

Living In Faith

by Manford George Gutzke

I have often told you that I was not born into this world as a Christian. I was born a human being, in fact a Canadian. Learning about the Gospel was for me an amazing experience. It began when I was in conversation with an old farmer who was the country postmaster. This man believed in God. He believed that the Lord Jesus Christ was alive. As I continued to talk with him and to read my Bible, I was eventually able to believe the Gospel. I became a believer in the living Lord Jesus Christ. Later on I grew in the knowledge of God's Word, and my faith was strengthened through the testimony of other believers.

In the course of time, I came to know a man who had a fascinating testimony of his faith in Jesus Christ. That man became my father-in-law. His name was Elias Bernstein. He was born in Russia where his family owned a large estate on the outskirts of Konigsberg. His people were devout Jews who believed in the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, – the very God we believe in. Elias lost his father at an early age, and his mother placed him in the care of her father, Professor Solomon Hillelson, whose family traced their ancestry to the tribe Benjamin. They had a proud record of pure Jewish faith. There had been no traitors, no renegades, no conversions away from Judaism, for seven generations before his time.

I have often heard Mr. Bernstein speak of his grandfather who was a devout believer in the Old Testament. He recalled that when his grandfather sold a bushel of grain, he would shake it down and then pour as much grain on top as would stay there. You may ask, "Why would he do this?" It was because he believed God's word that a good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, would result in God's blessing. His daily devotions were something unusual in their commitment. Each day he repeated fifty Psalms in Hebrew. Thus every three days he covered the entire book of Psalms. My father-in-law told me that he had seen his grandfather on his knees, with his face turned toward Jerusalem praying daily for the peace of Jerusalem. Often he saw him weep heart-rendingly as he prayed for the coming of the promised Messiah.

His grandfather believed that one day God would send this Chosen Anointed One, who would deliver his people. He confessed the sins of his people who had turned from the only true God. He was convinced that their sufferings and persecutions were the judgment of God. He taught that if his people were right with God, no one could oppress them, and that this time of suffering would continue until the coming of the Messiah. This dedicated Hebrew scholar did not know, nor did he believe, that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Savior.

Later when Mr. Bernstein became a Christian he was impressed to find how closely his grandfather's teaching of the Scriptures was reflected in the Sermon on the Mount. Perhaps you have heard me say that the Sermon on the Mount, taught by Jesus of Nazareth, was just about what John the Baptist preached and taught; i.e., the interpretation of the Old Testament Law.

When Elias Bernstein had completed six years in a Hebrew school of higher learning, he was led into the study of the Christian heresy. He was taught that it was a matter of history that a young Jew, Jesus of Nazareth, had become widely known and that the Gentiles had made Him their God, equal with Jehovah of the Old Testament Scriptures, and – that this was blasphemy. As his studies in the prophets continued, he found that so much that was taught by his professors seemed trivial and not thoroughly grounded. The things he sought answers for were almost entirely eliminated. He became deeply concerned and began to ask questions. "Why must Israel remain so long in exile? Why did the God-promised Messiah not come? Why were the God-given commandments not kept?" The answers he received satisfied him not at all. They only deepened his unrest and anxiety.

When the young student continued to ply his teachers with questions about the prophets, particularly the prophet Isaiah, his teachers accused him of having read the "forbidden book"; the New Testament. When he denied this, they accused him of falsehood. He now left the school to visit and seek advice from his grandfather, but he was very quiet and stern.

It was at this time that he heard his grandfather say to his Uncle Herman, who was Doctor of Astronomy in Berlin: "Do not attempt to save Israel by founding a society, Kneses Israel. This is God's work. He will personally through His Son the Messiah, gather and redeem Israel." These words affected him deeply.

More and more uneasy in his mind he left to visit his mother and uncle in Konigsberg. There in a shop window he saw the Book which he had been accused of reading. He went into the book store and purchased the Book. He proceeded to read the four Gospels and was greatly disappointed that they did not coincide. He decided to gather all the contradictory matter to prove the falseness of the Book, and then to write a criticism of it. But as he went on reading, the person of Jesus Christ grew greater to his soul with the reading of each chapter. When he read the story of the crucifixion, he wept bitter tears. At the words, "His blood be upon us and our children," he fully realized the great injustice of his people towards the innocent Christ. He felt himself guilty with them and completely un-nerved. In this state of despair he sought more than ever seclusion. His relatives were greatly worried about him.

Then it happened one day that he saw a lot of people entering a church. Unobserved he entered with them. There he heard a sermon on the sacrifice and prayer of Elijah. I Kings 18:30. "What!" thought he, "These Christians preach about a Jewish prophet as though he were their prophet!" He decided to speak to the preacher. After having heard him out, the preacher said, "Dear friend, keep on reading your new Book." He did this. The resurrection of Christ, His Ascension, and the Book of Acts affected him deeply, but the sought-for comfort did not come. With the reading of the first chapter of Romans, stating that all men, Jew and Gentile are sinners; and all, the one with, the other without the law, are equally unsaved; that no man can be justified without faith in Christ – his condition became so terribly clear to him, that he felt the blackest despair. He realized that without Jesus Christ he was lost, yet to accept Him, seemed to him to be the impossible. His relatives, his own love for his nation, his regard for the Jewish books, stood implacably in his way. On the other hand it seemed out of all reason to believe that this Jesus, despised and rejected by him and his people, would accept him. He did not even dare to call on His Name, nor to pray that He would be merciful to him. The depth of his soul was filled with such despair, that he would much rather have died than to go on living.

He sought distraction in pleasure and play, but grew only more unhappy. One day he gathered enough courage to again enter a church. There he heard a sermon containing the words, "Everyone can be redeemed and everyone who is justified by faith, has peace with God." He hurried home to pray, but he seemed unable to pray, until he cried, "Jesus help me." Startled at having spoken His Name, he shrank back; but resolved then that he would call on Christ. After many days, as he was reading the Epistle to the Romans, his heart cried out, "Jesus have mercy on me. Let me not be lost. Grant me Thy righteousness. Speak to me. 'Peace be with thee'." Then a miracle took place. He felt as though he was showered with fire, and was aglow through and through. From that hour he could believe that Jesus Christ was his Savior, his Friend and his God. His halting prayer, changed to words of praise and thanksgiving towards his God and his Savior. He knew that he was redeemed through the Blood of the Lamb.

Having found peace, he longed to impart his good news to his dear ones: Jesus Christ was the true Messiah, that through Jesus Christ is forgiveness of sins and true redemption. He hoped that they would receive such news with joy, but instead he suffered much sorrow and persecution. His uncle spit upon him and showed him the door. He also wrote letters filled with the most vile abuse and insults, and succeeded in setting his mother and his beloved grandfather against him! His guardians, who controlled the fortune left him, cut off his allowance, his very existence. They said that they were guardians of a Jewish, not a

Christian ward. His own sister offered great sums of money to have him assassinated, so that authorities gave him a personal guard.

In these hard times, robbed of all means of existence, the Lord sent him a Christian friend, a chemist, who took him into his home and taught him his own profession. In this home he saw how a Christian must live, how he must walk, how he must take up his cross and follow Christ. The lady of the house especially was an unforgettable example of patience and Godliness. When his training was completed, he worked with his friend as his assistant for some time. He dedicated his free time to the preaching of the Gospel with great fervor, joy and fire. He told of what Jesus Christ had done for him and that all could find in Him forgiveness and blessing. In country and city he found many earnest listeners. The Lord gave blessing to many souls.

In some meetings the presence of the Holy Spirit was very evident. It was then that temptation came to him in the form of thankful people. He was persuaded that he was a person of great importance and grew not a little proud, instead of giving Christ the glory. At one service he had for his text, Matthew 11:28-30, and emphasized the humility of Christ. After the service he received many words of appreciation and praise. The words of Christ had never before been made so clear, etc. This filled his heart with vanity, but later he felt a deep shame. He realized how much unrighteousness dwelt in him: to be able to speak of the humble Christ, and yet to be filled with self-esteem because he had been permitted to speak thus of Him. He said to himself, "You may no longer preach of Jesus Christ until you can give Him all the glory." Deeply humbled he sought and found God's pardon.

On the 21st of December of that year he found friendship and comfort in the home of Rev. Keturackat of Tauroggen, Kovno. Here he was shown so much love and kindness that soon he felt at home. The pastor instructed him in the evangelical faith, and it was here that he resolved to become baptized. Having been instructed by Rev. Keturackat, he wished to receive the Holy Baptism at his church, but it was feared that the Jews, particularly his relatives, would cause serious trouble. He was forced to leave, and on the 6th of March, 1886, he was baptized by Rev. Kahler in the crowded church of Lobnicht. In the months following he suffered much persecution instigated by his family, and had to go into hiding.

After this he received a very loving letter from home asking him to leave his faith in Christ and come back to the waiting arms of his family. For a moment the thought flashed through his mind that this would solve all his difficulties. Then it was that he seemed to hear the words, "Will ye also leave me?" He sank to his knees and cried out, "I cannot, I will not leave Thee. Thou hast graven me into the palms of Thy hands. I am Thine." In the months following the Lord Jesus Christ gave him great liberty and joy in testifying to his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Many older Christians were inspired by the story of his conversion, they came to him and said, "We want to warm our hands at your fire and rejoice in your devotion for our Lord."

In weeks that followed something very remarkable happened to him in the providence of God. The brother of the Tzar of Russia, the Grand Duke Nicolai Kanstatinovich, nephew of Alexander II of Russia, who had been exiled to Tashkent, had a large silk processing operation there. This man was in need of a chemist to head this operation, and to represent him in all his business dealings. He sent a telegram to a banker in the Balkans, that in summary said, "I need a young man who is intelligent, reliable and a chemist." The banker wired him this reply, "I know a man who is everything you say. He is honest, intelligent and a chemist. However he is a Jew who has become a Christian." The Grand Duke's reply was brief and to the point. "Send at once. He is my man." Thus, Elias Bernstein was taken into the employ of the Grand Duke and sent to Turkistan as his general representative.

That meant Mr. Bernstein lived in the Grand Duke's palace, and rode in the Grand Duke's royal coach. Everywhere he went, he was the spokesman for the Grand Duke. To a young man all of this was very appealing. During the first year the Grand Duke came for a visit and asked how he was getting along. Young Bernstein told him he was getting along all right, but there was something he wanted to ask him.

He said, "What is that?" He said, "These silk merchants who come to sell me silk are always offering me presents, should I take them?" And the Grand Duke said, "Yes, you'd better take them. If you don't take them you will offend them and you can't afford to offend them. So just take them." And so he did. The following year the Grand Duke came again and asked, "By the way, are the men still bringing presents?" The young man said, "Well you know, it is a funny thing. They have stopped bringing them." The Grand Duke leaned back and laughed and said, "That's what I wanted to hear. Now I know you are an honest man. If they had still been bringing them I'd be thinking you'd be giving them an advantage. But now I know you are dealing honestly with them."

After a while, Mr. Bernstein began to realize that this was not really what he should be doing. He longed for spiritual fellowship. He was surrounded by all the pomp and splendor of a Grand Duke's palace. He was treated with respect and deference as if he were something extra. Yet all the time he yearned to be around Christians that he might testify as to what the Lord had done for him, and hear from them what the Lord had done for them. In the course of time, he drifted away from God. He still believed in Christ, but without fellowship he was unhappy. Somehow he began to doubt God's goodness and God's grace. He wondered if God would really continue to bless him, since he was not able to witness and testify for his Lord. One day in reading the Bible, he became aware that his faith was actually getting weaker. He realized his heart was becoming worldly. He knew then, in his soul, that he should quit that position, to live more simply.

He was afraid to broach this problem to the Grand Duke. The Grand Duke was 6 feet 8 inches in his stocking feet and was a violent man. Young Bernstein was afraid to go in and talk to him. As he thought about this, he prayed to God to get him out of it. He prayed earnestly that God would deliver him. Then he fell sick! I have heard him say with a smile, "No man ever caught typhoid with more joy than I did." His recovery was so protracted that his physician ordered him to leave the country for Krasnayarsk.

During all the time he had worked for the Grand Duke, there had never been any talk about salary. Everything he needed was given to him. All he had to do was to write a check and it was his. As he was leaving, the Grand Duke bestowed upon him a fund, a bonus. It was a small fortune. The Grand Duke gave this to the young man, and told him to go up north and go into business. So with this nest egg, Bernstein went up north to begin a time of recuperation. During his convalescence he began to read the Bible with several Russians. One man reported him to the Greek Catholic authorities, and as a result he was taken into custody as sectarian and was placed under strict supervision for two years. In these two years he read through the Bible sixty times. Here God spoke to him through His Word. Here in seclusion he learned to understand more fully the depth and the breadth of God's mercy and love which is revealed in Christ Jesus. Here he came to a fuller knowledge of the inner man. Here he was with Jesus alone.

During these two years a famine existed in the city. Being a Christian, he could not turn away the people that came and asked for food. He gave it to them because the Bible said, "Whosoever asketh of thee, turn thou not away." And so this young Christian gave and gave, to whomever asked him. There came a day when a man with five children came. They had not had any bread to eat in two days and he came to him and asked him for bread. Did he have a ruble that he could spare? The young Bernstein said, "Yes, I think I have." He left the man downstairs. He went upstairs to his room, and got on his knees in front of his bed. Of all his fortune there remained only two rubles. He put them both on the bed and then he prayed to God. "Father, you know I haven't ever turned anyone away. I have given something to everyone that asked me. Now I have one request. I will give one of these two rubles to this man, but don't let anyone else come and ask me until I have some money." As he was about to rise from his knees, he felt as if a hand was put on his shoulder; and God spoke to him. "Since you did not withhold your money from the poor and you gave one of these two rubles to this man, I will bless that remaining ruble until you are rich." While he was still on his knees, he said, "Father, if you will bless me in this way, I will give ten percent of my earnings to the poor and increase the amount each year in the same measure as you prosper

me."

After filling a very remunerative position as a chemist in Libau for some years, Mr. Bernstein moved to Dorpat. There he purchased a spacious home and built a large commercial plant for the dyeing of homespun woolens and linens, which people from the surrounding countryside brought to him. He was a specialist in working with fabrics and his business grew and prospered. In later years he introduced the first chemical dry cleaning plant in that part of the country. Over the entrance of his plant, in large gold letters were the words, "Built upon His Promise, dedicated to His Glory." He was so blessed in his business that in time he was the sole support of thirty poor families.

In those days he was very busy as a lay witness for Christ Jesus. Twice he toured the prison camps of Siberia on a special permit from the Tzar of Russia. These trips were always made at his own expense. Each of these missionary journeys took him away from home for many months, but he counted this a small sacrifice in order to bring the Gospel to the men incarcerated behind prison walls, who knew nothing of the love of Jesus Christ.

Elias Bernstein became well known. He was chosen along with two other delegates to represent evangelical faith at the Swedish Court. This invitation, extended to him by the King of Sweden, is a treasured memento of the family.

Only Believe

This matter of receiving salvation as a free gift proves both puzzling and baffling to many sincere persons. Many people feel that they ought to do something for it. In fact there are earnest groups of people who miss this truth almost entirely. Paul wrote:

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:1-3).

Thus it was with the Jews in the time of the Apostle Paul. And so it is with many people today.

The Bible reveals that law is the prevailing principle in all nature: "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." Any natural mind understands this. The Bible makes it clear however that salvation comes only by the way of the cross. This truth was openly demonstrated at the time of Jesus of Nazareth. Paul openly told the whole world, "My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God' (they actually are trying to please God) but not according to knowledge." They are not doing what they are doing, according to the revelation from God. Thus Paul goes on to say:

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God" (Romans 10:3).

This was brought out so clearly in the further personal history of my father-in-law, Elias Bernstein.

In the providence of God, while visiting in the home of his friend Pastor Keturakat, he met his future bride, Elise Von Riesen, the youngest daughter of Friedrich Von Riesen of Elbing. Mr. Bernstein observed her winsome ways as she played with the children in the home and was at once attracted to her. He asked her permission to correspond with her and as they exchanged letters their mutual attraction grew into a permanent lasting love. Elise had been brought up in the Mennonite church, wherein morality and the good life were stressed. She felt that having been baptized as an adult, confirming her faith in God's Word and conforming to the doctrine of her church, she was saved. When Mr. Bernstein in his letters wrote that neither church membership, nor living a good life, nor being upright and honest, saved a soul, she became

greatly troubled. She could find neither rest nor peace of heart and mind. She wrote to her fiancé in real desperation saying, "If all the things I have been relying on for my salvation are of no avail, what can I do, what must I do to be saved?" When Mr. Bernstein received her letter, he sent her a telegram which contained only two words, "Only believe." Just two little words! Yet suddenly she was able to accept the blessed truth that faith, only believing in the finished work of Jesus Christ, could save her soul. Her heart was filled with joy and thanksgiving which marked her whole life from that moment on. She was truly a bright and shining light radiating Christ's love to all with whom she came in contact. The amazing thing was that the operator, who sent that telegram, sought out Mr. Bernstein, and on hearing his testimony was gloriously saved. After Mr. Bernstein married Elise Von Riesen their beautiful home in Dorpat continued to be a haven for Bible study and prayer. Each week the ministerial students of the University of Dorpat, where Mr. Bernstein was a trustee, gathered here and received inspiration and a deeper understanding of the Gospel they would preach.

Blessed By God

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Everything associated with what we call Christian is grounded in the reality of God. The disciples were called Christians, first at Antioch. In the New Testament those we would count as Christians believed that God was real, and that His Word was true. They believed that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God in whom they put their trust, was the express image of God, and that which Jesus of Nazareth taught was eternally true. He manifested in word and in deed the blessing of God.

For us it is a natural thing to think that blessing would mean material prosperity: that being saved would mean we would have more money, a better job. This is a common idea. If we say to anyone, "May God bless you" we are meaning: "May He give you health, and may He give you wealth, and may He give you good fortune, and may He give you success." If we are talking about the blessing of God, we think that means up, up, up – with everything just going fine. But is this true? Is that what the blessing of God means according to the Bible? The verse we looked at earlier, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," would lead us to the realization that "the crown of life" is promised for those who endure, who trust God, who rely on His Word, and who believe with all their hearts that all things work together for good to them who love Him.

But things do not always work out smoothly. There will be times of trial and testing. Even the weather is not always fair or mild. Those who deal with nature know that anything can happen, and it usually does. It seems so hard to accept the idea that trouble, disaster, calamity could be good for any person. Since Adam's fall destructive elements are loose in this world, so that man has to contend in order to live, he has to watch on every side. In so many ways we can see how benefits are linked to strain and stress. This is true in work. At times we find work a pleasure: if the work is not too hard, doesn't last too long, and we can see results. But there can be times when work is just plain drudgery. For many people, working is just trouble. This is also to be seen in the experience of correction. There is not anyone who ever did anything, whose work does not have to be corrected and lined up. There is no artist who ever painted a picture that did not want to touch it up so that he could correct this or that. No one ever built a building that did not have to be corrected. Even in conversation we often have to restate what was said, in order to make it clear. This is true even in healing. It is a wonderful thing that the body can be healed. For example, there are your teeth and dentists. For me, the dentist chair spells trouble. Yet we go there for benefit. In the same way we go to the doctor or surgeon to have the problem removed and the body

improved. In this life benefits are linked to strain, stress and even pain.

All the world knows about trouble, but it is only the believer in Christ who has hope. Paul could say, "I glory in tribulation." In the book of Hebrews the writer says, "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." This whole truth was demonstrated in the life of my father-in-law, Elias Bernstein. He had found in Christ Jesus, his Messiah, his Savior and Lord. He had trusted God daily and God had abundantly blessed him. Then after years of peace and prosperity and fruitful service for his Master, the local Estonian uprising threatened not only his wealth and property, but his very life and the lives of his family. He told me of the night when a mob carrying flaming torches and shouting destruction to the rich, came marching down his street. As they moved along they looted and burned the homes of his wealthy neighbors. The night was filled with the sound of explosions, and of shouting as the fires reached into the sky. The mob worked on a very simple principle: destroy everything that rich people had. Unless the rich people changed their attitudes and joined them, shoot them!

Mr. Bernstein heard shots as the mob came next door. He heard them breaking into the neighbor's house and could remember hearing the shot that killed the neighbor. He was scheduled to be next. He told me he had sent his family into the kitchen and how he had gone to the front door to meet the mob, hoping that somehow he would be able to stave off any harm to his family. He told about standing in the front door waiting for them, and thinking to himself: "What an irony all this is!" He had, as you know, made several trips to the prison camps in Siberia where he had preached the Gospel. He said to himself, "Now if at one of those times, when I was travelling by dog sled in northern Siberia, I had been frozen to death I would have given my life in His service. When I went into Manchuria and was turned back by the Japanese, if I had then been killed because I was a missionary, I would have died while witnessing for my Lord. As I stood there I thought, How humiliating to lose my life because of unimportant paltry money, instead of being allowed to die in His service." The revolutionaries came to his front gate and up the steps. Just then, as they were about to enter his home, his Estonian foreman stepped in front of the mob. At that moment this little man seemed like a giant as he stretched out his arms and quieted the mob and then said, "Not here. This man is a friend of the poor." At these words the mob walked away leaving everything untouched.

The next day the rioters came apologetically to tell him that they were very sorry, but they would have to burn his factory. They wanted him to escape, to take his family and to move out because they would have to burn everything down. Then he asked them, "When you burn all these things down, what are you going to do for a living? How do you expect to make a living?" They didn't know; so he said, "I'll give you the factory. You appoint yourselves a committee, have them here and I'll give them a deed to the factory." They said, "When the government comes back they will take back the factory and give it to you." "No," he said, "I'll give you a legal deed." They said, "Then keep the money in the bank." "No! The money in the bank belongs to the business. The business needs that." They finally said to him, "At least sell your home and keep the furnishings and art objects." Mr. Bernstein agreed. With the proceeds of the sale of his home, and the money he had deposited at the birth of each child, he and his family left Dorpat. There was much derision and sneering among the scoffers and unbelievers to whom the words above his factory had been a constant thorn in the flesh. Now they pointed at the sign and said, "He trusted in God and now he has lost all of his worldly possessions." Little did they know that these and other financial losses were used by God to save him and his family from the holocaust of World War I, which was to follow and which utterly devastated the city of Dorpat.

Having sold his home Mr. Bernstein decided to move to Moscow where he hoped to serve his Master among the Russian people. On the advice of friends he established a candy factory in the heart of the city which he named "Mamre." A year after he had opened this business he was approached by a group of missionaries. They were planning a journey to the prison camps of Siberia, and asked him to accompany them and act as their interpreter. Mr. Bernstein did not hesitate. He put his factory in charge of his

foreman and left for Siberia. When he returned six months later he found his factory closed and all supplies and equipment missing. He was completely crushed. He went home and said to his wife, "Christmas is at the door and we will not even have bread for our children." He loved to tell of her response. She did not hesitate for a moment but said with her bright inimitable smile, "God lives! We will not only have bread, we will have cake." The following day Mr. Bernstein received a letter from his old friend Pastor Keturakat who had migrated to the United States, urging him to come to America to be ordained into full time ministry among European immigrants. This letter pointed unmistakably to divine guidance. He sold his elaborate home furnishings for five thousand rubles and in March 1910 he and his family sailed for the United States, and then by rail to Illinois to the home of his friends.

Having thoroughly acquainted himself with the doctrines of a number of Protestant churches, he agreed to serve with the German Congregational Church of America. He was asked to take charge of the Greek and Hebrew department of their Seminary in Redfield, Nebraska, but chose to labor among the European settlers who had come to this country to seek a new life. Many of these people were almost illiterate, but they loved the Lord and God's Word as he preached and lived it. In 1914 he was asked to go to Canada to establish new congregations. Here he and his family learned to live in very meager financial circumstances, but they accepted all privations gladly as unto the Lord. Mr. Bernstein's labors were richly rewarded, for God granted him a remarkable revival among a people of whom many believed that church membership and child baptism were sufficient for salvation. His wife speaking of those days said, "When your father came home from these revival meetings, his face glowed with an inner light."

In the course of time the rigors of the Canadian winter undermined his health. He now accepted a pastorate in the State of Washington, and it was here, while visiting in his home that I was privileged to meet him. I had met his eldest daughter in Canada where we both taught school. It was there that we had become engaged and made plans to serve God in the foreign mission field.

It was during this visit at the home of my fiancée, that her father invited me to his study for a chat. He opened our conversation by saying, "I understand that you and Sarah are planning to go as missionaries to the foreign field?" I said, "Yes." His steel gray eyes looked at me kindly and searchingly as he asked, "Why are you going?" I was completely taken aback at his question. No one had ever asked me that question before. Whenever I had talked about going to the foreign field, people had said, "That's wonderful. You are a wonderful man to want to go." I was totally unprepared to answer my future father-in-law. Finally I said, "Well for one thing we want to help these people." He said, "That is a good reason. How are you going to help them?" "By improving their way of life," I replied. He said, "I am sure they could do with that, but suppose they are satisfied with their way of life and do not want you to interfere. Would you still go?" "Yes, I would still go because I want to give them the truth about God." He said, "Well no doubt that is a good reason. Of course you know that they have their own idea of God. Suppose they don't believe you? Should you have stayed home?" I answered rather defiantly that we would go and live there and show them. He said, "Suppose you go there and contract a disease and die in a month, should you have stayed home?" Well, I must confess to you that by that time I was thoroughly confused and a bit indignant. Instead of my prospective father-in-law praising me for going to the foreign field, he stopped me in my tracks by asking me why I was going! I did not know what to say to him, and I felt very foolish.

The next day he asked me again into his study. He continued the conversation where he had left off the day before. "When you go to the foreign field are you counting on the Lord going with you?" I said, "Yes of course, that is exactly what we have in mind. We have His promise, 'Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age.'" "Yes," he said, "that is a wonderful thing. Do you think that He will follow you, or do you think this means that you will follow where He leads you?" I did not know quite what to say, but it began to dawn on me that by his questions, he was leading me to the realization that my place of service must not be of my own choosing. He must lead, and I must follow. His next words made this

crystal clear, for he smiled and continued, "Why not think of Him going before you? Why not let Him go first, and you follow. You know the chances are He is working there now. If you follow where He leads you, you will have succeeded even if you were to die the next day. Neither riches nor poverty, nor life nor death will ever matter if we live in His blessed presence."

As I have recalled these facts in the life and testimony of this great man of faith, it is easy to understand why one of his favorite phrases he would often quote in joyful triumph was

"God with us, Immanuel."