

THE LIGHT THAT DID NOT FAIL

by

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1970

Books by Dr. Dunnington

Handles of Power

More Handles of Power

Start Where You Are

Something To Stand On

Keys to Richer Living

The Inner Splendor

Power To Become

The Light That Did Not Fail

CONTENTS

I. The Light That Did Not Fail	1
II. Caught Up in the Russian Revolution	10
III. The Czech March on Freedom's Road	21
IV. Fear and Faith	35
V. Life's Road Makes a Sharp Turn	54
VI. Clarence Darrow Asks For a Debate	66
VII. The Secret of Personal Power	76
VIII. Handles of Power	83
IX. Release From a Flaming Hell	98
X. The Other Side and Reincarnation	109
XI. Arthur Ford and the Psychic World	122
XII. Something To Stand On	136
XIII. What About the Trinity?	151
XIV. The Second Coming of Christ	162
XV. Blood, Atonement and God	170
XVI. The Fall of Man and Freedom of Choice	178
XVII. Resurrection and Judgment	186
XVIII. The Light Still Shines in the Darkness	194

This book is affectionately dedicated to Lois Berry and a whole army of open minded, questing souls in all of the six churches I have served. They became involved, voluntarily and enthusiastically, with the 'unorthodox' search for the radiant, dynamic Christ, unencumbered by man-made theological mumbo-jumbo and thus helped to make my ministry a pilgrimage of joy forever. If Mrs. Berry had not come to my home last October and said, "Well, when do we start on the book", this autobiographical story covering more than fifty years would never have seen the light of day. After all, a seventy-eight year old retired minister with no secretary and a right arm that couldn't write for more than twenty minutes without resting an hour, isn't about to begin his eighth book without a powerful push from somebody!

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CHAPTER I

The Light That Did Not Fail

On a mellow fall evening in September of 1919, about fifty young men who had come to Boston University School of Theology to prepare for the ministry gathered in the Lounge at Dean Beebe's request. Those who had had a distinct "call to preach" were asked to briefly describe that experience. Here is my own story:-

Our family lived in the village of South Haven, Michigan. One evening about nine o'clock, I walked into the living room and sat down near my mother who was absorbed in reading her nightly chapter from her Bible before going to bed. Mother was a Free Methodist and possessed a strong character and a deep, simple faith in a living, instantly available God. Much of her vital faith had rubbed off on me----a sensitive sixteen year old who loved his mother's God, but who rebelled when she even suggested that she hoped her son Lewis might become a minister.

Suddenly, I heard a voice, the loudest, most commanding voice I had ever heard in my life. It spoke three words only. "Preach the gospel". I glanced quickly at my mother, sure that she must have heard such a resounding voice. But no, she never batted an eye. She read on as though nothing had happened! I suddenly realized that the voice must have been subjective, intended only for me. I slowly got to my feet and walked unsteadily into the dark kitchen and stopped in front of an iron sink. I reached for the tin cup hanging on a nail and tried to pour myself a drink but I was shaking so that the cup rattled against the faucet.

When I finally returned to the living room, my mother had placed her Bible on the table and gone to bed. I sat and stared at the book for a long time. An intolerable burden had just been placed upon my life. Preaching the gospel was the last thing in this world that I wanted to do. But what about that awful command? I prayed: "Oh, God, whose voice was that? Was it yours? Or was it an hallucination? Please help me to settle that

question now! You know I have never been able to make a decent speech in my life! I'm too scared of people. Even when I recite in class, my voice is unsteady and my knees knock together. And I don't admire Free Methodist preachers! Those long Prince Albert coats they wear and those celluloid collars that button in the back! None of them wears a necktie because they say it's "sinful adornment" to indulge a tie. My dear mother has put away her wedding ring for that reason. She wears no ribbons or ruffles or bright colors for she does not wish to be guilty of "sinful pride".

"Now Lord," I prayed, "Help me to settle this thing here and now. I'm going to pick up my mother's Bible. I have never seen those three words in the Book but they ought to be there somewhere! If the first words I see as I open the Bible at random are 'preach the gospel', I will take it as proof that the words are yours—otherwise, I'll not think so". Way down deep I calculated the odds in my favor as being a million to one! Confidently I reached over and picked up the Bible and opened it at random. As I looked straight down at the printed page, I read "preach the gospel" (I Cor. 9:16). Three lines further on I read, "woe is me if I preach not the gospel". Paul was telling the people of Corinth of his absolute compulsion to "preach the gospel". This vivid experience happened sixty-two years ago and from that moment until this day I have never doubted that I was definitely called to "preach the gospel".

Let us pause here a moment to ask whether indeed I think that the God of this immense universe actually spoke to me that night. Jesus believed that the Infinite Intelligence and Love which he called "Our Father" was in close touch with all creation and even knew when a sparrow fell. He also maintained the closest imaginable relationship with the Father throughout his life. I personally have come to believe that God does not run this universe all by Himself anymore than the president of General Motors Corporation runs that huge firm all by himself. He is merely the guiding head of a vast organization. Our Communion Service reads: "There-

fore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious name". I believe it to be the place of God to keep us all busy, both here and over there, working with people in the unfolding evolution of our souls. Jesus said: "My Father worketh hitherto until now and I work". (John 5:17) The author of Hebrews had the same idea. In the eleventh and twelfth chapters he recounts how, by faith, Abraham, Moses and all the ancient leaders of Israel had done God's work and then passed on over into the Great Beyond. But they were still vitally interested servants of God, surrounding us and urging us on in various ways: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us". (Hebrew 12: 1-3). So I firmly believe that my guardian angel or some other servant of God guided my trembling hands on that fateful evening when I held the Bible and earnestly asked for guidance in determining my life's work.

I did not tell my mother or any living soul about my "call". There was no joy in my heart but rather a feeling of being trapped. Ten years were to speed by before my deliverance could be solved and I would be flooded with "the light that did not fail". We moved to Kalamazoo where I finished high school and entered Kalamazoo College. It was a small institution of 350 students and a faculty of 18 where a timid, confused boy could have personal friendship and attention so necessary for his unfolding. The Free Methodist church in that city continued to be a problem for me. When Dora Johnson, during the Sunday morning service, would suddenly leap to her feet, gather her ample, ankle length skirts about her, close her eyes and run at top speed around and around the auditorium without colliding with a chair or a pew, I was disturbed. They said she was guided by the Holy Spirit but it seemed to me like exhibitionism. Her performance usually inspired Elmer Boeckalow to march up the center aisle to the pulpit where he would turn and face the congregation, extend his arms straight

out on either side, shut his eyes very tight and then move his fingers up and down as fast as he could make them go. Dora would dart straight up to Elmer at top speed and then, with eyes still tightly closed, side step this male obstacle and proceed to make the circuit once again. Dora was unmarried, a girl of good character who worked in a corset factory, tithed her income, paid her bills and in general led a faultless life. Elmer was a day laborer who likewise led an exemplary life as far as I knew. The people of the church were people of integrity. They believed in a verbally inspired Bible, a concept that was already causing me much trouble, but it also bothered me that these dear people in their piety would never think of questioning the actions of the Holy Spirit. With so much work in the world that the Holy Spirit could and should be doing, was it irreverent of me to question the wisdom of that Spirit in motivating Dora and Elmer to spoil so many morning services?

In college I soon found where my basic interest lay. It was in the field of history. With my vivid imagination, I could literally see historical events marching irresistably through time and I could also understand something of the motivations of men which caused them to act as they did. One day Dr. Balch stopped me in the hall and said: "History is your field. I can get you a graduate fellowship at the University of Chicago when you have finished here. Dr. Benjamin Terry of the English History Department there is always in need of an assistant to mark his examination papers. I can get you that job".

Meanwhile, this same Dr. Balch at the beginning of my Junior year at Kalamazoo became the instrument through which a most important development occurred in my life. "Some farmers three miles south of Kalamazoo have asked me to send them a student who is capable of preaching an interesting sermon in their country schoolhouse every Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. I have already told them that you are just the man. How about it?" asked the professor.

At first I stoutly protested that I didn't know how to preach and that even an audience of farmers would scare me so I couldn't talk. "Non-sense", said Dr. Balch. "God has endowed you with the rare gift of vivid imaging power. You have drawn straight A's in every history course you have ever taken in my department. Use the Bible and the whole sweep of history for your source material. Then go out there and act just as if you knew. That is what they call faith!"

So I went. Before long I was greatly enjoying the experience. I learned the value of positive thinking in moving over to the side of positive acting. Those farmers came in ever increasing numbers and the loose offerings went up from \$1.10 to over \$5.00 after a few weeks! I was a "minister in the making". A few months later, as I was trudging home through three miles of snow drifts, an electrifying thought crossed my mind. Why couldn't I teach history in a small college during the week and preach every Sunday afternoon in some country schoolhouse? Thus, I would be answering God's call to preach on Sunday and at the same time be doing what I wanted to do the other six days of the week. The more I thought about it the more it seemed a sensible answer to my dilemma. I still did not want to be a minister. I did want to teach history. And so here was the perfect solution! The average person's capacity to rationalize in a situation of this kind is fabulous. Soon I convinced myself that God and I were both fortunate that I had even thought of such a fair solution! And this is the way I continued to think until one frosty, windy morning at 6:00 A.M. in Jackson Park Chicago.

I greatly enjoyed the year of graduate work in the field of history. It was a joy to work with genial Dr. Benjamin Terry. I marked thousands of his undergraduate examination papers, wrote a Masters thesis on "The Motives of the United States in the Annexation of Texas" and even became the student pastor of the McKinley Park Methodist Church out on Western Avenue. I was proving to myself that I could preach morning and evening

in a church and still carry a full load during the week in the field of history.

I was given my M.A. at the end of the fall quarter just before Christmas in 1916 just ten years after my frightening "call" to the ministry. Everything was working out just fine! That very morning Dr. Terry called me into his office and handed me a telegram from the president of a Normal School down in Kansas. The head of his history department had just departed this world with a heart attack. Would Dr. Terry send him a young man with at least an M.A. in history, but one who might be planning to go on later toward his PhD? "If you will go I'll be happy to recommend you," said the smiling Dr. Terry.

I was about to thank him and say I'd be only too happy to take it when a strange feeling of uneasiness swept over me and I asked him to give me a day to think it over. I will never forget the next twenty-four hours! One minute I would go back to my rationalizing about my "call" and tell myself God should be satisfied with one day a week from me as a preacher----and I should be happy with six days a week teaching history. But that night I could not sleep! Like Jonah I felt I was running away and really short-changing God.

Finally, after a sleepless night I got out of bed, lit the light, and took another look at that new sheepskin that said I had an M.A. in history and was qualified to teach it. I thought: "I'll give it a try and see how it works out." Then I put on my clothes and walked briskly down into Jackson Park to get rid of that tired feeling before going over to tell Dr. Terry I'd take the history job.

The wind was blowing in off of Lake Michigan on that cold December morning and I was about ready to head back to my room when the bent figure of an elderly man loomed out of the darkness and stopped to ask the way to a certain factory. He had a muffler around his neck but no overcoat and he was shivering with the cold. He had the sweet, gentle face of a man of

refinement and I felt drawn to him instantly. "See that lighted street car over on Cottage Grove Avenue," I said. "It is going south. Go over and take the next one and ride for two miles and you will see the factory on the right side of the street." As he started off, I asked where his overcoat was. He came slowly back and told me he had had to pawn it to pay for his hotel room. "My wife and I have one son", he said. "That young man is in a Tuberculosis Sanatorium in Colorado, but thank God he is improving and in another year should be perfectly well again. I retired five years ago and our small savings have slowly been eaten away by our son's illness until we have nothing left. We live in down state Illinois and yesterday I told my wife I was going into Chicago and get a job and here I am."

I asked if he had had any breakfast. With a negative shake of the head, he started off down the path. "Just a minute," I called. "I am a student pastor of a small church working my way through graduate school but I get paid fifteen dollars every Sunday night. Let me see how much I have at the present moment." I took four one dollar bills from my billfold. "This is all the money I have in this world", I said, "but this is Friday and I'll get fifteen dollars on Sunday evening. You take two dollars and I'll keep two dollars and we'll both get some breakfast, you can ride the street car to your factory and we will both feel better." He turned and walked slowly back as he took another tug at the muffler around his neck and a heavenly smile lit up his gentle face. As I slipped him the two dollars, a tear started rolling down his cheek as he turned, quickened his pace and walked briskly toward the street car he could now afford to ride.

What happened to me at that very moment, I simply cannot adequately describe. The English language was not made for experiences like this. The heavens opened and I was lifted up and bathed in a light so brilliant and so full of joy and perfect harmony and peace that I did not know where I was. The cold and darkness of Jackson Park was replaced by the indes-

cribable light and warmth of heaven. When I started to move, my feet were treading on air! I was light as a feather. But one thing I knew. The most glorious experience in the world is to help somebody in trouble! And that is what the ministry is when properly conceived----seven days a week to be the ambassador of Almighty God! How had I dared to think I could get by my "call" with a bit of service on Sunday? No! Now I knew. Ten years of doubt and rationalization were over. With joy unspeakable, I would take three more years of study in Seminary and go to work seven days a week! And love every minute of it! I had seen the light that would not fail!

I rather dreaded my confrontation with Dr. Terry at nine o'clock but he surprised me. When I told him of my decision to go to Seminary at once and prepare for a full time service in the ministry, he smiled broadly and said: "I am not surprised----God bless you", and put out his hand for a hearty shake.

Two months before that soul-shaking experience, a Mrs. Marshall had handed me a big and most remarkable book----Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness." It is the story of scores of people from Abraham's day down to about the turn of the 19th century who have experienced a divine illumination that changed their whole way of life. After Jesus' resurrection, he told his disciples to remain in Jerusalem until they were empowered with the Holy Spirit. Pentecost in The Upper Room as described in Acts 2 was that experience. "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit" and "it filled all the house where they were sitting." After the coming of the Light and the Holy Spirit, they were never the same again. Now began the "march of eleven men across the centuries" that continues to the present day.

In May of 1921, the day I graduated from Boston University School of Theology, I experienced another empowering by this same Holy Spirit. I hesitate to try to write of this transcendent experience because of a

feeling of complete unworthiness, but this little book is the story of my life and would be very incomplete without it.

Dean L. J. Burney sent word to the thirty-seven who were graduating on May 16 that he wanted to see us all in Robinson Chapel at ten o'clock in the morning. As we crossed the threshold of the chapel, it was like going from winter into summer, from midnight to the brightness and light of noon on a summer day. Dean Burney stood in the pulpit leaning against the lectern with a list of the graduates in his hand and looking intently at each of us as we entered. We later learned that he had spent the entire night kneeling at that altar praying for each of us on that list----praying for a Pentecostal experience, an empowering by the Holy Spirit as we went out into a difficult, secular world to minister to needy people.

The Presence of the Living God filled the chapel and us. Unspeakable joy, light, harmony, rhythm and deep peace suddenly filled our minds and hearts. I staggered down the center aisle and slid into a pew. I buried my face in my hands and wept for joy. I don't know how long I stayed there. No hymn was sung, no scripture was read, no word was spoken. We were just there in the Presence of the Holy Spirit. After perhaps forty or fifty minutes, we arose one by one and quietly went out into Beacon Street and thence down onto beautiful and historic Boston Common to breathe deeply of the soft spring air. This touch of Cosmic Consciousness was not something we had earned. It was the free gift of God to help prepare us for the difficult days of our ministry; to give us the voice of deep conviction and authority in matters spiritual and to hold us steady when even theologians later on would proclaim that "God is dead!" That was The Light that never was on land or sea---The Light that never failed even when the going got rough.

CHAPTER II

Caught Up in The Russian Revolution

Early in January of 1917, I matriculated in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago. I wanted to remain pastor of the McKinley Park Methodist Church until Conference time in June and then transfer to Boston University School of Theology. Fate decreed otherwise. The Lusitania was sunk by a German submarine and in April the United States entered World War I on the side of her allies. In March, Czar Nicholas II abdicated his throne. The Russian Revolution had already begun and Alexander Kerensky came briefly to power although neither he nor anyone else could bring order out of the chaos that progressively engulfed that unhappy land.

There were seven million soldiers in the Russian army, hungry, defeated and ill-equipped and they were leaving the front by the thousands, headed for home. In this dilemma, Kerensky asked the International Y.M.C.A. to send him thirty young men who could build Y.M.C.A. huts up and down the Russian front and thereby furnish a place where soldiers on leave could congregate in a warm place and watch motion pictures, drink tea, and play checkers or volleyball. It might help to keep the soldiers on the front so they in turn might force the Germans to stay on the Eastern front instead of being transferred to the French front. I signed a contract in April to spend two years in Russia as a Y.M.C.A. Secretary.

After weeks of intensive preparation and study of the Russian language, we sailed from San Francisco aboard the Nippon Maru via Honolulu. The middle of October we sailed from Tsuruga, Japan to Vladivostok where we boarded the Transiberian Express for the twelve day run to Moscow. In the compartment next to mine was a young Russian by the name of Yankel Sverdlov. The many troop trains filled with soldiers seemed to give him great satisfaction. "The Revolution has already begun", he would say. "Those poor devils are fed up with army life and they are all A.W.O.L.---- just going home without leave. Your group will arrive in Moscow just in time to watch the show".

As our train pulled into the Siberian town of Perm, Mr. Sverdlov became very excited. Our car happened to stop within fifty feet of a low red brick building. "See the corner room right over there? That is where my brother Joe and I and Joe Stalin slept on the hard cement floor the night before we were shipped north to a prison camp inside the arctic circle. The Czar's police had arrested us for revolutionary activity two years before. At about six o'clock that evening somebody brought us a heaping plate of baking powder biscuits. As each of us bit into a biscuit, our teeth struck something hard—a shiny gold piece. Every biscuit contained one! It was no small accomplishment to keep our eye on our guards as we finished off the biscuits and slyly slipped the gold pieces into our pockets."

After we were put onto the river boat for the trip north the next morning, Joe Stalin said: "I have a plan. Let's give most of the gold to Yankel. He can then bribe the Captain of the boat to bring him back to Perm on his return trip". Looking at me, he said, "He can hide you under the tarpaulin that covers the baggage. From Perm, you can make your way to Vladivostok, Japan, and on to the United States. You can take a couple of years to collect a lot of gold and then return to Russia where it can be used to help win the Revolution. Then your brother and I will come to Moscow and join you." There was a faraway look in his eyes as he stood and gazed out the car window looking straight north. "My brother and Joe Stalin are still up there", he said, "but it won't be long now until they are released. All of those long freight trains loaded with soldiers that have been passing us for days mean that the Russian army is breaking up. The revolution could break at any time."

As the train pulled out of Perm, he took me by the arm and guided me into his compartment which was next to mine. He pointed to an old-fashioned canvas valise that was about two and a half feet long, eighteen inches wide and eighteen inches deep. Three heavy leather straps held it to-

gether. "See if you can lift it", he said. I could not budge it and no wonder. It was full of gold collected in the United States!

We arrived in Moscow November 4, 1917. We found the place teeming with soldiers. There were no accommodations to be had in any hotel. We were taken to a hospital and given beds in the corner of a large ward. Two days later, the owner of a twenty room, very plush home at 26 Smolenski Boulevard came and offered to turn over that home to us. He was getting out of the country as fast as possible as were thousands of others and he felt his home would be much safer if occupied by Americans with an American flag flying from his flag pole. We moved in on November 6 and on November 7 the "Ten Days that shook the world" began. Political direction of the revolution was put into the hands of a small group of Bolsheviks made up of Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Sokolnikov, Bubnov, Kamenev and Zinoviev. They were called the Politburo and they wielded enormous power. At 10 A.M. on November 7, they announced the overthrow of Kerensky's Provincial government. Kerensky himself promptly fled. He drove through the streets of Petrograd in an open car headed for self exile in the United States and nobody stopped him. Other members of his government were promptly arrested and thrown into prison. Even the American Consul fled but before he took off he brought our group his big supply of Park and Tilford canned goods and wished us luck!

About halfway through the chaos and the blood and thunder of the ten days of the revolution, we became worried about what our home folk must be reading in the daily papers. Since all lines of communication were down, we decided to send one of our boys back to Vladivostok so he could cable each of our families that we were still alive and well. A young Hollander, one John Prinz, was chosen for this mission. John went down to the railroad station and was told a train might be ready to leave for Vladivostok within twenty-four hours but that he had better wait right there in the station with about 500 others who wanted out on the same train. That night John

lay down on the floor with the others to catch a little sleep. When he woke up, his passport and his money were gone! He came back to our house unhappy and crestfallen but we soon fixed him up! Each of us gave him part of our cash reserves. The passport was a horse of a different color but when I saw him reading his recently obtained nationalization paper, I had a brilliant idea. I took this important looking document and affixed his passport picture at the top of it. Then I went to the basement and got a can of Parker ^{and} Tilford tomatoes and cut off a big, round, red tomato and pasted that in the lower left hand corner and signed my name right across it: "L.L. Dunnington - Secretary of State for the United States of America"! I explained to my friend Prinz that a whole new batch of public servants would be taking over the places of Czarist officials and that few if any of them would be able to read English; that every official Russian document must have a big red seal on it and that this big red tomato would surely do the business!

I did not see John Prinz again until the next spring in April when I went through Chita, Siberia on my way to join a Czechoslovak group which I will describe later. John had completed his mission the previous November and had gone to Chita where he had important work to do. When I got off the train and walked into the crowded station, there was John. "How did the passport work out?" I wanted to know. He patted his coat pocket and said, "It worked like a charm and I'm still using it".

After the fighting of the revolution died down on November 17, it was decided that I should journey to Minsk, headquarters for the Russian Western Front, and build a Y.M.C.A. hut. So off I went with high hopes but inner misgivings of what kind of workmen I would be able to hire. It did not take long to find out. I soon had a fine big lot out on the edge of the city, great piles of lumber and about thirty carpenters. At first progress was satisfactory. Then I would notice groups of a dozen workers standing together heatedly discussing the latest rumors of what Lenin and

Trotsky were up to. One day I found them using my lumber to build a coffin —a regular sarcophagus it was, with the sides a foot thick! "Who gave you permission to use my lumber for a coffin?" I cried in anger. "Oh, a comrade died last night," they said, "and since the new day is here, your lumber is our lumber and our lumber is your lumber and we don't need your permission to use it". The fact was, however, that they didn't have any lumber!

One day I said to Dave, my interpreter, "I don't believe we'll ever finish this hut with these lousy communist workmen. They want their pay on time but they would rather talk than work". Dave was a keen Russian Jew who claimed he knew how to make them work if I would make him the "boss". He said he knew how the Russian mind works. So I told him to go ahead. When I came down to the hut the next day, I could hardly believe my eyes. Hammers were pounding, shavings were flying, saws were buzzing and even though it was December and very cold, the men were actually perspiring! Dave was beaming. "I called them together yesterday and told them 'Dot poor American, Mr. Dunnington, gets a cablegram every morning from President Wilson asking if dot hut is finished yet'. Poor Mr. Dunnington cries every time he cables back and says "no, these communists had rather talk than work". Those good natured, simple-minded peasant workmen believed every word Dave spoke so he topped that off with an even more preposterous one. "If you finish this hut by January 20, President Wilson will come clear over here and dedicate it and give you a big goose dinner".

That did it! They worked twelve hours a day until it was finished on time. Then Dave had to have the President fall down the White House steps and break a leg in his eagerness to make the trip! I was not sorry for Dave's big bold front when February 15 arrived. The German army heard that there were one million tons of wheat stored in the Ukraine. The German High Command needed every kernel of that wheat. So on a fine February morning, the long stagnant front became a beehive of activity as the entire German line came up out of their trenches and started East. Dave excitedly

informed me of a special train being hastily put together to carry important people to Moscow ahead of the German arrival. He thought I should be on that train and so did I.

I gave him 300 rubles to get me a compartment. When I arrived at the depot, the train was packed to suffocation. The conductor told me there was no room for me and that he had not received any 300 rubles. So I gave him 300 more whereupon he scratched his head and said, "Yes, come to think of it, your man Dave did give me the money and you have a compartment but I'm afraid it is full.

Sure enough it was. People were hanging off the roof and every inch of space seemed full of frightened humanity. Dave grabbed my bags and bravely said: "Leave it to me". We walked down the platform to my car and every inch of space was full! Dave straightened up, put out his chest and in a loud clear voice cried: "Make way for the American Consul"! Instantly every hat came off. There was evident the old peasant respect for official authority. They flattened themselves against each other and, rather magically, an aisle eighteen inches wide opened up the steps and thence into the center aisle of my car right up to my compartment. Inside eighteen people occupied the space that was intended for six. "Make way for the American Consul", yelled Dave. A dozen peasants scurried out into the corridor leaving six. I told them to remain while I climbed up to the third tier of bunks near the ceiling. Just at that moment my Polish interpreter, a lad by the name of Iskevitch, thrust a copy of Dicken's Nicholas Nichelby in English translation through the open window and it was passed up to me. No one will ever know how much that book meant to me in the three days it took us to finally arrive in Moscow. I had skimmed through it in high school. Now I devoured it! Those blessed peasant soldiers were kindness personified. At various stations along the route, they brought me cabbage soup, black bread and tea and I passed out enough rubles to keep us all well fed.

I never saw my hut again. We finished it on January 20 although President Wilson never made it over to the dedication ceremonies, he supposedly being in bed with a broken leg! I gathered a staff of eleven people around me, a cook, barber, janitor, a bouncer to keep order and several teachers. We taught hundreds of illiterate soldiers how to read and write, introduced the game of volleyball to the Russian people and in general proved that Kerensky was quite right in asking us to fill a deep need for his idle troops. We were of course two years too late.

Now let us drop back to the middle of December for a description of the morning I faced a firing squad and, with one second yet to live, was fortunate enough to talk my way out of my predicament. I was living in the only good hotel in Minsk, the Europa. I occupied a large comfortable room on the sixth floor. On that particular morning, I was ill with a severe chest cold and running a fever of 102 degrees. Dave had purchased some flaxseed for a poultice which covered my chest and which I kept warm by the application of a series of heavy dinner plates. A small electric hotplate sitting on the floor beside my bed was the source of the heat.

At 9 A.M. the manager came to my room in a state of fearful agitation. "A revolutionary committee of three tough looking, tough talking men walked into this hotel a short time ago," he stammered, "and told me the Communists had decided to take over the entire hotel as their new headquarters for the Minsk district." They had instructed him to tell every last occupant of the hotel to get out by 12 o'clock sharp or they would be shot by a firing squad that was ready to go from room to room and clear the place for the Communist take over. I told him that I was a sick man, that I had no place to go to and that I simply was not going to move out. He went back downstairs to plead my cause but soon returned to say I was as good as dead if I was found there at noon. The next three hours were the longest of my life but at last I heard the heavy hob-nailed boots coming up

the circular stairway that ended just opposite my door. Then one of the men kicked the door open and six unshaven, ragged, vicious looking men marched into the room followed by their commandant. The latter marched to the center of my bedroom and barked an order that lined his men up against the far wall. He stood looking me over for a few moments, cocking his head to one side and then the other as though he was surprised to see me there. Then he yelled, "ready, aim", and six rifles were pointed at my head. Up went his arm preparatory for his barking of that final and irrevocable word fire. Suddenly, and like a bolt of lightning, I sat up in bed and yelled, "Zdrasvitcha tovarish", which means, "hello there comrade." The man still stood there with his mouth open and his arm raised and a look of stupefaction on his face. That gave me time to get out of bed and, holding the flaxseed poultice in place with my left hand, I strode rapidly out to the center of the bedroom, stuck out my right hand and shouted, "Zdrasvitcha tovarish". A smile slowly spread over his face as he lowered his right hand and took mine, or tried to. Wet flaxseed is one of the most slippery substances in God's world and my hand slipped out of his grip. I thrust it at him twice more with the same result but the fourth attempt succeeded. By this time, he was laughing. This gave me an opportunity to say something before the firing squad pulled those triggers. Looking him straight in the eyes I said, "You are about to make the biggest mistake of your whole life by shooting me!" Why? "Because I came all the way over here from America just to help your soldiers".

He looked dumbfounded. "To help our soldiers?" he asked. Instantly, I recognized that he was interpreting my declaration to mean Communist soldiers. Of course I knew that there were no Communist soldiers in Russia when I left America but if he thought there were who was I to dispute him? The Russian word for yes is "da". So out came a whole string of them—"da, da, da, da, da!" He glanced uncertainly at the firing squad and back to me: "I don't believe the committee knows that you came all the way from America

just to help our soldiers", he said. "Maybe we shouldn't shoot you after all. I'll go down and find out——keep him covered." And he ran downstairs.

The next twenty minutes were the longest of my twenty-seven years as I stood looking down six cold steel rifle barrels. I did not want to die with a lie on my lips but I told myself that I had come to help all Russian soldiers, Communist or not. So I felt better then as I watched eagerly for the top of the commandant's head to appear around that last spiral of the marble steps. When I finally saw his face, he was smiling. He burst into the room all out of breath: "Go back to bed, Comrade," he panted. "They aren't even going to charge you room rent anymore." I walked very unsteadily over to my bed and fell in as the firing squad marched out of my room. I was shaking like an aspen leaf.

Early in January 1918, I received a letter from my train partner, Yankel Sverdlov. He said he remembered telling me about his brother and Joe Stalin being prisoners in the frozen north as we passed through Perm. He said they had been released in November and were both going to be attending a meeting of the Constituent Assembly in Petrograd on January 18. He would be glad to introduce me to them if I cared to be his guest. I was delighted to accept. Thus, I found myself at the Tavrida Palace on the historic evening of January 18, 1918. As we entered a large reception hall, Sverdlov took me by the arm and led me toward a group of about twenty-five of the leading Comrades standing in a big circle and all talking at once. I was introduced to most of them——Lenin, Trotsky, Stalin, Joe Sverdlov, Kamenev, Zinoviev, Lunacharsky and the rest. Then Yankel Sverdlov led me up into the balcony already packed with visitors where we found good seats with an excellent view of the huge platform where speeches would be made throughout the long night until 5 o'clock the next morning. I will never forget the effect that Nicholai Lenin had on that audience. After the lapse of more than half a century, I can still see his stocky figure standing there directly beneath the glare of an arc light. He was bald and the light, whenever he moved his

head, cast a powerful glow round about just as though he had a mirror up there where his hair should have been!

"Comrades," he cried, "you are to be congratulated on having won the proletarian revolution here in Russia. Now we shall go forward to win a revolution for the peasants and workingmen of the whole world. And if we need to lie and double cross and murder to gain our ends we shall never hesitate if those methods take us toward our goal". My understanding of the Russian language was fairly good by then but I leaned over and asked Sverdlov if I had understood Lenin correctly. Without batting an eye he said, "Of course, you heard right." Lenin was giving voice to the age old false philosophy that "the end justifies the means." The truth is that if a man becomes a thief and a liar and a murderer in pursuit of the noblest of goals, he is completely lost and defeated before he ever gets there.

For over 50 years, the U.S.S.R. has been following Lenin's philosophy. The latest example of their lying, double crossing way of life happened August 21, 1968 when, without any warning whatsoever, they invaded Czechoslovakia with an estimated 650,000 troops in the middle of the night, thereby violating the Warsaw Pact and a solemn treaty recently entered into with the Czechs not to interfere with their internal affairs! The Czechs were enjoying too much freedom under the leadership of Alexander Dubcek. Since even a little freedom destroys any Communist society, the Soviet Union decided to take over the freedom loving Czechoslovaks treaty or no treaty. I think time will show that this wanton invasion was the biggest mistake Russia has ever made in 50 years of her totalitarian way of life.

Now let us return to the all night session of the Constituent Assembly. Toward five o'clock in the morning the Assembly rejected by a vote of 237 to 138 a Bolshevik sponsored "Declaration of the Rights of the Tilling and Exploited People" which was really a summary of the legislative changes introduced in Russia up to that time. Lenin was furious. So this Assembly, the last legal chain linking the Communists to the Czarist past,

would not do Lenin's bidding! Very well then, he would dissolve the Constituent Assembly and he did so. He told them to go home. He was frank about it, calling his move, "a frank and complete liquidation of the idea of democracy by the idea of dictatorship." There was no trouble, no objection. The delegates, tired, hungry and confused simply went home! I too was tired and confused so I stumbled out of the balcony and back to my hotel and to bed. I had just witnessed the birth of the most far-reaching and vicious dictatorship that the world has ever known. Beside myself there was but one other American present—John Reed who sat on the platform near Lenin. He was buried beneath the Kremlin wall when he died soon afterward.

CHAPTER III

The Czech March on Freedom's Road

I have already described my rather dramatic exit from Minsk the middle of February 1918. The Y.M.C.A. secretaries gathered once again at 26 Smolenski Boulevard in Moscow to wait and see whether the German armies would keep on coming. They finally took Moscow but we headed East to Samara where we remained for a few weeks. That city was finally renamed Sverdlovsk in honor of my two friends Joseph W. and Yankel Sverdlov who were Lenin's dedicated disciples.

On the way to Samara we began to get acquainted with the Czechs. There were sixty freight trains loaded with these brave men scattered clear across the Siberian railroad from the Ural Mountains to Vladivostok. The Czechoslovak people had been a persecuted minority within the Austro-Hungarian Empire for 300 years. But the bright flame of the love of freedom had burned steadily in their hearts through the years along with an unquenchable determination to become a free Czech nation when the time was right. When the Czech army was made a part of the Austro-Hungarian army and sent to fight the Russians on the Eastern front, the Czechs decided the time had come to strike the blow for freedom. Thus many, many thousands of them deserted their German, Austro-Hungarian comrades, walked straight across into the Russian lines, turned around and fought their old taskmasters. They gambled "all or nothing". Like Washington and his fellow rebels in our own Revolutionary War, if they had lost the gamble they would have been executed as traitors!

When the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917 took Russia out of the war, these Czechs were left high and dry. So they arranged with the Communists to borrow sixty freight trains that would take them to Vladivostok. The United States government agreed to furnish transports to ship them from Vladivostok through the Panama Canal and thence to the French front where they could again get into their fight for freedom.

I joined several train loads of these fine men in a camp just south of Vladivostok and stayed with them for several months. I furnished the paint and wallpaper and they did the work as we refurbished several abandoned Russian army barracks. I gave them athletic equipment such as volley and footballs and motion picture equipment so they could amuse themselves. The amount of tea we drank in our new tea rooms was fantastic! Every night at bedtime I lined up with them and stood at attention under the silent, lonely stars as they sang their hearts out, singing the ancient Czech hymns and folk songs of their faraway homeland. It had been three years since these men had seen their loved ones and in many cases two years since they had had any mail from home. The one Czech name most frequently on their lips was John Hus, the man burned at the stake in Prague in 1415 because he insisted on the freedom to express religious ideas a bit too advanced for his day. John Hus gave his all for freedom and now they were ready to follow him to the death.

The promised ships never came. Meanwhile, the Czechs all along the Transiberian railroad clashed repeatedly with the Communists who tried to force them into the Communist mold. The result was a fight. When my Czech comrades heard of the widespread trouble, they left their snug camp to join the battle and soon they had seized the entire railroad from the Urals to Vladivostok. They proceeded to run it efficiently until the war was over and they could be repatriated under President Masaryk. I then returned to America and lectured for a few months in the Middle West before being sent to France to take charge of the welfare work in a Russian prison camp at Arcis-Sur-Aube.

Many years later, when I was the pastor of the Endion Methodist Church in Duluth, Minnesota, Joe Jordan, publisher of the Duluth Herald and News Tribune called me and asked how I would like to spend the summer as a roving reporter in Europe, gathering material for a series of twelve articles on "The Danger Spots in Europe." Adolph Hitler was the frighten-

ing dictator of the German Nazis and on March 15 of 1939, he had led his fanatical army into Prague and seized that brave, free people, sealing the borders before the world realized what was going on. "No newspaper reporter in the world has been given a permit by Berlin to enter Czechoslovakia since Hitler took over", said Mr. Jordan. "Maybe you can find a way to get in."

I accepted the assignment with alacrity and packed a single suitcase with a few essentials so that I could travel widely and freely without being impeded with unnecessary baggage. In Berlin when I went to Herr Goebbels office to ask for a permit into Czechoslovakia, Goebbels would not even see me. His secretary said the answer was "nein". When I boarded the German ship Bremen in New York and walked into my stateroom, I found a courteous note from the German government welcoming me to Germany as a newspaper man and enjoining everyone with whom I would come in contact to offer me every courtesy and assistance in my quest for stories about the greatness and strength of the Third Reich under Adolph Hitler. I showed this to Goebbel's secretary but she said; "The answer is still 'nein'".

July 31st found me in Warsaw interviewing the head of the Polish Secret Service. He told me that they had documents in their possession that proved that the Nazi party had plans to start a newspaper campaign on August 15 that would shout loudly about the awful atrocities the Poles were committing against the Germans through murder, rape and plunder. Nazi stories made up in the imaginations of the writers screamed to high heaven about these abominable deeds and the Fuhrer would not tolerate such conditions much longer. "Where will you be two weeks from now?" I was asked. "If I am on schedule", I replied, "I will be in Munich, Germany." He picked up a bundle of stories from his desk and said: "Go out into the street that day and buy a newspaper---you will see great headlines advertising these false atrocities and declaring that the Fuhrer

will soon be taking positive measures to stop the wicked Poles once and forever. The invasion of Poland will come on September 1st and the Second World War will have begun." When the Duluth Herald published this story and Hitler really followed that schedule, my Duluth readers thought I was a prophet!

That night in Warsaw, I had an inspiration----why not get acquainted with the German Ambassador to that hapless little country, show him my Nazi letter of introduction, and ask him to grant me a permit to go into Czechoslovakia for a month? That very important Nazi official was a genial fellow who admired America and I had the impression that way down deep he was not happy with the way events were proceeding in Poland. I told him frankly that I was just a dub as a newspaper man with very little experience and that if he would help me to get into Czechoslovakia for a look around and I found that the weird stories being told in my country about the Nazi treatment of the Czechs were not true, I would tell the truth about what I found and it might help. In any case, I would try to be honest and objective. In two rather lengthy talks, we seemed to hit it off in the most friendly fashion. He finally smiled, brought his fist down on his big desk and said: "I'll do it. I'll give you a one month pass into that forbidden land beginning tomorrow." I have that priceless document before me as I write.

The next day saw me aboard the train for Prague where I arrived at dusk on August 3 at the Woodrow Wilson station. I walked around the outside of the building and stopped in front of a huge bronze statue of the late President Wilson standing there making a speech with his famous fourteen points in his hands. I put my suitcase down and began a monologue. "Mr. President", I said, "I wish you were here instead of in heaven. I am a fellow American who has come here to try and find out what has happened to the Czechs since one Adolph Hitler marched in and took away all of their freedom last March." At that moment, a voice said,

"Follow me". I turned around, peered through the deepening darkness, and saw the disappearing figure of a poorly dressed man. He had my suitcase! When I had caught up with him, he kept right on going. "I know who you are and why you are here and I am taking you to a hotel where there are no gestapo", he said. We were soon striding down the main street and passing the large well-lighted Hotel Ambassador. "Let's go in here," I said. "No, no, that hotel is swarming with Nazi secret police", he replied without even breaking stride. Soon, however, we turned left and walked into the small, plain, shabby Hotel Adria. The manager verified the pleasant fact that there were no gestapo there and my unknown friend from the Czech Underground suddenly disappeared.

My first morning in Prague I went out to our American Embassy. They looked at me in utter amazement and wondered how I ever got the permit to enter the forbidden land! That afternoon one of the Czech girls working there called me and said she knew what I was searching for and she would be right down to my hotel to set something up. An hour later she called me again to say that, within ten minutes of her first call, two gestapo agents had appeared in front of her home and had remained there. "So go out of your hotel front door and stand gazing at the cameras in the window at your left and I'll walk slowly by and give you a message." As I stood there, I saw her coming followed by the Nazi agents about forty feet behind. She slowed down and said, "I'll meet you at the foot of this street in that open air restaurant on the bank of the Vltava River tonight at 7 P.M. I'll have Czechoslovakia's leading economist with me. There are two hundred empty tables under the elms which do not fill up until about 9 P.M.; we'll be sitting out in the center where the gestapo cannot get close without being observed."

I was there right on time and saw my two friends sitting by themselves surrounded by a sea of empty tables. Never shall I forget the next two hours! The Czech economist said; "Nazi agents write an article

for the paper everyday and submit it to me for my signature. It is always full of gross fabrications. The first time I refused to sign my name, they told me, my beautiful wife and three teen-age daughters would be executed. I signed", he said, "and I have continued to do so everyday since but how much longer I shall be able to so violate my conscience is a question."

On my return to the Adria Hotel, the manager said: "In your absence two gestapo agents came and asked for a room next to yours on the third floor. You are under constant surveillance. Watch your step." My Czech friend from the Embassy was better informed than I had thought. As we sat at our table under the elms, she had said: "I have arranged for you to take a three day trip into the country with a traveling salesman. Since you will be shadowed by Nazi agents from now on, this is how you can outwit them tomorrow. At sharp twelve o'clock as you leave your hotel, turn right and walk slowly for half a block. At that point is a street crossing. Stop and look to the left. Your salesman in a small green sedan of ancient vintage will be coming slowly along and will wave and smile. Start across the street, open his door and jump in. Your Nazi shadows will be on foot and unable to follow." It worked! As we turned off the main street at the first corner, I looked back and saw my Nazi shadowers stop and stare at us with disgust and frustration.

The next three days gave me an abundance of material for my series of articles. In all the towns we passed through were Nazi agents going from store to store and factory to factory with black notebooks under their arms into which they were writing down the "contributions" being made to the German army. For example, one small town was made up entirely of the employees of a knitting mill. The owner's wife and two year old son were sitting in a sand box in the back yard of their lovely home. She was crying as her son played with his toys. "A Nazi agent came last week to demand that my husband "appropriate" the entire product of our

mill for the German army. For over a century my husband's people have owned this mill and made underwear. When he refused, they led him away to prison and took over the plant." We saw several long freight trains snaking their way through the countryside. "Loaded with contributions," said the salesman.

Back at my hotel it was a Czech Methodist minister who gave me my next assignment. "At a garage about a block from this hotel," he said, "you can secure a copy of the new Czech Ten Commandments in English translation. They are passing rapidly from hand to hand but it is dangerous business. A recent notice in the paper promised a long sentence in a concentration camp for anyone found with a copy of this document in his possession. When the manager of this garage shakes hands with you, he will slip a copy from his palm to yours so don't look surprised and don't examine it there." I followed directions and slid it into my breast coat pocket. Back in my hotel, I did not dare take it to my room because I knew my room was frequently searched while I was out. On my way upstairs, I saw a large picture hanging on the second floor landing. No one was around so I slipped the commandments behind the picture.

Ten days later as I left the country, I recovered this valuable document and again slipped it into my breast coat pocket. On the train, I found an empty compartment, wadded up the commandments into a round ball and stuffed them into an empty iron ashtray attached to the door-jam. Then I ate prunes which I had provided for the purpose and stuffed the sticky pits into the ashtray. In fifteen minutes I was "full of prunes", but when the Nazis searched the place at the border, they lifted the iron cover of the ashtray and, with a grunt of disgust, slammed it back down again.

Here are those Commandments:-

1. I believe in the legitimate right of 8,000,000 people 1,000

years old in the Czech nation to live a free and independent life.

2. Do not believe that we have lived for 1,000 years in a German reich, as you are now told, but know from our history that this is a lie.
3. Believe in our historic rights which do not justify the subjection of the Czech nation.
4. Do not believe what you read in the Czech newspapers or hear over the radio, because newspapers and radios are under German control.
5. Do not believe that the Czech leaders have accepted the submission of our land to German control. They must be careful in their speech, otherwise we would have no leaders.
6. Do not believe we stand alone in the world.
7. Do not merely speak Czech----think Czech.
8. Do not participate in German celebrations. Treat the Germans in such a way that they always feel that they are foreigners, serving injustice and brutality.
9. Never forget that 40,000,000 gold crowns saved by the sweat of the Czech nation have been stolen by the German armies.
10. Remember the old Czech prayer 1,000 years old: "St. Vaclav, patron of the Czech soil, protect our nation. Let us not perish nor let perish those who will come after us."
Be strong and hard. Help the weak. Carry on. We shall win the victory over "the pure Nordic race."

One day Dr. Bartak, Methodist District Superintendent of Prague came to my hotel. "Word of your presence has spread rapidly and English speaking Czechs are asking that you be invited to speak to them next Sunday morning at St. Martins-in-the-Wall. This is the oldest Protestant church in the world. The place will be packed if you decide to do

it and you may be sure the gestapo will be there. It will be a dangerous assignment. On the wall behind you as you stand in the pulpit, is a four foot bas-relief of a communion goblet, a symbol of the goblet used at the "protesting communion" service the day John Hus was burned at the stake in 1415."

Then Dr. Bartak took me down to the great bronze statue of John Hus on the main street of the city. "There stands the greatest patriot in Czech history," he said. "His very name is magic. Some of his religious ideas were too liberal for his day and so they burned him to death on this very spot."

"Two weeks ago the Nazis made their biggest mistake right here," said Dr. Bartak. "See that ten foot sod circular border at his feet? Our expert florists come here every year on the Hus birthday and, having removed the sod, they write John Hus's motto in flowers. The Nazis asked what it was all about. 'Truth Will Prevail' was the answer. 'That was John Hus's motto and it is ours'. There was a short conference among the Nazis and then the order: 'Rip it out' and out it came.

Next morning the florists were at it again, this time shaping their flowers in the form of a goblet, the 'protesting communion goblet' of 1415. Because you see, the weeping followers of John Hus stayed here until his body was reduced to ashes. Then they marched up to Saint Martins-in-the-Wall, knelt at that altar and partook of the 'Protesting Communion'. Soon afterwards they had a four foot bas-relief of a goblet made on the wall back of the pulpit to be a constant reminder of their vow----never again, so long as there was breath in their bodies, would they allow a lover of freedom to be put to death. When the Nazis asked what it was, they were told: 'That's just a goblet', so they were given permission to leave it there. For the next few days, tens of thousands of Czechs marched past the John Hus statue with broad smiles on their faces. The puzzled Nazis never did find out what

caused the smiles. "But when the gestapo come to church next Sunday," added Dr. Bartak, "and see that goblet back of the pulpit and learn its story who knows what will happen?"

I told Dr. Bartak I would give him my answer the next day, but I was frightened. Again and again my mind went back home to Duluth where Helen, my beautiful wife, was taking care of Jim, Jon, Tom and Ted aged 5 to 15. They needed their father for a few more years. I must confess that until 3 A.M. I fought the battle of my life for the integrity of my own soul. Would I be worthy of the memory of all those Czech soldiers in Vladivostok that I had loved and admired since 1918 if I refused Dr. Bartak's invitation? No, I would not! And the Holy Week communion service that I had conducted every Thursday night of my ministerial career, emotionally describing to my people the simple carpenter of Nazareth who sat in an upper room in Jerusalem and passed the goblet around to his disciples, comparing the red wine to his own blood to be shed on the morrow as those disciples forsook him and fled. Could I ever do that again?

Suddenly out of the blackness of that anguished night came a text to be used on Sunday. I had never used it before in my life but there it was: "Greater is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Proverbs 16:32). Those Czechs would know who had taken their city five months ago! Around these words and John Hus's: "Truth Will Prevail", I would build my message!

Sunday morning August 7, 1939, just three weeks before Hitler launched the Second World War, St. Martins-in-the-Wall was packed and on the back seat sat my two gestapo shadowers. As the minister announced his text, a sudden stillness and moment of tension and expectancy seized the audience. You literally could have heard a pin drop. Then into the minister's frightened soul swept a feeling of stillness and of light and of power as he became a channel of unseen forces just waiting to be

heard.

The emotional dam of that Sunday service did not break until we were singing the last hymn. Those blessed Czechs had requested that we close the service with John Henry Newman's "Lead Kindly Light". Here is part of it:

"Lead kindly light, amid th' encircling gloom, Lead thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home; Lead thou me on! Keep thou
my feet; I do not ask to see the distant scene---one step enough for
me."

As we sang that prayer, I turned and faced that 500 year old "goblet" on the wall behind me and moved aside so the audience could see it too. Then the emotional dam broke and minister and congregation were crying tears of joy because of the priceless heritage of our faith. After the benediction, I saw our gestapo agents fading hurriedly toward the exit. I would not be arrested!

The Third Reich that was to last a thousand years was swept into the dust-bin of history six years later. Then irony of ironies! General George Patton and his Third American Army had rampaged across Europe and were in Pilsen ready to take Prague. At that moment, President Roosevelt, already a dying man, ordered Patton to sit still and let the Russians take Prague! Good old Joe Stalin needed a victory! And behold the Czechs were thereby slated for another twenty years of tyranny, this time of the Communist variety!

As I write these words in the closing days of 1968, it has been a sad summer and fall for the freedom loving Czechs. After twenty years of Communist tyranny, an unusual Communist came to power in Czechoslovakia, one Alexander Dubcek. He was a Communist but he loved the dignity that goes with a certain freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly and of the right to travel anywhere at any time. Young people in all of the Warsaw pact countries have been thrilled and as they have gathered

in groups they have shouted: "Long live Czechoslovakia"!

This was too much for Russia and they marched into that little country 650,000 strong in the middle of the night of August 21. Those precious freedoms so newly won were washed down the drain----at least temporarily----and the new Brezhnev doctrine was given to a shocked world: "If any Communist country in the Warsaw Pact starts the dangerous business of flirting with freedom of thought, of the press and of assembly, it is the duty of Soviet Russia to invade that country and take away these dangerous freedoms by force." In other words, Communism and freedom of the individual are as antithetical as oil and water. They simply don't mix. That is why the Berlin Wall was built----to keep freedom lovers from getting too close to the freedoms that always spell the death of Communism. That is why the Russians keep huge armed forces at the ready----to keep their satellite states from flirting with dangerous freedoms!

In the spring of 1942, Dr. Edward Benes, self-exiled president of Czechoslovakia, was brought to Duluth for one of the fine lectures he was giving throughout the United States. The Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the United States was now in World War II with might and main. The committee in charge of Dr. Benes' lecture asked me to introduce him to the 3,000 people who had bought tickets for his lecture at the Armory. During the day I told Dr. Benes of my experience with the Czechs in Siberia in 1918 and of my harrowing days with them in August of 1939. "I shall hope to resume my duties as president of Czechoslovakia when this war is over and the Nazis have been destroyed. I am inviting you to return to Prague at that time and to be my guest at Hradcany Castle overlooking the city." As we shook hands that night at the close of his lecture, I assured him that I should be more than glad to accept his kind offer to become his guest in Prague after the war.

So in 1948 I went hopefully over there full of eager anticipation. I arrived in early September just in time for his funeral! It was rumored that Dr. Benes was under virtual house arrest after the war but no news was forthcoming as to the state of his health. I joined the tens of thousands of tearful Czechs who marched all of one hot night up and down the main street of Prague. In every store window was a life size picture of the dead president, draped in black. That was all of the funeral he was allowed to have. The next day he was quietly laid to rest in a small cemetery outside of Prague. A simple head stone merely bore his name----Dr. Edward Benes.

Shortly before that Jan Masaryk had died. He of the magic name had told the world just before his death that he was the one non-Communist who was going to join the Politburo of the new Communist government. "Somebody will need to keep an eye on them" was the way he explained his difficult assignment. Soon thereafter his lifeless body was found beneath his third story bedroom window. "Suicide", was the official explanation. "Murder", was the verdict of most Czechs who knew Jan Masaryk! Life magazine carried a picture of Jan Masaryk lying in his coffin. They called special attention to the flower that had been slipped behind his right ear but which could not fully conceal the ugly mark behind that ear that had evidently been made by a blunt instrument. There must have been a good reason why none of Jan Masaryk's friends were allowed to examine his body after he was found dead beneath his bedroom window.

The Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia has split world communism right down the center as nothing else has done in half a century. The most pointed criticism has come from Communist parties throughout the world. The world unity for which Moscow has struggled so desperately has been shattered, possibly beyond repair.

My own belief that the Czechs have merely been temporarily

slowed down in their march along freedom's road is as strong as ever—even stronger. Millions of their young people have now been given something very definite to fight for. Many of them are now very definitely anti-Russian and anti-Communist. John Hus is more powerful than ever before because they know that eventually "Truth Will Prevail".

Fear and Faith.

On a beautiful afternoon in June of 1909, a very attractive young man, one Edward P. Whitney, called at my home in Kalamazoo and tried to sell me a single volume reference work. He told me he had worked his way through the Law School at the University of Michigan selling The Volume Library and, in order to get enough money to open a law office in Grand Rapids he intended to keep on selling books for another year. He said he could make ten to twenty-five dollars a day and that, while it was hard work, he really enjoyed it.

I was interested. I had just graduated from high school in Kalamazoo and I wanted to go to Kalamazoo College but I had no money and no job. Could I sell books? Ed Whitney thought I could but I wasn't so sure. Me? Go up to house after house and knock on the door, talk myself past the front door and sell the hesitant ladies books? All my life I had been timid and afraid of people. Way back in the third grade in South Haven, Michigan I had had a traumatic experience. I had agreed to "speak a piece" at Thanksgiving time. Across the gulf of seventy years, I can still feel the terror that literally engulfed me as I walked bravely up the center aisle to the platform and turned to face my classmates. My knees were shaking, my heart was beating like a trip-hammer and when I opened my mouth I couldn't utter a word. In complete disgrace, I ran from the room.

From that day on, I struggled with fear every time I was called upon to recite in class. Not once in succeeding years would I agree to speak in public---not until my sophomore year in college. Then I deliberately joined the Century Forum Literary Society knowing that every member was pledged to give two speeches a year as part of their program of self-development. On the Tuesday evening that I was scheduled to give my first public address since that horrible afternoon in the third

grade, I was hoping that the faculty critic who was always present would not be Tuffy Williams----a gruff professor of mathematics. I was afraid of him. Only the day before, in Trigonometry class, he had called on me to give the definition of a sine. I arose with shaky knees and gave what I thought was the correct definition. He glared at me and bellowed "wrong". I said: "That's what the book says it is." He gave me an annihilating glance and yelled: "Your book is wrong---- buy a new book tomorrow. Sit down!"

You can imagine my state of mind then to arrive in the Century Forum room that night and to see Tuffy Williams sitting in the back of the room with his chair tilted back against the wall. That would be the man to make a critical evaluation of my speech! I was tempted to flee. "No!", I said to my trembling self. "This is it. If I must die here and now, then death will be a welcome relief to this stupid frame of mind that always seizes me when called upon to do a simple thing like speaking in public." And I looked at the floor where I most likely would give up the ghost!

When the fatal moment finally came, I arose and walked as steadily as possible to the speakers stand and made a confession. I told the boys and Tuffy of my lifelong fear of public speaking and of my determination to overcome this fear or die in the attempt. I even jokingly pointed to the spot on the floor where my prostrate form might soon be sprawled! Then I quoted William James to the effect that the way to fight fear was to walk right up to the thing one fears and face it eyeball to eyeball. They laughed and I laughed----and my fear was gone! I do not recall what I talked about but I gave a pretty fair speech I think. At any rate, as soon as it was over Tuffy Williams came straight up to me and put his arm around my shoulder and said: "I knew you could do it. I have known of your struggle with timidity and fear. But tonight you won a great victory and made a fine speech. God bless you."

A half hour later, I walked down the hill, got onto my bike and started home. At that moment, the 20th Century Limited of the New York Central roared by on its nightly run from Chicago to New York. I was so high up on cloud nine that I wondered if I should stop and let it pass or just run right over it!

As I rode my bike along the two mile route toward my home, I asked myself why I had said nothing to the boys about the real reason for my great victory over fear. Well, my secret was my own and it was such an inward thing that it would be many years before I could speak about it in public. The time would come, however, when I would be eager to share my secret in the pulpit and in several books that would be read by tens of thousands of grateful people as we will see in the next chapter of this personal testimony. For the moment, let me just say that I had stumbled onto the use of great affirmations in affirmative prayer in the presence of God. The affirmation that I had been living with for days before I ventured to speak before the Century Forum Literary Society was Paul's immortal declaration to the people of Philippi. After listing the troubles he had successfully negotiated, Paul cries: "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Those words had been repeated prayerfully by a very scared but determined young man for many days before he dared to rise up and face his comrades. It was the same great affirmation that had pulled me through many a crisis in my book selling days.

The most remarkable one happened in Bay City, Michigan. I had accompanied E. P. Whitney through a number of small towns and sat beside him in many a home, observing the way he successfully worked his way through a canvass right through the objections most people raised to the signature on the dotted line of the contract. At last I was ready to hit the trail on my own and I took off for Bay City.

Bay City! A turning point in my life! I spent a whole week

there seeing prominent people and getting some excellent recommendations but I never sold one of them a Volume Library. I was afraid! I was timid and negative and I knew that all of the people I canvassed knew of my condition. At last I sat down and wrote Mr. R. E. Trostper of the King Richardson Co. of Chicago a letter complaining about Bay City as a territory and asking to be allowed to go over to Saginaw only twenty miles away. I will never forget his reply. He really nailed me to the mast and left my barque to wallow in a rough sea!

"No!" he said. "I will not give you new territory, Bay City is just like Saginaw----full of people who need The Volume Library. The trouble lies not in the people but in L.L. Dunnington. You are negative and fearful and the people you call on sense it. Yet you have all the ability in the world if you will only use it. Where is that Christian faith I heard you say you believed in? Put that to work and you will forget your timidity! You have the finest product in the world. The people need that book. So, with faith in God, in yourself and in the superior merits of The Volume Library go out into that fertile territory and plaster Bay City full of books! Good luck!"

That night I had a long session with my Bible. By the greatest good fortune, I stumbled onto the fourth chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians and finally stopped at the thirteenth verse. "I can do all things through Him who strengtheneth me." Paul had been called to preach and I, too, had had a frightening call to preach just three years previous to my Bay City experience. Paul ran into trouble but he did not quit. He wrote a courageous letter to the people of Philippi, made some great affirmations of faith, and kept going. I asked myself if God would have called me to preach if he hadn't believed in me. I knew he did believe in me. So did my mother. Before leaving home for Bay City, I was sitting in the living room and over-

heard a conversation between my father and mother in the kitchen. My father: "What's this I hear about Lewis leaving for Bay City today?" Mother: "Yes, he has signed a contract to sell The Volume Library for one year so he can go to college." Father: "He'll never sell a book! He is afraid of the cars. He'll never make it." Mother: "Jack, you don't know your son the way I do. If Lewis says he'll sell books, he'll sell books. And if he has hard going, he'll stay the course!" So, if God and my mother and Mr. Trosper believed in me I'd better believe in myself. I'd show them tomorrow.

And what a day that turned out to be! I kept repeating Paul's brief affirmation of faith. That night I sat down and wrote Mr. Trosper a letter that went like this: "Thank you for your pointed letter. It really shook me up! I went out into this community today with confidence and enthusiasm. I made just ten canvasses and took ten orders and made twenty-eight dollars! I collected a dollar down on seven of the orders. The only reason I did not get ten dollars down was because three of the dear ladies did not have a dollar in the house or I would have had it! You were right. The fault was not in Bay City but in Dunnington but I have taken care of that! Shakespeare in his Julius Caesar was also right: 'The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, But in ourselves, That we are underlings.' Now, Mr. Trosper, if you have some boys selling books in other Michigan towns who are failing, send them to me for a couple of days and I'll take them into the field and show them how it is done." He did just that and I helped a number of them to move over from failure to success in the really difficult business of selling books.

Incidentally, I have just read an article in Time magazine that disturbs me greatly. It says there is a strong tide running in this country to reform the many welfare agencies which are spending over five billion dollars a year to help indigent people on relief. The new

plan would be for the government to pay all families or individuals a minimum wage of say \$3,000 a year or more, depending on the size of the family without asking any questions. The argument runs like this: Give all people a living so as to preserve their dignity----not a word about the value of self-sacrifice, self-discipline and the indomitable will to succeed under the whiplash of economic necessity! If there had been a welfare office in Bay City in 1909, I verily believe I would have gone down there for money enough to pay my room rent and board bill and enough to get my shoes soled. I was putting card board in my shoes to save my socks from wearing through! And I really believe I would have been back home inside of a month thereby proving my father had been right about his elder son being "afraid of the cars". I am not for abolishing all welfare but I think a welfare state would ruin a lot of people.

That winter Whitney and I went south in search of a warmer climate for our work----to San Antonio, Dallas, Houston and Austin. In the spring, we hired and trained a hundred college boys to sell our great book and made a small profit on all the books they sold. We also went up into Ohio and hired young men in Columbus and Delaware. Not long ago, since I am living on Mercer Island, Washington and belong to the local Rotary Club, I was called on to say grace before the meal. As soon as the program was over, a distinguished looking elderly man rushed up to me and said: "More than fifty years ago, did you live for awhile in the Sigma Nu house in Delaware and did you hire and train a bunch of those boys to sell The Volume Library?" When I acknowledged that I had he said: "My name is Jones and I am recently retired from a large law firm in Seattle. I was one of your boys way back in 1910 in Ohio." I asked him if he sold any books! "Yes", he said, "but I was no great success at it. I am bound to admit, however, that that total

experience was one of the most helpful and constructive periods of my life. I have often wondered what happened to you and I was surprised to learn that you have spent over fifty years in the ministry----there was nothing pious about you in those days but you were a good tough down-to-earth salesman."

There came a time in the course of my book selling experience when confidence and enthusiasm would not even sell The Volume Library. We were in Lexington, Kentucky and that town was suffering a depression and many men were out of work. So the company told us to go on over to Evansville, Indiana and try again. But we were broke---- down to eighty-three cents. Whitney wrote the company and asked them to send us twenty-five dollars, General Delivery, Evansville. So we shipped our suitcases on ahead and decided to "hit the rods". That is the term one uses when traveling as a hobo on freight trains.

It was a warm summer night as we walked the tracks to a certain steep grade near the outskirts of Lexington and waited for a heavy freight to slow down so we could climb aboard. Up the side of a box-car we climbed and sat down on top with our backs to the wind. The cinders from the coal-burning locomotive shot by us with great force except for the ones that preferred sliding down our necks! It got chilly and began to rain. "We'll get off on the ground at the next stop," said Whitney, "and slide underneath across the rods." Hoboes can't do that these days because they no longer build cars that way. But in those days if the train was stopped or going very slowly you could slide beneath the train and stretch out across six double rods running lengthwise of the under carriage. They were about eighteen inches apart and most uncomfortable after half an hour but it was dry under there! After an hour or so, I got sleepy and wondered how I could stay awake so as not to get shaken loose from my precarious perch in case the

train came to a shrieking halt. I finally took off my hat and dragged it on the rail and, to change positions a bit, dragged one foot on the rail. It is an exposed place to ride because brakemen come along every time the train stops and flash their lanterns underneath looking for hoboes. If they see some feet sticking out, they give them a smart rap with a belly club they always seem to carry and yell: "Come on out of there you S.O.B." and out you crawl as we did. Then all they have in mind is shaking you down for a dollar or two and you can get right back on! We told our brakeman the truth---only eighty-three cents! He searched us and found we were honest about it. "Hell," he said, "I wouldn't feel right for a month if I took your last cent." With that he opened up the door of a freight car and commanded us to make ourselves at home. We took one look and said, "It's a pig car---or was a short time ago---how can we lie down in that?" He motioned us to follow him. He took us to the caboose and gave us a lot of old newspapers. We spread them out in our pig car, curled up spoon fashion to keep warm and went to sleep.

The next evening as we sped along toward Louisville, Kentucky, we were riding in some big drainage tile loaded lengthwise on a flat car. They were fifteen feet long and six feet in diameter and a great place for a hobo to ride in comfort. At one stop four "Knights of the Road", as they called themselves, came crawling into our big tile. Two were black and two were white but they were friendly and gave us some good advice. "Don't ride this freight down into the main yards," they said. The 'dicks' down there will spot you and arrest you for vagrancy. Get off in the outskirts of the town and come with us to the Jungle and have dinner." We told them we sure were hungry but in a hurry to get to Evansville. "All right," they said, "get off and climb the hill to the right. Up on top is a saloon with a little restaurant in the back room. Order crackers and milk. They will bring you a nice bowl of milk and

set a big bowl of crackers on the table. If you guys are as broke as you say you are, you can eat that entire bowl of crackers with your milk and the whole works will cost you but a dime apiece.

We climbed the hill and found the restaurant in the backroom of a saloon and ordered milk and crackers but our dismay was profound when the heavily painted blond waitress brought two bowls of milk and then one big bowl of crackers which she held in her hands while we very politely took a small helping apiece. Then this heartless, unfeeling imp of Satan took that bowl of crackers back into the kitchen and we never saw it again! It was the first meal we had eaten in twenty-four hours and I remember saying to Whitney as we slammed the screen door on the way out: "If I were St. Peter and that dame came knocking at the pearly gates I'd keep her outside for a week and give her a bowl of milk and two crackers every twenty-four hours just to soften up her hard heart!"

After three days of that, we finally arrived in Evansville, Indiana. As we strolled up into a poor section of town near the tracks, we picked out a run-down looking house that had not been painted in twenty years but it had a sign up that read: "Roomers". We were tired, dirty and unshaven but Whitney's beard was blacker and longer than mine so he decided that I should do the talking. The "lady" that came to the door was as dirty and unkempt as we were but she had it all over us because she had undoubtedly enjoyed three good nights of sleep and nine square meals since we had. Her sharp eyes surveyed us from scuffed shoes to battered hats and black faces but she took us upstairs as she said: "I have just one room vacant. It will be five dollars a week payable in advance." She was just changing the linen and the dirty sheets and pillow cases were on the floor. Clean towels were draped over her arm. "Madam", I said, "we'll be honest with you. We are a couple of honorable young men who are 'educators'. We place a single volume re-

ference work in homes where children need it to help them with their school work. Over in Lexington, Kentucky we ran into a bit of tough luck and didn't sell any. So we rode the rods over here and we have just sixty-three cents between us at the moment. But there are twenty-five dollars waiting for us in the post office. I'll give you this silver watch for security for a few hours."

I then handed her my pride and joy----a ten dollar watch I had earned getting new subscribers for the South Haven Gazette. She grabbed the watch, turned it over a few times and handed it back. "It ain't worth a nickle," she cried. Just then the telephone rang and she ran down the hall to answer it. I quickly stepped over to the wash stand, poured out a bowl full of water and washed my dirty face, neck and hands. Then, since she had the clean towels over her arm, I grabbed a dirty sheet and dried myself. I must confess that the amount of grime that was left on that sheet was revolting! I put the sheet back on the floor with the mess well covered up. But I didn't fool her! She took one look at me and saw the transformation. Then she picked up that sheet and snorted: "I'm going to call the police!" At the telephone, she changed her mind and came back and picked up my battered hat. "I'm going to keep this until you pay me two dollars for what you did to that sheet." Whitney and I started toward the front door. "We are going down to the post office to pick up twenty-five dollars", I said, "and I shall be very happy indeed to make you a present of my hat. As we rode the rods on our way over here from Kentucky, I dragged that poor old hat on the rails for hundreds of miles to try and stay awake. I can't use it anymore so consider it yours. And the best of luck to you." We got our money and another room, ate a few good meals, slept well for a few nights, sold plenty of books in Evansville and were none the worse for three tough days as hoboes.

CHAPTER V

Life's Road Makes A Sharp Turn

In September of 1919, I finally matriculated at Boston University School of Theology. The new multimillion dollar campus out on Commonwealth Avenue had not yet been built so the little group that then made up the School of Theology were snugly housed at 72 Mt. Vernon Street. I lived there for one year and then moved across the street into the house where Jenny Lind lived when P.T. Barnum was making a fortune out of the Swedish Nightingale. Our professors were among the most accomplished scholars in the whole field of theology---Brightman, Knudson, Cell, Buell, Sheldon and others. The student body came from all over the nation and the world, and many of us came from small towns with fundamentalist backgrounds. The attitude of these fine scholars was to the effect that we should all develop open-questing minds no matter how firmly we believed we already knew the truth about the Bible, The Virgin Birth, The Atonement, Heaven, Hell or The Trinity. They would help us to uncover a great array of new material on these and other theological questions and even then we were still enjoined to keep questing for still more truth. I soon fell in love with a great and venerable institution and all of those connected with it for I desperately needed what they had to offer.

At Christmas time that year, a little Englishman by the name of Johnny Kilmister strolled up to me in the hall on the second floor and asked how I would like to earn twenty ^{five} dollars the next Sunday. He explained that he was the student pastor of the West Lebanon New Hampshire Congregational Church but that he was trying to get a Baptist church in Concord and would be candidating the next Sunday. West Lebanon was one hundred fifty miles from Boston while Concord was only seventy-five miles away. I could readily understand his desire to move closer to Boston but what I did not know was that that desire

would eventuate in a sharp turn in my life's road----a turn so decisive that nothing would ever be the same again!

Of course I went for I needed the twenty-five dollars! The train was late because it was forty degrees below zero and a blizzard was raging. Harold French met me at midnight and took me up to "Sam Hill", a beautiful ten acre nursery farm just up the hill from the beautiful white, green-shuttered Congregational Church. A big fire was blazing in a huge fireplace and ready to greet me were Sam and Florence French, parents of Harold, Helen and Dot, teenagers, and members of a famous French family whose forebearers went back to the Mayflower, a family containing many artists such as Daniel Chester French who created the Lincoln Memorial. My welcome was complete. Two nicer people I had never met in all my life. Harold went to bed and Sam, Florence and I sat before the fire and talked until the wee hours.

The next morning when "she" came down to breakfast, I was transfixed. "She" was the older daughter, Helen. She was seventeen at the time, beautiful beyond comparison with a soft melodious voice and a queenly carriage that matched her quiet and genuine modesty. Dot was beautiful too but frankly I hardly saw this fifteen year old sister! I was gone----sunk without a trace!

Johnny Kilmister succeeded in getting the call to the Concord church, thank God, and I was soon invited to become the student pastor of Congregational Church. For the next two years the church grew and prospered, but my main attraction every Sunday morning was the fifth row, right hand side of the auditorium where the five Frenches sat. I was a guest in their home for awhile but finally moved to a room of my own in the Whitcome residence. I tried hard not to let anybody know how much in love I was with Helen but I am sure she knew. The heart always knows. Eighteen months after my arrival in that little town, I

was on my way to the French home for Sunday dinner when five year old Marjorie Kilton ran out and blocked my progress. Looking me in the eye she said: "Mr. Dunnington, are you as madly in love with Helen French as everybody in this town says you are?" She stopped me cold! And I thought it was a well kept secret! I wanted to finish Seminary and get a job and a bank account before I took on family responsibilities!

In the spring of 1921, Dr. Knudson took me out to lunch one day. He said Dr. Bugbee, pastor of the great Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church of Minneapolis needed an associate pastor. "He is one of the finest Christian gentlemen in the business," said Dr. Knudson. "He was my pastor at one time and now he writes me that he will leave the selection of one of the boys who will be graduating from our Seminary in May strictly up to me. I have selected you if you want it. He takes two months vacation every summer and you would do all of the preaching during that time. You would also have charge of all children and youth work." I took a trip out to Hennepin and was delighted to accept. In four years there, Dr. Bugbee and I never had a serious altercation of any kind. And in June of 1922, I married Helen!

She gave me five beautiful boys although we lost little Dick at age seven weeks. The child's disease that swept Duluth at that time was too much for the little fellow. Jim married Doris Bennett and they have three boys, Buzz, Scott and Jon. Jim is a commercial artist in Chicago. Jon married Joyce Johnson and they have two boys and a daughter, Kathy, David and Todd. Jon is the senior research architect for the Weyerhaeuser Company. They live two blocks from us here on Mercer Island. Tom is an artist specializing in the illustration of children's books and has his own studio in Elmhurst, Illinois. He and Mary Jane Baldwin have five children, Steve, Stan, Barb, Tim

and Dianne. Ted married Sally Vana and they have two girls, Ann and Sara. They live near Rochester, Minnesota where Ted is head of the department of Human Factors Engineering for I.B.M. The joy that my wife and I experience as we watch these fine upstanding young men and their wives bring up their families is something for which we are very grateful. For many years we have often taken our summer vacations together on Lake Michigan near Benton Harbor and even now as I write we are looking forward to just such a vacation next summer.

At Hennepin Avenue Church in Minneapolis, I had no sooner arrived and settled in then it was time for Dr. Eugbee to pack his family into the family car and take off on a long two months vacation. The beautiful auditorium seated fourteen hundred people and it was pretty well filled on most Sunday mornings. What should I preach about? I felt very humble and unworthy about assuming so great a responsibility. The first summer I used material that I had worked over in the West Lebanon Congregational Church. Then came a crisis. Some of my fine young people were having trouble believing in the Virgin Birth of Jesus and wondered how important it was in the thinking of Jesus. My answer to them took me back into the excellent study I had made of this very problem at Boston. When we were through, they were so happy with the clarification of this knotty problem that they asked me why I did not share these insights with all of the people in my preaching on Sunday morning. I replied that I would do just that and up went the topic for the next Sunday's sermon on the big board in front of the church: "What About the Virgin Birth?"

That topic brought Alice Kimball to my study on the double. She was sure I was headed for deep trouble. "You are only one year out of Seminary", she said, "and you are preaching in one of the great pulpits of our denomination while the 'boss' is on vacation. If you

get into deep trouble as I feel sure you will, what will Dr. Bugbee think of the poor judgment you have used?" I took a day to think things over and then went to see Alice. "This is a crucial decision with me," I said. "I am about to decide what kind of a minister I am going to be; one who avoids controversial issues so as to stay out of trouble-----or one who first comes to know his position through thorough preparation and then tells his story so skillfully and winsomely that he wins his congregation's consent to present the truth as he sees it." I then said I believed that, by and large, controversial matter could be presented if it were done right, without dividing the congregation. I proposed to try out my theory the very next Sunday. What follows is the gist of the next Sunday's sermon:

The surpassingly beautiful stories of the virgin birth of Jesus are found in the opening chapters of the two New Testament books Matthew and Luke. They are found nowhere else in the Bible. It is, therefore, a matter of the greatest wonderment that those same two books are also the only ones that contain genealogical tables tracing Jesus' ancestry back through Joseph to David. Matthew 1:1 reads: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. And Abraham begat Isaac"-----then follows the entire connection from father to son and on down through David to Matthew 1:16 where we read, "And Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." Luke 3:23 reads: "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed, the son of Joseph." And then follows the long ancestry back to David.

Mary was not of the Davidic line but Joseph was. Ancient prophecies had foretold the coming of a Messiah or King that would stem from King David. Jeremiah 23:5 says: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch and a King

shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth." Isaiah 9:6,7 reads: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever." The genealogical tables of Matthew and Luke trace Jesus through Joseph to this ancient Davidic line and say that, "Jesus was the son of Joseph."

There we have it, my friends. The same two books that give us the beautiful virgin birth stories are the same two that also prove that Joseph was Jesus' father and that he fulfilled an ancient prophecy in belonging to the Davidic line. What conclusion can we reach? The answer of an honest soul would seem to be that you choose whichever answer appeals to you most. If you prefer to believe that Jesus was born of a virgin the Bible supports you. If you prefer to believe that Joseph was the father of Jesus, the same Bible substantiates your claim. But which ever view we accept let us not point an accusing finger at the person of opposite opinion because he has just as good scriptural warrant for his position as we do.

Let us go on then to explore our question still further. What did Jesus think about it? The subject was seemingly of no consequence to him because he never mentioned it once. No one of his disciples ever mentioned a virgin birth though several of them left letters that have come down to us in the New Testament. John wrote: "Philip findeth Nathanael and saith unto him, we have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (John 1:45)

The townsmen of Jesus' day always assumed that Jesus was Joseph's son. When he began to do his mighty works they said, "Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" (Matthew 13:54-56). Jesus was the eldest of a family of at least seven children and possibly more and his neighbors had seemingly never heard of a virgin birth. "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:22). Paul seemed to think Jesus was the son of Joseph: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." (Romans 1:3)

Mary herself was as baffled as anyone else when Jesus at the age of twelve accompanied his family from Nazareth to Jerusalem for the Passover festival and then stayed behind for three days talking to the doctors about God. Mary and Joseph rushed back and found him in the Temple. "And when they saw him they were astonished; and his mother said to him, 'Son, why have you treated us so? Behold your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.' And he said to them, 'How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?' And they did not understand the saying which he spake to them." (Luke 2:48-51)

Why not? If Jesus had been miraculously born, one would naturally suppose that Joseph and Mary would have understood Jesus' early interest in the things of the spirit. As a matter of fact, here is the first shadow that later deepened into estrangement and misunderstanding as Jesus entered into his active ministry.

When great crowds began to follow him to watch his healings

and to listen to his words of wisdom, we are told that, "he went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. And when his friends heard it, they went out to seize him, for they said, 'he is beside himself.'" (Mark 3:19-21). Were Mary and her other children among the 'friends'? Possibly so, for we hear him saying a bit later, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house." (Matthew 13:57). And again, "A man's foes shall be they of his own household." (Matthew 10:36) On still another occasion, "Your mother and your brothers are outside asking for you. And he answered, Who are my mother and my brothers? And looking around on those who sat about him, he said, Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother." (Mark 3:32-35)

When a woman cried, "Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that you sucked," Jesus seems to have swung around with a rebuke as he said, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and keep it!" (Luke 11:27-28). When one gathers these sayings together and notes at the same time the complete absence of any reference to a mother and family that appreciates his unique ministry, the conclusion seems unavoidable that Jesus' own home was marred by misunderstanding. Could this have been the case if Jesus had been virgin born? Two of Jesus' own brothers, James and Jude, left letters that appear in the New Testament but they mention no virgin birth.

Comes then another question. Matthew (1:23) quotes Isaiah (7:14) that "a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This has for ages been taken as prophetic of the virgin birth of Jesus---or was until scholars looked into it. Now it is generally agreed that the word that was translated "virgin" should read "young woman".

Charles Foster Kent says: "The ancient Canaanites and Phoenicians regarded the process of reproduction as a sacred mystery. But in time, through their licentious religious practices, they so degraded it that Jews and Christians alike, in their horror and revulsion, ceased to appreciate its divine significance and sanctity. Hence in contemporary Judaism, the belief was widespread that, as Philo (an early church Father) expresses it 'every child of promise was born miraculously.' He says that the Lord begat Isaac and Samuel. Buddha and Zoroaster and Mithras and Attis were also said to have been born of the Holy Spirit.¹ Scholars are in general agreement that the two virgin birth stories are a late addition to Matthew and Luke, probably in the second century.

Up to this point, my friends, I have presented all of the evidence I could on both sides of this question within the space limits of a brief chapter. Honesty forbids any other course. When I first faced this question as a young man and began to find plenty of Bible evidence on the side of the natural birth of Jesus, I was greatly shaken in my faith. I felt I had been deceived by ministers who presented one side of this question and one side only.

I think I understand today why most ministers have been content to leave this entire question alone. The doctrine of the virgin birth unfolded within the early Christian church to account for the sinlessness of Jesus in the face of a belief in original sin. We have already discussed that doctrine. It assumed that the results of the fall of Adam affected the whole human race; that soul guilt could be transmitted from generation to generation; that if Joseph were Jesus' father, the sinful taint of the whole human race would also

1 "Life and Teachings of Jesus", Charles Scribner's Sons, p.45

inhere in Jesus.

But we have seen how this position is absolutely untenable for modern minds; how soul guilt and sin cannot be physically transmitted from father to son; and how our present knowledge leaves no place for a literal Adam and Eve in a beautiful garden some six thousand years ago.

Even if these things had been true, the Catholic church came to realize that its position was still untenable. Mary, as the one parent of Jesus, could have transmitted Adam's guilt to Jesus. So, to avoid this inconsistency, Pope Pius IX defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854 as follows: "The doctrine which holds that the Blessed Virgin Mary, from the first instant of her conception, was, by a most singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human race, preserved from all stain of Original Sin, is a doctrine revealed by God, and, therefore, to be firmly and steadfastly believed by all the faithful."

But here also, our Catholic friends are left in the same predicament they were before. In order to be consistent, Mary's mother would likewise have had to be immaculately conceived and so on back to Eve. And when you get back that far, the very foundation of the doctrine of Original Sin disappears. If we say, as the Catholics do, that a special act of God made Mary sinless, such an act could also have made Jesus, her son, sinless, thereby making the dogma of the Immaculate Conception unnecessary.

I believe in the sinlessness of Christ. Therefore, I believe also in his divinity. He was tempted in all points the same as we are but his complete oneness in Spirit with his Father was such that he never succumbed to temptation. Sin does not attach to the body but to the will. Jesus was as free to choose evil as he was free to

choose the good. The record shows that the exercise of his free will was always for the good through his unique consciousness of the divine Presence.

The final conclusion of the matter would seem to be that a belief in the virgin birth of Christ is not essential to the Christian faith. The unique relation of Jesus to God is quite independent of the method of his advent into the world.

Millions of devout souls will continue to believe that portion of the Biblical record which so beautifully describes the miraculous conception. Others of a different turn of mind will be influenced by another portion of the record which seems to indicate a natural birth. We are firmly convinced that both groups may be equally acceptable followers of Christ and good sons and daughters of the one Lord and Father of us all.

I am happy to report that that sermon was well received by the entire congregation and caused not the slightest trouble. Even Alice Kimball thought it was full of real enlightenment even to those who might wish to continue to affirm a belief in The Virgin Birth. Like Dr. Leslie Weatherhead, our great Methodist leader from England, it is time to affirm modestly that a lot of us must be "Christian Agnostics" relative to some of the theological beliefs we used to hold. A Christian Agnostic mostly says: "I don't know!"

It matters not to me where Jesus got his physical body. The big question is: "Where did he get that God-conscious soul of his?" He could truly say, 'I and the Father are One,' but then he prayed: "that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and Thou in me" (John 17:23). This blessed oneness in the Holy Spirit comes to men of faith who believe they can follow Jesus into the heart of God.

CHAPTER VI

Clarence Darrow Asks For A Debate

In 1932, at the very bottom of the great depression that followed the stock market crash of 1929, Clarence Darrow's advance man came to Duluth looking for a minister willing to debate the great Mr. Darrow on the question, "Is the Bible the word of God?" I was then pastor of the Endion Methodist Church but money was mighty scarce in those days. It was only seven years since Mr. Darrow had defeated William Jennings Bryan in the "Monkey Trial" in Tennessee and thereby scandalized fundamentalists by making it possible to teach the theory of evolution in public schools as over against the six day creation stories in the Bible. Would I debate Mr. Darrow in the armory? It seated three thousand people and it would be full, and I would receive one hundred dollars for an evening's work. I told the man that I would debate the devil for one hundred dollars in times like these. And so the great evening arrived! Each of us was to have forty-five minutes for his main address and then fifteen minutes for rebuttal.

Clarence Darrow spoke first and I liked the man from the moment I met him. His homely, craggy face was illumined by a friendly smile. He wore baggy trousers held up by bright red suspenders—no belt—and he relaxed by pushing back his coat lapels and inserting his thumbs behind those "gallouses" and snapping them as he released his hold. You should have heard this master of public debate capture his audience as he related the story of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden six thousand years ago! He graphically pictured the shapely Eve with nothing on but a fig-leaf strutting around before bug-eyed Adam who then and there became the first of a long line of males who love to look and dream. He made the most of a talking

snake and a shiny red apple. Then: "Yes, ladies and gentlemen, it was an awful thing that Eve done that night but---I beg of you to remember (thumbs slipped behind suspenders)---she was only three days old when she done it!!" Thumbs snapped out from suspenders. Audience roaring with laughter!

Mr. Darrow then took care of Joshua and quoted from Joshua 10:12-14: "Then spoke Joshua to the Lord in the day when the Lord gave the Amorites over to the men of Israel---'Sun stand thou still at Gibeon, and thou moon in the valley of Aijalon.'" And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the nation took vengeance on their enemies---the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go down for about a whole day. There has been no day like it before or since, when the Lord hearkened to the voice of man; for the Lord fought for Israel." Mr. Darrow wanted to know, "what kind of a God was that? And what kind of motivation was that---to stop the sun and moon for twenty-four hours for the one purpose of letting a blood-thirsty warrior slay thousands more of his enemies?"

When my turn came to speak, I thanked Mr. Darrow for his masterful presentation and admitted that for the most part I agreed with him! I was glad he had taken care of William Jennings Bryan at the "Monkey Trial" in Tennessee because it is the belief of most educated people that the Infinite and orderly mind of the Creator has not only spent billions of years slowly evolving the material world according to the laws of evolution, but that the Bible itself is the product of evolution. It slowly unfolded over a period of fifteen centuries. Parts of it are inspired and other parts of it are the imperfect product of the hands and minds of men. Inspiration is the thought of God put into the heart and mind of man although it finds expression through the imperfect medium of human instrumentality. I Corinthians

13, Paul's great chapter on love was inspired writing. We therefore, find just about everything in the Bible from the lowest moral standards to the highest. The Bible, therefore, is the progressive revelation of God to man stretching over fifteen or more centuries. I told Mr. Darrow that real Bible students simply do not believe the Joshua story about the sun and moon standing still for a whole day while a blood-thirsty warrior killed off a few thousand more of the Amorites! The moral standards of Joshua's day are to be rejected in favor of those of Jesus' day. Jesus boldly rejected some of Moses' laws in favor of his own revelations of the laws of a Loving Heavenly Father. It got him into trouble and finally cost him his life!

Listen to this: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy', but I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust" (Matthew 5: 43-45). Jesus was quoting from Exodus 21:24 and rejecting it as a bit of Mosaic law that was contrary to the will of God! Therefore, when I, as a Christian minister, reject certain Old Testament stories or laws as contrary to the will of God I am merely following the example of Jesus!

There are two accounts of the crossing of the Red Sea with the Egyptians pursuing the children of Israel. In the "E" account God commands Moses to stretch out his arm and the waters pile up on the left and right, leaving a dry path through which the Israelites cross over. When the six hundred chariots of the Egyptians come dashing up and follow the dry path, God commands Moses to turn around and stretch out his arm again and the walls of water come rushing together and drown all the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. This is the ac-

count that the average Sunday school teacher dramatically tells the students.

The "J" account is four hundred to six hundred years older and much less dramatic. In it, God causes a strong East wind to blow all the night and pushes the waters back until the Israelites walk across on dry ground. The next day he lets the wind die down and the waters return to their natural place, catching the Egyptians part way across and drowns every one of them. The dramatic "E" account, written several hundred years after "J" came about something like this: Official story tellers and historians, telling the original story of how Jehovah saved his people at the Red Sea, embellished the story a bit more dramatically each time they related it until the great Moses took care of the situation in very short order. Every one of the twelve tribes of Israel had an official story teller. During the many years that Moses led the children of Israel through the desert from Egypt toward the promised land, many an evening was whiled away as the weary people gathered in groups around their camp fires and listened to glowing accounts of the miraculous doings of their God as He saves them from their enemies. It was quite natural for these stories to grow with the passage of the years. It may be much more dramatic for a Sunday school teacher to tell the "E" story to her restless boys and girls, but the "J" account with its strong East wind is the one nearest the truth. As a matter of fact, history tells us that in 1854, a British general took his troops across the Sea of Reeds at the head of the Red Sea after a strong East wind pushed the waters back seven miles!

Let us have a look at these Creation stories. There are two accounts of creation in Genesis. The earlier account is in Genesis 2:4b to 3:24. It was written by "J" and is so-called because the

writer always refers to God as Jehovah. It is characterized by simplicity of style.

The later account runs from Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a and is known as the "E" account because the ancient scribe always referred to God as Elohim. The style is elevated. These two writers were separated by several hundred years and they came from radically different backgrounds and traditions. J claims that animals were made after man and E that they were made before man; J that man was made before herb-
age and E that herbs were made before man; J that land was made before water and E that the reverse was true; J that creation occupied one day while E claims that creation took six days; J assumed that, crea-
tion occupying one day, light and sun, moon and stars were made the same day while E had light made the first day and the sun, moon and stars on the fourth day!

Now it is perfectly clear, in the light of modern knowledge, that these accounts neither agree with each other nor with the story of creation that took billions of years as geologists find it indelibly written in the rocks. Our ancient writers were not scientists. They were men of religion. To make claims for the Bible as an infallible book which it nowhere makes for itself is not a defense of the Book but the greatest possible disservice.

There are three great diapason notes in this hymn of creation which ring out loud and clear. The first is that the universe is God's loving wish and creation. Whether it took a billion years or one day, God is the Creator. The second is that "God saw that it was good." And, finally, the child made in God's image is made lord over all. These epoch-making religious truths which constitute the imperishable message of the Bible and the Kingdom of God, in its vast sweep through eternity, will forever rest upon these ancient and inspired insights.

Some years ago, a man who wrote as I am writing was often disdainfully dubbed a "higher critic" and that was supposed to discredit him. Higher criticism, however, is concerned with the authorship, dates, circumstances of origin, doctrinal character and historicity of the various Biblical books as far as can be determined by examining their contents, comparing one book with another, and bringing light to bear on them from history, literature and antiquities. The term "higher criticism" in no way implies an unfriendly attitude toward the Bible but rather an honest attempt to find the truth.

Let me illustrate. Three hundred years after I and II Kings and I and II Samuel were written, a chronicler sat down to write I and II Chronicles using Kings and Samuel as his source material. Being an ardent patriot, he wrote with the exalted purpose of thrilling the Hebrews of his day with tales of a glorious past. When the record in his source material seemed commonplace or dull, he did not hesitate to doctor it up to suit his high purpose!

When, for example, II Samuel 8:4 has David wrest 700 horsemen from Hadadezer, the chronicler (I Chronicles 18:4) just adds a cipher and makes the number 7,000. II Samuel 10:18 reads: "And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew the Syrians, the men of 700 chariots." Copying this same event, we find our chronicler writing (I Chronicles 19:19), "And the Syrians fled before Israel; and David slew of the Syrians the men of 7,000 chariots." He adds ciphers consistently. II Samuel 6:1 says that David's warriors totaled 30,000 but the chronicler wrote (I Chronicles 12:23-37) that David's warriors numbered 300,000 men! When II Samuel 24:24 says that David paid 50 shekels of silver for Ornan's threshing floor, our hero-worshipping chronicler (I Chronicles 22:14) shoves the figure up to 600 shekels of gold. He is not going to have David penurious!

Well, what conclusion must any honest student of the Bible draw when, through the aid of higher criticism he has found I and II Chronicles to have consistently exaggerated figures and facts all the way through David's life? The answer is simple. The chronicler compiled two books of inferior historical worth as compared with his sources in Samuel and Kings. Should a man be called an enemy of the Bible for honestly facing such facts as these?

Those who believe in an infallible Bible quite naturally quote certain passages to prove some point of view. But without a knowledge of the background of the book they quote from, this may prove to be a dangerous procedure. Almost anything can be proved by the "proof-text" method. If the entire Bible is the "word of God", this practice is justifiable. If it is not, we may find ourselves in trouble. Exodus 21:15 reads: "He that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death." I have never yet seen anyone try to carry out the letter of that text! One may prove that polygamy is justifiable by reading Genesis 29 and 30 where Jacob married four wives without a note of disapproval being sounded. Then one may quote Mark 10: 11 and prove that Jesus insisted that monogamy was the only permissible rule for mankind.

Jesus' method of interpreting scripture was the only sound one. He was the world's first critical student of the Old Testament, though it got him into trouble. In Matthew 5:38 he said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth: But I say unto you that ye resist not evil." He was quoting from Exodus 21:24 and rejecting it as not being in accord with the will of God. He was casting aside a Mosaic law that purported to have been handed down from Jehovah.

Yet Jesus accepted great portions of scripture as the inspired

word of God to man. His first sermon (Luke 4:17f) was largely a quotation from Isaiah 61: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, (and the day of vengeance of our God)." The part in brackets is in Isaiah and it is part of the last sentence of Jesus' quotation but he deliberately left it off. Jesus did not believe in the vengeance of God. He preached the justice and the love and the forgiveness of God but he never talked about the vengeance of God.

But I can hear you say: "If you accept parts of the Bible as inspired and authoritative for today but consider other parts as just history or outgrown man-made legislation, how can you tell the one from the other?" Or I hear someone say: "If I can't take it all I won't take any of it!"

Do the owners of gold and diamond mines talk that way about their mines? Do they say: "Look at those diamonds all mixed up with stones and clay. If I cannot mine diamonds without the stones and clay I will not take any of it." Did any man ever talk that way? Of course, he never did. The very necessity laid upon men to get into a clay-and rock-filled diamond mine and work like Trojans for the glittering prize that will eventually be theirs but adds zest to the quest. Is the analogy not perfectly clear? Jesus thought it was, for that is exactly what he did.

And our saintly old mothers who were so horrified at the very mention of the term "higher critic", were they not in reality higher critics themselves? When they were in trouble and in need of divine guidance did they turn to Exodus and read about an eye for an eye

and a tooth for a tooth; or to Psalm 137 and read: "Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones?"

No, they did not. They searched out the 23rd, 90th, or 91st Psalms, or the Beatitudes or Paul's hymn of love in I Corinthians 13 or any one of a thousand inspired passages.

And how did they know these passages were inspired? How did Jesus know? Because deep answers unto deep. The human soul, created in God's own image, responds to the loving Father's eternal truth. The ultimate seat of scriptural authority rests not in the church, as the Roman Catholics claim, nor in the "complete and literally interpreted Bible," as many people maintain, but in the human heart. Said Jesus: "But when He has come----the Spirit of Truth----He will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak as Himself originating what He says, but all that He hears He will speak, and He will make known the future to you. He will glorify me, because He will take of what is mine and make it known to you."¹

When I had finished my discourse, Mr. Darrow, who was sitting on the opposite side of the platform, slowly got to his feet, seized the back of his chair, and slowly shuffled over to where I was sitting dragging his chair behind him. When he had slowly lowered his big frame into his chair, he leaned over with a big grin and said, "Hell, man, I can't fight you because I believe just like you do. If I lived here I'd attend your church. Listen! I've got fifteen minutes of time left. Tell me what you'd like me to say that will be of the most help to you after I have gone and I'll say it." I told him I was deeply touched by his generous attitude but that I wanted him to use his fifteen minutes to say whatever was on his mind.

During his brief rebuttal time, Mr. Darrow told a cheering

1 John 16:13,14----Weymouth transl.

audience that he agreed completely with my point of view on what the Bible was and advised anyone present who had no church home to drop in on the services at Endion church. He said that was exactly what he would do if he lived in Duluth.

During my rebuttal time, I reminded the audience that, since the Bible was the progressive revelation of God to man, the new Testament in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 contained the Sermon on the Mount, the most beautiful, inspired religious philosophy of life in all of the world's sacred literature; that Christianity was not a series of dogmas to be believed but a transforming friendship to be entered into with the simple and radiant author of the Sermon on the Mount.

The next morning I took Clarence Darrow for a long ride up the beautiful North Shore of Lake Superior. The longer I talked to this rugged fighter for truth the better I liked him. We corresponded occasionally until his death.

CHAPTER VII

The Secret of Personal Power

In the early spring of 1935, at the bottom of the great economic depression, two hours with a little colored man gave me more insight into the secret of personal poise and power than I have ever gained through any other contact. Roland Hayes had come to Duluth to give a concert in the Armory, and Dr. A. Raymond Grant and I learned that he was not allowed to use the public dining room of his hotel. We decided to go down and apologize to him.

When we arrived at his door he was busy telephoning; but he cheerfully called out to us to come in and find seats. He flashed us a smile and waved his hand in friendly greeting as he continued his telephone conversation, and we felt immediately the warm, courteous, engaging atmosphere that his very presence creates.

He had just finished eating breakfast in his room, for the dishes were still there. So, I began the conversation by remarking that I as a Christian minister regretted exceedingly a condition in our social order that made it necessary for a colored man to stay away from public dining rooms and to enter hotels by side doors.

"There is nothing that you or any white man can do to alter that," said Mr. Hayes. "That is a job for me and my people. I am trying to live every moment with such consciousness of the Divine Presence without any trace of bitterness in my heart that that condition of prejudice and racial antipathy shall disappear. And I am trying to get my people to do likewise."

He paused and looked about the room, and smiled as he resumed. "I am perfectly happy here by myself, and nobody in all the world can hurt me except myself." Then he told of the marvelous old soul that had taught him the art of singing in his boyhood and had told him

that, as a black artist, he would suffer many things if he allowed the barbs to get inside. "But always remember that, if your heart is right and your spirit divinely disciplined, nobody in all the world can hurt you."

We then asked Mr. Hayes if he had certain hours of communion and spiritual preparation for his concerts. He surprised us by saying that he did not now have such hours although years ago he had had them. "Now every breath I draw and every moment of the day is a communion with Him that is my preparation." Then he told us how he captured his audience during his first minute on the stage. "I stand there perfectly quiet with hands clasped before me and pray: that Roland Hayes may be blotted entirely out of the picture; that the people sitting there may feel only the Spirit of God flowing through melody and rhythm; that racial prejudice may be forgotten. The audience instinctively feels what is happening as I commune with my Father----and I capture them that moment and never let them go until I am done."

From this quiet-spoken little black man an electric radiance and joy flowed around us. "What a time I have had this winter!" he said. "I have given up expensive managers and the high-priced tickets they used to insist upon. Now I have no manager, and I am free to insist that the prices be kept low so the poor who long for my songs may come and hear them. The color line disappears: rich and poor, high and low, forget the lines that ordinarily divide them, and we all become sons and daughters of a common Father, hushed and quieted by the haunting power of the message of melody and rhythm and song."

Then he told us a story typical, he said, of what was happening to him constantly. In a New Jersey town, a Southern family decided to attend one of his concerts in order to show the fifteen-year-

old son "what a horrible mess a nigger makes out of life when he thinks he possesses talents that should be possessed only by white people." The parents had filled the lad with their prejudices ever since he had been able to talk. Mr. Hayes used his usual technique. He blotted himself out of the picture. The rhythm and beauty of God shone through. The atmosphere, now of harmony and peace and now of pathos and sadness, was not marred by the ego of the artist. After the concert, this young man sought out his black brother and threw his arms about his neck. Through his tears he confessed that Mr. Hayes had done in two hours what all the books and orators in the world never could have accomplished. His lifelong prejudice was gone. "And now every time I see him," said Mr. Hayes, "he assures me that he is devoting his life to eradicating prejudice in others similar to what his parents had fostered in him through the years.

"If I thought I could relate it without breaking down, I would tell you about the most remarkable thing that ever happened in my life," Mr. Hayes went on. He finally did relate it, and what a story it was!

"A few years ago, I gave a concert before a large and enthusiastic audience down in Alabama. The next day I journeyed to the old plantation not many miles away where my mother had been a slave. The old master and his wife were still alive, but what a change the years had wrought! The affluence of the old days was gone. The plantation itself had gone to ruin and had been sold for debt. The old gentleman and his wife, upwards of ninety, were existing in a little shanty. I introduced myself and asked them if they remembered my mother. Yes, of course they did---very well indeed. She was one of the dear souls they could never forget. They had called her Pony. Pony was not allowed to live in the slave quarters. She was too much beloved. She

would have died for her masters. So, she lived in the big house as a servant."

Mr. Hayes said that as he looked round about at the signs of poverty he could tell the train of thought in the old man's mind---- the contrast between the good old days when Pony had been a slave and they had been wealthy, and their present poverty with Pony's son, one of the world's most famous artists, standing before them. He wanted desperately to help them, but wondered whether their Southern pride would permit it.

"So Pony's son has sung before the crowned heads of Europe," mused the old man. "Tell me what you sang for the King and Queen of England."

"I sang a Negro spiritual entitled 'The Crucifixion.'"

"Why, that is the very song your grandfather sang the day he entered the ministry!" exclaimed the old man.

That was a story within a story. The grandfather, converted in Africa through the labors of a missionary, had brought his Christian faith with him when he was sold into slavery in this country and had done some preaching among his brethren. One text had made a very deep impression upon him: "Call no man master, for one is your master, even Christ." He was a hard worker and eventually rose to the position of manager. He could accept bondage, but he could call no man "master". This seemed to the proud owner to be stubbornness, and one day in a fit of anger he killed him.

Knowing that mention of "The Crucifixion" had revived this ancient memory, Mr. Hayes wondered whether this proud old couple would accept his help. He used the familiar spiritual technique of the concert stage and obliterated himself, asking finally if there was anything Pony's son could do to help. "Yes, I suppose so," came the an-

wer.

"I reached into my pocket and pulled out a check," said Mr. Hayes. "It was a large one---the returns from several of my largest concerts. The old lady was ill and lying on the bed. I walked over and laid it on her chest. She picked it up and saw the size of it and suddenly realized that it meant getting the old plantation back and ending their days in peace. She screamed and threw open her arms, into which the aged master and I both fell. In a moment we had our arms around each other and were crying like little babies ---just three of God's children with no dividing color line. The next day the old man walked five miles, hobbling along on his cane, to hear me sing 'The Crucifixion'. He sat on the front seat and let the tears course unhindered down his wrinkled cheeks."

As we rose to go, I knew that this hour had been the most shining and radiant of my life because of this man's divine consciousness. We were too deeply moved to speak. In the silence and through our tears we merely gripped his hand. After a moment, he asked, "And would you like me to sing 'The Crucifixion' tonight?" The people of Duluth will never forget it---the quiet announcement that two friends had requested it, and the spiritual power that surged through this little black man's soul, sweeping all before it. And as he sang and I recalled the thrilling story of what had happened on that Southern plantation I saw anew, as in a flash of insight, the deeper meaning of the crucifixion itself and of the love that has emanated from it to save and heal and bless mankind.

And now, having told our story, let us ask some searching questions. How did it happen that at the bottom of the depression, when people had little ready cash, Roland Hayes was pulling capacity houses; that even in Southern communities the vexatious color line was disap-

pearing as if by magic; that one of the greatest living artists could be denied the use of the public dining room of his hotel and yet not be hurt by resentment?

The answer is simply that this man knew how to pray! He emptied himself of himself and thus became a clear channel for the Divine. Every breath he drew and every moment of the day was a time of communion with the Eternal Presence. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." Here was no striving after big audiences and glaring publicity; these things just came. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord." When a man and God walk thus together through all the experiences of each day; when the man thus makes a complete transfer of all of his problems and burdens to the strong, sure shoulders of his senior Partner, worry, resentment, and fear can find no resting place. They just are not there. And this, dear friends, is the Secret of Personal Power! This is why the meek, or humble-minded, shall inherit the earth!

Some years ago Charles V. Webber heard a great missionary preach on the kingdom of God, ending with an invitation to any who would like to enter this wonderful kingdom to come to the front. About two thousand people crowded forward, filling the aisle and all available space. The missionary told them to say over and over to themselves as they were dropping off to sleep that night: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13) The next morning they were to repeat this Pauline affirmation over and over again. All through day after day for a week, at work or at play, they were slowly and meaningfully to repeat it. Then they were to take other affirmations and start all over again. Thus they would find themselves entering the kingdom of God.

Webber decided that, although he was already a minister, he

would give it a try. Before he opened his mail, he would say: I don't know what is in these letters, but "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." When his secretary announced a caller, he took a moment alone to repeat his scripture. All day long for a week he kept it up.

Before the week was up, Webber noticed two things. A new sense of joy was bubbling over in his life, and he had a greater flow of physical energy. He could go clear through a grueling day in high gear.

During the weeks that followed, he took other scriptural affirmations and, by constant repetition, caused them to sink deep into his unconscious mind: "In all they ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:6). He came to feel that God was really guiding his life. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (Isa. 26:3). Using this, he experienced a new and greater peace. One week he tried: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31). And it was true for him. Another week he lived with this one: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory" (Phil. 4:19).

As we become the living possessors of these eternal truths, we know that the Eternal Presence is with us. They become sources of spiritual and physical energy and power. There is an emanation of spirit that is radiant and friendly in spite of opposition. It leaves no room in our hearts for hatred, and, in Paul's words, we "overcome evil with good."

CHAPTER VIII

Handles of Power

When I arrived at the parsonage after my remarkable visit with Roland Hayes, I walked into the kitchen and sat down on a high red stool. My wife came in and asked where I had been. When I tried to tell her, I was still so choked with joyful emotion that I could not talk. "Later I'll tell you," I said. So she wisely left me to my thoughts. "Why," I asked myself, "has this little black artist maintained such a contagious joy and radiance in his work in spite of being prohibited from eating his meals in the dining room of his hotel? Why, at the bottom of the great depression, do such great crowds fill the auditoriums of the nation and sit spellbound every evening for two hours and then go home refreshed and spiritually refurbished for the battle of life? And why has the creative joy and harmony and beauty of life as I once experienced it on a cold, windy, December day in Jackson Park, Chicago and in Robinson Chapel in Boston gradually receded from my consciousness so that gray days and uninspired days and joyless days are more and more frequently the tenor of my life?"

I finally concluded that the main trouble lay squarely within the minister himself. I was trying too hard and I was neglecting meditation and prayer---an awful but true confession. I would start, the very next Sunday, to follow the example of Roland Hayes of emptying self of self before facing an audience. I did just that and continued to do just that for the next twenty-five years until my retirement in 1962. Every Sunday morning, after the best sermon preparation of which I was capable, I got on my knees before leaving my study and prayed something like this: "O God of Love and Truth and Radiance and Integrity, help me now to empty myself of self so completely, that the audience will never once be conscious of Dunnington but will rather

feel that he is a wide-open channel for thy truth and understanding and power." Then as the congregation was singing the sermon hymn, as we swung into the last verse, I put down my hymn book, bowed my head and once again in great earnestness, made the same prayer.

I felt a difference in my effectiveness as a minister from the very first Sunday. I spoke with greater authority and radiance and light. My people likewise knew something of great importance was happening. And in 1941 my ministry took on an important new dimension that was to change many thousands of lives not only in America but in other countries as well.

It came about like this. As I was calling in the homes of my parish, I noticed that fully fifty percent of my people were regularly reading Unity literature from the Unity School of Christianity in Kansas City. They were reading The Daily Word with its daily affirmations or Weekly Unity with the great affirmation of the week and then there was a monthly publication in addition to books of the same helpful quality. They would say: "We get more down-to-earth help from this literature than from anything the Methodist church puts out." Since these people were the most poised, integrated and involved people of my congregation, I asked why, and what part did these affirmations play in leading such successful lives?

Then in a flash of illumination I had it! They were feeding their minds the way God intended they should! Those minds were like the icebergs I had seen the previous summer as I steamed through the Straights of Belle Isle in the mouth of the St. Lawrence River on my way to Liverpool. Those bergs were floating around with one-tenth of the ice visible and nine-tenths submerged. So it is with the human mind. One-tenth is conscious while nine-tenths is always unconscious. The conscious mind is that part with which we reason, accepting or

rejecting what seems to us good or bad, as the case may be. And here is the law of the human mind as God made it: What our reasoned judgment dwells upon sinks into the unconscious mind whence it must be brought into manifestation. If we train ourselves to dwell upon what is good and true and beautiful, we gradually build integrated, poised, happy, power-filled lives. But if we indulge in negative, greedy, selfish, lustful thinking we become tense, unhappy, depressed, fear-ridden individuals----derelicts helplessly afloat upon the rough seas of life.

Suddenly, a new plan for a whole series of dynamic Sunday mornings using Silent Communion cards came full blown into my mind and I announced it the very next Sunday morning. "I can well imagine that you dear people leave this church after the service on Sunday morning and by Sunday evening you could not tell what your minister preached about to save your soul," I told them. "Well, all of that is going to change rather dramatically beginning next Sunday. I shall mimeograph the sermon on 'The Possible You' and you can take a copy home with you, along with a Silent Communion Card to carry with you and use twenty times a day until the next Sunday. Then come back and get another sermon, this time on 'A Bargain With Life' and get another card to enable you to work another week in the laboratory of your soul. We'll keep that up all winter and I predict some real excitement around here from now on as lives are healed of the hurt places and many find that there is a Living God whose radiance and illimitable supplies of health, love and joy begin to be appropriated on a wholesale scale."

The next Sunday morning, a very eager congregation assembled to listen to a sermon on "The Possible You". The mimeographed summary ready to be carried home read as follows:

Every person in the world has it in him to become far more than he is. "Men habitually use only a small part of the powers which they possess," said the eminent psychologist, William James. Great unused reservoirs of power lie buried deep within us all. In a world full of food, men starve. In a world full of beauty and joy; men destroy and kill. Instead of health, abundance, and happiness, we find untold millions suffering from ill-health, poverty, and despair.

These tense, depressed, fear-ridden millions are what they are, for the most part, because of negative, undisciplined thinking. What they desperately need is a technique of creative prayer and affirmation that will unlock the Infinite Resources of Poise and Power waiting to be set free.

Dr. Russell H. Conwell once took a trip down the Euphrates River. His old Arab guide told him the true story of the world's richest diamond mine. It seems that there lived not far from the river Indus an old Persian by the name of Ali Hafed. He owned a large farm with orchards, grain fields, and gardens. He was a contented man. Then one day a Buddhist priest came along and told Ali Hafed all about the magic beauty and worth of diamonds and of the fabulous power that one could wield in the world if he but possessed a diamond mine.

That night Ali Hafed could not sleep. He was a poor man now; not because he had lost his farm, but because he was discontented. So he sold his farm, placed his family with a neighbor, and set out to find a diamond mine. He wandered all over the world until he was ragged and hungry and sick. At last he stood on the shore of the bay at Barcelona when a great tidal wave came rolling in between the Pillars of Hercules. Unable to withstand the temptation, this beaten, frus-

trated man hurled himself into the incoming tide and sank beneath its foaming crest, never to rise again.

Meanwhile, the man who bought Ali Hafed's farm one day led his camel to the garden brook to drink. As he looked down into the water he saw a flash of light, ~~and on reaching into the water he saw a flash of light,~~ and on reaching into the white sand he pulled out a black stone with a flashing eye of light. It was a diamond! He reached down again and pulled out another and another, and thus discovered the world's richest diamond mine----the diamond mine of Golconda. The Kohinoor and the Orloff of the crown jewels of England and Russia, the largest diamonds on earth, came from that mine.

Jesus saw very clearly that the average man is Ali Hafed. He said that the Kingdom of God is like a treasure hid in a field or like a pearl of great price, for which a man sold all that he had in order to purchase it. Then came the most profound and meaningful declaration that it is possible for the mind of man to conceive: "The kingdom of God is within you." Those who open mind and spirit to the Eternal Presence find a Kingdom of unlimited resources within----the very diamond mines of God. Those who do not so open leave these same resources untouched, while they roam the world poor, hungry, and beaten.

Couldst thou in vision see the perfect man God meant,
Thou never more wouldst be the man thou art, content.

In order to utilize this diamond mine within us we need to recognize certain basic facts. We are made in the image and likeness of God. This does not refer to our physical bodies, but to our minds and spirits. There is an interpenetration of the human mind and the Infinite Mind. "In him we live, and move, and have our being."

Mind is creative. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God----All things were made by him.

----In him was life; and the life was the light of men." That is one of the most profound truths in the whole Bible. A word is a symbol of thought. John is saying that Infinite Mind created everything. And we have minds made after the Divine Image, having also the power of creation. Every thought creates!

Just here the problem of freedom comes in. We are free to think negative, untrue, vicious thoughts as well as the true, the good, and the beautiful. If we were not that free we should not be moral beings. If we had to be good, goodness would cease to be.

Let us look briefly at these thinking minds. Psychologists tell us that about one tenth of the mind is the conscious mind and nine tenth the unconscious mind. The conscious mind is that part with which we reason, selecting or rejecting what seems to us to be good or bad, as the case may be. What our reasoned judgment dwells upon sinks into the unconscious mind and becomes a part of us. If we train ourselves to dwell upon what is true and good and beautiful, we gradually build integrated, poised, power-filled lives. If we indulge in negative, undisciplined, greedy, lustful thinking we become tense, unhappy, depressed, fear-ridden individuals----derelicts helplessly afloat upon the rough seas of life.

How, then can we guard against being immersed in the flood of fearful and defeatist thinking that covers the earth? The answer is by learning how to pray! Silent communion with the Infinite Mind and the Eternal Love many times a day is the only answer.

"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," says the Bible. That phrase "in his heart" is the ancient way of saying, "That which finds a resting place in the unconscious is what makes the man." We cannot keep all bad thoughts out of the conscious mind. But we can keep from dwelling on them, and thus refuse to let them sink into the unconscious to bedevil us and to create failure and despair. Jesus

said, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Every one of these sins must first be harbored and nursed by the conscious mind before it can find a permanent abiding place "in the heart", the unconscious. If people really knew and understood the creative force and power of thought they would not dare to give voice to some of the weak, negative, vicious ideas that they do. Likewise, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things," said Jesus.

Some ministers have not sufficiently understood the deep psychological significance of Jesus' words. All too often their messages have been negative and fear-compelling. It has been too easy for these men to engage in an emotional debauch by shaking their congregations over a literal flaming hell, thereby throwing "the fear of God" into them. All too often the heaven that has been offered to heartsick and wistful seekers after God has not been the Kingdom of Heaven within, a Kingdom of faith and hope and love and joy in this world, but deferred spiritual dividends to be realized for the most part in some future world.

That is why we are developing this new technique of creative affirmative prayer through Silent Communion Cards. These positive statements of faith are to be repeated slowly and imaginatively many times a day until they have been fully accepted by the conscious mind. They will then sink into the great well of the unconscious mind to begin their beneficent work of rebuilding our personalities, our bodies, our personal relationships, and our affairs. Our last waking thoughts should be filled with them just before we drop off to sleep. For, make no mistake, in the unconscious mind is all the power which makes for our success or failure, our misery or happiness. Paul closed his great letter to the Ephesians with a triumphant shout: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,

according to the power that worketh in us, unto him be glory." It is crystal clear that when Jesus and Paul centered their teaching around faith in the power of God within, they counted on us to grasp the untold possibilities that lie dormant within us all.

Here we should sound a word of warning. This is not an easy road. We confidently believe that those who are persistent and absolutely faithful in the constant use of the dynamic affirmations that follow, will find themselves in possession of the magic key of faith, hope, and love that unlocks the prison doors. But real results will require a perseverance and a self-surrender that we have never known before. Many will make excuses for doing something else as they did in Jesus' day. "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

For those who are willing to put both hands to the plough of faith and creative affirmation without ever looking back to the fears and worries and bafflements of yesterday, we are confident that broken lives will be healed of life's hurts. The Diamond Mines of God are within, waiting to be worked.

Scattered around the auditorium on window sills and radiators were little piles of Silent Communion Cards for that week. Here is the content of the first one:

Silent Communion

For Rebuilding a Life

Infinite possibilities for growth and unfoldment lie ahead as I give myself over completely into the hands of God.

Through silent communion with him, new harmony and health and vitality are being manifested in body, mind, and affairs. "I can do all things through him who strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13)

It was a soul-satisfying morning. On succeeding Sundays they listened to sermons on The Art of Silent Communion, Unlock the Reservoir, Towards Radiance of Personality, Untangling Human Relations, The Attainment of Poise, Shifting the Load, Springs of Action, The Single Eye, Mental Health, Banishing Fear, What is Your Goal?, Why Men Suffer, The Revelation of the Cross, Eternal Life-----a Present Possession and others. Silent Communion Cards in various pastel colors were available each week along with a copy of the sermon.

What a transformation occurred in Endion church! Light and Love and Understanding as well as a kind of spiritual excitement pervaded the place. The church filled up. A mailing list gradually built itself up as members began to mail sermons and cards to relations and friends all over the nation. My mail grew so heavy that I had to hire a secretary for the first time in the history of that church. But money flowed in from all these hungry souls and from my radio audience so that we could pay a secretary without any trouble!

Lives were being changed. Housewives and busy mothers told of placing the Cards above the kitchen sink, secretaries told of placing them under the glass desk tops where they were typing so they could repeat the affirmations as they worked. Business men carried half a dozen of the cards in their coat pockets so, when they had a few minutes during a busy day, they could take time to feed their minds and souls. One busy comptroller of a large company who handled two million dollars of the company's money every year, pulled twenty of the cards out of his desk as I sat down for a chat. "These are dog-eared from much use," he said, "but I do believe they have saved me from a nervous breakdown. I was on the raw edge of one when this series started!"

When spring came and we had completed twenty-five glorious weeks of the affirmative approach to life and faith, I had my secre-

tary type out twenty-five chapters ready for publication in book form. When I asked my wife for a good title she came up with a beauty: "Why not call the book 'Handles of Power', that's what the cards are, are they not?" "But of course", I said, "that is exactly what they are. It is done!"

About that time I got a letter from Roy Smith---versatile editor of The Christian Advocate in Chicago. "We've been hearing about big things happening in Endion church as a result of your use of Silent Communion Cards," said Roy. "Give us the story so the whole church will know about this productive experiment." So I sent him the story and included samples of all twenty-five cards we had used. T. Otto Nall wrote the story under the general heading "He Teaches Them How", and he reproduced five of the cards on the cover page.

This important story hit the mails on July 31 of 1941 just as I left for a two week canoe trip with my choir director, Jack Ehler, and my two older sons, Jim and Jon. So for two weeks I luxuriated in the sweet, clean air and sunshine of Northern Minnesota and Canada. When we arrived home, however, my wife met me at the door and said: "What on earth have you been doing?" and she pointed to the small shelf at the foot of the stairs on which she had stacked five hundred letters from all over the country! They were from ministers and laymen of all denominations and from nearly every state in the Union. Practically all of them wanted sample sermons and Silent Communion Cards and they also wanted to know if I was publishing the whole story in a book. Only one letter was a disappointment. It was from the Methodist Publishing House of Nashville, Tennessee and it said they had read my manuscript of "Handles of Power" with great interest but might not find it advisable to publish the book because of the

bother of accompanying the book with a package of twenty-five cards. They thought book stores would not care to bother with the cards. But they would let me know soon.

So I went into action. I spent one whole day reading those interesting letters. Then I had a reply mimeographed, promising the people that the book would indeed be published. I bundled up all five hundred letters and sent them to the Methodist Publishing House with a brief note: "Before you finally make up your mind about 'Handles of Power' read some of these letters. Here are five hundred orders and this is only the beginning. Somebody is going to publish this book so let me know soon whether that somebody is going to be you." Back came a telegram: "Will publish book." When it did come out in May 1942, over eight hundred of them were sold in Duluth alone during the first two weeks, a feat that Publisher's Weekly said was some kind of record. That little book went through thirteen large printings during the next few years. The Epworth Press in London turned out tens of thousands of the Silent Communion Cards and one Englishman wrote a book about the remarkable though simple technique of thus appropriating God's limitless spiritual power. A pastor of a Congregational church in Sydney, Australia wrote me that he had quadrupled his congregation by making the cards available to his people as he used "Handles of Power" as a guideline for his own sermons. Missionaries in India likewise made extensive use of this simple technique.

In the spring of 1942, after fourteen years in Duluth, a call came for me to take over the First Methodist church in Iowa City, Iowa, home of the State University of Iowa. Dr. Edwin Voight, who had been their pastor for six years, had accepted the presidency of Simpson College in Indianola, Iowa and had already departed when the call came. I went down to have a look around and met with sixty mem-

bers of the Official Board at a dinner meeting. It was a large church built in 1906 and seated eleven hundred people as over against five hundred at Endion but, although Dr. Voight was an excellent minister, the average congregation numbered about three hundred fifty on any given Sunday with very few university students in attendance. The Board ate a delicious meal and then called on me to state what I thought I could do for the church in case they decided to extend me a call. I distributed packages of Silent Communion Cards and showed them a copy or two of "Handles of Power". Dr. Voight had raised twelve thousand dollars for the refurbishing of the one hundred year old church and Fellowship Hall where we were meeting was beautiful with new floor and ceiling. The auditorium was torn up because all pews had been removed so they could make a wide center aisle. The new divided chancel was being installed and they were about to put a gorgeous red carpet all over the chancel and auditorium. All of this simply carried me away! My wife and I had four sons, the oldest of whom would be ready for the university in another year and we needed to move to a university town. I said that between the Holy Spirit and that bright red carpet and "Handles of Power", I thought I could fill that big auditorium in four years ---a prophecy I thought was on the conservative side. I admitted that I was not a great preacher but said I had a new technique for appropriating the illimitable resources of The Living God. That would do the business! But there was one more thing. The church had never had a secretary. I would come only if they agreed to hire a half time secretary to start with and make her full time when conditions warranted. Several of the wives got poked in the ribs that evening as some skeptics silently wondered how brash a young candidate could get! But they called me and in four years the auditorium was full to the back windows, half of the increase being students of all

denominations. Elmer Lawyer called at the parsonage one day in 1946 and said: "I have worshiped in this church for fifty years and was present at the board meeting four years ago when you made your speech. I poked my wife in the ribs that night and shook my head in disbelief but you did it!" I told Elmer I had seen that poke in the ribs. Then I told him of my experience with Roland Hayes and of my earnest prayer to be rid of self every time I entered the pulpit. "Unseen powers have been at work here, Elmer, or such results could never have been attained."

The most gratifying aspect of this growth was the many instances of personal battles fought and won by students who were using the Silent Communion Card technique to get themselves off their hands. One day Dean William Simon, Dean of the College of Dentistry, called me on the phone. "I'm in deep trouble with P.J. who is a freshman in the College of Dentistry. Although he is a brilliant student, he has developed such a deep fear and hatred of Dr. X, one of his professors, that he is almost sure to fail the course. He is otherwise a straight A student and came to us with a brilliant record from high school. I have tried everything I could think of to straighten this boy out but he told me this morning he was thinking of quitting school and going home. May I send him to you."

Within the hour, P. J. came to my study. Clean cut and handsome, I liked this lad at once. He sat down in my "confessional chair", a big, upholstered easy-to-sit-in chair at the corner of my desk. I learned he was a Lutheran and a regular attendant at their services. The trouble with Dr. X had started the very first day of the fall semester. "He walked into the classroom where about a hundred of us freshmen sat, strode rapidly to the raised platform and stopped abruptly to gaze malevolently at each one of us in turn", said

P.J. "This is a core course", he continued, "and it is impossible for any one of you to become a dentist until you know this course like the back of your hand. I have been looking you over very carefully and I can usually tell which ones of you think you are so smart that you can pass this course without really burning the midnight oil. Well, you can't do it and I already know which ones of you are going to flunk. That's what I said, flunk! At that moment his eyes came to rest on me," said P.J., "and I stared right back at him but I was frightened and very angry. No one had ever talked to me or looked at me that way before and I knew I already hated that man with a passion". He was not sleeping well anymore nor did his food taste good. For the first time in his life, he could not give correct answers when called upon even though he knew the right answers. And he had just flunked a test! Yes, he was thinking of going home. He didn't have to take that brute any longer!

"I know all about him", I told P.J. "Several of the professors in the College of Dentistry are members of this church along with the Dean. In another year, as soon as the war is over, he is due for retirement. He is to be pitied and not hated. Imagine what his poor wife and three lovely daughters have to put up with! Most of the other boys in dentistry hate him too. He is a brilliant man with a small tyrannical soul".

"Now, P.J., you have no business giving any man the power to drive you from your chosen lifework. You have no business leaving this university----and I am going to tell you how you can win this battle and conquer Dr. X. Jesus said we were to love our enemies and do good to those who spitefully use us. Now you can't blow on your hands and start loving a man like that but you can pity the poor man because he has hardly a friend in the world". I then explained to him the rela-

tion of the conscious to the unconscious mind and told him the story of Ali Hafed. I gave him a bunch of Silent Communion Cards and asked him to start praying for his enemy as well as for himself. "Start visualizing him as your friend", I continued, "and as you sit in his class, think of some compliment that you could honestly give the man and then, when class is dismissed, put a smile on your face and go up and give him a bit of genuine appreciation. It will knock him over if you do it right----and I know you can and will do it right. Before you know it, your pity will have turned into good will." P.J. looked so stunned that I said: "Let's bow our heads" and I prayed for divine guidance in this unique experiment.

When P.J. stood up ready to leave, there was a lift to his chin and a smile on his face as he promised to give it all he had. "Carry those cards with you and steep your mind on great affirmations of Christian faith and especially Paul's, 'I can do all things through him who strengtheneth me.'" He promised.

Two weeks later Dean Simon called me to the phone. "I don't know what you said to P.J. two weeks ago but whatever it was is working the most amazing transformation I have ever seen. P.J. and Dr. X are now buddies and I just saw them eating lunch together and chattering away like magpies". Just so! "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind". (Romans 2:2) "The things which are impossible with man are possible with God." (Luke 18:27)

CHAPTER IX

Release From A Flaming Hell

One day a graduate student in the field of education came to my study, slumped into my confessional chair, buried his face in his hands and began to sob. "I have just now come from the psycho-ward of University Hospital", he said, "where I spent six weeks. I was over there for another six weeks last year, supposedly under expert psychiatric care, but in both cases I was not helped in the slightest degree. All they did was to take my Bible away because they said they wanted me to forget about religion for awhile."

When R.N. had stopped crying and calmed himself a bit he continued: "I stopped off at my home on the way over here. I have a wonderful wife and three little girls but my wife, for the first time in our married life, said she had just about had it and maybe a divorce should be considered. I can't blame her but that would be the end of the line for me----I would not want to go on living without my family. You see I can't sleep at night and I have taken sleeping pills until they are coming out of my ears. I have no appetite because no food agrees with me anymore. So I can't study. I am trying to get a PhD degree in education but I shall fail unless you can help me".

"I'll try", I said, "but stretch out now in that comfortable chair and let me have the whole story of your life and troubles from the beginning".

What a story it was! "My father was a fundamentalist preacher", he said, "who had a vivid imagination. About once a month he shook his congregation over a literal flaming hell. You could even smell the brimstone fires and hear the shrieks of the damned as their flesh fried and shrivelled. And how long were these people to be tortured? My father's favorite illustration was of a bird who flew to

the sand beaches of earth every hundred years and carried off one grain of sand to another planet. When that bird had spent untold millions of years carrying sand until all the sand on earth had been removed, only one minute of eternity would have been used up! Brother! He literally scared me out of my wits.

When I was twelve, I was rushed to the hospital for an emergency appendectomy. My appendix had burst and I nearly died. In my delirium, I heard the doctors speculating about my chances of survival. They were slim! And did that mean hell for me? It surely did and I was petrified with fear. To my surprise and joy I pulled through. Then my closest friend was wheeled into my room for an emergency appendectomy just like mine. I watched him like a hawk but he didn't make it! After he was gone, I told myself he was in hell because, as kids do, we had stolen a few things and lied a few times and now-----

In high school, I had a nervous breakdown but I finally got through. I went to college and prepared to teach. I even got my M.A. in Education and got a job. I got married to a lovely girl and we have three beautiful little girls. I finally decided to get a PhD and came to the University of Iowa with my family. But the awful fear of a flaming hell and of God has been with me night and day. If you can't help me, I am finished".

"My friend, I feel sure that I can release you from your nightmare of a literal flaming hell. My studies in Boston University School of Theology freed me from the same untenable beliefs about hell that have crippled your mind and spirit. In my boyhood, I listened with fear and trembling to many a sermon that rang the changes on the hot, leaping flames waiting to receive lost souls. Many a Sunday afternoon was spent with my brother and two sisters poring over the half-page

colored picture of hell in the big family Bible. After all the intervening years, I can still vividly see the vision of God standing near his judgment seat in heaven, pitching soul after soul hellward. I can see them falling head downward, wrapped about with giant snakes, hair streaming and with a look of indescribable horror on their faces, as the red and yellow flames reached up to engulf them. And I was told that this torment would last forever and ever with no abatement whatsoever.

Now try to harmonize that picture with a belief in a loving Heavenly Father who loves all of his children! 'Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God---for God is love.' (I John 4: 7,8) Jesus' matchless parable of the Prodigal Son depicts a loving, forgiving, understanding, earthly father with the thrilling conclusion that God is like that. Could that kind of God throw his children into a literal, burning, sizzling hell forever and ever for sins committed in one lifetime? Could any earthly father do that to his own children? Of course not!

The thought of unending torture is revolting to any sensitive mind. It denies any consummation, any complete victory, and any real happiness for God or Jesus. If a child were wicked and rebellious for an hour, and the earthly father punished that child for the rest of its life, that father's action would be merciful compared to the action of a God who, for sins committed in one lifetime, should punish his children forever.

What is the purpose of punishment? Surely not revenge. The purpose of punishment is remedial. When the wrong and distorted condition has been remedied and, through suffering for wrongdoing, the sinner against moral codes has learned his lesson, the reason for the pun-

ishment ceases to exist and the penalty should also cease. Any other conclusion presupposes that God knows of no better way of attaining his purposes than the use of methods that we poor imperfect humans would not stoop to use.

Our belief about hell must be commensurate with our ideas of God. Is He a God of capricious and violent temper? Or is He a dependable Being whose greatest attribute is love? Read Exodus 32. While Moses is up on Mt. Sinai, God sees the Israelites make a golden calf which they proceed to worship. God grows so violently angry that He tells Moses: 'Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them.' Moses then takes God severely to task for losing His temper. He reminds the Almighty of the great prestige He has among foreign peoples and of the necessity of preserving His reputation. 'Turn from thy fierce wrath,' cries Moses, 'and repent of this evil against thy people.' Then we are told that 'the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people!'

Now if that is the kind of capricious Being we worship as God, He could be expected to make and fill a literal hell of fire. But we do not believe in that kind of God. Like many another Old Testament conception, we have long since discarded those barbarous and primitive ideas for those of Jesus and the New Testament. Or have we? Perhaps we should say that many of us have.

At this point we may profitably stop and ask ourselves what the word hell meant to Jesus and his disciples. And many people will be surprised to learn that Jesus and his friends walked right by hell on numerous occasions as they left Jerusalem. Gehenna is the Graecised form of Ge-Hinnom or Valley of Hinnom which was a steep ravine outside the southern wall of Jerusalem. The English word for that valley is 'hell.'

On a trip to Palestine one time, I stood at the south wall of Jerusalem and gazed down into the Valley of Hinnom or Hell below me. Just beyond this valley rises a high hill on which King Solomon built his great palace where he lived with three hundred wives and seven hundred concubines. He could stand in his front yard and throw a stone down into the Valley of Hinnom. On many an occasion, he probably said to some of his wives, 'Get your things on girls because we are going to hell (Valley of Hinnom) for a pleasant afternoon!' And down the hill they went to loll under the palm trees. Solomon has the reputation of being a wise king but he was surely foolish to give his wives the freedom to worship their foreign gods. His Canaanitish wives, for example, were freely allowed to worship their God Moloch. This involved forcing Hebrew children to pass through hot fires and thus to become human sacrifices to Moloch.

Finally the reforming King Josiah decided to do something about it. In 621 B.C. he cut down the sacred groves and burned them; ground the shrines and altars to powder; laid waste the gardens and decreed that the Valley of Hinnom should henceforth be known as the vilest place on the face of the earth. Here the refuse of Jerusalem should be thrown; here the bodies of criminals and the carcasses of animals should be left to become food for birds of carrion; here brimstone fires should be kept burning night and day to purify the atmosphere. It was literally a noisome and fearful spot 'where the worm died not and the fire was never quenched'; a spot choked with putrefaction and stench; a symbol of the place of doom.

That is what hell meant to Jesus---that valley near Jerusalem. Always on the lookout for a parable that could drive home a deep spiritual truth, Jesus' keen oriental mind must have instantly sensed the symbolic significance of hell the first time he walked past the

place. It was a graphic and unforgettable symbol of the state of a man's soul when that soul has been separated from God. Hell to Jesus was evidently not a place but a bad state of consciousness which in turn was the result of sin. The agony and suffering that a sensitive individual would undergo by being thrown bodily into the Valley of Hinnom was somewhat akin to the eventual misery and pain of a soul living in alienation from his heavenly Father.

Let us note, then, some things that hell is not. Hell is not a literal torment in a sea of flame. Paul tells us plainly that 'flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God.' In spite of the vivid portrayals of imaginative writers like Dante, we shall have no physical bodies in the next world. Dante's 'Inferno' did much to make horribly realistic the literal hell that evangelists have dwelt upon through the years. It is time we evaluated Dante for what he was----a man of vivid imagination and little real knowledge of the Bible. Like God we are Spirit. We shall have spirit bodies with no real teeth to gnash and no real flesh to burn.

In the next place let us state that hell is not an endless condition. The idea of an endless punishment originated in a wrong interpretation of certain scripture passages. Careful readers of the New Testament may have noticed that the word 'everlasting' found in the King James translation has been changed in the Revised Version to the more correct reading 'eternal.' The word eternal does not always mean everlasting. It comes from the Greek word 'aionios' which means lasting for an aeon or age. It is a long time but not forever. If someone says that the same word is used in connection with heaven he will be right. Jesus said that 'heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.' (Matthew 24:35) The consummation of the age will mean that both conditions or states of mind that we have called heaven

and hell shall pass away, giving place to a new condition, when the perfect life begins in some far distant future when we have become 'perfect even as your Heavenly Father is perfect.'

Hell is, therefore, not purposeless torture. If the old phraseology is to be used, then let us say that the fire is one which burns out the dross in imperfect lives, fitting men for that which comes after hell and heaven in the consummation of the ages. Ponder carefully Paul's great word: 'If any man's work shall abide which he built thereon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.' (I Corinthians 3:15) We believe that Paul's ideology in the use of the word 'fire' is the same in meaning as that of Jesus. No false thing can finally live when God's plans are complete. But man himself will.

There is just one exception to this hopeful statement. It is possible for one to be lost forever and hence to be 'in hell' forever. 'Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.' (Matthew 12:31) So spoke Jesus. What did he mean? What is the sin against the Holy Ghost? It is the sin of the closed mind. Even God can do nothing with and for the man who closes his mind to new truth. And if he maintains the closed mind attitude, he is doomed both here and in the next world.

The Holy Ghost is truth in one sense. 'I am the way, the truth, and the life,' said Jesus. And again 'God is Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.' (John 4:24) Over in John 16:13 Jesus says: 'Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth.' Some of the most unchristian and cantankerous people that I know are rigidly 'orthodox' souls loud-

ly claiming that they have all the 'truth' and 'salvation' neatly wrapped and packaged in their own little systems, the while they damn all others who do not agree with them. If you do not chance to concur with their version of the virgin birth or the atonement or their view of the infallibility of scriptures, they do not hesitate a moment to consign you to everlasting perdition. They are committing the sin against truth, the sin of the closed mind. Since all spiritual progress is tied in closely with the eager, questing, open mind in search of some new aspect of God's eternal truth, even God can do nothing with such souls if they persist in that condition.

Let us briefly note what hell really is then. It is a sense of deprivation; the condition of a soul that finds itself in a purely spiritual world and unable to enter into the delights of that world because of long years of life lived on low, selfish, sensuous levels. It is the experience of being found out to be what one really is. After deceiving the world for years, there comes a time when the deceiver is found out and known of men. That is hell. Comes also the time when a man sees the results of a life of selfishness and sin and he is burned by the fires of remorse.

Someone has truly said that 'hell is disqualification in the face of opportunity.' In this life as well as in the future world, the man who clearly sees the man he might have been, sees the place he might have filled; the tasks he might have accomplished but for his selfishness and sin, must know what hell is.

Charles Lamb, one of England's most brilliant sons in the field of literature, was ultimately ruined by his thirst for alcohol. Looking back upon his childhood he mournfully wrote: "Could the youth, to whom the flavor of his first glass was delicious, look into my desolation and be made to understand what a dreary thing it is when a man

feels himself going down a precipice with open eye and passive will, to see his destruction and not to have the power of will to stop it, to perceive all goodness emptied out of him, and yet not be able to forget the time when it was otherwise----how he would avoid that first glass!

The man who robs a trusting girl of her virginity and then sees her go on down and down into a life of shame----and then perhaps sees his own daughter likewise ruined by some other man, is in hell. The memory of our sins will be an awful price to pay for having committed them. Jesus puts stern words into the mouth of Abraham in the parable of Dives and Lazarus. Dives had fared sumptuously every day while the diseased Lazarus lay near the gate to his estate and begged. In the future life Dives was tormented as he saw Lazarus in heaven safely resting in Abraham's bosom and so he cried out for Abraham to give him some water to cool his parched tongue. Abraham said, "Son, remember" Ah yes----remember! The memory of glorious opportunities of service that were spurned will be grievous indeed.

Many good and sincere people, even when convinced that conceptions of the "orthodox" hell run counter to the New Testament teaching of a just and loving God, feel that the teaching of the old hell is still necessary to restrain men from evil actions. They forget that fear-motivated morality is a weak, powerless and joyless morality; a morality quite incapable of inspiring men to noble living; a morality that makes it impossible for one to enter radiantly into a blessed fellowship with God.

Never shall I forget one dear, gentle old soul well along in the sunset years of life. She used to come to my study every few weeks at Endion Church in Duluth and pour out her troubled soul. She was gentle as a kitten. She had never done anything especially wrong

in her long life that she could recall. She always put a sum of money into my hand to 'help some other troubled soul in need.' But she was afraid to die; afraid of hell!

Again and again she told of the emotional conditioning in her childhood which impressed her youthful soul with the awfulness of a literal hell and of the necessity to love God if you would escape it. 'But He is so awful that I have never been able to love him,' she would say with trembling lips as the tears ran down her withered cheeks, 'and I know He will therefore send me to hell.' Try as I might, I was never able fully to assure her of the rightness of the views of hell here set forth. The deep mind of her plastic childhood years had been too rigidly and emotionally conditioned.

What then is the final conclusion of the matter? Are we so impotent in our understanding of oriental imagery that we cannot see that the sin and selfishness that alienates us from God and therefore from the happy, abundant and useful life means the death of the moral and spiritual life? Are we so dense and devoid of true understanding that such spiritual death does not seem as calamitous to us as physical torture?

Let us take our courage in our hands and be done with conceptions of literal hell fire which do such awful violence to Jesus' revelation of God. Let us admit freely that, just as an earthly parent who inspires his children with fear, can never enter a satisfying relationship with those children, so God is robbed of the joy of a loving relationship with his children so long as that relationship is spoiled by the fear of hell.

Let us be done forever with the blasphemy of the literal hell. God is light! God is love! God is truth! God is our heavenly Fath-

er! 'For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.'" (II Corinthians 4:6)

R.N. heard me through with evident relief. He stared at me with a fixation that expressed his great joy as well as his difficulty of comprehending the new freedom from haunting fear that was now his. I took both of his hands in mine and offered an earnest affirmative prayer for the days ahead. Then I gave him a bunch of Silent Communion Cards and said: "Take these and use them many times every day for one month. You have dug the snake pit of the fear of hell by believing your father's sermons on hell. Now fill your mind full of the God of love, of forgiveness and joy. Like the Prodigal Son you have come home to Him. You will need no more sleeping pills, your food will taste wonderful and digest perfectly. And your wife will say no more about divorce. Come and see me in just one month.

Thirty days later, I was getting ready to go to Des Moines to address the Women's Club when the phone rang. It was a bubbly R.N. who wanted to come over at once to tell me about a miracle. I tried to put him off for twenty-four hours because of my engagement but he would have none of it. Let me come now even if only ^{five} ten minutes he pleaded. So over he came. He bounded up the eight steps leading to our front porch and on into my study. He was a transformed young man. "It's a miracle," he exclaimed----"That's the only term my wife will use. I sleep like a baby, I eat like a horse and I can study until midnight with no weariness at all. I know you must leave for Des Moines but please come over and see my family and hear it from them."

So over I went the next evening. Mrs. R.N. was sitting there knitting a sweater while three little girls played with their dolls on the floor. "You have no idea what a miracle has taken place in my husband's life," she said. "After one interview in your study, this whole family was catapulted from the black despair of midnight into the warmth and light of the glowing noon-time sun. And my husband has already been offered a fine position as a Superintendent of Schools as soon as he gets his degree!" And I must say that, as for me, I once again experienced something of the deep joy and peace that I had felt on a cold December pre-dawn morning in Jackson Park, Chicago.

CHAPTER X

The Other Side and Reincarnation

When I entered Boston University School of Theology, I carried with me the orthodox, fundamentalist view that when a man dies he is slated to go to one of two places, hell or heaven. Both places were endless conditions, eternal damnation or eternal bliss. In the preceding chapter we considered hell as we are convinced Jesus saw it, basically a temporary state of mind. Conversely, heaven also is temporarily a state of mind, developed here and taken with us into the spirit world at death. The primary purpose of a loving Creator is to give every precious soul opportunity to evolve and unfold both here and over there.

Jesus said The Kingdom of Heaven is within us. It is like a grain of mustard seed, having within it the principal of eternal growth and unfoldment. Paul tells us that on one occasion he was "caught up to the third heaven and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." (II Corinthians 12:2) He was given a fleeting glimpse of a future state of a developed soul that was so glorious that he could find no words to describe it. And who knows how many heavens or astral planes beyond the third there may be?

Jesus said, "heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not pass away." (Luke 21:33) "Aionios" (eternity) does not mean everlasting but "for an age". John, in a vision: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away." (Revelations 21:1) Growth, evolution! At death there is so very much that is imperfect even in the best of men. False values concerning wealth, social position, rank, culture, education, pride of race becloud our spiritual vision. The incident of death does not change us one iota. One minute after death we are the same people we

were one minute before passing.

Jesus said, "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 18:18) Form a good habit here and it goes with you. Break a bad habit here and the personality growth goes with you. And don't count on suicide to get it all over with instantly because when you come to consciousness over there all your strengths and weaknesses will still be a part of you and your problems must still be faced and solved! Most of our growth in soul building here comes through the brave and patient struggle of facing difficulty and trouble. It hurts to fall down but it strengthens us to pick ourselves up. It is out of the crucible of suffering and pain that truly great souls are born. And God has no bargain counters for even the poor and weak. The writer of Hebrews tells us that Jesus learned by the things which he suffered. So even Jesus learned his great wisdom the hard way. He said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." God hard at work? Yes indeed! Working with people, wise and foolish and often stupid people both in this world and on the other side. They represent the one supreme value in His universe and He will never quit until, through suffering and pain, they have overcome and climbed the shining stairway into the eternal city. God is not sitting on the edge of a cloud watching the wretched procession of unfolding humanity passing by. He is deeply involved with every struggling soul as Jesus was and is.

I have just finished reading "The Other Side" by Bishop James A. Pike. This man is one of the best known churchmen in the world but how much he has learned by suffering and pain in the last couple of years! Bishop Pike's twenty year old son, Jim, shot himself in a hotel room in New York City in February of 1967. Jim was a product of what his father calls the subculture of the Haight-Asbury district

of San Francisco. There the youth who have rebelled against the Establishment, against organized religion, against their families and former friends, lived together very permissively. They called themselves "flower children" and adopted such slogans as "make love, not war." Most of them used drugs freely and seemed to enjoy cheap trips with psychedelic drugs like L.S.D. They were the now generation.

In the fall of 1966, Bishop Pike decided to spend several months in Cambridge, England and asked his son to go with him. Both Jim and his father thought such a trip would give Jim an opportunity to get away from his former companions and easy access to his drug supply. He told his father he was so confused that he really wanted to kick the habit. Unfortunately, he soon uncovered a source of supply in England and continued to take L.S.D. and other drugs. One must pity and admire Bishop Pike for the way he stuck by his son. When Jim would say, "Dad, I just dropped some acid will you sit with me while I'm on this trip? It might be a bad one." On several occasions, this anxious father sat up all night with his son and held his hand while the young man cried out in anguish as he was falling, falling downward through inky darkness into a bottomless abyss. At seven A.M., when Jim had partially recovered from his bad trip, he would again express a desire to be free of drugs.

Came then the end of the Cambridge sojourn. The Bishop had engagements in the U.S.A. and Jim made the return trip to New York City alone. Early in February Jim shot himself in his hotel room. "The Other Side" is a heartening book. It is the story of Jim's communications with his father through a British medium, one Mrs. Eva Twigg, and through my own good friend, Arthur Ford, in this country. I was rather shocked to learn that neither Bishop Pike nor his son believed in a future life when this tragic story began. They did not

even believe in the Resurrection of Jesus. But they do now! Bishop Pike recently died in Palestine as he was doing research for a Life of Jesus.

Jim told his father that he was met on the other side by people who were kind and understanding and patient, that he was learning much that he never knew before, that God was a Central Force. There were evil people over there trying to put out the light but they could not do it. And he, Jim, was so excited because he was becoming involved in a world full of opportunity for growth. Personally, I would not be surprised to learn at some future time that this fine boy who sought eternal oblivion through suicide, had finally decided to be reincarnated in some interesting family and give himself another chance to live victoriously in the same world wherein he failed so miserably as the son of Bishop Pike. Such a view makes a lot of sense to me.

The man who finally sold me on belief in Reincarnation was Edgar Cayce Senior of Virginia Beach, Virginia. I read a book by Thomas Sugrue entitled "There is a River". The most remarkable psychic of this century was born in 1877 near Hopkinsville, Kentucky. When still a boy, he had a vision of an angel who appeared before him as he sat alone out in a field. She asked him what he most wanted out of life and he told her he wanted to be able to help needy people, especially children. She told him his wish would be granted. It has been, for Edgar Cayce helped thousands through his remarkable fourteen thousand documented Readings given to over eight thousand people over a period of forty-three years.

As a boy in school, he had great difficulty learning to spell. One evening, after struggling for hours with his spelling book and still finding himself unable to spell, he dropped his head on his arms that in turn covered the speller. When he awakened an hour later, he could spell any word in the book! It frightened as well as delighted

him because here indeed was a strange power. Then a few years later he found he could lie on a couch and take a few deep breaths and fall into a self-induced trance. In that condition, anyone could ask him a question about the illness of any person nearby or a thousand miles away. All he needed was the name and address. The sleeping Cayce would then say, "yes we have the body." And then in exact medical language, although he had never studied medicine a day in his life, Edgar Cayce would fully diagnose the case and prescribe the remedy!

The Superintendent of Schools of Hopkinsville had a little girl who was very ill. One convulsion followed another as she slowly slipped toward death. The local doctor did not know how to prescribe for her. So Edgar Cayce lay down and went into his trance. Mrs. Cayce and Gladys Turner were there to ask him the right questions and to take notes of everything he said. "Yes, we have the body. This little girl slipped and fell against the metal steps of the family carriage two years ago, hitting the base of her spine and injuring it. When she got the grippe, it settled in the weakest spot at the base of her spine." Then he prescribed osteopathic treatment plus a poultice whose preparation and application he described in detail. The doctor followed directions and the little girl was soon well again.

On October 9, 1910, the New York Times carried two pages of headlines and pictures of the Sleeping Prophet. Magazines and papers across the nation spread the news of an amazing psychic. Harvard Medical School sent five doctors down to examine and expose Edgar Cayce. He came through with flying colors.

During my twenty years as pastor of First Methodist Church in Iowa City, it was my good fortune to have Dr. Marcus Bach as my inti-

mate friend. He is nationally and internationally known as one of the worlds foremost experts on little known religious movements. He has made it his business to visit the leaders of such movements in all parts of the world and has written many books on the results of his visits. With tremendous friendliness and empathy, he probes their secrets and ends each investigation with a host of new admirers. Between Christmas and New Years in 1950, I accompanied Dr. and Mrs. Bach to Virginia Beach to get a first hand look at the Cayce phenomena. We were deeply impressed with the genuineness and utter sincerity of Edgar Cayce's two sons, Hugh Lynn and Edgar Jr., Gladys Turner, the secretary who has been with the movement from the beginning, and a host of people who have been helped in numerous ways by Readings.

When I returned home, I asked Dr. Howard Thurman if he had ever heard of Edgar Cayce. Dr. Thurman had been living in our home for some months as he taught courses in religion in the University of Iowa's School of Religion. Dr. Thurman: "Yes indeed. One day a woman knocked on my front door and said, 'I want you, if you will, to tell me everything you know about God.' I asked her to come in and tell me why. She said she had been in an automobile accident two years ago with the result that she was paralyzed from the waist down. X-rays showed no reason for this condition and no doctor could be found who was willing to operate without more specific information. She finally wrote to Edgar Cayce and gave him her name and address and asked for a diagnosis. It is hard to believe but that man's spirit came three thousand miles to my home the day after he got my letter, found me sitting in my wheel chair, examined me, and found a small bone lodged across my spinal column as a result of my accident. He said any good surgeon could remove this bone and, after a short

time, I'd be as good as new. The first two surgeons I approached said they would not follow any quack's advice when X-rays showed nothing. But the third surgeon had heard of Cayce and was willing to try. He did try and removed the bone. And here I am! Cayce is a man of God. He advises his patients to pray and meditate a lot so as to stay well. But I have never paid any attention to God and never learned how to pray. Teach me! So Dr. Thurman had the lady come to his study every week for months. One thing he was never able to explain to his inquiring friend was just how Edgar Cayce in his spirit body could make a round trip of six thousand miles in one hour and come up with the correct diagnosis of a helpless body that doctors in a hospital, equipped with X-ray machines, could not fathom. Yet Cayce made such trips thousands of times to people having all manner of diseases, examined and expertly diagnosed and prescribed for the most baffling cases without ever leaving his couch in Virginia Beach!

Dr. Bach and I went down into the fireproof vault at Virginia Beach and gazed at the thousands of documents that comprised the Readings. Since that time, these yellowing records have been micro-filmed, typed and studied and made available to the public in book form. Under the editorship of Hugh Lynn Cayce, Noel Langley has written "Edgar Cayce on Reincarnation", Edgar Evans Cayce has written "Edgar Cayce on Atlantis", Mary Ellen Carter has written "Edgar Cayce on Prophecy" and Dr. Harmon Hartzell Bro has compiled a volume about "Edgar Cayce on Dreams". Other Cayce books will follow. Someone has said that "there is nothing so powerful in this world as an idea whose time has come". The time for a nationwide understanding of the Cayce phenomena has undoubtedly come. When I had lunch with Hugh Lynn Cayce in a Seattle restaurant a short time ago, he told me that

the work of the Association for Research and Enlightenment at Virginia Beach has grown so fast since World War II that it is almost impossible to keep up with the demands of proliferating study groups from coast to coast. The paid membership of the Association has grown from six hundred to over ten thousand and it is spiraling upward a bit faster each month. There is no thought of establishing another religion of course. It is of equal interest to Catholic, Protestant, Jew and people of no particular faith at all. Right now, I am waiting for a good Presbyterian friend of mine to get over the flu so she can invite a group of her interested friends to her home for a coffee hour. I will go over to her home here on Mercer Island and tell her group some things I know from my contacts at Virginia Beach and I will tell them what books to buy to start them on their search for new truth about the purpose of life.

The book "Edgar Cayce on Reincarnation" selects a portion of the two thousand five hundred Readings given between 1925 through 1944 and deals with the reasons for deep-seated fears, mental blocks, vocational talents, marriage difficulties, child training arising out of previous lives spent on earth and entailing what Cayce called "Karmic patterns". Karma, as he saw it, was a universal law of cause and effect, running through several incarnations and providing the soul with opportunities for physical, mental and spiritual growth. Each soul, said Cayce, has subconscious access to the characteristics, mental capacities and skills it has accumulated in previous lives. Also the entity must combat the influence of past lives in which hate, fear, cruelty and greed delayed progress.

Thus the soul's task on earth is to make use of its successive rebirths to balance its positive and negative Karmic patterns by subduing its selfish impulses and encouraging its creative urges.

Edgar Cayce was a very shocked man when a Mr. Lammers asked the first question about whether or no reincarnation was a fact. When the Sleeping Prophet came out flatfooted in his declaration that many people have lived quite a number of times on this earth and that there are complete records of those lives, names, places, vocations, strengths and weaknesses and reasons for choosing to come back and do the job over again! When asked where these records were, he said that when he was given a name and address and went into his trance, he had but to follow a steady shaft of white light that led to a hill whereon was a temple much like a big room in a library. Here were the books of people's lives, the akashic records. All he needed to do then was to pull down the record of the individual who had asked for a Life Reading and there it was.

Cayce was forever insisting, however, that free will was stronger than destiny and that God's free grace and forgiveness was always available to all souls who wanted to change the pattern of life from negative to positive, from self-centeredness to others-mindedness. The good life and results were never free----they must be earned and willed.

A most enlightening revelation about the justice of reincarnation is found in Chapter IV of "Edgar Cayce on Reincarnation". Paul Durbin, at thirty-four years of age, was stricken with multiple sclerosis. In the Reading the family secured, Cayce made reference to a past life: "The Entity is at war with itself. All hate, all malice, all that will make men afraid, must be eliminated from the mind. For, as given of old, each soul shall give an account of every idle word spoken (note Jesus' word in Matthew 12:36). It shall pay every whit. Yet the Entity knows or should know that there is an advocate with the Father. . . .know that the Lord liveth and

would do thee good, if ye but trust wholly in Him." In short, this soul had gone astray and needed to sincerely repent before help would be forthcoming.

The warning fell on deaf ears and Durbin, saturated with bitterness, self-pity and hatred demanded to know why Cayce had failed to cure him miraculously and instantly. The next Reading was more blunt. "First there must be a change of heart, a change of mind, of purpose, of intent. If this is done, keep up the messages and the use of the appliance suggested. But all the mechanical appliances that ye muster will not aid recovery unless thy soul has been baptized with the Holy Spirit. In Him, then, is thy Hope. Will ye reject it? The body is indeed the temple of the Living God, but what does it appear to be in the present? What is lacking? That which is life itself, that force ye call God. Will ye accept, will ye reject? It is up to thee! As long as there are hate, malice, injustice, those things that are at variance with patience, long suffering, brotherly love---there cannot be a healing of this body. What would the body be healed for? That it might gratify its own desires and appetites? Then, if so, it might better remain as it is. We are through unless ye make amends." Paul Durbin remained ill because he refused to repent and bring himself under the law of grace.

That is cosmic justice. "Do not be deceived; God is not mocked, for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruptions, but he who sows to the spirit will from the spirit reap eternal life." (Galatians 6:7,8). Jesus put the law this way: "Forgive and you will be forgiven; give and it will be given to you . . . for the measure You give will be the measure you get back." (Luke 6:37,38) But it may take several lifetimes to see this law completely fulfilled.

Read Matthew 17. When Jesus had been up on the Mount of Transfiguration and Peter, James and John had seen him talking to Moses and Elijah, the disciples asked him why the scribes say that Elijah must first come. Jesus replied, "but I tell you that Elijah has already come and they did not know him but did to him whatever they pleased. . . . Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist." This shows that a belief in reincarnation was common to Jesus and his disciples.

As a matter of fact, the early Christian church believed in and taught reincarnation for the first four hundred years. Plato, who died in 347 B.C., had been very explicit about the matter: "Soul is older than body. Souls are continuously born over again into this life." St. Clement of Alexandria (150-220 A.D.), St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Plotinus and Origen and many another early church Father taught reincarnation as a fact. In his *De Principiis*, Origen says: "Every soul comes into the world strengthened by the victories or weakened by the defeats of its previous life. Its place in this world as a vessel appointed to honor or dishonor is determined by its previous merits and demerits. Its work in this world determines its place in the world which is to follow this." Origen was one of the most influential teachers in the early church.

Some of the finest and most sensitive minds of our modern world have believed in reincarnation because they could not believe that any soul would be ready for eternal bliss or eternal damnation at the end of one brief sojourn on this earth.

Says Poet Laureate John Mansfield:

I hold that when a person dies,
His soul returns again to earth;
Arrayed in some new flesh---disguise
Another mother gives him birth.
With sturdier limbs and brighter brain
The old soul takes the road again.

There was Tennyson, Browning, Walt Whitman, Longfellow, Swinburne, Kipling, Maeterlinck, Ibsen, Schopenhauer, Hume, Goethe and a whole host of others who have told of their belief in reincarnation.

To such supremely sensitive souls, the frustrations, bafflements, jealousies and hatreds that scar and mar so many souls in this lifetime must be following laws of cause and effect. Both the material and spirit world are worlds of absolute law and order. And it is a most valid judgment that many of these negative emotions must have had their origin in a past life; that the present existence will never be complete until those weaknesses of the past have been squarely faced and conquered.

Thomas Sugrue, brilliant author of "There Is a River", the book that launched the nation-wide interest in the Cayce phenomena was a close friend of Hugh Lynn Cayce, the devoted leader and spark-plug of the whole Virginia Beach development with its nation-wide outreach of study groups and associations and its sponsorship of a whole spate of new books and pamphlets. These boys were roommates at William and Mary College. But underneath the outward friendship there was an undercurrent of jealousy. Both boys tried hard to keep this negative demon under control but there it was, showing its ugly head in subtle poisonous ways. When Hugh Lynn took Tom home with him for Christmas vacation and Tom became ill, Hugh Lynn asked his father to give him (Hugh Lynn) a Reading. The question was put to the sleeping father----why the rivalry between these two boys?

Edgar Cayce's answer was to throw a brilliant and transforming light into these fine young men's lives, a light so revealing and challenging that it would inspire each young man to change his basic attitude toward the other. Tom Sugrue would go on to spend

years patiently gathering first hand material in the Cayce home for his great book "There Is a River". That book would start a rivulet of national interest in the psychic doings at Virginia Beach that Hugh Lynn's superb leadership would turn into a torrent---a torrent so great and vital that no man would dare prophecy where it will end.

And what was the answer that came from the sleeping man who went to the akashic records to find the buried answer to his son's question? It was that these fine boys had been thrown together in a number of previous incarnations and they had been jealous of each others gifts and had therefore been bitter rivals. This represented a weakness and frustration in each life that must be overcome here and now before they would be ready to go on with their soul's development.

Both young men succeeded gloriously. I count Hugh Lynn as one of the most balanced, Christ-like souls I have ever known. Through meditation and prayer with the Living God, he got himself completely off his hands. His father indicated that it would be up to him to head up the movement and message of the Cayce revelations, for which the world of suffering humanity was now ready but his "channel" would not open wide until he settled his trouble with Tom Sugrue. Hugh Lynn told me one time that as he bathed the broken pain-wracked body of his friend, Tom, and tried to nurse him back to health, he came to really love him like a beloved brother. Thus healing came to his own soul---and preparation for his vital lifework was effected.

Arthur Ford and the Psychic World

The first time I met Arthur Ford was in the Hyde Park Methodist Church in Chicago. Dr. Marcus Bach and I had been asked to come there along with a dozen other ministers and such people as Margaret Harmon Bro, one of the Religious Book Editors of Harpers, to meet Arthur Ford and to help form Spiritual Frontiers. This organization figures prominently in Bishop Pike's story of "The Other Side". It was built largely around the person of Arthur Ford because some of us felt this internationally famous psychic should have church backing and support in proving to a skeptical public that the dead do live "On the Other Side" and that many of our loved ones over there can indeed communicate with us if we will but listen.

As I entered Hyde Park Church that afternoon, Arthur Ford was speaking to perhaps seventy-five people on Extra Sensory Perception. I walked down the center aisle and sat down on the front seat not ten feet from the speaker. Suddenly, Mr. Ford stopped speaking and stood smiling as he turned his head to the left and then said: "A large, smiling, friendly man has just come to stand here beside me. The name I get is Charley Pace and I also get the name Hamline University. He says to ask Lew Dunnington if he remembers the beautiful June afternoon that he and I got fed up with the tedious proceedings of the Northern Minnesota Annual Conference being held in the Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church and, at my invitation, took my car and drove to the Mississippi River and talked all the afternoon. Much of that conversation had to do with communication through psychics with discarnates on the far shore. He says to tell Lew he is so glad he and Marcus Bach are to be on the Board of Trustees of Spiritual Frontiers because the world is now ready for more information about

the invisible world of spirit.

When Mr. Ford stopped talking and looked vaguely around and asked if Lew Dunnington was present, I put up my hand. "I remember that day very well", I said, "because the bishop, only that morning, had told the men not to go wandering off in the spring sunshine---- he wanted them to stay on the job until adjournment." I also said, "Charley and I agreed never to say a word to anyone about playing hookey----and we never did!" After the meeting broke up at Hyde Park Church, I took a walk with Arthur Ford and asked him if he had known Charles Pace, President of Hamline University. He had never heard of him. I told him that years ago, Charley Pace was pastor of First Methodist Church in Duluth while I was pastor of Endion Church and that we played a lot of golf together on Mondays.

Not long after my introduction to Arthur Ford, Dr. Bach brought him to the School of Religion for a lecture to his students. I invited him to give a Sunday evening lecture in the First Methodist Church on E.S.P. After introducing him to an audience of three hundred people, I sat down in the pulpit near him. After speaking for a few minutes he suddenly stopped, leaned forward a bit, and peered up at the semi-darkened balcony in the back of the church. I had not had any lights put on back there, knowing that a small audience would thus be drawn to the brightly lighted front seats. "Lew", he said, "three women have just come in and taken seats in the front row of the balcony. At first I thought they belonged to this world, but I now perceive they are discarnates. They tell me you performed last rites for all of them within the past two years. One of them is Minnie Hunter who says she is so glad she gave you a sum of money for refurbishing the old Brick Chapel seven miles out in the country. She says she has observed the excellent use your young people are mak-

ing of the place in holding retreats out there on week-ends. Another of these women is also known as Mimmie. She tells me she has a daughter who is a member of this church but she has not been worshipping here for the entire fifteen years of your ministry. She says one of your members had a deep misunderstanding with her daughter before you came and she just quit coming. She works in the basement at Blank Department Store. Please go there and tell her that her mother wants her to come back to church. Your sermons are made to order for my daughter's condition and she must not miss anymore of them." Mr. Ford then gave me the name of the third woman but at the moment I could not recall having held her funeral service.

After Mr. Ford finished his lecture, I went quickly to my church record books. Everything checked out perfectly. It was a revelation to me and my people that Ford did not even need to be in a state of trance to be able to see and communicate with people on the other side.

The heartening aspect of his visit among our people was the changed viewpoint that came to certain of the members of the church. Let me mention but one of many. I will call her Adele. She was a secretary in the employ of a large firm. She was the mother of two boys aged eight and ten. Her husband had been dead five years. She was a member of the Business and Professional Women's Club of the church----mostly secretaries. I took Mr. Ford to her home on a Tuesday evening and eighteen of the members assembled with great expectancy.

Mr. Ford sat down in a big easy chair, placed a black silk scarf over his eyes, stretched out his legs, folded his hands over his ample girth, took a few deep breaths and went to sleep. Presently Fletcher, his faithful control, said: "Hello, everybody. Quite a

crowd is gathered here on this side with me----relatives and friends of you ladies who are anxious to say some things to you. Here is Bob, Adele's husband. He says he is so sorry that he drove his tractor up to the back door of his little farm cottage one noon five years ago, had a heart attack and died right there sitting on the seat. He says the thing that distressed him was the fact that he had to leave his business affairs in such a mess. He was not ready to go in any sense of the word. But he was so proud of the way Adele sold the place, moved into Iowa City, put the boys in school, got a good job and began a most successful role as both father and mother to our two sons. I have helped in every way I could, especially in the early days, and this is the only opportunity I've ever had to tell you of my pride and joy over your wonderful performance."

Adele was overjoyed. "I can't tell you what this means to me," said Adele after the meeting. "I have heard you preach sermons about the reality and nearness of the Other Side but I frankly had my doubts. I have wondered so many times if Bob really knew how I was making out or if I would ever see him again. Now I know. Oh! If you only knew what this hour has meant to me!"

Dr. Bach brought Mr. Ford to Iowa City to address his students just about every year. Once, when my wife was in New Hampshire for a couple weeks, I asked Bach and Ford to drop in for lunch and sample my culinary ability. My own favorite dish is to get a spring chicken cut up, roll each piece in flour, put it all in a big covered dripping tin with a cup of water to keep it moist and chuck it into a 300 degree oven for two hours. How my eminent guests went after my succulent chicken along with a tossed salad and some whole wheat bread and milk, topped off with three big chocolate sundaes! I had all I could do to keep them from making a habit of dropping by for lunch! That is,

until I saw how handy they both were with a dish towel!

After lunch, Marc took off for an appointment and friend Ford said, "we are alone. How would you like me to lie down here on your davenport, put on my silk eye bandage and go to sleep. Maybe we'll get something of interest to you." I'll never forget the next forty-five minutes! Fletcher said: "Hello! There is a charming and modest little man here by the name of Dr. Bugbee. He has been here before but so many others have crowded around that he has always stepped back and let the more insistent ones in ahead of him." How true to life was this character description of my former boss when he was pastor of Hennepin Avenue Church in Minneapolis. "I am so glad you are helping to launch Spiritual Frontiers, Lewis," said Dr. Bugbee, "because church people who are skeptical about the reality and nearness of the spirit world are now ready to consider the kind of evidence that the gifted Arthur Ford can bring them."

Only two people called me Lewis. All other close friends called me Lew. Dr. Bugbee always called me Lewis. So did my mother. She came through next. "There is a very beautiful and luminous lady here who wants to assure Lewis that, when he comes over into the spirit world, the two of you will never have anymore of those painful theological arguments about the devil, hell, heaven and the Second Coming like you used to have." I said to Ford after he had awakened: "Bless her heart. When I came out of Boston, I had foolishly argued with my dear mother about the untenable fundamentalist beliefs until I suddenly realized that my mother's strong faith in the Living God was right for her; that even if I succeeded in getting her to shift her point of view she couldn't become any better or stronger morally or spiritually; that she was one of God's noblewomen just like she was, fundamentalist views and all!" And now I had found her radiant and happy on The Oth-

er Side!

"And who is Fletcher?" When Arthur Ford awakened from his trance, I asked this question. He told me Fletcher was a boyhood acquaintance of his from Canada, that he was killed in the first World War and took it upon himself to join forces with his old friend when it became apparent that Ford possessed remarkable psychic powers. Fletcher is always near and ready to help discarnates to communicate whenever Ford blindfolds himself and goes into a trance.

In his autobiography, "Nothing So Strange", Ford has a fascinating chapter on "A Round With The Magicians," Howard Thurston and the world renowned Houdini. Both men claimed they could expose all mediums as the fakes they really were. Thurston, however, sought out a few mediums reported to be genuine, attended a number of seances with them and finally announced that some mediums were genuine, some could really communicate with discarnates in the spirit world.

But not Houdini! He did not believe in a future life and therefore all mediums must be fakes. He claimed he could duplicate any supposed messages from the unseen world simply by using his magician's bag of tricks.

As a fourteen year old lad in South Haven, Michigan, I watched carpenters nail the handcuffed magician into a big, heavy wooden box, put heavy ropes around it and toss it off a bridge into twenty feet of water in the Black River. Two minutes later Houdini's head bobbed up on the surface and he smiled broadly as he swam ashore.

There was a great stir throughout the nation when, in 1929, Arthur Ford finally came through with the secret code that Houdini had made with his mother and his wife. His mother died first and she was to get the secret word "forgive" back to Mrs. Houdini if she survived on the other side. Then Houdini died and mother and son were together

over there. During a trance on February 8, 1928, Fletcher announced that the mother of Houdini was with him and that she wanted to send a message of one word to Beatrice Houdini----the word was "forgive". She said Beatrice was the only person in the world who knew of the secret agreement this mother had with Houdini and his wife to send back this word in case she survived. Now that her son was with her over there, it was time they started making amends for the number of people whose faith in survival had been broken by Houdini. Mrs. Houdini was a surprised but happy woman when she got this message. This is "the sole communication received among thousands up to this time that contained the secret key word known only to Houdini, his mother, and myself," she said.

This message was but the forerunner of the more important one that Houdini had promised his wife to send through "if he survived." In November of 1928, this important message started coming through. The spelling out of this important message took a portion of eight sittings which the interested reader of these words may find described in detail in Ford's autobiography, "Nothing So Strange" (pp 69-75). It was a complicated code worked out by Houdini and his wife while they were doing an act together on stage all over the world. Two of the key words were "Rosebelle" and "Believe". Beatrice Houdini gave Ford a statement, signed in the presence of many witnesses, that he had indeed revealed the secret code that she and her husband had agreed would finally prove that he had survived death of the body.

"Tell the whole world", continued the famous magician, "that Harry Houdini still lives and will prove it a thousand times and more. I was perfectly honest and sincere in trying to disprove survival---- but I did no more than seemed justifiable. I am now sincere in send-

ing this through in my desire to undo. Tell all those who lost faith because of my mistake to lay hold again of hope and to live with the knowledge that life is continuous. That is my message to the world, through my wife and through this instrument." Houdini went on to predict that his wife would be attacked violently by certain people who would say she had sold her husband out by revealing the secret code to Ford and that Ford would also be attacked for accepting the sell out. But he said he knew his wife's strong sense of justice would sustain her and that she would remain firm in her defense of the truth. She did.

The more I saw of Mr. Ford, the more my absolute faith in his rock-ribbed integrity grew. On one of his many trips to Iowa City, I arranged for about twenty interested people to gather at the home of Dr. and Mrs. Bach. A tape recorder reported all that transpired. At one point Fletcher said to Dr. Bach that he should contact Leonard Deaver. "He is a good boy and you should have him with you in your work." Bach asked who Deaver might be. "A minister," Fletcher told him. "Salem Church."

Since neither the name of the church nor Deaver registered with Bach, he asked for more information and was told that Deaver was pastor of Salem Church in a nearby town and that he, Deaver, had recently performed funeral rites for "Russell Walker". Now Bach asked "and who was Russell Walker" and the answer was "a train conductor."

After the session was over, Bach felt a bit of a let down so he consulted his yearbook of ministers but still could not find Leonard Deaver. However, about a week later, I met Bach coming out of the Post Office with a lot of mail. As he glanced through it, he said, "Well, well, here is a letter from Leonard Deaver of Salem Church!" Ripping it open he said, "he is inviting me to give a lecture in Salem

Church on my recent travels." Later Bach told me he had called Deaver and asked him if he had ever heard of Arthur Ford. No, he had not. Had he ever heard of Russell Walker? Yes, he had buried him. He was a train conductor!

When Arthur Ford left Iowa City for Chicago at the conclusion of his visit, Marc Bach and I took him to the Rock Island depot. Since Marc was driving, Ford sat between us on the front seat. Looking at Bach and then at me he said: "You good friends will never know what a pleasure it is for me to come into the heart of this great academic community and to be so completely accepted for what I am----an ordained minister of the gospel and a man of integrity. In my work with Spiritual Frontiers, I am constantly speaking to new ministerial groups in various cities but, rather naturally I suppose, I am conscious of their skepticism and disbelief in my honesty. But a new day is dawning in which even Christian ministers are ready to open their minds far enough to believe in the ongoingness of life after death and in the possibility of communication with departed loved ones." We assured him that we both considered it an honor and a privilege to be associated with him in the new awakening.

It has been my good fortune to come to know quite a number of gifted psychics. Ida Marshall has recently passed into the unseen world where, I am sure, she feels right at home among her many friends. She was deeply spiritual, a frail little woman who, in her late sixties, had a severe heart condition which allowed the tissues of her body to fill up with water.

But let me tell you first how I came to meet her. When I retired from the active ministry after twenty years at First Methodist Church in Iowa City, I was seventy-two, my wife and I moved out to

Mercer Island, Washington to be near our second son Jon and his fine family. He said we would love the great Pacific Northwest with its mild winters and its fishing and camping opportunities. He was so right.

Within three months, however, I got restless. I wanted to get back into a limited amount of preaching if I could do so in a small way. Mercer Island, where Jon lived, was a beautiful Island only fifteen minutes from Seattle. Population fifteen thousand and no Methodist Church! When I went down to Methodist headquarters in Seattle and introduced myself to Dr. Henry Ernst, District Superintendent, I was instantly among friends. He had read some of my books and had once used "Something to Stand On" as the basis for a winter series of sermons in the church he was then serving. Furthermore, he told me he had just bought the abandoned Christian Science little white church on Mercer Island and was looking for a pastor to start a new Methodist congregation there. I offered to do it and was gladly accepted as "just the man".

It was a glorious experience to start from scratch with no members, no organ, no hymn books and not even any collection plates! I ran a couple of stories of my checkered career in the Mercer Island Reporter including my experiences in the Russian Revolution, the Czechoslovakia episodes as a newspaper man, eight trips abroad as a Tour Conductor, author, the Silent Communion Card technique for appropriating Divine resources and my rather remarkable twenty year pastorate in Iowa City.

The first Sunday in December of 1962, the little white church was full and I announced two services for the very next Sunday. In the three years I remained pastor, we took in three hundred members and I was gratified at the large number of people who joined after

telling me they had never wanted to unite with any church before in their lives. This one seemed to be just the one to fill their particular spiritual needs.

One of those who came was Ida Marshall and she came with J.C. and Inga Morris. Inga had been a parishoner of mine thirty years ago in Endion Church, Duluth. She had come west and married J.C. Morris, a promoter, contractor and builder. He had bought Ketron Island south of Tacoma and built roads and houses, installed a water supply, electricity, marina, docks and one of the finest homes in the country for his wife. Ida Marshall spent months every year with them.

Then tragedy. Cancer claimed J.C. and two years ago last October, I preached his funeral sermon at Steilacoom. But that was not the end of J.C.! During every trip that I made to Ketron Island to see Inga and Ida, J.C. came also. Ida could see him and talk to him just as plainly as she saw and talked to me----just like Arthur Ford could do. Ida was so frail that she stayed in bed until noon each day. The housekeeper would serve Inga and me our breakfast and we would often talk about my unorthodox views on matters pertaining to Christian theology. Ida far away in her bedroom always seemed to know what we had been talking about. She said J.C. told her.

The last time I saw Ida, she gave a remarkable demonstration of her power. I was to catch the late afternoon ferry to Steilacoom. I went into the beautiful living room and sat down in front of Ida and took her hand. We bowed our heads in silent prayer and expectation waiting for J.C. Soon Ida said, "J.C. is here. He says your work is far from done. You have a book to write and you have a lot of preaching to do yet. As a matter of fact, he says forces are at work this minute arranging for a sermon you are to preach next Sunday

in the little white church on Mercer Island. You will learn about it when you get home this evening." I told Ida I had not preached there since my heart attack eighteen months ago but we would see what the evening brought forth.

I drove the fifty-five miles home and quite forgot about J.C.'s prediction. I arrived back about 6:30 P.M. I had not been in the house an hour when the phone rang and John Compton was on the line. "Dr. Brizee's mother just died in Ohio and, before leaving to attend her funeral, he called me and asked me to get a preacher for next Sunday----will you take over?" I was delighted. The little church was packed but I didn't tell John Compton that I already knew of his request to me before he ever called up!

Before closing this chapter, let me relate one more incident from the psychic world that has to do with the writing of this book. In February of 1966, I had a heart attack that sent me to the hospital for two weeks. I lost forty pounds and, although I went back to the little white church on Easter Sunday and finished out the conference year in June, my coordination was sadly impaired, I found it almost impossible to write more than a few minutes at a time. So, since I would be seventy-six the next month, I decided to retire once more.

I still hoped I could write one more book---my autobiography. I wanted to leave my personal testimony of the power of the Living God in the life of any minister who can get himself off his hands and let the unseen forces of the Eternal unseen world guide him. I tried to start the book a few times but creative writing was torture. So time slid by until last June.

At that time, Jean Payne was about to drive up to Orcas Island to see a Mr. Louis of the Louis Foundation. He was a psychic in his early forties who could read one's aura, the electro-magnetic

field that surrounds every person. For example, when Mr. Eisenhower was president of Columbia University, this man was lecturing at the University and the president sent for him. As they shook hands, Louis said, "You are going to be President of the United States." Eisenhower laughed heartily. "How wrong you are, my friend! That is the last thing in this world I want to be!" Louis looked at him fixedly and continued, "At the top of your aura is the presidential seal of the United States. That symbol means that you will be President of this country." After staring at this confident psychic for a minute, Mr. Eisenhower finally replied, "I'll tell you what. If I ever do become President, you shall have the first dance with Mamie at the Inaugural Ball." And Louis collected!

It is a long three and a half hour trip up to Orcas Island by car and ferry and as I chatted with Jean Payne, a member of my church on Mercer Island, she assured me that Louis had not been told who I was or that I was even coming. We would have lunch at Louis's Outlook Inn which he has bought on Orcas and then meet the man.

After lunch, he came in and we shook hands. He looked at me for a minute and said, "Something happened to you two years ago that left you terribly devitalized. You lost a lot of weight. You know you should be writing the book that I see sitting on top of your aura! But you are too devitalized to write it. You don't have the strength and coordination that is required in writing a book. So you have been goofing off! But I am going to tell you what to do so you can 'get with it'. I see three keys sitting on top of the book which means that three classes of people will buy this book in great numbers because they need it so badly at the present time. It will have a great sale and I want the first copy."

Came then some simple directions. "Take lots of vitamin E and

C, Ironized yeast, and eat a lot of honey. Give yourself the summer to gain strength and then 'get with it!'. I was so stunned by the man's accuracy that I forgot to ask him who the three classes of people were who would be greatly helped by the book. If I were to hazard a guess, however, I would say they would be first, thousands of fine young people who are searching for something to give meaning and purpose to life but who are being tempted now by drugs, promiscuous sex and liquor, the so-called "now generation." Second, the tens of thousands of people who have bought and been helped by the seven books I have already written but which are all out of print---Handles of Power, More Handles of Power, Start Where You Are, Something to Stand On, Keys to Richer Living, The Inner Splendor and Power to Become. And third, a vast horde of faithful Christian church members who still go to church regularly but who feel the church and its program has little relevance to the present critical need of the world. I would even add a fourth group----those who are spiritually hungry but have never found any church that filled their need.

By last Thanksgiving, I was ready to try to write once more but I had no secretary. The efficient and delightful secretary I had had part time at the little white church, Geneva Schatzel, was still working there and only wanted part time work. Then out of the blue came Lois Berry to my home. "When do we start?" she said. "Start what?" She never batted an eye but said, "Your new book of course. I am going to type it for you. I waited all my life for your type of ministry to show up and now I have the feeling we should give it to the world in book form." Lois Berry is the wife of Ben, a patent attorney in Seattle, remarkable mother of four fine young people with an out-goingness typified by this generous gesture.

CHAPTER XII

Something To Stand On

In the fall of 1948 as the students returned to the campus and started attending our eleven o'clock service in greater numbers than ever, I decided to try to find out what they would like their minister to preach about. So I placed question boxes at the front and rear exits of the auditorium and asked the students to write out their questions and put them in the boxes as they left at the close of the service.

The questions surprised me. Here are some of them: Do you believe in an infallible Bible? In the Virgin Birth? In a literal hell and heaven? In the Fall of Man? In the resurrection of the body? In a final Judgment Day? In the Second Coming of Christ? In the Trinity?

That week I placed a large ad in The Daily Iowan and in The Press Citizen addressed to three thousand Methodist students at the State University of Iowa. I listed the above questions as typical and continued: "All right----we shall devote twenty Sundays to straight-from-the-shoulder answers to those questions and their answers after many years of earnest inquiry. We admit that the simple, lovable, dynamic personality of Jesus has been encrusted and almost buried beneath a load of man-made theological mumbo-jumbo. Let us examine the evidence with open, honest, questing minds and see if we can get back to HIM! Our answers will not be 'orthodox' but they will be forthright."

The response was overwhelming. It was necessary to begin a second morning service at 9:30 A.M. to accommodate the crowds of students of all denominations. Both services were soon filled to capacity with well over two thousand attendants and this situation remain-

ed until the end of my ministry there in 1962 twelve years later.

Each Sunday, the discourse of the morning was available in printed form as the people left the service. I told them that if I was to be quoted I wanted the quote to be accurate. Bull sessions all over the campus were the order of the day and I was frequently called to fraternities and sororities for further questioning.

The most rewarding thing in connection with this series was the response from many of the twelve hundred students who had written "unchurched" on their registration cards. I wrote them a letter in which I said I thought that it was just possible that they were too intelligent and too honest to accept the impossible theological impediments preached from some pulpits as "orthodox" Christianity---- that I hoped they would attend our church during this series just to find out what might happen to their thinking. Many of them did come and became regular attendants until their graduation from the University.

As I write the chapters of this book in 1969, twenty years after "Something to Stand On" came to life in Iowa City, it is much more evident now than it was then that the world is hungry for the spiritual dynamic and unity which the church of Jesus Christ could and should be furnishing. We must find our way back to the secret of those power-filled days of the first three centuries of the Christian Era when a handful of radiant, Christ-centered men overturned the Roman Empire. To do so we must re-evaluate the theological dissensions of later centuries with clear and open minds so as to recover a personal relationship with the simple, radiant, power-filled Christ.

The spirit in which I wrote "Something To Stand On" and in which I write now is expressed by the ringing challenge of Olive Schreiner:

"The new mother, when she looks down at the little head upon her breast, whispers in her heart: 'Oh, may you seek after truth. If anything I teach you be false, may you throw it from you, and pass on to higher and deeper knowledge than I ever had. If you are an artist, may no love of wealth or fame or admiration and no fear of blame or misunderstanding make you ever paint, with pen or brush, an ideal or a picture of external life otherwise than as you see it; if you become a politician, may no success for your party or yourself or the seeming good of even your nation ever lead you to tamper with reality and play a diplomatic part. In all the difficulties which will arise in life, fling yourself down on the truth and cling to that as a drowning man in a stormy sea flings himself on to a plank and cling to it, knowing that, whether he sink or swim with it, it is the best he has. If you become a man of thought and learning, oh, never with your left hand be afraid to pull down what your right has painfully built up through the years of thought and study, if you see it at last not to be founded on that which is; die poor, unloved, unknown, a failure----but shut your eyes to nothing that seems to them the reality.'"¹

Archimedes, when he discovered the principle of the fulcrum with its incredible lifting power exclaimed: "If I had something to stand on I could lift the world." So with us. If the fulcrum of our faith in The Living God be clear and strong enough, we could lift the world out of its impotence and despair.

The God that Jesus revealed was personal. He could think and feel and will and He embodied a sense of oughtness on which is based the conscience of mankind and the Moral Law. He knows, loves, purposes, warns, rebukes, rewards and punishes as only persons can, through the irrevocable operation of his eternal laws.

¹ "From Man to Man" by Olive Schreiner, Harper & Bros., p. 158.

Right here some people will interpose an objection. They will say that this anthropomorphic God is made in man's image; that their God must be greater than that; that he must be impersonal. We will agree at once that he must be bigger than that. Man's finite mind can never hope to compass infinity even in the slightest degree. What we are trying to say is that the most precious value in the universe is personal----that every soul is of infinite worth in the sight of God. Therefore, any adequate conception of God must contain personality. As Victor Hugo said: "The All would not be the All unless it contained personality. That Personality is God."

Of course, most of us have to outgrow our childhood conception of a Big Man with a long white beard, sitting on a throne in a grand but solitary place in heaven. The creator of the immensities of the starry heavens and of the inconceivable power of the atom quickly eludes any such limitation of his Being. When we are told that a train moving a mile a minute would have to travel forty million years to reach the nearest star, we are lost in an immensity that dwarfs the most vivid imagination. The Creator of that must be more than a big man. As an astronomer said after an hour with his telescope: "This does away with a six-foot God; you can't shake hands with the Creator of that."

But neither can a man have personal relations with a substitute for "God the Father Almighty" that some materialistically minded scientists have postulated. When Haeckel denies a personal God he has his substitute ready. I believe in a "chemical substance of a viscous character, having albuminous matter and water as its chief constituents." Can you imagine a family receiving a fateful telegram from the war department, saying George has been killed in Viet

Nam, getting down to pray and saying: "Oh, chemical substance of a viscous character?" Can you imagine Jesus praying like that in the Garden of Gethsemane?

No, that just won't do at all! When Jesus told the story of the Prodigal Son and the boy took his share of his inheritance, traveled to a foreign land and spent it all in riotous living and finally ended up feeding swine and eating corn with the pigs, Jesus has him turn his thoughts toward his father. He will go home and say very humbly, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you and am no more worthy to be called your son. Let me be as a hired hand." But the Father who had never given the boy up for lost saw him coming far down the road and ran to meet him, throwing his loving arms around his neck as he cried, "Oh, my son, my son that was lost is found" as the tears rolled down his withered cheeks. The fatted calf was killed, the purple robes were put on the prodigal and rejoicing filled the air. Why did Jesus tell that story? To show that God is very much like that father.

No, a teacup of water will reveal the quality of the whole ocean. Nothing in the universe can love or remember or forgive or create except persons. Therefore, we are on solid ground when we refuse to take a byproduct of experience such as physical energy and say that that is symbolic of the Eternal. We take full orbed personality, self-conscious being that knows and purposes and loves and creates and lift it up just as high as we can and say: "God, at least in part, is best symbolized by that." Of all the realities with which we deal, personality alone, invisible and inscrutable, reaching back in memory, reaching forth in imagination, self-giving in love and laying hold on the future with creative power, is a worthy symbol of God. Here indeed is the rock on which we take our

stand. On this, if the fulcrum of our faith be strong enough, we shall lift the world.

As a matter of fact, the only time the world is ever lifted is when a person is lifted. And Jesus taught that the way to lift a person is through love. "And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question, to test him. 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' And he said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And a second is like it, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets.'" (Matthew 22: 35-40).

Here was genius at work! The lawyer who asked Jesus the question would instantly know where he got the first half of the great commandment. Every Jewish child was taught Deuteronomy 6: 5, "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord, and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might." But that second half about loving your neighbor as you love yourself----where did Jesus get that?

Quick as a flash, he reached over into Leviticus 19: 18 and plucked one sentence out from among agricultural laws that Moses handed down for guidance in farming. "You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Then follows other instruction: "You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind, you shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed." Jesus was not interested in the agricultural minutiae that surrounded his pearl of great price. So he plucked it out: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," and set it down with Deuteronomy 6:5 about loving God.

For the first time in history, he placed the two loves side by side, called it the great Commandment and said, "on this hangs all the law and the prophets!" The love way of life! Absolutely central in all of Jesus' teaching!

And now let me shock you! Not a single one of the great creeds of christendom hammered out by the theologizers in the third to the fifth centuries after Christ had one word to say about Jesus' great Commandment on love----not even a reference to it was made! That of course includes the ^{creed} ~~and~~ used in many Protestant churches. They were so busy quarreling about Jesus' origin and power and place in the divine scheme of things that they completely forgot what he said was all-important! Is it any wonder the church has been losing power ever since? Within a short time after giving the world the great Commandment on love, Jesus gave up his life hanging on a cross, put there by hating men. And now, nineteen centuries later, descendents of these same hating Arabs and Jews are still hating each other to such an extent that the peace of the whole world just might be shattered in another World War unless the United States and Russia play their cards with such skill that they avoid the confrontation that neither of them wants.

Jesus' reputation was never greater than it is today. His simple statement that, "I am the way, the truth and the life" has stood the test of nineteen centuries while the way of retaliation practiced by Israelis and Arabs and others is clearly the cause of trouble instead of its solution.

Of course I know that many people will interpose a valid objection at this point. They will rightly say that one cannot force oneself to love a nasty, unlovable individual just by blowing on ones hands and stoutly affirming "I love you." That is right. You

cannot summon the beautiful emotion of love and slavishly command it to serve your interests. But you can begin by demonstrating unbreakable good will and that can grow into love...

Professor Torrey of Harvard is a great authority on Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke. He has translated the New Testament back into Aramaic. In that language he reread Matthew 5: 43-48 about loving your enemies. Then he noticed that by changing one little squiggle of that difficult language he had discovered what it was that Jesus probably said in Matthew 5:48. Instead of saying, "You therefore must be perfect even as your Heavenly Father is perfect" he said, "Be ye therefore demonstrators of unbreakable good will even as your Heavenly Father is a demonstrator of unbreakable good will." That throws a light into the preceding verses about "making his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and his rain to fall on the just and on the unjust." Of course! That is one of His ways of demonstrating unbreakable good will. But to command us to be as perfect as God is something else. Jesus' commands are idealism of the most practical kind. They work! And unbreakable good will can lead to love.

Jesus knew how to love men and women in every walk of life. In 1954 as I was touring the Holy Land, we were driving along the shore of the Sea of Galilee between Tiberius and Capernaum when the guide said, "and this pile of rock and rubble is all that is left of the village of Magdala." I came alive on the instant and said, "please stop." I got out of the car and stood reverently looking at the rubble where Mary Magdalene lived in Jesus' day. Only a short distance away, the Sea of Galilee sparkled in the August sun as it had in the long ago.

You know the story, one of the most revealing of the insight

and character of Jesus in the New Testament. A group of men came to Jesus dragging a woman taken in the act of adultery. They reminded Jesus that Moses, in the law, commanded that such a woman should be stoned; but what did Jesus think of that? Jesus stooped down and wrote in the sand without answering them. When they continued pestering him for an answer, he got to his feet and slowly looked them over. Then: "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." And stooping down, he again wrote in the sand. And these men, convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one and Jesus was left alone with the woman. When he finally straightened up, he said to her, "where are your accusers? Hath no man condemned thee?" She said, "No man Lord." And Jesus said, "neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

Here is the world's greatest Christian gentleman bringing a fallen woman to the great forgiveness, restoring her true identity to her without a stern lecture on the evil of adultery. She did not need it. In his presence she had already convicted herself of the evil deed, and now she desperately needed the strength that always comes when someone you respect has confidence in you. Jesus had said: "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." (John 3:17).

Scholars believe that this Mary Magdalene had a sister named Martha and a brother named Lazarus. They moved to Bethany near Jerusalem where Jesus was often in their home.. In fact, during the last week of the Master's life, he left Jerusalem every night and mostly stayed with Mary, Martha and Lazarus, returning to his dangerous assignment in Jerusalem each morning.

It is little wonder that the first person to see the risen Jesus on Easter morning was this same Mary Magdalene. She had arriv-

ed at the tomb before dawn. When she saw the empty tomb, she ran to tell Peter and John that the body of Jesus had been taken away. Then, weeping, she returned to the tomb and met someone she thought was the gardener. When she asked him where they had taken the body of Jesus, Jesus spoke her name, "Mary"! And instantly she recognized the man whose beautiful inwardness and understanding had changed her whole life.

The way of love of God and man is the only way that really works, that creatively transforms people and situations, that gives life true meaning and purpose. Edgar Cayce was constantly telling people through his sleeping messages to meditate and pray and to follow the example and light of him who said, "I am the light of the world." Without meditation and prayer, they could never hope to solve the problems they had been reincarnated to solve.

The Quakers have always been firm believers in the "guidance of the inner light." The people called The Society of Friends or Quakers still meet in their plain little meeting houses and wait in silence for the voice of God and for the manifestation of Light. They have the highest reputation in the world for selfless service in the distribution of aid to the needy. President Hoover who saved so many millions of lives in and after World War I was a Quaker.

One of the greatest of the early Quakers was William Penn, born in 1644 of a prominent family in England. As a young man, Penn indulged in meditation and prayer on a wholesale scale. His father would beat him up and send him to his room. Instead of getting angry, this young man practiced more meditation and prayer.

Then one night it happened! Suddenly, the bedroom was flooded with the most beautiful and radiant light and his soul came alive with a rhythm and joy and beauty that overwhelmed him. He felt "this"

is the Being of God and the soul of man is capable of enjoying communion with Him." Penn was never the same again. He felt impelled to counsel men "to seek and follow the Inner Light at all costs."

For this, he paid a very high price because religious toleration and freedom were as yet unknown. He was "banished" from college and beaten up by his father and turned out-of-doors but the Inner Light continued to shine. He was thrown into jail four times for speaking and writing like a Quaker. His most famous trial in 1670 on a charge of causing a riot by preaching in Gracechurch Street, is a landmark in English history. Penn was acquitted but the court was so incensed by the fact that this brilliant young upstart knew so much law that he could win his own case, that it sent not only Penn but the whole jury to jail anyway! Penn merely used the time, not for despair or anger, but for more meditation and prayer and more pamphlets. The jurors appealed and, although it took Penn two years, he won the case that was to establish a right that has ever since been cherished by English and American citizens alike---the right to free and unbossed juries.

More than a century later a young man in the American Colonies by the name of Thomas Jefferson was getting ready to write the Declaration of Independence with its clarion insistence upon the infinite worth of the common man. He steeped his mind in the stately, marching prose of William Penn's pamphlets on human rights. Penn, he said, was the greatest lawyer who ever lived. "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Sound familiar? The Inner Light of Cosmic Consciousness that Penn experienced in his bedroom was to shine brilliantly in his jail cell dur-

ing the long two years of his imprisonment. It was to find reflection in the greatest document of its kind in human history. The Living God knows how to make even the wrath of men to praise Him!

It turned out to be a blessing that the profligate spendthrift Charles II owed Penn's father sixteen thousand pounds which he could not pay. Thus it eventually came about that William Penn was given Pennsylvania in lieu of the debt. Here, in 1682, he made a famous treaty with Chief Tammany. Voltaire said that this treaty was the only one in history that was made without an oath, (Quakers believe a man's word should be as good as an oath), and the only one that was never broken! Penn declared that brotherly love and human decency should be one's guiding principles in dealing with all men. When he founded Philadelphia as the City of Brotherly Love, he meant it and as long as he lived his Inner Light produced great results.

But see what happened when he died! Penn had arranged the famous "Walking Purchase" by which he bought from the Indians all the land north along the Delaware River that a man could cover in a three day walk. He himself walked off a day and a half of the purchase in leisurely fashion. In 1737, long after his death, Governor Thomas Penn, his son, hired three famous backwoodsmen to complete the purchase. They ran, not walked, more than sixty miles in thirty-six hours, defrauding the Indians of valuable hunting grounds. This led to wars on the Pennsylvania frontier which did not end until the Indians were virtually exterminated.

Herein lies a truth that must not escape us in this critical hour. When Penn actually put Brotherly Love and Justice and Integrity into his promises and treaties and lived up to this high standard of conduct, there was peace and harmony. When on December 7, 1682,

his followers passed the "Great Law of Pennsylvania" whereby that colony was to become a Christian State based on the Quaker model, they were following the advice of one of the most practical men who ever lived. It is practical hard-headed realism as well as God-like idealism. But when greed and avarice entered the picture fifty years later and the Indians were defrauded of their land, the hatreds of men produced the inevitable bloodshed and chaos.

One more word before we close this chapter. What was the attitude of Cotton Mather to the coming of one of the most Christ-like characters ever to invade the New World? Mather was one of the most popular and influential ministers of the gospel alive. One day while browsing through some early American history, I came upon this letter:

"In The Year of Our Lord 1682

To Ye Aged and Beloved, Mr. John Higginson:

There be now at sea, a ship called *Welcome*, which has on board 100 or more of the heretics and malignants called Quakers, with W. Penn, who is the chief scamp, at the head of them. The General Court has accordingly given sacred orders to Master Malachi Huscott of the brig *Porpoise*, to waylay the said *Welcome* slyly as near the Cape of Cod as may be, and make captive the said Penn and his ungodly crew, so that the Lord may be glorified and not mocked on the soil of this new country with the heathen worship of these people. Much spoil can be made of selling the whole lot to Barbados, where slaves fetch good prices in rum and sugar and we shall not only do the Lord great good by punishing the wicked, but we shall make great good for His minister and people."

"Yours in the bowels of Christ

Cotton Mather"

What do you suppose Cotton Mather had in mind by "great good for His minister and people?" I think he thought that the sale of William Penn and his people into slavery would fetch him enough free rum to keep him pleasantly drunk for the rest of his life! When I was a student at Boston University School of Theology, I used to stroll across the Boston Common to gaze through the bars of a heavy iron fence next to Park Church at a huge mound of earth. Inside that mound were the tiny skeletons of unbaptized babies: Cotton Mather, famous pastor of Second Church, Boston, and author of many books, used to tell his people that that grave contained unbaptized babies, "many of them not over a span long", and that they were now creeping around on the floor of hell where they would remain forever and ever! Since I used to pass that pathetic grave many times on my morning walks, I used to stand there and try to imagine the grief of some of those colonial families after losing a baby that died before it could be baptized. And I used to wonder how the Christian church had survived through so many centuries with pagans like Cotton Mather at the helm! Then I would go back to my room, pick up my Bible and read, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Then I'd say: "All those little babies are in the Loving Father's Kingdom of Heaven. But where is Cotton Mather?"

When I wrote down that last question I intended to cross it out before handing this chapter over to Lois Berry for typing. Now two days later, I think I'd like to try to answer it---especially since my answer will be quite different than it would have been fifty years ago when I stood gazing through the iron fence at that pathetic grave. Cotton Mather, at death, would come to consciousness in the Spirit World just as William Penn would, just as all

those babies would. If reincarnation is a fact of existence as I believe it to be, Cotton Mather would instantly see that those babies were old souls who had lived on this earth a number of times already perhaps but who had a Karmic debt to settle on their return to earth. Since they died so young, they were cut off before their work was done and would probably choose soon to try it again with other parents.

Mather himself would be pleasantly shocked at this discovery no doubt and tend to feel that God had let him down! Then, William Penn, or some other apostle of the Inner Light, with a heart full of love and patience would take over the task of trying to enlighten this tough fundamentalist divine and slowly prepare him for a return journey to earth for another go of it. This man Mather was very gifted and able. He and all men could well use another chance. Then, instead of maligning the God of Love by sending unbaptized babies to hell, he might well honor God by working out a few sermons on the love of God, using a text like, "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." And that would be progress!

What About The Trinity?

Here is the Athanasian Creed of the Roman Catholic Church:

"Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith: Which faith, except every one do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic Faith is this: That we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in unity, neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son, of the Holy Ghost, is all one; the glory equal, the majesty coeternal. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost; the Father uncreate, the Son uncreate, the Holy Ghost uncreate; the Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible; the Holy Ghost incomprehensible; the Father eternal, the Son eternal, and the Holy Ghost eternal; and yet they are not three eternal but one eternal; as also there are not three uncreated, nor three incomprehensibles, but one uncreated, and one incomprehensible. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty. And yet there are not three Almighty, but one Almighty. So the Father is God; the Son is God, the Holy Ghost is God. And yet there are not three Gods, but one GodSo that in all things, as aforesaid, the Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped. He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity"

That, dear friends, is one church's official explanation of who Jesus was! It is little wonder that so many honest, virile, young minds are rejecting a Christology that indulges in such incomprehensible double-talk, such theological mumbo-jumbo! The Vaster

himself explained his wisdom and power in one simple sentence. "The words that I speak unto you are not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (Luke 11:10) Very simply Jesus is saying he is a clear, open channel for God the Father to work through. That statement is clear and satisfying. It was enough for Jesus, it should be enough for us. Christianity is not a series of dogmas to be believed but a transforming friendship emanating from a study and personal acceptance of the eternal and divine wisdom to be found in the Sermon on the Mount. Paul put it this way: "Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2)

The supreme contribution of the Hebrew people to the ancient world was that of monotheism or the "one God" idea. In a polytheistic world, the Hebrews worshipped Jehovah. At first they conceived of Him as their tribal deity but after a few centuries they knew Him to be the God of the whole world.

Every Hebrew child learned Deuteronomy 6:4-9 by heart before he learned anything else. Every time he entered his home, he touched the little box on the door post which contained these verses. He wore them on frontlets between his eyes or bound them on the backs of his hands:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord Our God is one Lord:

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:

"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and thou shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when

thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.

"And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

It is little wonder that this affirmation to love one God came naturally to Jesus' lips in his early ministry as he voiced the Great Commandment. You may search the words of Jesus in the New Testament exhaustively but you will find no reference that must necessarily be to a Trinitarian concept of God except in Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Scholars are in general agreement, however, that these words were added a century or two after the completion of the Gospel of Matthew and were never spoken by Jesus himself.

The Gospel of John contains references to the Comforter which the Father would send, (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7), but there is no reason to conclude that John was inferring anything other than the immanent Presence of the one God. Nowhere in the New Testament is reference made to the Spirit, Comforter or Holy Ghost in such wise as to infer anything other than another name for the Father. The Holy Spirit and God mean exactly the same thing. As Jesus said: "God is Spirit." (John 4:24)

The Christian doctrine of the Trinity is not, then, a New Testament doctrine. It gradually developed over a period of several centuries as men speculated concerning the burning question of who Jesus was. The overwhelming impression which his matchless life and death and resurrection left upon the world soon led men to equate

him with deity. But how? In what way could he be God?

The Trinitarian concept was not new to the ancient world. There were numerous ethnic trinities such as Osiris, Isis and Horus among the Egyptians; Anu, Enlil and Ea among the Sumerians; Sin, Shamash and Ishtar among the early Babylonians. These were all polytheistic Gods. Vishnu, Siva and Brahma among the Hindus, however, were considered different manifestations of the one divine essence of Brahman and hence must be judged to be essentially monotheistic.

Let us now trace the general development of Christian Trinitarian doctrine and see how God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit came to be considered three personalities in one unified Godhead.

Tertullian, in the second century, was probably the first Christian father to use the word "Trinity". He was undoubtedly influenced by a uniqueness in Jesus' life and teaching which put him in a relationship to God enjoyed by no other man who ever lived. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matthew 11:27). No one had ever spoken such words before. And then there was Peter's confession of Jesus' Messiahship, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16).

Another fact that influenced these early Christians was Jesus' embodiment of the principle of sacrificial love as expressed in his death. Since his resurrection followed on the third day after his crucifixion and since the whole Christian movement was grounded in an unshakeable assurance that he was alive, they very naturally began to worship him and to ponder on his unique relationship to the

Father.

At the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D., we find the Church Fathers sharply divided in one of the most heated religious controversies of all time. Athanasius was the leader and hero of an advanced Trinitarian position which declared, as the Nicene Creed put it, that in Christ dwelt "all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," that he was "very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father."

Fifty years later, toward the close of the fourth century, we find Cappadocian theologians recognizing the Holy Spirit as the third person in the Trinity. A century after that St. Augustine put the finishing touches on the doctrine and influenced the writing of the Athanasian Creed in which the absolute equality of the three Persons of the Trinity was declared to be "the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved." Wrote Augustine: "In that highest Trinity, one is as much as the three together, nor are two anything more than one. And they are infinite in themselves. So both each are in each and all in each, and each in all, and all in all, and all are one."

After reading a statement like that, one can readily sympathize with the man who wrote: "As he that denies this fundamental article of the Christian religion may lose his soul, so he that much strives to understand it may lose his wits."

By the fifth century Christianity had become an intricate system of beliefs instead of a Way of Life patterned after the example of the lowly Nazarene. Orthodoxy was determined by credal standards far more than by ethical conduct or religious experience. Opinion about Jesus transcended in importance the following of his example or the demonstration of his loving spirit. Theology complete-

ly supplanted ethics and true religion.

At the Council of Nicaea, Arius and two bishops led the opposition to the "orthodox" group and still insisted that Christ was not of the same substance as the Father and hence not coequal. These gentlemen were promptly banished and branded as enemies of Christianity. Fifty years later, Arianism had revived and was accepted by nine-tenths of Eastern Christendom.

During these years occurred scenes of indescribable violence. In Alexandria a mob led by Arians invaded the church of St. Thomas where the Nicene Creed was believed. A young man in woman's clothing danced on the altar; another young man sat naked in the bishop's chair, from which he openly preached immorality to a crowd roaring with laughter. On the same occasion, virgins of the church were stripped, beaten and violated!

Emperor Constantinus issued an edict to the effect that those persons who refused to take communion at the hands of an Arian bishop should have their mouths "held open by a wooden engine while the consecrated bread was forced down their throats." By 530 A.D. the controversy over the Trinity was so bitter that "respectable citizens, noble matrons, and consecrated virgins were stripped naked and raised in the air by pulleys." In this helpless attitude, "their naked bodies were torn with scourges or burnt with red hot plates of iron." And all of this in defense of Christ! When Damascus was elected Pope, the riots were so fierce over this Trinitarian issue that 137 corpses were found in one church.

In 451, following the Council of Chalcedon, a bitter struggle rent the church over the Trinitarian question of whether Christ was "in two natures or of two natures." Here was a controversy of so delicate a character that no one could really understand it. And

yet cities were divided into rival, howling mobs. The orthodox Patriarch of Alexandria, Proterius, was murdered in his own baptism by followers of his rival Timothy. "A literature arose, says the English historian Lecky, "surpassing in its mendacious ferocity any other the world has ever known."

Well, there it is! We could go on and on with the story of the cantankerous, hate-filled atmosphere that surrounded the church fathers during all the centuries in which the great creeds of the church were formulated. The three greatest---the Apostles Creed, the Nicene, and the Athanasian were evolved during the first six centuries of the Christian era. And although there were many great and Christlike souls who refused to become embroiled in these malicious wranglings, it still remains a sordid fact that these creed-forming centuries represent the most shameful period in all of the long history of the church. In their attempt to explain the simple, loving, power-filled Nazarene, they lost sight of the real Jesus almost completely and encrusted his dynamic personality with involved, theological mumbo-jumbo.

Even after nineteen centuries of the Christian era much of the blight of these early years remain to divide and confuse us. The Protestant revolt during the Reformation period of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries represented a courageous repudiation of many of the impossible theological positions which had grown up in the Roman Catholic church. But Protestants carried over into their movement much theological impedimenta and exhibited a spirit as evil and intolerant as their Catholic brethren. Visit the exhibit of instruments of torture at the Hague in Holland; look over the spiked collars, flesh pinchers, thumbscrews, branding irons,

iron whips, tongue tearers, iron spiders for disemboweling, choking ropes, wheels for breaking joints and the famous iron virgin whose embrace gouged out the victim's eyes and impaled his body upon numerous sharp spikes, and you will see what we mean. Both Catholics and Protestants used these instruments of torture to "set right" their erring brethren so that their souls might be "saved"! Pope Gregory XVI was quite consistent with Catholic orthodoxy when he declared that the idea of freedom of conscience about theological matters was "mad indifference flowing from the most foul fountain of indifference." It was for the individual's soul's salvation that these tortures were inflicted on both sides! The bitter hatred was masked as "zeal for Christ!"

But we are making progress. When I took a course of Systematic Theology in Boston University School of Theology half a century ago, Dr. Henry C. Sheldon taught us the orthodox theory of the Trinity. None of us comprehended it but we consoled ourselves that nobody ever had anyway.

When Dr. Albert C. Knudson later took the Chair of Systematic Theology he was at work on his book, "The Doctrine of Redemption." Here you will find a magnificent chapter on "The Person of Christ" with an approach to the problem of the Trinity that is sane and reasonable. During at least ten centuries of the Christian era he would have been burned at the stake for that chapter!

"If Christian believers would accept the Christ of the New Testament without theorizing about him," he writes, "it might be better both for the church and for religion in general." But, since men are bound to think along these lines, he offers his view on "the new Christology." Let us follow his thought:

"The specific changes that seem called for are in the main

three. First, complete humanity must be attributed to Jesus, not only in the sense that he had a human spirit as well as a human soul and body, but in the sense that his personal center, his ego, was human. This does not exclude his divinity. . . .In the second place, the uniqueness (his divinity) is to be regarded as due, not to the union of two 'natures' within him, one human and the other divine, but to his unique dependence upon the divine will and to his unique enduement with the Divine Spirit. Third, divinity, is to be ascribed to Jesus, not because he made this claim for himself, nor because he was possessed of omnipotence, but because of his unique consciousness of oneness with God and because of his creative and redemptive agency in the founding of the Kingdom of God." 1

How reasonable and satisfying this position is. Jesus said: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself; but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." (John 14:10). That is the only explanation that I have ever needed to account for Jesus. It is all Jesus needed. There never have been two kinds of divinity or God-power----one for Jesus and one for you and me. There has been a difference of degree but not a difference in kind. Jesus was completely at one with the Father as no other man ever has been so that he could truly say, "The Father and I are one." But he also prayed, "That they all may be one; as thou Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John 14:21)

I thank God that I have lived to see the day when the great theological schools of our free America dare to teach such a reason-

1 "The Doctrine of Redemption", Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, p. 319

able view of the person of Jesus and of his relationship to his Father; that God the Father and the Holy Spirit are synonymous names and that Jesus, "full of this Spirit," was able to do his mighty works for that one reason.

The difference, then, between Jesus and us would seem to lie just here: Two cups sit side by side on the beach when the ocean tide is out. One is completely clean while the other is coated inside with grease and dirt. As the tide rolls in it fills one to the brim; it is "at one" with the ocean. The other cup contains the same ocean water but is not full. The grease and dirt prevent a complete "at-onement." Jesus represents one cup, the rest of humanity the other.

As I reread what has been written in this chapter, I see more clearly than ever before why Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick felt impelled to write a chapter in one of his books on "The Peril of Worshipping Jesus." Said John: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother. . . .how can he love God?And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also." (I John 4:20,21) Love is the test of discipleship, not theology. Else why did Jesus say that on the love of God and man rested all the law?

We cannot close this chapter, however, without freely admitting that there are millions of Christlike souls who believe in the Trinitarian concept of God. They do not understand it. Even the formulators of this doctrine never did! These dear people were brought up to believe you could not be a Christian and believe anything else. They are loving and kind and good, not because of such doctrines as this but in spite of them. Many of them would not care now to rethink their position on this matter nor would they be any

better people if they did. They are already the salt of the earth. I am not writing for them. I am rather writing as plainly and as frankly as I am able to give what aid I may to that great army of younger souls who have not been emotionally conditioned to some of the "orthodox" positions and who are determined to find "Something to Stand On" that they can more nearly comprehend.

Even so, good friends, our goal still remains the same---- complete Christlikeness in answer to Jesus' simple prayer: "That they all may be one as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

The Second Coming of Christ

While I was still the pastor of First Church in Iowa City, a very intelligent and attractive young lady came to my study. She was close to a nervous collapse. Since coming to the University of Iowa from Texas, a fearful conflict had raged in her mind. I am happy that I was able to free her mind and spirit in two interviews. She was soon poised and radiant in her new found freedom.

Briefly her story was as follows: In childhood she was taught that Christ was coming "on the clouds of heaven" almost any day; that the world would come to an end; that the faithful would be caught up into endless bliss while the sinful would be cast into a lake of fire to burn forever. She was not allowed to go to a movie or a stage play, not permitted to dance or play a game of cards the way her friends did because, as her mother would always say, "You would not want Christ to catch you doing any of those things when he suddenly appears in the clouds of heaven, would you?"

When she came to the university, Mother was no longer present to restrain her. She started using her student passes to attend the excellent plays given in the University Theater, she saw a few movies and even went to a dance at the Union. Then it was that the emotional conditioning of childhood began to play havoc with her peace of mind. She was indeed in a fair way of losing her mind. I shall here relate the line of instruction which set her free.

The sacred literature of the world is full of the hope and assurance of a golden age. Ancient mythology in Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome depicted terrible conflicts between the gods of good and evil, out of which usually emerged a victory for good and a golden age of prosperity. Cosmic powers, in whose grip puny man

was impotent, struggled for mastery. Supernatural intervention was the only hope of deliverance.

This hope in the Old Testament was embodied in a Messiah whose coming filled the whole field of Jewish prophecy with increasing splendor. The powerful enemies of Israel had devastated their lands and, in 721 B.C. and 586 B.C., had carried the people off into a galling and hopeless slavery. In Daniel the assurance of supernatural delivery from this bondage took the form of a series of apocalyptic visions in which fearful beasts, representing the great world empires that were the oppressors of Israel, were destroyed, and "One like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven" and "there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (Daniel 7:13-14)

One can imagine the hope and courage which this message brought to the distracted Hebrews of that day. The year was 168 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes, powerful Syrian monarch, roared down from the north and swept everything before him. He even sacrificed a pig on the holy altar of Jehovah in the Temple at Jerusalem. This was the "abomination of desolation" which the Hebrews have not forgotten to this day. Thousands were leaving the religion of their fathers and taking up the pagan cult. Judas Maccabaeus and his sons started a revolt. The book of Daniel appeared, promising supernatural deliverance for the faithful by a cloud-riding Messiah.

The Jews produced an abundance of apocalyptic literature during the two centuries before Christ and the first century after Christ. The word apocalyptic means "to unveil." Mysterious symbolism was supposed to carry a secret message of deliverance to the faithful; a mes-

sage undecipherable by their enemies. It was an escape mechanism. It promised helpless, hopeless Hebrews that a Messiah would vanquish their powerful enemies and set up a splendid earthly kingdom provided only that they remain faithful to God.

Many writings, that were never embodied in our Bible, were written during these three centuries, books that had a profound influence upon Jewish thinking. Among these mysterious books were the Psalms of Solomon, First and Second Maccabees, Enoch, the Assumption of Moses, Esdras and Baruch. One of the last of the line was the book of Revelation in our New Testament.

This final book of the New Testament was written in apocalyptic symbolism for a particular time and condition. The Domitian persecutions were making life miserable for all Christians at the close of the first century of the Christian era. The content of its teaching may be summed up in the words of Revelation 2:10, "Be thou faithful until death, and I will give thee the crown of life." It was never intended to be used as prophecy for the coming of the end of the world at a later date any more than was the book of Daniel. Accredited scholars are in substantial agreement that Daniel and Revelation were written to enable the persecuted people of 165 B.C. and 100 A.D. to face their problems victoriously. They contain a spiritual message for all time but, we repeat, they were never intended to foretell the end of the world in later years.

Yet these mysterious books have been the happy hunting ground for all manner of prophets of doom for nineteen long centuries, and the end is not yet. By manipulating the various prophetic numbers found in the Bible, such as the "seven times" of Leviticus 26:18, the "seventy weeks," the "seven weeks," the "three score and two weeks," the "one week," the "time, times and a half" of Daniel, and the "five

months," "the forty and two months" and the "thousand years" of Revelation, these "experts" have added, subtracted and divided these figures at will until they have been able to arrive at almost any date. In the nineteenth century alone, dates announced for the Second Coming of Christ included, 1835, 1838, 1839, 1843, 1844, 1866, 1867, 1870 and 1873.

As I write I have before me the big chart of Prophet Miller who manipulated figures until he "proved" in five different ways that the world would come to an end in 1843. Even the day was set---March 15th. It chanced to be the year that a great comet appeared in the heavens amidst the falling of millions of meteors. This heavenly display was also supposed to be foretold in scripture.

The literature that was broadcast to a trembling public was lurid in the extreme. In a Letter to Everybody, Joshua V. Himes, one of Miller's associates cried:

"My friend!----the day of the Lord is at hand!----and when it cometh, you and I shall pass into another state of being----a being of eternal glory or eternal torment! Believe it! believe it! It cometh suddenly, in an instant of time, all things continuing as they were up to the very instant of the bursting in of the Lord upon the world. You are gazing along the sky---you see a lightning light along it---it is the Lord! You are speaking to your wife or your child by your fireside---an awful thunder breaks upon you---it is the Lord! You are sleeping in your bed---you hear a fearful crash---it is the Lord! You are awake in an hour of midnight darkness---you behold a fearful stream of brightness blaze in upon you---it is the Lord! You are riding in the cars or upon your horse, or buying in the market, or working in the field, or busied in your garden, or looking over your accounts, or getting bread for your family, or eat-

ing it with them, or reading a book----you feel the earth tremble with a fearful shaking under your feet----it is the Lord! You go to the door to meet a mother, a brother, or a friend----you meet the Lord! Awful day! Awful coming!----'Prepare to meet your God!' Prepare to meet his day! Prepare to meet his judgment! Prepare! Prepare!"

Thus entered the year 1843! Thus also read "The Midnight Cry"----a magazine distributed widely by Prophet Miller and his earnest but deluded co-workers. All New England was stirred as it never had been before. People gave away their property, purchased white ascension robes and, on the night of March 14th, climbed upon haystacks and barn roofs and anxiously scanned the dark horizon. Many lost their minds. And when March 15th dawned and the sun arose in the East as usual, great was the disappointment, or the relief, depending upon whether the watcher felt "prepared."

Poor Prophet Miller felt very much let down. He finally wrote: "I confess my error, and acknowledge my disappointment." He re-examined his figures and his charts and reset the time for 1844. Again he was doomed to disappointment. He did not live long after that. He was a broken old man.

Eighteen centuries earlier the Apostle Paul made a similar mistake. In his earlier letters he shows that he himself expected the literal Second Coming in his lifetime: "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air." (I Thessalonians 4:17). This warning of the end of all things so distracted the people, however, that Paul wrote again and advised them to go back to work and to stop worrying about the Second Coming as it probably was not coming so soon after all. (II Thessalonians 2:2,3). Years later still, writing from his

death cell in Rome, the doomed man had given up any expectation of being alive at the Second Advent, for he spoke of "having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better." (Philippians 1:20-23)

The proponets of the literal Second Coming seem to have a "blind spot" in their minds which prevents them from seeing some verses of scripture which, if taken into consideration, would save them a vast deal of trouble. On the evening that some of us watched the hypnotist, Mr. M., hypnotize a young man, he said to the boy under hypnosis: "When I awaken you at the count of three, you will not be able to see me in this room for the next thirty minutes." With the count of three, the boy came wide awake. There were eleven of us in the room and I asked him to count the number present. He counted ten. Mr. M. walked to a chair right in front of the boy and lifted it three feet into the air. This frightened the boy. He saw the chair rise, but could not see the person responsible for making it go up. He reached out and slapped it down and then looked helplessly around at us for an explanation.

So it is with those who hypnotize themselves with the certainty of a speedy Second Coming. They develop blind spots for certain verses of scripture. Take Matthew 24. This is the chapter that describes the "end of the world" with the awful signs that should accompany it and "the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Verse 34 is the verse that some people never see: "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled." That verse falls under the blind spot of those who still use this chapter to predict the Second Coming in modern times.

As a matter of fact, that entire chapter, except for the Com-

ing of Christ on the clouds of heaven, was fulfilled in that generation. When Titus took Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the streets ran red with blood for days; those on the housetop hardly had time to come down; those in the field did not dare to return to the house to get their clothes. It was the end of an "age."

And that is what Jesus was talking about----the end of an "age". The King James translators made a mistake as all scholars know. They translated the Greek word "aionios" as though it meant "world" when it really means "age." "Kosmos" is the Greek word for "world." So Jesus was merely describing the end of the "age" as all modern translations show.

Blind spots could be avoided if people would study the whole Bible with the aid of modern scholarship instead of indulging in the dangerous pastime of seizing upon certain isolated "proof texts" and making them prove any theory one has in mind.

The phrase "Kingdom of God" with the synonymous phrase "Kingdom of heaven" occurs more than two hundred times in the New Testament. It was Jesus' favorite theme. Let us look briefly at what it meant to the Master.

1. It was not of this world. "My Kingdom is not of this world," said Jesus to Pilate: "if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews." (John 18:36). His kingdom was not a materialistic or political kingdom as the Old Testament Messianic concept had it.

2. It was an inner kingdom. "And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, Thy kingdom cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, There! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20,21)

3. This inner kingdom was already present. In the parables

of the Sower, Tares, Mustard Seed, Leaven, Hid Treasure, Pearl of Great Price, and Drawnet recorded in Matthew 13, all are in the present tense and describe the kingdom as an existing and glorious reality.

4. It was a growing kingdom. The parables of the Mustard Seed and Leaven show this quality of an expanding kingdom. The world is only in the morning of its day. Mankind is still in swaddling clothes. There are giant redwoods in California that have spanned the recorded history of man. God is not in any hurry. During the vast vistas of time that stretch out before us, man will grow toward maturity. Every violation of the laws of the inner kingdom will but demonstrate their eternal verity.

The expounders of the untenable Second Coming ideas are anti-social. They cause men to lose interest in the struggle for a better world here and now. God alone knows how many people they have caused to land in asylums through distraught minds and hearts.

When I had finished telling my student friend what has here been set down, she heaved a sigh of relief and her face was alight with a beautiful smile of hope. "What an interesting and challenging world that makes it," she said, "and why would God want to destroy as beautiful a world as this anyway?"

Why indeed? Our main business here is to build souls fit to live through eternity. This world is God's workshop. Can anyone imagine a better one?

And if you accept the belief in reincarnation as I do, God needs this world as a wonderful place for us to return to in working out our destiny. Why should Christ deliberately come and destroy it?

Blood, Atonement and God

The theologians of the centuries, in their earnest desire to explain what happens when a man finds God through Christ, have developed a series of phrases and words that are no longer very intelligible to the common man. Even modern theologians differ widely in their interpretations of these words, leaving the modern seeker after religious truth more confused than ever. But men, in their desperate longing for a divine alliance that will turn moral defeat into victory, will forever continue the search.

The "atonement" means the at-one-ment or the reconciliation of God and sinful man. When a child has reached the age of reason and accountability and has started making deliberate choices that eventually will harm either himself or others, he is already breaking the spiritual laws of God's universe and getting out of tune with the Divine Will. He then begins to stand in need of a reconciliation with God.

The history of religion is the story of mankind's attempt to bring about this at-one-ment. In the dawn of Biblical history we find Abraham about to sacrifice his only son to God. He thought he understood God to say: "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest. . . .and offer him. . . .for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains. . . ." (Genesis 22:2). He was about to go through with this human sacrifice when he saw a goat caught by the horns in a thicket and a substitution was made. This story is undoubtedly a carry-over from an earlier period when men imagined that a human sacrifice was necessary to propitiate an estranged God. Such a gift would represent the best they had to give in exchange for the forgiveness of God. As time went on, the Hebrews and other primitive peoples

substituted animals for human beings. Thus the Old Testament is full of the stories of the offering of the blood of animals as a rite of atonement.

Let us have a look at such a day in the life of Paul. Toward the middle of September came the Day of Atonement every year, the culmination of a whole procession of sacrifices during the year. This solemn Sabbath was fixed as a time of fasting and repentance. The weight of sin and guilt which had been accumulating on all Jews during the year was then lifted to the last dark blot. Kippur was a day of judgment and expiation. Then God opened the records and scanned the doings of His people. The Jew who passed through the purifying ceremonial of Atonement Day felt that a new, clean leaf had been turned over for him in the Book of Life. It was his deep faith in the potency of the atoning power of animal blood, sacrificed to God, that made it truly a cleansing power in the lives of the Jewish people.

Paul, as a young student in Jerusalem, would rise early on the Day of Atonement. He would be one of thousands to make his way to the great Temple. The high priest, suitably garbed, would slay a goat and a bullock as sin offerings to God. The high priest would then take a censer with live coals from the altar outside the sanctuary and enter the Holy of Holies. Here no one save the high priest might enter and he but once a year. In a peculiar sense it was the Home of God. Having censured this inner shrine, he takes bull's blood and goat's blood for himself and for the people. He sprinkles it on the altar as an offering to the Most High and thus purges countless human hearts of accumulated sin.

But the ceremony is not yet complete. Another goat called the scapegoat has been carefully selected for his part in the Atone-

ment ceremonies. The priest makes solemn confession for the sins of all the nation. He places his hands on the head of the goat as a sign that the sins of the people are being transferred to the goat thus making the goat literally a bearer of the people's sin. Assistants spit upon it, prick it with thorns, scourge it to a precipice twelve miles east of Jerusalem, and there, pulling the fleece from its back, they hurl the goat into a deep gorge. This symbolism was rich in meaning for the Hebrews. Paul (or Saul as he was called then) would feel that his sins were forgiven and that he could start a new chapter in the book of his life.

Other primitive peoples held similar ceremonies for their gods. About two months before Atonement Day the Athenians were in the habit of sacrificing as scapegoats two criminals, one man and one woman. The ancient Albanians selected as a victim for the whole people a sacred slave, who in captivity uttered oracles of divine inspiration. Kept for a year at public expense, he was then led forth and run through with a sacred spear. The people then could stand upon the spot of the sacrifice in token that their sins had been removed.

Blood was considered a symbol of life. In giving one's blood to God as a gift, one was giving the most precious gift. An unblemished lamb whose blood was sprinkled on the altar of the Holy of Holies was thought by devout Hebrews to be necessary before God would consent to wipe away the stain and guilt of their sins. In the first chapter of the Gospel of John we read of an incident that was full of meaning to a Hebrew. John the Baptist was standing by the Jordan river one day talking to John and Andrew, soon to become Jesus' disciples. Jesus had been baptized the day before at the hands of John the Baptist. As the three stood talking Jesus came toward them. "Behold the

lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world," said John the Baptist. The next day Andrew and John (who was some day to become known as the beloved disciple) left their work and became followers of Jesus. The remark about "the lamb of God taking away the world's sin" was full of meaning to these young Hebrews.

Now let us frankly and honestly ask this question: Was the shedding of the blood of bullocks and goats and lambs necessary before God could forgive the sins of men? The answer is no, it was not! Those early Hebrews thought that it was and so for them it was. On the morning of Atonement Day as the blood of the sacrificial animals was sprinkled on the sacred altar, those earnest Hebrews accepted the forgiveness of God and their penitent hearts were cleansed by that faith. After Jesus' death it was the simplest thing in the world for them to think of Jesus' blood as taking the place of the lamb's blood as a suitable substitute for a soul-cleansing agent in the sight of God. For those who believe it, it still is. But it is one's faith that God has forgiven one's sins that is important. Blood thereby becomes a powerful symbol----but only a symbol.

Amos, Isaiah and Jeremiah were the first to see that God was not interested in blood sacrifices. Isaiah reports God as saying: "I delight not in the blood of bullocks or of lambs or of he goats. . . . bring no more vain oblations. . . . wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings. . . . learn to do well; seek judgment; relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:11, 15, 16). Jeremiah 31:31-33 says that God's new covenant will not be like the old one----in blood---- but that it will be written in the heart.

In spite of the revelation of these great prophets six and seven hundred years before Christ, the use of animal sacrifices continued right up to and through the time of Christ. Because of that fact it has been a comparatively simple procedure for a great proportion of Christendom to follow Anselm's views and to miss completely the deeper meaning of Christ's death. Anselm, a monk of the twelfth century worked out the substitutional or vicarious theory of the Atonement; that the righteousness of Christ was accepted by the Divine Father as a substitute for the righteousness of mankind lost through the fall, and the suffering and death of Christ were accepted as a satisfaction for the punishment justly incurred by mankind, men being released from punishment upon the condition of their acceptance, through faith, of Christ's sacrifice (shed blood) on the cross.

We believe that theory to be pagan; that it does a great injustice to a just and loving God; that it is out of line with Jesus' own conception. When at the last supper, he took a cup of red wine and said "this cup is the new testament in my blood which is shed for you," he was looking upon his own blood as soon to be shed as a symbol of life outpoured for sinful men.

The Moral View of the Atonement is the one most in keeping with Jesus' own teaching: that Christ revealed by his holy life and love-inspired suffering the nature of God, and so wins man to repentance and the pursuit of Christ's Way of Life which is all that God requires. "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." When sin-weary men yield to the inescapable insistence of that amazing picture, they find God.

Peter tells us that, "he bore our sins in his own body on the tree." (I Peter 2:24). That is a hard saying for many. Surely

there is no way that my sins can be transferred to Jesus, is there? No, not in any literal sense as some would have us believe. And yet, when rightly understood, Peter is stating one of the most profound of all truths. Some years ago a striking incident was reported in the daily papers. A youth had been put in prison for having committed a crime. His old mother came to visit him and they were left alone together in the cell. After a time the bent form of the mother (as the keepers supposed) passed out again through the long corridor and into the open air. But when the turnkey came back to the cell, he found not the culprit but the gray-haired mother, clad in the tattered garments of her son and offering to undergo the punishment decreed for her son. Could any self-respecting court in the land have accepted her selfless offer? The answer is no. His guilt could not be transferred to her nor could she have wiped out his guilt by spending the rest of her life in prison. And yet, in a very real sense that mother bore her son's sins in her own heart. Her very desire to suffer in his stead was a redeeming, transforming power in the boy's life that transcended all of the prison terms that could be meted out to him.

There is a painting by a modern artist that catches something of the truth we are trying to portray. In the midst of a motley throng stands Jesus, his hands out-stretched in welcome and compassion. About him are gathered the infirm, the aged, the cripple with his crutches, the mother with the sick child in her arms, the prisoner with the chains still clinging to his wrists, while in the distance come other groups carrying upon litters the sick, the palsied and the dying. It is a conception of Christ as the comforter and the burden-bearer of the world, who gathers into his own heart every shaft of pain, or misery or misfortune that ever drew from human

lips a cry of anguish or remorse. The story of this sin-bearer, and his infinitely saving sorrows, has done more to touch the heart of man and to change his life than all the discussions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists.

Why does Abraham Lincoln grow in our esteem and affection with every passing year? Precisely because he, through four years of bloody civil war, bore the burdens of the South as well as of the North in his own great heart. "I have never suffered by the South," he said, "I have suffered with the South. Their pain has been my pain. Their loss has been my loss." On Tuesday, April 4, 1865, after Richmond had been evacuated, Lincoln slipped quietly down the Potomac in the flagship "Malvern" and entered the battered city on foot. After he had walked two miles through the littered streets, he came to the "White House of the Confederacy" which Jeff Davis had evacuated only two days before. Sitting down at the head of the great table where Jeff Davis had held his cabinet meetings he gazed out the window lost in thought. No look of a victor's triumph could be detected in those tired eyes. No, he was seeing the graves of hundredsof thousands of the boys on both sides of the bloody conflict who would never see home again; and lowering his shaggy head on his arms, he sobbed like a little child. Lincoln bore in his own heart the burden of a ruined South.

During the closing days of the Master's life he stood looking down upon the city which he loved, filled with its thronging crowds of selfish, obstinate and rebellious people: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," he cried, "thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" Follow this incomparable lover of mankind now as he "sets his

face steadfastly" to go to Jerusalem. Read the gripping story of the Last Supper followed by that base betrayal in the Garden of Gethsemane. Stay with him through the night of trial and behold his quiet power and dignity as he is beaten until the blood runs down his back and then ^{is} falsely accused by the highest churchmen in the land. Walk with him along the Via Dolorosa and listen to him praying for the crowd even as he falls beneath the weight of a cross that his failing strength could not support. Watch him lifted up on a cross and then note that he refuses the proffered drug that would have eased his pain. No! He wants a clear mind for these last moments of earthly existence. There is still a prayer to be offered for those men there at the foot of the cross who are shaking dice to see who will win the seamless robe: "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." Was there ever another such prayer? Can any sensitive soul really follow this matchless Christ, bearing in his own heart the weaknesses and sins of mankind, without being irresistibly drawn to him? That, my friends, is the meaning of the Moral View of the Atonement. There lies Salvation for men who become weary of their own puny, selfish, sick little souls.

CHAPTER XVI

The Fall of Man and Freedom of Choice

As a boy I listened to many impassioned sermons on the theme of the Fall of Man. Basic in orthodox Christian theology was the belief in the creation of a good man named Adam. He was given a good woman whose name was Eve and together they lived in the beautiful Garden of Eden. Then they were tempted to eat of forbidden fruit and, in doing so, committed a sin whose taint was automatically passed on to the whole human race.

The Old Testament nowhere connects Adam's sin, directly or indirectly, with the sin of all mankind. Paul says: "As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." (I Corinthians 15: 22). This statement is vague and ambiguous and it is not at all certain what he meant. But Anselm, in the twelfth century, worked out his Substitutionary Theory of the Atonement with the interpretation that Paul meant to infer that the sin of Adam was visited on the whole human race! The assumption was unwarranted.

"The primitive mind," writes Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, "in the Bible as elsewhere, thought of the social group----family, clan, tribe----as the original and creative fact, the continuous reality from which individuals came, to which they inseparably belonged, and apart from which they had no meaning, status or rights. The center of worth lay not in persons, who conferred worth on the group, but in the group, which gave to persons any significance they might possess." Dr. Fosdick rightly concludes that "this supposition is so diverse from our thinking that only with difficulty can a modern mind grasp it." 1

Vengeance was a tribal obligation. When any member of a

1 "A Guide to Understanding the Bible", Harper & Brothers, p.55

blood-brotherhood was wronged, every member was wronged and therefore in duty bound to take up the feud. If one member was guilty of a sin, all were guilty. Substitutionary atonement, where one suffers in place of others and clears them by bearing the penalty which they deserve, cannot fully be comprehended by the modern mind because it had its genesis in the "corporate personality" of early Hebrew history.

Read the story of Achan. (Joshua 7). When Joshua sent his warriors to capture the city of Ai their hearts melted and "became as water." When Joshua rent his clothes in despair at this shameful defeat, God told him that there was an accursed thing in their midst which caused all the difficulty. When Achan finally confessed that he had stolen "a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold," Joshua, "and all Israel with him," took Achan and his sons and daughters into the valley of Achor and stoned them with stones and burned them with fire.

It is worth noting that the sons and daughters did not even know that their father had stolen the stuff. Even so, by the standards of "corporate personality" of the day, they were worthy of death. Neither did Joshua's army know of Achan's perfidy. Still, the sin of one man was thought to infiltrate and weaken an entire army to such an extent that they could not win a victory until the guilty man's entire family had been wiped out.

Far from thinking it unfair to visit on an innocent man retribution for a crime he had not committed, it seemed then the essence of justice that all members of his kinship-group should suffer along with the guilty man. As late as David's time, when a bad fame was blamed on Saul's slaughter of the Gibeonites, two of Saul's sons and five of his grandsons, entirely innocent, were put to death and their bodies hung up "before Yahweh." (II Samuel 21:1-14). Such

is the Hebrew background of the kind of thinking that lies behind Paul's remark "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

The modern mind can understand how in Christ all men may be made alive as each man glimpses the compelling beauty of Christ's revelation of God and, through faith, individually accepts Christ's Way of Life and Power as his own. But, even if we were to believe in a six-day creation that culminated in the appearance of Adam and Eve, the modern mind could not understand how Adam's guilt could be transferred to the whole human race.

Let us say at once, and with all of the conviction that we possess, that soul guilt cannot now, and could not in the long ago, be passed from a guilty soul to an innocent soul. Neither can an innocent man suffer for a guilty and thus satisfy the claims of justice. The substitutionary theory of the atonement which makes Christ suffer and pay the full price for the sins of the whole world violates every modern conception of justice.

We are not saying that vicarious suffering does not have redemptive power. We know that it does; and we believe that such suffering makes understandable and valid the Moral Theory of the Atonement. What we are saying is that the whole concept of justice that lies back of "corporate personality" is no justice at all but rather its perversion.

Our authority for this positive statement is the same Bible which, in its earlier books, teaches the very "corporate personality" concept we have condemned. And what we are about to relate is another splendid proof of the fact that the Bible is a progressive revelation of God.

Moses and Joshua are dead and seven centuries have rolled by. The tragic year 586 B.C. has come and gone and the Hebrew children

are unhappy exiles in hostile Babylonia. The Holy City has been razed, and the Holy Temple, home of Jehovah, is no more.

Here, for this very hour, emerges one of the great inspired religious geniuses of all time. These tragic events forced upon Jeremiah, first in his own inner experience and then in his message to his people and the world, a profound deepening of his experience of God and a radical change in his religious ideas. With the temple destroyed and the people scattered, corporate personality and corporate or group religion could no longer function.

Jeremiah himself was compelled to fall back on God in secret and to find an inner temple to replace the outer one that had disappeared. "O God, my strength, and my stronghold, and my refuge in the day of affliction," he cried. (Jeremiah 16:19). Here emerges, for the first time, the personal religion which Jesus was later to make central in his teaching.

It is no exaggeration to say that Jeremiah 31:31-33 represents the turning point in the Bible away from corporate or group religion to individual and personalized religion. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. . . .I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Can you imagine what those words meant to the lost, lonely, frustrated exiles eating their hearts out in far-away Babylonia?

The other great prophet of the exile was Ezekiel and we find him voicing the same revolt against the old orthodoxy, born out of tribal solidarity, which taught that the entire group should suffer for the guilt of one of its members. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. . . ." (Ezekiel 18:2)

Such thinking sounded the death knell of group sinning and group punishment.

These inspired religious pioneers were but forerunners of Jesus. He exalted the worth of individual personality, as no one had ever done. Jesus' God was primarily the Father of souls, whose will it was that not "one of these little ones should perish." The parable of the ninety and nine was told for no other purpose than to illustrate the Father's great joy over the saving of one precious, individual soul.

We are now ready for an important conclusion. In the first place we do not believe that there ever was a Garden of Eden that suddenly appeared on the earth at the end of a six-day creation. Educated people believe that Almighty God took billions of years slowly to evolve His universe and the men who inhabit it. And if there had been a literal Garden of Eden inhabited by sinning Adam and Eve, we do not believe they could have passed their guilt on to the whole human race. Physical characteristics may be transmitted from father to son but not soul guilt. We believe that the Bible itself is a splendid example of evolution and progressive revelation as we find Jeremiah and Ezekiel replacing the injustices of corporate personality with a new God-given insight into the infinite and precious worth of every human soul in the sight of the Creator; souls who are forever answerable to God for their own sins but who never have to answer for the sins of other people.

Jesus brought the new revelation of Jeremiah and Exekiel to full flower. He did not teach that men are born in sin because of an inheritance from Adam. "One day people were bringing young children to Jesus for him to touch them, but the disciples interfered. Jesus, however, on seeing this, was moved to indignation, and said to them:

"Let the little children come to me: do not hinder them; for to those who are childlike the Kingdom of God belongs. In solemn truth I tell you that no one who does not receive the Kingdom of God like a little child will by any possibility enter it." (Mark 10:13-15-----Weymouth translation).

And what is it to be childlike? It is to have the open teachable mind. A baby is created in the image of God but until he is old enough to form reasoned judgments and to make choices, he cannot be bad. A baby merely has tremendous potential capacities for goodness and badness. It is the province of the Christian church to teach him, as his personality unfolds, to make the conscious choices which will help him to develop into a radiant and God-conscious personality. It is likewise the province of the Christian church to teach him that when he deliberately makes wrong and evil choices, he sins; not because of any taint inherited from Adam but because of selfishness. And he must be taught that continued wrong choices will initiate a disease of the soul that only God can cure.

No one will ever be able to compute the incalculable harm which has been done to the human race through the teaching of the "worm-in-the-dust" concept of life that is the natural accompaniment of a belief in original sin. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Our minds are creative. Every single thought creates and influences us for good or ill. Teach a child that he is a worm-in-the-dust, conceived and born in sin, and he will tend to act that way. Teach him that he was made in the image of God, made to have dominion over himself and his world by the help of the loving God, and he will tend to act that way. We are what we think.

As Moses was about to die, he made the greatest speech of his life as recorded in Deuteronomy 30. "See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil. If you obey the commandments

of the Lord your God which I command you this day. . . .then you shall live and multiply. . . .I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live. . . ." What a farewell speech by the one hundred twenty year old Moses before his eyes were closed in death on lonely Mount Nebo!

And what were the commandments the people must choose to obey if they were to live? There were many but the most important were in the Decalogue given in Exodus 20. They were to worship only Jehovah, make no graven images, not take God's name in vain, honor father and mother, they must not kill, steal, commit adultery, bear false witness or covet a neighbor's family or goods. Only two of the ten commandments are positive----to keep the Sabbath day holy and to honor father and mother. The other eight are flat prohibitions, things people are forbidden to do. Why? Because the doing of them tends to destroy personality values as well as society itself.

There was also Deuteronomy 6:5, the command to love God with all one's heart, soul and might and Leviticus 19:18, a command to love one's neighbor as one's self. Moses had spent many years leading the Hebrews through the desert and watching them break these commandments. Now, as he prepared to die, he put it on the line. Keep the commandments I have given you and live----break them and die! The choice is yours!

So let us have done with the impossible theological tenet that the original sin of Adam and Eve and the guilt that went with that sin was passed to the whole human race and accounts for our sin. Let us be honest and admit that the choice between good and evil has been ours and whenever we have deliberately chosen to do

evil, to do that which hurts us and others, we have chosen death instead of life. And whenever we have deliberately chosen the good, that which integrates and ennobles life, the choice has still been ours.

Crime rates for years have been soaring. Lying, stealing, adultery, drug addiction, alcoholism and other sins that destroy personality values are being indulged by ever increasing numbers of people. The choice is ours every hour of every day.

But thank God more and more churches and people and foundations and movements like Moral Rearmament and Spiritual Frontiers and the Association for Research and Enlightenment at Virginia Beach are ready for new light and guidance in facing the problems that we all confront in this difficult but challenging day. Only last week I was invited to a luncheon where I talked for four hours about Edgar Cayce, Sr. and the books that are now appearing in a steady stream, explaining the thousands of Readings given by the Sleeping Prophet over a period of forty years. This group was interfaith, Protestants, Catholics, and a Jew. I told them of the gleam in Hugh Lynn Cayce's eye last May as he told me of the astounding growth of his father's work at Virginia Beach. As Shakespeare says in Julius Caesar: "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life, Is bound in shallows and miseries." People in increasing numbers are reaching out for the amazing philosophy of life revealed by this simple Christian psychic named Edgar Cayce, Sr.

CHAPTER XVII

Resurrection and Judgment

The Apostles Creed contains the positive statement, "I believe in the resurrection of the body." That concept is one more of the "orthodox" ideas I was taught as a child but have now discarded. It failed to justify itself either in the light of the teaching of Jesus or in the clear light of reason.

When Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "This day shalt thou be with me in the land of the blessed," he was, once and forever, giving the death knell to the popular conception that we pass to a long sleep at death, awaiting the blowing of the trumpet at the last day, when we shall be caught up to appear at the Bar of Judgment. As soon as life expired from that thief's body, he would be taken down and thrown physically into the Valley of Hinnom or hell just south of Jerusalem. That was where all bodies of criminals had been thrown since Josiah's reform in 621 B.C.

Quite evidently, Jesus was not concerned with what they did with the thief's body. It was composed of dust and to dust it would return. Certainly there was going to be no general resurrection of bodies that afternoon. Only one conclusion would seem to be valid----Jesus and the former thief would meet in the spirit world with spirit bodies. They could keep their appointment one minute after they were both physically dead.

When the Sadducees came to Jesus in disputatious mood and asked him about this very question he replied, "As touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' God is not the God of the dead but of the living." (Matthew 22:31,32). Jesus had seen and talked with Moses

and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. He knew that they and countless other Hebrews were alive in the spirit world in spite of the fact that there had been no general resurrection of bodies.

When Martha came to Jesus, weeping quietly over the death of her brother Lazarus, and said, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day," (John 11:24), Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The real life is that of God-consciousness which Jesus possessed in superlative degree, which his followers also possess to a lesser degree, and which is quite independent of the death of the physical body.

This is in line also with Paul's teaching. "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body" and "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." (I Corinthians 15:44,50). The spirit body interpenetrates the physical body in this life and gives that body whatever character and significance it possesses. When "man goeth to his long home" and "the silver cord be loosed. . . then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Ecclesiastes 12:5-7)

One cannot help wondering what the proponets of the bodily resurrection theory would have God do with the problem involved in gathering together the scattered particles of matter of those who have been cremated. An undertaker said to me recently: "Those in my profession certainly find it impossible to believe in the resurrection of the body. I have cremated many a body and scattered the ashes in some favorite spot of earth or on the bosom of some quietly flowing river. Those particles of dust again find their way into growing trees, flowers, shrubs or vegetables and continue to change

form as the years come and go."

"But," someone says, "Jesus experienced a bodily resurrection, so why should we not do the same?" We are not at all sure of that, my friend. We are sure of his resurrection. The Christian church was founded and grounded on that glorious assurance. The discouraged disciples and friends of Jesus, on Friday evening and all day Saturday, thought that they would never see Jesus again. But on Easter morning and for days thereafter they saw him and talked with him. Their gladdened hearts were galvanized into joyous action in a movement that swept the world.

Having said that, however, we are then forced to admit that the details of the experiences of the resurrection morning are so confusing that we must remain agnostic concerning details. Matthew relates that Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary" came to the sealed tomb in the early morning of Easter day and that an angel descended and rolled away the big stone and then comforted their frightened hearts. (Matthew 28: 1-7). Mark, on the other hand, tells us that Salome was with the other two Marys and that they found the great stone already rolled away. (Mark 16:4). Matthew says the women held Jesus by the feet and worshipped him, (Matthew 28:9), while John reports the Master as commanding them to, "touch me not; for I have not yet ascended to my Father." (John 20:17)

These and other details are confusing and contradictory just as we should expect them to be. It was thirty to fifty years after the event before these accounts were put into written form. The glad excitement of Easter morning was naturally such that, even if a number of accounts had been written within a month, there would have been discrepancies. After all, those dear people were human even as you and I.

But what difference does it make what happened to Jesus' body? Suppose new facts should be uncovered tomorrow proving beyond a doubt that the Roman soldiers stole his body away during Friday night and buried it in an unknown spot. That may have happened. If it did happen we have a very intelligible explanation of the answer to this question: With what body did Jesus meet the thief on the very afternoon that he was crucified? With all of the assurance in the world Jesus had said, "This day thou shalt be with me in the land of the blessed." Is there any valid reason to suppose that he met the thief with a spirit body Friday afternoon and then met his disciples with a different and glorified physical body on Easter day? In the light of what he had said to the Sadducees about their mistaken notions of a bodily resurrection; in the light of what he told the weeping Martha, I believe the answer to this question must be in the negative.

These views are also in line with the experience of countless numbers of people who have seen and talked with departed friends. We freely admit that much fraud and deception has been practiced in the field of spiritualistic phenomena. Every genuine article has its counterfeits and this would be especially true in this particular field that lends itself so easily to fraud. But, after having read rather widely in the field of psychic experience, I am personally convinced that there is a good deal of truth there.

In any company of ten people you will find at least one who will tell you an experience of similar import to this one which Dr. A. E. Lambert of the School of Medicine ~~Here~~ at the State University of Iowa told me. Dr. Lambert was a close personal friend of the Rev. Maurice Dunkley who followed me in the pastorate of the Congregational Church of West Lebanon, New Hampshire, some years ago.

One afternoon Dr. Lambert and Mr. Dunkley were sitting on a

bench at one of their favorite spots on the beautiful Dartmouth campus. They were discussing the future life. "There is only one thing I dread," said Mr. Dunkley, "and that is the actual struggle at the moment of death. The moment of the transition must be a hard one."

These two friends parted and went their separate ways. A short time later, Dr. Lambert was lying awake before dropping off to sleep when the luminous figure of his friend Dunkley appeared at the foot of his bed, smiling broadly. "My friend," he said, "there is nothing to it, nothing at all. It is easy"----and he was gone. Dr. Lambert sat up in bed and looked around and tried to evaluate this strange visitation. He did not know that Maurice Dunkley was ill. What could he have referred to?

The next morning Dr. Lambert received a telegram informing him of Mr. Dunkley's death the night before. In fact he had died just prior to his visit to Dr. Lambert. Incredible? Not at all. You can multiply this experience or similar ones by the tens of thousands. And it seems to me that many of them at least are in line with a belief in a future life. Why should they not be true? Are not the people who try to explain all of these things as "hallucinations" on more difficult and questionable ground than those who accept many of them, at least, as representing some reality?

Along with this question of a bodily resurrection is usually included the traditional view of a Bar of Judgment. The Apostles Creed affirms of Jesus, "from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead." The popular idea is that of a huge assize at the end of the world when Christ will come and pass judgment on every man's case after the dead have been physically resurrected and those still living have been gathered together from the four

corners of the earth.

These deductions stem partly from a literal interpretation of Jesus' parable of the Last Judgment in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

"For I was hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger and ye took me in:

"Naked and ye clothed me: I was sick and ye visited me: I was in prison and ye came unto me."

Here indeed is one of Jesus' greatest parables but it has suffered at the hands of literal interpreters. The background of the parable is to be found in the centuries-old frustrations of the Hebrew people. Carried off into captivity in 721 B.C. and again in 586 B.C., the Hebrew prophets developed a sound belief in the Day of Jehovah which later became the Day of Judgment. Seemingly powerless in the face of the repeated onslaughts of enemies from East and West, the great prophets of the Exile, following an apocalyptic conception first found in the Book of Enoch, expounded their own ideas of the coming of a Messiah who would settle accounts with Israel's enemies at a great assize as well as with the sons of Israel who were untrue to their religious heritage.

The sound ethical core of this teaching lay in their insistence that the justice of God could not be thwarted forever; that wrongdoing would one day be punished. It was perfectly natural for Jesus to seize upon a familiar Hebrew conception of a great assize and to give it a fresh and vital interpretation. Jesus was not the Messiah they expected. The Day of Judgment, as their ancient writers had pictured it, never came. But the essential truth beneath

their extravagant picturization remained----and Jesus gave it new emphasis.

"The whole meaning of the parable, then, to us, is an attempt to define a principle of judgment rather than its form or setting," writes Dr. Weatherhead. "The test which Christ imposes is never as to how much of grace has been received, but as to how much has overflowed in a ministry of loving service for others; not what we have, even of the grace of God, but what we give; not to cry, 'Lord, Lord', but to do those things which the Lord commands. 'Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren. . . ye did it unto me.' To have the love which delights to pour out itself for others is to possess the kingdom of heaven here and hereafter, and to be Christ's servant. To be without that self-forgetting love, whatever else one has, is, or does, is to forfeit the claim to be Christ's man, or to belong to his kingdom." 1

It is not what we believe about the Fall of Man, the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, or any other doctrinal matter that is decisive in the Day of Judgment but the love of God and man which has moved us to give ourselves and our substance as stewards of the Almighty.

Judgment comes to civilizations, nations, institutions, and men every day. History is replete with the inescapable import of the sentences which a moral universe has passed. The basis of that judgment is not theological according to Jesus. No, the Great Judge is mainly interested in one thing----what was your record relative to the crying needs of "the least of these my brethren?" Did you

1 "After Death", Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, p.60

demonstrate your love of God and man to those in need, this love which Jesus said was the heart of the Great Commandment? If so, the Judge will welcome you into the kingdom; if not you will be asked to "depart."

Let us not confuse the form and setting of judgment in Jesus' great parable with the principle and content. It was natural for Jesus to take a dramatic concept of judgment with which the people had been familiar for centuries, and clothe it with new power and significance. Judgment in God's moral universe is an on-going, continuing process. Judgment Day is every day, both in this world and the next.

The Light Still Shines in the Darkness

John, the beloved disciple, opened his beautiful gospel thus:

"In him appeared life and this life was the light of mankind. The light still shines in the darkness and the darkness has never put it out." (John 1: 4,5). When the lawyer asked Jesus what was fundamental in religion, the Master said it was to love God with all one's heart and soul and strength and mind and to love one's neighbor as one's self. He said people who so love are the light of the world-----a light still shining in the darkness.

Christianity is essentially a Way of Life centering in the soul-building personal experience of the love and light of God as it finds expression in one's personal relations with people. It is not primarily a set of dogmas as many would have us think. In previous chapters, we have tried to clear away much of the theological mumbo-jumbo that often passes for Christianity in an attempt to get back nearer to the beliefs that it seems to us were held by the simple Galilean.

How wise John Wesley was in that regard. "Give me thy hand," he wrote. "I do not mean you to be of my opinion; you need not. I do not expect it or desire it; neither do I mean I will be of your opinion. I cannot; it does not depend on my choice-----Keep your opinion and I mine, as steadily as ever. Only give me thy hand.----Let all matters of belief stand aside, let them never come inside. If thine heart is as my heart; if thou love God and all mankind, I ask no more. Give me thy hand." Good for John Wesley! He is in complete agreement with his Master.

Here, then, is what we believe; Something To Stand On, so strong and sure that the fulcrum of our faith could lift the world out of darkness and death into a glorious, eternal ongoing harmony of light and life and peace.

We believe in one God, Creator of the Universe, Father of all mankind, present in nature as law, in science as Truth, in society as sympathy and understanding, in conscience as duty; and in Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God, as the supreme embodiment of our highest ideals, of Love and Light, and of the will of God.

We believe that man, with his ability to think and feel and will and with his innate sense of oughtness that we call a conscience, is created in the image of God and that, if he chooses, he may become a son of God in good standing in the home of God.

We believe in prayer as communion with the Eternal Presence and in worship as the devotion of man's will and life to God.

We believe in the church as the fellowship of those who would do God's will in the world and in the Bible as the progressive revelation of God's will for mankind.

We believe in sacrifice and self-discipline as the price we must pay to make right what is wrong; and in salvation as a soul changing experience in our growth from self-centeredness to service and others-mindedness.

We believe in the indomitability of truth because of our conviction that all evil contains the germ of its own ultimate destruction.

We believe that Christ's love way of life teaches all-inclusive goodwill as the most successful way of meeting abuse, violence and evil.

We believe that the truth does indeed make men free and that freedom of thought, of speech and of peaceable assembly are essential to the pursuit of truth and to the unfoldment of personality; that democracy is therefore the handmaid of Christianity.

We believe that everyday is Judgment Day; that the moral universe of a just God, in the long run, returns to us what we have put

into it of time, talent and substance according to Jesus' law of spirit: "Give and it shall be given you-----For with the same measure that you use, it shall be measured to you again."

We believe that Jesus demonstrated the ultimate survival of personality beyond the grave and that the future life will furnish the opportunity for the continued development of personality including the possibility of the choice to be reincarnated in another human body to give us more chances to fulfill our dreams.

And finally, and most important of all, we believe with Jesus that persons represent the supreme value in the universe; that the constant affirmation and release of faith in the Living God, in man, in self, in the good, the true, the beautiful, is the creative power which releases life from the bondage of evil, insecurity and fear and which brings man into the glorious possession of the full and abundant life.

We think that the millions of simple, earnest souls who believe these truths and who discipline and fortify themselves daily through communion with the Eternal Source of love and light, constitute the light that still shines in the darkness. For there is a darkness over our fair land greater than any since we became a nation almost two centuries ago.

Dissatisfaction and frustration among our youth is so great that scores of colleges and universities have closed their doors a month ahead of the end of the school year. Many are experimenting with pot or drugs or alcohol as a possible short cut to the full life here and now. Permissiveness in sex relations escalates alarmingly as does the crime rate. Darkness does cover the land but the same eternal light that the beloved disciple knew still shines in that darkness because the darkness has never been able to put it out!

The New Testament is the story of the march of a handful of men and women across nineteen centuries. But the same unfailing light and love that they possessed is available today for those who will take it and use it. Yesterday I received a letter from a woman I have never seen out in Connecticut. She said: "Last night I was kept awake far into the night by worrying about some troubles I am having. So I finally arose and found my well worn copy of your book, 'The Inner Splendor' and, among other chapters, read again the story of Grandma Reynolds." Then she said that after getting her thinking straightened out she went back to bed and slept soundly the rest of the night.

Since that book is now out of print, let me summarize the story of the most remarkable woman I ever met. Some years ago I flew out to spend two full days with her the week she reached her ninetieth birthday. She greeted me with outstretched hands, her face smiling and radiant as she said, "God bless you". For two days we traveled all over Hollywood and Los Angeles meeting scores of her friends. How they brightened when they saw her! We ran into Tyrone Power on the street. He stooped down and gathered little grandma into his arms and gave her a resounding smack on the cheek. "We were on location making 'The Pony Soldier' out in the desert last March", said Tyrone, "and it was cold and wet and miserable. We all got colds and beefed a lot---- all except Grandma Reynolds. She came to the end of each day fresh as a daisy, full of love and radiance and she alone held that cast together until we finished the picture."

The second day I was with her, we found ourselves near her doctor's office and she said: "Come on in with me while I get a two minute check up. I haven't seen him lately." When the doctor spied her, he called her in ahead of the waiting crowd there as he told them that this was Grandma Reynolds and it wouldn't take him but a minute.

She pulled me in with her. The doctor took her blood pressure and listened to her heart. Then he smiled and shook his head in disbelief. "This little woman is ninety today," he said, "but she has the blood pressure of an eighteen year old girl. Grandma beamed, gave him a "God bless you" and we were off and running again.

Now how on earth did she get that way? Adeline deWalt was born in 1862 on a farm near Vinton, Iowa. As a girl she had a dream. Someday she would become a great actress! The family was poor and could not afford to buy her the two books she wanted----a good dictionary and the works of Shakespeare. So, when her mother offered her a penny a dozen for all the stray eggs she could find outside the hen house she went into action. She finally collected six thousand eggs and had just enough cash for two prize books. Standing on a knoll in the cornfield she gave such dramatic recitals of Shakespeare that she imagined the cornstalks waved in dignified assent!

When she saw young Frank Reynolds, son of the fire chief, riding on a red fire truck in a parade, she promptly fell in love. They were married and three girls and a boy appeared in due time. When her husband died and left her to bring up four children, she took a secretarial course and opened her own secretarial school in San Francisco. "I trained my girls not only how to run a typewriter but how never to be afraid or gloomy. They were in great demand."

Things were looking very bright indeed when the great earthquake of 1906 hit San Francisco. Ida Ansell was in partnership with Grandma Reynolds at the time of the fire and she still lives there. So when I suggested that we go over and talk to Miss Ansell, Mrs. Reynolds was eager to have me hear her story.

"Here we were", said Miss Ansell, "Adeline and her four children and I fleeing wildly through the rocking, burning city with other

tens of thousands, Adeline with a pillowcase full of needed articles tied to the end of a pole, little Mary clutching her tiny red rocker and Lelah with a copy of Dickens' 'Bleak House' under her arm."

On the edge of the doomed city they stopped to make a shelter for the night. "Although I was frightened and timid", Miss Ansell continued, "Adeline was resourceful and quiet. She leaned some boards against a fence, gathered a lot of leaves for a bed and in we crawled." I asked what Grandma's reaction was when six homeless refugees were settled for the night. "Isn't this cozy?" she said and then offered a prayer of gratitude to God for bringing them safely through such an "exciting" day. Soon afterward she was back in business again "on a shoestring" training secretaries for businessmen.

Eight years later her only son Franklin died. Grandma Reynolds had been able to take all the other stings of outrageous fortune in stride. But she nursed her grief over her son's passing so persistently that she was becoming a wrinkled, gloomy old lady. Then came the night of the great decision----the turning point in her remarkable life when a decision in the realm of spirit determined whether she would sink or swim, survive or perish.

"One sleepless night", she told me, "I thought of my mother. She had always made me feel the nearness of God, even in simple things like sun, rain and daily bread. He was our loving Father and we were his perfect little children. I got out of bed and looked in the mirror. I saw a sad, wrinkled old lady and I knew I had not been trusting God with my grief-filled heart. So I decided then and there to put my trust in my Heavenly Father as fully as I had faith in the sun for warmth and in bread to nourish my body." It did not happen all at once but she grew steadily younger and stronger and more radiant.

Finally in 1926, at the age of sixty-four, Mrs. Reynolds de-

cided that, since her three girls were grown up, educated and on their own, that it was time to do something about her two unfulfilled dreams ----a college education and becoming an actress. So she enrolled in the University of California and worked her way through in six years. At seventy she was ready to become an actress but it took another ten years of frustration before she made the grade.

Her first motion picture, made when she had turned eighty was "Come Live With Me", starring Jimmy Stewart and Hedy Lamarr. At the end of the first grueling day beneath the glaring lights, Jimmy Stewart asked, "Aren't you tired Grandma?" Her eyes blazed. "Young man, if you had waited eighty years to do something, you wouldn't be tired." She had been in thirty or more films in ten years when I talked with her and had been on Television fifteen times and told me, "I'm just getting started!"

When I told Grandma Reynolds that I was going to put her story in a new book to be called "The Inner Splendor" and asked if she had a special word for youth she was ready. "Yes, Marcus Aurelius said: 'Tranquility is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind'. And Paul instructed the early Christians of Corinth: 'Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind'. Tell our youth to learn to THINK positively (and put that word in capital letters). I have been growing younger for fifty years by staying constantly in touch with my Heavenly Father. Tell them the secret of success is faith, prayer and gratitude, backed up by hard work."

Asked if she had one favorite verse of scripture, she sat up just a little straighter and fixed me with dancing eyes as she really let me have it: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

I corresponded with Grandma Reynolds during the last ten years of her life. Every letter closed with the same three words, "God bless you". She knew from glorious experience a very great deal about "The Light That Did Not Fail".