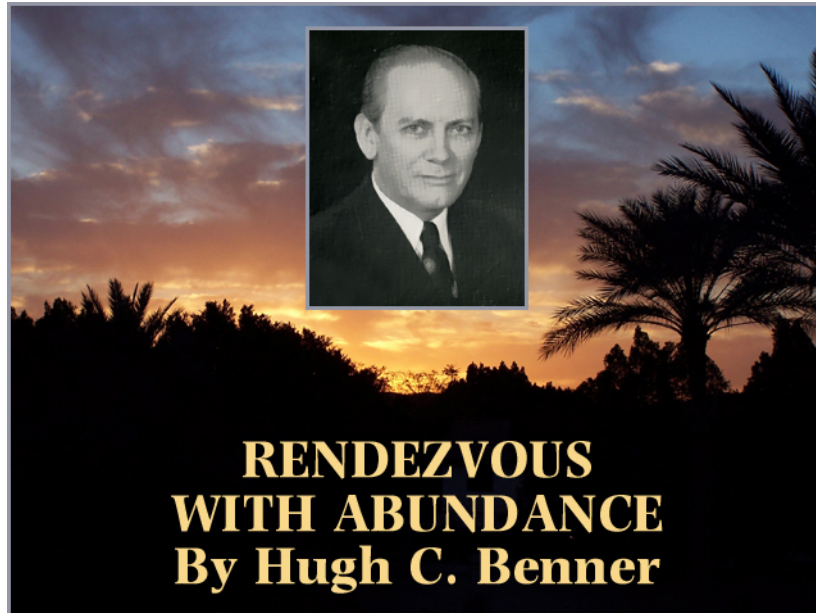


**All Rights Reserved By HDM For This Digital Publication
Copyright 1993 -- 2006 Holiness Data Ministry**

**Duplication of this disc (CD or DVD) by any means is forbidden,
and copies of individual files must be made in accordance with
the restrictions stated in the B4UCopy.txt file on this disc.**

**RENDEZVOUS WITH ABUNDANCE
By Hugh C. Benner**



**Beacon Hill Press
Kansas City, Missouri**

**Copyright 1958
Beacon Hill Press**

First Printing 1958

Printed In The United States Of America

*** * * * ***

**Digital Edition 09/22/06
By Holiness Data Ministry**

*** * * * ***

CONTENTS

**About This Digital Edition
Book Jacket Text
Foreword**

- 01 -- Rendezvous With Abundance**
- 02 -- Our Day Of Destiny**
- 03 -- The Spirit Of The Pioneers**
- 04 -- The Program For The Church (From The Prayer Of Jesus)**
- 05 -- "This Is War!"**

* * * * *

ABOUT THIS DIGITAL EDITION

During extensive searches at the U.S. Copyright Search Site done on September 22, 2006, no evidence was found of a current copyright on the printed edition of this book. Searches were done on all discovered listings for Beacon Hill Press (nearly 500 of them), and searches were also done under the Author's Name and Book Title. Thus, not having found a current copyright listed, HDM herewith sends forth this digital edition, to which we claim copyright, being willing to discontinue publication if it is later discovered that there is a current copyright on the printed book.

HDM also herewith notifies the reader that this digital edition may not be re-published without our express, written permission, while we do share this edition with the Northwest Nazarene University Wesley Center for their own re-publication.

* * * * *

BOOK JACKET TEXT

RENDEZVOUS WITH ABUNDANCE

"America has had a rendezvous with abundance." With these dramatic words a noted commentator and newspaperman summarized conditions in our country. Abundance of agricultural products, warehouses filled with the product of the factories-America lies virtually immersed in the abundance of her material possessions.

In RENDEZVOUS WITH ABUNDANCE, Dr. Benner pictures the vast spiritual resources now available to us -- "The Church of the Nazarene has had a rendezvous with abundance."

The Abundance of Our Heritage. This denomination did not rise as a protest movement nor on a negative basis. It had a sound historical context. While our

history as a group lies within the twentieth century, we are rooted in those doctrines held throughout the centuries.

The Abundance of Our Present Possessions. In faith, in vital Christian experience, in spiritual freedom, in tested patterns, in balanced attitudes, in consistent growth, and in unity we possess abundance indeed.

The Abundance of Our Opportunity. An adequate working force, a message the world needs, broad indications of spiritual hunger, and open doors of opportunity provide abundance of opportunity.

The Abundance in God. The promises of God, the providences of God, the resources of God make up indeed a staggering abundance. With all of this the Church of the Nazarene has a rendezvous.

Other sections discuss with equal courage and appeal:

Our Day Of Destiny
The Spirit Of The Pioneers
The Program For The Church (From The Prayer Of Jesus)
"This Is War!"

* * *

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hugh C. Benner pastored churches in Santa Monica, California; Spokane, Washington; and Kansas City, Missouri. In 1945 he was elected the first president of the Nazarene Theological Seminary. In 1952 he was elected to the highest position in the church, the office of general superintendent.

* * * * *

FOREWORD

The Church of the Nazarene was organized officially in 1908. Three years later I became a member of that denomination. Thus I have been a part of this movement during forty-seven of the fifty years of the history of this group.

Relatively, not too many have had the opportunity of participating in the first half-century of the founding and growth of a new denomination. It has been for me a thrilling and blessed experience. With but one exception, I have known personally all the general superintendents of the church. Through the years I have had some contact with practically all the other general and district leaders, as well as hundreds of pastors and evangelists. It has been my privilege to observe and share

in the development of the church from 10,000 members to the present total of 300,000.

With the advent of the Golden Anniversary year of our Zion, as one who has witnessed practically the whole of her history, I have felt it appropriate, in this, my first book-length publication, to put in permanent form something of my recollections and impressions of the earlier days of the Church of the Nazarene, my evaluation of our present situation, and my vision of the will of God for us as we look toward the future.

If these pages can serve to promote among members and friends a better understanding of the origins, heritage, mission, and challenge of the people called Nazarenes, and can bring some measure of glory to Christ, I shall be satisfied.

H. C. B.

*** * * * ***

01 -- RENDEZVOUS WITH ABUNDANCE

America has had a rendezvous with abundance." With these dramatic words a noted commentator and newspaperman summarized conditions in our country. In support of this declaration he cited the huge surpluses of agricultural products stored in a wide variety of places--granaries and elevators overflowing, Liberty ships filled with grain and anchored in our harbors, even vast quantities of wheat piled on the ground and covered with canvas or other protective materials.

For this rendezvous with abundance Americans should be humbly thankful, for one needs to travel but a short distance from our boundaries or shores to find great scarcity and appalling need. It is well to be reminded that in vast areas of the world the most ordinary level of American living would constitute extreme luxury.

Yes, America has had a rendezvous with abundance, but our purpose here is not to deal with economic prosperity. Hearing this striking phrase, it was well-nigh inevitable that an enthusiastic adherent of the Church of the Nazarene should transfer this idea into the realm of the spiritual and denominational, and declare, "The Church of the Nazarene has had a rendezvous with abundance."

Five decades have passed since the Church of the Nazarene was founded. During that time hundreds of thousands have been led providentially into our fellowship, many of whom, especially in more recent years, have had little or no contact with the earlier days of our movement. Therefore it seems both appropriate and wise to consider the Church of the Nazarene in terms of character, mission, and development, that our members and friends may have an intelligent concept of the people called Nazarenes.

When we emphasize this rendezvous with abundance, it is not in any spirit of pride, conceit, or bigoted sectarianism. Rather it is with a sense of humility and gratitude to God, for to anyone reacting otherwise should be propounded the question which the Apostle Paul asked of the Corinthians, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive?" We of this generation are the fortunate recipients of the sound contribution of our fathers and of the manifest blessings of God through the years.

When a rendezvous with abundance is suggested relative to the Church of the Nazarene, probably the first reaction of many will be one of at least mild skepticism, if not of positive denial. Such an attitude may well proceed from questions relative to denominational size, wealth, educational advantages, and cultural levels. Obviously the Church of the Nazarene is not one of the larger denominations. It is readily admitted that we do not rank among those groups with a high percentage of wealthy members. On the average, many other denominations can lay claim to higher intellectual training and a greater degree of human culture.

But in divine values, in those elements that are basic in the spiritual realm, in the things that most vitally concern the heart of God, the Church of the Nazarene is rich beyond computation. Truly we have had a blessed and glorious rendezvous with abundance. Again, in Paul's words to the Corinthians, it may truly be said, "All things are yours."

I. THE ABUNDANCE OF OUR HERITAGE

No denomination has received from God a richer or more adequate heritage than that which is possessed by the Church of the Nazarene.

1. Positive Origins

It is of major importance and significance that the origins of the Church of the Nazarene are positive. This denomination, in the beginning, was not a protest movement. We did not originate on a negative basis. Those early Nazarenes were not fighting anyone, nor were they committed to harsh, legalistic attitudes. For this we may be devoutly thankful, for negative, legalistic origins, regardless of the sincerity involved, always set definite and narrow limits to the possibilities of growth and strength for any group.

The origins of the Church of the Nazarene involved fundamental, positive elements. Principal among these were aggressive evangelism, and entire sanctification as a second definite experience of divine grace. Certainly these are not marginal, secondary, incidental issues. In the midst of a period when many were turning from evangelism to mere educational processes, and when the preaching of scriptural holiness was declining rapidly, hundreds of proponents of these issues found themselves being crowded out of the older denominations, and

to preserve their spiritual life and integrity banded themselves together. Many such groups finally merged to form the basis of the Church of the Nazarene.

There have been and are those who, to support some personal idea or emphasis, will claim negative and legalistic origins for our church, but one has only to listen to them to know that they had no personal contact with the early Nazarenes. Our Nazarene founders were not fundamentally against something; they were for something. Positive elements were primary; negative elements were secondary.

2. Sound Historical Context

The historical roots of the Church of the Nazarene are deep -- deep as the Church of Jesus Christ itself. While our history as a group lies within the twentieth century, our antecedents reach back to the first century. The fact is that the Church of the Nazarene is a traditional church, with nothing new or novel to present to the world.

The doctrines of the Church of the Nazarene are the orthodox doctrines held by the Church through the centuries. We have presented no new or strange doctrine. Every doctrinal tenet of our group has been held and propagated long before we came into existence as a church.

Much has been said of our organization and polity, which represent a fusion of congregational and episcopal elements. While it was inevitable that the balance of the elements of congregational action and administrative supervision in the Church of the Nazarene would be unique, it still remains a fact that these elements were blended in one form or another long before the organization of the Church of the Nazarene.

The sacraments? We have offered no new sacrament. Nazarenes have accepted and administered the two Christian sacraments approved most widely by Christian groups: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Nazarene standards of Christian living were not originated in this century. Rather, they represent the standards accepted by godly people of all the Christian era. We have only given the stamp of approval to those attitudes established by the Word of God and supported by the Christian conscience of millions who determined to "live godly in Christ Jesus." And it should be understood, with special emphasis, that an individual can maintain the true standards of the Church of the Nazarene and live a normal, happy, full, and effective life. These standards, properly understood and humbly maintained, never will make a Nazarene strange, odd, or eccentric. Furthermore, whatever God requires of a Nazarene for entrance into heaven, He will require of all others, for "God is no respecter of persons," not only in terms of advantages, but also in terms of requirements.

And what of techniques? The same principle obtains. Nazarenes use no techniques of organization or operation that have not been used by others, and prior to our denominational existence. Morning worship, evening evangelistic service, midweek prayer meeting, Sunday school, missionary society, young people's society, tithing, special offerings, public evangelism, personal evangelism, the altar or mourners' bench, fasting, cottage prayer meeting, anointing and prayer for physical healing, the family altar -- all of these have been the techniques of Christian life and service long before the founding of the Church of the Nazarene.

Very naturally the question arises, "Why, then, the Church of the Nazarene?" Simply this--there was need for a group who would infuse a new spirit and a new emphasis into the traditional elements of the Christian Church, with special reference to aggressive evangelism based upon instantaneous, crisis experiences, and to entire sanctification, or heart purity, as a second definite work of divine grace wrought in the heart of the believer subsequent to regeneration.

Certainly the Church of the Nazarene has had a rendezvous with abundance in her heritage. We possess the glorious wealth of positive, fundamental origins and of deep historical roots. We preach and practice nothing new or novel. Our foundations are sound.

II. THE ABUNDANCE OF OUR PRESENT POSSESSIONS

I. Faith

Nazarenes believe God and believe His Word. Believing the God of the Bible, it is normal and easy to accept the revelation of God. Great saints are produced, not by questioning God's Word, but by accepting it; not by criticizing it, but by obeying it. Because Nazarenes believe the Bible, our preachers need not defend a text; they just preach it. How grateful to God we should be for this wealth of faith! How thankful our preachers should be that some considerable portion of their congregations is not inclined to be skeptical concerning God's revealed Word!

2. Vital Christian Experience

Again, Nazarenes accept the idea of definite experiences of divine grace. We accept the scriptural experience of the new birth, or regeneration, by which, through faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the sinner can be justified, forgiven, in a moment of time and made a child of God. Nazarenes accept the scriptural experience of entire sanctification, whereby, as the result of complete consecration, accompanied by appropriating faith in the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ, the heart is made pure and the individual is baptized with the Holy Spirit. Because our people accept the fact of these instantaneous experiences, our preachers need to waste no time defending them; they need only to proclaim them -- pardon for every sinner and purity for every Christian believer -- and call seekers.

3. Spiritual Freedom

Ranking high in the list of elements of wealth and abundance which we as Nazarenes possess is our freedom in the Spirit. The typical Nazarene service is one in which the people, as well as the minister, have a perfect right to participate by way of audible response at any time. We believe this to be in keeping with the spirit and practice of the Apostolic Church. Through the years we have enjoyed those "seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," when the blessed Holy Spirit would move in a special manner upon the people, resulting in spontaneous response through song, testimony, and shouts of spiritual victory. In one normal Nazarene service more "amens" will be heard than would be heard in many churches during an entire year, except for those written in the ritual. We rejoice and glory in the riches of spiritual freedom possessed in such abundance by the Church of the Nazarene.

4. Tested Patterns

We are rich in the abundance of tested patterns. Obviously this could not obtain in the earlier years, for there had to be a time of development with some measure of experimentation as our founders and early leaders sought to find the organization and polity best suited to our purposes and mission. But our days of uncertainty and experimentation are far behind us. We complete a half-century of history with a record of no fundamental change in polity for at least thirty years.

5. Balanced Attitudes

In the good providence of God the Church of the Nazarene has maintained an effective balance, avoiding extremes. In this our group has simply followed the example and pattern laid down by our founders. Many times through the years there have been those who would have turned the church to some tangent, some secondary idea, some personal notion. But as many times the people called Nazarenes have refused to be turned from the main course of our God-given mission and spirit.

In the earlier days of railroading, when braking mechanisms were not reliable, there were spur tracks at points of danger for runaway trains. At a certain signal from the engineer the switch would be opened and the train would leave the main line to travel the ascending spur until it stopped. On the spur the train really was not going anywhere -- just stopping. From time to time there have been attempts to switch the Church of the Nazarene to some incidental spur track, under the guise of saving the church from some imagined or personally diagnosed peril. But at such junctures the General Assembly has taken a good look at the claims of such an individual or group -- and then "spiked the switch." Hence today the Church of the Nazarene continues to speed down the "main line" of God's original call. And those of us who remember the early days are assured that Nazarenes of our generation

are committed to the same vision, the same mission, the same purpose, of those of the first decade of our history.

Not least significant is the fact that the balance of the Church of the Nazarene has placed a minimum of limitations upon our ministry. We are not forced to spend valuable time on matters which never will save or damn anyone. We can give ourselves as preachers to the positive proclamation of the great truths of spiritual life and death. It is this wonderful, God-given, Spirit-directed balance that accounts in a large measure for our growth. We should thank God fervently that we have been able to avoid extremes that would hamper our effectiveness as a holiness church. Herein is a major element of denominational wealth, of our rendezvous with abundance.

6. Consistent Growth

The Church of the Nazarene has grown in numerical strength every year for fifty years. There have been no recessions or retrogressions. In the name of Christ and scriptural holiness, we have grown stronger every year. Through two world wars and a major financial depression the Church of the Nazarene has made numerical progress, until today, by the grace and help of God, the people called Nazarenes represent the largest organized group of Wesleyan holiness people.

7. Unity

The Church of the Nazarene comes to the fiftieth year in a glorious spirit of holy unity: In any group of 300,000 people, it is inevitable that some will be unhappy with policies and personnel. In some cases such reactions result from sincere, if unwarranted, conclusions or criticisms. In other instances the problem lies in the realm of what the late Dr. R. T. Williams, general superintendent, termed "frustrated ambition," and what Dr. J. H. Jowett called "the infirmity of ambition." But any attempt on either score to sunder the unity of the Church of the Nazarene has failed, so that in these fifty years no fundamental cleavage has weakened our Zion. For late proof of our unity, witness the fact that our annual Thanksgiving Offering for world-wide evangelism in 1957, with only the usual promotion among our people, brought from consecrated, loyal Nazarenes more than \$916,000. Our unity represents incomputable wealth in the spiritual realm.

Thank God for our present possessions. Surely, as we consider the faith of our Nazarenes, their acceptance of vital spiritual experience, the freedom of the Spirit which we enjoy, our tested patterns, the balance of attitudes through the years, our consistent growth, and our unity unbroken by any major disaffection during half a century, we are moved to declare again our rendezvous with abundance.

III. THE ABUNDANCE OF OUR OPPORTUNITY

1. Adequate Working Force

In the truest sense opportunity is measured by the ability to capitalize on it. This principle points up as never before the opportunity facing the Church of the Nazarene, for in the providence of God we have at our disposal an adequate working force. Our personnel, in every phase of our operations, is second to none in our history. Financially, our people are loyal and generous, having maintained for years a high ranking in per capita giving among Protestant denominations. Our equipment is the best in our history.

The auxiliary departments of our church are at their peak in effectiveness and outreach. Our institutions have long since passed the critical stage of establishment. The Nazarene Publishing House, doing a current business of approximately \$2,500,000 per year, pours out its multiplied millions of pieces of literature and music, all devoted to world evangelism and the spread of scriptural holiness.

Figuring largely in our opportunity is the significance of our Nazarene training program. In the field of formal education are the Nazarene colleges and Nazarene Theological Seminary. In the less formal area is Christian Service Training, through which every Nazarene may develop and prepare for a more effective contribution to the church and the kingdom of God.

2. A Message the World Needs

The world is filled with voices proclaiming all manner of ideas. Most of these deal with matters that are much less than primary in significance. It is thrilling and satisfying to have a message that is primary and which meets the deepest need of mankind. This the Church of the Nazarene proclaims -- a message of eternal import, and applicable to all men everywhere, under every condition, and in every place.

It is the message of full salvation through Jesus Christ. It is the message of peace with God for the sinner. It is the message of a clean heart for every Christian believer, a heart cleansed from evil dispositions, relieved of inner tensions, made happy through the sense of the Divine Presence, and made strong by the indwelling Holy Spirit. In the universal scope of this message lies a golden opportunity, for never have the benefits of scriptural holiness been more clear than in this era of frustration, insecurity, and boredom. The answer is in the regenerating and cleansing power of Jesus Christ. Every person is a prospect.

3. Broad Indications of Spiritual Hunger

The twentieth century opened with high hopes from a human standpoint. Humanism and modernism in religion became dominant in many originally evangelical groups. Great denominations swung from their original positions, giving less and less attention to vital evangelism. But war on a global scale, the rise

of godless communism, and the opening of the atomic age have blasted those early hopes, created a widespread pessimism, and generated a growing fear in the hearts of millions in all parts of the world.

The result of all this has been to cause millions to reassess the claim of God on humanity, and to become at least susceptible to the gospel message. In spite of the reaction of some that this is only a shallow, temporary, defensive attitude, it still remains true that America, as well as many other countries, is evidencing a greater religious consciousness than has been seen in fifty years. Major evangelistic efforts, including the Billy Graham Crusades operating on an unprecedented scale, have been bringing the gospel to hundreds of thousands. Whatever the limitations of such campaigns may be, the significant fact is that millions have shown an interest in the message of redemption. They have felt some measure of need of God.

Such a hunger in such an age is "made to order" for the Church of the Nazarene. Our message and method have been the same through the years. We do not have to return to evangelism; we never have turned from it. So this resurgence of interest in religion and the broad evidences of spiritual hunger present an immeasurable opportunity to the Church of the Nazarene.

4. Open Doors

While it is true that in some areas of the world it seems that doors are closing to the church and the gospel, it is also true that many doors of opportunity still stand wide open. In our own country, hundreds of communities are without a spiritual Christian witness. The forces of scriptural holiness owe to every community the glorious message of full salvation. With population increasing steadily, with the tremendous growth of most metropolitan areas, with major new housing developments in nearly every section of our country, the Church of the Nazarene faces an unprecedented home mission challenge.

And what of the situation in foreign areas? Field after field in which we are already established offers numerous wide-open doors of opportunity if we can furnish additional funds. With just a little more support, many of our missionary projects can be lifted from minimum effectiveness to a level of major achievement.

Furthermore, doors are open to the Church of the Nazarene in many countries and areas as yet untouched by any evangelistic Christian effort. Our problem is not that of finding opportunities, but of securing sufficient funds to warrant entering new fields. "The Lord of the harvest" has a right to expect of the Church of the Nazarene a devotion, a consecration, a zeal, a generosity, that will take advantage of our rendezvous with abundance in opportunity.

IV. OUR ABUNDANCE IN GOD

Far above all the abundance with which the Church of the Nazarene has been blessed in heritage, in possessions, or in opportunity, is our abundance, our unmeasured wealth in God. It is the abundance of the divinely supernatural that links the church with the infinite. Here, as in no other realm, is our rendezvous with abundance.

1. The Promises of God

Hundreds of wonderful promises glow on the sacred pages of God's Word. And not one of His good promises ever has failed. They are designed to make the people of God pure, happy, and spiritually powerful. It is well to remember that any one fundamental and comprehensive promise of God, if accepted in all its implications, is sufficient to bring a soul into a right and full relationship with God through Jesus Christ, enable him to live a life pleasing to God, and take him through the gates of the Holy City. And the promises of God to the Church are particularly meaningful. Jesus Christ himself declared, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." All that is promised to the Church generally is promised to the Church of the Nazarene. What infinite abundance! What glorious riches!

2. The Providences of God

Here is a realm in which all followers of Christ should live more fully. We need to be reminded that if we are working in the will of God we are not working alone. "We are workers together" with God. We may not see where or how He is working, but He is in the picture somewhere, foreseeing, directing, using every means to help us accomplish His blessed will in the building of the Kingdom and in winning the lost to Jesus Christ.

In boring a great tunnel through a mountain, the men seldom work from one side only. Rather, two crews of men begin at opposite ends of the project and work toward each other. For days and weeks and months and possibly years, they neither see nor hear the other crew. But as one group bore from one side, they work in the consciousness that they are not alone. And in due time they all will know the thrill of a job completed. So, if we are "boring" through a mountain of problems, indifference, and opposition, if the way seems dark and the difficulties endless, just remember that God is "boring through" from the other side and in due time we shall see and know the thrill of achievement in the divine will.

Those who have heard him tell it never will forget the moving story of divine providence told by Dr. Charles Strickland. Sent by the Church of the Nazarene, after much prayer and planning, to open a work among the Europeans of South Africa, Dr. Strickland and his family journeyed to that distant land -- only to face apparent frustration and futility. It was learned that only those groups which had secured charters prior to about 1916 were authorized or permitted to carry on religious activity in that area. It seemed that a major blunder had been made, and that the

supposed leading of God had been an entirely false impression. The situation seemed hopeless -- but not for long. A young man who had access to the government records discovered that the Church of the Nazarene was properly chartered for this work.

How could this be? In the year 1907 a man named Harmon Schmelzenbach went to South Africa to do missionary work among the natives. This was his call and he gave his life literally for the heathen of Swaziland. But Harmon Schmelzenbach had been in Africa only a brief time when he was impressed strongly that the message of scriptural holiness must eventually be preached to all people, including the Europeans in South Africa. And being a man of action, he decided to do something about it. So he saddled his horse, rode three hundred miles to Johannesburg, and secured a charter for the Church of the Nazarene. And there it lay for decades, unbeknown to officials of the church, and forgotten by officials of the country-until Charles Strickland came and needed it. The mysterious and glorious providence of God-operating nearly forty years ahead of time to prepare the way for the Church of the Nazarene among Europeans in South Africa!

No, we never work alone in the will of God. Whether in the large place or the small, whether in an established church or a home mission project, the providences of God are working consistently and persistently and effectively for us. God always is "boring through" from the other side.

Truly, the providences of God are wealth immeasurable, and they are available to the Church of the Nazarene.

3. The Resources of God

Herein is our ultimate hope. As a people we are not limited to our own planning, our own power, for at our disposal as we seek to do the will of God are the illimitable resources of our God, who "shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." We can count on Him who is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." We can live constantly in the light of the words of Jesus, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore.., and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

God never will do for us what we can do for ourselves. But when the achievement of His will demands more than we are able to produce, there is a supernatural power available. It is this element which enables the Church so to achieve that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." With the resources of God we can be full of faith, courage, and holy optimism in the face of problems and difficulties. The Church of the Nazarene has this priceless spiritual abundance with which to meet the challenge of this day.

IN CONCLUSION: THE HUMAN ELEMENT

To be completely fair with our initial idea we need to be reminded that America's rendezvous with abundance was not accidental, incidental, or automatic. The vast surpluses of grain did not "just happen." Behind it all was an immense and controlling human factor. There were human initiative, human planning, human investment, human effort, human persistence, and human harvest. Many tens of thousands of people worked, and worked hard. From the days of planting and sowing, to the hot days of harvest, they let nothing -- weariness, long hours, inconvenience, problems, weeds, pests, indifference of others, expense -- distract them or discourage them, until the harvest was completed.

Such a challenge confronts the Church. Too often we quote, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," but fail to complete the verse, "according to the power that worketh in us." The final measure of achievement is "in us." God is not about to do everything for us. We are "workers together with him." There are some things, yea, many things, which we must do if they ever are done. We can pray, and we must pray. We can witness, and we must witness. We can win souls, and we must win souls. We can bring men and women into the circle of our church life, influence, and blessing, and this we must do.

It is a challenge to the Church of the Nazarene to utilize every resource, to project our vision and mission, to channel all our efforts, to turn all our energies toward the incomparable business of soul winning and the building of the kingdom of Jesus Christ. In every church we must see consistently the saving of sinners, the reclaiming of backsliders, and the entire sanctification of Christian believers. Thus and only thus can we justify our existence and demonstrate our gratitude for the glorious rendezvous with abundance which God has given the Church of the Nazarene.

* * * * *

02 -- OUR DAY OF DESTINY

Light! Day! Glorious words are these. Allusions to both ideas are numerous in the Scriptures. The Apostle Paul declared concerning the Thessalonians, "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day." The prophet Isaiah, exulting in the coming revelation of Jesus Christ, exhorted his people, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," and while these are simple words, the implications are beyond our human grasp. Again He said to His disciples, "Ye are the light of the world," and here also the inference is extremely broad and highly challenging in practical application.

The Psalmist declared, "The Lord God is a sun and shield." Malachi proclaimed, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." We normally think of the sun in terms of light and heat, but

fully as important as these benefits is the healing, purifying power of the sun, killing more germs than all the antiseptics of the world put together. Without this enormous and constant "healing," human life would be destroyed from the earth. And in Jesus Christ is complete healing for the disease of sin. Truly, as Thomas Moore has sung, "Earth has no sorrow that Heav'n cannot heal."

Zacharias, in his prophetic utterance concerning Christ, declared, "The dayspring from on high hath visited us." The dayspring is the dawn, and how beautifully this expresses the meaning of the Saviour in life, for wherever and whenever Jesus Christ comes, whether to the individual, the home, the church, or the community, there is a dawn, a beginning of a new era of light and blessing!

And not least among these meaningful allusions or pictures of the significance of Jesus are His own words recorded in John's apocalyptic vision when He said, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." When the morning star shines, all other stars pale into obscurity and vanish from sight. In the great glowing beauty, in the pristine purity, in the radiant brilliance of the morning star, there is an unchallenged monopoly of the sky. And multitudes can testify that when Jesus Christ moves above the horizon of life as "the bright and morning star" all else pales into insignificance. It may well be observed that so long as the things of this world are of major importance and of primary interest to an individual he has not yet seen Jesus "as he is."

Light! Day! Surely these are glorious words. The day speaks of the future. One may live and think retrospectively in the night, but with the dawn our minds move forward to plan for the future. The day speaks of hope and optimism. One may feel pessimistic in the darkness, but in the dawning light a new hopefulness and optimism come to the heart. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The day speaks of opportunity, of vision, of clear thinking, of sincerity, of openness. And hear another favorite Bible passage, words of the Wise Man: "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." This is God's will for His children. "The path of the just" is not fated to come to a temporary high noon and then, through lengthening shadows, move to its close in the dark. While the years will bring one to a time of lessening activity in service, the radiance of the heart need not be dimmed. For that one who lives in the will of God, the transition to the "glory world" will not bring too much of a shock, for he will be living already in the light that "shineth more and more."

All that "the day" means to the individual can be implied in its significance for the Church. There are those who subscribe to the idea of the inevitable decline of every church group. They believe that every such group comes to a kind of high noon of vision and spiritual power, only to begin an inevitable retrogression that leads into lengthening shadows and the ultimate darkness of spiritual impotence and defeat.

But is such a course of development and degeneration inevitable? We say, "No!" It is God's will that the Church of Jesus Christ should, like the path of the just, shine "more and more unto the perfect day." There can be a group so fixed in purpose, so devoted to God, so committed to the divine will, so determined to live holy lives, so imbued with spiritual graces, so consecrated to the redemptive vision and mission of the Lord Jesus Christ, that a full and glowing spiritual radiance and victory will be maintained until the Saviour's return. Why should not the Church of the Nazarene be such a church? We are persuaded that it can be. We believe this is "our day of destiny."

How can we meet this challenge? How can we attain to our divine destiny? How can we succeed in this extraordinary project?

Some would posit continued success on the basis of a divine origin, and surely the Church of the Nazarene is not an ecclesiastical accident. Our group was called into being by divine leadership and guidance. But this of itself, however true in our days of beginnings, is no guaranty of success a half century later. Others would reason from the standpoint of a divine mission, or of the propagation of divine truth, particularly in the realm of scriptural holiness. We do have such a mission and we do proclaim divine truth. But these are not sufficient to guarantee the ultimate fulfillment of our destiny. Every generation must justify itself. Every generation of Nazarenes must "bring forth fruits" that will justify the existence of our church in their day.

How then is this to be done? In just one basic way. That is by constantly realizing the validity of our true norm, by consistently maintaining in spirit and activity our true norm: The experience and program of the Church of Pentecost.

What were the essentials of Pentecost and of the Church that proceeded from Pentecost?

Today in church activity we hear much of efficiency, methods, charts, graphs, records, slogans, surveys, and business procedures. The Church of Pentecost had none of these as we know them, and probably some unthinkingly would hasten to declare that we have no need of these. But we do need and can use all such aids today. Many a preacher would be "jolted" if he were to face up to a chart or graph of his achievements -- or his failures. Lay workers might see their activities in a new light if given the same treatment. We are under solemn responsibility to utilize every human aid in making our Christian service more effective in our day.

But Pentecost is not to be compassed by any or all of these human helps, for at best they are of secondary importance. Essentially, Pentecost represented first a personal experience in the hearts of Christian believers. John the Baptist declared of Jesus, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." These words were perfectly clear to John's hearers, for when Deity and fire were mentioned together, the Jewish mind interpreted their connection in terms of the manifest

presence of God. Thus, on that epochal Day of Pentecost, "There appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." The prophecy of John was fulfilled in the baptism with the Holy Spirit, and the symbolic manifestation of the presence of God. In their experience, then, there was a new and more vital contact with God, a personal cleansing and enduement that gave them warmth, zeal, earnestness, and spiritual power.

Secondly, the program of the Church of Pentecost was essentially divine and supernatural. While those early Christians gave of their best in judgment, planning, organization, and ability, there always was an element in their achievement that was "beyond the human." In this connection we may well be reminded that in the last analysis it is this divinely supernatural element that is the hallmark of the true Church. We may profitably ask ourselves as to our individual churches, "What is taking place or being accomplished that cannot be explained on the basis of human planning, human psychology, or human ability?" Something should be transpiring frequently in our churches that can be explained only by the presence and power of God: spiritual blessing, the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power," "the joy of the Lord," miracles of redemption, miracles of healing, the glory of the Lord being revealed in spontaneous testimony, the pungent conviction of the Spirit that impels sinners to seek for pardon and Christian believers to seek and obtain purity of heart.

The experience and program of Pentecost, as outlined above in essentials, represent the norm of the Church of the Nazarene and herein is to be found the pattern for realizing our highest destiny. With this as a background we shall consider four phases of the activities and experience of that glorious company of early Pentecostal Christians. These are the elements that must be found in the hearts and lives of the people called Nazarenes if we meet the challenge of God's will for us as a church.

I. THE CHURCH AT PRAYER

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were gathered together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness." Such a reference to prayer is frequent in the Acts of the Apostles. At every important juncture in the life of the Church, they are found praying. It may be that someone will react with the observation that here we are, bringing up again that trite subject of prayer. But such a reaction betrays a complete lack of understanding of the significance and character of prayer. If we should enter into the full revelation of the power and possibilities of prayer, it would be the most exciting and thrilling experience imaginable.

Prayer humbles the heart, and only the humble are heard of God. Prayer makes the heart tender. Those who are cold and hard of heart can expect nothing from God. Prayer brings contact with God and connects us with infinite divine

resources. Certainly if the Church of the Nazarene is to enter into her full destiny, there must be a great spirit of prayer constantly upon our people. Without this spiritual renewing and energizing, Christian experience becomes nominal and Christian service becomes routine.

When the record declares, "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost," it might be inferred that this represented another Pentecost. But such is not the case. These early Christians had learned that under the pressures of life, in the midst of the struggle with satanic powers, with opposition on every hand, they became weakened and drained in spirit. At such a time they began to pray and God answered with a renewed sense of His presence, with spiritual blessing and refreshment, with a new surge of spiritual power and reassurance. They were lifted above their trials and went on their way "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." In our modern day, when life is filled with speed, pressure, and strain, we too need times when we call on God and with renewed joy and blessing and strength we are "filled with the Holy Ghost."

There is another point of emphasis that is helpful in relation to the scripture record quoted at the beginning of this section on prayer. "And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were . . ." How frequently we are interested in some "shaking," but not where we are! It is easy to pray, "Lord, shake the sinners," or, "Lord, shake the community," or, "Lord, shake the neighboring church out of their coldness, formalism, and apathy." But if we want a genuine revival, if we desire a great evangelistic awakening, it must begin where we are. Let our Nazarene churches pray until we are shaken out of our ease and comfort and lack of concern, until we are blessed and alert and zealous for Christ and holiness, until we are given burning hearts and a new soul-winning passion.

Again we reiterate: The Church of the Nazarene must be characterized by the power of prayer if we are to realize our God-ordered destiny.

II. THE CHURCH IN FELLOWSHIP

The record of the Day of Pentecost reveals and emphasizes the fact that the Christian disciples in the Upper Room "were all with one accord in one place." Later in the same chapter we read, "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship." Much has been made of the element of doctrinal agreement, but we need to realize that along with this there was a constant fellowship. Again we read how they continued "daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house." This beautiful Christian spirit prevailed in their later experience, for near the close of the fourth chapter of The Acts we are told that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."

The unity of the Holy Spirit pervaded the Church of Pentecost. Self-seeking, personal ambition, desire for preferment, jealousy, and all kindred carnal attitudes and dispositions had been cleansed from their hearts by the fiery baptism with the

Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit was being evidenced in their lives -- "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Such fruitage always produces unity.

But unity does not necessitate uniformity. In that early group there was a vast variety of personalities. God always has recognized the value of individuality. But in the midst of their individual differences they had found, in the Spirit, a basis for a deep and abiding unity. By the help of God they were able to subordinate the lesser elements of personal opinion, differences in judgment, and variety of outlook, to the major issues of unity in Christian living and service.

This is the challenge to the Church of the Nazarene today. We have many differences of background, training, outlook, and personality. But by the cleansing and guiding presence of the Holy Spirit we can keep our hearts united in Christ and directed toward an effective, redeeming witness. Paul declares that a major responsibility of the life of holiness is that of "endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The sanctified heart is to be an agent of unity. Holiness is designed, not only to cleanse away the divisive spirit, not merely to make one passive at the point of unity, but to impel an active endeavor toward unity, minimizing secondary and personal interests, and magnifying the great issues of the gospel of Christ. The most dangerous enemies of the church never have been on the outside, but rather within the church. Satan knows well what to do with a divided church, but he has no way of defeating a group of holy men and women who purpose to remain firm and strong in "the unity of the Spirit." Such a holy unity is a major element by which the Church of the Nazarene can meet the challenge of this modern day.

III. THE CHURCH WITNESSING

In too many church circles this matter of witnessing is a forgotten issue relative to Pentecost. We are accustomed to the emphasis on the purity and power of Pentecost, and these are basic. But what of witnessing? Jesus declared concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit, "and ye [My disciples] shall be witnesses unto me." This responsibility and privilege of witnessing was accepted as normal for all Christians. Apparently they had not discovered the idea that a few preachers were to do all the soul winning. Having no church buildings, they simply witnessed for Christ wherever they found people -- in the homes, in the synagogues, in the streets and market places, or by the riverside.

Their witnessing began on the Day of Pentecost. Evidently they spent little time in celebrating their own spiritual victory. With the dynamic force of the Holy Spirit moving powerfully in their hearts, they literally burst out of the Upper Room to tell the good news to all who would hear.

Here is a significant, and possibly startling, observation: So far as the record goes, not one soul was converted in the Upper Room. "About an hundred and

twenty" Christian believers were sanctified wholly, "filled with the Holy Ghost." But apparently not a sinner was there which is quite understandable, for it would be a rare kind of sinner indeed who would remain with a group like that, "with one accord in prayer and supplication," for a period of ten days, looking for the coming of the Holy Spirit. It was only when the sanctified Church came out of the Upper Room and went to the people that their soul-winning mission began to be effective.

What a one-day evangelistic campaign! Three thousand souls won to Christ before sundown! How was this mighty work accomplished? Usually the credit is given to Simon Peter and his sermon, and we would not minimize the value of this message. But honestly, do you think that sermon alone could win three thousand souls? Personally I doubt it. Granted that it is a remarkable and Spirit-inspired utterance, it can hardly be called an evangelistic sermon, and certainly not in terms of our modern concept of evangelistic preaching. Simon Peter gave them some history, quoted some scripture, accused them of assorted evil activities including the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth, threatened them a bit, gave them a promise or two, "and with many other words did he testify and exhort," and apparently gave a one-sentence altar call, "Save yourselves from this untoward generation."

But could Simon Peter unaided achieve such remarkable results? If not, then how were they won? I must confess that I find the answer most logical to me "between the lines," but nevertheless I believe it is correct and tenable in the light of the whole situation.

When those scores of Spirit-filled disciples burst from the Upper Room, probably every one of them felt that he had a sermon to preach. As they charged down the stairs, obviously someone had to be in the lead and -- yes, you guessed it-- there was Simon Peter, rushing ahead as usual. Thus, before anyone else could get organized, Peter was standing on whatever was the current equivalent of the proverbial goods box and had launched into his now famous sermon.

When the other preachers found the pulpit pre-empted and their incipient ministry frustrated, many varied reactions might have been expected. These idle "preachers-become-listeners" might have sat back, saying to one another, "Do you think he is big enough to handle this camp meeting crowd?" Or they might have wandered to the edge of the multitude to conceal their boredom. But not so! These had just been sanctified wholly and filled with the blessed Holy Spirit. And when they discovered that their sermons were not needed, they must have said, "Well, if we cannot preach today, we can still witness." And as Peter poured forth his message under the anointing of the Spirit, the others began to do personal work. As Peter declared that Joel's prophecy was being fulfilled, these Spirit-baptized disciples would move from one to another giving their witness. "I was there," one would say, "and what Simon Peter is talking about happened to me!" And another, "The Holy Spirit has come in His power to my heart, and this Jesus of Nazareth is real -- more real than ever as my Saviour." And as they witnessed, one after

another, hearing their testimony and seeing the radiance of their faces, would declare, "I believe!" "I accept Christ!"

It might be added that such a description of the soul-winning activities of the Day of Pentecost seems to be necessary to satisfy the implications of the record which declares that "the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans?" Then follows a list of fifteen groups with an obvious variety of languages. What a glorious and meaningful miracle! And for the highest purpose the salvation of men -- three thousand of them!

Nazarenes, we can stay in our churches, singing, praying, preaching, until Doomsday, and few will be reached. But if we are to fulfill our destiny as a major evangelistic force, we must get out of our "Upper Rooms," out to where the needy are waiting, and there give them our witness to the redeeming love and grace and power of Jesus Christ. Then, and only then, will any "Crusade for Souls" become more than a catchy slogan. Then, and only then, can we meet the tremendous soulwinning challenge of our day and generation.

IV. THE CHURCH GROWING

The Church of Pentecost moved out into a world that was pagan and in opposition to all for which the gospel of Christ stood. Those early Christians faced misunderstanding, mockery, persecution, and death. Yet the Church grew in a mighty triumph of Christian faith. With an irrepressible joy, with an aggressive zeal, with an undimmed optimism, the Christians gave their witness and through the years thousands and tens of thousands, yea, hundreds of thousands, accepted Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

In these days of relatively small numerical gains and meager advancement it should be emphasized that the irresistible impact of the Church on the life of the first Christian century was not produced by an insignificant number of Christians. At the first, just to survive, they had to win converts to Christ rapidly. Then with the later development of wholesale persecution and martyrdom it was necessary to make greater gains in order to make up for the considerable losses. Jesus had said, "I will build my church," and those early Christians believed this prophecy to be true and possible in their day, and in spite of all obstacles and opposition, even to "the gates of hell."

There were times when the forces of desperate hatred toward Christ and His way of life were killing Christians at a rate higher than that of our growth. But the followers of Jesus Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, lived in a sense of ultimate triumph. The spiritual power which was theirs through the Spirit was turned into soul-winning efforts.

Today we need to begin to "think bigger" in relation to the growth of the forces of righteousness. Nazarenes need to "think big" in praying, planning, and working. It is easy to excuse our small gains on the basis of the indifference of the world, of the unbelief of this age, or of the growth of evil. But God did not put the Church in the world to dwindle and fail. The Church of Jesus Christ is here to grow in spiritual power and numerical strength. We Nazarenes need to get a vision of larger churches, not merely that we may report them, but that our spiritual influence and effectiveness in soul winning may be greater in every community where the Church of the Nazarene is established.

Much has been said -- too much -- concerning the desirability or the necessity of being "little and clean." But why not be "big and clean"? A minister of another holiness denomination is reported to have said of that group, "We are not in the world to win souls; we are in the world to hold up a standard." As important as are standards of holy living, that statement demonstrates a complete distortion of values and an abysmal ignorance of the primary mission of the Church. The Church of the Nazarene has scriptural standards to which we intend to adhere, but our basic commission is not in that area; it is in bringing lost men and women to a saving, cleansing relationship to God through Jesus Christ. Only as we understand and enter fully into this mission can we hope to fulfill our divine destiny and be in our generation a church "of the day."

FOUR PERILS

In conclusion, we would suggest four perils which we face. First, the peril of a small, inadequate vision in the face of immense opportunities. Second, ecclesiastical presumption and conceit, causing us to be satisfied with limited spiritual and numerical success. Third, the peril of self-interest by which personal notions, incidentals, secondary issues, or desire for position may become paramount, while the issues by which men live or die are subordinated. And finally, the peril of losing ourselves in the mass, so that we expect "the church" to be and do something unusual apart from individual attitudes.

We must remember constantly that the church is but the resultant of all its members, and only that can be accomplished which is brought to pass by individual devotion and effort. Individuals by the tens of thousands must come to feel a deep responsibility for the failure or success of the church. They must share in the burden of Christ for a lost world until they are to a great extent identified with those in spiritual peril around them.

It is a thrilling experience to see this principle in operation, even in the purely human realm. I saw this one afternoon as I was flying home to Kansas City from an engagement in Texas. I was to change planes in Tulsa, but as we neared the airfield there, we abandoned our approach and proceeded in a wide arc away from the field. On returning we again swung away from the landing strip and remained on a circular course at about three thousand feet. Then the stewardess informed us of

the difficulty. Flying about in the vicinity of the airfield were three or four small, yellow, single-motored planes of the Oklahoma National Guard, and one of the young pilots was in trouble. His rudder controls had become disconnected, and while he could control the plane in flight, he would face extreme danger in landing. Without control over the sidewise motion of the tail, unless both landing wheels touched the runway at the same instant, the plane might lose a wing in crashing against the runway, the plane might overturn suddenly, and in either case the threat of fire and explosion was imminent, with a fiery death probable for the pilot. After a time we were permitted to land and as we taxied to the ramp we could see the emergency vehicles standing by near the runway.

By this time a large crowd had gathered to watch this dramatic situation unfold. The control tower was connected with the loud-speakers so that we could hear the instructions of the dispatcher to the endangered pilot as he attempted to "talk him down." With the field cleared, the pilot in the little yellow plane would drop down toward a landing -- lower, lower, lower -- until he was a scant three feet from the runway. But then his heart would fail him. He could not bring himself to face the peril of that first contact, and applying the power, he would struggle to gain altitude again, barely clearing the hangars as he flew up into the rays of the setting sun. Time after time that scene was repeated. The tension in the watching crowd grew, and I felt my full share of it. I had a son who one day soon might be in a similar situation as he engaged in military service, and as I watched that little plane, while I did not know the boy in it, I felt as if I had some responsibility for him. I do not know that it helped, but I breathed a prayer for him, and I have an idea others there did the same.

But the fuel supply was running low and time was running out. The emergency equipment moved to another runway. This time there was a kind of desperate purpose in the way he was "setting her down." This was "it." Lower, lower, lower came the little plane. The crowd seemed to cease breathing. Still he settled toward the hard surface of the runway -- three feet, two feet, one foot -- and he touched! Not quite simultaneously the tires gripped the concrete -- one wing tip slammed hard and bounded the frail craft onto the other wing tip in a split second. Another second and the plane had slued around in an almost complete circle. But it came to rest upright and all in one piece. The emergency crews were there immediately to guard against fire and to check on the pilot.

The instant that little plane had stopped and it was apparent that the danger had passed, that crowd began to cheer and whistle and applaud and shout. Yes, I was doing my share. One would have thought we brought him down -- and maybe we did help. But while he was a stranger to us all, we rejoiced "like a camp meeting crowd" that he was on terra firma, safe and sound.

Minutes later I was on my plane, winging my way home. But as we gained altitude I felt there was in that experience a lesson for the church. If a group could become so concerned about an unknown lad in a disabled plane, how much more

should Nazarenes everywhere share a deep concern and burden for those who are lost in sin and are moving toward eternal night!

May God help us to see the perils which confront us and deliver us from them all. May He give us that vision, that sense of utter dependence on Him, that understanding of primary values, and that burden and passion for the lost, that will enable us to emulate the Church of Pentecost and meet the full implications of God's will for us as a people.

* * * * *

03 -- THE SPIRIT OF THE PIONEERS

This chapter is very personal. It is to a large extent the story of a man. That man was my father, Elias Stephen Benner. He was not a preacher. He was a layman -- a sanctified layman. He was not widely known, even among Nazarenes, except in two or three areas where he had resided for considerable periods of time.

But my father symbolized that lay pioneer spirit without which the pioneer Nazarene preachers would have been quite ineffective. Thus, in doing honor to my father, I am honoring as well all those thousands of faithful holiness laymen who, without fanfare or recognition, loved God, served God, prayed "the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," paid the bills, took the risks, and carried the burdens during the early, difficult, uncertain years of the Church of the Nazarene.

In emphasizing the pioneer spirit of first-generation Nazarene laymen, we do not forget or minimize the influence and contribution of our pioneer preachers. The Church of the Nazarene today collects large dividends on the competent guidance and sacrificial devotion of those hardy preachers who blazed the modern trail for aggressive, organized holiness. But our pioneer preachers are relatively well known and their record is familiar to us. Thus we shall give our attention here more especially to the spirit and activities of Nazarene laymen in general, and of one in particular, whose life was characterized by those elements which always have been manifested by spiritual pioneers.

Our deepest purpose goes beyond the mere recording of incidents of our early days. If we as a people are to be effective in our time, we must possess and perpetuate the same essentials which gave life, progress, and permanence to the Church of the Nazarene in the pioneer period.

My father was an older child in a large family. Born in Randolph County, Indiana, in 1867, his family moved just across the state line into Darke County, Ohio, when he was very young. There was little opportunity for formal education. Entering school in early winter, he and his older brothers would be out of school as

early in the spring as a plow could be put into the ground. In that manner my father progressed, in terms of that day, as far as the sixth "reader."

His parents were good, honest people, fairly regular in church attendance but with little understanding of vital religious experience. In his early twenties he was married to Emma Charlotte Lawrence and began farming near her home in Marion County, Ohio. Through my mother's influence my father became a member of the Methodist Episcopal church in the village of Claridon, eight miles east of Marion.

About that time there came to the pastorate of that circuit and church an able, spiritual, evangelistic holiness preacher, Rev. W. R. Chase, who soon had gracious revivals in progress in all four churches on the circuit. Scores of people were sanctified wholly and my father and mother entered into that blessed experience at that time.

My father's experience of holiness was radical and sound. From my earliest recollection he was an active, spiritual, aggressive holiness layman, bearing his full share of responsibility, and more, in the work of the church and the Kingdom. In 1910, to meet the educational needs of his three sons, he moved to Olivet, Illinois, where an interdenominational holiness school had been established in 1907. Some details of the move will be emphasized later, but it was during the early months in Olivet that he came into contact with the people called Nazarenes. In 1911 our family became charter members of the Church of the Nazarene organized in Georgetown, Illinois.

From that time until his home-going in 1957, my father gave without stint of his time, energy, and means to promote the cause of scriptural holiness through the Church of the Nazarene. Those early Nazarenes majored on things spiritual, and the essence of their success is to be found in that realm. For the Church of the Nazarene was not founded for the purpose of developing a great ecclesiasticism. It was not designed to be a major educational or reform movement. The mission of those pioneer Nazarenes was clearly spiritual, and the elements which made them triumphant were spiritual elements.

1. Faith

Early Nazarenes possessed a faith in God that gave them the assurance that spiritual achievement was possible. This faith provided a clear vision of that which needed to be accomplished. It was an active faith that brought God into every situation. There was little with which to work. Churches were few and widely scattered. The churches that were operating were, for the most part, small and poorly equipped. The total membership of the Church of the Nazarene could have been seated in any one of several large present-day auditoriums.

But those Nazarenes believed God. They were holy optimists. I cannot remember hearing my father, or any other Nazarene of his generation, predict or

mention the possibility of failure as to either local churches or the denominational outlook. It seemed they were always attempting projects that were humanly impossible. But they kept on believing God -- and continued to accomplish the apparently impossible.

While my father was basically conservative in financial matters, he was daringly generous in his attitude toward the interests of the church. In those beginning days the major question was not, "What will it cost?" but rather, "Is this project in the will of God?" Their faith in God made them confident that whatever was in the will of God could be done.

Well might we later Nazarenes pray fervently, in the words of the hymn writer, William Bathurst, "Lord, give us such a faith as this."

2. Divine Guidance

Pioneer Nazarenes believed firmly in the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This was true not only of preachers but of laymen as well. Earlier I mentioned my father's decision to move from our home in Ohio to Olivet, Illinois. In his search for a school in which his children could secure an education under Christian and holiness influences, he traveled north, south, and west. Olivet was the last institution he visited in that search.

I have heard him tell many times how there was less to be seen at Olivet than at any other of the schools investigated. From a purely human standpoint, and judged by material assets, Olivet would have been eliminated automatically. But as my father prayed, he felt definitely that Olivet was the place to which we should go. And to Olivet we went.

There were times when circumstances might have raised serious doubts as to the wisdom of that decision. But looking back on the whole situation, the genuineness of the divine leading is clear. In the first place, my father found in the Church of the Nazarene a fellowship of holiness people and a spiritual atmosphere that never ceased to bless and encourage him as a layman committed to the doctrine and experience of scriptural holiness. Furthermore, he found a place of service that was a constant challenge to his aggressive spirit.

As for me, the whole future of my life, in Christian experience and area of service, was rooted in that decision. I thank God fervently for that special divine providence which has given me the privilege of serving as a holiness preacher in the Church of the Nazarene.

In passing, it is interesting, and I believe significant, to note that every other school to which my father gave consideration back there in 1909 has either ceased to operate long ago or has offered only the most limited educational opportunities. But Olivet Nazarene College has survived and grown until more than one thousand

students have been enrolled during some recent years, and it has become an outstanding church-related college of the Midwest.

How could a farmer, relatively untrained and with no means of logical determination, make a decision which the passing years have proved to be basically sound? There is only one explanation: My sanctified father, as a layman, knew God and recognized the mysterious guidance of the Holy Spirit. This element was in constant evidence among the early Nazarenes.

3. Sacrificial Consecration

Another outstanding element in the experience of pioneer Nazarenes was a sacrificial consecration that was almost reckless. They were gripped by the clear conviction that they, and all they possessed, actually belonged to God. In the glory of their faith they launched projects which probably would be judged presumptuous by many today.

Not only was their money consecrated, but their other possessions, as well, including any real estate which they owned. Time after time those courageous Nazarenes mortgaged their properties or signed notes to provide church buildings, or to ensure the continuance of Nazarene institutions. In dark days when it seemed that Olivet Nazarene College could not possibly survive, even for a decade, my father, with other members of the board of trustees, signed papers for as much as his properties were worth. This was no empty gesture, for there were emergencies which often threatened him with the loss of all he possessed. But he and the others gladly took that risk for the sake of Christ and the church.

The credit and borrowing power of those pioneer Nazarenes were also "on the altar," for many of them borrowed money to promote the interests of holiness evangelism. It was thus that our First Church in Marion, Ohio, was able to secure adequate facilities so soon after organization.

We had lived in Olivet, Illinois, for six years when circumstances developed that made it necessary for my father to resume the operation of his farm near Marion. Of course he immediately became an active member of the Marion church. At that time the church was very poorly located, and the building was far from adequate, in both construction and appearance. The situation disturbed my father greatly. He said, "This is not good enough for the presentation of scriptural holiness to this community." So he began to search for a better location and a more appropriate building.

He soon found it. A Lutheran congregation had constructed a new building and their former property was for sale. As I recall it, they asked six thousand dollars for the property, with a down payment of fifteen hundred dollars. When the proposition was presented to the church, they could see no way by which they might make the purchase, for the down payment seemed completely beyond the

resources of that small group. Fifteen hundred dollars represented a considerable sum of money in that day. But my father was convinced that the project was in the will of God, and therefore possible.

Just prior to this, George Grace, another farmer, had become a member of the church. My father laid the matter before Brother Grace and suggested the possibility of the two of them borrowing the money for the down payment. This they did on their personal notes. Soon the church moved to the new location, and that property, with some additions, served that congregation for more than twenty years, when their growth compelled them to secure more commodious facilities. Thus two sanctified laymen, farmers, fully consecrated, made the difference between a limited, frustrated, stunted church and a church with vision, opportunity, and effectiveness.

Today, with many tens of thousands of Nazarene laymen who own property and enjoy excellent credit, it would seem that the possibilities for the rapid growth of the Church of the Nazarene should be unlimited. May God give to our laymen a new vision of what a group of consecrated lay people can accomplish when their money, property, and credit are fully and actively consecrated to Him and to the cause of scriptural holiness.

4. Soul-winning Zeal

The Church of the Nazarene was born in a fervor of soul-winning activity. Those pioneer Nazarenes expected to win souls. This was the anticipated order of things every Sunday -- assuredly in the evening service and frequently in the morning service. And the laymen played a major part in this phase of the work, both by personal contact and by zealous prayer and counsel with seekers at the altar.

They were not content to have a reasonable evangelistic success in their own churches but were constantly seeking other opportunities for soul winning. As one of the younger Nazarenes in those days, I joined with others in tent meetings and street meetings. I have played my trombone, along with other young instrumentalists, in street meetings when the "drunks" crowded so closely that we could scarcely operate our instruments. At other times we would ride the electric car in the evening to a town six miles north of Olivet, Illinois, and then walk six miles across country, carrying our heavy instruments, to hold meetings in small mining towns where regular religious services were not held. The town "roughs" would sometimes throw rocks through the windows and try to harass and disturb, but we simply carried on the services. Afterward, late at night, we walked the six miles back to the interurban line for the ride home. So young and old alike, Nazarene laymen were evangelistic.

I have related how our family had moved back to our Ohio farm in 1916. For years there had been no evangelistic ministry in the community, much less any witness to holiness. It was not long until a burden for the souls of his neighbors

came heavily upon my father's heart. I can still hear him say, "They are going to hear the message of holiness one more time."

He did not wait for some home mission organization to offer assistance, but rented a tent and prepared to pitch it at the edge of the village of Claridon. Someone had recommended Rev. Julius Miller, of the Dakota area, as an effective holiness preacher. My father contacted him and he agreed to come. Joe and Helen Peters, students at Olivet Nazarene College, were secured as singers.

When Brother Miller arrived, my father outlined to him what must have seemed a very strange arrangement. "There may be no offerings taken in this meeting," said my father, "but don't worry about that, for your offering is already in the bank." And so it was, and a generous offering. For two weeks the meetings continued. The Peters' would sing, the Benner young folk would play their instruments, Brother Miller would preach second-blessing holiness, while my father directed the services, shouted the victory when he felt like it -- and paid all the bills.

When I remember the soul-winning passion of my father and others of those first-generation Nazarene laymen, I get a vision of what can come to pass in this modern day if our laymen are stirred to this great work. We today have the advantages of better talent, easy transportation, and far greater numbers with which to work. Grippled by a genuine crusading spirit, we can enter, almost immediately, a thousand communities that need the truth and redemptive power of holiness evangelism.

5. Loyalty to Holiness and the Church

The pioneer Nazarenes were a committed people. They were strong in faith, burning with zeal, clear in purpose, and definite in doctrine. They were committed to scriptural holiness without equivocation, without apology, and regardless of the cost. If people understood, so much the better; but if they did not understand, those holiness pioneers accepted whatever consequences might come. And come they did -- ostracism, opposition, mockery, persecution. But with the Apostle Paul they declared, "None of these things move me."

This loyalty was also evidenced in their devotion and faithfulness to the church. Their loyalty to the Church of the Nazarene was, in most cases, a duplication of what had been earlier an intense loyalty to the groups to which they had belonged previously. Some, and possibly many, have supposed that the first group of Nazarenes came into the new denomination in a spirit of rebellion toward their former connections, that they were disposed to fight those groups. But this is far from the truth in most instances.

Those first-generation Nazarenes had been faithful to their churches during earlier days. When the issue of entire sanctification forced them out of those churches into various holiness groups, they were not belligerent toward their

former associations. It was with deep regret and a heavy heart that my father came to feel that he must turn his interest, efforts, and personal allegiance in a new direction. I never heard him speak of his former church in any but a kindly manner. He was moved deeply to be compelled to sever the close friendships of years, for he had given to that group his best in service.

But he felt the clear call of God to align himself with a group definitely committed to the promotion of holiness. And when the final decision was made, there was no turning back. His loyalty, not only to holiness, but also to the Church of the Nazarene, never wavered.

6. Initiative and Intensity

Much of the strength and rapid progress of the Church of the Nazarene in the first two decades came by reason of the initiative of laymen. Often the vision and energy of laymen charted the course for preachers. This was the record in the establishment of many churches.

My father's initiative carried over without diminution into his later years. He had moved to southern California in 1925. Two or three years later he established his residence in Glendora, California. There was no Church of the Nazarene in Glendora and soon he began to feel that something should be done about it. He was then nearly sixty years of age, and might have felt that such ventures were for younger men. But with his usual enthusiasm he began to plan and work toward the establishment of a new center of holiness evangelism.

Progress was slow, but God blessed the efforts of that first little group. Today a beautiful church and parsonage occupy choice property in Glendora, California, and a thriving congregation bears effective witness to full salvation in that beautiful city. Of course many others beside my father were involved in that project, but I believe all who know of its beginnings will testify that my father's zeal, prayers, enthusiasm, and support represented a major factor in the establishment of that church.

The same characteristics of vision and initiative and intensity continued in my father's heart to the end of his life. His later years were spent in Pasadena, California, where he was a faithful member of the First Church of the Nazarene. Just before my father's physical condition confined him to his bed, the pastor, Rev. J. William Ellis, and the people of First Church were considering a move to a new location.

In connection with one of the last midweek services my father attended, a church meeting was being conducted to consider the report of a commission which had been set up to study the proposed move and to make recommendations. The commission recommended the move, which, of course, represented a major

financial project for land and buildings. Having reported thus, the chairman of the commission moved the adoption of the report.

Although eighty-six years of age, the aggressive spirit of my father would let him sit still no longer. My friends have told me how, in his rather feeble and crippled condition, he began to struggle to his feet, and finally balanced himself by leaning on his cane. Addressing the chairman and the congregation he said in substance, "I am not in a position to make such a motion to move our church, for I am too old. I'll not be here to see this new church built, or to help pay for it." Then, with a fleeting touch of the old spiritual glow and faith, he declared, "But I can second the motion." He then proceeded to tell how he felt that this proposal was God's will and that He would help in the project.

My father and the thousands of wonderful Nazarene pioneer laymen are gone to their well-deserved reward in a "better country." But a later generation face a needy world. What will they do about it? Let it never be forgotten that it takes only one generation to change the whole course of any spiritual movement. Later generations may improve on techniques and equipment but seldom, if ever, do they improve on the spirit of the pioneers.

While pastoring in Santa Monica, California, we witnessed the annual observance of what was known as "Pioneer Days." For about a month the people of the community took on the general appearance of 1849. Clerks in the stores, office workers, policemen, all wore the costumes of mid-nineteenth century days. The streets were filled with horse-drawn vehicles -- buggies, surreys, carts, stagecoaches, prairie schooners. Horsemen and horsewomen rode everywhere.

Then on the closing day of the celebration came the Pioneer Days Parade. Down broad, smooth Wilshire Boulevard they came in a line more than a mile long. "Pioneer Days"! The sun was shining brightly. The California sky was blue, and gentle breezes moved through the swaying palms. Blimps and planes flew overhead. First-aid stations were located every three blocks, with ambulances standing by. The roiling Pacific shimmered over the palisades at the end of the boulevard. Beauty, comfort, and safety were evidenced everywhere.

"Pioneer Days"! It was interesting to imagine the consternation and probable helplessness of that group if suddenly they had been transferred into the original, genuine pioneer days, with trackless deserts and unexplored mountains before them, with literal and deadly enemies a constant threat, and with occasional piles of whitened bones that mutely told their tragic tale of failure.

The real pioneer days were no parade. Those pioneers risked all to reach the golden land. That journey demanded courage and resourcefulness. They had left all that was dear and valuable. They were in dead earnest.

So it must be with modern Nazarenes. We must refuse to be content with a shallow mimicry of Nazarene pioneer days. We must experience in our day the consecration, faith, sacrifice, courage, and resourcefulness of our Nazarene pioneers if we are to bear our full responsibility to our generation.

Let us pray that God will give to our present-day Nazarenes, laymen as well as preachers, those elements that brought strength and greatness to the formative period of the Church of the Nazarene.

*** * * * ***

04 -- THE PROGRAM FOR THE CHURCH (From the Prayer of Jesus)

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." This I believe firmly. But I am as quick to admit that not all scripture comes to me with equal significance and force. I confess freely that I receive more blessing from the twenty-third psalm than from those long genealogical tables. Certainly this is not to be charged to the scriptures involved, but is due to my present limitations. In a better world I believe we shall come to know the meaning of the scriptures which now are obscure.

The Scriptures may be likened to the Tabernacle with its court, holy place, and holy of holies. There are passages in God's Word which, like the court, may be entered and explored easily. Other passages seem to be somewhat more secluded, like the holy place. Then there is that relatively small list of scriptures which are extremely sacred and of deepest spiritual meaning -- the holy of holies of the Bible. Surely in any such list of scriptures the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel According to John would have to be included.

This high priestly prayer was prayed by our Lord at the most critical juncture of His earthly experience. It is the longest recorded prayer of Jesus. It was concerned with the deepest elements and purposes of the divine plan of redemption. Furthermore, and not least by any means, this prayer is more than an expression of desire in behalf of a few chosen individuals, but reveals the basic plan and program of Christ for His Church. This is our primary concern in this message. Other things the Church may do in the course of her ministry to a needy world. But whatever was emphasized in the prayer of Christ in behalf of the Church, that the Church must do or fail. Herein is the irreducible minimum of that which is the fundamental responsibility of the Church.

I. A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THIS PRAYER

There is an opening section and a closing section, both of which seem to deal more particularly with the relationship of the Son to the Father. Between these are two well-defined sections which comprise the main body of the prayer.

The first of these is concerned with the disciples then with Him, and includes two main petitions: "Keep them," and, "Sanctify them." Between these petitions is a major observation, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

The second portion of the main body of the prayer begins at verse 20, where we come to a definite and significant transition: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." Here we move from a little group of immediate disciples into a range that includes all the followers of Jesus Christ through all the ages to come. This is the prayer, the burden, of Jesus Christ for His Church to the end of time.

It is fundamental to the proper understanding of this prayer to keep in mind the close relationship of these sections concerning the disciples and the Church. These are not exclusive but cumulative; that is, all that relates to the immediate disciples is also applicable to the Church. In other words, the full implications of Christ's burden and will for His disciples are directed toward those who love and serve Him, even in this modern day.

II. CONCERNING THE IMMEDIATE DISCIPLES

1. Security

For these Jesus first prayed, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me." In this petition is all the intensity of a loving, divine solicitude for His followers. Jesus was praying, "Keep them, guard them, protect them, watch over them, 'keep them from the evil?' " It was a revelation of the intercessory interest of Christ in His followers. It was indirectly a pledge of a gracious divine providence that would surround those who had given their hearts to Him.

And herein is a most blessed and heartening truth for us. Our Lord prays this prayer for us too: "Holy Father, keep them." In this day of strain and confusion and peril, we can be sure of the solicitude of our Saviour. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews declares, "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." And again he says, "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Today He prays "for us," "Keep them, protect them, guard them, watch over them, 'keep them from the evil,' let a loving divine providence preserve them in and for the will of God." What a glorious and powerful security we have in Christ!

2. Sanctification

For these disciples Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." We are familiar with all the arguments which would rob this passage of its

essential meaning, including the idea that this represents only a kind of all-inclusive human consecration; or the concept that it was merely a "setting apart" of the disciples for a special service. But these and all other similar teachings are inadequate to compass the full meaning of this prayer, "Sanctify them."

The Cross is involved in this petition. "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it." "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." No such sacrifice, no such death on a cross, would be necessary to a human consecration or to set apart the followers of Christ. Jesus died on the Cross to solve the sin problem, and when His death is connected with the sanctification of His disciples, it means that this experience has in it a dealing with sin. Thus when Jesus prayed, "Sanctify them," He was praying, "Make them holy," "Make them pure." Deep in the heart of this high priestly prayer is this clear revelation of the deepest purpose of redemption: to restore the individual to the spiritual image of God through the entire sanctification, the cleansing, of the heart. This is the scriptural holiness that is God's will for every Christian believer. This is provided for every Christian believer through the power of Calvary. Only through this glorious experience of divine grace can we meet the challenge, "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [living]." Only thus can we be enabled to obey the injunction of Jesus Christ, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

3. Worldliness

Concerning His disciples, Jesus made this sweeping and penetrating observation, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Twice He made this declaration which sets forth clearly the line of demarcation between the disciples of Jesus Christ and the sinful world in which they lived.

Again, this is applicable to the true Church, even in our day. The Church is to set the spiritual standard at this point. The followers of Christ are not to be a mere reflection of the world around them, but are responsible for maintaining their integrity, regardless of the attitude of the worldlings. This has been the firm and scriptural purpose of all those who through the centuries would "live godly in Christ Jesus."

In this realm of unworldliness there always have been extremists who would, by excessive external demands and legalistic ideas, make God's people to appear eccentric and queer or would remove them from effective influence on the world in which they must live and serve. The Church of the Nazarene is not committed to any such position but holds to sane, scriptural, normal standards of holy living.

However, we always face the possibility of such a strong reaction to the extremists that we fail to give a proper emphasis to the standards which are essential to vital Christian living. We must refuse to permit some extremists to

frighten us away from a legitimate and essential emphasis on standards. During every year tens of thousands of people are converted at Nazarene altars and unite with our church on profession of faith. These new Nazarenes frequently have had little or no background in vital holiness and need to be given light on the implications of Christian living. Then, too, there are those who have been in the Church of the Nazarene many years but, by reason of worldly pressures about them, have become careless regarding these standards relating to associations, activities, and appearance. While these matters are not to be the subject of constant "harping," it still is the responsibility of our preachers and our people to give due attention to our basic standards and to deal with serious deviations from them.

Furthermore, we should not forget that our standards include far more than some external prohibitions. Greater and more important -- and more numerous -- are the exhortations to positive standards of spirit, attitudes, and activities, for the life of holiness is not one great negation; rather it is a positive life in which the graces of Jesus Christ are manifested in growing measure.

Security, sanctification, unworldliness -- these were the heart burden of our Lord in behalf of His disciples. And for these He prayed in relation to the Church. It is our responsibility to enter fully into all for which Christ prayed. Are you living in this portion of this prayer?

III. CONCERNING THE CHURCH

In this section of the prayer that relates particularly to the Church, as in the portion relating to the disciples, there are three major elements. Similarly, there are two petitions and one observation. These represent God's will for the Church. They bring to us a threefold challenge. Here, we repeat, is the basic program of the Church.

1. Unity

"That they all may be one," was the first petition of our Lord for the Church as such. It is a rather remarkable fact that unity is mentioned more times than any other element in this prayer. Four times Jesus prayed "that they may be one."

How our Lord must have cherished this unity of His followers! And the standard He set for this unity is completely baffling except as a divine project. The unity of God's holy people, in some respects, is to be in quality like unto the unity of the Godhead: "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be made one in us. . . that they may be one, even as we are one."

The Apostle Paul had this same concept and vision of the unity of the people of God. It sounds as if it were based on this prayer of Jesus. To the Ephesian church he wrote:

"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Later, in the same letter, Paul wrote of "the perfecting of the saints," and "the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come [or 'till the whole comes'] in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." In this we hear clearly echoed the last allusion to unity in the prayer of Christ: "that they may be made perfect in one."

While Paul's words may be related to individual experience, it seems clear, in the light of the complete passage, that he had in mind the Church as a whole, coming in unity of faith and knowledge "unto a perfect man," or a man of full stature, mature, strong, balanced, effective, and bearing commensurate responsibility.

What are the elements in this unity? Paul lists them as lowliness, meekness, long-suffering, and forbearance, plus initiative toward oneness of heart. The way to unity is not to be found in self-assertion, independence of spirit, or legalistic demands, but in humility, charity, and kindly understanding. It is our responsibility to co-operate in achieving that for which Christ prayed: to maintain unity in holiness, to let no secondary issue divide, to allow no personal interest to separate.

There have been those who, because the church would not be committed to their personal notions or peculiar ideas, have claimed a kinship with those who founded the Church of the Nazarene. But there is no remote similarity in these situations. Our early leaders faced pressure and opposition at two principal points: aggressive evangelism and scriptural holiness. On these fundamental issues they faced persecution, ostracism, and denial of the right to testify to the experience of entire sanctification or to promote this doctrine. In numerous cases they endured ostracism and suffered expulsion from older groups in order to maintain their spiritual integrity.

There is no such issue in the Church of the Nazarene today. No Nazarene preacher is being persecuted for aggressive evangelistic activity or for preaching scriptural holiness. No layman is being denied the right to testify to holiness of heart or to promote the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification. On the contrary, scriptural holiness is being urged upon every layman, and the preaching of holiness is being urged upon every Nazarene preacher.

Holiness evangelism! Every Nazarene pulpit in the world is open to this glorious doctrine and program. It is in order in every Nazarene mission station. Nazarene college chapels and classrooms are open to the witness to, and the

proclamation of, heart purity. Holiness is in perfect order in our graduate seminary. It is a part of our Sunday school teaching. It is emphasized in our young people's activities. It is fundamental in the work of our missionary societies. The preaching and experience of heart holiness are urged by every general superintendent and every district superintendent. It is the personal testimony and emphasis of every departmental leader. The Church of the Nazarene was founded with scriptural holiness as a basis for life and ministry. We hold tenaciously to this God-given mission today.

In these days of such deep need in our world, the challenge to unity among God's holy people is greater than ever before. I want to be an instrument of unity. I want no personal interest, no personal idea, no secondary issue, to betray me into causing disruption in the forces of holiness. We are under a solemn responsibility to see that as far as our opportunities and influence may extend we are helping to answer the prayer of Christ, "that they all may be one." May God deliver us from every spirit, attitude, plan, or activity that would divide the body of Christ and thus weaken the impact of the gospel of full salvation on a lost world.

2. Glory

In the midst of His prayer for the Church, Jesus declared, "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." The suggestion of glory is considered by many as a kind of mystical, almost fictional, idea. But the ancient prophet Isaiah asserted, "The glory of the Lord shall be revealed." This glory is a wondrous reality in the plan of God.

What then is this glory? It is an outstanding manifestation of the presence of God. Throughout the sacred record we find the glory of God accompanying the revelations of God. When the Tabernacle of Moses was completed, "The glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle." Without the glory, it was nothing more than an elaborate tent with unusual furnishings. But when the glory filled it, and continued to glow over the mercy seat, it meant that the presence of God was there. Similarly, when the Temple of Solomon was completed, and Solomon's prayer of dedication was ended, "The glory of the Lord filled the house." Prior to this it was just another elaborate Oriental structure, but when the glory came it was the house of God, and it was the glory that manifested His presence.

At the birth of Christ the presence of God was revealed when "the glory of the Lord shone round about" on the Judean hills. On the Mount of Transfiguration the glory of the divine Son of God broke through the usual limitations of His flesh and was so luminous that, according to Luke, "the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening." There was glory on the Day of Pentecost, for when the Holy Spirit came upon that consecrated group of Christian disciples, "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them." Again God had manifested His presence with glory. And eternity will have its ineffable glory, for the light of the Holy City will be the glory of the

immediate presence of God. So it is not surprising that John declared, "And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. . . there shall be no night there."

It is the glory, the manifestation of the presence of God, that sets the religion of the true and living God apart from all other religions. It is this glory that distinguishes vital Christianity from that which is nominal, formal, and powerless.

At this point of glory there is a beautiful symbolism to be found in connection with the crucifixion of Jesus. At the moment of His death, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Much has been said, and properly, concerning the fact that with the rending of the veil of the holy of holies access to God was provided for all directly, and anyone could come to God without the mediation of the priesthood. Certainly this is a glorious truth and we are blessed in its contemplation. But just as true is the fact that the same rending of the veil that gave free access to God also made it possible for the Shekinah, the glory over the mercy seat, to shine out freely upon all God's people.

The Apostle Paul wrote of the Church as "a glorious church," or a Church of glory. The word translated "glorious" is the same word that in Luke 7:25 is used to describe those who are "gorgeously apparelled." The glory of God is to be so real and so manifest that the Church will be a spiritually "gorgeous" church, regal in her spiritual splendor. The Church is to be glorious, yea, at times spectacular, in her radiance, freedom, joy, blessing, and spiritual demonstration.

The question may be raised as to the relation of such manifestations of glory to refinement and culture. In this connection we should understand clearly and emphatically that holiness does not necessitate crudity. Scriptural holiness in its fullest implications is the essence of culture and courtesy. We are enjoined to "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." At the same time it must be admitted that there can be spiritual peril in refinement and culture, for unless a true perspective is maintained there can be a loss of freedom, life, and power. The cultured individual faces the temptation to turn from simple faith and a simple response to God, to a rationalistic, sophisticated attitude. He may be so impressed with the values of self-control that he no longer will yield his emotional responses to the moving of the Holy Spirit. Certainly if we are compelled to make a choice, it is better to have the glory of God in our midst together with some measure of crudeness than to have no glory, no sense of the presence of God.

But such a choice is not inevitable or necessary. There can be the glory of God together with the highest in culture, refinement, and intellectual achievement. It is significant and blessed to remember that the glory of God filled the Temple as well as the Tabernacle. The Temple was one of the most costly and beautiful buildings of ancient times, and there may have been those of the "old-time saints" who felt that God could not bless His people in such beautiful and polished surroundings, that He was the God of the Tabernacle only. But He did bless in the

Temple with such a measure of glory that the priests could not minister for a time. Again, the glory came on Christ at the Transfiguration as well as on the shepherds, and that same glory shines in the Holy City as well as on Judean hills.

I have seen the glory of God upon His people in vastly varied places and situations -- in little churches and big churches, in brush arbors and "rag tents," in store-building home mission projects, in far distant lands among people of widely differing languages, colors, customs, and cultures, in college chapels and classrooms, in home-circle services, in graduate seminary circles.

The Church of the Nazarene was born in this glory. Dr. P. F. Bresee was accustomed to exhort the early Nazarenes to "get the glory down." What did he mean? It was more than a clever phrase or an empty psychological bid for enthusiastic response. This injunction was sound, scriptural, and practical. Dr. Bresee was urging his people to sense more keenly the presence of God, to enjoy more richly the blessing of God, and to exercise more fully the legitimate freedom of the children of God.

"The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." Hear again this declaration of the great Head of the Church, for this is His will for the Church in all the centuries. Thus it is our responsibility to relate ourselves so completely to Him, to co-operate so fully with the leadings and inspirations of the Holy Spirit, that the glory of God, the manifestation of the presence of God, will be the usual experience in the Church of the Nazarene around the world. Jesus prayed for this. We have the vision of it. We must know the reality of it if we are to meet the challenge of God's highest will.

3. Redemptive Outreach

What is it all about? What is the purpose of it all? Jesus Christ made this crystal-clear when He prayed "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me . . . that the world may know that thou hast sent me."

The supreme end and purpose of it all is to bring all men everywhere to the faith and knowledge of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. This is the paramount mission of the Church. No other achievement can compensate for failure in soul winning.

"Keep them." The followers of Christ are to be kept, not as a lot of "hothouse" Christians, living sheltered, secluded lives. They are to be kept by the power of God in order that their lives of Christian integrity may serve as a convicting force in soul winning.

"Sanctify them." Christian believers are to be sanctified wholly, not for the experience to be an end in itself, not that they may merely testify, "I am sanctified," but that they may have spiritual power for effectiveness in soul winning.

"They are not of the world." Their unworldliness is not designed to be merely a basis for a high moral code, or for the setting of ascetic standards of life, but that they may be spiritually minded and free from the spirit of this world, giving a loyal and devoted service in soul winning.

"That they all may be one." This is not unity just for the sake of saying, "We are united," but rather a unity that will give strength for a major evangelistic impact.

"Glory." This glory is not to be an end in itself. Such an attitude breeds fanaticism. It is the sense of the presence of God that eventuates in soul winning. Some may fear that spiritual manifestations and demonstration will drive people from the church. But such is not the case. The glory of God upon the church always is attractive. The genuine moving of the Spirit with a humble, sincere response from the people of God never is repellent. No greater or more effective evangelistic force can be applied than that of evident spiritual victory, holy joy, and divine radiance in the experience of the church, together with the witness of the redeemed to the reality of the saving and cleansing power of Christ.

IV. "THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE"

The scope of this prayer will not be understood properly without a strong emphasis on the implications of this phrase. "The world" here is too often considered as representing merely a rather nebulous idea of people who are not Christians. But the vast sweep of the Great Commission is in these few words. Jesus commanded His disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." His disciples were to be witnesses unto Him "unto the uttermost part of the earth." Thus, when Jesus prays "that the world may believe," He means the whole world. Nothing less in vision, planning, and activity will meet the challenge of this prayer.

V. THE PROGRAM OF THE CHURCH

Here then, in the high priestly prayer of Jesus, is the basic will of God for the Church: Kept by the power of God, sanctified wholly, delivered from the spirit of this world, living in holy unity, experiencing the glory of the Divine Presence, and all focused and channeled toward the winning of lost souls to Jesus Christ.

In this divine program for the Church the spiritual needs of those who comprise the Church will be satisfied. In this program is the provision for meeting the needs of a lost world: that sinners may be saved, and Christian believers sanctified and filled with the Holy Spirit.

On the island of Santiago, in the Cape Verdes, in the capital city of Praia, stands the beautiful and commodious Maud Chapman Memorial Church of the Nazarene. Atop the tower of this church is a large illuminated cross. The

missionaries told me that this shining cross had become the principal beacon light to guide the ships into the Praia harbor. As I sailed the seas in that area night after night, I could imagine the sense of assurance and security that would come to the hearts of those Portuguese sailors as through the darkness they caught their first glimpse of that cross which would guide them safely into the harbor.

In the darkness and foreboding of this our day, the message of a full and uttermost redemption through the cross of Jesus Christ, heralded abroad by the witness of a Spirit-filled Church, is the beacon light which will bring the lost of earth out of the night of sin into the harbor of eternal peace. As we pay the price for the realization of that for which Christ prayed, we shall be indeed that "light of the world," radiant and clear, that will reflect the beauty and truth and power of Him who alone is the Hope of the world.

*** * * * ***

05 -- "THIS IS WAR!"

This is war!" How frequently this phrase was heard during World War II! Today the Christians of the world may well hear this same phrase. The many references to military figures in the Word of God remind us that such are always appropriate in portraying the problems and prospects of spiritual achievement and of the work of the Church of Jesus Christ.

A gigantic spiritual conflict is raging. We are in enemy territory. This is no parade. There should be no cause for surprise among the people of God when resistance to the work of God is encountered. We should remember that conquest is in the will of God. The perfect symbolism of this fact is to be found in the experience of the children of Israel when they entered Canaan. They were called to fight for possession of the country, even though it was their Promised Land. Only that portion which they had conquered could they actually claim as theirs.

Victory in the Christian life cannot be enjoyed without conflict. "Be sober, be vigilant;" warned the Apostle Peter, "because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith." The Apostle Paul declared, "For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries."

Many adverse situations and developments in Kingdom activities would be much more comprehensible if we realized that there is a satanic origin to some problems. Not all problems are thus derived, I would add quickly, for many of them are born of our own limitations, carelessness, stupidity, or laziness. But allowing generously for the self-induced difficulties, we must recognize the fact that the forces of evil are not impersonal, but are under the control of a diabolical personality who is using every means at his command to defeat the Church and frustrate the will of God. Thus we may expect opposition, misunderstandings,

delays, indifference, mockery, disillusionments, betrayals, disappointments, persecution, and frustrations in the course of the conflict.

In warfare there are two major activities which engage the armed forces. The first is an unremitting, vigilant guard. The second is an aggressive attack. We shall consider these elements in the waging of this holy war.

I. MAINTAINING OUR GUARDS

What is the purpose of guarding operations? It is to protect and guarantee the integrity of the fighting force against perils from without and from within.

1. Perils from Without

In the matter of external perils, there is little danger from a frontal assault. Opposing forces of blatant skepticism, or of open challenge to aggressive evangelism or to scriptural holiness, are obvious and easily located. Nazarenes are disposed to deal with such rather summarily. A far greater danger lies in the technique of infiltration. During World War II we heard much of "fifth column" activities. Those involved were not so easily detected. Going into a country, they would wear the costumes of that country, speak their language, observe their customs, insinuate themselves into their society, and appear to be committed to their ideals and purposes, but in reality they were enemies, set to destroy all that was precious to those of the country infiltrated.

In the cause of Christ and scriptural holiness there may be those who live off the church, move in our circles, appear to be a part of the movement, and committed to our purposes, but in reality they never have met the deep issues of heart holiness and they design to do everything in their power to change the course of the Church of the Nazarene from a vital, aggressive, spiritual, evangelistic force, and develop a nominal, formal church program. Against such infiltration we must maintain a vigilant guard, regardless of whether the source is high or low, in the ministry or the laity.

Another type of external peril is that of the flanking movement, whereby the enemy moves in obliquely and to the surprise of the fighting force. Prior to World War II the French, living under their centuries-old fear and suspicion of Germany, decided that permanent security lay in building an impregnable wall of fortifications to the east, and the result was the famed Maginot Line miles of concrete and steel and big guns. But when war came the Germans swung their panzer divisions around the end of the Maginot Line in a huge, unorthodox flanking maneuver, leaving the great French fortifications useless and isolated from the struggle.

Through the centuries the spiritual forces of the world have faced these flanking movements, and in our day they continue. They come from various directions and represent a wide range of deviations from the truth "as the truth is in

Jesus." It may be some form of relativism which would make Christ and His gospel just another religion, without any final and absolute meaning, without any unique quality; that would make Him merely a way, instead of "the way"; that would abrogate the declaration of Simon Peter, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

It may be one of the many varieties of humanism which would call for greater dependence on human ability and human cleverness and would minimize the need for dependence on God. Or it may be some form of rationalism which would question the validity of the revelation of God to man and would give to man the right to judge God in terms of human concepts.

Forms of Universalism, unitarianism, liberalism, realism, or the so-called neo-orthodoxy are to be considered as among these flanking maneuvers that are turned against the simple, vital "faith once delivered unto the saints."

In meeting all such perilous attacks our only sufficient defense is the fullness of the Holy Spirit, who will reveal the truth of God's Word to our minds and hearts. Those who delve deeply into these matters through advanced formal training can maintain their fundamental faith and true spiritual perspective only through a close walk with God and a deep humility of mind and heart. They must realize that in most of the institutions of higher learning there will be strong leanings toward one or more of the deviations listed above, and their only protection under such influences is through the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to judge all teachings in the light of Jesus Christ, "the truth." The operations of the most brilliant intellect, apart from the dominance and guidance of the Spirit of God, are untrustworthy, for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness to him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

2. Perils from Within

The first of the internal perils is that of a "softening" process developing because of a lack of active conflict. In time of war inactivity breeds carelessness and weakness. Without the pressure of the conflict men tend to "take it easy," to become presumptuous, and to lose the keen edge from their fighting ability. The safest military group and the one least likely to be defeated and captured is that group of men who have been constantly in active conflict. Such men are alert, their weapons are in good condition, their supplies are in order, and they cannot be surprised.

In the Church of the Nazarene we must guard diligently against such a softening process in spiritual life. Unless our people in a given congregation are alert, active, and effective in the conflict against sin, they will become indifferent and will lose the keen edge from their experience and their service. Our only hope

at this point is to maintain an active soul-winning program that will keep our people alert in mind and heart.

The second peril within our group is that of weakness growing out of a lack of understanding the issues involved in the conflict. An army cannot be at its best without some conception of the basic reasons for the struggle. The Church of the Nazarene had its beginnings in the midst of certain definite spiritual issues. They were concerned with vital experiences of divine grace, with scriptural holiness, with spiritual freedom, and with aggressive evangelism. Only as succeeding generations know and understand and are gripped by these issues will our Zion be strong for the fight against sin. Each generation must "tell it to the generation following," or we shall lose our unique calling and sense of mission, and will "be like all the nations."

Guarding Nazarene Integrity

1. Integrity of Doctrines

The Church of the Nazarene holds to a few specific doctrines. We are convinced that they are scriptural and essential. Unless we are to lose our identity and reason for existence, we must maintain the integrity of these doctrinal tenets. The doctrinal statement found in our Manual is not a point of departure, but a point of reference; not a subject for debate, but a subject for proclamation.

Believing these fundamental doctrines, we are under the sense of responsibility to teach them with conviction to all who will hear. We believe there is the underlying authority of the Word of God supporting these doctrines and have no agreement with those who insist that there is no authority in the field of religion and of spiritual truth. Thus we are committed to a program of indoctrination, in our churches, in our Sunday schools and young people's organizations, in our seminary, and in our colleges. There may be a wide variety of opinions on things secondary, and we are charitable on those matters, but we consider our basic doctrinal statement to be primary, and we call for agreement and conviction in that basic realm of belief.

In relation to doctrines, we must ever be aware of the danger of losing the practical connection of experience with doctrine. It is not sufficient that we maintain the original doctrinal statement in our Manual. We must see to it that the spiritual experience of our people demonstrates and supports the doctrines. Only thus will doctrines be other than a dead creed.

2. Integrity in Standards

In another chapter we have emphasized the fact that the Church is to be "not of the world," but it is in order to emphasize this again. There is a cross in the gospel of Christ, and to some degree that cross will always be evident in the

relationship of the vital Christian to the world. In the process of worldliness encroaching on the church, there are first tendencies, then trends, and finally the acceptance of worldly standards. When a worldly tendency appears, it is the responsibility of our preachers to deal with it so that it never becomes a trend. To do this it is not necessary to be constantly speaking of these matters, but sufficient must be said, either publicly or privately or both, that our people know the standards of the Church of the Nazarene.

3. Integrity in Spirit

The Church of the Nazarene, from the beginning, has been characterized by a quality of spirit and atmosphere that has set us apart from the usual Protestant group. In this atmosphere of worship and evangelism is to be found much of our strength and genius as a movement. There are those who become greatly disturbed over the educational problems of our church. Others become greatly exercised concerning standards, and both of these fields are important. But what of the basic spirit and atmosphere of our churches?

As go the local churches, so finally goes our church. If we are not extremely vigilant and sensitive at this point, we can easily and quickly become but a pale copy of the nominal church. Our pastors must realize that when we turn from a typical Nazarene atmosphere with its freedom, blessing, life, enthusiasm, testimonies, response, and genuine demonstration in the Spirit, we do not strengthen the fabric of our church, nor do we increase the power of our appeal. People are searching for spiritual reality and vitality. They hunger for manifestations of the presence of God in the lives of professing Christians and in the corporate experience of the church. It is our responsibility to cultivate, strengthen, and enjoy that warm, vibrant, Spirit-generated atmosphere that characterized our church during the years of our most rapid growth.

4. Integrity in Our Sense of Mission

God called the Church of the Nazarene to a particular mission -- the spread of the message of full salvation, scriptural holiness as a second definite work of divine grace, over the earth. Certainly we are not the only ones called to this mission, but this is our mission. Nazarenes are called out for a greater mission than just building another Protestant denomination. We must ask God to keep alive in our hearts, generation after generation, this burning sense of mission. Otherwise we shall become but another denominational casualty to the forces of spiritual stagnation, just another leveled-off religious group, just another church composed of indifferent members and without any gripping purpose. But under God we can keep our mission clear, bright, and compelling. Under God we can continue to accomplish through the years the work to which we have been called.

Two Observations

One, it must be remembered that processes of denominational deterioration never are sudden, but always gradual. No church ever made a "sharp turn" away from fundamental concepts or purposes. Thus there must be eternal vigilance against anything and everything that would tend to defeat us or turn us from our God-given purpose.

Two, no war ever was won by an army of guards, however brave and vigilant and effective. In the work of God, guarding is necessary, but it is not the means of final victory. Some have attempted to turn the Church of the Nazarene into an army of guards, and their major interest seems to be in the realm of guarding against perils. This we must do, but we must keep our guarding activities in their proper place and perspective.

II. PROJECTING THE ATTACK

Wars are won by a vigorous policy of attack. The guarding processes are but to maintain the integrity and strength of the fighting force so that the attack may be aggressive and effective. Thus we turn to the purpose of it all -- projecting and pressing the attack toward ultimate victory. What are the elements of this spiritual advance against the enemy?

1. Direction and Concentration

It is necessary first to know who constitutes the enemy and where he is located. Wars have been lost because of uncertainty at these vital points. The Church often has wasted strength and opportunity by attacking at a spot where there was no real enemy, only religious decoys. Furthermore, a greater tragedy has been known to occur by reason of a military force attacking its own units, owing to some error in giving or receiving commands. What greater tragedy could come to the church than that the "army of the Lord" should attack its own soldiers?

If we keep our vision clear and our motives pure, such mistakes and spiritual tragedies will be avoided. When we are winning souls to Jesus Christ we may be sure we are doing damage to the enemy. Too many local holiness churches are evangelistic "blanks." The primary business of every local church is soul winning, and it would seem that any church, anywhere, and of any size, could win at least one soul during a year. And yet many report no such minimum achievement.

Giving forth the clear message of heart holiness, provided for every Christian believer, one can always be certain that he is "shooting in the right direction." Heart holiness must be made a constant issue, so that men and women will "hunger and thirst after righteousness," and be satisfied by the baptism with the Spirit. The devil will fight desperately against such a course of spiritual warfare, but God will give the victory.

Membership in a spiritual church constitutes a major advance against the enemy. Church membership of itself never saved anyone, but in the fellowship of sanctified people are encouragement and strength for the individual Christian; and in the opportunities for service afforded by such a church is a major guaranty of an active and fruitful Christian life. For the Church of the Nazarene and all holiness groups, membership is a pretty good test of actual victory.

2. Preparation

This is the realm of "spiritual logistics": the provision and organization of personnel and material. While in the last analysis God must give the victory, there is a large place in the work of God for human planning and co-operation. Too many evangelistic efforts are ineffective because of carelessness and indifference on the part of the church. If we are to succeed in this greatest of all activities, we must leave nothing to chance. Prayer, publicity, personal contacts, consistent attendance, financial support -- all of these are in the realm of human co-operation with God.

Then when all these elements have been properly cared for, we must remember that the struggle is essentially spiritual; that "we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Pervading all our human efforts must be a sincere dependence on God and a firm faith that He will hear our prayers and give victory.

Finally, in the matter of preparation, we must keep in our vision the world-wide outreach of the gospel. It is not enough that we concentrate on the powers of evil nearest us. This we must do, but our hearts must reach out beyond "Jerusalem," to "all Judaea. . . Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Nothing less will meet the implications of the message and spirit of our Lord.

3. Self-forgetfulness

A soldier is of little value until he has forgotten himself and his personal interests. It was this attitude which Jesus emphasized when He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Heroes are not made when following self-interest. A soldier does not become a hero by arising some morning with the remark, "Today I become a hero," and then working out a scheme whereby such a development may ensue. No, heroes are produced when, in the heat of the battle, a critical situation faces the fighting unit, and without a thought for possible fatal consequences, or possibly with a full expectation of such, the fighting man rushes in, saves his comrades, or retrieves the situation -- and is surprised to find himself alive -- and even more surprised when he receives a medal for it.

In the work of God and the holy war there is a place for a kind of holy recklessness that impels God's people to risk all they are and have that the will of God might be accomplished. May God give to us all a greater zeal and a more complete self-forgetfulness.

4. Morale

Morale is that attitude of mind that gives zeal, spirit, hope, and confidence to an army. Morale is not necessarily a matter of superior numbers or equipment. It is a combination of faith in a cause, the will to win, and confidence that victory will be achieved.

In the work of God, morale is compassed by faith. Faith in God brings assurance, even when the outlook is dark and there seems to be no way out. Faith brings God and His resources into the situation so that the people of God declare with the Apostle Paul, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Faith takes us beyond the human into the realm of the divinely supernatural.

AND ABOVE ALL -- GOD

The Psalmist declared, "Thou art my hope, O Lord God." Today we too will find our ultimate hope in God. In spite of opposition and difficulty, regardless of the problems and mysteries which we face in the work of God, we may be assured of His presence and His sufficient help.

In Isaiah we read, "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." In ancient times the standard, or banner, was highly significant in warfare. The standard was always near the leader, and the leader was always to be found at the most critical point of the fighting. Thus the banner was the point of keenest interest and greatest significance. It was the responsibility of every man in that army to assist in keeping the banner flying. If the man holding it was stricken, the one nearest him was to seize it and hold it aloft, and on and on, man by man, to the last soldier who lived to fight. For it was understood that as long as the banner was held high that army was not defeated. Regardless of the fortunes or misfortunes of the battle, regardless of the relative numbers, regardless of appearances, as long as the banner waved in the breeze, that army was "still in there fighting."

Isaiah carries this figure over into the realm of spiritual warfare, and with a thrilling addition. The banner of holiness was unfurled in ancient times, and has been the "standard" of God through the ages. Certainly holiness has been the critical point of the "war of the ages," and God has stood with His people there, fighting against sin by every means and promoting holiness with every resource. The people of God are under a deep responsibility to keep the banner of holiness unfurled; and as the spiritual warriors fall in the fray, it is our responsibility, one after another, to lift up the standard, and continue the battle.

But there are times when it seems that all human forces are routed and the cohorts of evil are destined to frustrate the will of God in a given situation. Isaiah declares that when the cause seems doomed, when no man is able to hold up the banner, then the Spirit of the Lord will sweep in with His unlimited resources and with a mighty hand "will lift up the standard," and apparent defeat will be turned into glorious victory.

During the famous Battle of the Bulge of World War II, the situation was desperate for the American forces. My good friend, Dr. R. Wayne Gardner, served as a chaplain in that area and has told me of the almost unbelievable heroism of our soldiers. Day after day the fog and clouds made air support impossible. Supplies dwindled, and finally there were times when enemy tanks were resisted with small-arms fire. Defeat seemed certain. But the thin, bulging line still held, until the day that the skies cleared, and the planes came, paving the way for a smashing drive to victory.

Sometimes the spiritual lines seem thin and wavering. All the power seems to be with the enemy. But God will come if we are in His will. He will not fail. That is the truth revealed in the epic struggle of David and Goliath. When David came out to challenge the giant, the situation appeared not only tragic, but ludicrous as well. Goliath was not at all complimented by his opposition, and seemed to feel that David represented but a minor incident to be dealt with in a rather offhand manner. "Am I a dog," roared Goliath, "that you come after me with a stick?" and threatened to feed David to the birds. But David, armed with his sling and smooth stones, "hasted and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine." Some may differ with me, but I doubt seriously that David had enough strength to put that stone through the thick, bony, beetle-browed skull of that crude giant. I think that when God saw that little fellow running toward his huge opponent, and saw him whirling that sling with such determination, He said, "I must help David." David furnished the courage and the skill that sent the stone on its unerring course, straight to that beetle-browed forehead. But I believe that sometime in that brief second or two after the stone left the sling, the hand of God gave it a "crack" that sent it whizzing and whistling like a bullet, crashing clean through the giant's skull. In less than a minute Goliath was dead, the Philistines were in pell-mell rout, the cause of Israel was triumphant, and the good name of God was retrieved from dishonor.

IN CONCLUSION

As a people we face all the problems and perils common to the war against sin. We must be vigilant at every point of peril and purposeful in maintaining our integrity. At the same time we must achieve for God. No negative process of guarding can compensate for failure in positive holy achievement. We must and can maintain a faith in God that will put divine resources into every situation. By the help of God we can live holy lives, win souls, promote scriptural holiness, and continue to build a church that demonstrates the glory of God in the midst; a

church that will glorify Jesus Christ and wage a victorious battle against sin until Jesus comes again.

* * * * *

THE END