Yes if we quit the practice, He will; but while we are living under condemnation, the Holy Ghost will not talk through us." She got so angry that she almost exploded, hence I doubted her experience. I have met with numbers of such cases, but as I knew we could not afford to set aside the truth because of the failure of some to measure up. I also realized that people would counterfeit or imitate everything that came along. I also knew that there was no danger as long as we kept the love of God in our hearts, and our search was, to be more efficient in His service, so I kept watching.

I went to Danville, Virginia to work. There I found seven different factions, advocating the "Tongue's evidence" doctrine. Then I went to Pittsburg, Pennsylvania and I learned that there were seventeen different bunches, contending that all who received the Holy Ghost would speak in Tongues. I knew the Word taught that the Holy Ghost was the unifier, according to John 17:17-21 and Acts 4:31, 32 and many other scriptures. I knew that they all could not be right any more than all the sectarian institutions could be right. After I got the light on the true Church, I knew all the institutions of men were wrong. I also knew from what I had seen of this, that there could only be a very small percent, if any, that were right. I knew that there was a Bible tongue. I also knew that there were many other gifts of the spirit and that any of these, if real, were evidence of the

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit—one as much as another. Where then, all this confusion of Tongues? The facts are plain to me now. Luke 11:9-13 says, the heavenly Father is more willing to give the Holy Ghost to His children than parents are to give good things to their's. The Holy Ghost is received through faith, not penance, Acts 15:8, 9; 26:18. I have never heard of a Tongue's preacher instructing his hearers to exercise faith for the reception of the Holy Ghost; but to wait for the sign. Jesus said, "A wicked and an adulterous generation seeketh after a sign, and there shall be no sign given." They say tarry; and cite you to Luke 24:49, and Acts 2:1. I will ask you, what were they tarrying for?—a sign? Emphatically, no. They were waiting God's time, the day of Pentecost. Why did not Cornelius and his household have to tarry? Because the Holy Ghost had already made His advent into the world and is waiting for all who will receive Him. The Pentecost people always make me think of the Prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. They tarried, cried, leaped, and punished themselves to make their God hear them. The Pentecost cry to the top of their voices and punish themselves to obtain their desire; and if the Holy Ghost should come, unless He should come with a gurgling in their throats, they would not receive Him. I have heard some say that they did not pray for the tongues and they got it. The fact is, they were taught that if He came, He would speak and they would not receive Him any other way. Therefore, as they were not yielded to God, but determined to have their own way, there was nothing more natural than for the deceivers to give them what they want. That is why they have no power over sin. Elijah was an example for us. He prepared everything according to the instructions given in the Word. After making thorough preparations like God instructed Moses, (Heb. 8:5, "See thou make it according to the pattern showed thee on the mount.") he then said, "Lord, thou art God, manifest thyself, that this people may know

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

that thou art God, and that I have done this at thy command, hear me, Lord, hear me.” Then the fire came. If we make the preparations according to the instructions given us in the Word; that is, repent, be sure our sins are all under the blood, and that there is no condemnation on our souls, then present our bodies a living sacrifice and believe God’s promises; the Holy Ghost will take His abode in our hearts. Yes, and give us power over all the power of the enemy. We will not be under bondage to any of the filthy habits of the devil. Neither will we be wanting to make Love to another woman or man, other than our own. As I testified in a former chapter, what the Lord had done for me. He will do the same for you—take all the ‘want to’ do evil out of your hearts.

Chapter 26

The Panic or Depression

When I came to Richwood, I bought property on Cranberry Street, and moved into it. Later, I bought the old South Side school house property. We used one room for a place of worship. During this time, the family and I did around fourteen hundred dollars' worth of work at Camden-on-Gauley. I took the man's notes and put them up as collateral, and borrowed some money on them. Later, I was beat out of the entire sum. That left me in debt, six hundred dollars. I had bought a piece of property on Greenbrier road, prior to this. In order to pay this indebtedness, we moved to the Greenbrier road property and rented our home. Later, I sold the home place for two thousand dollars, mostly on payments. I also sold the schoolhouse for three thousand dollars, on payments; they resuming the payments on my indebtedness. I was getting along nicely, but alas, the crash came. The parties to whom I had sold, dropped their payments, and let the property with the indebtedness come back to me. My son-in-law wanted a home, and as the school property extended to Front Street, I decided to build him a house on these lots. Before it was finished, he decided it was going to cost more than he could afford to put in a house. We then made a deal and sold him the Greenbrier property. That left us with the new house. Instead of getting out of debt as I had hoped when I started the house, I was

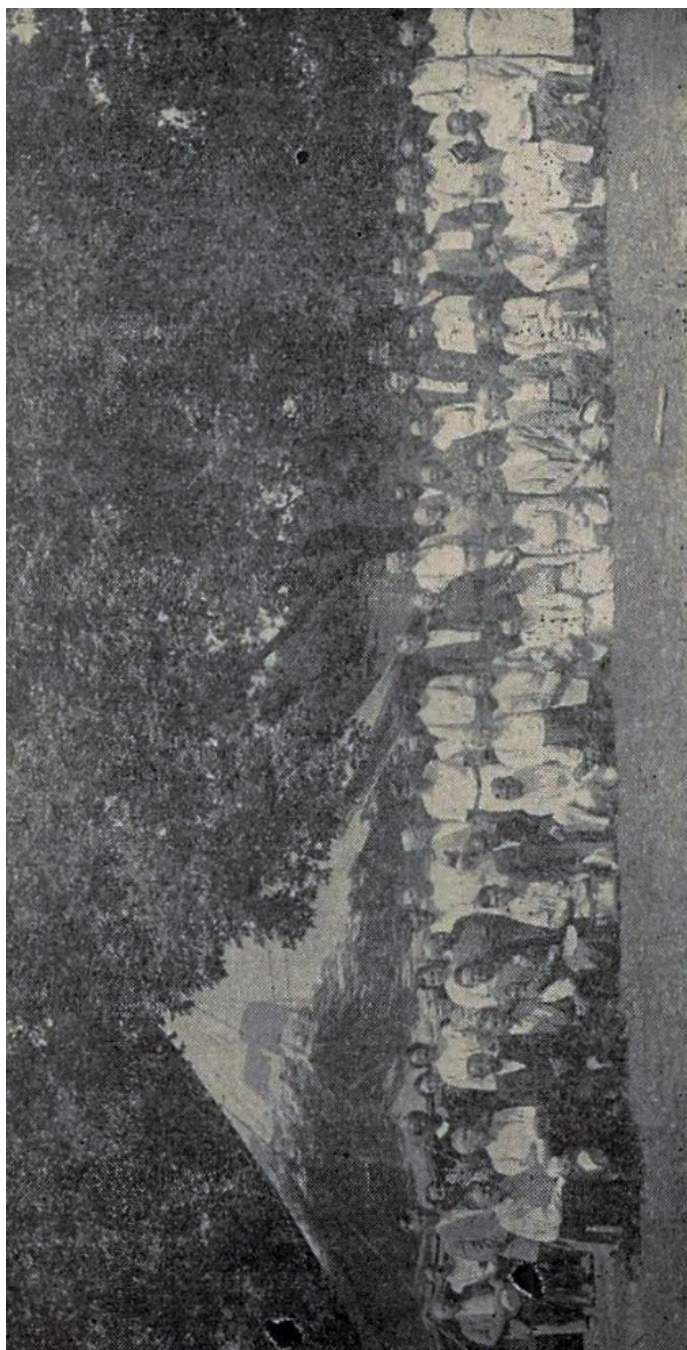
SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

in more deeply. I later offered to sell the two pieces of property that I had once sold for five thousand, for fifteen hundred dollars cash, but failed. So I still have the property, although I tore down the school house and built four cottages. I then arranged so the rent would take care of the indebtedness and leave us enough to live on.

Last summer, we went to a camp meeting in Ohio, and one in Indiana. The meetings were so good that we all voted to have an international camp meeting this summer. Monark Springs, Mo. was chosen as the site, and July 17 as the date. Of course, I expected to go, if possible, with the proviso, if the Lord wills. This spring, I went down into Virginia and conducted a series of meetings. While there, some trouble occurred at home that called for an outlay, and looked like it was going to interfere with my camp meeting plans. Of course, I committed it to the Lord; but continued to watch and wait. The nearer the time came, the more it looked like I was not going to be able to go. The day before the appointed time to start, I had no license for my car. My two granddaughters were with us and would have to be taken home to High Point, North Carolina. I had raked up eighteen dollars, all the money I had any assurance of, and my license were \$18.80. I had to go to Charleston after them, so I went out on the road looking for a ride. I only waited a very few minutes until I caught one and reached Charleston about as quickly as if I had my own car. While there, I collected twenty dollars and had a suit of clothes given me. I walked out to the edge of town and one of my neighbors came along, picked me up and landed me in Richwood. When I reached home, there were two letters for me. One had ten dollars and the other had five. I also received another suit of clothes. The next morning we took our granddaughters and started for High Point, reaching there that evening. A sister from California was in Knoxville, Tenn. and had written us that if we went, to stop by and take her with us. We did and she gave us ten dollars. Then a

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

truck swiped us and bruised a fender and gave us six dollars. Altogether, we had received fifty-one dollars, and also reached the camp in good time. We heard three sermons the day we arrived and I said, I would feel well paid, if I had to start back the next morning. We stayed till the close, however, and enjoyed it all. There was a twenty-five dollar debt on the dining hall, and forty-five for the tabernacle, that had to be paid, outside of feeding that throng, out of the freewill offerings. Everything was cleared; but there was nothing much for the preachers. As I had spent forty-odd dollars going and when the meeting closed I only had twelve dollars, it looked like a slim "get back." Someone gave me one dollar the night the meeting closed. The man we stayed with that night offered to fill my tank with gas; but as he was not saved and had already invited us up several times to eat with them and treated us so nicely, I refused. I said to my wife, that our means looked scant for such a trip; but the Lord can make gas go twice as far, if necessary, to get us home. We started the next morning and on our trip we picked up two fellows who gave us seventy-five cents each, making us fourteen dollars. We bought fuel, our eats, and paid toll across three bridges and landed home with over four dollars. The Lord truly did prove His ability to work without means, the same as with. On our trip out, we paid from 22 to 26 cents a gallon for gas and on our way back, we paid from 12 to 17 cents. We also made the trip in less than half the time. I said to my wife, "I would not be afraid to start to California without a cent, if I felt the Lord was pleased for me to go." It was truly wonderful what the Lord has done and will do for those that trust and obey Him. I am anxious to get rid of my encumbrance, both property and debts; but as property is hard to sell for cash, and rent is about as good as payments, I am just awaiting an opening, I know God can make a way, and will, in His own time. There is no depression in Christ's Kingdom.



Ministers at the Monark Springs, Mo. National Camp Meeting, July 1938.

Jesus Satisfies

There's not a craving of the mind
Which Jesus cannot fill;
There's not a pleasure I would seek,
Aside from His dear will.

From hour to hour He fills my soul
With peace and perfect love;
While rich supplies for every need
He sendeth from above.

The joys which this vain world bestows
Have lost their charms for me;
Once I enjoyed its trifles too,
But Jesus set me free.

Its joys will perish in a day,
Its pleasures quickly fly;
Its mirth like mist will pass away,
And all its honors die.

Christ stilled the angry tempest's power,
Which raged within my heart;
And bade each sinful passion there
To speedily depart.

Oh, Jesus is my all in all,
He satisfies my soul;
For me He died on Calvary,
And now He makes me whole.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

Yes, Jesus is my Saviour dear,
My rock, my strength, my song,
My wisdom, and my refuge safe;
To Jesus I belong.

He is my advocate with God,
My way, my life, my Light,
My great physician, and my friend,
My guide by day and night.

—Selected.

Chapter 27

“Be Not Drunk With Wine, but Be Filled With the Spirit”

My soul is stirred with indignation against the contemptible traffic of intoxicants, as exists in our midst, in this enlightened age. Surely, every God-fearing and decent, loving citizen of this country, ought to be stirred to drive this traffic from the land. Some say to get people saved and the traffic will die of its own accord. That is true, if, and when that is done. But that is one of the enemy's greatest instruments to hinder the progress of salvation work. I believe I have a right, as one that has learned this lesson by experience, to give my testimony in this case. Before I became acquainted with the effects of intoxicants, my heart was tender towards the Lord, and the preached word always brought conviction to my heart. I did not always yield, however; but I did seek and found peace with the Lord, before I knew the effects of intoxicants. I don't pretend to lay all the blame for my waywardness on the drink habit; but it surely deserves a great part. One reason is, that when I began to drink, it naturally obstructed my association with Godly people. I did not enjoy their company, nor they mine. My iniquities separated between me and God, and my sins hid His face from me, Isaiah 59:2. As I have stated in previous chapters, my friends, instead of inviting me to meeting as they would have done under different conditions, had to

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

lead me away to keep me out of trouble. Also my guilty conscience separated me from the girl that otherwise might have been an influence for good. It also caused me to be a grief and burden to my sisters that naturally made our separation more desirable for them and me. So for the long miserable years that I followed this cursed habit, I was not fit for Godly society. The only association that I was fit for was those my equal. What, therefore, could be expected from such association, where God was never mentioned unless in vain. Thank God, the devil overshot his mark again. He thought he would run me crazy and finish me quickly. Instead, however, I saw what was taking place and broke away from the habit. Then I was fit to associate with a better class of people and through their association, I was led to the place where God could talk to me. Hallelujah! The devil knows the effect this habit has on salvation work. Therefore, he went to work through money-loving brewers, years ago, to try to induce as many as possible into this soul destroying habit. Under the old order of the open, saloon, these tools of the devil spent millions of dollars, advertising, to try to increase his harvest of drunkards. However, under the law, that prohibited minors from loitering around these abominable places, it was slow work. Yet there was enough destruction of homes wrought by drunken fathers to stir the respectable home and God-loving citizens to rebel against such conditions. So prohibition was voted and should these God-honoring citizens have had charge of the enforcement of the law, it would have been a perfect success. But as the enforcement was placed in the hands of money-loving, God-dishonoring men, it did not prohibit it as it should. However, it was much better than the open saloon and a million times better than the present state of affairs. These same money-loving brewers, and their like, are continually howling about the failure of prohibition. They know that the respectable people of the land are indignant against conditions,

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

as they exist, and feeling as they do, that their craft is in danger, they fill many headlines and editorials with exaggerated or false excuses for the ungodly conditions, as they exist, also falsifying conditions under Prohibition. I trust God, if we succeed in returning prohibition, we will have learned enough through past experience to take the enforcement out of the hands of the enemy. My heart aches for the young people of this and the generations to come, if there isn't a change soon. There is no place where the boys and girls can spend a social hour or even have lunch, that this soul destroying beverage is not prominent. They say beer will not make one drunk. However, people who have tested it say that there is no truth in the statement; and knowing what I do regarding the old time beer, I believe enough of it will make one drunk. However, if it doesn't have enough alcohol in it to take one's senses, it is just what these brewers want. They spent millions in former years, advertising, to raise their stock of drunkards, and now they are growing by leaps and bounds. Beer creates the appetite for the stronger beverage. It is, as the primary class, to prepare them for the graduation at the whisky store. Oh, God, awaken this nation against this soul-deceiving and soul-destroying traffic.

There's danger in the flowing bowl,
Touch not, taste not, handle not.
It ruins body, ruins soul,
Touch not, taste not, handle not.
'Twill rob the pocket of its cash,
'Twill scourge thee with a cruel lash.
And all thy hopes of pleasure dash,
Touch not, taste not, handle not.
Strong drink is raging, God hath said,
Touch not, taste not, handle not.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

And thousands, it hath captives led,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.
It leads the young, the strong, the brave,
 It leads them where no arm can save,
It leads them to a drunkard's grave,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.

Come let join each heart and hand,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.
To drive the traffic from the land,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.
We need the strongest, bravest hearts,
 To foil the cruel tempter's arts,
And heal his fearful wounds and smarts,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.

Oh, hasten then the happy time,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.
When joyful bells the notes will chime,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.
Then raise the temperance flag on high,
 And lift your voices to the sky,
Sing, glory be to God on high,
 Touch not, taste not, handle not.

—Selected

Chapter 28

The Glory of the Latter House

“The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of Hosts.” (Haggai 2:9).

I do not disclaim or belittle the wonder working power of God in His people in these last days. Many miracles have been performed, and almost all of God’s true saints that have come into contact with the evening light reformation have felt the touch of divine power in the healing of their bodies of diseases of all kinds.

Neither do I have any fault to find with the truth as taught by the ministers of what we have been pleased to call the “Old Time” Saints. When we say “Old Time” saints, we do not mean that they have anchored on the truths as taught by Brother Warner and others of his day; but have kept their hearts open for more truth, and who have not taken darkness for light and gone back on truth that they once had. I say God is still blessing these truths to the good of all who will receive them and practice them.

But what I want to say is: I am not satisfied to anchor where we are. I have felt for years that there were greater things ahead for us. Long before I knew there was such a text in the Bible as the one at the head of this article, I was deeply impressed that we had never come into possession of all the power, unity, and glory that Jesus

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

taught us we might have. I believe I appreciate the light and truth that God has permitted us to live to see, and walk in as much as any person living, and I daily pray God to help me to be content with my lot in life. Yet I am not content to anchor here while I can see with an eye of faith, greater things ahead. I have felt the urge of emotion or zeal for these things rise till I was constrained to cry out at times in my awkward way; but have as often had a rebuff from someone which served to check or cool my zeal. However, as I have heard said many a time, you can't keep a good man down; and neither can light and truth be kept down. And whether I am ever able to arouse one soul to that pitch where they will endeavor to attain such an experience, or not; God will find someone in His own time who will stir up the people along this line.

The prophecy of which this text is a part was made in the year 520 B. C. when the foundation of the temple ordered by God through King Cyrus was being laid. The temple built by Solomon had been destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar and the children of Israel carried captives into Babylon. The time had now come that God had broken their yoke and allowed them to return to their own land and rebuild the temple of God. We have been taught by the preachers of this reformation, that Solomon's temple represented the Church of God in the morning of the Gospel day, before the people of God were led into Spiritual Babylon, Catholicism and Protestantism; and that this second temple that replaced it represented the Church of God as brought out of denominationalism in this evening light reformation. I believe this is the true interpretation of these scriptures. If this be true, then it must be true that God had in mind; not just the shadow, but the true tabernacle which the Lord built and not man, when He said: This house shall exceed the former in glory. I may have a very imperfect perception of what this means. However, one thing I feel

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

sure of is, that the Church is destined to be more distinct before the final consummation of all things.

I can only state my convictions as to how this is to be attained. First, instead of compromising with the world, as some have thought whereby to win the masses, there must be a greater distinction between the world and the Church. To accomplish this end, the gifts will have to be in full operation in the Church, especially the gift of discernment. Before these gifts are restored in full measure, the saints, as a whole, will have to drive out the fear of man, the world, and worldliness. It must be with us as Jesus said of his disciples of old: "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." Before this is said of the body as a whole, it must be held up as the standard by those who are over God's heritage. Likewise: "Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:33) was not meant for a select few, but for every saint. We hear folks say sometimes, "You must be willing, if He requires it, to give up anything." He did not say, you must be willing; but, whosoever doeth not cannot be my disciple. Discipleship is attained by buying the field. It takes all to buy it: "For joy thereof he selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field" (Matt. 13:44). People say sometimes, in speaking of the young ruler, Jesus saw his heart was set on his wealth. I fear many that claim to be wholly consecrated, if confronted with the command: Sell that thou hast and give to the poor; like the young Ruler, would go away sorrowful—the Lord knows. Whosoever doeth not forsake all cannot be His disciple. I fear some that carry the name of old time saints are too anxious to get a fair following, to say as our Lord:

"The Son of Man hath no place to lay his head" (Luke 9:58); or, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (verse 62).

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

Brethren, are we lifting up the standard as our Lord who set the example for us and said: Follow me? (Isaiah 62:10) “Go through, go through the gates; prepare ye the way of the people; cast up, cast up the highway. Gather out the stones. Lift up a standard for the people.” Are we obeying, or are we doing like one of the ministers who used to be with us said after I had preached on the Bible standard of dress? He said he was not called to set a standard, that the Bible was the standard. I told him if God called him at all, He called him to set, or lift up a standard. In these days of deception, if we value our souls, we had better not only obey in lifting up a standard, but like Jeremiah said, “Stand in the ways and ask for the old paths”; not like most of the people who are looking for something new, but for the old paths and walk therein. Yes, and if we are posing as preachers or teachers, we had better point out the way to others with no uncertain sound, or we may have the blood of souls on our garments in that day.

Jesus said the kingdom of heaven was like a merchant man seeking goodly pearls; who when he found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. I don't think he could have come in possession of that pearl without selling all. He might have done like Ananias and Sapphira; but he never would have obtained the pearl. Neither will anyone be in the bride, the Lamb's wife that has kept back part of the price. It is dangerous to esteem lightly the sayings of Jesus: He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple. The saints after Pentecost did not hesitate to measure up to the requirements. They valued the hidden treasures too highly. I have heard people say some of them sold their possessions and goods. We ought to be more careful how we read, and then more careful how we add to, or take from. The Word reads: “And all that believed were together, and had all things common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men as

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

every man had need.” (Acts 2:44, 45). Also Acts 4:34: “Neither were there any among them that lacked; For as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the price of the things that were sold and laid them down at the Apostles’ feet, and distribution was made to every man according as he had need.” Why not speak plainly? These things have been preserved by God, and handed down to us, and translated into our native tongue so we can understand them. Why then misconstrue or mystify them by distorting them? Some folks, to justify their selfishness, try to take advantage of Peter’s statement to Ananias (Acts 5:4), “While it remained, was it not thine own? And after it was sold, was it not in thy power?” Truly, they could have refrained from lying to the Holy Ghost and not have been struck dead physically; but as long as that desire was in their hearts to keep back part of the price, they could not have been disciples of the Lord. Let us be fair. We would like to see the power of God manifested like it was with the saints after Pentecost, especially as recorded in Acts 5:15, 16. They brought forth the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and couches; that at the least, the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing their sick folks, and those who were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one. So if we desire to see these manifestations, let us not keep back part of the price.

Some say Paul spoke of some that were rich. Yes, he did. 1 Tim. 6:17-19: “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to **distribute**, willing to **communicate**. Laying up in store for themselves a good **foundation, against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.**”

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

These rich men were not saints. However, they could be by obeying the command to distribute. In 1 John 3:17: “Whoso hath this world’s good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” Malachi 3:10 says: “Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, If I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it.”

There is much preaching today on tithing by money loving preachers, who try thereby to squeeze more money out of their selfish, unsanctified adherents—“One way of taxing their members.” The tithing system as taught under the Law and by these law teachers, has no place in the New Testament Church. The tithes under the law was what legally belonged to God as a kind of a tax to run the government, as it were. It was God’s and no man had any say how it should be used. But as God designed that our service to Him should be with a willing heart, God’s literal Israel had a chance to offer free will offerings. But the tithes in the afore mentioned prophecy, no doubt, has direct reference to the people of God in the gospel day, and more especially to the evening time of this day—The Latter House. Now what about our tithes? 1 Cor. 6:19, 20 says: “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God’s.” I am sure every consecrated person will acknowledge that they belong to God—spirit, soul, and body; time talents, and means. What have you that doesn’t belong to God? Nothing, unless you are holding on to your will power. Then our tithes as represented in our text is our all, whether it be earthly possessions, talents as soul winners, or what not. All belong to God.

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

Should we place it all at His disposal? He promises He will pour us out blessings to exceed our capacities. We haven't yet seen the glory of this latter house equal the former, much less exceed it. When Nehemiah, under the shadow, heard the cry of the poor that were being oppressed by their brethren, he called an assembly against them and required them to cease from charging usury or interest and to give back their lands and the money they had taken thereby. "Moreover I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise." (Nehemiah 5:13.)

Isaiah's prophecy foretelling conditions as they exist in this gospel day, and no time more fitting than the present, or this latter house, says of some: "They take delight in approaching to God. Wherefore have we fasted say they; and afflicted our soul and thou takest no knowledge?" They were bold enough to approach God and censure Him for not taking note, when at the same time they were exacting their laborers, their poor brethren, making them to howl, and finding pleasure in it. They seem to think because they were in position to hire their drudgery done by their poor neighbor, or brother, it was lawful to be just as exacting as they cared to be. As their brother had to have the work, so they went on with their form of worship, seeking God daily. No wonder He said: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet and show my people their transgressions and the house of Jacob their sins." He says: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands—to undo the heavy burdens—to let the oppressed go free—and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house?" When thou seest the naked coverest him and don't try to dodge or hide thyself from them

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

either. When we do this, something will happen. Then shall the light break forth as the morning, and those that are sick shall become well speedily. Then the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward. Then we will get our prayers through. If we take away the yokes, and our heart goes out to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted, then shall thy light break forth and thy darkness be as the noon day. Surely nothing will then be hid, but every corner will be exposed, and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones. “Hallelujah!” “And thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring whose waters fail not” (Isaiah 58:1-12).

Surely the reward will be worth the cost. We all desire to hear the Lord say in that day: “Come, ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” If so, then let us not be scheming and planning how we may induce others to help us, as I have seen and heard preachers do. I have seen some of them use a great part of the time appointed for the preached word, begging; or if they didn’t come out plainly and beg, they would make you feel miserable by their hints, till you felt you would rather give them something than to go through with the ordeal any longer. Thereby they spoil the other part of the service. Such persons would do well to obey Paul’s instructions in Eph. 4:28: “Let him that stole, steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands, the things which are good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”

Ever so many called preachers would do much more for the cause they represent working with their hands helping someone God has called that are out obeying God, by freely giving and trusting Him to sustain them. I would as lief someone would steal from me, as to work on my sympathy until I would have to give to him to get rid of him. Many souls are robbing themselves of the more blessedness Paul mentions in Acts 20: 35: “Thus, I have showed you

SKETCHES OF MY LIFE

all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said: It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

I realize we may have to suffer some inconveniences by following the instructions given in the Word, but if we obey and suffer for it we are commanded to rejoice. Yea, and leap for joy, “For great is your reward in heaven” (Luke 6:23). When we have learned and have a willing heart to obey these scriptures, there should be, and will be, a mighty turning to God. The gifts will be restored to the Church and we will see the glory of this latter house exceed the former.

Shall we move these obstacles out of the way and let God through His Holy Spirit work, or will we still make excuses for our selfishness and unbelief and stand in the way of the fulfillment of His prophecies and let it pass on to other generations? My heart’s desire and prayer to God is, that the Church as a whole may awaken and put on her strength, “Shake herself from the dust” (Isaiah 52:1, 2). Then the 54th chapter of Isaiah will be fulfilled.

But the preachers must take the lead. Will we, or will we not?

