

The Call to Serve

by Dr. Manford G. Gutzke

Surely Thou Art Also One of Them

Do you think being a Christian should make any outward changes in a man's life?

I was not born into this world a Christian. No one ever is. In terms of nationality I was born a Canadian. I grew up to manhood in a normal way, born in the country. I went to a country school and then to a town high school. I grew up into manhood with many doubts about almost everything. I think I doubted people. I doubted the culture in which I lived. I doubted our politicians. I doubted what I saw in public life because there seemed to be so much subterfuge and so much cheating going on in every direction. When it came to the church I doubted there too. I certainly was no believer. I had nothing particularly against these things. I just had no confidence in them. Many intelligent people were not Christians, and this left me with a great doubt about the whole thing.

I have told the story of my coming from unbelief into faith in a booklet that we have published called "Out Of Darkness." I have also told the next portion of my testimony from the time I became a Christian until I felt called to serve Christ in full time service. That particular story has been put together in a booklet that we call "Into His Marvelous Light." Those two booklets are published by us and they are available -- one telling the story of conversion and the other telling the story of my call. (If you don't have these you should write and ask for them.)

The day came then when I walked out on Portage Avenue in Winnipeg, Canada, away from the law office with my prospects as a lawyer behind me. And all the unknown future was before me. I hadn't any idea where I was going to go and no idea what I was going to do, beyond the fact that I had been called to devote my life to spreading the gospel. I was as ignorant about what to do as a newborn babe. What do you do when you walk with the Lord?

I did know one thing - I had His promise before I ever left the law office, and that promise was "My grace is sufficient for you." That was all I had, but it was enough.

The first step I took was to confide in an older Christian and ask advice. I went to a man for whom I had great respect. He was the Executive Secretary of the Manitoba branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, Dr. E. J. B. Salter. He suggested that I work in his office until I had thought things over, drawing to my attention something that had become obvious to me: I was going to have to re-think my whole life. I needed a little time to do that, and he had some work as an office clerk that an untrained person could do

While I was there I saw something happen between two workers in the office that I often call my first lesson in Christian living. One of these men happened to be an immigrant from Europe. He was a German. The other man was also an immigrant from Europe and he was a Jew. These two men had started to quarrel in their work. I remember how Mr. Salter called these men, remonstrated with them and urged upon them that as Christian men they shouldn't quarrel. I remember how he said to the Jew, "Now you may hate this man because he's a German and because you're a Jew, but now you're a Christian." I'll never forget the reply: "If he acted like a Christian I could get along with him as a Christian. I could be a Christian too. It's when he gets to acting like a German that I begin to act as a Jew, and then there's no way for us to get along together."

Often I have thought about that. The unity we look for, the peace and quietness that we want, is of course to be found in Christ Jesus.

Then an incident came up something like this. An emergency developed when one of our representatives in Saskatchewan was injured. His wrist was broken while cranking his Model T Ford, and that meant he couldn't go on with his itinerary of representing the Bible Society. So I was sent out to Saskatchewan to take his place. I had never driven a car in my life, but I was put into the seat of a Model T Ford and I was to keep up his schedule, going from community to community. Well, I went out to do it and found myself doing something that I never in the wide world ever had expected to do. I went out to collect money, the one thing I abominate. But I was collecting money for the British and Foreign Bible Society. What actually helped me along was this: I knew I was collecting it for the Lord's work. That being the case, I would go along and do it.

Here I learned a second lesson. I found out that when you go before people and say that you're doing something for the Lord Jesus Christ, people look at you differently. Up until then I had been a school teacher, a soldier in the army, a law student, a farmer and I had been looked at accordingly in each circumstance. When people see you as a Christian worker, especially if they think you mean it, they look at you with a different look. Now I think I know what Peter must have felt when that woman said to him, "You're one of them," and I can appreciate Peter's denial that he ever knew the Lord Jesus Christ. It isn't easy to take when you first face it. You bear His reproach. I found that when I would go anywhere in the name of the gospel people looked at me like I was something less than a man, something quite removed from the ordinary.

I also found out this: not everybody who professes to be a Christian really cares about the things of the Lord. Now I could understand that the unbelieving person might despise me. I could understand that an unbelieving person could be skeptical about my profession and look upon me with either contempt or distrust. But when people in the church avoided me because I was active in the Lord's work, that gave me an entirely new insight into the subtlety and the cunning of the human heart. And as a verse as I was to going around asking for money, I came to see that I could do this regardless of what people thought of it because I was doing it as unto the Lord.

And by the way, I found out that many Christian people don't want to do things for the Lord. Here's a strange thing. I found some unbelievers much more ready to give to the work of translating the Bible than Christian people were. I can recall to this day men who were not members of the church, men who had nothing to do with an open profession of Christ, who would actually give money more liberally for the translation of the Scriptures than some people who were prominent in church life. That was an eye-opener to me. And it gave me great cause to wonder.

I feel that the Christian gospel is actually handicapped by the way in which so many professing Christians act. If we confessing Christians would make it a point to live according to what we say we believe, the people in the world would be more inclined to believe what we say and our efforts to spread the gospel would be much more effective.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt 5:16).

Is There A Christian Around Here?

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear: having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ" (I Peter 3:15-16).

I had just started my itinerary in Saskatchewan, Canada, as a representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society, not only learning what it meant to drive a Model T Ford over the country roads, but also calling upon one home after another according to the maps I had to follow and collecting money for the Bible Society. One evening, about supper time, I drove into a very fine farm. Several men were working there and I met the farmer himself who was in charge. I asked him questions about the local church and when we could have services there so that I could speak for the British and Foreign Bible Society. He was an officer in that church and he told me all about it. After we had talked about this, it was time for supper. We were way out in the country, a good 15 miles from town. There was no restaurant nearby and ordinary courtesy would have called for him to invite me to come in and have the evening meal with him. Probably he realized that if I would come in for the evening meal, it would mean that I would spend the night. Apparently he just didn't want to have me. And he didn't ask me.

Now I had committed myself to serve the Lord and I had given myself over to serve Him, but that didn't make me naive. I hadn't just been born yesterday and I knew perfectly well that he didn't want this preacher around. Now, I didn't want to do anything to offend and I didn't want to act proud, but, believe me, that got under my skin. But before I went away, without realizing what it sounded like, I said to this man, "By the way is there a Christian that lives anywhere around here?" And, do you know, I don't think that man even got the point!

He turned quickly to me and said, "Yes, there is. He lives about four miles from here." And then he gave me directions how to drive my car four miles to go to the other man's home.

Now mind you, the man I was talking to was an officer in the church. When I drove out of that yard I thought to myself that all the Pharisees and all the hypocrites were not dead yet. It occurred to me that if the Lord Jesus had to face them in His day, He still has them around Him today.

I drove the four miles and came to a much more modest place. I drove into this other spot, came up to the man's yard and asked him, "Is your name so and so? A man up the road (and I named him) told me that you were a Christian. Is that true?" This man looked at me and said, "Yes, I'm a Christian. I'm not a spiritual Christian. I am not living a spiritual life, but I'm a Christian." "Well," I said, "do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior?" "Yes." "Well," I said, "you have got a guest for the night." I never even waited for him to ask me. He was my brother. He took me in and we had a wonderful time. He gave me supper and we sat around and talked and talked. I asked him a little more. I said, "What did you mean when you said you weren't a spiritual Christian?" And then I learned something about the difference between the word spiritual and the word carnal. I had never heard anyone talk that way about it. He said, "I'm a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ. He died for my soul and I know that I am going to heaven because of Him. But, I do not every day live in conscious fellowship with Him. That takes Bible reading and prayer. And it takes a certain yieldedness in spirit." And he said, "I want to thank you for coming by and talking to me because this is the first Christian fellowship I've had for a long time." Then I thought to myself, four miles down the road there's an officer of the church, the owner of a big farm, and he had to send me here to meet a Christian!

Now let me tell you of another man I met in the course of my experiences. He was the man whose place I took as representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society, the man who broke his wrist cranking up his car some weeks before. In due time his hand was sufficiently healed and he took his car back from me. He went on with the program while I remained in that part of the country to do home mission preaching. Some months later, while I was teaching school, this man (who was a Presbyterian preacher by the name of Smith) came by my school and introduced himself. He said, "I am the man who owns the car that you ran for a while." He was a real Christian. In no time at all he was talking about the

Lord and we were sharing our personal fellowship with the Lord. Before he turned away to leave the little school house where I was teaching he said, "Let's pray," and he got down on his knees beside those school benches. I hadn't been in the habit of doing that, but I got down on my knees beside him. Then he lifted up his voice in prayer. I want to tell you right now I had never been in the presence of a man who prayed so loud. He almost scared me. He just poured out his heart to the Lord in a loud voice. When he was through and when I prayed, you could hardly hear me. In fact, I could hardly hear myself. In my own mind I thought, "What a loud man! I don't think so much of him."

Several weeks later I met a rancher who asked me what I thought of this man Smith. I didn't want to say anything about him, but the rancher said, "You know, that man has something." Then he told me that on one occasion when he was out with a group of men, this man Smith came to their cabin and wanted to spend the night and they let him in. While he was there, one of their number, a young lad, was very, very much troubled because he had a terrible earache. Smith went over to his bunk and said, "Son, do you want to get rid of that earache?" This young fellow just looked at the preacher and said rather tartly, "What do you think?" "Do you mind if I pray over it?" "Well, you can do anything that will help me."

Smith prayed over the youth and the earache was gone. The boy fell asleep and never did have it any more. And then the rancher asked me, "Now, what do you think of that?" Well I'll you right now I didn't know what to think of it. But one thing I did do as soon I could: I pulled out the file on Smith and changed my rating of that man. He might have been loud, but believe me he was a man of God . . . and those country people knew it.

Ye Shall Be My Witnesses

There was a home mission field of the church in Saskatchewan where I had served as a representative of the British and Foreign Bible Society. It was a good twenty miles from town, and there were three preaching points.

I remember that they gave me \$75 a month. It doesn't sound like big money today. Let me tell you it wasn't very big money then, because I had to pay \$50 a month for room and board. The mission board was to give me \$35, and I was to collect \$40 from the churches, \$20 from one field and \$10 each from each of the other two fields. It doesn't sound like much; but this was a country community and there had been some five or six crop failures in a row. The people were very, very poor. Out in that country it gets real cold in the wintertime. There were families where children stayed indoors from fall to spring because they had no shoes to wear. It was a poverty stricken situation. There I learned several interesting things. First, I learned that people tend to show their hate toward God in their attitude toward the preacher. Now you might think that is a strange thing to say, but that's exactly what I found out. Of course, outwardly, on the surface, they are always very polite. But you can tell underneath it's different.

I was "given" \$75 provided that I could raise \$40 of it from these poor people. In addition to that I was provided with an old buggy that rattled all over the country when I drove it. The harness was patched, and a buckskin pony called Canary pulled that buggy. I don't know how old that horse was, but it was far too old for any good use.

As a boy I myself had laughed at the preacher's horse. It always seemed to be the poorest horse in the community. And when I considered that old buggy I rode in, with that old patched harness on that old buckskin horse, I realized that not one of those things would have been tolerated on my father's farm for a moment. He wouldn't have even sold them for scrap. I stayed with a very successful farmer. This man was not a church member but he was a very successful farmer and I was self-conscious about that

old buggy rig. For a long time I avoided the issue by a very simple method. I had a bicycle and, although it took me all day on Sunday to do it, I rode that bicycle about twenty miles around to my three preaching points. As long as the weather was fine all was well. But the weather got so bad that I couldn't ride the bicycle any more. The roads got muddy and filled with ruts and I had to use the horse.

All this time the farmer never said a word. He just let me go ahead and try to use that old horse. It was just impossible. Then one day I thought, "Now this is plain foolishness. I don't believe the Lord wants this at all." I led the horse out to the road, opened the gate and turned that horse loose to go wherever she wanted to go. I was through. I came back in and never said a word. I expected to walk. I would do as much preaching as I could do walking. When I couldn't walk I wouldn't preach. The next day that farmer, sitting at the breakfast table, said to me, "You know, I've got a real fine horse in so-and-so's pasture. He's five years old, and he needs work." Five years old is a very fine age for a horse. He said, "He is broke and can be handled. He's a good horse, but he hasn't done anything all summer. I wish you would take him and use him." I said to him, "Well, I certainly could use a horse. I don't have one." He didn't say a word about my turning that other one out. After a bit he said to me, "By the way I don't believe you'd better hitch that old buggy behind him. I think that would scare the wits out of him. But I've got a new buggy standing in the barn. I never use it because I have a car. So if you want to, you can use my buggy." Then that farmer said, "We'd better put my harness on him. I wouldn't trust that old harness." And within 24 hours I had a very fine horse that anyone would have been glad to drive, five years old. I had a new harness and a new buggy, given to me by a man who wasn't a church member. You know why I think he did it? I think he recognized something like integrity at the bottom of the whole business. There was a point where I just felt that the old worn out equipment was disrespectful to the gospel. That's really what I thought. I didn't mind personally. But for the gospel I thought it was downright unfit. And do you know it took a man of the world to come along and back me up on that.

Now I want to tell you about something else that happened. I was learning things. When I realized that I was supposed to collect money from these poor farmers who didn't have any, it suddenly dawned on me that I was able to teach school. Teaching school was my business and something in which I had experience, and they needed school teachers. I could get a good salary, far more than I was getting from them as it was, more than twice as much as I was getting in preaching. And the school needed someone there. I could teach school and then these poor people wouldn't have to give me any money at all. And the church wouldn't have to give me their \$35 a month. I would just do it for nothing, because I would earn my way teaching school. So I wrote to the Executive Secretary of the field and told him about my idea and how it would save him money. Well, I got a letter from him in which he rebuked me in a shocking way. I want to tell you he hurt me. For three nights I didn't sleep. Suddenly I realized I wasn't working for that Executive Secretary. I was working for the Lord. And do you know from that day to this that understanding has stayed with me in all of my relationships.

I'd like to commend to you these several things. The man who is going to walk in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of people is going to have to expect to bear His reproach. People are going to look at you with a queer look. They are going to treat you the way they would treat the things of the church and the things of the gospel. In the course of it all you can be many times misunderstood and many times you can be hurt. But you do these things for the Lord. That's the important part of it.

The Function Of The Holy Spirit

Nobody in our family ever had been a preacher. I had to learn everything in a first hand way and it

took a long time for me to learn. I decided to serve the Lord expecting to go at that time to the mission field. About four months after I left the law office I felt in my heart that I should prepare myself for missionary work by going to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. One reason why I felt I wanted to go that far away from my home in Manitoba, Canada, was because I heard that Dr. R. A. Torrey was Dean of that Institute. I had read some of his books and I felt, if I had a chance to study under such a man, that would be the thing to do. Now, I had no money. I had been a school teacher, but I had spent what money I had saved up, trying to finance myself in preparation for law. In those days I had no idea that there was such a thing as student funds available, no idea that there was such a thing as scholarship funds. I thought every man had to pay his own way completely. So I went ahead to earn my money to pay my way. Well, the only thing I could do that would earn any more money than day labor was to teach school. So I secured a position as a school teacher in Saskatchewan, Canada, where I hoped to save the money to take me to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Teaching school was a very demanding situation. It was a one-room country school. I was the whole faculty. There were about 50 students in this room and there were nine grades. I taught the children how to count and taught them their ABC'S, and I also taught a 9th grade student to prepare himself in English literature and in history and in mathematics and in science and in drawing and in music. I also had an 8th grader that I was preparing for state examinations. All this in one room. At least nine full grades and only one teacher in the whole thing.

But I was not only the teacher: I was the playground director; and the first aid department; and the librarian; and the custodian; and the policeman. I was everything it took a person to be with a group of 50 students. And I can tell you right now that on a stormy day, if you keep 50 students in a one-room building from 9 o'clock in the morning till 4 o'clock in the afternoon, you've got a situation that's harrowing on the nerves. Then, if you're trying to teach nine different grades and keep them all busy, it will extend you some. My strength began to wear away. I don't know whether I am such a very patient person anyway, but I began to feel worn out. I was becoming irritable, and I became very much concerned.

I had my testimony out that I was going as a missionary and people looked upon me as a Christian, as something strange. I know one thing, they expected me to be perfect. That meant that I could never lose my temper. I could never lose my patience. I was afraid that if I lost my patience in teaching school that it would do my testimony harm and it would do the gospel harm, and I was very anxious to win these people as much as I could to the things of the Lord.

I remember while I was living in that community as a schoolteacher I was the only professing Christian among the young people in that whole area. The question would come up, how shall I conduct myself in the community? How shall I act in a way that would be honoring to the Lord? I had to live there, and there were no church services. I was in a sense a living, walking example of someone who said he was going to believe in the Lord.

So far as the community was concerned, there was only one resident that they would have admitted was interested in living the Christian life. He lived some distance away and belonged to a Holiness Movement church. People referred to them as the Holy Rollers.

This man drew a good many facetious remarks, and many folks made sport of him. They lampooned him because he was a man who said he believed in prayer. I remember so well, while I was listening to them talk about him and watching him, I began to ask myself whether I was to be a man like that. Would it be that I would serve the Lord if I were to openly tell the people how I felt about the things of God?

I remember so well one time in that country community there had been a hail storm, and the hail storm had just gone across Billy Wilson's farm. That was this man's name. It had gone over his farm and had

destroyed his crop. I can remember the next day or so we were on our way to town with a group of young men and they met him. They had quite a time making fun of him about the fact that his crops had been hailed out. They asked him whether the Lord wouldn't take care of him. He answered them honestly and sincerely and humbly, "Oh, yes, He'll take care of me."

Someone said, "Why didn't you pray about it?"

"I did pray about it."

"But it hailed anyway!"

"Well," he said, "that's what the Lord wanted was to send the hail. I don't know why. It's new to me, but it's all right if that's what He wants."

And then they kept on pressing him and they asked him, "If you belonged to the Lord and you're trusting in Him, why wouldn't He take care of you?"

"Oh," he said, "the summer isn't over yet. He'll take care of me." Then he went on and told them in a very quiet way, "I told the Lord if he didn't want me to have that crop it was all right, but would He just make sure my poor cattle would get feed. So I asked Him to make sure that I would have plenty of fodder in my fields so that this fall I would at least have cattle feed and my cattle wouldn't go hungry."

We all laughed in one way or another, and we went on our way. I thought about him a good deal. He was the butt of many a joke on the part of those men, even though they respected him because of his integrity.

By the way I don't mind telling you what happened. There were scattered showers during that summer and every one of them rained on Billy Wilson's farm. When the fall season arrived, the other land in the community that had not been hailed out had a very, very poor crop. In some cases it was not worth harvesting, but Billy Wilson's land, had so much fodder that he had tons of hay to sell to the neighbors round about. I privately marked that down. Nobody especially talked to me about it, but I remember how they made fun of him and yet he tried to give glory to God for all that God had done for him. That made an impression on me too.

But in our local community and among the young people there were no other Christians with whom to fellowship. And so my normal procedure was to work in school from Monday through Friday. Saturday I spent all day at school working up my program for the next week. Sunday was my day for personal devotion. On that day I went down to the school house and took my Bible and a hymn book. I would read the hymns and sometimes I would sing or hum them to myself. There I would sit in that school room and read the Bible and sing the hymns and I would pray to the lord and seek to understand more about the things of the Lord. I became very much concerned about my school teaching, and one Sunday while praying, my heart turned to consider the promises that had been made in the New Testament about the Holy Spirit. I began to think about that and it dawned on me that if I were filled with the Spirit maybe I could manage this teaching. I began to wonder what that would be like. To complicate the situation in the school, there were two brothers enrolled by the name of McIver. I called them the McIver boys. I remember these two boys came to school, both of them riding on one horse. For some reason, although they were about 11 and 13, they were both in the same grade. And the strange thing was that these boys came every second week. One week they came to school and one week they would stay home. Well these fellows were two out of a class of five in grade 5. Can you imagine what that would do to a program when two out of five would come only every second week, and you had all these other students to take care of? These boys were smart, but you can't study half the time and keep up.

At this particular time I decided, after thinking it all over, to try this business of having the Holy Spirit take charge. I resolved that I would yield myself personally to the Lord and count on the personal

presence of the lord Jesus Christ in me to teach that school. He could use my mind, use my knowledge of teaching, use my knowledge of pedagogy and everything else that might be involved, but He was to be responsible. I would be seated in the heavenlies. I would be retreating into Christ Jesus and He would take my place. So on Monday morning I decided to try it for one week. For one week I would handle that school only as I felt led in my heart the Holy Spirit wanted to do.

On Monday morning I came down. I can remember that up until noon it went pretty well. And I thought to myself by noon, well if it was going to be like this I could teach it myself. There's no problem now. Everything was going along fine. Then after lunch we came to the test. It was the week that the McIver boys were there and just at that time their class was learning long division and decimals in arithmetic problems. And the boys couldn't get it. I had them up at the blackboard to show them what to do. I would give them the problem and they would work on it and make mistakes, give them another problem and they would work on it and make more mistakes. With this schedule I didn't have long for grade 5, only a few minutes. I showed them everything I could and they didn't understand. Of course, they hadn't been there. Everybody knew about it, and I was wondering what to do. So I asked the Lord in my heart what to do. He said they will have to learn it. You'll have to teach them. So I kept on with them. Well, the time was prolonged. Instead of getting through with that class in seven minutes I was with them twenty minutes. The whole program was thrown out of line, because these boys couldn't learn what to do in long division and decimals. And in my heart I would keep asking the Lord what He would want me to do. He just kept on wanting me to teach them, patiently teaching them.

I remember the whole school became very quiet and I was smitten in my heart to realize that they actually expected I would fly off the handle and get mad. And all the time my heart was rejoicing more and more because I didn't feel like getting mad at all. In my heart I had said to the Lord, if you want me to teach decimals to these boys till the school is over I'll keep on doing it. He said you teach them until they know. So I did, with the result that after about twenty minutes, suddenly the boys got it. Everybody was relieved. And you know the strange thing is the school picked up speed that day. They hurried on through their work and before the day was over we got through with everything we were supposed to do. The big thing was that I had won the victory without any tension in my soul. Everything had worked out just fine. They were no more than out of sight from the school when I dropped on my knees to thank the Lord. I thanked the Lord for His personal presence. Would you think I am terrible if I tell you that I wondered if it would be that way the next day? I just wondered if it would happen again, and then I asked the Lord to forgive me. The next day we did the same thing. I had said I would try it for a week.

From that day to this, that week's experience has transformed my whole outlook on work. Whenever would get in a real tight spot now I remember it's the Lord's business, not mine. If I have some real burden crushing me now, I remember it's the Lord's to carry it, not mine. If I am face to face with something I don't think I can figure out, I say to myself this is the Lord's work, it's not mine. Now I know the meaning of Christ in you, the hope of glory. These were wonderful things to learn. All the time the Lord was preparing me for the day when I would serve Him in full time service.

Set Your Affection On Things Above

Some time ago in the seminary where I have been a professor, while we were discussing the meaning and the implications of living in the Lord and of Christian life, one of my students spoke up with this question, "Why is it that everything I want to do is wrong?" And everybody, of course, laughed about

it. I could sense that over half of them had felt that way themselves, but they might not have openly spoken about it. The young man was in dead earnest. And so I answered him, "I can tell you. I can tell you in a word. But you won't like it." The young man told me to go ahead. "Well, the reason is that you are wrong. Deep down in your heart you are wrong. The things you want just don't fit God." I am reminded here of what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 5:17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." There came a day when the Lord called me away from my regular routine, away from that which I was going to do, away from the profession that I had chosen, to devote myself to the spreading of the gospel. That was a big thing. I had to re-learn my whole basis of life.

Unconsciously we always make our plans for the future on the basis of what we are today. Being as I am, I look upon things and evaluate them, pro and con, good and bad, according to the way in which they would affect me. Desirable things I'd like to have, undesirable things I don't want anything to do with. Now what I would think of naturally as a human being is one thing, but what I would think of as a servant of the Lord is something else again. This is what I was to learn. I was to learn what it means to actually become in the world, in full public view, a servant of the Lord. On one occasion I was in the state of Washington visiting my fiancée, who is now my wife. During the time I was there some interested people in the community arranged to have me give my personal testimony in a high school gymnasium, the largest open building and space in that town. On Sunday afternoon I spoke to a large company of people of all denominations, telling them about my personal intention to serve the Lord and to go possibly as a missionary in His service. The following week I spent some time with the young fellows who afterwards became my brothers-in-law, playing around on the gymnasium floor, playing basketball. I'm no real basketball player, but I enjoyed the exercise.

A man who was serving as custodian came to me and said he wanted to talk to me, so I went with him into his furnace room in the building. Then he said to me, "Seeing you out there chasing that ball around that away offends me." I was shocked. I said, "Why, what's wrong? Why does it offend you?" "Well," he said, "you were here last Sunday giving your personal testimony about your intention to go as a missionary." I said, "Yes." "You're going to be a preacher?" "I suppose that's what people would say."

"Wouldn't you want to be a good preacher?" "Yes, I would like to be a good preacher." "Do you think the Apostle Paul was a good preacher?" "Yes, I think he was." "Do you think the Apostle Paul would play basketball?" That was a shock to me. I got out of it at the time by commenting that of course they didn't have basketball in those days. But he just looked at me. I went away, turned it over in my mind and heart and thought about it. I could easily dismiss the old man as a crank. I could dismiss him as a man who just had, shall I say, a prejudiced view. But he was a believer. And he said I gave him offense. And he had wanted to join me in my public witness. So I came back to him and I told him, "All right, I'll not play any more." "Oh," he said, "I'm not sure I want you to interrupt your game, but I just wanted to let you know." "Well," I said, "I have made point of it and this is the last time I'll be here." The following week, when I continued my witness and testimony, the man wasn't there. I hope you don't mind if I tell you that I went to see him. We greeted each other, and I said, "What you do offends me." He looked up at me and said, "How can that possibly be true?" "Well," I said, "we had a meeting here last Sunday afternoon. Didn't you know about it?" "Yes," he knew about it. I said, "You weren't there." "Well, no," he wasn't there. I said, "That offends me." And he looked at me rather strangely. But privately in my own heart and mind I realized that if I was to be a servant of the Lord, if I would do anything that would cause anybody to stumble, I should not do it. Years later a business man who was a prospect for the church where I was pastor invited me to see professional wrestling. Now I

am interested in any kind of athletic activity, but I declined to go. He asked me again later, and I declined again. When he was going to ask me still another time he said to me, "Preacher, I don't think you want to go." I said, "That's right, I don't want to go." He asked, "Why? You don't think there is anything wrong with it, do you?" I said, "No, it isn't that there is anything especially wrong with it, but I just don't want to go." Well, he didn't quite understand. So I tried to tell him.

I said, "I have some people in my congregation, some elderly women, ladies, who look upon me as a man of God. They see me as a minister of the Word. These dear old souls are in a state of life where it could happen at any time that they would be on their death bed. They would want to send for their preacher, and I'd be the preacher. You know it would hurt the heart of some of these women if I came into their bedroom where they were lying on their deathbeds and talked to them about the things of the Lord, and looking at me they would remember that the night before I had spent watching a professional wrestling match. It would hurt them." "Well," he said, "they would just be narrow." I said, "I don't know whether they would be narrow or not. They're persons, and they're my sheep. They're in my flock, and I belong to them." Finally, he said, "Well I would think that when you were a Christian you'd be free." I said, "I am. I'm free. I'm free to go as I want to. And I'm free not to go if don't want to. I don't have to go." And so I learned again this whole matter of living your life in the presence of God as if you really belonged to Him.

I suppose the biggest crisis that ever came in my life was when I was teaching school, shortly after I had left the law office. I loved to play baseball and in playing baseball it turned out that the team I was with got their uniforms by a certain procedure. They had a community dance, and from the proceeds they bought the uniforms. In the last week before the season opened suddenly it dawned on me that I was playing in a uniform that had been secured by doing something I wouldn't do. I didn't go to the community dance. That began to bother me. It would look as though I was taking advantage of something that I wouldn't do. So I went to my manager and explained to him that I would not be able to go. He wanted me very, very much to think it over. I was actually in agony for days. I wanted to play so very badly. Then in the middle of the night it came to me, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." Then I knew what was the matter. I loved to play ball. The question was how much did I love the Lord. I am thankful He gave me the grace in my heart to have it very clear. I called my manager up and said, "I'll not be able to go."

Witnessing To Strangers

My life had been lived in one small neighborhood in the country in Canada. From the time I was five years old, when we moved out to that part of the country from Ontario, until I was past 17, I was never more than five or six miles away from the home farm where I was reared. This resulted in my being very skeptical of strangers. I just naturally was cultured in a country boy's attitude toward people who were not known to me. Later it was my privilege to live and to work in cities. And in the cities where all men are strangers the question would naturally occur to me, how would one work to spread the gospel? How would you make contact with people who are complete strangers? I expected to go as a missionary, and so this was a very pertinent question. When I went as a missionary they would all be strangers to me.

The Lord inclined me not to expect to learn about this from other people, but to learn through my own personal experience. I went to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles and there the program included preparation for the students to teach the Bible and to preach among anyone that they would meet. In the

course of things we would preach on the streets of Los Angeles where we had permission from the police to hold our meetings.

They had a gospel mission, something like a rescue mission, called Biola Hall, and this was our project as students. When I first went down to the Institute and heard about this I was very skeptical about it. I didn't see how that kind of preaching and teaching could ever do any good. Just imagine going down to a hall on the streets of a city and speaking to people you had never seen before and might never see again. It seemed to me that that was just really going to be a waste of time. But, since other people had planned it and I was coming into it, I decided to investigate it. In the first quarter that any student was at the Institute he was not sent out on any of these practical assignments. So for the first few weeks I would go down to the hall as a stranger. The students didn't recognize me. I mingled with the crowd as one of those who were standing listening to the student preach. There I would try to evaluate what was the worthwhileness, why one should go on with that preaching. Night after night when I went and listened, my skepticism grew more and more. I would stand in the crowd and listen, and I would become very skeptical. If anyone would have asked me what do you think about street preaching, I would have said, for me never. It never would have helped me. But I attended and I went for weeks. Then one night while I was down there it was just as though, out of the dark, sunlight suddenly burst.

A man got up. I would say that he was past 35 years of age, very well dressed, shining face, evidently a European immigrant, judging from his accent. Very vivaciously and with gladness of heart, I heard him shout, "Tonight I am three years old!" This was the kind of language that I could certainly not understand. But I heard him go on to say, "Three years ago tonight I stood right out there. I was just like any of you. I didn't know. I didn't believe. I wasn't a Christian. But I heard the gospel. I was half drunk at the time, but the preacher said he had something to give away. I didn't have anything, and I came to ask him about it. He looked at me and said, 'You couldn't understand if I told you now.' And I remember I said, 'Because I am drunk?' They said 'Yes.'

"Well, tomorrow I'll be sober; will you tell me then?' 'Yes, we'll do better than that. We'll give you a place to spend the night.'"

So, he said, they took him in, gave him a place to spend the night and the next morning they explained the gospel to him and he believed.

I listened with considerable interest, all the more so because he then began to talk about the people that he in turn had won to the Lord. His particular profession was that of a masseur. He was attached to one of the exclusive men's clubs in Los Angeles. This man went ahead and gave his testimony, and I found out that in one year, while working down at that club as the massage man, he had won dozens of men to the Lord personally. As I listened to him I was deeply stirred. I said to myself, if they continued Biola Hall for the rest of the year and only won one soul like that, it would be very much worthwhile. I was learning something about talking to strangers in the name of the gospel.

There's another little experience that I'm not too proud about. I was working my way along in school and I got a job working in the yard of some person's home at 50 c an hour. Working four hours in the afternoon, I earned \$2.00. One particular day my work was trimming loganberry vines. If you know anything about loganberries, you will know that they can be very vicious. They are bigger than blackberries. Their thorns are longer than blackberries. On this particular hot afternoon it was a mean task. I worked at it for four hours and after I was paid I walked home to save some money.

As I was walking home through Pershing Square in Los Angeles, a man about my age stepped up and asked me for money. When he asked me for money it irritated me to the point of making me angry. I think you would say I got mad. I looked at him and I saw a man as old as I, as able-bodied as I, who had

done nothing all day long. I had been out there working with these loganberry vines at 50c an hour, and now he's asking me for my money. Everything in me resented it. But even when I looked at him it came to me that the Lord would appreciate the fact that this man didn't have anything. Regardless of what the man had done, the Lord would do something for him. So I remember asking him very curtly, very shortly. "How much do you need?" He said, "I haven't had anything to eat, and if I had 15c I could have a cup of coffee and some do-nuts. And if I had 10c I could spend the night at the Salvation Army Hotel. They would take me in for 10c to spend the night on a cot there. I would need about 25c."

I thought to myself that's a half hour of loganberrying. But when I looked at him the Lord spoke to my heart that I should give it to him. I remember I said to this man, "Well, I am going to give it to you, but you're not welcome." He looked at me with such surprise. I said, "You wouldn't know why I was going to give it to you, would you?" He asked me, why. I said, "Did you ever hear of Jesus Christ?" He said, "Only in profanity, only when men swear." I said, "Do you know there is such a person?" "Yes," he said, "I think I know there was such a person." "Well," I said, "Jesus Christ came into the world for me and He suffered for me and He died for me. And I never did anything for Him. I wasn't worthy. He did all that for me and I wasn't worth anything. He wants me to give you something. And so, because He wants me to give it, I'll give it to you, and so here it is."

I gave him the quarter. But I said, "You're not welcome in my mind." He looked at me. He said, "I don't know anything about this Jesus Christ you're talking about. I never heard about Him coming in this way. But I'll tell you one thing, if He is anything like you, I wish I knew Him." And oh how that humbled me! The people outside in the world don't know about the Lord. You and I have to tell them, and show them . . . in such a thing as to give a man money when he didn't deserve it. He was hungry and cold and that was the truth, and I could help him. I could do something in the name of the Lord that would help that man understand something about the Lord Jesus Christ.

A Cloud Of Witnesses

Have you ever stopped to think how much a Christian is helped by other believers?

Much of my early spiritual experience as a believer took place in a very private way. I did a great deal of thinking by myself. I read my Bible in private. I prayed in private. I carried on my inward considerations with myself without ever revealing anything about it to anybody else. I did have occasional conversations with a Christian farmer, but I got practically no help from the public services of the church. I would just have to admit that it was not my privilege to ever meet a minister who helped me before I became a Christian. My help came from people in a private way.

But the Lord called me to go on and serve Him and to step out in the world among people. When I got to the Bible Institute and in the presence of about 300 other young men, I found myself in a fellowship of believers that was both stimulating and instructive. I could wish that every Christian person had a strong fellowship of Christian people to be with. I want to tell you of several who particularly influenced me.

There comes to my mind a young man who was a rancher from Idaho. His name was Rex Mitchell. I remember when he told his personal testimony, how he stopped school when he was in grade six because his father wasn't well and he worked to help support his mother. They were very poor. He had worked, saved and prospered until as a young man he owned a ranch in Idaho. One day while working in the fields he heard a voice, and it said to him, "Rex, go preach." I'll never forget him telling about that. He said he thought he was losing his mind. He was working with a team of horses out in the field. There

wasn't anybody around and it was broad daylight in the afternoon. It just haunted him. But the word was there as plain as day. He heard it several times, "Rex, go preach." He didn't tell a soul. The following Sunday when he was at church his pastor stopped him on the way out from the church and shaking hands with him said, "Rex, why don't you go preach?" And Rex told me that he just grabbed that preacher. He said, "Listen, come on in here and talk to me." He took him back inside the church and Rex said, "What made you say that to me?" The preacher was almost frightened. He said, "I don't know. It just came to me when I saw you. I wondered why you didn't go preach." Rex said, "You know I couldn't preach. I never went to high school a day in my life."

One thing led to another, and he was told about the Bible Institute of Los Angeles that was organized for the express purpose of helping people without a college education get some training for personal witnessing for the Lord. The upshot of it was that Rex went down to Biola, to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles in California.

It's hard for me to tell you, even if I could, all the various things about this man. Let me just tell you one thing I am sure you'll appreciate. One of the first assignments any of us had was to read a book of the Bible through at one sitting. Now Rex was not enrolled as a regular student because they didn't feel he could keep up with any class. But he went to this class and studied Romans. And the professor gave us an assignment that we were to read the Book of Romans in one sitting. Rex resolved he would do it. So on a Friday night (there were no classes on Saturday) he began to read. All day Saturday he read, going out only for meals. He didn't read on Sunday because it was the Lord's Day. But he read on Monday, and he finally finished. He said it took 16 hours of reading, and then he skipped the big words. This man worked as a student and, believe it or not, he finished the regular course in two years. When the time came for his graduation, he was elected to preach as the student valedictorian. It was said that Dr. Torrey, when he listened to him, made the comment that that was the greatest sermon he ever heard a student preach.

On graduation from The Bible Institute, Rex was engaged as a Field Representative of the school. For the next year he went up and down on the California coast preaching and teaching for the Institute. He became a great evangelist. His life was spent early. He died quite young and was buried in Paso Robles, California, burned out you might say. On his grave was recorded just the name Rex Mitchell, and under it these words, "Only one life, so soon 'tis past. Only what's done for Christ will last." Rex Mitchell was a man uneducated but unafraid in the strength of the Lord.

I think of a man whose name was R. V. Johnson of Phoenix, Arizona. He always called himself "Revised Version" because of his initials. He was a converted boot- legger. He had a remarkable conversion on the streets. He told about how one morning, after having been in a drunken stupor the night before, he was hurrying down to his office where he had some of his bootleg whiskey. Just as he came down to the corner of the street he heard, a voice behind him saying, "R. V., why do you not accept my Son as your Savior?" He said he looked around quickly. Nobody was there. It frightened him and he decided that he was losing his mind. He hurried on down to his office as quickly as he could. When he got to his office he wanted to get a drink of liquor but could find no liquor in the office. That's where he kept it, but there was none there. He couldn't understand that. Then he wanted to have some brought in, and he could not pick up the phone. He was literally unable to pick up the phone. After spending some time there and perspiring freely because of the excitement that was in his soul, finally he yielded himself. He said, "All right, Lord," and he gave in. Later his wife told him that the night before, his 10 year old daughter in praying for him had prayed a prayer like this, "Oh, Lord, I'll not let you go till you save my daddy."

Well, R. V. Johnson became one of the greatest street preachers I ever heard and ever saw. He had a message he called "From Moonshine To Sunshine." He would get up and would preach that. I have seen hard men on the street break into tears while he preached to them of the love of God in Christ Jesus.

I remember one day we students went out on a picnic. We spent all day once a year on our annual picnic. Coming in that evening in the lobby of the men's hotel, I remember R. V. Johnson standing around talking with us about 10:30 at night. He turned around and said, "You know, I have had a great time today. I have had much pleasure. But do you know there are still some poor fellows down on the street who don't even know about the Lord? Do you realize there are some men in the dark tonight that don't even know about Him? I am going to have to tell them. I am going down." I said, "I'll go with you." So along we went, several of us. I heard R. V. Johnson speak from 11:00 until midnight, one of the greatest sermons I ever heard, and I saw men literally in tears come to accept the Lord when R. V. Johnson preached. When I look at that and I think about those men, deep down in my heart I realize I had a great privilege in ever meeting them.

Time would fail me to tell you of a man by the name of Cameron who had been a professional gambler and who had accepted the Lord Jesus Christ and now was devoting himself to learning about Him so that he could talk to others. Of Aeschliemann, the Swiss, who was never satisfied with his own devotion to the Lord, no matter how faithful he was. He was forever crying unto the Lord to draw him nearer and nearer to Him. And Barton, the business man - more about him in the next chapter. I remember him so well. He would just look at you plain. He would say, "God answers prayer. You know that, don't you?" I can think of gifted Oscar Walton, who was an accomplished church organist, and of talented Eldon Whipple, a gentle chap who had studied English as his major in the University of Washington. These two fellows were great pals. They went off to China as missionaries. I think of a very lovely woman who was an accomplished violinist. She was a concert violinist. She went to Ethiopia as a missionary. Dozens upon dozens of these men and women were brought into my life to help me see what a witness there is in people whose lives are given over to the Lord.

Do you realize that all over the country there are people, men and women, who actually in their hearts, really want to serve the Lord? There is a great cloud of witnesses, people whose hearts have been touched by the Lord, who are seeking to honor Him and to tell other people of Him.

Does Praying Make A Difference?

Ever since I had heard of prayer, even as a boy in the days of my unbelief, I understood that praying was supposed to have some effect. But for me it seemed that generally folk would try every intelligent and diligent way to get something done, and usually the case was that when nothing availed, when there wasn't anything they could accomplish apparently, people would say to each other, now, is the time to pray. Prayer seemed to be the polite way in which a person could shed responsibility. But in spite of the fact that there was so little evidence of any consequence, still the idea lingered that maybe praying would make a difference.

When I became a Christian I accepted no easy or floating optimism about things. I wanted to be genuinely realistic about everything. In my own heart and mind I was sure that much harm is done, even resulting in downright skepticism and unbelief when people just used words, empty words, to talk about the things of the Lord. And I felt that way about prayer.

As I began my preparation for serving the Lord at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, one of my privileges was the meeting of other believers who also were being trained to serve in the gospel. It was a

wonderful thing to meet these people and get to know them. To have personal fellowship with dozens and dozens of men and women who were personally and sincerely committed to serving the Lord was a very strengthening thing. These men and women believed in prayer, and some of them believed in prayer as an aggressive tactic. It was the way they worked to get things done, and they believed that you could actually pray to accomplish things. I used to join in their prayer meetings, not because I had so much confidence in prayer but I did have confidence in the Lord and I did need help and I was glad to help anywhere I could.

Soon I realized, when I met with these men, that I did not believe as they did about the power of prayer. They would pray about specific things, and frankly I didn't think it mattered that much. I didn't think it would result in anything. So one night, when I was meeting with these men, I stopped after we had had a season of prayer and I confessed my unbelief. I told them, "I suspect I shouldn't even be down here with you. The truth of the matter is that I wish very, very much I could believe in what you are doing in praying, but as of right now I'll just have to tell you that I just don't believe it makes any difference. I think prayer is all right, and I think it's a good thing, but I don't think it will make any difference in what's actually going on. And I think maybe I'd better leave."

There was a man there by the name of Barton. I mentioned him in the last chapter. He had been a business man, and I had great respect for him because of his serious minded intelligence about everything. He spoke up and said, "Would you like to have confidence in prayer? I said, "Yes, sir!" He said, "What would give you confidence in prayer? Well, what would?" And I couldn't help but tell him, "If I ever saw it work." He said, "Now, about the only way I could think that you would have it work is for us to think of something in which you need help. Can you think of anything at all that you wish was different, that you'd like to see happen, and we'll just make it a matter of prayer? Maybe the Lord will show you how He'll answer prayer."

Under those circumstances I was to identify an issue that concerned me, and these people were going to pray for me. There was something that bothered me. It was a very practical matter. I was a student. I was down there at the Institute for learning. All day we would spend in classes and at night we were supposed to study. I was very subject to a bad habit of not getting at my studies. I would be around with the boys and we would talk and talk, and the time would go on and I wouldn't get at my studies. I knew if I once started at my studies I was glad to be there, but I just had trouble getting at it. So it occurred to me that I could get help at that point and confessed it to them. And I said to them with reference to this, "If you want to pray for me, you can pray that the Lord will make it easy and natural for me to go to my studies."

Barton, I remember, said, "Well that sounds all right. Who is willing to join?" Several fellows said they would and they got on their knees, and they prayed that Lord would show me what He could do along this line. When they got up they said, "Well now, how will we know?" I said, "I'm going to watch it, and you fellows meet here next week. I'll be back here and I'll report to you. And believe me, if it doesn't work, I'm coming to tell you." Barton said, "If it does work, will you tell them?" I said, "Yes sir! I'll tell the whole world if it works." Then I went off by myself.

I realized this is the kind of thing you could have by autosuggestion. You kind of hypnotize yourself into following through. But at the same time I knew this is the kind of thing in which I really could be helped. So I found out.

I want to admit that the very next night, after we had had our evening meal, we were standing around talking. I had been around a few minutes and suddenly it came to me that I would like to go and study. I went to my desk and began to study. And I did it again the following night, and before the week was half

over I found out that I had an entirely different attitude. It was no problem for me to just turn away from the boys and go to my room and study. So the following week I went down to the prayer group and I told them. And that began a great fellowship in prayer with them.

Later on I had a most remarkable experience in prayer. I was engaged to be married to the young woman who is now my wife and she was living with her sister in Los Angeles. Her sister had been married to a very fine young fellow who was nicknamed "Beaut." We all had been concerned over the fact that Beaut was not a believer. He had been reared in the Episcopalian Church, but he had never had a real experience with the Lord and we had been praying for him. Perhaps I had prayed for him as long as three years. I know the other members of that family had been praying for him for at least five years. At that particular time in Los Angeles we had an Irish evangelist, by the name of Bill Nicholson, a great preacher. And Beaut used to go hear him preach. We had great hopes that he might be won to the Lord. But after he continued through this whole series of services at the Church Of The Open Door, my brother-in-law, as he afterwards came to be, still was not converted. And on the last night of the meeting somebody offended him by suggesting to him that the reason he didn't respond to the call was that he was afraid. Now, of course, Beaut was in a strange place and he felt kind of embarrassed. But when he was told that he was afraid it just stung something in him. He had been over four years in the First World War and being seared was just not anything he liked to think about. It infuriated him. He came out and vowed to his wife and to us that he would never go to hear Nicholson again. Nicholson was a good preacher, but those people who did personal work just made him mad. He'd never go.

The following Saturday my fiancée, her sister and I were together. I was out there visiting and I was leaving to go back to town to do my janitor work. Just before I left their home we decided to have prayer. We got on our knees. In the course of prayer I was led to my amazement to pray specifically that Beaut would go to hear Nicholson preach the next night, Sunday night, and would be converted. It didn't come out just that way in a minute; it took time. But gradually, that was the gist of it. And I remember, when I had spoken it, then the Lord as much as said, what else will you have? I remember I asked, that my brother, Walter, up in Canada would come to faith. Only my problem was that there wasn't anybody to preach to him. The nearest preacher I could think of who would be able to preach the gospel so that a man could believe was 80 miles away in the city of Winnipeg.

To our utter amazement, the next day Beaut himself said, "Let's go hear Nicholson preach." We went and he listened to him preach. That night there were a thousand people in a big tent listening to that evangelist. Nobody came forward to repeated invitations until at a certain point I was moved to turn to my brother-in-law and ask him, "Don't you want to go?" He said, yes. And this Episcopalian walked down the sawdust trail ahead of me, got on his knees in front of an old wooden bench and gave his heart to the Lord. And my heart sang to remember how God doth hear and answer prayer.

Later on I found that so far as my brother was concerned, a Salvation Army man came from Winnipeg, Canada, 80 miles out into his country community. It was the first and only time in history such a thing had happened. He preached two nights out there. My brother heard and was converted.

God does answer prayer.

Am I A Christian?

Assurance is a wonderful blessing. There's nothing that can be so demoralizing to a person as uncertainty, to be torn between assurance at one time and doubt at another time, back and forth between feeling sure and then feeling unsure, feeling certain and then feeling uncertain.

It's enough to make a soul sick. To be able to rest in quiet confidence that all is well with my soul because of Christ Jesus, is to have a readiness to witness to the Lord, to serve the Lord and to endure anything in the name of the Lord.

I know that it's often a surprise to learn that doubting seems to belong to growing up. It's not an unusual experience. There are certain ideas that we held as children, and the form in which we held them was because we were children. Suddenly, as we grow older, that form seems so inadequate.

We are even inclined to doubt whether we ever belonged to the Lord. Whenever such thoughts come there is always one simple formula that can always be depended upon. The gospel will come to us saying, "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That really is true. If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, you'll be saved. But right there is where the problem can come. We can begin to doubt that there ever was real faith in our hearts. It's true that whosoever believeth in Him shall be saved, but have we believed in Him? Now this can come to you in various ways. It may come to you sometimes as you're studying in the Scriptures. Because you come to know more and more about the Lord and you get more and more into the things of the Lord, suddenly the old thoughts you used to have, the ideas you used to have, seem so naive. They seem so uncertain and you begin to doubt all over again.

It was that way with me when I went to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. While I was there studying Bible and having the Bible taught to me by men who knew much about it, it seemed to me that the ideas I used to have about the Lord were simply not adequate. Perhaps, I thought, I didn't even really believe. There arose in my heart in those days a great big doubt as to whether I was really a Christian.

This could have disturbed me more if I hadn't heard Dr. Torrey say that even after he became an evangelist there were times when the thought would go through his mind and he would wonder if he personally really was a believer. He had heard all these things and said all these things, but he could do all that even if he hadn't been a believer. He knew it. He said this used to trouble him until he finally decided like this: "I know right well that the thing to do is to commit myself to the Lord. I have many times preached it and I thoroughly believe that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life. And if it is true that right up to this minute I never have really believed, I will believe now."

In that way Dr. Torrey gained the upper hand and came to have a constant abiding faith in the Lord. It helped me to hear him say that, because if he had doubts, then it wouldn't be so bad if I had doubts.

"These things have I written unto you that you believe on the name of the Son of God [and that's what I was]; that ye may know that ye have eternal life." The book of 1 John was written that we might know.

I studied 1 John very carefully and I found that the whole book centers itself upon the Lord Jesus Christ and then crystallizes the whole matter by pointing out that if you believe in your heart that Jesus of Nazareth is really the Son of God, and if you believe that He came into the world actually to seek and save the lost, if you believe that He died for you and that He rose from the dead, and if you believe that He is now interceding for you and is expecting to meet you and that you're going to meet Him, and if also your heart is affected so that you care about other people, so that you love other people . . . if these things are true with you, you've got the evidence that you really belong to the Lord.

I realized that if I could be sure I loved the brethren, I would have evidence that I actually did belong.

Just at that time in the course of our work at the Institute something happened. I went out with a group of men for the purpose of distributing tracts and inviting people to come and hear a gospel message in various business establishments. In this particular case we visited the warehouse of the Southern California Edison Company. It was the first place I ever went on this type of work. Our

director assigned us to different areas, and he assigned me to a big shed. I was to go into this shed, hand out tracts to people and invite them to come to the services that were being held in front of the office building. So I went.

I felt like a fool to go up and hand a stranger a piece of paper and talk about the Lord Jesus Christ, but this is what we were supposed to do. So I was willing to go ahead and do it, although I felt very awkward. As I came into one particular group of men and I looked around, I saw a man, who was considerably older than the others, and I decided in my heart I'd go to him because the chances were that he would be kind in his treatment of the matter.

I offered him a tract. He turned on me rather harshly and said, "What is it, politics or religion?" I felt almost like telling him it wasn't either one, it was about the Lord Jesus Christ, but I thought, why quibble, and I said, religion. Then he swore at me and told me to take it away. He wouldn't take any. That day nobody took any. The thing that was important to me was when he swore at me.

Now I come from Canada in a section of the country where you don't swear at men. Sometimes people swear at their horses, but it's generally not approved. You might swear at a piece of machinery. But you just don't swear at men. And if you do, it's always part of the code that we had that you would have to do something about it. If a man swore at you, you'd have to hit him - and this man swore at me.

I suddenly realized that the anger that I normally would have felt rising up in me because of it, didn't rise at all. It never came into my consciousness, and instead of my feeling angry with this old man I actually felt in my heart a compassion toward him. I found my heart filled with thoughts like this: isn't it too bad a man can get to be his age, as old as he is, and when someone courteously offers him a piece of paper that will tell him about the Lord, he curses and swears. My heart went out in this kind of feeling: what a sad life he must have lived. And I found that instead of criticizing him I actually was sympathetic with him in his problem. I had no sooner had this happen to me than I realized I had the evidence in my own heart that I was looking for. If we love the brethren, we belong to the Lord. And the only reason in the world I didn't get angry with this man, but actually loved him and wanted to help him, was because I really did love the brethren. And this was not my own doing. This was Christ in me working it out in that fashion. So the truth of the matter was that I loved the man's soul, and since I had this evidence, I knew that I was born again.

When we had our testimony meeting that night and everyone told about their experiences of handing out tracts, I got up and told them the greatest thing I could tell them: this day I found out for sure I was a Christian. When a situation arose that ordinarily would have filled me with anger and resentment I found instead of anger that my heart was filled with love toward the man so that I knew the grace of God was working in my heart. To this day I have never had any more doubt about my personally belonging to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Where Shall I Go To Serve?

From the very time I first began to realize the Lord might call me into full-time service I thought that it would mean I would go to the foreign mission field. All through my studies at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, and then after I graduated, I expected to go to the foreign mission field. I thought that's what the Lord wanted me to do. But, of course, there was the question of where.

I was married the day after graduation from the Institute, and began preaching for a little group of people who were starting a church in Pomona, California. At the same time I began to seek the Lord's mind as to where I should go, which one of the mission fields should I be in. Remember, I had started

preparing myself for the mission field without discussing it with anybody who was on the mission field. I had asked no missionaries for advice.

My wife and I both had the same thing in mind, but we didn't know which field. The Lord had called me and I felt He should tell me which mission I was to go to. So I tried to find out.

My procedure was a very simple one. I got up real early in the morning, something like 3AM and I would go out from the city to an open air amphitheatre that was cut into the side of a hill, with concrete stairs and benches. I would go up to this quiet, solitary place and there I would sit in the pre-dawn darkness, praying that the Lord would open my heart and mind, and trying to think what He would have me to do, trying to recall everything that He had been showing me. Then, as it would get light, I would read my Bible and I would pray and ask the lord where He wanted me to go. This went on day after day. From Monday through Saturday, each day in the week, I spent from early in the morning before daylight until anytime from 10 to 11 o'clock in the forenoon in prayer, in Bible study and meditation, trying to find out the mind of the Lord. I learned a great deal, but not about where to go. This went on five days a week for almost three weeks. And it became very much of a burden to me.

In that time I canvassed every mission field I could think of, every one I could remember. I tried in my heart whether the Lord wanted me to go to India or whether He wanted me to go to the Arctic Circle. I remember trying to figure out what it would be like to be a missionary among the Eskimos. And I tried to figure out what it would be like if I were a missionary in China, and finally in Africa. I think my wife and I had almost settled in our hearts and minds that it would be an African country, but we couldn't be real sure.

In giving you this word of testimony I can't help but feel that perhaps you have a real burden on your heart for certain results. Perhaps you have a feeling that if you had real faith you would have to mention it only one time and then you'd know the answer. That's not the way the Bible puts it, and it's not the way personal experience goes. Actually the fact is that it may take some time before the truth of the matter will come to your heart and mind. Just what happens to you during this "incubation period" I'm not too sure. Whether or not you change your mind or what happens to you I am not sure, but it probably will take some time for the light to shine in your soul. In my case it took hours upon hours upon hours of time. Three weeks of early morning meditation . . . and I still didn't know.

I became practically desperate. I remember that one morning it seemed to me that even the things I was thinking over were nothing new. I went over every known combination of ideas that would help me to know and I didn't have any idea where I was to go. So this particular morning I remember I just stopped in prayer. I am not so sure my spirit was very nice, but it was honest. I remember how I said to the Lord in prayer, "Now Lord, I've tried everything. I have considered every possible direction to go and now suppose you just show me." And, of course, you may wonder why I didn't start there. And I guess I could wonder that, too, but you see the thing was that all of these things that were in my mind needed to be brought out. All my various ideas needed to be faced.

In any case, on that particular day when I really opened my heart and mind to the Lord to see what He would do with me, there came to my mind people in this country, English speaking people in the United States and in Canada, who believed in the gospel and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ but didn't really understand what it meant. They didn't really know the meaning of the very thing they were professing and I was to tell them. I could tell them because I had been an agnostic. I had been an unbeliever and I had come to believe. And so it dawned on me in my heart (from the Lord) that what I should do was to devote myself to minister in this country.

I can tell you I was surprised. I didn't want to do it. I remember that deep down in my heart I just had

a feeling that I couldn't do it. But when I tried anything else nothing else would fit. Everything else would just fade out and become dim. But when I thought about this continent, then I had a strong feeling. It was also shown to me that I should particularly work with the people in the churches and the leaders of these churches. If they were professional men, all the better. If they were college men, all the better --sober-minded, thinking people need to be confronted with the fact that the things of the gospel are real and true. That was to be my mission.

I remember how I came home from prayer that morning. Instead of coming in at 11 o'clock, I came that morning about 8. And, when I came in I recall I said to my bride, rather in disappointment, "Well, it looks like we're going to stay in this country." I will never forget how she said, "They need the gospel here. You can preach here." And then I remember how I said, "That means I've got to go to college, because if I am going to work in this country I'll have to get acquainted with the college ways of doing things so that nobody will think that I don't know the gospel." And we talked a bit more about it and she said, "That's all right. You might learn something." And so with that kind of backing, we turned around in our own career.

This brings me then to the thing that I have committed myself to, even to this day. The Lord had finally brought me around to the place where I could see what He wanted me to do - stay in this country and speak especially to church people, Christian people, about the reality of the faith in which they believe, about what these things really mean. This, by the grace of God, is what we are seeking to do today.

We are setting out things of the Bible because we believe they are the Word of God. We believe that as you come to know the Word of God, He can open your heart and mind to what He wants for you. If you will yield yourself and trust in Him, He will bring it to pass. He won't particularly make you rich in this world, and He won't give you everything that you want in this world, but He will take you to Himself. He'll bless you here, and He will keep you here. He will be your God and you will belong to Him.

This is the message we try to share with everyone as He enables us.