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Autobiographies

MY LIFE STORY

By

C. B. Fugett

*“Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without
which no man shall see the Lord” Heb 12:14*

Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World

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EVANGELIST C. B. FUGETT

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INTRODUCTION

As the pastor of Rev. C. B. Fugett I have been asked to write an introduction to this book.

The first time I ever met C. B. Fugett was when I was pastor of a church in Texas. On the first night of the meeting he gave his life's story and 40 people sought and found God. In that meeting I learned to respect Rev. Fugett as one of the leading evangelists of the nation.

Since being his pastor I have learned to appreciate him more than ever. He is a unique personality, Godly in character, optimistic in nature, dynamic in preaching, humble in spirit, individualistic in style, gifted in prayer, and fearless in dealing with sin. His messages are saturated with prayer and tears, and empowered with the Holy Spirit.

For more than 25 years he has lived in Ashland and been a loyal member of the local church. He is respected by the church and community. During the last two years he has conducted two revivals in the church. The last one being among the best revivals in the church's history. His local church has faith in him and large crowds are in attendance when it is announced that he is to preach.

Though redeemed from a life of sin; he is cultured and refined. In reality he is a miracle of grace. To hear him preach is to respect him; to know him intimately is to love him. C. B. Fugett is one of the greatest souls I have ever met.

Galal A. Gough, Pastor
First Church of the Nazarene
Ashland, Kentucky

MY LIFE STORY

By
C. B. Fugett

Born in a log cabin in the hills of Kentucky, where some die getting religion and some die wearing boots.

Oh, how well do I remember that old cabin, the old fireplace, the back logs, the dog irons; those cold winter nights when we children would pop corn, roast potatoes and play blind-folded and chicka-me-craime-crow. That's a great game! There was a little cherry tree near the back door, and a little old log barn not very far from the house, and up on the hillside there was a little black haw tree. But now the old cabin has been torn down. The little cherry tree stands there no more and, sadder still, some that formed the circle around the old fireplace—they are gone, too.

I am sorry to say that I began to smoke cigarettes when I was a lad of only eight years of age, and was drunk at the age of ten. From ten until I was twenty-one, I was known as the boy gambler, from Cincinnati to Owenton, Kentucky. Night after night in Cincinnati, the bartender got my last dollar, and I was kicked outside or pulled into the back room to spend the night—sleeping in the rear ends of old saloons, lumber roads, straw stacks, and along the roadside until my health broke at the age of twenty-one.

Whiskey ate the lining out of my stomach, and I didn't think then that I had long for this world. Only God knows how I suffered! Now, friends, you know when you are feeling good you don't think much of God or Eternity, but when the color leaves your cheeks and your health is gone it certainly changes the color of some things.

I had never read a chapter in the Bible nor heard one read before I was twenty-one, but God put something in my conscience and something in your conscience to teach us that the righteous have a different reward from the wicked. I was sick, sad and despondent.

One dark, rainy night I was staggering the streets of a little town—cold, hungry and penniless. As I was passing a little Methodist Church, I heard them singing:

"They told of salvation so free,
And of Savior that died on the tree!"

I staggered into that little church that night and threw an old torn overcoat and a flopped-down hat on the floor, and sat down on the back seat.

There were a few young people singing from the "Amen Corner," and they had a shine on their faces that I had never seen on a face before. With their hands lifted toward Heaven, tears rolling down their cheeks, they sang that old hymn: "It Is Joy Unspeakable and Full of Glory!"

My friends, it was the freedom and the glory on those singers that attracted my attention. And the same thing that attracted my attention still attracts the attention of a lost world today. The Holiness

people sing different and testify different; they pray different and preach different, and they are different from any people in the world, and there is no substitute for the glory of God.

Oh, there is no way to tell the impression that service made upon me! The preacher preached, and I never heard a word he said. He dismissed without an altar call. I left the church and got drunk. The next morning when I woke up, the little singers came up before me again. I could see the shine on their faces and hands lifted toward Heaven. I am so glad God called after me!

On January 21, at 10:30 in the morning, God spoke to me and said, "Will you go back to that little church tonight?" And I said, "I will if I am not dead!" From the way I was feeling, I thought I would be dead before night. When I made God that promise I got weak in the knees. I left an old tobacco barn, with men I had been in deep sin with, went down on the hillside, fell on my knees, and began to pray! The rain was coming down from heaven, but there is nothing that can stop any man from seeking God if he really wants God. I didn't know how to get saved. I had never seen a soul converted in my life!

I returned to that little Methodist Church the next night. Herbert Boulder came in and sat by my side. Brother E. J. Arthur preached. By the way, he was a Holiness preacher. At the close of his service he said, "I am now going to open the altar!" I will confess I didn't know what he was going to "open."

At the close of the sermon, this young man looked at me. He had the kindest look upon his face that I had ever seen, and in a sweet, tender tone, he said to me, "Jesus loves you!" That was the sweetest message I ever heard! He was the first man that ever told me that Jesus loved me! I have often wished that I could reproduce the kind look on his face and the tender tone in his voice. He said to me, "Don't you want to give your heart to Jesus tonight?" and we both started for the altar.

I cried and prayed for nearly two hours. The Lord said to me, "Will you give up your cigarettes?" I said, "I will!" From that night to this minute I have never touched another. He said, "Will you give up your liquor?" I said, "If You will lift this burden from my heart that is crushing me to death, I will never drink any more!" I said, "I am through with my cards and my drink." There on my knees, apparently all the sins of my past came before me like a mountain turned black. I quit, got up and sat down on the altar. The preacher said, "What is wrong?" I said to him, "I can't make it!" He said, "You almost got saved a few minutes ago. Get down here and try it again."

How I thank God for that last little boost that dear preacher gave me. Through that little boost I have led nearly 197,000 souls to Jesus Christ, of whom there are over one hundred out preaching the Gospel today.

I dropped back on my knees. Sister Edith Printer began to sing:

"The cleansing stream I see! I see!
I plunge, and lo, it cleanseth me!"

And about that time I "plunged!" I was on my feet praising God! I looked at the preacher; I thought he was the prettiest man I had ever seen! I looked at the little choir of singers; they looked like angels! I looked at my old shoes; they looked better! I looked at my hands; I thought they had changed!

Now, my friend, the preacher hadn't changed, neither had the singers, neither had my shoes or hands, but that moment I was born into the Kingdom of God, and:

"I remember when my burdens rolled away,
I have carried them for years night and day;
When I sought the blessed Lord,
And I took Him at His word,
Then at once all my burdens rolled away!"

I can say with the poet:

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me!"

The most beautiful picture that hangs on the walls of my memory is that little Methodist altar where I first met Jesus.

That night at midnight I stood on the street corner and conducted my first street-meeting. Remember, the night before I was drunk, the following night I was on the street corner, testifying. I hadn't yet joined the church nor been baptized but, thank God, I had been born again! My brothers thought I was drunk, put me in the old buggy, and we started home. They would curse a while and then I would shout a while. I said, "Boys, I have got it!" They said, "You got it in the neck!" I said, "No, I have got it in my heart!" I almost rubbed a hole in my shirt over my heart. I would just yell, "Hurrah for Jesus!" just as loud as I could.

When we reached home, I went to the bedside of my father and mother, woke them up and told them that I had found Jesus. I bowed by the bedside and opened a family-altar in that home, that is still going yet today. Since that time I have seen a number of my sisters, brothers-in-law and loved ones accept my Christ under my ministry.

This all took place over twenty-seven years ago, but I am glad to say that He is more real to me today than He has ever been in my life, and I would close by saying, "Praise God from whom all blessing flow!"

MY LIFE STORY

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ON THE SUNNY SIDE OF LIFE

After reading the story of my conversion and the awful life of sin that I was saved from, you can understand that naturally I was grabbing for every straw to keep from backsliding. I had never heard of that doctrine, Once in grace, always in grace! There is only one thing wrong with that doctrine. There is not a word of truth in it! God has put something in my conscience and something in your conscience that teaches us that the righteous have a different reward from the wicked.

I shall never forget the first prayer meeting, after the revival closed, in the little Methodist Church where I was converted. One-half hour before the janitor unlocked the door, I was sitting on the steps waiting to get in. They had a testimony meeting that night. I had never seen anything like it, and I noticed the young people were testifying. I figured that they would expect me to give a testimony, so I fixed me up a good one. I got on my feet to deliver it and forgot every word of it. I am going to give you now my first testimony. I said, "Thank God He has saved me from tobacco!" That was the big thing in my life, because I had been a cigarette fiend from a little boy. A good sister in the church yelled out, "That's good, stick to it!" It was like giving me a hypodermic. I thought I really had said something.

In this little Methodist Church there was a certain young lady who, every time she testified, got blessed. I thought I would like to have her for my wife. Maybe I should not have had thoughts like these in prayer meeting, but I am sure that all of you that are married got your wife some way. Probably after all there is no better place to pick one than from the prayer meeting crowd! The devil told me I couldn't get her. She was a teacher in that little Methodist Church. But the devil lied to me, for in nine months I had her. The first night I asked to take her home, I just didn't know how to go about it. I asked her if she was going home. There was nowhere else to go around that joint at that time of the night. She said, "I am," and then said I, "So am I." Nine months from that time we stood at the little Methodist altar and were united in marriage.

Right after we were married, we received light on raising tobacco. I told the Lord I wasn't going to raise it any more. My father said, "You will starve to death." I told him if I did I would be in Heaven before my heels got cold. Friends, I would rather starve to death and go to Heaven, than have all the world and be lost, for "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" From that day to this, I have never raised another stalk of tobacco. I have not starved to death either, for God has supplied my every need.

In the little village where I was converted, we conducted street meetings twice a week. One night I related to my congregation on the street corner that I had quit raising tobacco. A merchant came to me at the close of the service and said, "I understand that you are going to quit raising tobacco." I said, "I have already quit." Then he said, "Can you barber?" I said, "I can." However, I had never cut a man's hair or shaved a man in my life. He said, "I have decided to rent you a room up over the store to live in and a place in my store for your shop." Naturally, I inquired how much he was going

to charge for my living headquarters and also my barber shop. He said, "\$1.50 for both." I said to him, "That is cheap enough, but I haven't got the \$1.50." He said he would take it out in trade. I knew I could stand it if he could, and there closed one of the biggest deals that were ever pulled off in that little town.

We went to housekeeping in one room. We had our kitchen, dining room, bedroom, and sitting room all in one. We had a goods box for a kitchen cabinet, and we erected a table from a goods box, too. We had to burn a kerosene lamp in daytime in order to see, for there was just one window pane in that room. We had three straight-back chairs and a wooden bed with slats. You say, "Mr. Fugett, were you happy in a home like that?" I was never happier in my life! We loved God and each other! Remember, friends, it takes more than wood and nails and bricks and mortar, fine Russian or Persian rugs and overstuffed furniture, and silverware, and special china to make a home. If you have the Lord and love for each other, let it be ever so humble, it is home, sweet home.

In Kentucky where I was born, I never heard of a toothbrush nor a safety razor nor toilet soap. We made our soap out of cracklings, and lye that we derived from ashes run through an ash-hopper. I always made mother's soap for her. All this brushing your teeth, shaving every morning, polishing your shoes, was never heard of where I was born; and then again, we never heard of that pajama business. All I had to do was pull off one old galluses and jump in. We sure did save a lot of time. We had time to pray and time to read the Bible, and really time to live; but now we are living in a streamlined age. We have streamlined furniture, streamlined radios, streamlined trains, streamlined airplanes, streamlined automobiles. We even have a streamlined ministry and streamlined pulpits, and there is a streamlined religion. It has no Cross in it, no death in it, and no Blood in it! But the religion of Jesus Christ has a Cross in it, and death in it, and Blood in it; but, thank God, The Way of the Cross Leads Home. That is the way we must go. Many of us have many plans. God has just one. Let's not miss it!

I bought me a barber chair from a shop. I shall never forget the rainy day Nellie and I upholstered that chair and varnished it. I had me a little barber sign painted red, white and blue. I wish I had taken a patent on it. (I might have some money today.) I got the little sign up on the side of the store Saturday morning. It would run only when the wind blew, but the wind was in my favor and the little sign was a-spinning, and I was standing like a big green country boy watching it, and here came a man down the street toward my shop. I looked him over. He looked like he needed his face mowed instead of shaved, and I said, "O Lord, don't let him go in!" But that is one prayer God didn't answer. Then I was in hopes that he wanted to purchase something out of the store. The merchant said, "What will you have?" He said, "A shave." The merchant pointed to me and said, "There is the barber." The big fellow started to get in the chair. It looked like my old chair would flatten out, but it didn't! My father had said, "Son, before you shave them, soap them good in hot water." I will never forget it in this world, and I know he won't.

That was great experience. I had purchased me a new razor. It had never been on a man's face. I paid twenty-five cents for it. I went to work on him. I got him about one-half way down one cheek, turned him over and went to work on the other side. I got him about one-half way down the other side and my old twenty-five-cent razor quit, and the more I sharpened, the duller it got. My hand slipped and I sliced him one. I used every barber's towel Nellie had made me, mopping blood. Blood

ran down into his Vandyke I had left. Then I filled it with powder. He looked different! I imagine he felt different! I said to him, "You are finished." He said, "What do I owe you?" I said, "A nickel." He paid the nickel, walked to the door, pulled his old red bandana out, and began to mop the blood from his face. I stood there and watched my first customer go away sorrowful. Oh, that is so funny now, but it sure wasn't funny then. It seemed to me like drops of perspiration the size of your thumb were running down my back.

I didn't know that Nellie had been peeping. She called to me and said, "Let us go up to the room!" Very meekly I followed her up the steps, and she said, "We will pray!" Now, my friends, in the twenty-five years of my ministry I have sat under men like Billy Sunday, Will Huff, E. Stanley Jones, Dr. H. C. Morrison, Gypsy Smith. I have had the privilege of sitting under some of the greatest preachers that ever crossed this continent. But the greatest prayer I ever heard prayed in my life was in that little dark room that Saturday afternoon. Nellie told God how He saved me from liquor and gambling and tobacco, and how I was trying to make an honest living without working in the tobacco patch. She prayed until she got the party on the other end of the line. She said to me, "Got will not let you down! Take courage! She reached me a handful of pocket handkerchiefs, and said, "Use these for barber's towels if anyone else comes in." Three months from that day, I was making \$5.00 a day in the barber shop. That was good twenty-five years ago. As much as I believe that God sits on the Throne, I believe He heard that little woman's prayer.

While I was in the store with the merchant, he was gloriously converted and called to preach the Gospel. When he received his call to preach he said he wanted to sell the store to me, but I told him I couldn't buy an old hen and chickens. I was taking every dollar I made to make my restitutions. He said he would sell it to me on time. If I paid for it, it was O.K.; if I never did, still O.K. I said, "Man, that sounds good!" I went up to talk it over with Nellie. I thought she would be proud to have a merchant for a husband. Instead she began to cry. She said, "You and that man ran all the trade away." I said, "He got religion." I mean it. We laid it on so hard that people quit coming in. I told her, "We can't lose anything." She asked, "Why?" I informed her that we didn't have anything to lose. She said, "Say, I had never thought of that." I told her that we would have to do some thinking to go through this life, so we bought the store. In twelve months, we paid every dollar for the store. We had a prayer room in the back room and one upstairs. I never sold a dime's worth of tobacco while I was in the grocery business, and I had the largest grocery trade in town. Part of the time we ran five clerks a day.

But while I was so busy, one day I discovered the heavenly dove had ceased to sing in my soul. I said to Nellie, "I will never go in that store again until I hear from Heaven!" The next morning about four o'clock I struck the glory world, and I sold the store before breakfast.

I went on the road as a traveling salesman. I preached at every street corner, train, and courthouse yard they would allow me to. I was preaching a good while before God called me to preach. He saw I was going to preach anyway, so He just called me. When I received my first call to the pastorate, there were six women and one man there in a little mission home. This little home sat over creek called Kezer Creek, up in Kentucky. The devil told me that if I gave up my job to preach Holiness I would starve to death; and I told the devil that if I preached anything it would be sky-blue Holiness.

We began our work in this little mission home and one day a revival broke out and a fine bunch of people prayed through. In the number was a bartender's wife by the name of Williams. He tended bar on Front Street at Catlettsburg. When his wife got converted, she cleaned house and broke up his card table and beer bottles. The bartender sent me word that if I ever put my foot in his house, it would be pitiful for me. But you know, my friends, God allows every preacher to have some severe trial in his life; and I believe if he makes it through over that test, he will make good. One day everything we had to eat all ran out at once. We didn't have anything for breakfast, and had nothing for lunch. This was the darkest day that I had ever lived since I had been converted! Along in the afternoon, I prayed that we starve to death and never tell it and keep the reproach off the Lord. They tell me before you die of starvation, you feel like you are full of good things. However, I hadn't gotten that far along and my stomach was growling like a dog.

I said, "Nellie, we are going up to see Mrs. Williams, the bartender's wife." You remember he had sent word never to put my foot in his house. We didn't any more than enter his home until the telephone rang, and I could tell from their conversation that he was coming home. My heart, that is supposed to be under my fifth rib, got to beating up in my neck. I prayed a little prayer about an inch long. I said, "O God. if he kicks me out of the house, help me to demonstrate the Spirit of Jesus!" About that time, he hit the door. His wife said, "This is Rev. Fugett and his wife." At once he began to curse me and bemean me, calling me vile names; but thank God, I was sanctified. There wasn't a ripple in my soul, and when he was through with his abuse, I said, "God bless you, Mr. Williams. Jesus loves you!" He went into the kitchen, sat down, and began to cry. His wife came in and said, "Brother Fugett, he is weeping—the first tears I have seen him shed in twenty years." She went back to the kitchen and he said, "Wife, I have to tell those good people good-bye!" He came in and asked my forgiveness, told me he was ashamed of himself, and that he believed in my kind of religion. As he shook my hand, he left \$5.00 in it, and also \$5.00 in my wife's hand. Friends, you can never know just how I felt! We hadn't had a bite to eat all day, and here God was using an old saloon keeper and had him a-bawling and giving us money! It seemed to me, when I saw that \$5.00 bill, someone pushed a button in my back. An electric current went from head to heel! I knew I was going to have a spell and I thought the best place to have it would be at home. I don't know how we got out of there.

We got down home,—sat down, and I told Nellie how I had suffered during the day. I pulled out my \$5.00 bill and, sure enough, she had \$5.00, too. We sat there and shouted, whooped and bawled, and told God we would never let Him down. While we were shouting, there was a rap on the door. I went to the door! A big tall man was standing there. He said, "Mr. Fugett, I am a railroad man. I live in Ashland. I am a sinner man, but I have felt all day like you might be in need!" He took out of his truck a big ham of meat, a sack of sugar, a bucket of lard, a sack of flour, a sack of meal, a big beef roast, three big steaks, and a whole side of breakfast bacon. By that time I was sure enough having spells. But let me say, my friends, if we live a holy life, shun the wrong and do the right, I know the Lord will make a way for us, for He has said, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus!"

Remember the devil had been riding me, but now it was my time to ride. I got on, and said, "Old devil, look at that big ham of meat, look at that big beefsteak! You said if I preached Holiness, I

would starve to death!" I said, "Old devil, I want to serve notice on you that I have been pouring it on hot, and your children are paying the bills," for both of them were sinner men.

The first four months in Normal, Kentucky, we built a new church seating a good four hundred people. We had five hundred to pray through and find Jesus. Most of them have gone on to their reward.

Then the Lord called me to the evangelistic field! My companion always stood with me. I was ordained one year, and she was ordained the next. We began our evangelistic work in the mountains of Kentucky. There were nights that we sat up in the little mountain stations, because we didn't have a quarter to get a room. I never heard her complain once about the way being so hard. I have never met a person on this earth who carried so much a burden for the lost, as she carried.

One day she took sick. From that she was operated on. Apparently she recovered and had a relapse. They put her in a room three months by herself, without company. She said to me, "These have been the sweetest three months I have lived. Jesus Christ has been so real!" One day she took a turn for the better. The doctor said, "Reverend, your wife is much better. You can go back to the evangelistic field."

I was in Inez, Kentucky, on my knees at seven o'clock, in Mr. J. E. Maynard's home, praying, for the meeting that I was conducting in the courthouse, when a rap came at the door. A man had ridden horseback from Paintsville. He said, "Rev. Fugett, I have a message from Rev. John Fleming. Your wife is at the point of death. Come at once." I rushed to her bedside. I called God's Bible School to pray for her, and many other of her friends, and the best doctors in the State of Kentucky were at her bedside.

On the 29th day of November, at 11:30 P. M., Dr. Stimson, chairman of the staff of doctors that had so loyally stood with us, said, "Rev. Fugett, your wife is in a coma and will never know you again." I thought I was ready for the shock, for I knew she couldn't live; but you know, friends, we are never ready. I slipped out into a little adjoining room and had prayer. I asked God to allow her to talk with me one more time. When I returned, I picked up her hand, and she opened her eyes. I said, "Nellie, did you know that you came almost going to Heaven a few moments ago?" She said, "I know it." I said, "How close to Heaven did you get?" She said, "I saw Jesus. He is the most beautiful being my eyes have ever looked upon. There is a little river out in front of me, and while He was here with me, He built a bridge across that river for me to cross on!" Then she folded her hands and began to sing,

"The toils of the road will seem nothing,
When I've gone the last mile of the way."

I kissed her good-bye, and said, "Nellie,

'If you hasten off to Glory,
Tarry just inside the Eastern gate.
For I'm coming in the morning,
And you won't have long to wait!'"

These memories linger with me. Nellie was a close friend of my present wife, Elizabeth. I pray God this message will encourage some discouraged heart.