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FORTY YEARS ON THE FIRING LINE
By Everett Otis Chalfant

(E. O. Chalfant Tells His Life Story)

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DEDICATION

To my wife, Eliza, and to my children, Fred, Morris, and Betty Jean.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

In October, 1913, I attended the annual meeting of the National Holiness Association held in the First Nazarene Church of Chicago. It was there that I first met and talked with Dr. P. F. Bresee. I had heard about him and his great work, and my meeting him caused me to pray about

identifying myself with his crowd. Thus, a little later I joined the Church of the Nazarene. I have devoted the greater part of my life and ministry to this church.

I have been evangelist, pastor, and district superintendent. Nearly thirty years have been spent in the superintendency. My district and various friends in the church have insisted that I write this story of my life. I finally decided to do so. The press of other duties forced me to prepare this in spare hours over a period of the last two years. I have been guilty of writing in the past but I have never claimed to be an author. This material is not prepared for the scrutiny of literary critics.

This is the gist of my life story. Some of it may cause you to laugh and some parts may bring tears. But I submit it to every reader with the prayer that it shall be a blessing. To that end it has been prepared and to that end it is dedicated.

E. O. Chalfant

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INTRODUCTION

When the Holy Spirit comes into a life, He follows "grain" in personality, just as the lightning follows grain in wood when it strikes a tree. Uniqueness of personality, where it is unassumed, is no harrier to Holy Spirit's operation. In fact, it is a positive asset. Elijah was useful because he dared to be himself "plus ." Our denominational history will reveal that E. Chalfant has rendered valuable service because of same characteristic. He is unique, and God has! him. His life and ministry have been inextricably en into the development of the Church of the Nazarene for thirty-five years. He has lived and served principally in the Middle West on the Chicago Central District, but his influence has been felt throughout entire church. Faithful and valued service on the General Board and in many General Assemblies is part his record. "Holiness and Home Missions" is his favorite theme, and the rapid expansion of the work under supervision is the result.

Although the "Chalfant touch" has been preserved in these pages, there are also history, much valuable counsel and advice for the minister, and entertainment blessing for all.

Hardy C. Powers
January 16, 1951

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01 -- MY CHILDHOOD

The most important day of my life was March 22, 1882. That was the day I was born. The event took place in a typical old-fashioned log cabin that rested on the eastern slope of a verdant Indiana hill. I spent my childhood years playing around the door of that cabin about nine miles southeast of Muncie. My parents were hard-working farm folk, and I grew up in the wholesome atmosphere of vigorous farm life. We always said that the lad who wasn't reared on the farm missed a lot in life. For one thing, you can't be lazy and be a farmer at the same time.

I still remember the old log cabin with its spacious rooms. I especially recall the big fireplace in the "front room," before which I spent many a happy hour. My mother, Mrs. Phoebebell Shaw Chalfant; my father, Phin Chalfant; and my only brother, Memphis Joe, who was three years my senior, made up the household. After my brother and I had completed our chores and after the evening meal was over, we would gather in the front room before a crackling fire. How well I see it now! My brother and I would lie before the open fireplace. Mother and Father would rest in their big rocking chairs. They would often recount events from the past, while their two boys would listen eagerly. The day always ended just as it had begun -- we would read from the big family Bible and have prayer.

But I still recall many of the events that Father and Mother used to talk about in the hush of the evening. For instance, I well recall their saying that our ancestors were French Huguenots who migrated to this country some generations back. Three Chalfant brothers came over and settled in what is now the heart of Philadelphia. The name Chalfant is still prominent around that area. As the early frontier moved slowly westward, the name Chalfant moved with it. Eventually, the Chalfants settled in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana.

I have heard my parents relate the story about the brother in Kentucky who decided to visit his brother in Bluffton, Indiana. That was a great trip in those days. On the way to Bluffton, the Kentucky brother asked permission to spend the night in a farmhouse. Folk were more hospitable back in those days, and they gladly let him stay. He fed his horse and put it away for the night, and came into the house. While the woman was preparing his food, the man of the house reached out his hand and asked, "And what may be your name?"

The traveler quickly answered, "Chalfant."

His host's eyes sparkled, and he said in amazement, "Chalfant? Say, what was your father's name?"

He replied, "Ezekiel Chalfant. He lived around Pittsburgh."

The man next asked, "And he had webbed toes, didn't he?"

And the Kentucky brother asked, "How did you know that?"

The old man told him, "He was my father. You see, I am Jesse Chalfant. Friend, we are brothers!"

Thus the lost brother was found and the tribe was reunited. Jesse Chalfant was my great-grandfather.

Then there was the story Father used to tell about my grandfather, Joel Chalfant. He was a bit on the peculiar side. He belonged to the old United Brethren Church. At one time his presiding elder was Dr. Milton Wright, later Bishop Wright. He was the father of Orville and Wilbur Wright of aviation fame. In his later years, I heard him preach.

Dr. Wright had come for the quarterly conference to be held in Grandfather's church one Saturday afternoon. After the service was over, and for lack of a better invitation, the elder agreed to go home with Grandfather. Grandfather was a man of hard features. He was barefooted, and he wore old-fashioned jean trousers and a cotton flannel shirt. The elder was dressed in a Prince Albert coat, white necktie, stiff shirt, and a plug hat. There was quite a contrast in the two men as they rode down the dusty road in a big spring wagon with the rattling chains and the double team. The elder sat erect, holding his plug hat on his head to keep from losing it, while the wind made his coattails crack like a whip. Grandfather allowed his bare feet to rest on the wagon front for all the world to see. The embarrassed Elder Wright sat there, no doubt expecting the worst. They rounded a corner, and there was a beautiful farm home, a big bank barn, well-fenced pastureland, and an abundance of livestock. The elder turned and said, "Who lives in this farm home, Brother Chalfant?"

About that time Grandfather turned in at the big gate and answered, "Oh, I live here."

Dr. Wright knew then, in his astonishment, that no one else could have gathered by looking at him that my barefooted grandfather, peculiar as he was, happened to be the leading farmer in that area.

Thus went the stories that we often heard in the hush of the evening.

But equally important were the childhood impressions made by my maternal grandparents. They were Robert Shaw and Patsy Gibson Shaw. They helped settle the area around Muncie, Indiana. At least they did their part, for Grandmother had seventeen children. She worked hard all her life. She passed through the hardships of rearing her children; she knew what it was to have sorrow and disappointment, for she lived through the dark days of the Civil War. She was a Christian woman. When she was ninety years of age, I came in one day and said, "Grandmother, you have lived a long time. Tell me, has God ever failed you?"

I can see her yet, as tears came to her eyes and she raised a feeble hand toward heaven. "No, Everett, He has never failed me. Every time I have needed Him, He has always been near."

One of childhood's most sacred memories concerns the year 1886. I was only four years old at the time, but I can still remember it. That year both of my parents were sanctified. They prayed through in the old-fashioned, dying-out way. Our home was the scene of glory for days as Mother and Father reveled in the ecstasy of this new experience.

Mother was radical, and I am glad she was. Her mother before her was radical. The truth is, I have a radical streak in my family tree! My parents were very strict. They were punctual in devotions and in praying before meals. As a small lad, I often saw Mother put the biscuits on the oven board and turn to Father and say, "Phin, pray before we eat this morning." He would ask God to bless the home, bless the food, and keep us all true. These habits of grace before meals, secret prayer and devotions that my parents taught me in childhood have stayed with me to this glad hour.

I should relate one more important childhood impression. Everyone remembers the community in which he was reared. Good environment cannot be overemphasized. Looking back now, I can see that mine was as near a Christian community as I could hope for. I don't remember any card playing, dancing, drinking, or immorality. Divorce was unheard of. The community was filled with God-fearing people. I still remember the Kirklands, Jacksons, Rhoadses, Feltons, Reynolds', and other wonderful families.

Back there the social center was the church. Everybody came to services and heard the minister preach heartfelt regeneration and holiness of heart. Sunday was the Lord's day, and folks lived accordingly. They kept the Sabbath day holy by attending services, reading their Bibles, and praying. The church was the center of community interests, and the preacher was "respected, revered, and received."

There are trivial incidents of childhood that remain with me. However, those things that served to mold me into a holiness preacher were the influence and prayers of Christian parents, Father's and Mother's getting sanctified, and my being reared in the atmosphere of a God-fearing community.

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02 -- CONVERSION -- CONSECRATION -- CALL

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CONVERSION

The area where I was reared is in the "Bible belt" of the nation. In all the territory surrounding my home, old-fashioned revivals were the usual fare. Although the revivals were usual, the results were unusual. Great sweeps of victories were often reported in the various churches. It is natural to assume that the aftermath of this atmosphere would be genuine conversion. As I look back on it now, there were a number of contributing elements that led to my conversion.

One of these was an outstanding revival back in 1892 conducted by the Rev. and Mrs. John Seelig. It was a six-week meeting in the new United Brethren church that had been built by my father and grandfather. Father and Grandfather went back into the woods, cut the fine timber, and sawed the big white oak logs. Then they hauled them to Eli Rhodd's sawmill. After the little thirty-by-forty church had been built and dedicated, the Seeligs held this glorious revival to which I referred.

Back in those days the people knew how to pray, and they literally brought heaven and earth together. I have seen them pray for days, and oftentimes the meetings would last from ten o'clock in the morning until mid-afternoon. Many times there would be no preaching. There would be such liberty and so much of the power of God on the scene that a great host would flee to the old-fashioned mourners' bench. Let me say right here that I still like the term mourners' bench. That is exactly what it was. Folks would come and implore God for forgiveness, the fire would fall, victory would come, and heaven would be populated.

During Brother Seelig's revival there was a blacksmith from a neighboring community who boasted that he could withstand the power of God -- he said he could come to the meeting and it would have no effect on him. I was but a small lad at the time, but I recall hearing the older folk talk about praying for that blacksmith. The next morning he came to the day meeting. I can see him yet as he strode in and sat down behind the old box-wood stove. The very room was filled with the presence of God. Concerted prayer began to rise in that little church, and in a short while nearly a hundred people had gathered around the blacksmith. They began to rally the forces, and it seemed for a moment they were going to turn the world upside down. When folks pray like that, something is bound to happen -- and it did. They literally prayed him to the floor. Like wax before fire, God brought him low and he received the victory. That made an indelible impression on my childish heart.

Another incident that urged me Godward occurred about this time. My brother and I would take turns driving up the cattle at milking time. We often had to go to the far corners of the pasture to search the cows out. It fell my lot to perform this menial task one stormy evening. While I was driving the cattle, I recall there was a tremendous burst of thunder, and then great flashes of lightning seemed to touch the earth all about me. I was frightened as only a lad could be, and I recall telling the Lord that if He would protect me I would give my heart to Him. I was happy indeed to get in out of that storm and to feel the warmth and comfort and security of home. That same night Father read from the Bible and he and Mother prayed. Then my older brother said the Lord's Prayer, and then I prayed:

Now I lay me down to sleep.
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take.

After I had finished saying that, I added, "Lord, have mercy on me." Thus the Lord was dealing with me.

There was another contribution to my conversion that must not be overlooked. I had two wonderful Sunday School teachers, whose names were Ellen Huber and Addle Huffman. They were two of the finest persons I have ever known. They were converted, consecrated, conscientious teachers who assumed their tasks seriously. They knew how to teach the Bible well enough to hold the attention of a squirming country boy. Their Sunday School lessons equaled some of the finest preaching I have ever heard. During the course of the lessons, I have seen them become so stirred in heart that their eyes would fill with tears, and that had a great bearing on the youngsters in the class. Those teachers by their exemplary lives made us want to do the right and shun the wrong.

In the year 1899 my father began making preparation for me to go to Huntington College. This was a church school, and no parent ever made a mistake in sending his child to a good church school. The course I pursued at Huntington was comparable to the curriculum of a present-day high school.

I had been in school a few days when the announcement came that the Reverend A. P. Lilly was coming to hold a revival. The contributing elements that I have mentioned heretofore made me a choice candidate for conversion. The very first night of the meeting the evangelist wanted to know if there was anyone who wanted to be saved, and I raised my hand. The second night he asked anyone who wanted to be saved to stand up, and I stood up, I was getting hungrier for God by the hour. The third night he gave the invitation to come for prayer, and I was the first one there.

In desperation I told the Lord that I wanted to be saved and that I was willing to go through with Him. They began to sing, "I can, I will, I do believe," and my past life rose and passed before me like a panorama. I saw every wrongdoing of childhood; I saw the watermelon patch I had helped to ruin; I saw the old buggy that I helped put on top of the blacksmith shop; I saw the difference I had with a childhood friend. I believed that if a man intended to go with God he must make his past life right. If he had had trouble with somebody, he must go and fix it up. If he had mistreated someone, he must go and make it right. Thus while I was at the altar on my knees, I promised God that when I got back home I would go and see the man whose watermelon patch I had invaded years before. At the mourners' bench those watermelons looked to me like striped rain barrels. I promised God that I would tell the man about putting his buggy on the blacksmith shop. I further promised that I would go see Joe Myers, a young fellow with whom I had had quite an encounter. And I said I would fix it up with that old German woman that I had lied to about the price of butter, telling her it was one price when it really was another. While I was promising God to take care of all these things, He came into my heart, my burden rolled away, and I experienced the joy of sins forgiven, and I knew that old things had passed away and all things had become new. I was a new creature in Christ Jesus. I went down praying, but I came up shouting; I remember rising and shouting all over the house, hugging Dr. C. H. Karichoff, the president of the college, and hugging all the professors. I remember there were crying and shouting all over the house because a sinner had come home. May I say here, I have never gotten over it to this day.

I remember going to my room that night, but I didn't sleep too much. About four o'clock in the morning the Lord told me to get up and pray. As soon as the sun was up, I went down behind the hill, knelt under an old tree, and started to pray. There I began my devotional life, and I have kept that habit to this hour.

After I had been saved a few weeks, I returned home for a brief visit. I remember I came in on a newly built railroad from Muncie, and I had to walk some distance from the tracks to the old home place. I came across the field carrying my telescope, one of those old-fashioned suitcases, and my mother saw me while I was "yet a great way off." She came across the field to meet me; she was so glad to see me that she embraced me and brought me to the house. She turned to me and said: "Son, I am so glad that God saved you while you were gone. I prayed when you left home that God would save you while you were at the college. When you left home I made it a habit to go into your bedroom every morning and pray from six-thirty until eight o'clock. At the end of thirty days the Lord promised me your salvation. Just shortly after that I received your letter saying you had been saved. Your father and I are so happy!"

Thank God for an old-fashioned, praying mother who held on until the assurance came that her boy would be saved.

My brother was saved about that same time, and he has been a Christian man through the years and has reared a Christian family.

Let me testify here that Jesus has been more than I ever dreamed He could be. He has helped me when I have been on the mountain-top, and I thank Him for it. But He has also helped me in some of the most trying scenes of life. Anyone can continue pressing the battle when he is on the mountain and the sun is shining; but the real test of life comes when we walk through the valley and the sun hides its face. But Jesus has stayed by me in every circumstance. Perhaps it is better expressed in the words of a song I have sung around the bedsides of dying friends:

There's One above all earthly friends,
Whose love all earthly love transcends;
It is my Lord and Christ divine,
My Lord because I know He's mine.

He's mine because He died for me,
He saved my soul, He set me free.
With joy I worship at His shrine,
And cry, "Praise God, I know He's mine."

He's mine because He's in my heart,
And never, never will depart.
Just as the branch is to the vine,
I'm joined to Christ, I know He's mine.

Someday, upon the streets of gold,
Mine eyes His glory shall behold.
And while my arms around Him twine,
I'll cry, "Praise God, I know He's mine."

I know He's mine, this Friend so dear.

He lives with me; He's ever near.
Ten thousand charms around Him shine,
And, best of all, I know He's mine.

* * *

CONSECRATION

College students always like to visit home, and I was no exception. It was good to have a short visit home with my wonderful parents. However, on my return to college, the memories of an old-fashioned sanctified mother made me hungry for the blessing of entire sanctification. There were many things about the doctrine of holiness that I did not understand in those early years, but what I did understand caused me to hunger and thirst after the experience.

One day I was reading a holiness paper (I still subscribe to every holiness publication). I was reading an article on seeking and finding the blessing, and it made me hunger all the more. I remember writing Mrs. M. W. Knapp that I appreciated the article and was seeking the blessing. In the return letter Sister Knapp reminded me of the promise which says, "The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." She said, "Now, Brother Chalfant, holiness is a good thing, and you are walking uprightly, and you are going to get sanctified wholly."

So I continued to seek the experience, and often I would unconsciously sing:

Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;
I want Thee forever to live in my soul.
Break down ev'ry idol, cast out ev'ry foe;
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

I would spend much time searching the Scriptures for every holiness passage I could find. I would read verses of promise and verses of assurance and verses of warning, but they only increased my hunger. I was in a veritable spiritual labyrinth. I was seeking the door that led to the blessing, but I could not find it. So I hungered on.

I knew one thing for certain: to be a candidate for the blessing, I must know that every sin was covered by the Blood. I took inventory of my experience. I am glad that I never tasted liquor nor tobacco; I never knew one card from another; I never swore nor took an oath; I never knew anything about dancing or shows of any kind. I decided that I was fully forgiven for all sins and was a candidate for the experience.

It was during this time that I was introduced to Wesley's Sermons. I read them with consuming delight, and I have been an avid reader of Wesley to this hour. Wesley stirred my heart and awakened me anew to my great need of holiness with the sermons, "Sin in Believers" and "Repentance and Believers." But my old difficulty remained; I did not know how to go about getting this experience. One day while I was attending services in the United Brethren church that my father and grandfather built, I stood to my feet and said to the crowd that I was fully

surrendered to God. As I look back upon it now, I know that I was not sanctified then. I was trying to get a foothold for spiritual security.

I began to engage in all kinds of Christian work. I remember during March in 1902 that I went to a rural community over in Rush County to do some Christian work. I had finished my classes at Huntington the first of the year, and had begun to do personal work in various meetings, not only in Rush County but also in Brookville and Liberty and Oak Forest, Indiana. This personal work was unconsciously leading me to the blessing.

In May, 1902, I attended the great Cincinnati camp meeting. This was really my first contact with what may be called the modern holiness movement. This was the greatest meeting I had attended up to that time. Professor McNeill led the singing and the glory fell on the people: The preachers were Seth Rees, Charles Stalker, and Andrew Dalbo. I especially remember the good preaching of Brother Rees. He was given to his Quaker swing, and the people would be stirred in soul and melted in heart and hundreds would flock to the altars. During the camp meeting I remember Brother Andy Dalbo had me stand and testify. I did the best I could and told the people I was fully surrendered, but I had not yet received the blessing.

In the ensuing summer months, my father decided that he would help me get some more education. He wanted me to make some extra money to help in the expenses that would be incurred, so he bought me a fine bunch of hogs. There were a number of fine shoats and one big four-hundred-pound hog. I kept them in a clover patch, pumped the water for them to wallow in, and fed them yellow corn. One day I had pumped the water hole full and climbed on the wagon bed to shovel the corn down to the ground. Then I began to call the hogs. They never did have any trouble hearing me. As I called, the hogs came running down the distant hills, and soon they were gathering in for their breakfast. I climbed down from the wagon and stood at the edge of the mudhole. The small pigs were standing at the trough. The big four-hundred-pounder was very slow about reporting for the morning meal. He came when I least expected him, and he pushed me into the mudhole. I climbed out of that mudhole and went at him with a fence rail and beat him half to death. Suddenly I realized what I was doing, and I dropped the fence rail and said to myself, "Now, isn't this becoming of me!" That was another reminder of a deep need in my heart. To punish me further, five of those pigs died a short while later.

Sometime after that I was riding home one Saturday night. I had borrowed Memphis Joe's new rubber-tired buggy. As I drove around the turnpike that moonlit Saturday night, two young men in two buggies came racing toward me. One went to my right and the other to my left. The hub of the one going to my left collided with the outside rim of the rubber-tired buggy and pulled off the entire rim. His buggy tilted, and he fell on the ground. Before I knew what had happened, I had lifted him up and was shaking him as hard as I could, I held a closed fist before him, and if he had said a wrong word he would have gotten a right punch. I felt something in me akin to the very pit of hell. I knew I needed something else and decided I was going to get desperate.

The next morning I walked into the kitchen and Mother was preparing breakfast. I saw the yellow-backed biscuits on the oven board, a platter of sugar-cured ham, and a bowl of brown gravy; on the back of the stove there was a crock of rice. I saw the old-fashioned oilcloth on the table that was already set with plain plates and other dishes, wooden-handled knives and forks and

pewter spoons. In the midst of a kitchen scene such as that I announced to my mother that I didn't want anything to eat. When she asked me what was the matter, I told her I was going down to the old United Brethren church, and that I intended to stay there until God sanctified my soul. Mother gave me two comforters and two pillows, and I walked down the old turnpike for about twenty rods to the church. It was about six-thirty in the morning when I arrived. I stayed all day and all night. I didn't eat, drink, or sleep, for my time was spent in seeking the blessing. I stayed the next day and the next night. During those days, two services were held daily in the church, and the people heard what was taking place. When they saw the comforters and the pillows, they said, "That Everett has gone crazy."

But I kept right on pressing my claim. On the third day about six o'clock in the evening, God opened all the windows of heaven and sent down glory and peace and joy and love; something hit me on the top of my head and went to the soles of my feet like an electrical thrill. I knew that the old man of sin was crucified, for I had the witness that I was sanctified wholly. I was completely dead to this world and was fully alive unto God. That was September 15, 1902, and the blessing still holds today!

During the years that intervened between my being saved and my getting sanctified, I was passing through a dying-out process. Time and time again I had carnal stirrings, and I knew that the old man was not dead. For fear that some might think that holiness is obtained by a process of continued seeking, let me correct that impression. It is not necessary to go through three years of prolonged agony as I did. The reason for my prolonged seeking was not because of any lack in God's ability; rather, it was necessary because I did not want to die out completely, and I didn't understand how to get the blessing. I believe that holiness can be secured by faith in the blood of Jesus Christ as soon as the believer is willing to make a complete consecration and thereby become totally dead to self.

* * *

CALL

My call to preach was intuitive, but very definite. I knew when I was very young that I would be a preacher. The challenge to preach the Word was ever present. I had tried to preach some before I was sanctified. In fact, I preached my first sermon in February, 1902. I preached from Philippians 3:14 -- I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling After I had made my first effort, I opened the altar and nine people came and sought God, the first time I ever preached the gospel. That was the beginning of a meeting on the north side of Muncie, Indiana.

I do not remember all that I said in my first sermon, but the gist of it was to impress the people to mind God. I knew that He had called me just as surely as though He had written it across the canopy of the skies in flaming letters. However, it took my experience of sanctification some time later for me to have the courage and boldness that I needed to preach the glorious truth.

God not only called me to preach, but He called me to preach old-fashioned, second-blessing, radical, dying-out heart holiness. The emphasis of my entire ministry has been this very theme. The main reason I have been able to hold true, stay at the task, and accomplish

something for the Kingdom is found here. May God continue to raise up successive generations of holiness preachers, until generations yet unborn shall rise up and call us blessed for having established and maintained the Church of the Nazarene.

I still like that text, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The way of holiness produces the highest morality, for it cleanses completely from the sin nature, and that cleansing is the true basis of all genuine morality.

The way of holiness produces the highest type of separation from the world. The inward separation comes first, and then the outward separation is the natural result. Jesus said, They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. God's sanctifying power completely separates us from the world.

Further, the way of holiness produces the highest intellectual grasp of God. God is holy. And He says, Be ye holy; for I am holy. The Bible plainly states, But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. Again it says, The world by wisdom knew not God. Christ is the wisdom and power of God. He is the Fountainhead of all wisdom. When our hearts are made holy, we have an intellectual grasp of God that the world can never know.

Further, the way of holiness produces the highest type of Christian experience. I have been a careful observer for nearly fifty years. I have read the experiences of saints and sages. The way of holiness as told by John Wesley, John Fletcher, Adam Clarke, and Richard Watson, and as sung by Charles Wesley, has produced a triumphant army of holy saints that is not paralleled by any other religious system or moral code in all history. I have further found that the way of holiness produces the highest intensified personal devotions. When you remove sin and selfishness and self-seeking from a man's heart, then his heart is motivated by divine love and he worships God in the beauty of holiness. That type of man can be expected to practice personal devotions and make them the key of his spiritual life.

The way of holiness gives the highest grasp of consecration, and that is the Bible grasp. Search out the men of all ages and all stages, and you will find that the men who have walked in the way of holiness have had the greatest grasp of what it means to be fully consecrated.

And this same holiness works today. After nearly fifty years of preaching, I can still say that it is the emphasis of my ministry. God give us more men who know they are called to preach -- and know that they are called to preach holiness!

A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify;
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,
Oh, may it all my pow'rs engage

To do my Master's will.

Arm me with jealous care,
As in Thy sight to live;
And, oh, Thy servant, Lord, prepare
A strict account to give.

Help me to watch and pray,
And on thyself rely,
Assured if I my trust betray
I shall forever die.

* * * * *

03 -- CAMPAIGN -- COLLEGE -- COURTSHIP

After the turn of the century, I felt impressed to pursue full-time evangelism. My college days at Huntington were past; I was saved and sanctified, and I longed to be actively engaged in Kingdom work. I started holding campaigns regularly in 1903. For a year or two our work centered in Indiana. I recall some fruitful revivals in Nashville, Mount Zion, Wilkinson, Moreland, and New Castle, Indiana.

There were some incidents during some of the Indiana campaigns that I must recount here. My mother and I went to a certain church in answer to its call. I proceeded to preach the same radical doctrine I had always preached. I was reared in the shadow of such preaching and teaching. I not only preached against sin, but I dared to call it by name. After a week of that kind of preaching, the community was awakened. I felt the pressure of the undercurrent of reaction throughout the community and decided that I would go into the woods and pray. When I came in from my prayer meeting, my mother informed me that we would have to move to another boarding place. The woman who had invited us to hold the meeting and at whose house we were staying was so perturbed at my preaching that she told Mother she was turning us out. I told my saintly mother that I was not going to move, but I was going to continue sleeping and eating at the same place. Mother reminded me that that would be impolite; but I told her that the good sister was responsible for our presence there, and she thought she would get away from conviction by forcing us to move.

So I returned to the boarding house and, before I could open the door, the woman said, "Now, Brother Chalfant, you can't stay here any longer."

But I answered, "Now, Sister, I am going to stay here longer. Get out of the way." And I walked into the house and went directly to the upstairs bedroom where I had been staying. When the evening meal was ready I came downstairs, but not at her invitation. There wasn't an extra during the entire meeting, and that very woman came to me and apologized and found victory!

I remember another campaign that we conducted about two miles from my home. Some of my relatives came to the meeting, and I preached and prayed as usual. At the end of the first week, the preaching was so fervent and straight that the crowd wanted to mob me. One Sunday morning after I had preached, an old sinner came to the pulpit to whip me. I turned to my friend and said, "Brother Clark, hold my overcoat." That shocked my antagonist and he turned and fled from the building. After eight days of preaching, the pastor told me that the people were furious and would not allow me to preach there any longer. The folks were not willing to obey the Lord, so we closed the revival. Within a year, that church's doors were closed and it was made into a corncrib.

One night during a revival in central Indiana, a young girl who was praying at the altar suddenly became rigid and fell over on the carpet in front of the altar. Some folk feared that she was dead, but I knew she was in a trance, and I advised them to leave her alone. A few hours later she came out of her stupor and announced that she had been to hell. She had previously told the crowd at the altar that she had promised the Lord that she would give up everything. However, she was holding on to something. She had a half bushel of yellow-backed Nick Carter dime novels. She said that when she lied about them she was punished. She continued, "I told the Lord that if He would bring me back from perdition I would quit lying and burn those books." Such incidents used to be heard in old-fashioned revivals.

I remember one Sunday afternoon when a Sister Powers was sanctified. The Spirit of God came on her in such a marvelous manner that, as she walked across the auditorium, everyone she pointed her finger at fell to the floor under the power of God. Those were wonderful days.

We had a good revival in Warrington, Indiana, in 1904. I remember a fine young country lad who used to ride his pony in to attend the Warrington high school. He became very interested in the revival. One night he came to the altar and received wonderful victory. The woman on the other side of the altar from that young man, who prayed for him and encouraged him until victory came, was my dear old mother. That young man is one of the outstanding laymen of Christendom today. He is Dr. Grover Van Duyn, former president of Olivet Nazarene College.

The revival at Warrington was one of the most outstanding campaigns I ever held. It was an ideal meeting. It lasted nine weeks; there were great crowds, a host of seekers, and a wonderful spirit on the people.

In the year 1905 I began associating with my good friend, John T. Hatfield. Earl and Gertrude Davis were our singers. We started our first campaign on the tenth of May in that year. We held seven meetings from May until September. Dr. Joe Williamson, Quaker evangelist, was with us in some of them.

One of our campaigns was in Greenfield, Indiana, and was held near the courthouse. I remember that the workers stayed in the Columbia Hotel. One day Brother Williamson and I left the hotel and went to the courthouse in Greenfield. The elderly Judge Sample had let us borrow his field glasses, and we were eager to view the countryside from the top of the courthouse. While we were up there, I turned to Brother Williamson and told him that this was a good place to pray. We fell to our knees and "turned loose." My voice was rather loud, as I was praying under a great burden. After I had finished, Brother Joe started to pray. While he was praying, I heard

murmurings down on the street. I stood up and looked over the wall and saw that the courthouse square was thronged with people. I didn't know what was happening until later, when the janitor told me that when the folk heard me praying they came running, thinking that someone was dying. He told them that it was a holiness preacher praying in the courthouse tower.

A few days later our party went to Jamestown. This was not a long meeting, but I remember pressing an altar call the very first night. I told Dr. Joe Williamson that I knew that was unusual, but I felt directed to do it. The next morning I learned that a young man who was under conviction in that first service met with a fatal accident on his way home. He had an early type muzzle shotgun. It was not a breach-loading gun; rather, it shot caps. On his way home from service he was walking down a dry creek bed, when he stumbled and fell. The gun hit the rocks and released the trigger, and he was killed instantly. When I heard about that, I knew why I had been directed to open the altar the first night of the revival.

It was a week before I made my next altar call. It was at the close of the Sunday morning service, when I turned to the choir and asked them to sing an invitation song. That church had been so cold and dead that the choir did not know what I meant. Before I knew what had happened, they were on their feet singing lustily, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." About nine people stepped out and came to the altar.

After a few days' rest, Brother John T. Hatfield and I purchased a new tent and about five hundred dollars' worth of canvas settees. We took it to Andersonville, Indiana, for our first tent campaign. Brother Joe Williamson, who was with us in that campaign, preached one night and hit every sin in that community. The next morning we found our new tent flat on the ground. We counted forty holes cut in the top, and forty holes in the sides. The vandals had also cut the canvas seats and the ropes from the stakes and rail poles, and broken the gasoline torches. To make the situation worse, there had been a torrential rain during the night.

Brother Hatfield and I looked at the tent and then at each other. Every dollar I had was invested in that tent. We got down on our knees and prayed for the people who had done this. When my father heard about the situation, he came to me and said he would have the tent fixed -- and he did.

I remember our holding a campaign in Bluntsville that was quite different from the usual. It was different because, after two weeks of preaching, we had not stirred a single soul to action. It was my turn to preach the last Sunday night, but no one came to the altar. Just before I pronounced the benediction I looked at the crowd and said: "I just have one thing to say. When it comes time for me to die, there are two places I want to miss. I want to miss Bluntsville and hell!"

I heard about a rural church near Morristown, Indiana, that had not had a revival in many years. I decided to go over there and hold a campaign myself. After I had preached a couple of nights, I could tell that those folk didn't know what a real revival was. I went over to the sawmill and ordered a mourners' bench. I gave the dimensions to the man and told him I wanted it as soon as possible. He asked me what I intended to do with a contraption such as that, and I answered him, "I am going to get those sinners across it." He told me that I would never do that in that community.

He was wrong. After about two weeks the meeting began to break, and folk were streaming to the mourners' bench and praying through in glorious fashion.

I remember one night I started to take the offering. I picked two men and told them to come and pass the hats, but they refused. I told them to mind the preacher and take the offering. They were very hesitant, but they came forward and nervously clutched the hats while I prayed for the offering. They did their task well, even though I learned after the service that I had called on the saloonkeeper and his bartender!

Thus went our campaigns until the year 1908. In the summer of that year I was conducting a tent meeting in Straughns, Indiana. We had a six weeks' campaign with commendable results. It was during this meeting that I first became acquainted with Dr. U. E. Harding, who was at that time an evangelist in the Free Methodist church. During this campaign I chanced to read a front-page article in a prohibition paper about Doctor Bresee and the work he was doing in Los Angeles. I remember the article told of great glory in this center. For the first time in my life I realized that there was a better way of organized holiness, and I longed to know more about Dr. Bresee's crowd. After that campaign I took my tent home. Looking back now, I can see that a new day was dawning in my life. I attended the Bible conference at Winona Lake, Indiana. I listened to Billy Sunday, J. Wilbur Chapman, Bishop Hartzell, and others. I heard the singing of E. O. Excell, Charles Grabriel, Robert Harkness, and Homer Rodeheaver. This conference opened my eyes, and I saw that one group did not have a corner on God.

Another revelation came to me a short time later. I attended a large holiness camp meeting and heard Dr. H. C. Morrison, Dr. Joseph H. Smith, David Hill, Bud Robinson, and J. M. Harris. I saw a sane and sensible crowd that had great power. I made up my mind then and there that I should have better preparation for my life's work.

When I returned home I told my mother that I needed more education. She told me that she was in favor of my getting more college work if it did not dampen my preaching. So Father and Mother and I began to pray for a door to open that would make it financially possible for me to continue my education.

On the twentieth of October, 1908, Mother told me that our prayer was answered. "Arch Hamilton came," she said, "and he is going to build a new turnpike in front of our house, and your father has sold him one thousand dollars' worth of gravel. You and your father can go to the county seat tomorrow and get you some clothes and a trunk for college."

On the twenty-sixth of October, 1908, I arrived at Kingswood College, founded by Dr. J. W. Hughes, who was also the father of Asbury College. I had heard wonderful things about Dr. Hughes and his work, and I decided it would be profitable for me to study under him.

The years at Kingswood will never be forgotten. I liked it so well that I stayed until I had earned two degrees. We had a wonderful faculty and a splendid student body. I made many lifelong friends there. I met Professor and Mrs. T. S. Greer. Brother Greer was professor of history at Olivet Nazarene College for thirty-five years. I also met such outstanding Christians as

Charles Dunaway, J. E. Williams, Brother and Sister Ben Sutton, Professor and Mrs. F. A. Peake, Dr. Lofton Smith, and Dr. Luther Bridges, the prominent song writer.

I must say here that one of the outstanding ministers I have met in life's journey was Dr. J. W. Hughes. He was a Spirit-filled saint, and he was an outstanding scholar and administrator. I believe that J. W. Hughes sent out a thousand preachers who are around the world this hour. From his schools came Dr. E. Stanley Jones, Bishop Fred Fisher, Bishop Watts, Bishop Pickett, and many other well-known men. Dr. J. W. Hughes will never be dead as long as his Christian workers remain alive. God bless his sainted memory!

Kingswood College never dampened my spiritual ardor. Before I left home I promised my mother that if I began to "tone down" or "cool off" in my spiritual life I would come right home. But a holiness college did just the opposite for me. It gave me a greater sense of spiritual freedom, and that is something I have kept to this day. The day we lose a sense of spiritual liberty in our services we can write Ichabod across the doors of our churches!

One morning during chapel at Kingswood, I heard Dr. H. F. Reynolds speak. I shall never forget that when Dr. Hughes introduced him he said, "Many people are talking about the Nazarene church's being the coming church. It is not the 'coming church.' It is already here."

I met Dr. Reynolds and talked with him, and that made an unforgettable impression on me.

Later in the day Dr. J. W. Hughes came to my room in the dormitory and said, "Brother Chalfant, Dr. Reynolds was right in his statements about organized holiness."

During the summer months following, I continued to evangelize in Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, and elsewhere. But I could not get away from the conviction that the Lord wanted me to identify myself with Dr. Bresee's crowd. Thus it was in 1916 that I joined the Church of the Nazarene in Muncie, Indiana, and was ordained to preach by Dr. R. T. Williams, September 1, 1916, at Anderson, Indiana.

One thing that Kingswood gave me that makes me eternally grateful is this: I found my wife there. Her name was Eliza Watts and I first saw her in 1910. It was not love at first sight. The truth is that we prayed about the matter for five years. We wanted to make certain that it was the Lord's will for us to unite in marriage.

I appreciate the fact that my mother and my mother-in-law prayed that the will of God might be done in the matter, so that we might not make the mistake of our lives. I must say here that some preachers have limited their ministry by failing to secure the right wife. If a young preacher has prayed about anything, he should pray much about this. When people ask me (and they often have), "How did you get such a wonderful wife?" my answer is always the same, "The Lord gave her to me."

After my future wife and I felt clear in the matter of marriage, I proceeded to her home in Kentucky to ask for her hand. Her parents lived in a farm home near the old Kentucky River. I remember following my future father-in-law up and down the hemp row, trying to get enough

courage to ask him for permission to marry his daughter. But I had become so nervous that I would just stand and listen to the murmur of the river and watch it thread its way to the sea. I finally excused myself and came into the house. During the walk to the house I mustered enough courage to ask my mother-in-law and felt relieved when she consented. On the eighth of September in 1915, in that stately Kentucky farm home, anticipation became realization. There, before relatives and college friends, Dr. J. W. Hughes declared us man and wife.

There are many things to which I may attribute any little success I may have known in the ministry. I am thankful for a Christian heritage, and I am thankful for Christian associations with great men, and for college days. But if I were to point to one thing that has kept me in the middle of the road and constantly at the task, it would be my wonderful wife. She has given me three wonderful children: Fred, a member of Detroit First Church; Morris, a missionary to Africa; and Betty Jean, who is currently studying at Eastern Nazarene College.

For many years my work has kept me away from home the greater part of the time, and Mrs. Chalfant has had to assume the responsibility of rearing the family. She has done well, and may the Lord reward her accordingly.

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04 -- CHURCHES I SERVED

In early June, 1916, my wife and I were in the midst of a revival meeting in Gravel Hill, Missouri. I was seriously entertaining the proposition of leaving the evangelistic field and taking a pastorate. One night during the meeting I got up from the old straw bed and prayed until I knew the will of the Lord. When I arose it was all settled -- I was ready to take any Nazarene church that the Lord would proffer me.

A few days later I received a call to the First Church of the Nazarene in Muncie, Indiana. I accepted the call and arrived in Muncie on June 15, 1916.

The church gave no guarantee of any stipulated salary. There was no parsonage, so I rented a house at 308 West Howard Street, and paid the rent myself. I was willing to do this, as I felt that the Lord wanted me there.

As a pastor I continued to do the work of an evangelist. I believed then, as I believe now, that the task of the Church of the Nazarene is to evangelize the people. We held prolonged tent campaigns, and we stayed on the job until a glorious revival was a reality. Dr. L. Milton Williams and Bud Robinson held a wonderful campaign for us the first year we were there.

I also had a city-wide canvass during the campaigns back there in 1916, '17, and '18. The people co-operated splendidly, and I recall that one fall, before starting our revival campaign, we canvassed twelve thousand homes. We did other promotional work, including a budget allocation for newspaper advertising in both local newspapers. The three tent campaigns held there produced the South Side Church of the Nazarene in Muncie in 1919.

The vision of starting new churches was constantly kept before the people. In 1917 we organized the Harris Chapel Church near our own community, and we organized another church in Gaston, Indiana. We assisted in the campaigns at New Castle, Anderson, and Parker, Indiana. Now we have strong churches in these places. Carrying the financial obligation of tent campaigns and helping to organize other churches caused the membership of Muncie First Church to triple in the three years we were there.

During my first pastorate I received the vision of the needs of our foreign missionaries -- and have never lost it. During the assembly in July, 1917, in Cleveland, Indiana, Dr. J. W. Goodwin impressed the churches with the foreign missions needs and challenged us to action. I proposed to do the best I could. I returned home and announced a special foreign missionary campaign. The workers were the Reverend E. G. Anderson, foreign missionary secretary of the Church of the Nazarene; also Rev. R. C. Coddington, missionary from India; and Miss Viola Willison, who later went to India and gave her life there. District Superintendent U. E. Harding was present also in the campaign, which lasted from Thursday, Thanksgiving Day, until Sunday, with three services a day. The Muncie First Church gave more liberally than the whole Indiana district!

That same year we held an Olivet campaign with President J. E. L. Moore, and received twenty-five hundred dollars for the college. Olivet has always had a special place in my heart, and I shall continue to stand by her as long as I live.

The church board at Muncie paid a guaranteed salary of twenty-five dollars per week, which was later raised. The people were very kind to us; and Sister Chalfant and I will always remember the Maggs, the Slagels, the Nulls, and Ludwigs, the Boyles, and many others who were faithful to the cause.

In 1919, we were trying to start another church in Muncie. I was praying about it one morning in June, and the Lord clearly showed me that my work was finished at Muncie First Church. I did not understand it, for the program seemed to be going well and the people appreciated us. But It is not mine to question the judgments of the Lord. It is but mine to follow the teachings of His Word.

I told the Lord that I was willing to do whatever He wanted me to do and that I awaited His directions. I had no place to go and did not know how to go about getting another place, as I was comparatively new in the church. I waited until the day before assembly, and Brother U. E. Harding called me from Indianapolis, saying that the West Side Church of the Nazarene had extended us a call to go there. I felt that this was the leading of the Lord. I asked nothing about salary, but I promised him I would accept. I later learned that the salary was less than I had been receiving, but I did not complain.

After the district assembly, where, incidentally, I met Dr. and Mrs. R. T. Williams and their son Reginald, we moved to Indianapolis. They had no parsonage, and we made arrangements to store our furniture temporarily in Amos Griffin's barn. My wife and I rented one room -- and it was not the best room in the city. We cleaned the wallpaper, scrubbed the floors, used some exterminator to remove some inhabitants from the folding bed, trimmed the wick of the kerosene stove, and set up housekeeping.

We had been in Indianapolis only a few days when the church decided to buy a good parsonage, and in short order we were moving into our new home. The obstacle was removed, and now it was time to accomplish something for the Kingdom in Indianapolis.

At that time the West Side Church was a basement church. We immediately began to make plans to complete the church. Brother T. H. Agnew came to help me raise money. The people gave sacrificially until we were able to secure a contractor to build the church. On April 11, 1920, Dr. J. W. Goodwin came to dedicate the church and we had a heart-warming service. After the dedicatory service Dr. Goodwin met the church board and urged them to raise my salary. They rallied to his request and gave me a fifteen-dollar weekly increase.

My evangelistic fervor began to rise again, and I became convinced that the Nazarene churches in Indianapolis should have a united effort for souls. We made our plans for a great campaign to be held in Thompson Hall, but later found that it would not hold the crowds; so we had to move to a larger place, a 60 x 120 tent in front of the courthouse. The campaign cost around three thousand dollars, and one-third of that was spent for advertising. Dr. R. T. Williams, Virginia Shaeffer, and the Rinebargers were the workers in the campaign. That campaign not only more than paid for itself and gave us a host of new prospects, but it made the right impression on the city proper.

The next year we continued to put on like campaigns with such workers as R. T. Flannery, the Aeolian Quartet, Dr. H. F. Reynolds, Stella B. Crooks, Ida Veig, Lela Hargrove, and E. G. Anderson. Thus, in addition to the building program, the church continued with an emphatic evangelistic program.

During the summer we held a united campaign with Bona Fleming. During an afternoon service I told the people what was on my heart. I believed that it was our responsibility to give the gospel to the entire city of Indianapolis, and I would grant that we could do that if we could raise one thousand dollars to buy a tent and equipment and continue to buy more tents as finances made it possible. Brother J. W. Short, then district superintendent of the Indiana District, agreed with me and the churches proceeded to give hilariously. Out of those tent meetings came a number of Nazarene churches throughout Indianapolis and the vicinity. We had a total of twenty-one meetings at a total cost of ten thousand dollars, but we had literally thousands of souls at the altar.

I still feel that the three years I served the West Side Church in Indianapolis served as the proving ground and foundation for the superintendency. I assumed the responsibility of every interest of the denomination. I sponsored, the entertaining of two district assemblies, and one of them was held at the old Alexandria campgrounds; I served on the District Advisory Board and was a trustee of Olivet Nazarene College; in July, 1919, I attended the General Assembly at Kansas City; and in the spring of 1920, assisted Dr. R. T. Williams in liquidating the debt of the Nazarene Publishing House.

During the years in the pastorate I pressed local, district, and general interests. I am still thankful for the wonderful people in Muncie and Indianapolis who stood by the full program of the

church, for in honor of their faithfulness the work of the Lord prospered and many were added to the church.

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05 -- CHICAGO CENTRAL CALLS

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APPOINTMENT TO DISTRICT

On Thanksgiving morning in 1921 the late Dr. J. W. Goodwin came to see me to tell me that he had recommended me to First Church in Columbus, Ohio. I promised him I would pray about the matter. Dr. Goodwin told me he would be by the next day to get my answer. I prayed all night long. He came by the next day and asked me my answer, and I quickly told him that I did not feel led to accept it. He seemed momentarily startled and asked the reason for my decision.

I answered: "At the present time this West Side Church is being geared for its highest possibilities. I know that the other situation offers more financial security, but I prefer staying here where the work will be more difficult."

I have always felt that there is the danger ever present of preachers' rating themselves and feeling they deserve to be in a certain category. The truth is that the best place for any preacher is the place where the Lord wants him and where He can use him.

After breakfast Dr. Goodwin and I walked arm-in-arm to the church, which was some two blocks away. As we approached the church, Dr. Goodwin turned and took hold of the lapels of my suit and said, "Very well, Brother Chalfant, I believe you are right; never let salary or position have anything to do with the decisions you make in the church. Always stay where the Lord wants you to stay."

That represented some of the best advice any general superintendent has ever given to any young preacher, and that admonition can well be repeated today.

From that time to the following March I continued to press the battle in Indianapolis, knowing that I was in the center of His will. Then something strange occurred. During March in 1922 I was impressed by the Lord to know that my work there was complete. I seemed to be in a state of suspense. I had no place to go, but I felt the Lord would soon open a door. He always does if we wait and believe. The last day of August, 1922, I was in my study on my knees when the telephone rang at about three thirty in the afternoon. When I answered it, I learned that it was Brother Floyd Johnson, district secretary of the Chicago Central District. He gave me a message that was to change the course of my entire ministry. He told me that I had been elected district superintendent of the Chicago Central District. Then Dr. R. T. Williams came to the telephone to congratulate me and urge me to come at once. I promised him that I would, as I felt that this was the open door that I had been waiting for. We should never try to pry a door open, but wait and let the Lord open it. No one was more surprised than I when I was apprised of my election. If a man tries

to open a door, it can be dangerous to enter; when God opens a door, a man can enter, knowing that it is His will.

My emotions were mixed after I had placed the receiver back in the cradle. I was glad to be elected, but I knew that a hard task lay ahead. I remember going to the New York store in Indianapolis and purchasing two grips; then I hastened home and packed them and boarded the train for Danville, Illinois. I arrived in Danville early the next morning, and went to the home where I was to stay. The first man I saw was Dr. T. W. Willingham, and he gave me the directions to the church.

The reception of the district assembly was all that one could ask for. Dr. Williams conferred with me and he was so kind. My salary was set at \$2,000 a year plus traveling expenses, but I was to pay my own house rent. I remember my traveling expenses for that first year were nearly \$800.

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VISITING THE CHURCHES

On the first Sunday of September, 1922, I spoke for the first time on the district at Chicago First Church. My message embraced three points; they were as follows:

1. A man who succeeds in the Christian life goes for a vision that is sane yet seemingly insane;
2. He must have an activity that is superhuman;
3. And he must have a passion that partakes of the nature of a mania, and mania means crazy.

We had a good service, and I was particularly impressed with the pastor, my dear friend, the late W. G. Schurman. He stood by me from 1922 until 1932, when he was "promoted to Glory." He proved such a close Christian companion that I still miss him every time I go to Chicago.

I recall that he and I talked about my plans for the district. He said he would stand by me and stand by my program. After that I visited a number of the churches in Wisconsin, and then went to the central and the extreme southern part of Illinois. By that time I had a fair picture of the district at large. The next time I was in Chicago I told Brother Schurman that I had decided to start one hundred new Nazarene churches on the district. He laughed until he cried and patted me on the back and asked me if I thought I could promote a program that big. I told him that the Lord would help us do it, and he agreed to help me. I told him I wanted him to start the first one on the north side of Chicago, and he agreed to do it.

That same summer he took a 40 x 60 tent and some of his leading members and set up at north side. With his own hands he drove the stakes, and then preached and prayed and carried the burden. From that meeting came the embryo for a new church. Today we have a church on the north

side which is worth some \$75,000. (By 1926 we had doubled the number of churches the district had when I first came; I remember that we fulfilled our slogan for 1926 -- and built twenty-six new churches.) But this was only one church (that at North Side, Chicago) and there remained much to be done. It was now time to press the district program on a large scale.

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DISTRICT PROGRAM

As a pastor I had always pushed every part of the church program, and as district superintendent I could do no less. The district at that time was one thousand miles long and two hundred fifty miles Wide at its widest place. I did not have a car for the first seven years, and that necessitated train travel. I moved from one church to another, giving the challenge of home missions. The people gave, the pastors worked, and a host of new churches were in the making. Much of our work was done on faith, but the Lord never failed us. The property increases that first year were equal to \$7,000. The membership showed a gain of 209, and the Sunday school showed a gain of nearly 400. Monies raised for all purposes came to \$10,000 above the previous year. These figures may not seem impressive to the uninitiated, but back then they represented substantial gains. I shall not say too much concerning home missions here, as I will develop this more fully in a later chapter.

I will add this one thing concerning home missions-the difference between now and thirty years ago is that it takes five times as much money and three times the effort in order to start a new church. However, if we will spend the money and exert the effort, the Lord will help us build new churches.

I also started from the first to press the needs of foreign missions. If you will check the records, you will see the wonderful people of this district have consistently given sacrificially for this great cause. I also promoted the Sunday school, and substantial gains have been recorded annually. Along with this, the N.Y.P.S. and the W.F.M.S. have made commendable and steady increases. I have always appreciated the Nazarene young people. There is no better group in all the world, and on their shoulders rests the responsibility of keeping the church tomorrow what it is today. And the women of the district have given time, talent, and tithes. Let me add here that one of the many things I appreciate about the women of our church is that they are dependable. When there is something the men cannot or will not do, just set the goal for the women, and they will reach it and rejoice while they are doing it.

We have always admonished our people to subscribe to Nazarene publications. In fact, this district had the first district-wide Herald of Holiness campaign. I remember meeting Dr. Chapman in Evansville, Indiana, and telling him my plan for such a campaign. He liked the idea and urged me to launch the campaign. We have had a campaign every year since then. We originally set our goal of one-third of the membership, and later raised it to one-half the membership. Eventually we raised the goal to the total membership, and for these last years our Herald of Holiness subscription list is equal to the membership of the district.

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OLIVET NAZARENE COLLEGE

When I first became district superintendent, I was told by some that my responsibilities would not only include those of the superintendency but also some responsibilities for the college, since it was on my district. I was told by others that it was my business to stay as far from the college as I could. I adhered to the latter proposition and lived in Danville, Illinois, for the first two years. Those were strenuous years for the college, and I felt I should be there. If the college went down, I was willing to go down with it. So I moved to Olivet, Illinois, and began to face the problems of the school.

It may be well to relate some of the basic facts about the school situation at that time. The Church of the Nazarene purchased the school in 1912 from an interdenominational group. In those days the Chicago Central District bore the brunt of its support. The district originally elected the trustees. At the time we purchased the college, we assumed debts which totaled \$166,000. That incurred indebtedness was for everything from cuspidors to mortgages.

In 1918 a school campaign raised \$100,000, reducing the indebtedness to \$66,000. Then the report came from Business Manager M. E. Borders that the school was never on such a firm footing, but it still needed money to erase the indebtedness.

All this transpired prior to my arrival on the district, and when I came in 1922 the school was in a worse financial condition than ever before. It now had a potential indebtedness of a quarter of a million dollars. In 1926 Dr. R. T. Williams and I toured the zone and raised \$76,000 in cash. On June 10, 1926, the college was bought in by Dr. T. W. Willingham, and we proceeded to liquidate and to make right the debts of previous years.

We continued to carry the heavy load and better days seemed ahead. One fall night in 1939 I was visiting my good friend, the Reverend George Harmon, in Decatur, Illinois. There was a phone call for me and I was startled to hear the voice of Dr. A. L. Parrott, Olivet's president, saying that he was calling me from my own home to tell me that the administration building was burning down. I told him I would be there shortly. It was a sad sight to see the crumbled ruins of the school we had loved and had sacrificed so much for.

We refused to be defeated, and the Lord opened the way for us to purchase the present campus at Kankakee, Illinois. Today we have over one hundred acres for our campus and a number of well-constructed buildings, including the recently completed girls' dormitory. The college is on a firm footing and has a consecrated faculty and a great student body of over twelve hundred. What we have today could never have been save for the host of consecrated Nazarenes who gave their life's blood and some their life's savings in order to have this holiness institution of higher learning for our young people.

The presidents of this institution have all played their part in its success. They were B. F. Haynes, E. F. Walker, J. E. Moore, N. W. Sanford, T. W. Willingham, A. L. Parrott, Grover Van Duyn, Selden Kelley, and the present administrator, Dr. Harold Reed. I must also mention a man

who gave his life for the school and died prematurely. He was Dr. Lawrence H. Howe, a great friend of youth who still lives in the hearts of his former students.

* * *

CRISIS YEARS

We should here list the "crisis years" of the district. The first crisis came in 1926. That was the year we saved the college. Those were perilous times, but the Lord brought us through, and we are thankful to Him. Many there are who still recall the seriousness of the situation of that year. The next crisis came in 1936. That was the year the state of Wisconsin was declared a separate district. The churches in that state became strong enough to support their own district program, and they have continued to grow through the years. The year 1939 was a crisis year that many will remember, for that was the year of the fire at Olivet College. Many eyes were dimmed with tears and many hearts were sad to see the dear old school which was surrounded by so many pleasant memories reduced to ruin by fire. By 1940, the next crisis year, we moved the college to its present site in Kankakee, Illinois. The time that has intervened since the move has proved that it was the thing to do. The school has become the largest holiness college in the world. The next crisis came in 1943, when the district was again divided and the Illinois District, which comprised the lower half of the state, was given to the late Dr. R. V. Starr, who made a remarkable record in his work there. Rev. W. S. Purinton is now superintendent. The most recent crisis came in 1948, when the district was divided again and Rev. Lyle Eckley was appointed district superintendent. The current Chicago Central District consists of two tiers of counties on the eastern rim of Illinois from Danville to Chicago.

* * *

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

In these past years that I have been superintendent I have sent out some ten thousand letters annually. I have written a half million pieces of advertising matter. My mailing list has risen to 1,500, and I have received words of commendation for my advertising from leaders in other churches.

I have made one thousand pastoral arrangements and have given some three hundred preachers their first charges. Perhaps the most important task of a district superintendent is to send the right man to the right place at the right time. This is not an easy task, but the Lord has helped me, and I have obeyed Him and the church and tried to serve my men and their families to the best of my ability.

At the present time the district is strong in every area of our program. New projects are under way and growth is still our key word. I have a splendid group of pastors, and it is a great blessing to work with them. One thousand choice blessings on each of them and the people they serve!

In these dark days that are upon the world, we can only pray for a brighter future. We do not know when Jesus will come, but every indication is that it will be soon. We dare not be caught napping on the job when there is so much to do. I expect to continue to press the battle and to promote a vigorous campaign for souls as long as I serve. This district, along with the rest of the church, shall continue to go forward with the Mid-Century Crusade for Souls. If Jesus shall tarry, the district will press forward and continue to conquer territory for the King. We must not lose the vision nor the passion for souls. God has helped us to this hour, and I am confident that He shall continue to do so.

* * *

A PERSONAL WORD

One reason I have been able to carry the load of district work has been my devotional life. I never fail to read my Bible and pray. At the present time I am reading three chapters a day during the week and five chapters on Sunday. I usually read these chapters before daylight and then have an extended season of prayer. I once felt impressed to read Clarke's Commentaries, and I read every word in those commentaries and gained much spiritual strength.

There is something else that has been a great blessing and inspiration to me during these years, and that has been my family. My dear wife and children have stood by me all these years and have permitted me to go out and give my life to the church. May the Lord bless them and reward them accordingly.

Space does not permit me to mention the many pastors with whom I have worked and am working with now. These brethren have been true, and to them I offer thanks for their great work. Preachers are the nearest and dearest friends a man could ever hope to have.

* * *

NOTES TO YOUNG PREACHERS

Perhaps I should add a word to young preachers. I know the ministry. I have appointed some one thousand preachers and have labored with hundreds of others. I know their battles -- their trials and triumphs. I have rejoiced with preachers in hours of victory and have suffered with them in times of sorrow. God bless the preachers!

Our young preachers are entering their fields of labor in the world's most trying hour. I do not know but that the fullness of time is almost spent and that eternity is nearly ready to begin; but, even so, we must press the battle as though every day were the last. There is so much to be done -- and so little time to do it!

We must usher in another generation of preachers who know they have a genuine call from God. In reality the ministry rises above the ranks of a profession. It is a calling and must be held sacred as such. That call must be as clear and definite as any other experience with the Throne. All

doubt must be erased if a preacher is to succeed. Preaching is the most important work in the world, and we dare not treat it lightly or reduce it to a professional status.

Prepare to preach. When the call is a certainty, then the individual must make plans for preparation. That is more true today than ever before. A preacher must discipline himself by studies and good devotional habits. He should plan to get a higher education -- all that he is physically and financially capable of. Some men have made it and some will make it without formal education -- but they have done so in spite of that lack and not because of it. Some men have sought to prepare after they were forty and have done well, but it is best to complete your formal training between eighteen and thirty.

The Christian ministry is not devoid of Gethsemanes. The ministry is not immune from hardship and suffering. So I would challenge young preachers to learn the lesson of discipline. I sometimes think the most important thing in the ministry is to learn to suffer in a Christlike spirit. The greatest preachers I have met along the way have been men who learned to accept reverses in the right spirit.

Next, learn the lesson of human relationships. That is simply getting along with other people. More preachers have failed here than at any other point. I have seen good pulpiteers fail here. I have seen financial wizards fail here. And if you are going to get along with other people you will have to give in many, many times. Men who fail to do so think they will succeed just the same, but they are only trying to bluff reality.

Lastly, a preacher is more than a man who preaches. He is out of the pulpit more than he is in it. Thus day by day he must be a living advertisement for holiness and the church. One day he shall preach; but six days shall he visit the sick, minister to the dying, strengthen the weak, encourage the discouraged, comfort the sorrowing, pray for the lost, "weep o'er the erring one," and thereby stay true to God and the calling.

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06 -- MY THEORY OF HOME MISSIONS

As pastor and district superintendent, I have never neglected any part of the program of the church. I have persistently and vigorously pressed foreign missions, home missions, Sunday school, W.F.M.S., N.Y.P.S., the Herald of Holiness and other publications, "Showers of Blessing" radio program, and the like. While I have not done so at the expense of any other part of the general program, I concede that my area of concentration has been home missions. I regard home missions as the backbone of the church. Without this emphasis, the church would become stalemated and stagnant. Our people must continue to give sacrificially for this cause if we are to continue propagating scriptural holiness.

I cannot stress too heavily that our home mission work is the foundation of all growth and enlargement. This is one of the secrets of the phenomenal development of the Church of the Nazarene. It has been the master key that has opened doors of progress. On my home district during my tenure, some three hundred communities have been entered, and some two hundred fifty

churches have been organized. As most of my readers know, when I came to the Chicago Central District, it embraced the states of Illinois and Wisconsin. This area now comprises four districts: The Wisconsin District with forty-five churches; the Illinois District with one hundred churches; the Northwestern Illinois District with fifty churches; and the present Chicago Central District with fifty churches. The total giving of this entire territory in 1922 was \$126,000. In 1949 the total giving for all purposes was approximately \$1,350,000. The membership in 1922 was twenty-two hundred. It is now approximately fourteen thousand. Missionary and young people's societies, subscriptions to the Herald of Holiness and other Nazarene periodicals are in like proportion. These figures represent a tenfold increase, and the secret of this increase is an aggressive home missionary organization. My theory of home missions is very simple. It consists of three things: the mission, the man, and the money.

The first consideration must be given to the mission proper. The committees must decide which areas are best suited at the given time for gospel invasion. It is important that the mission succeed, for if it fails we must wait for many years before we dare make another attempt. It has been my observation that individuals who get thoroughly saved and sanctified will immediately request a Church of the Nazarene, for often there is no other place where they would fit in and be happy in the service of the King.

The man is perhaps the most important element in the campaign. To promote a home mission campaign, he must have a three-fold passion: a passion for God, a passion for souls, and a passion for the Church of the Nazarene. He could have the first two passions and be a valuable worker in some fields, but not in our denomination. He must be a wholehearted Nazarene, who believes in our methods. Men who have recently infiltrated our ranks are not capable of performing this task. Weakness at this very point has caused the failure of some very fine home mission prospects.

The late Dr. J. B. Chapman used to illustrate this point with one of his typical homespun stories. Perhaps you have heard him tell of the miller who was worried because the mill was infested with mice. He imported a number of cats to get rid of the mice. All went well until the machinery started. It made so much noise that the timbers began to shake, and the cats became so frightened that they fled from the mill through every opening. After some thinking, the miller decided to bring in a mother cat and let her raise her kittens amid the clamor and clatter of the mill. This solved his problem, for as the kittens matured they became accustomed to their environment, and the noise and the vibrating timbers became part of their lives.

When it comes to starting a new Church of the Nazarene, we need men who are genuine Nazarenes, who are familiar with our ways of doing things. I have heard Dr. Chapman say, "I have been in the fire so long that I can't stand the smoke."

The matter of money would naturally enter into a home mission program. Let me say here that I have trusted God for literally thousands of dollars to promote such campaigns. Finances are needed for the opening campaign, and they are required for carrying on the campaign for an indefinite period; and there must be a nucleus of financial security for promoting the new church after it is organized. The laity should know of this threefold financial need for such a venture and be willing to give accordingly.

I could not possibly list all the concrete cases that I have witnessed on my district and elsewhere. I will mention only three.

In 1922 I was appointed to the superintendency, and I moved to Danville, Illinois. The following spring I had a month's tour with Brother Bud Robinson. He was with me every year after that as long as he lived. During those four weeks we raised enough money to buy ten 40 x 60 tents. I remember that Brother Edwin Cunningham, a devout layman from Mansfield, Illinois, purchased one of the tents and one hundred chairs. We erected that tent in the central part of the city of Champaign, Illinois. We used the Reverend Ural Hollenback and the Reverend and Mrs. Theodore Ludwig with other local workers. We stayed on the job all summer and organized a church with eleven members in the month of August. We proceeded to buy a lot and a tabernacle at a cost of \$2,000. The Reverend H. B. Garvin was called as pastor and he did an excellent work. In 1928 a new church was built which was valued at \$75,000. The depression came, and there was a struggle with the indebtedness incurred. Through the faithful ministries of holy men of God, including H. B. Garvin, J. J. Gough, L. G. Milby, J. Y. Jones, and H. B. Jensen, the indebtedness was paid and a parsonage built. The property is now valued at \$100,000. The membership of over three hundred raised \$27,000 for all purposes last year. The struggling home mission church has become a giant among churches. This pattern of building and growth has been repeated throughout the denomination.

Peoria, Illinois, was one of the most difficult areas to enter. Our first campaign there was in July, 1923. There we emerged with one convert, Brother Roy Layman. He was worth the campaign. He willingly opened his home for cottage prayer meetings, which were continued for a year. In the meantime attendance increased, and a revival was the result. We rented a hall and had some more victories in regular services. In 1924 Brother J. O. Hoke and his wife Edna came to be pastors. They labored faithfully and bought a lot on the corner of Fifth and Fisher streets and constructed a tabernacle. This was the beginning of a great work. The Hokes, along with C. B. Armes, H. B. Jensen, Ralph Bauerle, Ralph Rice, Lloyd Morgan, and Ernest Rice, have all done their part in building our great work there. We now have a new building and parsonage valued at \$70,000. This church has mothered four other Nazarene churches in Peoria. Today some seven hundred and fifty people attend Nazarene Sunday schools in Peoria.

We have made splendid gains in the past decade in Kankakee, Illinois, the home of Olivet Nazarene College since 1940. The moving of the college to that area, naturally, strengthened our position. In this immediate area, they now have the college church, Kankakee First Church, Kankakee West Side Church, Fairmount Avenue Church, and the East Bradley Church. Each church is a miracle, as to the manner in which it came into existence. The Kankakee area is an excellent example of what can be done with an aggressive home mission program.

I must add here that none of the two hundred and fifty home mission churches that have been established during my superintendency could have become realities without the sacrificial labors of wonderful pastors and the commendable giving of our great constituency.

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07 -- GLEANINGS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS

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1923

To Dr. Reynolds and the Chicago Central District Assembly:

Under the good providence of God, about one year ago, while on my knees at Indianapolis, Indiana, my telephone rang and, upon answering, I was told that I had been elected district superintendent of the Chicago Central District for the coming year. I did not hesitate, but proceeded to buy two grips, and I have been on the move from that day to this. I never enjoyed a year better in my life. I never worked harder. I never had so many problems. I never encountered so many perplexities. I never met so many good people. In my ministry of some twenty-one years, I have never had a better spirit of co-operation, fellowship, friendship, and love than I have had in the last year. The task that I assumed one year ago is now history. I have no desire to try the year over. Someone else might have done better, but I have done my best.

Since I am ever more concerned about the future than I am the past, I wish to call your attention, first of all, not so much to what has been done, but what needs to be done. I say it humbly, but, after my past year of experience, I am more convinced than ever that God wants the Church of the Nazarene to be the leading aggressive evangelistic agency in the nation and, of course, upon our district. I say it, my heart bleeding, that real, vital, godly, aggressive, evangelistic agencies outside of our own denomination are generally unknown over our great territory of 112,000 square miles

As to special campaigns, Brother Ed Roberts and Will Eckel had a very profitable drive for home and foreign missions and, as far as we have been able to find out by many inquiries, this special campaign proved a great blessing to the people, and brought these two interests to the minds and hearts of the people with a new vision and inspiration. We also had with us during the year, for one month, Brother Bud Robinson. We had about thirty conventions on the district. These conventions were conducive of much good

As to new churches, we have organized at the following places during the year: Havana, Joliet, Quincy, Franklin, Oconto, Wis., Madison, Wis., Champaign, Sullivan, Lincoln, and Assumption, and possibly we have ten more in the making where we thought it not advisable to organize, but where the field is open and inviting

Another material increase in our district during the last year has been the purchase of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church of West Side Decatur by Brother Garvin and the good people there. It is said to be one of the best buildings in our connection

I think our statistics will show an advance in church membership. There is a beautiful spirit prevailing over our district. We seem to have a united vision and there seems to be a disposition on the part of our people to press on to greater things

* * *

1924

We consider it one of the greatest privileges of our life to have had the opportunity of laboring on Chicago Central District for the past two years. We believe we can honestly say the past year has been the best year of our life. While we have faced the most problems and have had the most difficulties to encounter, and have worked the hardest of any time in our twenty-five years of Christian experience, yet we believe we can honestly say that we have had the most enjoyable time also. We are sure that we have had the continual smile of God upon us and also have had a most beautiful spirit of co-operation from our pastors and people.

First of all, we feel that the most outstanding thing that has occurred during the year has been the constant revivals that have been put on among our people, in our churches and in home missionary projects. We are convinced more than ever that the first great business of our church is to preach the gospel in its fullness, and get people saved and sanctified wholly, and conserve and preserve what we do. We think there have been possibly three hundred conventions, revival meetings, and home missionary campaigns on the district during the last year

The home missionary outlook in a nutshell might be summed up thus. We have got in touch directly by correspondence and by campaign after campaign with about one hundred places of above 5,000 people during the past two years. We have many good new churches. We have some that have made phenomenal growth. Many have made normal and regular growth. Some are struggling. We have generally been able to provide suitable places of worship. We have had no serious difficulty in providing a pastor where reasonable support could be promised. The task is not an easy one. It is a most difficult one. As we see matters, the job is only just begun. The work has touched the mere edge. And if we will put into the work blood, sacrifice, and money, and if we can find some more good men who are efficient and competent, we see no reason why we cannot establish Nazarene churches in these great, promising cities in our territory. As to actual organizations, we have had ten in the last year; and during the last fifteen months, we have had twenty

We have had a number of special conventions during the year. Bud Robinson gave us the month of October on the district. Great crowds flocked to hear Brother Robinson. He received a remarkable hearing in Wisconsin. During Brother Robinson's stay with us of some two months, he received nearly one thousand subscriptions to the Herald of Holiness, and made hundreds of new friends for us up and down the district

I think that I would be very ungrateful if I should fail to mention the assistant district superintendent of this district, my wife, who has really carried the greater part of the load. While rather retiring in disposition, yet she and my two little boys have entered most sympathetically into my struggles, burdens, and perplexities. She has given me every encouragement, and never once has she murmured because of her lonely hours and the long nights that I have been away from home. And generally when I am at home, my mind and heart are so full of other things that I have failed to give her and the children the attention that I should. I feel that for whatever has been accomplished she deserves the greater part of the credit

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1925

To Dr. Goodwin and the Twenty-first Annual District Assembly of Chicago Central District:

Through the good providence of God, we bring to you our report of the work on Chicago Central District for the assembly year now closing. We believe we can honestly say this has been the best year of our life. It has been the most busy, the most perplexing, and we have had the greatest responsibility; yet we have enjoyed the work even more than that of the two previous years that we have spent with you. The time has gone by so swiftly that it seems only yesterday that we came to be with you.

The most important thing that we have to report is that there have been souls finding God during the entire year in practically all of our churches. The evangelistic note seems to increase all over our district. Our established churches generally have from two to three campaigns each year. Many of our churches have put on home missionary campaigns. We have kept up the evangelistic work outside of the regular churches the year round. There has not been any time during the year that we have not had meetings going in new fields. In all these meetings we have had souls. We are more convinced than ever that the first great business of our church is to preach the gospel fully, and get people saved and sanctified wholly, and conserve and preserve our work.

We have endeavored to keep home missionary campaigns going, from the beginning of the assembly year. During the first six months we organized two new churches or missions each month. We have been able to keep up this record during the year

There is a general good feeling over the district for Olivet College. The people have confidence in President N. W. Sanford. The treasurer, Brother Willingham, also has the confidence of our constituency. Our people seem to be more united than ever with the institution than at any other time I have known the district. It is no uncommon thing to hear people speak of sending their children to Olivet

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1926

Through the good providence of God, we bring to you our fourth report of the work on Chicago Central District for the assembly year we are now closing. This year has been one of perplexity, many problems, and intense conflict; yet we believe we can honestly say it has been the best year of the four we have spent with you

While it is a fact that there has been much material progress, yet we have made this advancement only at the point of blood and sacrifice and great effort. Our people and pastors seem

to be more anxious, in most places, to have a home where holiness can be preached than they are to have a house in which to live

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1927

It is our humble opinion that we as a district must keep up an aggressiveness along the line of home missions. When we think of our great field of eleven million people with so few vital evangelistic agencies working, we feel constrained to say that if Illinois, Wisconsin, and Chicago are ever to have a vital gospel it must come pretty much through the Church of the Nazarene

During the year we have had a Herald of Holiness campaign. I think as a district we led the way all through the campaign

I was told by the editor of the Herald of Holiness and by the circulating manager that our district deserved the credit for having agitated the rest of the districts to this very important work

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1928

We have had a splendid line of special conventions during the year. Dr. J. G. Morrison visited a number of our larger churches in the interests of foreign missions; also Brother and Sister Davis, of Southwest Mexico Mission of the Mexican District. Brother Schmelzenbach, from Africa, and Brother and Sister McHenry have visited some of the churches on our district. Sister Fitkin, national president of the W.M.S., held the Woman's Missionary Auxiliary at Georgetown, Illinois. There seems to be a stirring up and a demand for a more aggressive foreign missionary program on our district. To that end plans are being made at this assembly to hold at least six outstanding foreign missionary conventions with the strongest help possible

* * *

1929

.... The progress of the Church of the Nazarene on Chicago Central District depends possibly 90 per cent upon one thing. That one thing is men of the right vision, spirit, ability, and grace. Every good church that we have is traceable to some man. Every failure to make legitimate progress is traceable to some man. We are convinced more than ever that a preacher, as one of our leaders has said, must be able to do three things in a successful way. First, he must be able to get the people to come to church. Second, he must get the people to be spiritual. Third, he must finance the church. There may be times when one or more of these three things are impossible to accomplish; but after careful and prayerful, unbiased study of this problem for seven years as superintendent of this district, we are fully convinced that the reason for the slow progress of our work in some places is due to the fact that we do not have men who can get the people and keep them, who can make the people spiritual and who can keep them spiritual, and who can finance the proposition

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1930

We are so glad that the Lord in His good providence has permitted us to bring to you our eighth report of our work as district superintendent of the Chicago Central District. The past year we believe we can say without hesitation has been the best year of our life, personally and otherwise We have always started every year for the last eight years on our knees; and we are glad to report that in the midst of struggles, perplexities, and so on, we have made some progress spiritually, personally The new census will show approximately one hundred twenty-three million people in America, eleven million of which are on the Chicago Central District, almost one-tenth of the total; also out of the 123,000,000 only 50,000,000 of the U.S. are identified with any church, either Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish -- that is, two out of five, or 75,000,000 in America and six or seven million in Chicago Central District. There are multiplied thousands who never darken church doors, who have no Christ, no Bible, no loving God. Will we, the most highly professing and most supposedly aggressive church of the twentieth century, sit idly by while millions are going to Christless graves and eternal hell? "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Judgment must begin at the house of God

* * *

1931

We are now in the midst with the rest of our denomination to increase the subscription list of the Herald of Holiness to 40,000. Many of our churches already have gone over the top by getting one-half of their membership, but we feel that in this district assembly we must give attention to making some advance plans whereby every church and pastor will get behind the Herald of Holiness campaign and never stop until he is sure his church has a list coming in equal to one-half his church's membership

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1932

The slogan for the district during the year has been "Deeper devotion and more aggressive evangelism." This high and most worthy slogan has been given careful and due consideration; and there have been more prayer and Bible reading, both among the preachers and the people, than at any previous time during our history. All-night prayer meetings, days of prayer and fasting have been characteristic throughout the entire district. This, we believe, accounts more than anything else for the splendid spirit of the raising of our budgets and the fact that our churches generally are in a very satisfactory condition financially with very few exceptions

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1933

We feel that a special word should be said concerning the great state of Wisconsin. The outlook was never so promising We have one of the finest groups of people in that state of anywhere in our denomination. We have, I think, about twenty-two places where we have formal organizations and six hundred to seven hundred Nazarenes and some fine church property. The truth about the matter is there have been more real activity and encouraging response to our operations in that district this year than at any time in our history

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1934

Wisconsin -- This part of our district has shown the most aggressive attitude in the last eighteen months of any time in our history. We have a very fine people in Wisconsin. They are very loyal in every way. We have always felt that as soon as we can get a thousand Nazarenes in Wisconsin we should have a district up there. We are working to that end

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1935

The general slogan for our district for the last twelve months has been: Holiness, Possess It, Live It -- And Proclaim It. The second blessing properly so called is receiving, we believe, in every way an enthusiastic push and emphasis never before known on the district

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1936

Dr. J. W. Goodwin said in the closing minutes of our recent General Assembly: "Sixty thousand new Nazarenes this quadrennium" -- which means an increase of about 50 per cent in our membership during the next four years; that would mean 3,500 more in Illinois

We can precipitate a revival in Illinois that will make ourselves felt in every nook and corner among these 8,000,000 souls; so I would say let our slogan be Souls, souls, souls at any cost. Let us say we will have old-fashioned revivals in every part of the state of Illinois or die; and if we do that, everything else will come along all right

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1937

The trouble is not in this age; the trouble is not in our doctrine, or our church polity. The question is: Can we generate within the hearts and minds of our ministry a passionate spirit that is hot enough to awaken our laymen and make them hot enough until they will preach a gospel that should precipitate or start a revival in this age? It's the shining face from the passionate heart

that will burn through the rottenness, the corruption, the sin, of this age; and also the same thing will awaken sometimes a rather sleepy Nazarene crowd

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1938

.... The world is sick and tired of dead ecclesiasticism. What it wants is something that has the anointing of the Holy Ghost on it, something that has fire that burns, and something that can save a poor old lost sinner

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1939

Another new matter that we have taken on this year has been the girls' and boys' camps. Considerable effort was made to get an attendance, and it was beyond our expectation. There were 288 boys and girls at Olivet from June 26 over July 4

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1940

I suppose that it is commonly admitted that the one thing that held the center of the stage very much in the last two months was the Olivet Nazarene College. After the fire November 19 we have endeavored to keep up and go along with the Board of Trustees in all plans for the disposing of the property at Olivet in the old location

The churches and pastors and everyone have co-operated. I think we will raise the needed money throughout the zone, as well as the money that we are supposed to raise on the district to put the school in a very fine shape early this fall.

Dr. A. L. Parrott has put his very life and blood into putting this matter across, and he deserves tremendous commendation for his good work

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1941

I have been superintendent on this district long enough to know that our preachers and their families will literally die for our cause. I see more than one spend his last nickel of insurance and then wear secondhand clothes to plant our church, and this has not been done only by the small places but by many in the larger places. I have seen some of our leaders die penniless. We should do everything we can to take care of these men and women who are dying for our cause. Let us look after our ministers' temporal welfare, and God will reward us for it

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1942

As a Sunday school is the greatest educational process in our denomination with our people from the cradle to the grave, we are so glad that our church board put on its most aggressive Sunday-school program. Dr. A. S. London and wife were with us for fourteen weeks and we stressed the improvement of our teachers, the increasing of our attendance, and the saving of our pupils

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1943

.... And now we come to the dividing of the district. That is the right thing for us to do. I have thought the matter over and over, spent sleepless nights and days in thought and meditation, and I have made the best recommendations that I know in what I think is best for God's cause

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1944

Have Revivals -- Evangelize every way, through Sunday schools, youth services, our colleges, visitation, tracts, radio, personal work, good advertising, holiness conventions, long-siege revivals, home mission campaigns, old-fashioned altar services. Here are the revival essentials:

1. Humbling ourselves before God.
2. Making adjustments with one another.
3. Complete separation from worldliness.
4. Soul travail in prayer.
5. Home visitation and personal work.
6. Attractive advertising.
7. Inspiring, uplifting songs.
8. Earnest, rugged holiness preaching.
9. Old-fashioned altar services.
10. Spiritual life and freedom.

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1945

When T. H. Agnew lay dying, I went to see him. His parting words were, "Chalfant, you're alive, and you're boisterous; don't you try to be anything else." He said, "You press the battle, and keep red-hot and straight." So all down the way, I've had encouraging words from our general superintendents, from people everywhere to stick to the old track and the old-fashioned way

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1946

The unlearned fishermen had the Great Teacher; but above all, they had the great passion and the ingenuity and uniqueness of their day and generation. So the right type and the right kind of preaching is our greatest need. Here are the suggestions:

1. Reproachless in our morals.
2. Sound in doctrine.
3. Determined to seek and find God's will.

Along with this, today's fisher of men must:

1. Keep up his prayer life.
2. Be studious.
3. Work hard.
4. Make up his mind to be loyal and keep loyal to every interest of our denomination.

* * *

1947

It was during this year, as you all well know, that Morris, Margaret, and Billy Chalfant went to Africa; and after they got there the fourth person, David Morris, appeared on the scene to gladden their hearts. The details of this story are well known generally to about everyone and do not need to be enlarged upon. But suffice it to say that the entire Chalfant family greatly appreciates the unusual and magnanimous contributions that the district, through the pastors, people, and W.F.M. S. have given in their money and prayers to land these children safely in Africa. So we say a thousand thanks to you all. The latest reports are that Morris is preaching with his old-time vigor and having souls at the altar, and that little Billy wants to dress like the Africans with no clothes. Morris reports that he is rising at four-thirty each morning and praying for two hours

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1948

.... I felt a year ago this last July that the district should be divided. I wrote down all the places where they needed church buildings and parsonages where we now have organizations. There were 103 propositions. I said, That's twice too much for one man, so we'll divide the district in a year. Dr. Williamson said to me, "Brother Chalfant, it doesn't seem like the people are very willing to do that." But we thought it over and talked it over for a year, and that's what I think ought to be done

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1949

.... If I had any one thing that I would tell you that has impressed me more than another in the last twelve months, it would be that God is with the Church of the Nazarene, and I believe we have had our very best year this year. It is pretty much because we have depended upon God more -- emphasized holiness more -- and put first the great outstanding objective of our denomination, "The Saving and Sanctifying of Souls," through a ministry of second-blessing holiness and because we have stood for the standards of our church -- have also lived unselfishly and promoted our cause unselfishly, when it comes to the direct interest of the district, which will show up in this report

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1950

Anyone who will think soberly and sincerely will know that we're in the very crux of the world's greatest outstanding moment. Eternal verities are before us. Forty million deaths each year, 109,589 each day, 4,562 each hour, and 76 each minute. And two-thirds of these people never heard of the gospel of Christ. And in the words of the ancient Jeremiah, "Is it nothing to you?" Eddie Rickenbacker, of great air fame, said that World War III, if entered in a full-fledged way, will cost a trillion dollars. And someone has gone to the pains to figure this out and tells us that a trillion is more than all the minutes since Christ was born. The wealth of the world is said to be four trillions. What are we Nazarenes going to do around Chicago and around the world? I believe in my heart of hearts, after studiously and carefully and almost distressingly living continually with John Wesley and his Journals of Life, that we have something to offer this world. What is it?

It is first and second blessing holiness. It is the only thing that ever has worked successfully in the woes of life. It is the only thing that brings genuine heart satisfaction and gives proper bearing in soul satisfaction in the time in which we live. In other words, holiness will be our message not suppression, not counteraction, not intellectual culture, but just good old, plain, first and second blessing holiness. I'm of the opinion that if we stick right there and press it, in every department of our church, by every official of our church from janitors to general superintendents, that is our hope!

It is always a great pleasure for me to work on the Chicago Central District. I enjoy my work, I enjoy the people, I live with my work day and night. It is a part of me. I don't want it to be otherwise. I enjoy my family, but I enjoy working with the Church of the Nazarene and Almighty God. Life is so short, and how we do need to be awake all the time! So again, I thank you for your many, many kindnesses to me and for taking care of me so wonderfully. The whole family, Frederick and Martha and Linda Delores, Morris and Margaret and Billy and David in Africa, Betty Jean, and Mrs. Chalfant join with me in saying, "Ten thousand blessings on you."

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08 -- HUMOROUS HAPPENINGS

I have had a number of humorous happenings along life's journey. Some of them were not so humorous at the time as they were later. Bear with me while I do a bit of reminiscing.

I recall the day I matriculated at Old Kingswood College. Dr. J. W. Hughes, the president, was in charge of the morning chapel service. He told the students that there was a new member present, and he wanted him to come forward to be introduced. I walked down before the chapel crowd and heard Dr. Hughes ask, "What is your name?"

I replied in staccato, machine-gun fashion, "Chalfant, Chalfant, E. O. Chalfant."

He asked me again, and I told him again. He hesitated a moment and then handed me a card and whispered for me to write my name. My writing back then was just as good as it is now. I wrote the name and handed him the card. He studied it for a moment and then suddenly raised his eyes to the student body and said, "Everybody who is glad to have this young man present say 'Amen.'"

After college days were passed, I became a burning evangelist. I was closely associated with Brother John Hatfield, the Hoosier evangelist. We were at a camp meeting one Saturday afternoon. Father Reynolds, an old-time Quaker, had been a chronic seeker at our camp for many years. That Saturday afternoon he came into the tabernacle and proceeded directly to the altar and knelt down in the deep new straw.

Brother John was at the pulpit and he started praying, "Lord, kill this old Quaker. Kill him, Lord; let him die." He had not prayed but a few sentences until the dear brother fell over in the straw and began to cry, "I am dead, I am dead, Lord." At once, Brother Hatfield climbed over the altar and started pulling back the straw and said, "We'll bury him right now."

Brother Hatfield and I rolled the old man into the place we had made and we covered him up with a big pile of straw. Shortly, the man arose from the straw pile with chaff all over his clothes and face. He was shouting, "I've got the blessing." After that, he lived a victorious life.

On another occasion, I was conducting a revival meeting in a certain church in the Midwest. I had a seeker at the altar who seemed to be in a state of apathy. Nothing else seemed to

move him, so I decided to try something that would. I got behind him and prayed and kicked him. I kept on kicking him until he came to himself and jumped to his feet, shouting the victory. Dr. T. W. Willingham was there that day, and he still likes to tell about the time I kicked a man into the Kingdom.

I also recall a meeting in the spring of 1900 where a friend of mine could seemingly make no progress at the altar. In my desperation, I caught him by the shoulders and shook him till his teeth rattled. When I stopped, he had good victory.

While these were drastic methods that worked, I would not advise any young preacher to try them.

I recall another incident, during a meeting in central Indiana. One night I preached against lodges, and the town became stirred. The next day a group of men saw me and told me that they were going to have a hanging. They asked me if the statements they had heard were true. I looked at their faces and looked at the rope and told them that they were. They took me down town and persisted in breathing out threatening words. I asked them if I could pray before they put the rope around my neck. They granted my request, and I stormed the heavens. I prayed down so much glory that God blessed me, and when I opened my eyes the men were all gone.

During one of my pastorates, I had just completed our new church building. The stained-glass windows and the new pews seemed to hold the people in reserve. I stood behind that new pulpit and pointed my finger at them and said, "You folks used to shout around here; and if you don't start shouting again, I'm going out here and step in the deepest mudhole I can find and come back in this church and walk on every seat."

They knew I meant business, and they started shouting then and there -- and they have been shouting ever since.

During the course of my first pastorate, I learned that an avowed hypocrite took pleasure in testifying in the meeting. I was a young and fearless preacher, and I cornered him and told him that he must not do that until he prayed through. He told me that I was a young man and that it was none of my business, but I told him that he was only half right -- I was a young man, and it was my business whether he testified in my service or not.

A few weeks later, he stood in the midst of a service and said he was going to testify. I pointed my finger at him and said, "You filthy, low down, black-hearted old hypocrite -- sit down!"

He stared in utter amazement, his mouth gaped open, and he sat down.

There have been a number of humorous happenings since I came on the district. One night I was so preoccupied with the burdens of the district that I parked in front of a church in Danville, reached for my brief case, and hurried in. I walked down the aisle, went to the platform, and seated myself. I placed my brief case beside me and looked up at the crowd. I looked surprised. They looked more surprised, for I was in the wrong church. It wasn't even a Nazarene church!!

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09 -- SOME SERIOUS SCENES

Into every life "some rain must fall." Every life is punctuated with serious scenes. As I look back across the years, I can see how the hand of God has been on me in trying hours.

On October 22, 1882, my father and mother were out milking the cows. They left my brother and me at the house. I was only a few months old, but my older brother says that the burning logs in the old fireplace attracted me. The logs were held in place by large andirons. We used to call them dog irons. On this particular evening the fire had burned down to a bed of living coals. The excessive heat of the hickory logs made the dog irons red hot. I was seven months old and the glow must have attracted me. I crawled near and took hold of one of the dog irons and fell with my face against it. My older brother, who was only four years old, pulled me away from the fire. Both hands were severely burned, as was my face. Only God's providential intervention saved my life. I have carried the scars of that accident through all these years, and they are a constant reminder of God's care.

On April 1, 1886, my mother sat in front of the old log house in southern Indiana. Memphis, who was now seven years old, sat on her right side, and I sat on the left. A great cyclone cloud was boiling up in the west. Everyone suddenly sensed danger. My father and the two hired men were bringing in the three teams of horses from the newly plowed fields. They rushed the horses into the log barn and left the harness on. Then they hurried to the house and found that Mother had taken the two boys into the house and placed us between the feather bed and the straw tick in the front room.

It was not an instant too soon, for the cyclone reduced the house to shambles. The two hired men were blown into a cherry tree about ten rods from the house. My father was pinned beneath the falling logs and had to be released by the neighbors. Mother was not hurt. When the storm subsided, they searched the wreckage to find my brother and me. The old feather bed and the straw tick were unmoved by the storm. It was only by a miracle that we escaped injury.

Another serious scene that comes to mind centers around Thanksgiving time in 1917. Dr. U. E. Harding and Brother Elmer Anderson were coming to hold a missionary convention at Muncie, Indiana. Because of the inclement weather we decided to use the old base-burner stove in the front room of our house. The next morning I was suddenly awakened by the red-hot glare of the stove. I was surprised to find that the ceiling paper had dropped down on the stove and the pipe had fallen. It was nothing short of miraculous that the house did not burn, for we learned later that the timbers around the flue had been on fire, but they had gone out. Providence protected us. John Wesley said, "He who notes a providence will never fail to have a providence to note."

Another serious scene took place on July 10, 1941. My son Fred felt that he must honor his country, and he entered the armed forces. That same scene was repeated in a myriad of homes around the world in the ensuing years. I prayed for him, as I would travel up and down the district. I knew that his new environment could be hard on his Christian experience. When he told me that

he needed a Christian buddy, I prayed to that end; and the Lord sent Arthur Brown, a young Nazarene from South Dakota, to the same camp, and he and Fred became close friends. They stayed together through Camp Grant and Camp Barkley for two years. Finally our son was assigned to overseas duty and he told us good-bye. He went through some of the hardest fighting in Italy, France, and Belgium.

I was in a campaign with the late Dr. H. V. Miller in Peoria, Illinois. After the service, my other son Morris came to see me; and he was accompanied by the Rev. Walter Morris, pastor of the college church, and Dr. Leist, the business manager of the college. They told me that they had a telegram for me, saying that our son was missing in action. I remember the news struck me like a thousand bolts of lightning. But in a while I regained composure and told them I would be all right. I declared that I would trust God. Some time later I received another telegram with glad news -- it told us that Fred was all right and would soon be home. I am thankful that he was spared, but I am more thankful that he was ready to go. Sometimes our human love makes us more concerned to pray for our loved ones to be spared than to pray that they may be ready for eternity.

My other son Morris was called to preach while he was rather young. He told me that he wanted to serve on my district, and I told him that I would first have to get someone who wanted him. He said if I would give him a chance that someone would want him. I finally placed him in Havana, Illinois. He did good work, and I later moved him to the little city of Eureka, Illinois, where he built a basement church. He came to me and said that someone had to supervise that building program, and he sought my advice. I said, "My dear boy, what you need to do is to take off your dignity and take off your starched shirt and put on some overalls and go to that lot and mix mud and carry brick and supervise that job." And he did that very thing.

Some time later he came to me and told me that God had called him to Africa. I told him to make sure, but he answered that he had been sure for some years. So he made his application to the General Board and it was approved, and the message finally came that reservations had been made for him to sail in the month of May, 1947.

We had the farewell service on the eleventh of May in Danville, Illinois, in the afternoon. It was hard to tell my son and his family good-by; but my family was all on the altar, and I still feel honored to think that God would use one of my boys on a foreign field.

I shall turn back a number of years for the last scene. It was January 27, 1926, when I had been summoned to my mother's bedside. While I was kneeling by her bed, she told me that she saw the angels and the spires of the city. She testified to the goodness and keeping power of God. She wanted me to pray with her before she left, and I did. I was thankful she had always been a good Christian mother. I was glad that she had been of the radical stripe. After I had prayed, she placed her cold, death-stricken hands on my head and prayed for me and asked the Lord to help me to live and preach what she had always stood for. Then she reached over and placed her hand in mine and said, "Everett, be true."

Those were the last words I heard her say, but they have never gotten away from me. I am still thankful that the victory she knew in life held good when the shades of life were drawn.

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10 -- FORTY YEARS ON THE FIRING LINE

If I could live my life again, I would still live it for Jesus and the Church of the Nazarene. It will soon be my golden anniversary of preaching -- in February, 1952. It took about ten years for me to see the beginning of the pattern for my preaching life. But for some forty years I have been actively engaged on the firing line. The work has been difficult, there have been multitudinous disappointments, and the battle has often seemed hard. But I want to testify that God has stood by me and brought me through to this hour.

I am thankful that I was engaged in intensified holiness evangelism. That made a good foundation for the work that was to follow. I am thankful for my years as a Nazarene pastor. I pressed the battle and stayed on the firing line.

For nearly thirty years the Lord has seen fit to let me serve as superintendent of the Chicago Central District. These have been good years because He has helped us. I have had some temptations in life, but I have never been tempted to leave the church nor desert my post in the firing line. I want to do the best I can with all my ransomed powers to fight sin and continue building our great church. Every ounce of energy I have is dedicated to that end.

If the Lord would let me choose my lot, I would choose to die on the firing line and not behind it. A number of years ago I asked Dr. R. T. Williams how he could stand the burdens of his position. He replied, "I am not standing it; I am dying by inches." And that is just what he did. I must do no less than that.

But the thought of names like Williams and Chapman, Goodwin, Reynolds, Miller, Nease, and others seem as lonely as space against the distant sky. These were Christian warriors who fought a valiant fight. Theirs now is the victory, for they stand with trumps in hands on the walls of Zion. They wear crowns of life eternal. They were reluctant to lay down their arms -- good soldiers always are. But when the call came, they ascended to glory and even now they feast with the King!

Often in these late years my eyes and thoughts turn toward the city wherein they dwell.

One sweetly solemn thought
Comes to me o'er and o'er:
I am nearer home today
Than I have ever been before.

I am glad that I have stayed on the firing line and have stayed in the thick of the battle. I rejoice that I have always preached holiness. He has led me and He has kept me and He shall continue to do so until I make the crossing. I know remaining years in the vineyard are numbered. Soon He shall call; and when He does, I am ready to go home. I have remembered the words of my sainted mother before she slipped through the gates of glory, "Everett, be true." I have kept true -- true to God, to the church, to the souls of men, and to my mother.

His assignment for me has not been easy; I often wonder why He gave me the task of the superintendency with its burdens, tears, and mental taxations. But I am glad that He directed me in that place of service. He has given me a glorious constituency, such wonderful people who have stood by me, and who shall continue to do so for the remainder of life's little day.

I have no fear of death. It is the door to heaven for me. When it comes -- and it shall then you may know that I have simply dropped the cross to claim the crown. For, "I have fought a good fight." Soon I will have "finished my course." Yes, "I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

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THE END