

Into His Marvelous Light

by Dr. Manford George Gutzke

My First Public Testimony

In an earlier book I have given personal testimony to illustrate what happens in the soul that comes to faith. The name of that book is Out of Darkness. In it I told how I had suddenly been able to believe in Christ Jesus as my Savior and yield myself to Him as my Lord. Now I want to continue that testimony. I want to share with you something of what happened to me as I began growing in faith.

You know, that's one of the wonderful things about becoming a Christian. It's a good deal like being born as a baby. One of the first things that a healthy child does is to grow, and one of the first things a healthy Christian does is to grow. He grows in faith and in knowledge. In my own experience, however, I had no idea about that. When I became a Christian, there was a certain sense in which I felt as though it was all done. But I was to learn that one can grow in grace and in knowledge. The things I'll be telling about took place without my expecting them to happen.

On the night on which I came to faith I was walking on a country road, and I was suddenly able to believe. The rest of that walk home was a walk of great joy. I was elated and in my own soul actually living in a state of glory, because I knew now that there would be nothing interfering between myself and the Lord and that I would personally have an open way into heaven itself. God Himself would take me there through the Lord Jesus Christ.

No one had told me that I would ever have to witness. I would not have known what you meant if you had asked me anything about witnessing. I think if you had spoken to me about a witness, I would have thought about a man who gets up in court and takes part in a trial. I had not recognized in my reading that there was any special burden put upon a man who believed, saying that he should witness to others. But just the same, when I did come to believe, I remember that I felt the first thing I would have to do would be to tell the young man who lived in the same home as I did. The next morning he was up before I was, and was out at the barn taking care of the stock, feeding the horses. When I woke up I went out there immediately. On my way out to the barn I kept saying to myself, "Well, what will I say? How will I say it? How will I talk to him about it?" We had never talked about these things. But I knew I just had to do it. I went into the barn and told him something like this: "The most wonderful thing happened to me last night." And he said, "What was that?" I said, "I found out and came to see that Christ Jesus when He died on Calvary's Cross died for me. And what that means is that I am going to heaven. I guess, like the Bible says, I am saved." Now I really expected him to laugh at me. I don't know why I should have, but that's what I expected. And yet to my surprise he didn't. I remember he said very humbly, "I wish to God I could say that." When he turned away I thought, "My goodness me; even he wants to believe," although he hadn't admitted it.

During the forenoon I went on over to the farmer, who lived several miles away, the man who had helped me to understand and who had shown me so much of the truth in the gospel. He listened to my story with much satisfaction. He told me that he had a friend of his in town, another school teacher, an older man, and I should go and tell this other man. So, he took me over to his friend's home and introduced me as a young Christian. Immediately I told, him my story, how I had come to believe. He was very much interested and overjoyed. He said, "Now you must stay with me tonight. Tomorrow is Sunday, and you can ride along with me." He had three different places where he led a country Sunday School and where he did some preaching.

On our way to the first preaching point he said to me, "Now at this first place I often conduct the service; but when we get to the second place, I want you to get up and tell your story." I was startled. "Oh no, I'll never do that." "Oh, yes," he said, "I think you should." I insisted, "I can't. I just can't do it. And furthermore I don't need to." And he asked, "Why would you say you don't need to?" "Well," I replied, "I am saved. I believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that's all a person is supposed to do. And that's just all." He said, "Well, the Bible says that whosoever believeth in Him shall not be ashamed." I knew it said that. And I knew in a very real sense I wasn't ashamed, although I will admit I was frightened at the idea. He went on to tell me that the Bible says, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so." I appreciated that, and I thought when the time was right I would, but I didn't have to get up in church and do it. And then he said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." So he said, "You think about it."

During that first church service I was thinking about it all the time. And the more I thought about it, the more I realized, "I don't have to do this to be saved. I am already saved. I already belong to the Lord, and I think that's all He wanted me to do. But it is true that He did say, 'Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.' And it is also true He said, 'Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.' All right, I will do it, although the thought of it frightens me." So when we came away from that place, I told him, "All right, this once I will do this thing."

At the second preaching point there was a much larger company of people. I saw one of the two fellow students that I had been with several years before when we heard a sermon on heaven. Afterwards we had gone to talk to the preacher to ask him how to get to heaven. None of us were believers, and there he was. It was the first time I had seen him since we got out of school and several years had gone by. Then I saw sitting there the girl that I had had as my partner at the county dance about two weeks before. I had bought a box at the box social, and this girl had been my partner. Also, as I looked around over the crowd, there was a young fellow with whom eight days before I had spent most of Saturday afternoon playing pool in the town pool hall. I thought, "My goodness, in front of those people, I am to get up and say what happened to me?" Then I would think of the Lord and I would say, "Well, so far as the Lord Jesus is concerned, He has done so much for me, I'll do it." But I went down to the front of that class room and sat at the front desk, so that I wouldn't have to walk so far when I came to get up and make my talk, because I was frightened stiff. I remained in a panic right until that man started to talk. He got up and said, "Instead of making my usual talk this morning right at first, I have called on a young friend of mine." By the time he had said that much all the panic left me, and I was ready. He said, "He is going to take five minutes and tell you what happened to him."

I got up, and that five minutes became thirty. I told them what happened to me when I came to believe. My friend had been conducting preaching services in that community for months, and he had previously told me that there were many interested people, but none of them had become Christians. Well that day, they stayed around and talked and talked, and would you believe it, eight people came to faith and among them was my fellow student who had not been able to believe. He is still living up in Canada. I hear from him each Christmas. He is an elder in the church. That girl who was my supper partner also became a Christian. And that young fellow that had been playing pool with me became a Christian. It was the most astonishing thing. So, as we drove away from there and went to the third preaching point, he said, "How about doing it again?" I said, "I'll be glad to." I got up and told my testimony again, and three more people believed. It was a wonderful day for me, a day of giving my open, public testimony that I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. I was able to tell the whole world, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."

My First Personal Work

It would be hard for anybody to realize how little I knew when I became a Christian. I think the proper word is to say that I was naive. I didn't know what would happen to me when I really came to faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. I remember that after I gave my first testimony, people would say, for instance, "Now that you're converted . . ." I stopped them and would say, "What do you mean - converted?" I remember so well somebody came to me and said, "Well, you believe in the advent of the Lord Jesus Christ." I had never heard such a word. I was a school teacher, but I didn't know anything about what that would mean. And you know, in those days I had no idea that the Scriptures recorded that the Lord Jesus Christ said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations." That never occurred to me. I certainly didn't know it referred to me. And yet I remember that I did have to tell people. I was very conscious of the fact that I wanted people to know not only that I was a believer but that it was all true. A human being on earth could actually believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and could so become a child of God. It was an astonishing thing to me.

Now at that time I was a school teacher; and, of course, there were other school teachers in the community, and we would get to know each other. Near me, in the next school over from where I was, there was a lady school teacher with whom I had many times had conversation. Sometimes I would call at her home, and we were good friends. When I became a Christian, I wanted her to know about it. I talked to her, and I found out something very amazing to me. Her father was a real Christian, but she just couldn't believe it was true. She said that she knew her father believed, and she knew her father was a good man, but it just did not seem real for her. I talked about my own experience and told her how I had been an unbeliever and how I had come to faith, and I reasoned with her about the significance of these things.

So far as my own conduct was concerned, I was not conscious of feeling that I needed to make any change in my affairs. But I had stopped dancing, which was a very common public activity for young people. If you haven't lived in the country, you won't know how important that is. We lived way out, a long piece from town. There seemed to be very little opportunity for young people to get together. So, the country dance, which we held every week or two during the winter time, was a very common social event. As a matter of fact, I used to be one of the promoters. Several of us would get together and hire the dance hall, and I would help put up the money. We would get the fellow that would play the fiddle and the man who would do the calling of the square dances. And so we would arrange a dance. That was a very common thing for me to do. I even learned to play the fiddle. Believe it or not, I have actually been the fiddler at one of those dances in my earlier days. Also, I used to call the square dances. So you know I took an active part. No one said it was wrong; and when I became a Christian, nobody said anything to me, but I quit.

I often think back as to my reason. I didn't have any feeling that it was particularly a matter of sin, but I just didn't want to go on with it. I think perhaps it was because I didn't like to think of spending so much time and doing something that was not as important as I could have. I could have been talking to others about being Christians. I didn't realize that this was a matter of any spiritual significance except that I just didn't go.

In those days I was very much interested in athletics of any kind. In the community where I was we had a baseball team. I remember we called ourselves the Red Sox. We had bright new uniforms, brilliant red and white; it was the first uniform I ever had on. I was manager of the team as well as a player. We didn't have much money, and the budget for this ball team was raised at an annual party. The people

would all be invited to come to the Red Sox ball team party. We began with a concert, and after the concert we had a debate. Then we had a box social, and after the box social we had a dance. If you want to know how long that took, it took from dusk to dawn. We started when it got dark and we quit when it got light. We made enough money out of that to finance the ball team. We could pay for the umpires, buy the baseballs, and that particular year we even bought the uniforms.

As manager I went along to this particular affair. I shared in the concert. I remember I took part in one of the plays. I played the part of a nice man. Then after that, I took part in the debate. I stayed for the box social and bought one of the boxes. I remember it cost me \$9.00. I intended as soon as that was over that I would go home. No one particularly expected me to go home, I am sure. The young man I was living with had been telling me, "People won't mind your going to dances. They all know how things have been with you, and they would respect your feelings. They wouldn't misunderstand you at all, if you were to come along to dances just the way you used to." I felt maybe that was true, but I hadn't gone to others. I overheard two of the young fellows in the cloak room just across the hall from me. One said to the other, "Did you see that? Gutzke at a dance!" Then I knew right away that it was far more important than I had thought.

When they began to move the chairs away from the floor of the hall for dancing, I went for my overcoat. Immediately some of the boys came and said, "You're not going home are you?" I said, "Yes, I am going home." They made repeated efforts to persuade me to stay, but I put on my coat and got my overshoes and began to go. Finally, they went over and got my closest friend. I had one very close friend in that community. He and I were pals all the way through, a very earnest, sincere man. I knew that if he came and asked me to stay and I didn't, he would never understand and it would be the end of our friendship. So they brought him over, and I thought, "Here's where I lose my friend!" And by the way, I did. He wasn't a bad man at all. He just couldn't understand why I would not do what he asked me to do. He came and said to me, "The boys want you to stay. They all understand how you feel, but if you would stay tonight, they would just appreciate it." I said to him, "Are you going to stay?" He said, "Why yes." I said, "Why are you going to stay?" "Well," he said, "I guess because I want to." "Well," I said, "that's exactly why I am going to go, because I want to." So I said, "Good bye," and I walked out. He and I were friends, but never close friends again. But as I walked out the door of that hall, I had a wonderful joy. I remember it was winter time, and I walked home in the early morning hours. I had a wonderful experience of fellowship with the Lord.

Now what I did not know was that all this discussion had been witnessed by the young school teacher I was telling you about. First of all she had seen me at the dance. She was a little surprised. And then she had seen me get ready to go home, which seemed to fit. She had seen the boys come to persuade me, and she wondered whether I would stay. Suddenly she said to herself, "If he doesn't stay when those boys talk to him, then this means it's real with him." She saw them go over and get my friend. She said at the time, "Now that's dirty. They shouldn't do that. That's his closest friend." But she saw this man after a bit get up and walk over; then she knew deep down in her heart, "If he can say 'no' to his closest friend, then this thing is real and the gospel must actually be true." I had no idea she was thinking that. She said afterwards that when they were talking to me, it seemed to her that I was just standing up a little bit straighter each time anyone came. Finally when my closest friend came, it looked as if I was almost leaning over backwards. And she said the moment I walked out that door, her heart just broke open into light. She said to herself, "It's true. It's really true. Something actually happened to that man."

So you see our public conduct does matter. We never know who is watching us. By the way, they won't give us any special help when we have to face the issue. They will wonder whether it's real. But

believe me, if they see us standing true to the things that we believe, it makes a difference to them. The next day when I was in town, I happened to see her. She took me aside and told me what had happened. The moment that I had walked out of that hall she was suddenly able to believe. She lives up in Canada, and I understand that she is a good Christian woman to this day. I just wanted you to know that how a Christian acts in public does matter for his personal testimony to other people.

My First Preaching

I never in the wide world ever expected to preach. Several times in the days when I was an unbeliever and in the process of coming to faith, I had the feeling that if I ever believed this, I would have to tell it. But I paid no further attention to that. After I had become a believer and had lived on into the next summer in the district where I was a school teacher, I came home for my summer holidays. My father had a farm. The very first Sunday that I was at home I went to the little country church where I had gone all my boyhood days. That particular Sunday we had church at two o'clock in the afternoon. We were all over there, and the preacher didn't come. For some strange reason that I never found out he never came. So the people started wondering whether or not they should go home. Of course, the choir leader could have led them in singing, but no one was prepared to bring a message. Somebody said right then, "Well, ask Manford to do it." I had in that community given talks at concerts and at other times, and I had taught Sunday School. They also had heard about my spiritual experience.

Well, it was an opportunity to give my testimony. I could stand up in front of those people I knew so well and tell them how I had become a Christian. So I agreed. I had no idea how to do it. I went to the choir director, and we sat down and made up an order of service, the like of which I had never seen in my life. With the help of the organist we picked the hymns and the Scripture. Then I got up to speak. I never dreamed for one moment that I would do what I was doing now. I had no thought of such a thing. I was a school teacher; and I expected, when I had saved enough money, to become a lawyer. That was the thought that I had in mind. But, I was a Christian, and they were in the service, and they wanted someone to talk about the Bible. So you know what I took for my text? You'll recognize it right away. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" John 3:16. Up there in that pulpit I shared with them the great discovery of my life. They had known me as a boy. They had known me as a high school student. They had known me in the community. I got up and told those people that I found that God Almighty, the creator of the heavens and the earth, wanted people to be saved.

I am sure I left many questions unanswered. When I first used to think about these things, I would say, "Well, why is the world here?" That day I didn't tell them that. Another time I would say, "Why is man like he is? Why isn't he just like a horse? Why isn't he just like a dog? Why should he be like he is?" I didn't tell them that. There would be times I used to ask, "Why am I like I am? Why is it that I want to be good and I can't be good? I want to do right and I can't do right? Why should I be like this?" I can tell you right now I didn't tell them that either. I used to wonder when I first heard about the gospel, "Why is it that God wants to save people through the cross of Calvary, through Jesus Christ? Why couldn't He just show us what to do and we would go out and do it?" Well, I didn't tell them, because I didn't know. I had no answer for that. Before I was a Christian I used to raise questions like this: "What will happen to the heathen? If the only people who are saved are those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, what about all those people in the world that don't believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" When I got up to preach, I didn't tell them that. And then I used to wonder what will happen to the world. Will it go

back into nothing? What happens after the end of the world comes? When the old farmer that I was talking to used to tell me that if I had faith in the Lord Jesus Christ I would be saved, I would ask him for a practical point of view, "How is that possible? How can it make any difference if I just believe, what difference will that make?" And you know that day when I got up to speak I didn't say anything about that question either.

The questions which I used to ask before I was a believer and by which I had been bothered and for which I never got an adequate answer, I didn't touch even on. I had no answer. I didn't attempt any answer. And you know what? I didn't need any answer. That wasn't the important thing. I was not telling them that God had showed me everything. I didn't know everything.

But God had revealed something to me. He revealed to me His plan in Christ Jesus. I had come to know that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God. When He died on Calvary's Cross, He died for the sins of the whole world, and that included me.

I stood up in that pulpit in that little country church, and I told those neighbors of ours that when Christ Jesus died on Calvary's Cross, "He died for you folks, for every single one of you. And, if you or I would receive Him, God, will receive us; and God will save us." I stood there and told them that's exactly why I am expecting to go to heaven. I'll go to heaven because Christ Jesus died for me and God will, for Christ's sake, save my soul.

I called on all the Christian history I could think of. They knew about the church. They knew about the reputation of the church, and about all the different churches there were. I called on them to remember that that's what the Christians had been telling from the day of the Apostle Paul down to this present time. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." This truth came to that church.

I think perhaps I would have remembered that day mainly as an exciting experience if it hadn't been for what happened when I got out of the church. I overheard some farmers talking. One older man, who was born in England. was telling his neighbors something like this: "I have heard that kind of preaching before. When I was a boy over in England I heard this kind of preaching. They used to preach like this over there." When he said that, then I knew that this is the kind of preaching there should be. Now I hope you won't misunderstand when I tell you that they never heard it before in that church. I had never heard it there. I didn't realize so much that I was saying differently, except that I kept telling them over and over again about the Lord Jesus Christ.

To this day, as I stop to think about it, even right now to this very ministry, The Bible For You, this is still our message. This is all we have to tell the whole world. If I could just now look you in the eye, the one thing I would want to give you, the testimony that I would want to give you right out of my heart, is this - "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the great thing that is true. When you go to church and when you read your Bible, you don't look to find answers to everything that you can possibly imagine. That's not important. There will be a great many things you will never know. The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us. And one of the things that's revealed is that He so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. Now that's been revealed and told to us. This is the message that we Christian people have to give to the whole world.

My First Public Witness

When I became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I made a public profession of my faith. I took every opportunity I could get to tell people that I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. I think I wanted them to become Christians, but I also wanted them to know I was a Christian. And yet, I found it a difficult thing to let people know. Now, as I look back on it, I can understand that it was a little with me as it is with a girl when she becomes engaged. Have you ever noticed that when a girl becomes engaged she likes people to know about it? But you know, she's got it easier. She puts on a diamond and people look at the diamond and she holds it up to them and people know. But what could I do?

Now, don't misunderstand me about this. There are things a Christian can do, but I didn't know what they were. And the people I was with didn't know what they were. If I had done them, I don't know whether they would have recognized it. There was no obvious change in personal habits, other than the matter of dancing. Inwardly I felt a difference, but how could I show it? I had been doing for a long time what I thought was right, and I still did. I had attended church, seeking and listening, hoping I would hear something. Now I went to church because I had found and I had heard, but how could people tell the difference? I was just going to church. I had been charitable to the poor just out of the goodness of my heart. I still was charitable to the poor, but now I was doing this as unto the Lord; but how could people tell? I had been reading my Bible. Do you remember, I read a chapter every day trying to find out what was true? Now I read the Bible, knowing it was true, but how could people tell that there was any difference? I had been praying. I prayed the Lord's Prayer every night. I still prayed. People wouldn't know what I said. How would they know it was different? I had been inwardly uncertain and unsure of anything. Now I was sure and darkness had changed to light in my soul, but who could see that? How would you show it?

The best thing I could do was to talk about salvation, about the Lord Jesus Christ, and about the gospel. All who heard me could tell that this was real. But, you know, I soon found out that when I got among people who didn't know me, they didn't particularly want me to talk about spiritual things. They didn't want to talk to me about the Lord. They didn't want me to talk about becoming a Christian. Now I had cut out worldly amusement. For instance, I had stopped going to dances. But what difference would that make? There were other people in the world that didn't dance. That doesn't always mean they're Christian.

When I was in the army, it was the same question. How could I show the other men in the army that I was a Christian? Most of my manner of life I had always followed. There was my time of personal devotions. I read the Bible in my bunk in the barracks, but then I had done that before I was a Christian. People looked on it as being kind of peculiar, but I did it. I used no profanity. That made me different. I told no dirty yarns. But they thought I was just a bit of a sissy. That didn't particularly impress them. There were discussions and there were arguments about religion, none of them very serious. Nobody ever really cared much. After the army, I went back to teaching school; and it was much the same as before, only I found that my own faith was beginning to falter. I wasn't so sure of things in my own soul as I had once been.

Then there occurred an unusual incident. I was coming home from the city of Winnipeg to the school where I was teaching. From the main line train I was to change to another train. At that junction of the railroad, we were delayed for two hours because the train was late. It was winter time, and there was a winter storm on. So we were shut up in the station house for two hours. I would say about eighteen or twenty people were there, and we were just sitting in one room around a coal stove putting in two hours

of time. While we were sitting there, I heard one man talking to another about going to church. Of course, I pricked up my ears right away. I didn't ordinarily hear anything like that. He was urging that this other man should go, and the other man was evading it any way he could.

After they had talked along and this man just kept putting up excuses, finally there was silence. For some reason I felt that I wanted to say something, and I got into the conversation. I asked these two gentlemen, "Is this a private conversation or can anybody get into it?" They said, "Why it's open and free for all. Something you want to say?" I turned to the man that had been telling the other one he should go to church, and I said to him, "You have been wanting this man to come to church. Why should he come to church?" And you know, I was really wondering what he would say. I myself wasn't going much, and I just wondered. He said, "Well, he should go because it's right." I said, "What makes it right?" He couldn't tell me. Then he said, "Well, he should go because it's good." I said, "Good for what? What difference will it make?" "He should go because it's decent." I said, "You mean everybody who goes to church is decent?" "No, I couldn't say that." "Do you mean all decent people go to church?" Well, he couldn't say that. You can't prove it. He said, "It would be helpful." I said, "Helpful for what?" And so the discussion went. I finally asked him, "What is the church for?" You know what I really wanted to hear from him was that the church is a place where you worship the Lord Jesus Christ. But he never said it. Finally, it got to the place where rather defiantly he said that politics is the highest form of religion, and at that point the discussion more or less died down.

But he was somewhat disturbed by then. So, he got after me. He said, "Do you belong to a church?" I said, "No." He said, "Why not?" "Well," I said, "I just found no reason why I should belong." So in a rather sneering way he said, "You just want to be a lone wolf." "No," I said, "I have no desire to be by myself, but I would need to have a better reason than any one that you have given so far." And he said to me, "Well, you just wouldn't join any church." I said, "Oh, yes, I would join a church. I saw a church in Hamilton, Ontario, that I would have joined." When I was in the army, I had gone to church one Sunday night and I had been astonished to find a church where the preacher got up and preached about the Lord Jesus Christ. This man said, "You'd join that church?" "Yes," I said, "if that church were in this community, I'd belong to it." He said, "Why?" I said, "They talked about the Lord Jesus Christ, and the preacher got up and preached the Bible." So after I had given my testimony about that, the conversation sort of died down.

One of the other people present, a little bitty school teacher whom I had never seen before, spoke up and she said, "I just want to say I belong to that church in Hamilton, Ontario. And what this young man has said is only part of the truth. The half has not been told." And then she went ahead and gave her testimony about that church and how the people in it really believed the gospel and she told some of the things they did to try to bring other people along to believe. That was astonishing to me. We were two thousand miles away, in a little railroad junction point in northern Manitoba, and there this should happen. I was very much impressed by that.

There was an Episcopalian clergyman present. I hadn't seen him yet. He had an overcoat on, so I didn't see his clerical clothes. I wouldn't have talked for one moment if I had known that there was a preacher present. What I did not know was that the man I was arguing with also was a preacher. I just didn't know it. He was asking one of his parishioners to come to church. That's where I got into the discussion. But when they turned to this Episcopalian clergyman there, they asked him, "Mr. So and So, what would you say about all this?" I remember how he said, "I have been listening with a great deal of interest, and I believe the church needs prayer." I thought, "Oh my goodness, here's a man, a minister, and he knows." I could just tell that was real.

Six months later, I was in another town, standing in a drug store waiting for someone to pick me up, and a man came in that I had seen at various times in that part of the country. He was what we called a horse doctor. You'd call him a veterinarian. An older man, he came into the drug store to buy something. He turned around and, as he walked out he said, "Aren't you the young man that I saw in a railroad station house last Spring?" I said, "Yes." He went on to talk. He said, "That was a very interesting discussion you had there," and, then he said to me quietly, "You know, you won the argument but you were wrong." And he walked out. Well, I nearly ran after him. All the way through that argument I had known it didn't need to be like he was saying. I didn't intend to say that a man should not go to church. I really wanted to find out why he should go. I wanted us all to recognize it.

When this horse doctor said to me, "You were wrong," and walked out, I felt deep down that I was wrong. All the way through that's what should have been the case with me. I really came very close to doubting my whole experience because of this very fact that I was too much alone. Actually I needed to be in a church, and people do need to have the fellowship of other Christian people. I didn't know it then. I didn't realize it, but I was to find it out later.

My First Real Doubt

As I began to grow in faith, there was one condition that was true about me and that was not good. I was a believer for over four years before I united with the church. It was a reasonable thing for me to do. I didn't belong to the church because, so far as I knew, the church had not been interested in my spiritual welfare. From the church, no one had ever come to me about my soul. No preacher had ever talked to me about my soul. I had Sunday School teachers, and I am sure that some of those Sunday School teachers were hoping that all of us would really come to believe. But I can remember very well that when I did become a Christian, I realized that no official person from the church, no minister, and no elder had ever said one word to me about becoming a Christian. But even though that was true, it was not right.

After I became a Christian I was among old friends for several months, first where I taught school, then at home. Then I spent six months at Normal School, followed by two years in the Canadian Army. Then for over a year I was out teaching school again. Except for the first few months after I became a Christian when I witnessed to all who knew me, I gave no special witness about my being a Christian. I was living a good life, but I had lived a good life before I was a Christian. Any teacher would have done many of the things I did that you would say were good. In the midst of all that, there were no church services in that community. I could have gone five or six miles away to church, but I didn't because I didn't find any particular benefit in it for me.

Gradually there developed in me a great doubt. I called it a great, massive doubt. I was suffering the fate of all people who lead easy, pampered lives. My soul was safe. My guilt was gone. My heart was at peace. My mind was at rest. Right in the middle of all that, doubts arose. Was I a real Christian? Was I actually saved? As I look back now, I used to think that if I had had my face slapped each day because I was a Christian, I would never have doubted. I would have known I really belonged. I have even had the feeling that if all the churches were forbidden to open and government law went out that there would be no church open next Sunday, maybe many people would be aroused to think of what they actually had there. The doubt grew in me. I was concerned, not about the gospel, but about my response. Later I was to learn that John wrote his first epistle to help those who needed assurance. But at this time I didn't know how to be sure. I knew salvation was free "to whosoever believeth in Him." But did I really believe?

With this concern in my mind, there came a very important day in my life. It was a day in Spring. Spring up in Canada, in the north country, can be a very lovely time of the year. This was one of those lovely days. The sun was warm. The snow was thawing off the ground, and it was very comfortable to be out; just a quiet, sunny day in the early Spring. It was a Sunday, and I went out in the woods with my Bible to find out whether or not I was a real Christian. I found a stump to sit on; and believe it or not, I sat on that stump from nine o'clock in the morning until four o'clock in the afternoon. I never moved off that stump. I had the Bible in my hand. I read, I prayed, I meditated and I tried to settle it. Am I really one of the Lord's own? Am I a real Christian? Slowly and carefully I went over every aspect of my consciousness to see how it really was with me. I read pages and pages of the New Testament. Earnestly I prayed and meditated. I repented of my conduct, my carelessness, and tried to find out for sure.

On into the afternoon several undeniable facts stood out. There had never been any question about God. I didn't have to settle that. And there never was any question about sin. I knew I was a sinner. There was no question about Jesus Christ. I knew He was the Savior. And I knew the gospel that if a sinner believed, Christ Jesus would save him. But I knew that the whole question was about my relationship with the Lord. Was I a real believer?

Consider what it was like. I was a school teacher. I was supposed to be good. I was in the community as one of the leaders of young people. I was expected. to be moral. I lived, as a decent man who tried to be unselfish and courteous. Well, this was only natural conduct for an educated, cultured young man who was the school teacher in the community. You see, there was no reason why people should give me any spiritual credit for my conduct. If I had in those days belonged to a church, if I had participated in church, I might have been teaching Sunday School. I might have been giving to church work. I might have been sharing in praying for missionaries. If I had been doing something like that it would have been different. But I was doing nothing. I wasn't actively doing anything that pertained to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. All the things I showed outwardly, a person could do in a very human way without being a Christian. The thing that I had not done was to bring out the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. I had kept quiet about that because of the circumstances and my being a school teacher.

That afternoon while I was sitting there reviewing all that, I found out something like this, as I recall the passages of Scripture: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven." And I had confessed Him. Then I read in another place, "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself." It suddenly dawned on me: I had confessed Him as my Savior and He had confessed me before His Father in heaven. I might have forgotten Him because I was human. He would never forget me because He was God. He would always remember me; and because He had given Himself for me, I really belonged to Him. I remember how finally, sitting on that stump about four o'clock in the afternoon, I prayed the prayer that was to become the turning point of my spiritual experience. I said something like this, "Lord, if it's like this, that You died for me, You bore my sins and because of Your faithfulness I am saved, if You'll just give me a little help from now on, I'm not going to be a dead loss." And I got up off that stump and walked away. I could really and truly remember I had confessed Him before men, and He would confess me before my Father which is in heaven. He would take care of me. From that time on I had it fixed in my soul that I wanted to serve Him.

Desire To Grow

I have told you how after a long day of heart-searching experience I was given grace to see that if I had once turned to the Lord and given myself to Him, He would receive me and He would never let me go. That first real doubt was a very real scare to me. I was able to recognize that it was a bad sign. I had felt so weak that I thought I would die. As I tried to think about what was the matter with me, I thought, perhaps, I was undernourished - that I actually had not really fed my soul. Now I was right about that, but I didn't have any idea how to go about it. It was not that I was sick. I didn't have any wrong ideas about things that I had to get straightened out. I was not diseased in my soul. I am thankful that I was spared any kind of heresy. I didn't get off on the wrong tangent, but the right ideas that I held in my heart and mind were weak. They weren't strong enough to make the change in me that there should have been. As I look back now I realize that I did not really understand what it means to live in Christ. I knew I was saved; I was not going to hell. And I knew that the Lord Jesus Christ was going to take me to heaven. But I had practically no understanding of what it meant to have "Christ in you, the hope of glory."

At that time everything for me was a matter of conscious belief. I was seeking to maintain a state of self-conscious conviction about the Lord Jesus Christ. I know now that there are other helps to sound faith, but I didn't know it then. That's a bit like saying that "Certainly good seed must be put in the garden, but you've got to have more than good seed." That's very elemental. Without the good seed, you won't get a good crop, but having a garden takes a lot more than just putting seed in the ground. Now the seed had been put in my heart. I really believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, but there has been little cultivation.

I was very fortunate actually that I fastened my heart and mind on the milk of the word, which is good food even after you are a grown man. But it was years before I learned about the meat that you should have when you're older and more mature. And I am so grateful that even in those days, by the grace of God, I didn't turn to stimulants, sedatives nor opiates of any kind. I didn't start turning around and away from the Lord. I knew I wasn't as strong as I should be, but the Lord kept me faithful in those days. I really wanted to believe that I might be strong in faith, that I might have the joy of it as well as the peace. I had had it when I first became a Christian and I wanted that again. I did not realize that part of my problem was in my being too self-centered. In my preoccupation with my own personal condition, I was actually hindering the work of the grace of God in my heart. I wasn't able to know that. But I was fortunate that this was only a matter of immaturity. Immaturity is something that you can grow out of. With more and more experience, you'll gradually grow out of it. I knew enough even in those days to realize that "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." I knew, too, that Peter had said, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby."

After my experience of doubt, I began to take steps, as much as I could, to see that I would grow stronger in my faith in the Lord. I began to pay more attention to my reading of the Bible. As a believer I knew to read in the epistles. I particularly stressed that because I was trying to understand what it means to live in Christ. But I really had little idea what that actually would mean. I wanted to believe with strength, with full assurance and with no doubt. I did not realize that what I really needed was to have less of self and more of the Lord. Every day I thought and tried to understand the Word, and I studied in every way I possibly could.

Another thing I did was to pray. I had been praying for years. I had been praying in the dark, but still I was praying. Now I began to feel sure that praying would help, even though I didn't really know how

to pray nor what to pray for. I knew about praying in trouble, but I knew very little about praying as a kind of a range finder to find out where to go. I didn't know about praying to keep in touch with the will of God. There was nothing intelligent about my praying as a means of getting things done.

I did another thing that was very important: I began to read biographies of Christian people. And I remember reading the biographies of certain missionaries, some of which I have never forgotten to this day. One of those I read was the missionary called "Paton of the South Seas." I read about men of faith. Those were the days when I read George Mueller's diary and learned of God's dealings with George Mueller.

There were various incidents that helped me to grow. One day I went to church with a Christian lady friend. When it was over and we were on our way home, one of the other people present with us remarked, "Wasn't that a strange thing. That man preached about thirty minutes and never mentioned the name of the Lord Jesus once." I was smitten, because I hadn't mentioned the name of the Lord Jesus in a long time. And so I immediately looked up and said, "Well, maybe he doesn't want to make it too common? He doesn't want to refer to it too easily?" After we were away from the group, this particular Christian friend said something that greatly helped me. She was older than I, and a mature woman. I only knew her for a few days and she passed out of my life. But what she told me has stayed. She said, "Manford, don't you know that every time you name His name you'll be stronger?" I didn't realize it. But from that time on I was determined that I would mention His name. And it's true: just as sure as you live, every time you mention His name, you'll be stronger. If you don't have an opportunity of mentioning His name in the presence of other people, do it in prayer. Mention the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, your Savior. Give Him His whole title. Call Him the Lord Jesus Christ. Your soul will prosper.

I remember also how I decided that I would need to go to church. I had at that time just began preparation for my law career. As is the custom in Canada, I had entered a law office as a clerk. I worked as an apprentice that I might learn what was involved in being a lawyer. I made up my mind when I went to Winnipeg that I would also look for a church.

Can This Church Be Real?

As I look back over my early spiritual career, I can see more clearly than ever how very much I lost in not having the privilege of fellowship with dedicated, intelligent believers. I didn't have the blessing of a strong church. The Bible says it is not good for a man to be alone, and this is true spiritually.

Personally, I think that one of the reasons I stayed alone and did not want to have anything to do with the church probably was resentment that the church had not sought my soul. No one from the church had ever come to talk to me about my personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. My skepticism, which had moved me to agnostic ideas about God, affected my view of the church. Now I know that this was a definite hindrance. I never forgot the old horse doctor who told me I was wrong when I had been talking about not going to church and defended a man for not going to church.

I came to the place in my desire to grow where I resolved to find an acceptable church. In so doing, I looked up a church that I had heard about when I was in the army. I heard about the church Sunday night when the men in the barracks were talking back and forth, joshing one another. They began to rib each other about not going to church. They turned on me, and now without any fun in their voices asked, "Why aren't you in church?" I recognized that it was somewhat personal. I spoke up and said, "Well, why talk to me that way? You men aren't in church." And they said to me, "No, but you seem like a

fellow that would go to church. Why aren't you in church?" So I told them, "I'm not in church; because if I had gone to church tonight, the preacher would have gotten up and told me how to win the war. He would have told me why the allies weren't winning. And he would have told me what was right and wrong about the war. I have read intelligent and competent commentators on these things, and I think I probably know everything that he would say to me. I don't want to spend my time listening to that kind of thing." At that point a sergeant in the company spoke up, "I can tell you one church where you won't hear politics. You go to Elam Chapel. It's at the corner of Ellis and Sherbrook. You go there, you'll find out one church where they don't just talk politics. They'll preach to you about the Lord Jesus Christ." I was very much struck because that was the first time I had ever heard the name of the Lord Jesus used in that barracks that it wasn't used in profanity. That's what was in mind three years later when I was in Winnipeg as a law student. The first Sunday I was there I went to the corner of Ellis and Sherbrook. I was going to find out about this church.

When the preacher got up he preached immediately about the Lord Jesus Christ. I was shocked. I had never heard a preacher get right up and talk about the Lord Jesus Christ. I had heard them talk about Christians, about the church or about what was right and wrong, but I didn't usually hear them talk about the Lord Jesus Christ. Then I noticed he was a visiting preacher. I thought, "Oh, he's a visiting preacher." But that night the pastor was going to preach. So I came back to the church, and to my amazement he also preached about the Lord Jesus Christ. I just didn't know what in the world to think about that. I didn't think it could be real. I decided that I would attend every meeting there until I found out.

They announced that on Monday night there would be a young people's meeting. Monday night I came. I expected to find about twelve or eighteen young people. I knew what young people's meetings were like. Usually somebody would read a portion of a lesson. Another one would read a portion of Scripture or a piece that had been cut out of a lesson help. After they had read through these parts, I expected they would have some sort of formal prayer. Then we would have coffee and doughnuts. And that would be a young people's meeting. I had been to many of them and knew exactly what to expect. So I went there on that Monday night, and I found sixty or seventy young people. It turned out to be a farewell party for a young girl who was going as a missionary. The program was largely made up of hearing a young man who was home on furlough from the mission field. And would you believe it, I felt in my soul a resentment about the whole thing. I said to myself, "Why are they going, and I am not going? What does that young girl have that I don't?" They talked about her love for the Lord and her faithfulness to the Lord. Deep down in my own heart I said to myself, "I love the Lord. He is my Savior. He died for me as much as He died for her. And if she is going, why shouldn't I go?" When the young man got up to speak I thought to myself, "What does he have that I haven't got?" But there it was.

Then I said to myself, "That's a special young people's meeting, and maybe when they have the regular one it won't be like that." They had prayer meeting on Wednesday night. So I went on Wednesday night. Again, I expected about fifteen or twenty people, and I thought I knew just exactly what to expect at prayer meeting. I had been to them. Instead of that, I found over two hundred people at this meeting. And when they had time for prayer, instead of one or two men praying who were called on, they had the meeting open for prayer. For more than twenty minutes they prayed spontaneously. One would lead in prayer, another would lead in prayer, and another one would lead in prayer, until the leader just broke in and ended it because he wanted to bring a message to the people.

The following Sunday I went, of course, to the morning service, and the preacher preached about the Lord Jesus Christ. That afternoon at three o'clock was the Sunday School hour. So I came to the Sunday

School just to see what that would be like. I was satisfied I would find some place where it would just be an ordinary routine business. They sent me to a young men's class. I found some twelve or fifteen young men who were all ex-soldiers, single, unmarried men. And do you know what they did in that Sunday School class? They actually discussed the gospel. I couldn't believe it. Why, they talked about what it means to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. They raised questions about how you get answers to prayer. They talked to each other about what it meant if you had Christ with you when you were in your office. I just couldn't believe that I would ever hear that in the church. Now the old farmer used to talk that way, but I had never heard that in church in my life. Yet they did. So I kept coming. I would come to the Sunday morning and evening services. I would listen, just as carefully as I could, because I was sure that some day one of these men would break down and just preach an ordinary sermon like I knew, about how good it is to be good and how bad it is to be wrong, and things like that. I was expecting to hear why they couldn't believe this and why they changed their mind about that, and about various other things . . . new discoveries of this and that. There would be lots of big words and you wouldn't know anything that was going on. But, it just never was like that. Every time I heard a sermon there they talked about spiritual things. They talked about the Lord Jesus Christ. They interpreted the Bible. The young people continued in their Bible study, and they would be praying for those who went as missionaries. I remember going on Wednesday evening to prayer meeting, listening and taking part, actually taking part in prayer meeting. I still could not believe it could be true.

Finally after I had found it to be like that, I said to myself, "This is the company of people I must belong to." I decided that I would unite with that particular church. You know, I'd never heard what denomination it was. I had dealt with myself about that. I resolved I would not ask them what denomination it was. It didn't make any difference. These people believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. They talked about Him, They honored Him. I believed as they did, and I wanted to honor Him, and I would just belong. I shall never forget the day I came to unite with the group.

The minister himself dealt with me. He asked me, "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?" I said "Yes." "Have you received the Lord Jesus Christ?" "Yes." He said, "What's going to happen to you?" I was slow to bring it up, but he made me come out with it. "What's going to happen to you?" I just had to admit out openly and publicly, "I'm going to be saved. I am actually going to heaven. I am actually going to be with the Lord Jesus Christ." Then he said, "How do you know?" Well, I would think of various things. He held me right to it. "How do you know?" Finally I had to admit, "It's in the Bible." He said, "Yes, this is God's Word."

How To Know The Will Of God

Sunday School met in the afternoon at three o'clock, and as a young, unmarried man I attended a young men's class. Most of us had been in the army. When this particular young men's class met, to my amazement they had regular lesson leaflets, and each time we would read and interpret it. Then we would discuss questions that would come to our hearts and minds. We discussed matters of faith. I remember how shortly after I had been there, a question was raised that came up again and again and again - "How would I know the will of God in my life?" No matter what the particular lesson for the day was, before it had been going on for very many minutes, we were at that point again. We discussed it and discussed it in various ways. When we would be through with the Sunday School about four o'clock in the afternoon, six or eight of us would walk together. Many times we continued the discussion which had begun in the Sunday School. How would you know the will of God for your life? How would God get a message

across to you as to what He wanted you to do? We discussed many aspects of that.

I remember we asked ourselves questions like this: "Would God use visions or dreams? If we were to get a special message from the Lord, would this mean that we would have a dream about it? Would it come to us in the form of a vision?" The rest of us would say right away, "How would you know the message was true? How would you know the dream was real?" Any number of us one time or another had dreams. We never thought of taking them literally. We never thought of taking them as true. And many, many times in spite of everything anybody ever suggested, we would fall to see anything significant in them. How would you know that this particular vision that the Lord was sending to you was something real from Him and wasn't just something that you ate that caused you to have a dream, a nightmare or something of the kind?

Another time we would ask, "Would you expect God to speak to you in words that you could hear, in audible words?" We had heard people say that, and such testimonies I am sure many of you have heard. They are given to this day where people will say, "I heard a voice in the night, and it said such and such a thing to me." Now would that be a way in which God would guide us? If a man was wondering what he was going to do, should he wait until he heard a voice in the night telling him? How would you know the voice was from God? What would there be about it that would make you think it was from God? Why should He speak English?

Then we would raise the question like this, "Would God affect your thinking in such a way that you would reach certain conclusions by yourself? As you think about things, suddenly certain arguments would come up stronger than others and you would reach a conclusion that would be the will of God for you?" We would then raise the question immediately, "How would, you be sure this wasn't your own idea? You have done that kind of thinking by yourself. How do you know it isn't some other man's idea? Why should it be God's idea?" That brought us to the point where we weren't sure. Someone else would ask, "Would God send some very important person to tell you His will?" Would that be the way it would be? Perhaps the preacher would come and would say to you that God, wants you to do thus and so. Maybe some very godly woman would come and tell you that God wants you to do a certain thing. Some of the rest of us would argue, "Why should you trust that person? Just because he is a church official doesn't make him right." We knew many church officials who had made mistakes. And then, many church officials disagree with each other. They can't both be right. Which one? Well then, how would God convey His message to you?

Sometimes we would try this in our minds, "Maybe God will overrule events in His providence? Maybe He'll fix it so that no matter what happens in your life you'll be in His will? Well in that case, if God is going to fix it so that everything that happens will just lead you in His will, why are not all people in the will of God?" We had read in the Bible and were very strong that God is no respecter of persons. When God speaks to men He says, "Whosoever will." If God, is going to do it, why wouldn't He do it to everybody? Why pick on some and not others? So that was not convincing to us. Then we would think, "If you are really sincere maybe then God would lead you. Maybe it was a matter of your sincerity and your integrity. And if you really, humbly, sincerely sought the mind of the Lord and then you start to figure things out, the way you figure would be God's will." Then we would come up with this kind of an argument, "In that case, why do sincere people differ? Why do you find sincere people on the opposite sides of an argument?" Finally we would be led into something like this, "Would God bring some specific event to pass? Would He affect you in some way? Maybe there would be a wreck. Maybe your house would burn down. Maybe lightning would strike. Would God bring some special event to pass that would guide you, direct you or affect you in some way like that?" When we had thought about

that we would argue, "How would you know what it meant? How would you know it meant anything at all? Why wasn't it just an accident?" I want you to know that this went on not only just one Sunday afternoon but Sunday afternoon after Sunday afternoon.

One day as we were walking along on the banks of the Assiniboine River in Winnipeg suddenly one of our number spoke up, a man by the name of Giles, "We are just wasting time. We don't mean what we say." Well, this was a different note; and we all looked at him immediately. "What do you mean?" We didn't feel that we were fooling around. We had been talking about this thing for weeks. To us we were very sincere about it. He turned to the river. In the middle there was a man sitting in a boat. He said, "Now suppose that boat turned over, and that man couldn't swim. He'd just hang on to the boat, clutching to it in the current and calling out for help. Look down here at the shore. There is a row boat with oars in it. There's the man out there on the point of drowning; here's the row boat." And he looked at us with something like scorn and said, "Would you have to see a vision in the night? Would God have to do some amazing thing to convince you? Why, of course not! The man's need would be the call. We are talking about how would you know the will of God. The situation you are in and the need that is there is the will of God for you. That's the thing for you to do." Well, we were all rather sober that day when we went home.

The next Sunday we all went out again as usual; and as we were walking along, we noticed one person missing. Giles wasn't there. Someone said, "Where's Giles?" Another replied, "He quit his job. He's gone to the Moody Bible Institute to prepare himself to go to the mission field." I was stricken in my heart that he had hit upon the truth - It's the need that's the call. What is it that's needed? That's what you and I are called to do.

Should I Go To The Mission Field?

I had seen young people go to the mission field and had been present at the meetings when they were being sent off. I remember the luggage that was given to them as a parting gift. I had wondered, "Why shouldn't I go? The Lord died for them. He died for me. They loved the Lord. I loved the Lord. If they are supposed to go, why shouldn't I go?" And then I had been discussing with the group of young men in the Sunday School class how to know the will of God in your life. All these things had been taking place. In the meantime I had been a clerk in the law office, and I would spend all day working in the office. But these are the things that occupied my spare time. Someone might have said, and I even checked on it in my mind in those days, that that was just too much emphasis on religion. But I would have answered, "When is it too much? Is it true? Well if it is true, isn't it important? Would it be an intelligent thing simply to ignore all these questions?" I knew it wouldn't be.

Presently the issue became clear and I found myself asking, "Should I go to the mission field?" That was a real serious thought. I was unmarried. Should I go to the mission field? I would go down to my law office after supper. I would sit down at my desk to study the issue. I would take out two blank sheets of paper. On one side I would write, "Why I should go to the mission field." On the other piece of paper I would write "Why I should stay at home." Then I would meditate. I would write down the reasons why I should go, and then I would write down the reasons why I should stay. In the course of the evening I would get a lot of real good arguments, but each night when I wound up it was a draw. Sometimes I would say, "This is just too much distraction for my law study. It's going to ruin my study. I should put it away. Then I would think, "That would be a very poor precedent. It would be a poor thing for me afterwards to say I struck a point where I raised a question and couldn't answer it, so I just put it on the

table and forgot about it. Would that make sense? Would I be any kind of a man if I shelved a difficult problem? There must be a way to see through this thing."

I read my Bible carefully, watching for guidance that would tell me I should go to the mission field. I prayed regularly, seeking any kind of feeling I was being led to go to the mission field. I attended church faithfully, listening closely to what the preacher had to say. All these things were used finally, but at no one time did it seem to come out clearly that I should go to the mission field. It became more and more of a problem.

One day I realized that it all amounted to this: there would be many other people just as good as I was, but because they were not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ they would be without the blessing of God. I was an unbeliever far longer than I needed, to be, if I had just known what the gospel was. Somehow I had missed it. I went to Sunday School and to church. I sang the hymns. I read the Bible. I listened to the preaching. Yet somehow it was terribly long in getting through to me. I just didn't realize that man could enter into personal relationship with Almighty God by the simple method of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and by committing one's self to the living Lord Jesus Christ he would actually be saved. Now mind you, this is much more than just believing that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. Devils believe that, and in itself it is not enough. It isn't enough to believe that He died, on Calvary, or even that He died for sinners. It is when you understand that He died for you and take Him for yourself, and you commit yourself to Him that the results follow.

It dawned on me that there were people just as good as I, who would believe the Lord just as much as I, and some of them might be better Christians than I was . . . if they heard the truth. That old, farmer talked to me, and others need somebody to talk to them. Maybe I should go and tell them. I knew what it was to be an unbeliever. I knew what it was to live in this world and try to be good and do everything that's expected of you and yet be on your own in the dark and in the weakness of the flesh. I knew what it was like to be without God and lost. And I knew what a wonderful thing it is to know that you can receive the Lord Jesus as your Savior. He will forgive you your sins, you can belong to Him, and He will live His life in you and help you every day. And when you are through here, He will take you home to Himself. I knew there were any number of people that did not know this wonderful gospel. They would believe it if they knew it, and that seemed to almost put it up to me.

All of this came to me very clearly one night. A particular illustration almost got me to leave the law office. I raised the question, "Suppose that my brother and I had just been left money by our Uncle John, in Ontario, Canada. Suppose someone met me on the street in Winnipeg." "Your name is Gutzke?" "Yes." "Manford Gutzke?" "Yes." "You have a brother Walter?" "Yes, Walter Gutzke." "Well, do you have an uncle by the name of John in Ontario?" "Yes, I have an uncle. His name is John." "Did you know that he died and left you his money?" "No, I didn't know that." "He left his estate to you two boys, and he said that if you came down there and identified yourselves you should have half of his estate. Each of you would get twenty thousand dollars." Then I thought to myself, "Suppose I had gone down, identified, myself and got the twenty thousand dollars; and my brother is still out on the farm wishing he had even five hundred dollars? What would it mean to him if he had twenty thousand? I knew it was for him. I got mine, and I knew he didn't know about his. Shouldn't I go tell him?" That almost got me out of the law office.

Feed My Sheep!

Several events happened almost at the same time, and I can't remember exactly which one came first. I

was thinking about being a missionary. I thought that trying to bring somebody into an understanding of the gospel would make me a missionary. I never thought of it in terms of making me a preacher. But when I did turn that over in my mind, the thought bothered me that I would never be good enough. I mean I wouldn't be faithful. I was afraid that after I started I would cool off. But then I did something that turned out providentially to be just what I ought to have been doing. A group of young people in my church used to go down to the Chinese branch of the YMCA. We would help to teach young Chinese boys how to read English. Each of us would be given a student. We would help him to learn English, how to spell it, to write it and say it, and what the meaning was. While I was debating in my mind that I never would be good enough to go as a missionary, one night, when I walked into the Chinese YMCA, on the wall there was a motto. I am sure it had been there before, but this day it seemed to be there in a special way. It was framed like a picture, made of blue cloth and with silver letters. Those silver letters shown right into my eyes and down into my heart. "My grace is sufficient." I shall never forget it. "My grace is sufficient." That was exactly the answer I needed. Of course, I wouldn't be good enough. I wouldn't be strong enough. I wouldn't be faithful. But here was the answer - "My grace is sufficient." Suddenly I knew that if God wanted me to go, He could strengthen me for it.

Then I remember how, as I kept thinking about it, I said to myself, "Well, I could never preach. I never in the wide world could preach." I didn't want to preach, because you must remember no preacher won me. It wasn't by the preaching of the gospel in the pulpit that I came to believe. It was in private conversation with an old farmer who used only illustrations to set out the truth before me. When I thought about that it came to me, "Maybe you won't have to preach. But you could tell a story." I knew I could tell a story. And if I could tell a story, then I could tell all that was necessary. All I had to do was to get out and tell the story, then I could tell all that was necessary. All I had to do was to get out and tell the story of how God sent His only Son into the world to seek and to save the lost. And I could tell stories like the story of the good shepherd. I could tell the story of the prodigal son. I could tell the story of how the leper was healed and how the blind man had his eyes opened. Those were the stories that I could tell. And so I knew that I could never turn around just because I said I couldn't preach. I might not even be called to preach. All I had to do was tell a story.

I would say to myself, "I can't devote my life to full time service as a minister or as a missionary. I started out to become a lawyer, and this thing of starting out one thing and turning to something else, that's not good." So I took refuge in that for a while. Then I remembered from my Bible reading that Peter and his brother Andrew had been fishermen, and they left that to follow the Lord. James and John had been with their father, Zebedee, as fishermen, and they had left that and followed the Lord. Matthew was seated as a tax-gatherer. He got up from his table and followed the Lord. There was no reason why I shouldn't do it. Wasn't it my own idea to become a lawyer? If this was a call from God, wouldn't that take precedence?

One Sunday night the preacher of the day preached a sermon on heaven. I was always interested in anybody that would venture to preach on heaven. He especially emphasized that we would meet the Lord Jesus Christ. Somehow, listening to him, it became very real. I would actually meet the Lord Jesus Christ. He said, "When you meet the Lord Jesus Christ, and He looks into your eyes, you will suddenly know what you look like in His sight. You will feel in yourself just exactly what you are in His presence. You might not have any great record of achievement, but you will know that He is looking into your heart and He will know about your intentions. What do you intend to do? What have you tried to do? Have you ever tried to do anything for Him?"

And suddenly I knew that I would meet my Lord face to face. He would look me in the eye and the

whole question would come up. "Why didn't you go when I wanted you to go to serve?" That troubled me.

The young people in the church met for prayer on Saturday nights. It had been going on for a long time and I didn't know it, but one Wednesday night a man came to me and said, "How would you like to come to a Saturday night prayer meeting of young people?" In my own mind and heart that was not what I wanted to do. Even if I wouldn't mind praying, I knew that any group of young people that would meet for prayer on Saturday night would certainly be a stuffy lot of folks. But I was interested and I said, "Yes, I will." So I started going. I found to my amazement that they were the same young people that were at the church regularly. They met for prayer. They reviewed the various things they wanted to pray for. They prayed for the church. They prayed for the preacher. They prayed for their Sunday School Class. They would pray for the superintendent. They would pray for the young people's meeting. They would pray for the work of the church. It was the most sensible thing. They prayed for an hour. They got up and shook hands with each other and went home.

I had been going several weeks when after hearing this preacher preach about heaven on Sunday night, the following Saturday night I went to the prayer meeting. The leader on that particular occasion got up with a Bible in his hand. He said, I want to read a passage of Scripture to you. He read in the twenty-first chapter of John's gospel where the Lord Jesus is talking to Peter, "Lovest thou me?" I was listening very closely; and when he read that out, my own heart responded, "Yes." And Peter said, "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." "Feed, my lambs." I said, "Oh my goodness, that's the very thing I am wondering about." Then He asked the second time, "Lovest thou me?" "Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee." "Feed, my sheep." And then the third time, "Lovest thou me?" "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." "Feed my sheep." That night I didn't take the trolley home. I walked home . . . four miles. All the way home I kept asking myself, "Does he really mean me?" And I would say to myself, "Oh, you're just imagining it." And I would say, "Well, when the Bible said that Christ died for you, did you just imagine it? No, when He died for me, He died for me. Well, when He is saying 'Go,' doesn't He mean go?"

That night I knew the Lord had called me to take the gospel to others.