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Autobiography/Sermons

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

By

Thomas P. Roberts

*“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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HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

Wilmore, Kentucky
1952

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DEDICATION

It was through the good providence and plan of God that I met, won, and wedded the girl who was to be my helpmate through life and a truer helpmate no man has ever had. All through our married life and during the busy years of my ministry she stood faithfully and nobly by me in our little humble home.

God gave us four dear children, three boys and one girl. My dear wife had the care and raising of these precious children. Her sweet personality and kind influence together with her Christian life and loving counsel has played no little part in their lives.

While we were out in the evangelistic work, battle after battle, this little woman stood by the home. God's Word says, the reward is as great to them who stand by the stuff as those who fight in the battle. She will share in the reward that will be given in that great, glad, happy day and will hear the words of the Blessed Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant, you were faithful in your part of the building of the Kingdom and the salvation of the lost, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord."

To my precious wife I lovingly dedicate this book and to her I ascribe the following poem of my own originality:

The girl I married was poor, but good
And by my side she has nobly stood.
Her Father and Mother, she lost while young
Then with others her life begun.

I saw her one day under the apple tree,
I said in my heart, "She is the girl for me."
I did not know as she stood under that tree,
That in her heart she was thinking of me.

So, with fleeting footsteps, I hurried to her side
And said, "My child, will you be my bride?"
She gently dropped her lovely head,
Then lifted her eyes and modestly said,

"Must I answer now or wait awhile,
And be sure you love this orphan child?"
"My child," I said, "God has a mate for every man,
And I felt you were made for me by God's own Hand."

"I am an orphan too, I want you to know,
But down through life together we will go."

"So heart in heart and hand in hand,
Letting God be our Guide,
To the close of the day we will ever stand,
You will never regret being my bride."

Now, Our Golden Wedding is past,
Our race is almost run;
But, we hope when we stand in His presence at last,
He will say, "Children, Well done."

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FOREWORD

The purpose of a Foreword is to focus one's attention upon the author and to indicate the character of his book and to sharpen the appetite of the reader. With the good subject in the premises this task will be a real pleasure.

Rev. T. P. Roberts, the well-known Evangelist of Wilmore, Kentucky, was born of sturdy country parents of Anglo-Saxon stock and thereby inherited a strong physical constitution which has stood him in stead during his strenuous career for half a century of preaching.

As a married student in the early and memorable days of Asbury College, he supported a family and acquired a practical education. During his study and subsequent residence in Wilmore, he was favored with the supreme opportunity of sitting at the feet of such outstanding and distinguished religious leaders as Dr. Henry Clay Morrison, Dr. John Wesley Hughes, Dr. W. B. Godbey, Rev. L. L. Pickett and other noted divines. He also drank at the flowing fountain of gospel truth in the great Central Holiness Camp Meeting where many nationally-known Evangelists proclaimed the doctrine of holiness as a second definite work of grace.

Thus qualified and equipped theologically and with the holy fires of evangelism burning in his bones, he went forth on the far-flung battle front and conducted some of the greatest soul-saving revivals recounted in the history of the famous Holiness Movement. This interesting story of his ministerial life contains the vivid description of a number of these epoch-making, soul-saving evangelistic campaigns. Therefore the reader will find that this book is not a dry discussion of abstract principles but humanly historical "Highlights" of an intense evangelistic career providentially ordered and spiritually beneficial to multiplied thousands of people. It has come out of a life-long religious experience fortified and enforced by a deep devotion to the cause of public and personal evangelism.

Early in the history of his evangelistic career he received the nickname or nom de plume of "Night Hawk Tom." This cognomen or sobriquet was given him because of his close preaching and "hewing to the line" in exposing the sins of the people who imagined he stalked the streets of the town at midnight to find out what to preach against the next day.

In the "Highlights" the author touches on the naive and unique customs and manners of the people in the far-famed feudal districts of the mountains of Eastern Kentucky. While this gives the book provincial flavor, yet the congenial "Night Hawk Tom" is a fast friend to the mountain people.

The historical portion of the book is interspersed with a number of characteristic sermons which search the very souls of men.

Withal there is a variety of redeeming feature of clean, wholesome humor running through the book to enliven its religious contents. The vivid description of the unusual and adventurous experiences on "Happy Top," with its primitive rusticity of forty years ago, will charm, amuse and evoke the laughter of the moody, the morose and the melancholy-minded.

The interesting chapter on "It happened" is full of facts and remarkable incidents sufficient to fire the soul and to inspire the reader to a closer walk and to a greater religious activity for the cause of the Kingdom of God.

The literary style of the author's writing is peculiarly his own. He makes no effort to clothe his language in highly scholastic, technical or high-flown philosophical terms, but presents facts in plain practical words which the ordinary reader can easily comprehend.

The "Highlights" center around certain significant events marked by mighty evangelistic occasions. For instance the great Waco and Brookstown revivals were known and recognized as the greatest evangelistic campaigns ever held in Madison County, Kentucky. In this unusual divine visitation and manifestation of grace many souls were saved. Out of this epoch-making and record-breaking meeting a number entered the ministry. Such men as Dr. J. R. Parker of Wilmore, Kentucky, one of the most prominent holiness evangelists of the present day; Dr. J. W. Reeves, formerly of Richmond, Kentucky, and now the noted pastor of the famous Dwight L. Moody church in Northfield, Massachusetts; the late Rev. H. T. Bonny of the Kentucky Conference. Rev. O. B. Beck who was in the mercantile business in Waco at the time was graciously restored and re-entered the Methodist ministry and for years held important pastorates in the Conference. Rev. G. W. Thomas now in the Indiana Conference was converted in the great Doylesville revival meeting in Madison.

Among the number of converts in the great Morehead, Kentucky, revival was the noted attorney, Mr. Will Young, brother of the late legislative political leader, Judge Allie Young. Bill Young was recognized as one of the greatest criminal lawyers in the state of Kentucky.

The chapter composed of a cluster of prominent testimonials on what others say of the author of the "Highlights" is positive proof that Rev. T. P. Roberts, bearing the same name as the noted historical Evan Roberts who spear-headed the world-famous Welsh revival, has wrought unusually well as an ordained minister of the evangelical gospel and has made an outstanding contribution to the cause of Christ.

The blood-curdling, challenging chapter contributed by the noted "Bull-dog" Charley Wireman of the Wesleyan Methodist Church is enough to make one's hair stand on end. His marvelous, and we might say miraculous conversion, under the powerful, pungent preaching of the tireless and unterrified Tom Roberts marks an event in the annals of twice-born men. It is a thrilling story how "Night Hawk Tom" won "Bull-dog" Charley.

With such wonderful success of a characteristically fruitful ministry in the wide evangelistic field, Tom Roberts has never posed as an "high-brow" or brilliant religious leader. It is to his everlasting credit that he has never strutted on the streets as a gaily attired and highly perfumed clerical dude or

dandy. He is just plain and unassuming Tom Roberts — a common man among men. He is one of the exceptionally few preachers of the present day who gets happy and shouts in the midst of his sermon. Nature has endowed him with a good strong voice so essential in effective evangelistic preaching.

He is recognized as an honorable citizen and a useful man of whom his family and the town in which he lives may be justly proud.

He has always stayed in the middle of the road on religion and carefully avoided all dangerous side-tracks and fanatical extremes. Thus furnished with all due caution and the wisdom that comes from above, he has the fine record of having held ten revival meetings in the city of Middletown, Ohio, in addition to the many successful, soul-saving revivals he has conducted for many years throughout the country at large. It is very fortunate that he has written this unique history of the "Highlights" of his life's career for the glory of God and the benefit of others. The book is worthy of a place in any person's library. It will prove a great blessing to all who peruse its pages and study its contents.

We commend it to the public and bespeak for it a wide circulation.

Rev. Andrew Johnson, D.D., Ph.D.

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PREFACE

The preface to our book is the form of a preamble. In these preliminary statements we present five reasons for writing and publishing the book which contains the "Highlights" of our life and ministry in many old time soul saving revival meetings.

For many years the thought of making a book scarcely ever entered our mind. Therefore the origin of the idea of putting a book on the market came from friends. Time and again people would come to us with the request that we put our sermons in print or permanent form. Finally feeling an inward urge and a providential leading we decided to get busy and to push the pen across the pages of the paper and begin the new project.

Our first reason then for publishing and putting the book on the market is the repeated request of the people. It is our sincere desire that they will not be disappointed but pleased as the book goes forth with its message of peace and goodwill.

The second reason for the publication of the "Highlights" revolves around the family and the sacred hearthstone of home. It has been the wish of the members of our beloved family that we leave them in the event of our decease a permanent record of our life's work — something 'that they can behold as a sacred memory. We hope the book will meet this domestic demand. We trust it will be read often and always cherished.

The third reason for writing the book is the high hope that the great revival meetings recounted there in may create a desire in the modern church that the same kind of revivals may be repeated at the present time. Like cause produce like results. God is still on the throne. If the required conditions for a real genuine revival are met and the old time gospel is preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven, Great sweeping soul-saving revivals are inevitable.

The fourth reason for writing the book is personal. The aim or purpose is not to exalt the author. His desire is to create a greater influence for the glorious cause of full and free salvation which may continue to go forward after this earthly frame has crumbled into dust and the soul goes sweeping through the gates "washed in the blood of the Lamb." Amen!

The fifth reason for composing the book and committing it to its fortune or fate is the good it may do for the general welfare of humanity.

While far from being complete, yet the book contains a record of our life as we have lived it and as God has used it.

So, upon the wings of faith we humbly send forth the booklet on its appointed and providential mission, praying that it may prove to be a blessing to all who read its pages and that it may help to kindle the fires for future revivals.

We are under obligation and gratefully acknowledge valuable assistance of our dear preacher son Farris and the help rendered by our faithful friend, Dr. Andrew Johnson, evangelist of Wilmore, Ky.

We fully appreciate the of our daughter Viola Gossett in typing the manuscripts.

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INTRODUCTION

T. P. Roberts, known by his friends everywhere as "Tom", gives us a story of his life in this volume. It is really a story of evangelistic history covering more than a thirty-year period. Tom was graciously converted, beautifully sanctified, and became an enthusiastic preacher. He reminds one of the statement of the Negro man in south Georgia. When asked if anybody enjoyed religion in his community his reply was, "Those who had it did." Tom really enjoys his religion.

You will find this book readable. It is a testimony of the grace of God and what He can do with a consecrated life.

Z. T. Johnson, President Asbury College

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Testimonies

It was in May 1911 that you were preaching in an Evangelistic Meeting which proved to be a Real Revival of Religion, at Doyleville, Ky., Rev. William Vanderpool the pastor.

Meeting scheduled to close on Sunday night May 15, but a service was announced for Monday night, Baptismal Service at the Creek of Tuesday followed by the reception of members the same evening.

It was on Monday evening May 16, that I went to the altar on your invitation, and after some time of repentance and weeping, that a flood of light came in and the burden of my soul rolled away. Some months after that I put all on the Altar and received Full Salvation.

It was not long until the urge to preach the gospel was ever and always with me. Accordingly, I began making preparation for entering the ministry. Local Preacher's License was granted in June 1915 — I graduated from Asbury College in 1919 and came to the North Indiana Conference as a pastor the same spring. Thirty three years have been spent in the pastorate here with the close of this Conference Year.

I thank God for the early experiences and most of all that my anchor still holds and that I am still on the firing line.

George W. Thomas

I count it a blessed privilege to write a few words of my personal appreciation of Brother T. P. Roberts. His genuine experience of full salvation and his faithfulness in giving testimony to the same has made him an instrument of the Lord in the salvation of thousands, many of whom are preaching the simple Gospel today.

By every right his name belongs to the "Endless Line of Splendor." Today many rise up to call him blessed and to thank God for such a fruitful ministry.

W. S. Mitchell

Our mutual friend, Andrew Johnson, writes me that you are soon to publish a book on your years in the Christian ministry. I am sure what you have to say will make a very interesting story and will

be read with pleasure by your many friends. I remember your earnest preaching and zeal which were very influential in my own life when a young man. Surely God has been using you in the salvation of souls and in the service of His Kingdom, It is my privilege to be serving the Dwight L. Moody Church in Northfield, Mass.

Joseph W. Reeves

I believe now that it was in November of 1924 that Rev. T. P. Roberts assisted Rev. G. W. Hoffman in a revival at Carrithers Chapel, a little country church in Spencer County, Kentucky. It was in that meeting that my soul was sorely troubled because of my sins. Some years before I had become a member of that little church, but under the preaching of Brother Roberts, God knocked at the door of my heart. I saw that I was a lost sinner and longed for deliverance from my sins.

One evening near the latter part of that revival, as I remember now, I went into the church and sat down about the third seat from the front. While I was sitting there during the time of the service, surely God spoke to my soul. I felt a lightness come to my burdened heart. I had been to the altar an evening or two before, but it was while I was in this seat that God came in. Something happened to me then that changed the course of my life. I began then to follow Jesus and soon felt that He would have me go into the ministry.

This summer I went back to the little church to attend an evening service in a revival. In that service I sat as near as memory would allow in the spot in which I was sitting that night God spoke peace to my soul. As I sat there I looked to the altar where my wife was converted some months after I was. I had a deep feeling of praise as I thought of those two other days. Other people were in the service, but I wonder if they felt that evening as did I. My mind would run back over the miles and years since that first evening. What a difference it has made in my life and will mean across the eternity.

H. M. Wiley

In this age of interlocking influences, it is difficult to attribute certain achievements to certain causes. Many people and things influence our lives, and it would be interesting to trace these influences and give credit to the proper sources, and while this cannot be done in whole, it can be done in part.

In my early ministry it was my privilege to meet Rev. T. P. Roberts, and work with him in revival meetings in churches where I was pastor, and elsewhere. It is refreshing in this day of chaos and doubts, to find a minister who preaches his faith instead of preaching doubts; and this I found to be true in the preaching of this consecrated man. I found him true to the doctrines of the Bible, and therefore true to the Articles of Religion as set forth in the Discipline of the Methodist Church.

In later years, while I was pastor of The Methodist Church, Wilmore, Kentucky, the home of Brother Roberts, I found him faithful in his service for Christ. Although he retired from the conference, he continued to preach as supply pastor, and evangelist. He attended my church services, and prayer meetings, when not preaching elsewhere. He always stood by me as pastor of the church; and would assure me of his prayers and love, which encouraged my heart in the work.

G. R. Tomlin, D.D.

I have known Rev. T. P. Roberts since the days we were in college. He has been a faithful messenger of Christ as a pastor and as an evangelist and has been successful in both fields.

W. B. Garriott

It is with great pleasure and a sense of loyal devotion that I write this testimonial regarding the work of Rev. T. P. Roberts, who for many years as a member of the Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Church has served as a pastor and evangelist.

My first acquaintance of him was in the spring of 1921 when he came to the Florence Methodist Church to assist the pastor, Rev. G. R. Tomlin in a revival, and I, as a wayward young man became impressed with his forceful preaching of the great old doctrines of the Bible as taught in the yesterdays by John and Charles Wesley.

During this revival my wife was reclaimed, and I became convicted of my sinful condition and my need of God, which led to my conversion and call to the ministry, on the fourth Sunday afternoon in June 1921 about a month after the revival had closed.

Bro. Roberts has conducted numbers of revivals throughout the years, many of which have proven great awakenings and resulting in many finding the Lord, but to me the outstanding characteristic of his work is that it abides throughout the years. Many revivals close and in a few weeks are forgotten, but not so with the work of Bro. Roberts, it abides and after years have past the results of his revivals are still living in the lives blessed under his ministry.

He has always been outstanding in his declaration of the need of a vital Christian experience, preaching in a sane and convincing manner the need of Repentance, the New Birth and Sanctification as a Second definite work of grace.

C. C. Tanner, Pastor Olive Hill Methodist Church.

It affords me real pleasure to write you a line, as you enter the new field, and write a book, of which one said a long time ago, "Of making many books there is no end." It has been my pleasure to know Rev. T. P. Roberts since he began a very fruitful ministry in fact he held for me in old Cassidy Methodist Church one of the great revivals of all my ministry. Scores were saved and I was kept in the Licking River nearly every month, that winter baptizing people by immersion who came into the church on profession of faith as a result of that meeting. Bro. Roberts has been an outstanding Evangelist in the Methodist Church, and has preached a full gospel and had thousands of converts. And I hope his book will be used to win many to Christ, for I am sure this is his greatest desire.

I shall look forward to reading his book with great pleasure, and hope the fondest anticipations of the author shall be realized.

W. L. Clark

When I was a boy about 10 years of age I was attending the old Glenn View Campmeeting near Greensburg, Ky. Rev. T. P. Roberts, of Wilmore, Kentucky was one of the evangelists when I went to the altar and was converted. I remember well when this happened in the straw of this old camp. The abiding presence of the Holy Spirit is with me now and has been with me through these years. Brother T. P. Roberts was wonderfully used of the Lord, with his great ministry in bringing me into this wonderful experience. The Lord has blessed me in the field of song evangelism for twenty-five years, and I am grateful I had the privilege of hearing Brother Roberts, this man of God, in my youth.

E. Clay Milby

I was converted at Aliceton, Ky., Camp Meeting Under the preaching of Dr. J. L. Glascox, and a short time after my conversion, I was sanctified under the ministry of Rev. T. P. Roberts and called to preach.

Brother Roberts was a source of inspiration and encouragement in my early ministry when I really needed help and guidance. After I entered the pastoral work he did some evangelistic work for me, with much success in bringing others to Christ. He has been a true servant of God and many have found Christ through his ministry. May God richly bless his book to the salvation of many souls.

G. B. Trayner

I have known Rev. T. P. Roberts for a period of more than thirty years. He is one of God's true and tried servants, and has been a great soul winner through the years. He was a Pastor in my District when I served as Superintendent and was most successful and fruitful in his efforts. He has been a

great evangelist, and God has wonderfully blessed his life and ministry. I am glad now in the closing years of his ministry he is putting into book form some of the rich experiences of his life, and I shall bespeak for it a great sale with successive editions.

Warner P. Davis D.D.

I have known Rev. T. P. Roberts since 1931. During that period I have had the privilege of being his District Superintendent twice. Brother Roberts has always impressed me as being a true "man of God." He loves God, the Church and people. Naturally his people love him and believe in him. He is soundly spiritual in the truest sense, and has distinguished himself as a Gospel preacher and soul-winner in the Kentucky Conference. He writes out of a rich experience and fruitful ministry.

Floyd D. Rose D.D.

It gives me a distinct pleasure to make a brief statement at the request of Brother T. P. Roberts, to be included in his new book. The place of my conversion was at Salvaisa, Kentucky, a village in the heart of the "blue grass." On the invitation of the Rev. Pat Long, Brother Roberts had come as an evangelist to the Salvaisa Charge. The community was mightily stirred under the forceful and dynamic preaching of the evangelist. His fearless and courageous preaching gave sin and Satan no quarter. The issue was set; the stakes were high; immortal souls were hanging in the balance. These issues moved the earnest soldier of the Cross to put his heart and soul into the conflict.

A number of people, under the impact of the truth of the Gospel, yielded their lives to Christ. Most fortunately for me, I was one of that number. I was twenty-three years of age at the time, and, although I had a religious nature and had often prayed, I had never become a Christian. Under the influence of the revival, a pungent conviction gripped my heart. It was not to be lightly regarded or easily shaken off. My soul cried out for deliverance from sin. Upon the invitation of the evangelist, I came forward and knelt at the altar of the little red brick church. In a never-to-be-forgotten moment, God came into my heart. I shall never forget that experience. My sins were forgiven. Divine peace came into my troubled heart. It was transforming, vital, eruptive, life-giving. As long as I am rational, I shall never forget the glory of that hour. No vagueness, no uncertainties here. I was a new creature in Christ.

Subsequent to that experience, God honored me by giving me a call into the ministry. That call I answered. After twenty years of service in the ministry, I rejoice that God gave me that call. I am deeply grateful for what good I may have done for the Kingdom. Also, I am happy that in the workings of Providence, my path crossed the path of Brother Roberts, and that under the influence of his life and preaching, I became a Christian and a preacher of the gospel.

Rev. L. D. Roe

In appreciation of the life of ministry of Rev. T. P. Roberts he came to Herrington Chapel as pastor of this Union Church. I was unconverted at this time. I thought with many others that he was a great gospel preacher. He was great because he was godly. All true greatness comes from godliness. He preached the old time gospel and you could look in his face and see that he had what he preached. Nearly every service someone would be saved at an altar of prayer. He held two of the greatest meetings ever held in Madison County. I loved him then and love him now.

J. A. MacClintock

I have known Rev. T. P. Roberts for more than thirty years. He is a good evangelist and one of the best of preachers. I have had him with me in revival services. He is a great soul winner and his work abides. I cheerfully recommend him and his book.

B. C. Gamble

"My Daddy"

Many years ago people would often see a slim, good looking man, with coal, black hair and steel-gray eyes leading a little tow-headed girl. The man was my father, T. P. Roberts and I was the little girl. I was the baby after the interval of eight years and the only girl, so of course I was the apple of the family's eye and most especially Daddy's.

I went everywhere with him. I shall never forget those golden days of childhood and youth. The wonderful trips, the stirring old-fashioned revivals and the fine, generous people I met. Now, as I grow older I realize more and more what a grand heritage it is to have good Christian parents, who try to do all they can for Christ and their fellowmen. These two scriptures come to me over and over when I think of Daddy and his life.

"Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it."
Proverbs 22 :6

"I have been young and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" Psalms 37:25.

Viola Roberts Gossett

Dear Father;

By request, I am writing a brief letter to this book written by my father. I assume it an honor to write it. God's Word says, "Honor thy father and mother." If, His word had not said that, I would still have honored them, because there never lived nor will ever live, sweeter better people in this old world. They deserve the best I can say and more. To my last breath, I will be thanking God for the best people I ever knew who loved me, gave for me, lived for me, prayed for me, worked and sacrificed for me, and sought by every means possible to lead me into the true paths and life of an honorable Christian man. Though, I have swerved from that path and life in many respects, nevertheless, God's Word holds good, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." Today, I am seeking by the divine help of God to go the way God wants me to go, and the way my precious father and mother taught me. To them I owe an everlasting debt of gratitude for all they have done for me; God bless this book, its author and the one to whom it has been dedicated. And may He richly bless everyone who shall read its pages. It is a testimony as well as an account of a great Ministry and Life. I know it was not given in the spirit of braggadocio, but in humility and praise to such a great God Who could have caused so much good and such a great Christian success. If there should come out of its reading just one precious soul for the Kingdom of God, the book will be far more than paid for.

I was born in Nicholas County, Ky., Carlisle is the County Seat. My father and mother with other good people moved from Nicholas County of Jessamine County, Kentucky when I was only 2 years of age, and of course I knew nothing about the place of my birth until many years later. I remember when we moved from the farm a few miles below Wilmore, Kentucky, into town where my father entered Asbury College to study for the ministry.

As a small boy, I became acquainted with some of the greatest Christian men and women of the world, including such persons as: E. Stanley Jones, J. W. Hughes, H. C. Morrison, W. B. Godbey, and many many more. They have been to me a blessed memory in my trying to live the Christian life. Incidentally, I can remember the last sermon Dr. E. Stanley Jones preached in Wilmore before his departure for the great Mission Fields of India. I loved all those great men. They will never know how much it meant to me to be under their Christian influence.

But of all the Christian influences which meant so much to me, none could ever take the place of the influence of my own father. To me, no one could ever hold a light to my father's preaching, and to this day, I haven't swerved too far from that conclusion. Many of the accounts of this book are vivid memories to me. I went with my father in many of the week-end services, met and loved the good people, and received their love in return. I often said, if ever I preach, I want to preach like my Dad. I have tried and tried to do just that, only to realize what a miserable failure I have made. I have looked around many times to see if he had not splintered some of the pews, or to see if some of them were not losing their varnish under the blazing heat from those scathing blasts from the pulpit.

There may be many who might think that that kind of preaching wasn't necessary. Maybe it wasn't, I'm not the judge. But I do know that God honored that kind of preaching which was instrumental in the salvation of many precious souls, and a richer account for the Kingdom of God. The results are undeniable. Maybe the doctor's prescriptions are very severe sometimes, too, but

many have been made well by following such prescriptions. Dad was an Old Time Gospel dispenser of the Medicine. He was not a surgeon and perhaps a specialist, but he has applied remedies to many a sin sick soul only to see that sin sick soul get well and then blaze the fact of his recovery to everyone he met.

Dad was on the type of Peter Cartwright, W. B. Godbey, and others who believed what they preached and preached it with all they had. I would, under God, pay my profound respects to such men as Cartwright, Godbey, Moody, and others, including my own father, for their spiritual courage, their zeal, their undying faith and love for the God they served and the souls they were seeking to rescue for God. If God could put up with such fiery preaching, and it did the job, I can put up with it too. In one of my father's revivals, he had preached a sermon on "Hell" and at the close of the sermon a fellow sitting in the back of the house turned and left the church. Upon reaching the street he accosted a Negro man and gave him a dollar to walk home with him. Some think there may not be such a place as Hell, but my father sure manufactured a pretty literal place that time. Maybe, we had better not take too many chances on it not being true and then all too late come to find out that it is true. No one has ever gone beyond this mortal life and come back and told Ms it was not true.

I have been preaching for over 25 years. I have seen many precious souls saved in my pastorates, many of them under my own ministry. Coming up through all these pastorates, I have also been coming up through one of the greatest changing periods perhaps all of us have ever seen. Tent Meetings, Camp Meetings, Revival Meetings, and special evangelistic efforts in many places are seemingly things of other days. New twists and angles have been applied to the Scriptures and the Old Gospel and the ways and systems of religious harvesting have taken a huge swing in an altogether different way since those days of my father's preaching. It has been so terrific that it would sweep anyone who did not have his feet firmly on the Rock of Ages, into an abyss of skepticism and agnosticism, and even very close to atheism.

I have preached all of my ministry in the state of Illinois. I have met some of the best and dearest people in this world. My beginning years of ministerial work were rather hectic and uncertain. But as the years have come and gone, and as the work seems even more blessed, I have settled down to a sure understanding of the gospel and my intentions of finishing up at the good old Gospel Post. I have served only 9 pastorates in 25 years. In one pastorate I served 8 years consecutively, and could have stayed longer. My determination is not to see how long I stay in any one place, but how much good I can accomplish while I am there.

In closing, I wish to add these words: Friend or foe, saint or sinner; there is no greater life than that dedicated to the Master's use. One day, we shall all stand before God. It matters not when or where, but how. In our service for Our Master, it matters not where, but when and how. In the final check-up with Our Maker, and the eternal destiny of our souls have been decided by our great God, it will not matter when and how, but where.

To you who read this book, keep in mind that all of these accounts and writings have been prepared for your best profit, and the total praise, credit, and honor, to God through Our Precious Master, Jesus Christ. I hope to meet you in My Father's better world, surrounded by His eternal Joys,

amid the company of all men made perfect, with your loved ones, and my loved ones, where we will ever sing the eternal praises to Our King, as eon after eon rolls away into eternity.

Farris M. Roberts

"After serving the devil for years, I went to a revival my Father was conducting in Middletown, Ohio, and was converted. I am a Christian today. I teach a Bible Class in my Church. What I am and ever expect to be, I owe to a Father and Mother who feared God and never forgot to pray for a wandering boy."

Clarence E. Roberts

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 1

Highlights of My Life and Ministry

"For if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the Blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." I John 1:7. "That was the true Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the World." St. John 1:9.

I was born in Nicholas County, Kentucky, on October 1, 1872. I was the third of seven children and I suppose from what they say, that I was the "black sheep" of the family. I was the baby for five years, naturally I was spoiled until folks could smell me at a distance. When they came for me at one of our neighbors and told me that the stork had brought me a little baby sister, this broke up my little play-house. I was no longer the little spoiled, petted baby; so, I wanted to get rid of her and wanted to put her in the well. But, I am so glad I did not drown her for she was the first one I led to Jesus and has been my intercessor all through my ministry.

My father was a good provider, hard worker, but never knew what it was to live under his own roof. With so large a family it was hard for him to make ends meet, and not being a Christian he did not know the secret of putting Jesus between the ends. He loved his family and practically gave his life for them by hard work and exposure. Although he was not a Christian yet he was in sympathy with our mother and did nothing to discourage her in the religious life and made every possible arrangement for her and the children to attend Sunday School and Church. He would often go with us, but was so tired and worn when Saturday night came that he felt as if he needed the rest on the Sabbath. Of course, if he had been saved, he would have felt differently. When he came down in his last sickness he sent for his preacher. He belonged to the Christian Church. Brother Thorpe came a number of times. We lived in a very religious community and the good people came to see him and he would always ask them to have prayer, and some months before he died, he was gloriously saved. Even before he was saved he was always glad when the preacher would come home with mother and the children. So, our home was a preacher's home. A few days before father left us, my oldest sister asked him if he felt he was alright and ready to go. He said, "Bettie, I have but one regret and that is leaving your mother and you children. I am ready to go and meet my Lord. I have no fear." And we are going to meet him some sweet day!

My mother was one among the most saintly souls I ever knew. If it had not been for her Godly life and influence I might have been lost and the thousands saved under my ministry might not have been saved. I have often said that when I get to heaven and the crowning angel comes around to put a few stars in my crown, I will tell him to put them in Mother's crown, for I might have had no trophies to lay at the Master's feet, if her prayers and daily life had not influenced me to be a Christian.

Mother raised us children on prayer and hickory tea. I do not remember Dad ever whipping any of us, he always turned that job over to Mother and she seemed to be an expert at the job, especially, when she got hold of me. I am sure it hurt her much more than it did us. I am certain that she never hit me a lick amiss unless she hit at me and missed me.

I remember in my first school year Mother's sister was the teacher and was staying at our home. The school house was in sight of our home. I was always a Tom-girl and wanted to play with the girls. I think now that I only wanted to tease them, and one day we were playing "playhouse" and when they had their table set, I saw it was my chance. I ran through their dining room kicked over their little table, spilled their polkberry preserves, broke up their mud pies and made havoc of their noon-day meal. They threw clods and rocks at me and I ran bawling, to the school-house to tell Aunt Mollie. I started to run, but they headed me off. Aunt Mollie, the teacher, gave me a good "tanning," with a green iron-weed, and I pulled out for home to tell mother how Aunt Mollie had beaten me up. I was sure mother would take my part and give it to Aunt Mollie straight, for being so cruel to her sweet little baby boy, when she came home. When I entered the house, sobbing like my heart would break,

Mother said, "What is the matter, now?" I replied, "Aunt Mollie whipped me." She said, "What for?" I replied, "Nothing." She said, "You did something or she would not have whipped you, what was it?" I replied, "I was just playing with the girls." Mother said, "She would not have whipped you for just playing with the girls, what did you do?" I finally confessed that I ran through their play-house. She finally got the whole story out of me, and instead of taking my part, she walked down to an old pear tree and broke off a sprout and gave me a worse whipping than Aunt Mollie had given and sent me back to school. We need more old-fashioned mothers like her today.

I never liked school and got many a thrashing for playing hooky. I was the looser, and it made it very embarrassing when I came to Asbury and entered school there. I had to begin in the Primary Department and for three and one half years I burned midnight oil, pulled my hair, kept my nose to the educational grindstone until it is crooked to this day. This I had to do to get what little "book sense" I have and I got it the hard way, yet, I appreciate what Asbury College has meant to me, with those good, kind, Godly, patient professors, I do not think I could have found the like anywhere else. God's blessings upon their memory.

I can see now that I was always religiously inclined. In my early childhood days, I loved the old Circuit Rider. When he would come to our home we children would take his horse to water and feed it, and carry his grip into the house. I thought they were the greatest men on earth and I have not changed my way of thinking. Often in my childish thinking I would imagine I was a circuit rider and preaching to large congregations, with little children taking my horse to water and carrying my saddle-bags into the house. Frequently my congregations consisted of mullein stalks and waving wheat fields. My pulpit was a huge rock, the canopy of heaven as an auditorium, warbling birds and passing winds my choir and the murky pond my baptistery. Sometimes my congregations would consist of my sisters, little brother and the neighbors' children.

When I was between the ages of 8 and 9 years, there was a revival in the Baptist Church that I attended. There were only two churches in our community, the Baptist and the Methodist. They were

having an old-fashioned "mourner's bench" revival. I went to the altar and got saved and have never doubted that God came into my young tender heart that night. But I later heard a preacher say, in one of my camp-meetings at a children's service where there was a number of them saved, that it was as easy for a child to backslide as it was for them to get saved. He said you will see that these children will come back without a profession in a few days. What he said is so, unless they have someone to encourage and teach them. Oh, how we need Godly parents and Christian influence around our children as it was with me. Had it not been for my Godly mother encouraging me and praying for and with me, the devil might have made me doubt that I was saved that night. But, as I have already said, I never doubted it. I believe I was called to preach before I reached my teens, but I did not obey the call, hence I lost my experience. However, I never got away from the call and when I would hear a preacher preaching the gospel I would say down in my heart, how I wish I could preach like that. And though I was living a backslidden life, I wanted to get back to God. I knew if I did I would have to answer the call to preach. I felt I was not qualified and that I would never be able to preach. I lived in that condition for eight long years, and no one knows but those who have had a similar experience what a miserable life it was. I was reclaimed a number of times, but every time the call to preach was renewed and I would try to compromise with my Lord telling Him that I would teach a Sunday School Class, superintend a Sunday School, lead Prayer-meetings, anything, except preach. But I found that He was no compromiser. It was preach or backslide. I remember hearing a young preacher say while I was in school, that he did not believe anyone was ever called to preach until he had done everything possible to keep from preaching. So, for ten years I lived the up and down life. I never refused to pray when called on. I would testify whenever I had an opportunity, but would always say, "I am not where I want to be and where God wants me to be and I want the prayers of God's people." I always detested hypocrisy, I never wanted to claim something I did not have.

Awhile after we were married, my wife and I, were attending a revival in Little Rock, Kentucky; (Bourbon County). Dear, saintly S. H. Pollitt was doing the preaching, and those who have heard him know what a mighty preacher he was especially, on holiness. On a Sunday morning I went to the altar seeking holiness with my head, but my heart was seeking reclamation, and God always answers the heart need and not the head. I was reclaimed, and God flooded my soul with great joy. Those about the altar thought I was sanctified and insisted on my claiming the blessing of full salvation, but I knew I had just been reclaimed. I believed that I would know the difference between the Blessing and the Blessor. I am sure this mistake has been made by many seeking sanctification with their heads, when they needed to be saved or reclaimed, and thereby a reproach has been brought on the cause of Holiness.

The following Monday after my reclamation they were having cottage prayermeetings for the revival. Wife and I, with a number of the neighbors, attended this meeting. I opened the gate for the ladies. I closed the gate and as I started up the path to the house, I put my hand in my pocket and touched a big twist of the "devil's chewing gum." I took that twist of tobacco out of my pocket and threw it as far as I could into a weed field, and turned my back to keep from seeing where it fell. My back has been turned on that filthy habit ever since. Thus, I was cleansing myself from the filthiness of the flesh. I had been making my consecration ever since I left the altar on Sunday and I thought when I threw the filthy weed away I surely had completed the last act that would keep me from being a joyous Christian. But when I got on my knees in that cottage prayer-meeting, there was that long-debated question: "Will you preach my Gospel?" "Anything Lord," I cried, "Only meet the need

of my hungry heart." Like a lightning flash breaks through the blue, the fire fell and the glory filled not only my heart but the room where we were assembled. I think everyone in that prayer-meeting was on his feet shouting and praising God. It must have been similar to the early Church, when in the "upper room." He came and filled all the house wherein they were sitting. It was a veritable Pentecost and a great epoch in the life of this preacher.

"MR. TOBACCO"

My name is Old Tobacco
Sometimes called Burley or Long Green.
I'm one of the most notorious hypocrites
That you have ever seen.

They sow me and plant me
In the cold murky ground.
They plow me and hoe me,
And pull the earth around.

They worm me and top me,
And pull the suckers out.
And whether it's right to use me
They have some fearful doubts.

Then they split me and cut me,
And hang me up to dry;
And all the time they're doing this
There's a cloud in their spiritual sky.

Then they strip me and bulk me,
And haul me off to sell:
For the human family to use me
And damn their souls in hell.

They chew me and smoke me,
And contaminate the air.
Then they go to Church on Sunday
And try to say their prayers.

But going to church on Sunday,
I'm sure is not enough.
For God will not hear and answer,
Until they quit the dirty stuff.

by - Rev. **T. P. Roberts**, Wilmore, Ky.

Soon after this experience we moved to Wilmore, Kentucky, to begin to make our preparations to fulfill the promise I made to God on that eventful afternoon.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 2

Preparing for the Ministry

In the year 1900, my wife and I and two small sons, came to Wilmore, Kentucky, I bought a carpenter shop from Mr. Jord Lowery for the sum of \$200.00. This, I partitioned off into two rooms and lived there for three and a half years attending Asbury College during that time.

My first attempt to preach was in a tent meeting in Clark County, Kentucky. I went to this tent meeting with one of the Asbury boys who was engaged for this revival. I wanted to get some experience before I started preaching and insisted on the Evangelist not to expect me to take any service. I would pray and work around the altar or do anything I could in the meeting except take charge of a service. The meeting began on Friday night with a fairly good crowd. At the close of the service, the Evangelist announced that I would preach at ten o'clock Saturday morning. That announcement almost knocked me off my feet. I was so shocked I was unable to say a word until we got alone, then I said, "Brother Gates, why did you do this? I asked you not to expect me to try to preach or lead a service until I had had some revival experience." He replied, "The best way to learn to preach is to preach."

I did not sleep well that night. I knew very little about the Bible. I did not eat any breakfast the next morning. I had no appetite. I went out into the grove and prayed, but it seemed I could get nowhere or get any light on any Scripture or text to use for my message. I think I prayed in every fence corner between the grove and the home where we were staying. Finally I thought I had a verse of Scripture I could talk on for a few minutes. We went to the tent and they began the service. While they were praying the last prayer before I was to take the service, all went blank on the Scripture I thought I was to talk on. I asked Brother Gates to sing another song and while they were singing a verse of Scripture came to me but I did not know where it was found; so I whispered to the Evangelist and asked him to find it for me. He did and handed the Bible to me. The verse of Scripture that had come to me was the first verse of the 5th Chapter of 2nd Corinthians: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

I wanted more than anything in the world to be sure that my call to the ministry was Divine. I had put the fleece out a number of times before, but while praying over this service, I put the fleece out again like Gideon of old, I said, "Now Lord, give me a clear evidence this morning of my call to preach, by saving someone in this service."

I took my text and I think I repeated my text twice. That is about all I remembered except that I cried, "hollered," and shouted, but to this day I do not know what I said.

To the best of my memory, there were not over twelve or fifteen people in that audience. There were two or three unsaved and about that many backsliders. Every sinner was saved and every backslider was reclaimed. That was the happiest moment of my life. My call was settled and I never doubted my call to preach from that time to this good day.

My next effort of evangelistic work was in a Barnmeeting with this same Evangelist, Brother Gates. This meeting was in Bourbon County, Kentucky, preached alternately with Brother Gates throughout this meeting. These meetings were my initiation into the Evangelistic field.

We held these meetings during our summer vacation and then went back in the fall to begin our schooling for another term. This was the most trying time I had while in school because I wanted to be out in revivals, but I made it through by holding services over the week-ends, many times in private homes.

Dr. J. W. Hughes, then President of Asbury College, had arranged for some of the boys to conduct revivals during the Christmas Holidays. A fellow-student, by the name of Fred Avery, and I, were to go to West Irvine, Kentucky, about two miles from Irvine, the County Seat of Estill County. The church, where we were to hold the revival, was about one mile beyond West Irvine at a little village called Cedar Grove. The pastor of the charge was on a vacation in Florida. Dr. Hughes had instructed us to inquire for Aunt Lydia Willcox, as this was where we were to be entertained. As far as we know now, Aunt Lydia was the only one in the whole community who professed to have religion. She was one among the best women I ever knew. But at this time she was in a backslidden condition, as we will relate later on.

When we arrived at the Willcox home, a little girl answered our knock. She invited us in and excused herself and left us alone in the parlor room. She was the only one we saw. It was about sundown when we arrived. In an hour or so, the same little girl came to the door and invited us out to supper. We had to go through the hall into the sitting room, then into the dining room. As we went through the sitting room, the head of the home, Mr. Willcox, was sitting in an invalid chair growling like a dog with a bone. I heard him say, "I do not know why they sent you boys up here anyway."

By this time I was at the table which was loaded with good things to eat. Sister Willcox gave us a warm welcome. There was a sweet group of boys and girls around the festive board. I did not have much of an appetite, so I soon excused myself, and went back through the sitting room. The dear old man was still growling, but I did not stop to hear what he said.

Soon Brother Avery came in. He looked at me as if to say, "what will we do now?" I called him to prayer. I remember we took each other's hand and got on our knees facing each other. If ever two boys prayed in earnest, we were those two boys. While we were on our knees, the first bell rang at the church. We had to go through a little cedar grove, and I said to Avery, "Let's pray again." We got down and prayed for strength and courage to face the task. It had been well announced that we were coming to hold a meeting in Cedar Grove Methodist Church, so they were there from the "lead mines!" The Church was crowded to its capacity. I do not remember who tried to preach that first sermon. I rather think Avery did, and at the close of the service, the crowd filed out until there were only two left standing looking at each other, Avery and me. He looked at me again as if to say,

"What will we do now?" I told him , "There is plenty of wood and a good stove, we will take a berth in the Church." We replenished the fire, spread our overcoats on the pews next to the stove. We were about to retire for the night when a little boy stuck his head in at the door and said, "Uncle Ben said for you to come down there and sleep."

We gladly accepted the invitation. Uncle Ben's house was just across the road from the Church. We entered the house and Uncle Ben arose, staggered across the room about "three sheets" in the wind, shook our hands and said with a very thick tongue, "No one is going to stay in a church on a night like this, whether he is a preacher or a tramp, when we have a good bed in a good warm room, unoccupied."

Aunt Hudley, wife of Uncle Ben, was as sweet and kind as our own mothers, but she too showed she had sipped a little too deep at the "fiery fountain of the tempting flood." They put us in a good warm room and on a well filled featherbed with plenty of wool covers. As we were going into the "dream-land" we could hear the geese quacking and the lambs bleating.

The next morning we had "Thanks" at the morning meal, thanking God for the kindness of this fine family and the good night's rest. We prayed earnestly for God's blessings on this family.

After such a good night's rest and such a wonderful time around the family altar in Uncle Ben's home, we went up to the Church. This being Sunday morning and in the day-light, we discovered the church building very much dilapidated, glass out of the windows, weeds higher than the first sash of the windows. A small group had gathered for the service, and though the crowd was small, God was there and our hearts were very much encouraged.

After the service, the same sweet little girl, who met us and welcomed us the first afternoon, came up to us and said, "Mother said for us to bring you home with us for dinner." After dinner we had a season of prayer and God blessed. As we started to service that evening, this family insisted on our coming back and spending the night. The services were well attended that night. We were so enthused that we announced services for Monday morning, to begin at 10:00 o'clock. We had one person in the audience on that Monday morning, the same sweet little girl, Nannie Willcox. We continued to have good crowds at the night services. On Tuesday morning our crowd increased by two. Little Nannie Willcox had brought two of her little sisters with her. After we had talked on a passage of Scripture, I said to Nannie, "Don't you want to be a Christian?"

She replied, "Yes."

I instructed her to get on her knees and I said to her, "Nannie, you pray while I pray."

While we prayed, Nannie was gloriously saved.

That day, we dined again with Uncle Ben and Aunt Hudley. That night, Aunt Lydia Willcox, mother of little Nannie, was in the service. After the first song and the evening prayer, Aunt Lydia arose to her feet and asked if she might speak. We said, "gladly." We could sense that something had happened. She said, with tears of joy running down her cheeks:

"I have felt for sometime that I was not where I ought to be spiritually. I have lost some of the joy I once knew, but kept trying to make myself believe I was alright. But this morning, when Nannie was coming up the path, I heard her singing. I looked through the glass in the front door, she was leading her little sisters one on each hand, and she had such a shine on her face that I knew she had been saved. I turned from the door and went into the kitchen. I closed and fastened the door, got down on my knees and told my dear Lord I would never leave the room and meet my dear children until He gave me the assurance that I was back in the Fold. I hardly got the words out of my mouth when there came to me such a peace and joy. I ran, unfastened the door, found Nannie standing in the hall with her face shining. I folded her in my arms and said, 'Nannie, we will live for God and go to Heaven if none of the rest go.

By the time Aunt Lydia had finished her testimony there was hardly a dry eye in the house. I thought of that verse of Scripture, "And a little child shall lead them." From that hour the revival progressed with leaps and bounds.

The entire Willcox family was saved, including Uncle Ben and Aunt Hudley. In about a week or ten days, Uncle Al Willcox, the man who had growled about us boys coming to bother folks during the holidays, had left his invalid chair and had taken to his bed. He said for us to come and pray for him. By this time, Brother Wilson, a most Godly man and one with great faith, had come up to join us in the battle. He, with others, went to pray with Uncle Al. He lifted his hands while we were praying and began praising God. It was a happy home.

In about six or eight weeks I preached Uncle Al's funeral. Since the revival I had been going back over the week-ends, and on Friday evening before he died on the following morning, I was at his bed-side. He motioned for me to bend down as he could only speak in a whisper. He put his arms around my neck and whispered these words, "I am so glad you came and held the revival and my family and I all got in. I am going soon and all is well."

In the early morning hours he went sweeping through the gates into the "City Four Square."

There was a young man who was teaching in this community who was gloriously saved during our revival and was called into the ministry. Another young man was deeply convicted, but was running from the meeting. His good old uncle had been saved in the revival and was praying for him. This young man knew his uncle was praying for him, and so would shun him. One day we had a wonderful service. This young man was standing looking in through the open door. His uncle saw him and started back to speak to him. Before he reached him, the nephew started for the altar, but never made it. He fell in the aisle about ten feet from the altar. He laid there from 12:00 o'clock noon until 3 :00 o'clock in the afternoon. We had gone to dinner about a mile down the road from the Church and could hear him shouting the praises of God. This was a great day for J. R. Noland and for the Kentucky and Louisville Conferences. He and R. A. Selby came to Asbury College, at the close of that meeting, and went out to preach the Unsearchable Riches of the Glorious Gospel. Bob Selby is in the Florida Conference. There were over a hundred saved and sanctified in this great revival, all because of one little girl being saved in it.

Well, the largest part of the group that was there then have passed over the "River", and are resting under the Tree of Life. I am going to see them soon. I wish I could relate all the wonderful things that happened in this great revival, of the all-night prayer-meetings, and about the critics who came over from Irvine to see if the reports were true or false. They went back convinced that it was not man's work but the workings of God.

This great revival, that took place over 40 years ago, is still on the march. A fellow from there told me only a few days ago in Lexington, Kentucky, that they are still talking about the great awakening that took place then and that this was what put Cedar Grove Methodist Church on the map. They now have a beautiful up-to-date Church and quite a little village has sprung up around it. I want to say, our sweet little girl Nannie Willcox, who was one of the largest factors in the spreading of this revival, is one of the main spiritual members of this Church today. A few years ago at our Annual Conference she introduced me to her lovely girls and told me that her family was living for God and the Church, and that they have a happy Christian home.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

Chapter 3

God's Will Working

A few months following the great revival at Cedar Grove, I received a call from a young man who had been in school with me in Asbury. The place where the call came from was called "Happy Top," located in Estill County. This young man was working under the direction of the Presbyterian Church, as a missionary in the mountains of Kentucky. I had been going back to Cedar Grove over the weekends, as I have previously stated. Brother R. A. Selby, the young school teacher who was saved in the Cedar grove meeting, found out I was going to hold this meeting on "Happy Top." He asked me if he could go with me and get some experience. I told him I would be glad for him to go. I did not tell him then, but the main reason I was so glad for him to accompany me was that I might need a body guard. For, already one big, double-fisted, broad-shouldered mountaineer had threatened to cut my head off in the Cedar Grove revival. This revival was farther back in the mountains, so I was delighted that he was going to be with me.

Brother Coppage, the young man who called me for the meeting on Happy Top Mountain, told me that he could not promise me any money other than my traveling expenses and entertainment, but they needed a revival and he felt under God I was the man for the meeting.

I was trying to go to school and support my family without much to go on. Previous to this call I had received two other calls that seemed more promising than the Happy Top call. I shall relate how definitely God led me to Happy Top. Brother Henry Martin, who is now a member of our Kentucky Conference, was in school with us. We were engaged to hold a tent-meeting, located just outside the city of Winchester, Kentucky. The place where we were to hold the meeting was among tenants raising large crops of tobacco. The landlords were to finance the meeting, so we were expecting a good offering. Just a few days before our school was out, we received notice that the meeting had been canceled on the account of the tobacco season. It was spring and the weather was just right for setting out the dirty weed, so, away went our expected good offering. Then came another testing stronger than the first. I received a call to hold a revival just outside of Wilmore, Kentucky. Of course it looked as if it had come in such an opportune time to take the place of the one that had been called off. But I never could get the consent of my mind and heart to hold this revival. I told the situation to the Pastor and he said that I would have to pray about it. The more I prayed the more I felt this was not where God wanted me. When I told the Pastor about it, he could not understand it, and neither could I at that time. I had no other engagements and here was one right at my door, yet I could not take the meeting. The very next morning I received the card from Brother Coppage to come to Happy Top. By just reading the card I got happy, for I was sure this was where God wanted me. So, I accepted the date and the place that promised no money, but privation and danger. I was happy because I felt I was in the center of God's will.

The only directions which we had on how to get to Happy Top were to come to Logston's Store, but they forgot to tell us how to get to Logston's Store. For some reason, I got delayed and was one day late. I went to West Irvine and spent the night with Brother and Sister Selby. As I have previously stated, Brother Selby was going with me. The next morning Brother Selby had the way planned for us to at least get started on our journey. Sister Selby was to take us in the buggy as far as she could then we were to go the rest of the way afoot.

We bid Sister Selby good-bye not knowing whether we would ever see her again or not. We started up the mountain after putting sticks through the handles of our suitcases and throwing them across our shoulders. I thought we would never get to the summit of the mountain up which we were wearily toiling. It seemed to me it was almost perpendicular. After reaching the top we sat down on a log and viewed the landscape.

I said to Selby, "Where do we go from here?"

He replied, "Down the other side of the mountain." And, so we started on the second lap of our journey and quest for Logston's Store.

We had gone but a short distance when we spied a little cabin nestled in the lofty woodland, not far from the little by-path we were following. One of us suggested inquiring here our way to Logston's Store. I went up to the yard fence and saw a dear old lady sitting on the back porch, smoking an old stone pipe with a stem four inches long. The smoke was curling over her head, and she was peering over the top of her glasses. When we approached nearer to the yard gate, she arose from her chair to quiet a dog that was making some advances toward the strangers.

I raised my hat and said, "Good Morning."

She replied, "Hidy."

I then asked her if she could tell us the way to Logston's Store.

"Oh, yes," she said. "You go rite out thar to that big elm tree, gat over the fence, go down the hill, you will see John Gray's barn. When you gat to his barn you follow that thar little path down by that thar little pappa patch. Then you will see that thar school house. After you leave that thar school house, you cross over the fence by that thar big hickory tree into the road. Follow that thar road, it will take ya to Logston's Store."

I thanked her and went back to Selby and told him, "Now, if we can find the land-marks she gave me we will soon find Logston's Store."

We journeyed on, passing each land-mark until at last we came to the big hickory tree and crossed the fence out into the road.

"This is our last crossing," I exclaimed, "Thank God."

We soon came in sight of a small building at the side of the road. Three mules and an old gray horse were hitched in front of the store. Three or four men were sitting on the little front porch, seated on nail kegs and soap boxes, whittling pine sticks, spitting red, and I imagine, telling long yarns. As we approached, they arose and treated us in a most hospitable manner. Just then Brother Coppage came out of the store and seemed genuinely glad to see us. He introduced us to the men, one being the man of the home where we were to be entertained. The Store was at the base of Happy Top Mountain. They relieved us of our suitcases and we were soon on Happy Top, as the sun was sinking behind the western horizon. Our host said to Brother Coppage, "I had better "holler" over to Henry and tell him that the preachers have come and there will be services tonight."

I said, "Services tonight? It's night now and the people are not expecting us, being a day late."

He said, "We'll have a crowd." And, he shouted over to his neighbor and told him to tell his neighbor. So with the voice-telephone the services were announced over and around the Mountain.

We met the lady of the home where we were to stay, and in their home they had a very sweet little baby. We ate our supper (not dinner up "thar"). Very much worn after our mountain climbing and store hunting, we made our way out to the little log school-house. To our surprise the place was packed to its capacity. They had to clear the aisles to get us to the platform. There behind a little stand-table I made as I thought a very scattering short talk, but the people looked so hungry and so much in earnest that I asked all who wanted our prayers, that they might be saved in the meeting, to lift their hands. Fifteen or twenty lifted their hands. Then I said, "How many will get down on your knees right where you are and let Brother Selby pray for you?" I think everyone who lifted their hands got down. God blessed Brother Selby in prayer and gave us a wonderful opening service.

The home, where we were staying during the meeting, was a one room cabin, with a little shed-kitchen with a dirt floor, no door, just an opening with a quilt hung up over it. There were just two beds in the main room. Brother Selby and I were assigned one and the man of the home occupied the other, with the little baby. I wondered about the good little wife and mother, but when we had gotten settled for the night, she came in from the little shed-kitchen, blew out the light of the little brass kerosene lamp and retired with her husband and baby. Our bed was made of good old-fashioned, clean, mountain straw. We slept as good as we ever did in all our lives. The next morning we went out under the quilt-curtain door into the little kitchen, washed our faces and hands, combed our hair, and took our places at the humble festive board. As we returned thanks, we got happy because we were sure we were where God wanted us. The menu consisted of old 'ned' as yellow as the golden sunset, biscuits, as blue as indigo, butter, as white as the driven snow, coffee, as black as midnight, but every bite as clean as a shirt just back from the laundry. In fact, everything about the little cabin home was sanitary and so clean you would not have been afraid to have eaten your meals from the floor.

This little incident happened while we were at breakfast one morning, and I think it will be of interest. The stove-pipe of the cook stove lacked a few inches going out through the shed roof. On this particular morning the roof caught on fire. I said, "My gracious, that roof is on fire, Sister."

She said, "That's alright. Have a warm biscuit."

I watched the flame increase and was thinking of what few clothes I had hanging on the wall. I got more uneasy and said, "Aren't you afraid that blaze will get out of control and the house will burn down?"

She replied, "We are used to that. John, pass Brother Roberts the molasses."

About the time I was ready to vacate the house with my belongings and watch it burn to the ground, she went to the water bucket and took the dipper full of water and threw the water up around the stove-pipe and put the fire out with as much calmness as if she was filling the teakettle. So, we did not give the fire alarm or call the fire department. I did not have to move my belongings to safety, and the house did not burn down.

The revival on "Happy Top" increased with interest and numbers from the very beginning. We soon saw that the building was in no wise adequate for the increasing crowds, so they erected a brush-arbor. We used what seats we had from the Church, brought chairs from their homes, used slabs from the sawmill. Even then at times there were as many on the outside of the "arbor" as there were on the inside. We used lanterns and kerosene lamps for lights and a long log for the altar, which was filled every service with penitent seekers. Many attended this revival who had never been in a Church or Sunday School and some who had never seen a Bible. They began to come to the evening services before the sun was down. We never saw more earnest seekers or happy finders in all of our evangelistic work than in this revival. They would shout and testify, then fill their pipes and fill the place with tobacco smoke until you could almost cut it with a knife, or fill their mouths with "long-green" or Brown Mule and spit red all the time while praising God for what He had done for them. A happier people I have never seen. No doubt you are asking the question, how could they do this if they were saved? They were walking in all the light they had. Brother Selby said to me, "How are you going to handle this tobacco proposition? These dear people will have to see that it is wrong to use tobacco."

I replied, "Brother Selby, God has planned this revival from the very beginning and He will take care of this problem."

After the meeting had been in progress for some time, God led me to preach from the words of Jesus to His disciples, "Follow thou me."

In the course of my message I said, "To follow Jesus is to be like Jesus. If you can imagine pure, Holy Jesus with a pipe in His mouth filled with "long-green" blowing blue smoke over His head that had been crowned with thorns for you and me, or if you can conceive of Jesus, Pure Jesus, chewing long-green Mail Pouch, or Brown Mule, go right ahead and follow Him. But, if you cannot think of your Dear Lord indulging in this filthy habit, let us throw it to the four winds and follow Him with clean hands and pure hearts."

That crowd which had been so wonderfully saved did just that. No more blue tobacco smoke, or amber running out of the corners of their mouths. Blessed are those who will walk in the light as it falls across their paths, for, verily I say unto you, they shall grow in grace and in the knowledge of

our Lord Jesus Christ. And if they fail to walk in the light, they will not retain their regenerated experience. This is why we have so many backsliders.

We first came to Wilmore, Kentucky, with our good friend F. T. Arnold. I lived on his farm one year and when I gave up farming and went into the ministry, he said to me, "Tom, if you are out in meetings and you find a calf that will grow into a milk-cow, just bring it and put it over the fence into my pasture and it will soon make a good cow for you."

So, while in this revival on Happy Top one hot afternoon, we were sitting out in the yard in the shade, reading. After awhile the man of the home joined us, and while we were both sitting there, a little calf stuck its head through the fence and bawled. I said, "If I could buy that calf I could take it home with me and let it become a good cow for us." Then turning to Selby I told him what Mr. Arnold had said.

In a little while our host arose and went over to his brother-in-law's home as his brother-in-law owned the calf. When he returned he said, "I think you are the owner of that calf. I just told Henry about what you said. He said, "I have been asking seven dollars for it but I will take two dollars less, and if you can raise the five, we will give Brother Roberts the calf."

They soon raised the five dollars and he told me, "You have a calf on your hands."

At that time, the L & N Railroad had a Line through Nicholasville, Kentucky, five miles north of Wilmore. That was as close as I could get to Wilmore with the calf that night by railroad. So, I brought the calf in the baggage car to Nicholasville and arrived there at about 8 o'clock that night. I then proceeded to lead the little fellow to my home in Wilmore. I got home between one and two o'clock the next morning and put her over on Mr. Arnold's farm. She made us a wonderful cow. I named her, Topsy.

At the close of the meeting on "Happy Top," Brother Coppage told them he wanted everyone that could, to bring a hen up to the store and sell it and bring the worth of the hen to the Evangelist. They gave me the sum of \$33.00 and the little calf. I have been paid since from one to several hundred dollars in revival meetings, but I have said, that was the largest offering I ever received, counting its value. That meeting is still going on. Four of the Logston girls were saved in this revival. They attended Berea College, graduating from this School. They later went to Hamilton, Ohio, to live. There in Hamilton they started the construction of a church, got the basement finished, covered it with tar paper and called me to come there for a revival. We had a great revival, organized a Class of 67 Charter Members, and later, they built a thirty-thousand dollar (\$30,000) church on the basement in which we had held their first revival. When this new edifice was finished, they called me back for a revival in their new Church. Again, we had another good revival. After a number of years the young people, among them the children of these fine Logston girls, called me for another revival, and we had another good revival meeting, all the result of the "Happy Top" Revival.

That Mountain had its right name when we left, "HAPPY TOP."

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 4

It Happened

The purpose of this chapter is to relate to my readers some of the strange, humorous, and wonderful happenings of my years in the evangelistic field.

In one of my meetings in the Mountains of Kentucky, an old mountaineer was gloriously saved and always gave his testimony by saying, "This preacher was the instigator of my salvation." He asked me for one of my pictures. I gave him a penny picture I had taken at a dime store. A few years after the meeting in which he was saved, I was called to hold a meeting up in Jackson County, Kentucky. The place where the meeting was to be held was in a schoolhouse and church combined. When I entered the church the first night you can imagine my surprise when I saw my enlarged picture hanging over the pulpit. I wondered how on earth it had gotten there. The crowd gathered, and this dear old man entered and came over to me. He put his arms around me, and rejoicing said to the congregation, "Here is the man who was the instigator of my salvation." He had taken my penny picture, had it enlarged to life size, and put it where everyone could see it. That was more than any of my blood-kin had ever done. He was a dear old saint. I am going to meet him some sweet day in my Father's House in Heaven.

In a revival down in the Louisville Conference, in my early ministry, one night we had an altar full of seekers. They were praying through and leaping to their feet, testifying to the marvelous saving grace of Jesus, when an old lady, who must have been all of 80 years of age, tapped the floor with her cane and said, "I am saved and sanctified. For years I 'fit it' and 'fit it' and now I've got it and I want you to pray that I may still hang out." Though her English was not up to par, her blessing was. I expect to see her among the Blood-washed around the Throne.

In another meeting which I was conducting, one night the altar was full of seekers. A young man was on the outside of the Church and overheard a big mountain bully threatening to kill me when I came out of the Church. His wife was at the altar. This young man came to me and told me about the threat adding his own convictions about it and said, "He is liable to do what he says. I know him and he is over-bearing and mean enough to do anything."

I asked the young man what the fellow had against me. He said it was because the man had said that I had his wife at the altar and he wanted me to stay away from his wife and let her alone. I said to the young man, "Son, I do not know this fellow's wife, but I do hope she gets a good case of salvation. Maybe she can calm him down and he will be at the altar himself before the meeting is over."

The young man said, "He's taking his family home, never to come back to this place again, and you had better tell some of your friends about his threat before you go outside."

"O.K." I replied, "You are my friend aren't you?"

He said, "Sure!"

"Will you see that I am unharmed?" I asked.

He replied, "I will do it."

I thought but little more about it, but that young man formed a group of unsaved young men to be my body guards. The man that had threatened me found out about this group, and he got his wife and children and left. He lived but a short distance from the Church, but he stayed away and would not let any of his family come back to the meeting. Several days after this, maybe a week or more, we were taking dinner not far from his home. We were going to have a season of prayer and had gathered in the sitting-room, after retiring from the dining room. There was a number of people of the Church at this home praying during this afternoon prayer session, when there was a knock at the door. Our host arose and opened the door and to our surprise and also to his, there was our enemy. He had come to borrow a sack to take his corn to the mill. He stepped inside before he realized who was in the room and then he got in a big hurry to be gone. He said, in a trembling voice, "I want to borrow a sack, I want to go to the mill."

I gave our host, Mr. Lane, a wink. Mr. Lane said to the man, "O.K." and arose to go get the sack.

I said, "It's three o'clock, our prayer hour, let's pray." By this time I had my chair between the door and my man. He was standing when we got on our knees. I called for prayer to begin at the other end of the circle. This was one time when I complied with the Scripture, "Watch as well as pray. I was in arm's length of the man who had threatened my life. I saw his limbs were trembling. By the time it was my turn to pray I was sure we had won a victory. I put my arms around his legs and he was shaking like an aspen leaf. He fell to the floor bellowing like a mountain calf. When the "Fire" hit him about six inches below the collar-bone, he "hollered" like a Comanche Indian. He grabbed me, lifted me off the floor and carried me around the room until I thought he would break every bone in my body. I was out of breath when he put me down. His entire family was saved and my four young body-guards were also saved in the meeting.

Ten years after this revival, I was crossing the street in Wilmore. As I started to step up on the sidewalk a man, getting out of a buggy, had one foot on the step of the buggy and the other one on the ground when he saw me. He said, "Aren't you T. P. Roberts?" I said, "Yes, what is left of me." He said, "You don't know me do you?" I replied, "I do not remember your name but I can prove to you that I do know you because you are the fellow who was going to kill me and came to Mr. Lane's to borrow a sack, got into a spiritual trap, and got gloriously saved."

By the time I was through telling him about that wonderful day, the big tears were coursing down his cheeks, he said , "Yes, Brother Roberts. That's been ten years and the promise is true and the anchor holds."

This dear man has since gone to his reward. We will have a great time when we sit down by the River that flows from beneath the Throne and rest under the shade of the Tree of Life. We will talk about the great revivals we had down on earth, and the Christ, who through His atoning Blood made it possible for all the victories won, and lay our trophies at His feet and Crown Him Lord of All.

While in school at Asbury, I had a supply charge in Woodford County, the old Mt. Edwin Church. I had very little experience in pastoring a church, but these fine people had great patience with this boy preacher and would come after me on Saturday evenings and bring me back on Monday mornings. We had services on Saturday night, Sunday morning and night.

The first time I went to my new work, I stayed all night at Brother Haden Allen's. They had a little boy named, John. They had little John well "spoiled." Sunday morning John came to my bed-room door and said, "Preacher, get up! Mother wants that sheet for a table-cloth." I heard his Daddy laugh in the other room and knew that he had put John up to saying what he did.

During the time I was Pastor of Mt. Edwin, Brother A. P. Jones held a meeting for me. He was then Pastor of our Church in Wilmore. We began the meeting on Monday night. Brother and Sister Allen's home was always the preacher's home. So we were entertained in their lovely home. Brother Jones weighed over 300 pounds. They called us student preachers, "One-horse Preachers." One day little John climbed up on his daddy's lap and whispered, "Dad, isn't Brother Jones a "Four-horse preacher?"

I have since been Pastor of the Mt. Edwin Church four times and held four revivals there.

This incident took place in the Mower's Park Camp. We had as our co-workers, Rev. B. T. Flannery and Ella Dee Hinkle, now Professor Kenyon's wife, as our pianist. We had been having some misbehavior and a great deal of drinking on the grounds. One Saturday night the crowd was large and for fear there might be some disturbance, after leading the song service I went back and took a seat in the audience. It was Brother Flannery's turn to preach. After the message I went to the platform and took charge of the singing. There were some people coming to the altar. My mind, of course, was on the altar service and I was not aware of what was taking place until I heard someone say, "Old Bill wants religion." I looked up and two drunks were coming down the aisle leading a horse to the altar. There was only the one aisle in this tabernacle, it was in the center and a very large one. One of the Board members and I went down to help them with dear old Bill who seemed to be

so humble and penitent. I turned him around and led him out, assuring him that he would be alright when he got out of the hands of these drunken bums.

They swore out a warrant for these two men, one confessed and paid his fine and the other skipped the country. The incident became more amusing after we had retired for the night. As we were about to dose off to sleep, one or the other would say, "Old Bill wants religion." This would wake us up and we would have a big time laughing. I told Brother Flannery, his preaching was the most effective I had ever witnessed, putting the burden for the salvation of "Old Bill" on the hearts of these two drunks.

I was holding a Tent-meeting in Middletown, Ohio, when four young men conspired to cut the tent ropes when I gave the altar call. They were to take stations one at each of the four main ropes and when the sign was given they were to cut their rope. But, the one who was to give the signal got deeply convicted before I was half through the message, slipped over to the others and told them that he was going to the altar instead of cutting his rope. He went to the altar and was gloriously saved, and has been preaching the Gospel for over 20 years before I knew anything about their plans to cut the tent ropes.

A year or so ago, he was holding a revival in Richmond, Kentucky, and gave his experience of that memorable night. One of my preacher friends was in the service and told him where I was living and he sent me his picture. He is nationally known as a "Walking-Bible." Well, thank God my boys are still rising up, swelling the ministerial ranks. A new one shows up ever so often to gladden the heart of this old preacher. I am sure I have enough preachers who have come out of my meetings to make a fairly good Annual Conference. To God be all the glory.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

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Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 5

The Great Campton Revival

I was called for an engagement to Campton, Kentucky, County — seat of Wolfe County. The meeting began on a Friday night, in the month of November. We had to go from Campton Junction to Campton on the little Toto train over the narrow gauge railroad. It backed out of the Junction and ran backward for quite a way, then it headed for Campton. We had a time getting to Campton. The little train was heavily loaded carrying baggage, mail, freight, and passengers. The train would run out of steam from time to time and would have to stop long enough to get up steam in order to make the grade. One time, the engineer came by a group of passengers, cursing the railroad company, and the little Toto train. Some were teasing him and asking him if he wanted them to push. This made him more angry than ever. He came by where I was standing cursing so loud we could not hear the little engine trying to gather steam enough to go on its way. With pity, and being sorry for him I said, "My dear man how much steam are you putting in the boiler with your cursing?" He looked at me and said, "Was I cursing? Excuse me, please."

I want to say that I saw that man blessedly saved in the revival to which I was then on my way to hold. The little train finally made the grades and we arrived at our destination in Campton, Kentucky.

We arrived at about 7 :00 o'clock p.m. Brother Matthews, the Pastor, met me and we went direct to the Church where we found a full house already singing and rejoicing as though they were already in the midst of the revival. I said to the Pastor, "It looks like the revival is already on." He replied, "Brother Roberts, there have been two weeks of prayer for this meeting. Every home in Campton has been prayed in and quite a number out in the country."

No wonder God gave us one among the greatest revivals of all our ministry. The meeting had not been in progress a week before there came a pall of conviction upon the entire town. Business was dispensed for the afternoon services and that large old Methodist Church was full to overflowing. It could not accommodate the crowds in the evening services. The Courthouse was just across the street in front of the Church and Court was in session. There were 13 murder cases on the docket.

I was being entertained in the Connoy home at the upper edge of the town. Sister Connoy was one among the most Godly women I ever knew. Brother Connoy was a fine Christian and one of the leading merchants of the town. These two fine Christian people gave wholehearted support to the revival.

This revival almost broke up the Court. They had two sets of jurymen and sometimes would have to come to the Church to get enough people to make out the panel. The sheriff was saved, and some of his deputies. The County Clerk was saved and joined our Conference the year following. There

were lawyers, doctors, professional men, good and bad, rich and poor, murderers, boot-leggers, moon-shiners. All were definitely; saved at the old fashioned altar.

There were a number of young people and children saved and when you called for testimonies they would testify like popcorn popping on a hot griddle. They would have services on the school grounds and get their school mates saved.

Boot-legging joints were broken up. "Mountain Dew," the name Rev. Charles Wireman gave it, was poured into the gutter. Gambling dens went out of business. Homes, where sin and hell held sway, had been transformed into happy homes. Family altars were erected. God became the Monarch of these homes and where sin did once abound, now grace did much more abound.

There were only two churches in the town, the Methodist and Baptist. Dear old Brother Tolston was the Pastor of the Baptist Church, and a wonderfully good man. He and his people cooperated with us most beautifully, hence his Church derived great benefit and blessings from the revival.

We were in the closing days of the revival and a large class was to be taken into the Methodist Church. Not having heard anything but baptism by immersion, they were all going to be immersed. As we have stated before, it was late November and the weather was extremely cold. Brother Matthews wanted me to preach a sermon or two on baptism and change their minds if possible, as to the mode.

I told him I had never preached on the mode of baptism, had only stated my beliefs and views. He said, "You have the ear of these candidates and they will listen to what you have to say. I do not want to immerse them in this cold weather, and you know that it is the doctrine of our Church to "sprinkle". You are the one to convince them." I said, "I will not try to preach on baptism, but I will give five minute talks on it each afternoon before I preach."

I had dear old Dr. W. B. Godbey's book on baptism, and the book, "Why I do not Immerse" by Dr. L. L. Pickett. I gave their views. I then gave mine of how John the Baptist baptized with water not in water, that he applied the water to the candidate, not the candidate to the water. Then in St. Matthew 3:11, John said, "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He, Jesus, will baptize you with the Holy Ghost." So, the Holy Ghost was poured out upon the candidate. I am persuaded John the Baptist was pouring or applying water to the candidates. Thus, I closed my first and last sermons on the mode of baptism.

We came to the closing service and Brother Matthews was to take his class of members into the Church. We had an old fashioned testimony meeting. I do not think we had any preaching that evening. God came upon us in an unusual way. It was a service never to be forgotten. Then Brother Matthews took charge of the service. When he had lined up the candidates for membership he was so delighted with the results of my five minutes talks on the mode of baptism that he told me, "Brother Roberts, everyone of them wants to be sprinkled, but one," calling her name. Her mother spoke up and said, "Brother Matthews, just sprinkle her with the rest." I said, "No, let her be immersed." Her father belonged to the Christian Church and her mother to our Church.

I saw something else happen that evening that I had never seen happen before or since. I think, when you know what it was you will agree with me when I say the incident should be given to Ripley's "Believe It Or Not." Brother Matthew was busily baptizing the candidates. Brother Tolston, Pastor of the Baptist Church was on the pulpit platform with me. A lady of the Class motioned for him to come down to the front where they were baptizing. When he came back on the platform he said to me, "What do you think! that lady wants to come into my Church but she wants to be sprinkled." I said, "What did you tell her?" He replied, "I told her to go ahead, I would take her in."

To close this chapter I will say, Campton was a brand new town, having been made anew by the Holy Ghost. We could truthfully say what the Bible says in regard to a newborn soul in II Corinthians 5 :17. "Old things are passed away, and behold all things have become new."

One of the most remarkable works of grace I ever witnessed in this Campton Revival was the conversion of C. L. Wireman, and by his consent we take his description of what took place, out of his life's story, the book entitled, "Kentucky Mountain Outlaw Transformed," for our next chapter.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

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By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 6

Kentucky Outlaw Transformed

First of all I would like to disabuse your mind of any idea you may have that I gave my testimony in any braggadocios spirit, or with any thought of putting a premium on sin. I only refer to the dark side of my life in order to make the bright side shine brighter and show the power of God to save from the depths of sin.

There are a few Scriptures I would like to remind you of. One is: "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Another is: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." And yet another: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." And one more: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul."

On the 13th day of March, 1890, in a little two room mountain but in a remote section of the mountains of Eastern Kentucky, a pretty little baby was born. Now that was the 13th day, the unlucky day, of March, the windy month, in the beginning of the gay 90's. I was born into an average home of that section in those days.

My parents were very poor. My father was a laboring man working at hard labor for meager wages to support my mother and nine children. In those days there was no Red Cross or relief of any kind for the poor, and every man had to scratch gravel for himself. If he could not support his family that was just his bad luck.

So our home was very destitute. We had the old fashioned clap-board loft and puncheon floor. Our wall paper was readable. We had no carpets but mother always said that cleanliness was next to Godliness, and while we might have some excuse for being poor, we had none for being unclean. And she put me in the manufacturing business when I was a mere lad, manufacturing scouring powder out of sand stone with a hammer. My mother would take my product and spread it much more lavishly than I thought necessary and take the old hickory scrub mop that my father had made out of a hickory sapling and apply some water and stay at the job until her floors were immaculately clean almost as white as snow.

My mother was very strict with her children. Though she was a typical mountain woman she did not believe in fighting. She said that cats and dogs, and not human beings, were supposed to do the fighting. My father, on the other hand, did not look for trouble, but if the other fellow was looking for it, he never had to pass my dad up for accommodation. And I always admired him, and longed to be like him.

Now my mother never allowed us to go next door to play with the neighbor children without her consent. We lived in the outskirts of a small county seat town, and when we went down the street to the post office or elsewhere on an errand, it was with strict orders to go to that particular place and come immediately back, without any loitering on the way; with a further warning, if we got into trouble with any of the neighbor children, she would punish us severely. My mother never investigated a brawl to see who started it. All she needed to know was that one of hers took part in it and he got what was coming to him. I had an old fashioned ma and pa. The world is about ruined now with new fangled papas and mamas.

Some bad boys who were allowed to run wild would take advantage of my not being allowed to defend myself and would chase me, brick bat me, and if they got hold of me, pummeled me considerably and I resented that and thought, how I wish I was allowed to take my own part.

Now we had only three months of school during the year in those days. I got to go about half that time and the rest of the time I had to stay at home and dig "taters" and pull fodder to help keep the wolf from the door. My clothes were hand-me-downs. When my dad got through with his lumber jacket, etc., what was left, mother made our clothes out of it. I sometimes went bare footed when snow was on the ground. There were no free text books or rental books in those days, and father, not being able to buy books for all his children, I was obliged to borrow from others and study with others. And that is the way I got my "book learning" for the most part.

I was about 12 years of age when school opened in the fall. I did not want to go and thus expressed myself to mother. She insisted that I must go. I gave as my reason for not wanting to go to school, that I did not have clothing like some others did. That was embarrassing. And the leader of the rough gang in town abused me all through the school term, and I dreaded that. Mother insisted that I must go, and of course I did. But I said to my mother, "The first thing I will do when I get on the school ground this morning will be to hunt up that bad boy, take him by surprise and give him the worst whipping he has ever had in his life." Mother said, "If you do and I hear about it," (and I knew she would because I had sisters in school), I will give you one of the worst whippings you ever had."

I took that boy by surprise and beat him until he bled profusely at the nose, ears and mouth, and was carried home in a semi-conscious condition. The doctor all but despaired of his life. When I got home and sister broke the news to mother, she took me off behind the old woodshed, (and those familiar scenes linger with me still), and she broke off a peach tree switch. She could handle one to the greatest perfection of any human being I ever knew. Having nine children to practice on, some of us almost every day, she got it down to perfection.

I cried like a good fellow while she was whipping me, but felt better when she got through. Now some folks have an idea that crying and feeling better is getting religion, but I know better than that. If that had been so, I would have been one of the most religious boys in the country.

When she finished with me that day I said, "Now, Mother, tomorrow I will give him a worse one than I did today." She said, "If you do I will give you a worse one than I did today." I did, and so did Ma. When she finished with me that time, I said, "Now, Mother, tomorrow I will just barely leave

life in that rascal, and if he gets over what I am going to give him tomorrow, and I ever see him again, I will kill him." I intended to do that. Mother was convinced that I meant business. When I got through with that boy the last time he was all but dead again.

When we got home, I did not wait for sister to break the news. I told mother what I did. They chimed in and told how awful it was. And I said, "Now Mother, come on if you are going to whip me and get it over with, but, remember if you do, and I ever see that fellow I will kill him." Mother had sense enough not to whip me and saved the boy's life. A few years ago I met up with him on the streets of Winchester, Ky., and had a long conversation with him and learned that he lived happily ever after. But that was the beginning of a bloody fighting career.

If a boy reached the age of 13 or 14 in that part without carrying a pistol he was looked upon as a sissy. No mountain boy wanted to be called a sissy. Some of us were not able to buy a pistol. There was a young rascal about as mean as I was, about my age. We got our heads together and decided that we would resort to any kind of chicanery or skullduggery to get money enough to buy a partnership pistol. We finally did that. This pistol was a very appropriate pistol for a partnership pistol because it had two barrels. It was the same kind of gun that Mr. McKinley was assassinated with. The fellow who sold us the gun told us that we could not find ammunition to fit it, but we could take .32 rifle cartridges and fit them into the pistol and it would shoot not so accurately or hard as if the ammunition had fit the gun, but it would shoot.

This boy and I had an agreement that we would carry the pistol in turns take time about. I was to carry it so many days, and then he would carry it so many days, with the further understanding that if the one with the pistol happened along when the other fellow got into trouble, he would take the pistol and shoot the partner out of trouble.

Not long after, two big rough-necked fellows had me down and doing plenty to me when my gun-toting pal happened on the scene with the pistol. He kicked one in the ribs and told him to let me go. When he swore that he wouldn't, he shot him just as plumb between the eyes as you could put your finger, but fortunately the ammunition did not fit the gun so that the bullet went under the hide and stopped in a pump knot on top of his head, and was easily extracted by the doctor. Only the fact that the ammunition did not fit the gun saved me from being implicated in a killing at that early age.

I carried, from the time I was in my early teens, a single action .45 caliber revolver in a shoulder holster on my left shoulder, which is lower today than my right, probably because of growing up with that heavy pistol weighing down that shoulder. I also carried a double action, improved Smith & Wesson in my pocket.

We mountain boys had no use for men of high caliber. They didn't appeal to us. Our ideal was the man who had the most notches in his pistol handle, denoting the number of men he had made to bite the dust. Our warped minds looked upon them as heroes and we wanted to be like them — ambitious to be bad.

There was among us a man who was looked upon as about the worst. I envied him when I was about 17 years of age. I thought if I could get in combat with him and win the fight it would put a feather in my cap and other men would sit up and take notice. The time came when he and I fought. No shots were fired. He was striking me with a bottle of liquor and I was striking him with a revolver, and broke the trigger guard, and the next lick the trigger stuck into his head and he fell bleeding, so far as anyone knew, dying. I was so filled with the venom of hell that I walked over wearing hobnailed boots and stomped him in the face as you would a snake. And that put a feather in my cap. I was the talk of the town that I had whipped the bully.

He had a good friend. He was also a bad man who had killed two men and one woman, and one was his own brother. He and my enemy were boon companions. They were all around bad men living in the country a few miles out of town. My companion, or pal, was about two years my senior. He was tall, about 6 feet 1 inch in his stocking feet. One of the coolest men I ever saw. He and one of these men were avowed enemies as was the other man and I.

One day my pal and I sat in the lobby of the Hotel, talking with the proprietor and his wife and son, a young man about my age, but not in my class. He was an upright, clean, moral young man. But on one occasion some bad men were abusing him when I came on the scene, put them to flight, took him out of their hands, he thought, saved his life, from the bands of those ruffians. He always wanted to do something to accommodate me because he appreciated what I did for him.

As we were talking there, a handy man around the town who was later killed in a drunken brawl, came in and said, "Bulldog," for that was what they called me over all that part for sometime before I got saved, "Bulldog," Charlie, those two men have just ridden into town and hitched their horses and making no bones about inquiring about the whereabouts of you and your pal. They are on the war path." When he said that, the devil rose up in me and I said, "We will go and see what they are looking for."

And, we started out. This young man insisted on going with us thinking, I believe, that he could perhaps keep me out of trouble and he went along. We came into the front of a store building. It was a liquor shop — bootleg joint. As we stepped in the door, these men were in the rear of the room. The shooting began. Thirty-five or forty shots were fired in less time than I could tell it. Pistol smoke so dense you could not recognize a man at arm's length. I heard a window raise in the rear and could see enough to see the bulk of a man go out of the window. Thinking perhaps that it was one of those men already wounded I whirled and made for the door intent upon running out and heading him off and finishing the score with him outside. When I got to the door, there was this fine young man with a shot-gun blast in his throat and bleeding like a stuck hog. He reached for me and fell. I ran over his dying body in my effort to finish the score with the man who jumped through the window. My friend had all the fingers shot off one hand. Another man was wounded; never got over it; died in the insane asylum. I was not touched with a bullet.

Time went on and this career was getting worse as I was 'led captive at the devil's will,' until one day — I had been down at the creek fishing below the little county seat town, when I heard shooting on the street. It was nothing uncommon to hear many shots fired on the streets at night by men shooting at random under the influence of "mountain dew," but when you heard shooting in the

daytime, it usually meant serious trouble. I rushed to town, thinking perhaps some of my friends might be in trouble. When I got to town the streets were deserted except a little group on the porch of the hotel. As I walked toward them I saw it was part of a certain gang.

The leader had a number of henchmen; among them one of the most unreasonable men I ever saw. He and I had a few words some time before, and as I drew near, he came walking out with his pistol visible in the front, cursing me. I said, "You know if I had my gun you wouldn't talk that way to me." He said, "You go home and get your gun. I have been wanting to shoot it out with you for some time." I said, "I will soon be back to accommodate you."

Across the street was a general mercantile store, the glass was shot out in front. As I crossed the street going toward my father's home I remembered having seen a pistol in the show case in the store and I went up and shook the door, and the proprietor came out of his hiding in the rear of his store, when he saw who it was, and let me in. He said, "Bulldog, what do you want?" I said, "Do you have a good pistol?" He said, "Yes, I have a brand new .38 Special." And I said, "That is a good one. I would like to borrow it a little while if you don't mind." He said, "It all depends on what you want to do with it." I said, "I want to kill a certain man with it." "In that case," he said, "you are more than welcome to my pistol," and gave it to me.

Now in addition to having my own pistol, well loaded, I carried extra ammunition. But today I rushed out with that strange gun and only one round of ammunition. Getting about half way across the street those men began to shoot at me, but the only bullets that took effect were from my own gun, shooting the leader. But, if he was three miles of this place and knew that I was going to give my testimony or preach the Gospel he would come to hear me, and you will know the secret of that before I am through tonight.

I finally got low down enough to become a deputy sheriff. Now that is no reflection upon some men who occupied that position, but in that part of the mountains in those days, a man who put any premium on life, his own life or others, did not accept a place as deputy sheriff. The man who was elected to the high sheriff's office had to depend upon the rough necks to serve as his deputies. If you were to go into the Kentucky mountains today, and things are mild compared with what they were in these days of which I am speaking, you would find a man coming down the street with a big pistol buckled on him. You might ask who that man is and they would tell you that it is a deputy sheriff and then they would go on to tell you how many men he had killed, and how much time he had served in the penitentiary. For the most part those are the men who act as deputies in those mountain countries. I happened to be heading the posse that arrested some of the men that came out of the feuds in bloody Breathitt County. While serving as deputy sheriff I witnessed many gun battles and participated in some of those battles myself. I do not believe I would be exaggerating if I would tell you that I had my hands full of bullets shot at me but never was touched. How do you account for that, preacher? I believe with all my heart, that the Infinite God of all wisdom saw the day coming down the road when I would repent and be saved and go up and down this land shooting the old Gospel gun as fearlessly for God as I ever fought for the devil.

Now, I drank until I had delirium tremens three or four days in succession in hell on earth. Seeing everything imaginable that would torture my soul other than snakes. Most victims see snakes; I did

not. I saw a monster that would come out of its hiding place with gleaming eyes. Comparing it to a hedgehog it had prongs more like a porcupine. It would creep toward my bed where I was bound hand and foot and while I would plead with my friends to protect me from it, they would try to persuade me there was nothing there to hurt me. I recognized my friends. But to my drink-crazed mind those things were just as real. It would pounce upon me, shake itself to get loose and run back in its place of hiding with my blood dripping from its prongs. While I would be watching for its return, I would see it coming down the wall to drop on me from above and then scale the wall with my flesh hanging on — blood dripping from it. What was that? Just a foretaste of a drunkard's hell that he will go through forever, unless he is saved from sin. I could hear my enemies on the outside threatening my life. I would plead for my gun to protect myself. They would try to persuade me that there was no one around. They were just as real as the faces of my friends.

Now, this career went on from bad to worse, down through the years. Finally, I got too low down to be a deputy sheriff and they fired me from the job. Then I turned outlaw proper; running whiskey joints, dancing and gambling and all that goes with the hell-hole of vices like that, and I defied the officers. The sheriff and his deputies would not undertake to arrest me though they had warrants in their pockets for me. One time the sheriff did slip in behind me in a feed store and grabbed me, but I threw him between two sacks of feed stuff, took his pistol away from him, piled several bags of feed on him, gave him the horselaugh and left him squirming under the feed stuff.

Now, they decided they would clean up the town and they sent to another part of the county and got a man and made him Marshall — a great big red-headed freckled-faced man. They said he was fearless and would clean up the town and begin with Bulldog Charlie. The night after he was sworn in I asked some of the boys if they would like to witness some fun. I hunted up that Marshall, took his pistol and black-jack from him, shot under his feet and made him wade back and forth through the creek, gave him back his pistol and told him it was his bedtime, and he sneaked off and went to bed. Ever after that, anytime I wanted the keys of the town all I had to do was say, "It's your bedtime now," and he would go to his dug-out and be seen no more that night.

This wild career of sin and folly was destined to meet its Waterloo in coming in contact with the Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The Methodist Church decided to have a revival meeting and they went about it like they intended business. That was in the days when the Methodists believed in revivals and their women wore hair and clothes. They organized prayer bands and fasted, and prayed in every home except one in that county seat town. One old infidel judge would not permit them to pray in his home. They got a mail-order evangelist and his name was T. P. Roberts from Wilmore, Kentucky. In those days they called him, "Night Hawk Tom." They claimed that he could go into town and stay three days and tell all the meanness that was going on in the town, and the sinners did not realize that God could reveal things to His man and they thought he snooped around town at night and got his information, so they dubbed him "Night Hawk Tom."

He came for the revival. My place of business was on the corner of Main Street and the street that ran about a block back to the Methodist Church. Brother Roberts was entertained about two blocks up Main Street from my place in the Connoy home. Brother Connoy was a fine Christian and Sister Connoy was one of the most saintly women I have ever known. Well, the talk of the town was the revival meeting and we discussed it around the drink table and the card tables. Some of the boys

would go to the revival, come back after the service and tell us all about what had gone on, and what the preacher had said. And one night he paid his respects to the bootleggers and they told me about it. That night they said, "Now, if you want to get a squint at the evangelist, he is coming down the street." It was a cold November night, a big white snow was on the ground. The moon was shining almost as bright as day. We had places arranged where we could look out and see what was going on outside without being seen on the inside. I went to one of those places and down the street came a little sawed-off, hammered-down fellow and I said, "Is that it? I won't kill it but I will brick-bat it out of town." And it went out that the bad man was going to run the good man out of town. And people generally believed that I was mean enough to do it and didn't expect anything else.

One night, Sister Connoy was called from the service before it was over and informed that her son was on a drunk, threatening to leave his wife, etc. She had gone home. A blinding snow storm was raging. That night, Brother Roberts on his way home, met her coming through the storm. He asked her where she was going. She said, "Going to try to get my boy who is drunk and threatening to leave his wife, and take him home and effect a reconciliation." "Shall I accompany you in searching for your boy?" "No, it wouldn't do for you to go where I will have to find my boy. That man that runs that place would kill you if he would catch you around other than passing by. You go home and pray that God will help me find my boy."

She came that night to the side door, rapped on the door. When I responded, standing there with tears in her eyes, she said, "Charlie, is my Willie in there?" If I was in the right humor I would get him and make him go home with her. If I was in a bad humor I would not get him for her, thinking she was my enemy because she was opposed to that business of mine. Isn't it strange how the devil has a way of making sinners believe that their enemies are their friends and their friends are their enemies? This night, however, I happened to be in the right humor. I got her boy and made him go home. When she put him to bed and got his promise to stay, she returned home and found Brother Roberts still on his knees. He arose to his feet and said, "Sister Connoy, did you find your boy?" She said, "Yes, I got him home and got his promise to stay." He said, "I have just been thinking there are so many young people in this town, I wondered if it would be at all possible, in any way, to reach them with a revival?" And here is the sad indictment that good Christian woman brought against me. She said, "Brother Roberts, this man they call "Bulldog" Charlie at this awful joint on the corner is being used as a handy man of the devil as no other man in town. He has an influence over the young people. If we could only get that man converted, it would mean the turning of the town toward God."

That man of faith said, "There is nothing too hard for our God. Our God is able. Suppose that you and I enter into a covenant of prayer, and call others into the covenant in the day service tomorrow, and fast, and pray, until God either saves that wicked young man or moves him out of the way of a revival in this town." Others entered into the covenant the next day. I knew nothing about that.

But one day as I was going about that awful business, all at once seemingly something settled down over me — the most miserable sensation I had ever experienced. I did not recognize what it was. I knew nothing about the Holy Ghost conviction for sin. I knew nothing about the covenant of prayer and that all over that town the saints of God with burdened hearts and weeping eyes, were calling on God in behalf of my poor hell-ward bent soul. I carried on as best I could, and that evening just a little after dark, it was a rainy, dark night, I said, "Now, Jack, take over I am going home."

He said, "You have been acting strange today." I said, "I feel bad and I am going home." I went home, but on my way I had to pass the home of a sister whose husband and his cousin had come in my place not many days before and bought some drinks and then bought a bottle to take with them and said, "We are going down below the town this afternoon." They were my entertainers. One of them had the finest high tenor voice I ever heard and beautiful soprano voice. The other had the best bass voice I have ever heard before or since. They were both drink addicts. They would entertain us by singing in that place. I said, "Now, I am expecting you back tonight." They said, "We will be back." But that afternoon while under the influence of that damnable stuff they got into a drunken brawl and one knocked the other's brains out. The killer was arrested, charged with murder, put in jail. His wife was one of the best women in this world. She could not attend the night service because of the care of the children. But she went to the day service and entered into the covenant to pray for the bad man. I had to pass their home on my way to my home.

At this time I only weighed 118 pounds, was just a walking skeleton. They said I would be in the insane asylum or in my grave in a little while. I could only walk a little ways without either having to sit down or lean against something till I regained my strength. This night I stopped at the gate post of that home and leaned on the gate post and inside was the Christian woman and her little children getting ready for family prayer. I could see them as plain as I can see these on this front seat. I was that close to her. It was so dark on the outside she did not know anyone was near. When she knelt to pray she faced that window and I could hear everything she uttered. I could not move away. She prayed earnestly for her family and God's protection for her children and that they might be saved in early life and live for God. Then she prayed so tenderly for her poor husband in jail charged with murder, that God would show mercy, and save him before it was too late. Then she prayed so tenderly and earnestly for the widow and orphans of the man whom her husband had killed; claiming God's promise to be a husband and a father. Then she lifted her voice and in desperation prayed out, "Oh, God, we now remember our covenant to pray for poor sinful wicked Charlie."

If you would have shot me, it would not have effected me more. I thought, is it possible that I am the subject of that good woman's prayer? I was soon convinced I was the poor guilty wretch for whom she was crying to God for mercy. When she finished, I staggered on to my father's home. All night long I tossed to and fro, afraid to go to sleep; afraid I would wake up in hell.

I went down the next day to my business to carry on, but not with the interest I had had heretofore. That afternoon just about dark, I said, "Jack, take over; I am going home again." He said, "There are two factions to be here tonight. There might be serious trouble; you better stay on the job tonight." I said, "No, I am going home. If you see it brewing, send a horseman for me and I will come as quickly as I can."

I got home that night just as the family were sitting at the supper table, but my appetite was gone. I went into the bedroom and threw myself across the bed and thought I must get some sleep. It seemed I would smother to death if I did not get up out of that bed and into the fresh air. I walked out on the front porch and I was walking back and forth like a lion in his cage. I was between the two opposing spirits. All Heaven moved me toward the house of God where the revival was in progress, and all hell was marshaled to hinder. That day, as I stood on the street, the evangelist came down the other side of the street and turned and walked across to where I was, and taking me by the hand not

knowing who I was, he said, "I don't believe I have noticed you in the revival. Won't you come and be with us?" But now I opened not my mouth. There was a feeling of admiration came up in mind for that man and I wondered why a good man would cross the street to shake hands with a man like me. I found the secret in this Book. "The steps of a good man are ordered of the Lord." And conviction deepened.

I only had that kind of conviction once before, not a long time before. I fought a man in a gun battle, giving him just a flesh wound on his face, but one week to the day later a man killed him in a gun battle. Both men had notches in their own pistol handles. It was customary for bad men to attend funerals of other bad men, and when I passed around the casket and saw the wound from my pistol in the face of that dead man, there was a feeling came up in my heart that I ought to change my way of living, ought to be a better man. That feeling was soon crowded out. It came up again when Brother Roberts spoke to me that day, on the street.

That night as I was walking the porch I swore vengeance against the churches, but prayer changes things. While the great Spirit was pulling me toward the house of God, all the forces of hell were against me. But the first thing I knew, the old church bell began to toll, and with every toll of the bell, the arrow of conviction went deeper into my soul. If I was to build a thousand churches in the village, country or city, I would insist on putting an old fashioned bell on each one of them. Thank God for the old church bell. Then, the first thing I found myself going toward the House of God.

When I entered, Sister Connoy, who was sitting where she could see, let out a war whoop of victory and said, "Thank God, Brother Roberts, He has answered prayer." He did not know who I was. Others looked about to see who it was and when they saw it was me, some of them left the church, went out and sent it around town that the bad man had gone up to the House of God to run the good man out, and a great company of people gathered around the church to see the good man run out, but I came for a better purpose than that.

That good man got up and began to preach. I never heard such a sin-scathing sermon. He read my pedigree. If he had known all about me he could not have read my history more clearly than he did with the old Gospel that night. Before he was half way through, I was feeling like the Samaritan woman who said, "Come, see a Man which told me all things that ever I did." I was so glad he wasn't a compromiser; wasn't afraid to preach the truth with no uncertain sound. I was so glad that he fearlessly preached the truth, and no mush-mouth, pussy-footer.

I began to wonder before he got through if he would ever give me a chance to get to the mourner's bench. Finally they started to sing and I started down that aisle. One woman said, "He is going after the evangelist." I went to the altar a penitent sinner before God and began to get religion. I found it a bigger job than I anticipated. Listen, brother, if you are teaching that a man can live for years in sin and repent of it all in a twinkling of an eye, you go tell it to some one who is more narrow between the eyes than this old Kentucky preacher. Every man lives his life over sometime, somewhere. Some men's sins go before them to judgment; others follow after. Those whose sins go before them to judgment are those who live their lives over in repentance. Those whose sins follow after will live their lives over in hell.

There I was at the altar getting religion. I had no more than got on my knees until God said, "Back there is a man you mistreated. You go back and apologize and ask that man's forgiveness." I got up and went back and said, "I am sorry about the way I treated you. I want you to forgive if you can." He said, "Charlie, that is perfectly all right." He has told me often times since, he never was so glad to see any man at the mourner's bench. That night after the service I was busy pouring out my whiskey and burning up the cards. The town was stirred and people came from far and wide, driving old buggies that every wheel started in a different direction. Men and women who hadn't been inside a church for years, came to that revival meeting when they heard that the bad man was trying to get religion. I got on the job, and went at it like I meant business.

The next day I went to the sheriff's office, walked in. He turned as white as a corpse and said, "What do you want?" I said, "I want to surrender." Pulling back my coat he saw I had no gun I said "I mean it." He said, "I guess you are doing the right thing. What has come over you?" I said, "I am trying to get religion, trying to be a good man. He said, "We have a strange judge from another part of the state."

There were thirteen murder cases in that small county, and our own judge was indisposed for some reason, and the governor had appointed another man and he had read the Commonwealth of Kentucky against Charlie Wireman. They had other prisoners at the bar. When he would say to the sheriff, "Where is this man Wireman you have so much against," he would say, "We haven't caught him yet." The sheriff said, "I don't know anything to do but to take you up before the new judge. I said, "Let's go and have it done with." The devil told me that I would spend time in the penitentiary, but I knew I must be right with my fellow men and with the Lord.

When we went into the presence of the new judge, he said, "Are you Charlie Wireman?" I said, "Yes, sir." He said to the sheriff, "Where did you get him?" "He surrendered in my office." It is often known that men hide out in the mountains for months and years without as much against them. The judge could not understand when he told him I had given up. "You know what we have against you?" I said, "Judge, I am trying to get religion in the Methodist revival and I want to be right with the law and my fellow man." He said, "You know what we have against you. I think we have enough to put you in the place where the dogs won't bite you for a long time. Can you give bond?" "I am sorry, judge; there isn't a man in this town that would sign my bond." "I don't know what else to do but to commit you to jail." I said, "If there is any way that you can make it so I can go back to the revival I would be glad." Talk about running away from a revival meeting; I thought I would die if I could not get back to that meeting.

By that time the sheriff was weeping like a child. He said, Judge, may I speak with you privately?" They held a muffled voice conversation and when they broke away, I heard the sheriff say, "I am sure he will." The judge said, "The sheriff knows your father and knew you from the time you were in swaddling clothes, and he knows you well enough that he believes you mean business and if I would take your recognizance that you would come back the day after the revival is over. Will you do that?" I said, "I will." He then recognized me to come back. I felt now like I was converted, almost; but I wasn't.

I walked out of that court house and went down the street and got a horse. I said, I am going to make friends with a man who had threatened my life. We never passed each other on the street that we did not have our hands on our guns and men would turn their backs, expecting one or both of us to die with our boots on. I said, "I am going to try to make friends with him." He was a big man and had a roaring voice. He was a desperate character. My father stood by the side of the horse and said, "Son, don't go about that man. If he knew you were unarmed he would kill you on sight." I rode away and my father said, "We will never see him alive again." I rode up to the gate that was about thirty yards from the house and hollered "Hello." He saw who it was, seized a high powered rifle and stepped to the door. I put up my hands and said, "If you shoot me, you will shoot a man who is helpless. I want us to be friends. I am sorry I shot your brother. Will you forgive me and let us be friends?" He dropped that gun down in one hand and came cautiously down the path to the gate, opened it and stepped up beside the horse and said, "Bulldog, do you mean that?" After showing him that I was at his mercy, I said, "I am trying to get religion; I want to be a good man." The tears came up and he has told me repeatedly since, the first tears that had dimmed his eyes in thirty years. And he stepped back and set that old rifle down against the fence and reached up and clasped my hand with his big hand and said, "Charlie, if you want to be a good man I am telling you here and now that I will be the last man in this world to lay a straw in your way. You go on and be a good man, if you can." I fell over on his neck and wept like a baby and told him good-bye and went over to his father and mother's home.

They had said they would like to tie me to a stick, strike a match and set me on fire and laugh at me while I burned at the stake. I walked up the path to that country home, rapped on the door. The mother came to the door. She turned pale and said, "What are you doing here?" thinking I was looking for some of the boys. I said, "I want to ask you to forgive me for shooting your son. I am trying to get religion. If I could exchange places with him I would, but all I can do is to repent and ask forgiveness. Will you forgive me for shooting your boy?" She closed the door in my face but let me digress here long enough to tell you among the first converts God ever gave me was the dear woman who wanted to burn me at the stake.

I went on and on, making one confession and restitution after another. The first at the altar in the day service and the last one to go away in the night service. Until one night, one never to be forgotten night, thank God, when I made an end of resistance, was lying flat on my back and they were singing, "I'd rather walk with Jesus alone," when my faith took hold. Pardon was written upon my wicked heart. The glorious salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ broke into my sin-benighted soul, dispelling the darkness with such splendor and grandeur that it made the chandeliers in that old Methodist church hide their faces in shame, Thank God. I was a new creature in Christ Jesus the Lord.

Now, there are two spots I always visit when I go back home. I go up to the graveyard in the outskirts of the little town and get on my knees between two mounds that hold all that is mortal of my father and mother. I held their hands as they crossed the great divide, and there on my knees I long for the eastern skies to split and these graves give up their dead that I might be changed in the twinkling of the eye and join them in the rapture. And then, I go hunt up the janitor of the old Methodist Church and borrow the key. On one occasion I took my precious boys and showed them the spot and told them about the great transaction. But usually I go alone and turn the key gently in

the door, and walk softly down that aisle, for I am treading on holy ground and down to that old mourner's bench where I find

"A spot to me more dear
Than native vale or mountain,
A spot for which affection's tear
Springs grateful from its fountain.
'Tis not where kindred souls abound,
Tho' that is almost heaven,
But where I first my Saviour found,
And felt my sins forgiven.

"O sacred hour! O hallowed spot!
Where love divine first found me;
Wherever falls my distant lot,
My heart shall linger round thee.
And when from earth I raise, to soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eyes once more,
Where I was first forgotten."

Thank God, if it were possible I could take old "splitfoot" and rub his dirty nose on the very spot where God for Christ's sake pardoned my sins.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

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By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 7

The Campton Campmeeting

At the close of this wonderful revival the people began to talk of having an annual Camp Meeting. So, early that spring, following the revival they purchased one of the most beautiful sites for the camp grounds I ever saw. Folks who attended that camp meeting would say, surely God planted it for just this purpose. The cook-room, dining-room, store-room and one bed-room was back under the cave formation in the cleft back of the large tabernacle. All they had to do to make these rooms was to box-up the front.

A large tabernacle was erected, some more cottages were built.

I was one of the called evangelists for the first year. Sam and Sally Guyn had charge of the music, and because of the great revival the preceding Fall at the Church and this being something new in that section of the country, large crowds were in attendance. It seemed that the spirit with which we closed in the church began the first service of the Camp.

We had people from far and near who attended this Camp meeting, even some came from out of the State. It was estimated that there were over a thousand people on the grounds at times. The long altar was full of seekers after the first break came. They came to the altar at both day and night services. It was estimated that on one Sunday morning there were over two hundred people at the altar. Of course, the altar was inadequate to accommodate that many people at one time, yet the seekers were kneeling for definite work throughout the tabernacle.

One lady, who had come to the altar a number of times, seemed she could not get through. I was talking to her that Sunday morning and asked her what seemed to be in her way. She said, "I just cannot forgive the man who killed my husband and made my babies orphans."

I said, "Sister, you can by God's help." She replied, clenching her hands, "I never can, I never will."

I said, "If you mean that you just as well get up and go back to your seat. God's Word says, 'forgive or there will be no forgiveness and you may have to spend your eternity in Hell with this murderer.'"

She literally screamed out to God to help her to forgive this man who had made her a widow and her children orphans.

I said, "God will give you grace to forgive this man."

She said, "I will, I will, I do." A light broke over her countenance as bright as the noon-day sun without a cloud.

She arose, went to the for side of the tabernacle and took the man by the hand that had killed her husband and said, "I forgive you and want you to be saved." He broke down and followed her down to the altar. The Holy Spirit swept that audience like a storm would a forest and that was the time when they estimated over two hundred people fell on their knees crying to God for mercy.

Oh, how I would love to see this happen again. We are not seeing such conviction or such manifestations of Divine Power today, and the ingathering of precious souls into the Kingdom of God and the Church. And, why not? God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

May I recall to your mind again what I said to that woman, that she would go to Hell unless she forgave. Friends, if I had not been plain and faithful with this poor sin-sick, broken-hearted soul she might have been lost in Hell forever and not only her, but the man she forgave and led to the altar and the scores of other precious souls who were saved in that great service. Dear ones, it pays to be faithful to the trust God has given us and to the souls for whom Christ died. Dear Old Brother Burke said to me in one of my revivals, "Brother Roberts, I used to wonder why you preached on the terrors of the law in the beginning of your revivals but now I know. It produces conviction right from the start and without conviction you will not have a revival. You may have a meeting of long duration, but no revival." How true were his words.

We received a number of calls for revivals while in this Camp Meeting. One of these calls was from Jackson, Kentucky. One of the leading lawyers from Jackson attended this Camp Meeting and insisted that we bring our Evangelistic Party to Jackson for a revival. I asked him if he could secure a place for the revival. He said he was sure he could secure the court-house. We agreed to come at a set date if he would make the arrangements and let us know, which he did. I had never been in Jackson, but had heard plenty about Jackson and "Bloody" Breathitt and of course I had some apprehensions, but remembering the command of Jesus to His disciples and His promise, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," and, "Lo, I am with you always," I had no other alternative. I knew Jackson was in the world and He would go with me. So, if he was for me, who could be against me?

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CHAPTER 8

The Great Jackson Awakening

I boarded the train and started for Jackson and "bloody" Breathitt. It was after dark when I arrived at my destination. I thought in and around that old depot was the gloomiest, most dismal-looking place I had ever seen, but Sam and Sally Guyn were there to meet me as they had preceded me some time before. I was really glad to see them!

Sister Crouse and Miss Clark, were running a Mission down in "Snake Valley." I said to the Guyns, "Where do we go from here?" They replied, "Down in Snake Valley." I said, "Oh! My Lord, I always was afraid of snakes."

Sam said, "Miss Clark has them charmed with her personality and music. Come, let's go, they have prepared supper for you."

We found Sister Crouse and Miss Clark deeply spiritual and carrying a great burden for the Jackson revival. After we had eaten a well prepared supper we prayed, sang, got happy, and felt encouraged though we were down in Snake Valley.

We went to our services at the Court House. The janitor was a trusty convict from the jail. He had the Court Room as clean as a parlor. The Court Room was packed, all available seats were occupied, the aisles were jammed and every available space for standing room was taken. I thought of all the things I had heard about "bloody" Breathitt, blood-curdling crimes, homicides, suicides, committed here, and I began to wonder who was on my side. Then I thought of the promise of Our Dear Lord, "Lo, I am with you always." So, I cast all my fears aside, put the Sword in the hands of the Spirit and before the revival was over the slain of the Lord was many.

Sometime after the meeting was well under-way I was invited to the County Clerk's home to stay during the remainder of the revival. His name was Russell. He was a cripple, his wife was a fine little woman, and he was a good man but he was full of his jokes. He was a Presbyterian and she belonged to the Christian Church. Brother W. B. Garrett was Pastor of our Methodist Church. Court being in session we had our afternoon services in one of the lower Court Rooms for awhile, then Brother Garrett insisted on our coming to his Church for the afternoon services. We did this for the rest of the revival.

One morning at the breakfast table Brother Russell said, "Brother Roberts, they are having their Presbytery in our Church here this week. I suppose that is something like your Conference. They visited me at my office and wanted to know why I was not attending their services. I told them I was attending the revival at the Court House. They chided me very severely and said. I ought to attend

my own Church services. He went on to say, "Brother Roberts, about all the Spiritual food I get is over here at the little Methodist Church."

"Well," I said, "Brother Russell do you not think that you ought to pay your board where you get your meals?"

His good wife said, "Now, Mr. Russell, answer Brother Roberts." I saw I had him for once so I said, "What would you think of me if I would take my meals over at one of the hotels in Jackson for two weeks and when I was ready to leave, would go over to another hotel and pay my bill?"

He, for once, did not know how to answer. But at the close of the meeting he with his good wife came into our Church. So, I caught a red-horse and a deep water perch for the Methodist Church.

As I have already stated, we were holding the afternoon services in one of the lower Court Rooms the first week and after this we held them in the Methodist Church. During the first week, we were going to the services, Brother and Sister Guyn and I, and had been talking about the reputation of Jackson, and "bloody" Breathitt, and yet how nice were their homes and how good and kind and hospitable the good people of these homes were. We were passing the jail, and it seemed to be full of prisoners. These prisoners were looking out through the bars, cursing, hallowing, trying to attract the attention of the people on the street. They were really hard looking customers. We had just passed the jail when a rough-looking mountaineer rode past us on an old flea-bitten mule. The man looked as if he had not shaved for days, and he must have weighed all of 180 pounds. He was holding a big long birch switch in his hand and a big rowel spur on each boot. Sam Guyn said, "Look yonder, Brother Roberts, how would you like for that fellow to get hold of you?" I replied, "He isn't going to get hold of me if I can prevent it."

We watched him further. He rode up to an old hitching post, threw the reins over it, turned and looked across the street at us and then motioned to me to come over where he was I was afraid not to go and when I started, Sam said to me, "Good-bye, old Pal!"

As I walked up to the man keeping a safe distance, to my surprise he said, "I want to talk to you." Not wanting to talk there, he took me around the drug-store and the Court House, in a little narrow alley. As I somewhat reluctantly followed him into that alley I looked at Sam as he waved his hand as if to say, "Good-bye forever." When we were out of sight of the others and I was looking for anything to happen, he turned to me and said, "Do you know where you are?" I said, "Sure. I am in Jackson, Kentucky." He said, "Are you aware of the danger you are in?" I said, "I had not thought of being in any danger."

He went on to say, "If anyone had told me that you could preach like you have been preaching to these people and not be molested, I would have told them they were off in the upper story."

I replied, "Well, I have preached here just like I preach every place I hold a meeting. Humanity is the same everywhere. Have I not preached the truth?"

He said, "You have, and I admire you for it, and let me say, I am not a Christian, but you keep up your good preaching, and I will see that not one hair of your head shall be harmed."

As with "Christian" in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress, the lions by the side of the road were chained. I thanked the man for his noble courage, added God's blessings upon him and bade him good-bye turned and made my way to the Court House. As I entered the Court House with my chest out, my head up, I told Sam Guyn, "He did not get hold of me, but God got hold of him and he was 180 pounds back of the Gospel I was preaching."

In this great awakening in Jackson, something over one-hundred people received a definite experience of salvation. We had the finest of cooperation from all the other churches in the city in every way, which contributed much to the success of the meeting. Finances came in very generously and easy, and our entertainment was of the highest quality.

Brother Ben Hargett, who owned one of the banks, took us through the bank where we saw more money than we ever saw in any one place. He had thirteen office workers. He said to us, "this is God's Bank. Every dollar over our expenses go into His Cause." He told us that if at anytime we found a needy cause where he could put some of God's money, to just let him know. Years after this, I wrote to him for a donation for the building of a Methodist Church, and once for a student in Asbury College. He responded with a very nice offering. Before we left the bank, he called the office workers together for a word of prayer. He was a member of the Methodist Church of Jackson. Thank God for men like Ben Hargett.

Brother Ben Hargett with some other leading citizens, at the close of this great revival, suggested we have as our closing service, a Mass Meeting on the Court House lawn. We will never forget that scene and service. It was estimated that there were over 200 people in this service. After we had given a short farewell message, Sam and Sally Guyn sang as only Sam and Sally could. We then asked all who would, to bow in prayer. Almost everyone got on his knees and we closed our campaign in prayer for the continuation of that great awakening.

We bade them good-bye with a different conception of Jackson, Kentucky, and "bloody" Breathitt. To God be all the Glory.

I held two meetings in Dayton, Ohio. One Camp Meeting and one Church Revival. The Camp Meeting came out of the Church Revival, a mighty fire was started for God in that Church Revival. Not only did the Camp Meeting come out of that Church revival, but many precious souls for Our Christ, among them, my own precious son who was at that time living in that City.

My son was employed in the Kroger Stores, being manager of one of the leading stores of that City, but previously to our revival in the Church had been stricken with appendicitis, underwent an emergency operation, and one week from the time of his release from the hospital he took down with Scarlet Fever. For 30 days he had to be confined to his home. During those 30 days our revival was held at the Church. The Pastor of this Church, Rev. J. L. Kennett, a very Godly man, and myself, had prayer one day with my son. At that time he was running from the call to preach, and when we left him, he was under great pungent conviction. On the Sunday night when we were closing our revival,

my son at home, felt God was making a serious demand not to let that revival close with him not being reclaimed and renewing his covenant to preach. And down on his knees at his home while we were in our last altar service at the Church 2 or 3 miles away, my son yielded to God and from that time he went into the ministry and has been preaching that Blessed Old Gospel for over 25 years. God is not confined to the four walls of any Church, not to one specific locality. He can work simultaneously on all roads of life and His demands are not easily shaken off as are those made by man.

Our Camp Meeting at Dayton was held under the auspices of the Pilgrim Holiness Churches in cooperation with all the Holiness Churches of that City. Rev. Cox was my co-laborer, a mighty fine intelligent man of God. Without more details relative to that Camp, we will say, it was among one of the best Camps we were ever in, and much of that good work abides to this day.

One of the greatest fruitful evangelistic fields was in Middletown, Ohio. I have held 12 or 13 revivals in that City. The first revival was in the Garfield Mission, out of this revival came the first Nazarene Church of that City.

During our first revival in the Garfield Mission, one night two drunks were disturbing the service. I reproved them but it did no good as they kept on making disturbance. Finally I said, "I want that talking stopped and I don't mean maybe. I am from Kentucky." One of them shouted back, "We are too." So, I did not get my bluff in on that occasion.

All these revivals in Middletown were of great moment. Eternity alone will reveal the great good that was done in those meetings. As stated elsewhere in this book, the man I referred to as the "Walking Bible," came out of one of these meetings.

I also held two revivals in Franklin, Ohio. One was held in the Opera House, and one in the Nazarene Church. In our revival in the Nazarene Church, two preachers came out of that revival. One of them came to Asbury College and finished his schooling. Incidentally, the cities, Hamilton, Middletown, Franklin, and Dayton, all in Ohio, are one right after another in almost a straight line. Of course, I held many other revivals in Ohio.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 9

My Evangelistic Work

I was a local and approved evangelist for over 25 years, preached in almost every state in the Union, held between six and seven hundred revivals, saw ten and twelve thousand seekers at my altars. This estimate does not include my camp meetings, for my faithful co-workers get their share. I had a fine chain of camps when I joined the Kentucky Conference and I had some of the very best coworkers in these camps. To name some of the good men I have worked with, G. W. Ridout, B. T. Flannery, T. M. Anderson, Ben Sutton, Tom Henderson Charlie Slater, Howard Sweeden, Clay Milby, R. A. Shank and wife, John W. Grace, J. R. Parker, Ernest Roberts, C. W. Wireman, Samuel Steed, and John McFarland. There are others whose names I have forgotten but all were holy men of God and princely preachers. Some of them have gone on over to the Father's House and are waiting for our coming and the thousands they have won for the everlasting Kingdom.

In some of these camps it was estimated we were preaching to 2,500 to 3,000 people. The long altars were full at times and after the camps would get in full swing there were few barren altars. The presidents and boards of these great camps were great souls and so cooperative and kind. They always saw to it that the workers were comfortable and well cared for. They never will know what these camps have meant to the multiplied thousands until the count comes in. What a time that will be when we all gather for that great campmeeting in the Glory Land where there will be no altar service, no repenting or mourning, but singing and shouting and praising our Blessed Lord that we are in a perpetual camp meeting that will never break up or go back to the old grind. I am getting a fore taste of it right now. Glory be to God, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. I will have to quit writing for a while and celebrate. To God Be All The Glory. Forever and Ever.

I joined the Kentucky Conference in 1928. They took me in on a two-thirds vote on the account of my age. I was 56 and getting into the conference at that age is something I never heard of before or since. Dr. J. L. Clark told them they were not taking in a new man for I had been a Methodist all my life and had been preaching in the Church for 25 years. So, when they took the vote I went in with flying colors. Consequently, I have the reputation of being the oldest man admitted into the Conference as far as I know. I appreciated it and have tried through these years to prove true to the vows I took at the altar of the Methodist Church. Please, do not think I am boasting for I have nothing to boast about because had it not been for my Dear Lord I could not or would not have accomplished anything worthwhile in my feeble ministry. I over heard a District Superintendent say that he believed that T. P. Roberts had put more members into the Methodist Church in the last quarter of a century than any other one man in the field. I doubt this, but there is one thing I do not doubt, that is, I did my best to get them saved before they took the vows of the Church. I have contended in my revivals that the greatest revival we could have would be inside of the four walls of the Methodist Church. She is loaded to the water's edge with unconverted men and women, boys and girls. I have found these to be the hardest groups to get to the altar. This is why I said that I

doubted the District Superintendent's remark at the time but I appreciate his faith and praise, but I have never had the reputation of great numbers in my revivals as some of our fine evangelists. But I would be willing to put the abiding results up beside their numbers. I never was much on counting noses or numbers in my meetings but rather on new born souls.

My first pastoral charge was the Oddville Circuit, six miles from Cynthiana, Kentucky. I stayed on this charge four years, held my own revivals the first year. They were good revivals because I had good backing. No pastor ever served a more loyal people. We witnessed some of the most gracious times of the out-pouring of the blessed Holy Spirit of God and the in gathering of precious souls. We had five prayer meetings a week, one in each Church and a cottage prayer meeting. These prayer meetings were going when we went on the work and they were going when we left the work. I never felt like I was a pastor. I wanted to see people saved and be in revivals, so I held a number of revivals beside those in my churches. One of the charges I served, the people complained about me holding too many meetings off the work. At one of the last quarterly conferences for the year the District Superintendent asked if they wanted me back. They said, we have but one objection of our pastor, he holds too many revivals off the work. The D. S. said, "I can give you a man, a good man who will never be in demand for revivals. Brother Roberts is a revivalist and is in demand, which do you want. They said, "Send him back."

This is why I said I was never called to the pastoral work. I had to hold my own revivals and then jump the pastoral fence and hold revivals for the Brethren to keep the revival fire burning in my own heart. I am glad I have been a pastor though, because now I know the pastor's problems and can have sympathy for them. I have known evangelists to criticize pastors for the deadness of their churches and blame him for it's deplorable condition and kill the pastor's influence with his people. I always made it a practice to try to bring and to leave the pastor and his people closer together in my meetings. There never was a nobler group of men in all of our connection than the untiring, faithful pastors. I always felt if they had confidence enough in me to call me to hold their revivals I wanted, under God, to do my best for them and their people.

My next charge was at Hillsboro, Kentucky. The Annual Conference was held that year at Wilmore, Kentucky. I was staying at my sister's. My D.S. came to me and ask me how I would like to go to Mt. Olivet? This is a little county-seat town and I felt, a good charge, so I told him it was alright with me. He came to me on Sunday morning and told me I could rest easy I was down for Mt. Olivet. I was perfectly satisfied with my appointment. The Bishop was to read the appointments immediately after lunch. I went down to my sister's feeling contented and happily told them where I was going. After lunch I went back to hear the Bishop read the appointments. I would have been in the Carlisle District should I have gone to Mt. Olivet. The Lexington District appointments came before the Carlisle district. So, when he was reading the Lexington District appointments he said, "Hillsboro; T. P. Roberts." They had had a short cabinet meeting at the noon hour and had changed some of the appointments and mine was one of them. You could have knocked me over with a feather, or at least I felt that way, for the pastor who was there a year or so before, told me while holding the Mt. Hope Camp, which was on the Hillsboro charge, that there were five churches and during the winter months he had to go forty miles to one of his churches. Knowing this I told the District Superintendent I would not go. They could just appoint me Conference Evangelist, but he said I feel you are the man for the work and I am sure this charge is of the Lord. I said "If I was sure

it was of the Lord I would be willing to go." He said, "I believe you will see that God's hand is in it. I said, "O. K. I am not looking for an easy place, but for the will of God, just so I can win souls." We went to Hillsboro. I never had two better or happier years while in the pastoral work.

We did find five churches, but did not have to go over ten or twelve miles to the farthest church as they had completed the highway that had compelled the previous pastor to go forty miles around. We had five gracious revivals on the charge the first year. There was not a prayer meeting in either church when we went on the charge. Before the year was out we had five prayer meetings going strong. We had good help the second year and had a good revival in each one of our churches. We had two wonderful years on the Hillsboro charge. God helped us in the building of the Kingdom in the hearts of that fine cooperative people, which is still burning bright. Praise God.

At the next Annual Conference they appointed me as conference evangelist. We then moved back to our home in Wilmore, Kentucky. After being out of the field of evangelism for six years I had to start from the ground up. One pastor engaged me for a meeting at Conference. I went and held his meeting. The folk not knowing I was in the Evangelistic field again, the calls were not coming in. For several weeks I was stranded and of course the devil with some of the folk tried to make me believe I had made an awful mistake, quitting the pastoral work. As I heard Dr. Carradine say once when he was not getting calls for a week or so he got restless. He would sit down then get up, lay down, get up, walk a while, always changing his position. I found myself doing that very thing. While in this condition one Sunday afternoon I went up above our home overlooking Wilmore to a grove of trees. I had not only gotten restless, but I was desperate. I prayed in earnest about a call for a meeting and that I might get started back in the field. The more I prayed the more desperate I became. All at once it seemed every window in Heaven was opened and such a deluge of Grace and Glory flooded my soul and the shekinah of His Presence filled that grove. I felt like Jacob of old, "This is none other but the house of God and this is the Gate-way to Heaven." It seemed as I went down home from that Holy Place I was walking on air. I was so sure I was going to get a call for a meeting and said to my wife and a young lady student from Asbury, who was a visitor that I felt certain that I was going to be called to hold a revival. They rejoiced with me. That evening I went to church. Dr. V. L. Moore, our pastor at the time, asked if anyone had received a blessing from God that was fresh and up-to-date. He said he would give them a few minutes to testify. I could hardly wait until he got through speaking to give my experience on the hilltop a few hours ago, how God had assured me I was going to get a call for a meeting. We had another shouting time. The next morning Brother Moore and Brother Huston, came up home, called me down to the gate and said, "Here is your call." He had received a letter through the morning mail from a United Brethren pastor in West Mansfield, Ohio to send him an evangelist at once. He was to wire him, collect if he could send him a preacher, and when. Brother Moore asked when I could be ready to go. I said, "As soon as I can get my grips packed. I gave him the date and was soon on my way to West Mansfield, Ohio, traveling in my little Ford coupe. I arrived in West Mansfield, Ohio, in the late afternoon. The parsonage was in West Mansfield, but the meeting was to be held at York Center, Ohio about eight miles from West Mansfield. I never had worked with the United Brethren people and knew but little about their doctrine. I soon found, however, that the pastor wanted a revival of heart felt experimental salvation. So, I unsheathed the Gospel sword. I challenged the devil, with all his cohorts of earth and hell, and launched the battle in great faith for a sweeping revival. The faith was not because I was the human leader, but for two reasons; first, God had so wonderfully answered my

prayer that Sabbath afternoon on the hilltop. Second, because God the Divine Leader was there in the personality of the Holy Spirit to give leadership and unction and to show Himself mighty to save and strong to deliver. We found a well-filled church awaiting us, when we arrived for the opening service. The Pastor, Brother Nicholas, introduced me. I gave my experience of the hilltop in Wilmore. I could see from the expressions on the faces of some of my audience that they, too, had prayed through for the revival. From the very first service the revival began and before we had gone a week the altar was filled. Oh! how God did bless us. He blessed us in our every coming together. I do not think I ever saw a finer group of High School students, as well as the grades, in any one place than at York Center, Ohio. There seemed to be no rebellion in their hearts. You could tell they had come from homes of discipline and good training. It was not hard for them to get through to God. A fine group of these young men received the call into God's service. Several came to Asbury, graduated, and now are in the Harvest Field, winning the lost to Jesus. Others went to various Colleges and I understand they are making good. This was a great revival. At the close of this meeting they felt the need of a permanent "Camp" and four denominations joined us in organizing for this "Camp". I think there were something over a half hundred charter members. Committees were appointed and the work started. They wanted me to come back for a tent meeting and complete the work. I agreed to come if they would let me bring J. R. Parker. They agreed so Brother Parker and I went and had a fine meeting. At the close we got the site donated for the camp, over \$400. dollars on the tabernacle and about that amount was donated in labor. Of course, soon they had the tabernacle erected and called Dr. H. C. Morrison and myself to dedicate it. Neither one of us was able to go, having other engagements. They have a wonderful camp and have been improving it through the years until now they have one among the best camps in Ohio. I have been one of the called preachers twice and suppose to be a visiting preacher every year. They have had and are having some of the greatest evangelists that are in the field today. I never stand on that platform and look into the faces of that multitude that I do not think of that hilltop experience that Sunday afternoon and say, behold what God hath wrought, and have a spell of rejoicing. There is always the humble feeling also. I feel like putting my face in the dust and giving God all the Glory for all the accomplishments that ever have been achieved since that first service in that United Brethren Church, down to this good hour. Glory be to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen and Amen.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 10

A Sermon On Regeneration

Text: Isaiah 35:18.

"And an highway shall be there and a way and the way shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men though fools, shall not err therein."

Introduction: If the "Way" is the Way of Holiness, then the Highway is evidently The "Way of Regeneration." Or, to the spiritual man, it is the New Birth. Regeneration in the Greek means, A being born again. (Pal-ing-ghen-es-ee'ah) In St. John 5:21, Romans 3:11, Eph. 2:5, it also means, "being quickened." "And You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins."

From these facts of doctrinal truth, one may readily understand that to become established upon the Highway of Regeneration is to be lifted up out of darkness, gloom, and mists of doubt and spiritual unbelief, onto a height of glorification and exaltation. God picks the man up from a state of spiritual ignorance and inability to help himself, and transplants him on the mount of Spiritual light. He is then a new creature, a new creation, possessing a divine principle and a creature that only the redeeming power of God can produce.

Regeneration! It is the First Definite work of Grace.

The Evidences of Regeneration may be summarized briefly as:

1. Conviction. This conviction is because of sin within the heart and life of man. This conviction may come in different forms and caused by varied means. Conviction is the revelation of one's condemned state in the sight of God.

2. Following, in an honest heart, a definite degree of conviction for actual transgressions comes a holy, or, Godly sorrow and a deep humility with a repentant spirit toward God, who has been so deeply grieved by our willful sinning against Him.

3. Such a heart is drawn to God, confesses, repents, and exercises faith in God's promises to forgive sins. The heart is, then, filled with joy, love, and devotedness to God, who has sent His witnessing Spirit to bear witness of truth of the work of the New Birth wrought in the human heart.

Regeneration: How can one retain this experience? And how can one bear the fruits of

Regeneration?

In I Thessalonians 5 :16-23, are found the fruits of Regeneration, which lead directly into the Way of Holiness.

1. "Rejoice evermore." In the regenerated heart there bubbles forth a living spring of joy. This joy comes through the glorious knowledge that all past sins are forgiven. To quote the language of the poet, "Oh! the joys of sins forgiven, Oh! the bliss the Blood washed know." The joy and spirit of rejoicing abides evermore, even though in the midst of earthly sorrow, the heart rejoices at the mercies of God and the hope of a perfect life after this shadowy pilgrimage of earth.

2. "Pray without ceasing." The regenerated heart is a heart that is constantly in communication with the Heavenly Father. To pray without ceasing is not a command to be on ones knees or with bowed head, or in a customary attitude of prayer. It wishes to convey the meaning that as one goes about his daily tasks, takes bodily rest, the soul is in a prayerful attitude toward God. David, The Psalmist said in effect, "Whether awake or asleep, I am with the Lord." That is the vital relationship with Him, enabled to get a petition through to the throne at any time or in any place. To illustrate: One who enjoys the regenerate experience, may meet a sinner, talk with him, about the business which interests him most in the material world, or discuss current topics of the day and at the same time that the lips are conversing with him, the heart is sending up a silent cry for the salvation of his immortal soul.

3. "In everything give thanks, for this is the will of God, in Christ Jesus concerning you."

The truly regenerated heart is always thankful to God, for all His mercies and blessings. There would be no need for the President of the United States to issue each year a proclamation for Thanksgiving Day, if all men everywhere were living in the true state of regeneration, for everyone then, would be thankful in his heart every day in the year. Not for everything give thanks, but in everything give thanks. In the midst of sorrow, as Job of old, "The Lord giveth, the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

A personal experience illustrates this point, very well. Several years ago, I owned a small farm, I did it more for my two boys who needed to be out in the country and away from the many dangers of living in town. While I was away in a meeting, the barn on the farm burned to the ground. The Pastor, for whom I was conducting the revival services, received the word first. He received a false report that it was my house that had burned. The word was that it was a total loss.

I noticed that the good Pastor wept throughout the service that night, but I did not know then the reason. At the close of the service, he broke the news to me as gently as he could, of the disaster. After the first shock had subsided, I looked at him through my tears and exclaimed, "Thank God, I have a home in heaven which fire can never destroy." I was not thanking God for the loss of my home and earthly possessions, but was thanking Him that in the midst of such a loss, that down in my heart there was that ever-thankful attitude, which is found in any regenerated heart, that I had an eternal and imperishable abode in the skies, beyond this world of sorrow and losses.

4. "Quench not the Spirit." Obey the dictations of the Spirit of God, which dwells in every regenerated heart. Walk constantly in the spiritual light as it is turned on. "When He, the Spirit of

Truth is come, He will teach you all things." The regenerated heart delights in the teachings of the Spirit. If one would progress along the spiritual highway of regeneration, which leads to the Way of Holiness, and Christian perfection, that one must let the Spirit have full sway in the will and heart and life. This experience is a heart experience; "For out of the heart are the issues of life." Thus, the life will be lived according to these things in the heart fully controlled by the Holy Spirit.

5. "Despise not prophesying." The regenerated heart is open to the truth at all times. Good plain preaching is a source of enjoyment and uplift to that heart that has experienced the New Birth, and a "Newness of life."

Sinners and false professors do not enjoy the truth. Jesus' Gospel revealed the corruptness of the Scribes and Pharisees. They despised that message, and despised the Messenger, and because of it, they put Him to death on the Cross.

Herodias, illegal wife of King Herod, had John the Baptist beheaded because he exposed her adulterous life. But, in outstanding contrasts to these examples, is, the regenerated man or woman whose sins have been forgiven and washed away through the precious blood of Jesus, and rejoices in the plain unvarnished truth of the gospel, profits and grows in a spiritual way on good spiritual gospel food.

6. "Prove all things." Hold fast to that which is good." This means, be spiritually discerning in all things. There are three ways in which we are able to prove all things.

- a. Experience of Regeneration.
- b. By the Holy Scriptures, the Word of God.
- c. By the means of prayer.

There is a glorious promise in the Word of God which will carry this out. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." James 1:5, Again, Paul tells us of such discernment. I Cor. 2 :12-16. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

One can take prayer, the Holy Scriptures, and the dictations of the Holy Spirit, and settle all questions concerning conduct, various questions of right and wrong, the maze of doubts and fears, and the difficult problems of a growing Christian life.

a. "Hold fast to that which is good." In the Way of Regeneration there is abundant food of spiritual fruits and pleasantries, which satisfy the hungry, regenerated soul. Matthew 5:6, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." Everything good for the seeking, regenerated Christian is along the Highway of Regeneration; the experience of joy; the good and righteous attainments all challenge the regenerated man to hold fast to the Road, letting nothing side-track nor lead one astray from the blessed highway of regeneration.

7. "Abstain from all appearance of evil." So many have the misconstrued idea that one must be sanctified to live without sin, but the truly regenerated heart finds no pleasure in partaking of anything of a sinful nature, but shuns even the very appearance of evil, and is forever seeking to please God and be a blessing to his fellowman.

8. "And, the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

And is a conjunction showing very clearly that regeneration is a definite work of grace wrought in the heart by the Spirit of God. This regenerated experience makes the candidate a fit subject for the second definite work of sanctification, wrought by the Great God of Peace. The Highway of Regeneration converges into the Way of Holiness, or, Sanctification, and the one possessing these two experiences is looking forward to the preservation and glorious perfection of the triune man, spirit, soul and body, when the King of Glory shall come to earth the second time.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW MY JESUS!

by — T. P. Roberts

I want you to know my dear Jesus
More than all this world unto me.
He is more unto me than a brother,
Or a friend here on earth e're could be.

He is calling, He is calling the lost ones,
O, will you not heed His sweet voice?
He will give to your heart satisfaction,
And in Him evermore you'll rejoice.

I sought Him when a poor lost sinner,
My heart was so heavy and sad;
And He spoke all my sins forgiven,
And now I'm so happy and glad.

My life is now full of sunshine,
For His grace is sufficient for me.
And some day He will call me up higher,
And with Him I shall ever more be.

Like a shepherd, he's seeking the lost ones,
Who have strayed on the mountains of sin.
He will pardon all your transgressions,
And cleanse all your nature within.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 11

The Great Hindman Revival

During our revival at Campton, Kentucky, a young lawyer, Circuit Clerk, Kentucky, attended this meeting and was wonderfully saved. The following year he joined the Kentucky Conference and they sent him to Hindman. Upon taking the pastorate at Hindman, he called me to hold a revival for him. I accepted the call.

Hindman, Kentucky, is a typical mountain town, the County-seat of Knott, County. It is 40 miles from Jackson, Kentucky, as the crow flies, and Knott County joins (bloody) Breathitt. To reach Hindman, I had to go by train to Jackson, Kentucky. In those days, things were pretty rough in the Eastern Kentucky Mountains. You could not reach Hindman by train the way I was traveling. Automobiles were things almost as yet unheard of in that section of the State. The good Pastor from Hindman met me at Jackson with a mule. That was to be our mode of travel to Hindman 40 miles away.

The roads were anything but straight and smooth. Up and down mountains, across streams. We crossed one stream, named Troublesome Creek, four different times. Narrow pass-ways, in and out among the trees and brush, and cabins miles apart. Our safety and fate lay only in the hand of God, but we were traveling for Him, and even though the roads were rough and the way many times was dark, yet Our God was leading all the way.

Leaving Jackson with all my clothing tied up in a sack and thrown across the mule's back, we started out on our trip to Hindman 40 miles well back into the heart of the Eastern Kentucky Mountains, a trip which took 2 days to make. I am mighty glad we had two or three weeks to rest up before we had to go back over that identical route, riding awhile, and walking awhile, any way which promised the best in the line of comfort. But going back to Jackson, we rode a little more in luxury as we had a saddle-horse. After two days and a night, we finally came in sight of Hindman, our destination.

Though Hindman was situated well back in the Eastern Kentucky Mountains, yet it was anything far from a quaint old mountain town. It was rather modern and well up-to-date. Though the outlying section of mountains was rough and very hard traveling through, yet Hindman was a thrifty modern city, as mountain cities go. It was a location of learning. The Normal School for Teachers was located there, as well as the School for the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, also, a nice Grade and High School.

The Revival proved to be a great Spiritual awakening throughout the whole city and locality. It got into both special Schools, reached every class of people on the walks of life. The good people of Hindman were very susceptible to the Gospel and the cooperation and response was of the best.

I was entertained in some good homes and by the best of people. I was entertained in the Senator Smith home part of the time. I have a little basket which was given to me by Mrs. Carter Smith, and we use it for outgoing mail. When we left Hindman, a fine lawyer by the name of Baker let me have his saddle-mare and a saddle to ride back to Jackson. His son came home with me and entered Asbury College.

The following article is a supplement to the Hindman Revival by way of describing the living condition and ways of typical mountain people.

In those days, a man living up in those Mountains, if he owned a log cabin, puncheon or dirt floor, a mule, a hillside plow, a muley cow, a rooster and three hens, three or four small patches of ground grubbed and cleared, two coon-dogs, a muzzle-loader and perhaps a brace of 44's, he was a man of wealth and distinction. Moonshine Stills were plentiful. Mountain Dew could be purchased by having your money on a certain stump, getting well out of sight of that stump, and by the signal of a rifle shot, go back and get the Dew. Women "dipped" snuff, and smoked "hillside" from clay pipes. The feuds of the Hatfields and the McCoys were still fresh in the minds of those mountain people. Penalties for crimes were paid many times from the barrels of a "44" or the "Marlin." They believed in honor and defended it in their way. Courts of law were too slow and too doubtful. They took law and justice in their own hands and upheld it with their own blood. And yet, if you wanted a favor and your favor was just and right, the favor was shown you or you would know the reason why. Many of those people in those days said but little. It was not anything strange if you asked someone a question and did not get an answer. Not, because they would not answer you for reasons of coldness, but because they did not know how to word the answer and figured the best way out was to say nothing. And yet, if there was a message or important news to get across, it was done, maybe days and weeks before the news got around, but it got around. If some rough and ready mountaineer, reckless and Godless, wanted to show his superior capacity for daring and fun, and he wanted to disturb a meeting of any-kind, he would go in shooting and come out reloading. The Revenue Officers were no match for those "eagle-eyed" mountaineers. I once heard a story, true or untrue, never-the-less it could have been true.

A Revenue Officer, having received several tips on where a certain still was in operation, stopped at a mountain cabin not far from this still. Seeing a small boy out in the yard, he asked, "Where is your father?" "He's over yonder," the boy said pointing in a certain direction, which direction was identical of the tips for the locality of the still. "Would you take me over there?" the Revenue Officer asked. The boy nodded his head in the affirmative for the reply. As they were going down a long, narrow, twisting path the Revenue Officer said to the boy, "The reason why I wanted you to go along with me was because I needed someone to show me how I was to get back." — "But you're not coming back," was the cold reply from the boy.

In most cases drinking water was procured from mountain springs, cold clear running water fresh from the heart of the mountain and drank from a gourd dipper. Huckle-berry pie "long sweetin" (Sorghum) "taters" "fatback" and cornpones, were specialties among those people. The smell of pine-cones, the fresh nip of the cool woods, the song of the birds, the bark of the squirrels, the whole atmosphere of the mountains, its thrill and invigoration soon made one a part of it and it a part of one. Grandeur and beauty, the blooming ironwood trees, the fresh scent of sassafras and wild grape

and plum, the great sentinel trees atop the mountains, landmarks perhaps back in the days of Daniel Boone, all to be impressed indelibly upon the mind and soul, never to be forgotten.

Those people had their enjoyments, fun, and happiness of life. But too, they had their sorrows. Death stalked those hills the same as it stalks the pathway of all life. Friends and neighbors would gather in at the death of someone in their locality. The deceased was soon washed, and laid out on the "cooling-Board" to be watched all night — during that time, the plain pine coffin was made by the best workman in the neighborhood. The next day, the body was dressed in a shroud, laid in the pine coffin covered with black crepe — service of some kind, perhaps very simple was conducted, and the body was lowered away beneath the dirt and rocks of the hills of Old Kentucky. A plain wood slab marker was placed at the head of the grave with such inscriptions, as: "Gone, but not Forgotten," And how true were those words. Though those wood slabs have now vanished with the years of time and by the elements of weather — and many of them perhaps have been forgotten by man, yet, Almighty God knew where they were laid, and when He bids them rise, He will note the opening of every grave.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 12

The Albany Revival

I received a call for a revival meeting in the little county seat town of Albany, Kentucky, Clinton County. When we arrived in this little town, we were informed by the pastor that we would only have nine days of revival services, as the Louisville Annual Conference would meet in just nine days. We, therefore, had to close the meeting on the second Sunday.

Much praying and preparation had been made for the meeting, so from the very beginning God came in mighty power and the revival leaped out in front right from the start. We held two services daily and each service was marked with signal power and progress. At the close of the revival, in the last service as I remember, twenty-seven people knelt at the altar, most of them heads of families. Certainly those nine days were ordered of God, as the results so wonderfully proved.

To me, it looked like a spiritual tragedy to close the revival, but close we must and close we did. But the Official Board and many of the good people of the Church were never satisfied until they had called me back for another revival. In a few years we went back for another engagement. It looked as though the meeting began where we had left off in the first revival.

The third day of this meeting, in the evening service, I made this proposition; all who wanted the prayers of the praying people, to come forward and give me their hand on it. A very goodly number came forward and shook my hand.

The next morning, one of the members of the Church came to the place where I was being entertained and asked me if I would go with him and the Pastor to see his brother-in-law, who was dying with tuberculosis. He was not ready to die, as he had claimed to be an infidel. He also told me, as we were on our way, that when I was there in the first revival, his brother-in-law thought I was the best preacher ever to come to Albany; and that I might influence him to yield to God and be saved before it was too late. He had refused to let others talk to him about religion.

We arrived at the home and were given a nice welcome. I soon discovered that he could not speak above a whisper as he was so near death's door. I spoke to him and asked him if he knew me. He nodded his head that he did. I then asked him if we could sing and have prayer. He nodded his head again that we could. After we had sung a couple good old gospel songs, I asked him about his spiritual condition. He shook his head indicating that he was not right with God. Then I said, "Don't you want to be saved?" He answered in a forced whisper, "No." I said, "You know you cannot get well?" He whispered, "Yes."

They had told me about his mother, how that she was a good religious woman and had gone on to her eternal reward. Then I said, "You had a good mother." He whispered, "Yes." Then I said,

"Where is she now?" He lifted a bony finger and pointed it upward. I said, "Do you not want to meet her?" Then he whispered, "Too late." I said, "It is never too late with God, He will save you right now if you will let Him." As we went to prayer, I said to him, "While we pray, I want you to pray too and ask God to save you, He will do it."

While I was praying I opened my eyes and saw his lips moving, and a tear coursing its way down his cheek, I knew we had gained the victory. When we arose from prayer, there was a light on his face that only God can give to a redeemed soul. He asked to be lifted up. We lifted him up. Then he asked that we sing a certain song. As we began to sing the song he had requested, his voice grew stronger and he helped in the singing of the song. He hugged his wife and children and exhorted them to go to the revival meeting and get right with God and meet him in heaven. His good wife was already saved and had been praying for him for years. I am sure all his children came to God in that great revival meeting.

As we left his home and were starting back to town, we had just reached the high school grounds when we heard the excited cry of a woman. As we turned, we saw the woman coming across the school grounds crying, "Come quick, Esco has been shot and is calling for Brother Roberts." The good woman was the wife of the good pastor I was helping in the meeting. She told us to hurry as fast as we could, as they believed he was dying. We hurried as fast as we could to the courthouse where they were taking his dying deposition. When I reached his side he said, "I knew you would come, I gave my hand for prayer just last night and I knew you would be praying for me." I said, "Esco, do you know you are dying?" He said, "Yes, I know it, Brother Roberts." I said, "Esco, are you ready to go?" Then he said, "I know God saved me when I was shot and I began to pray, and this good woman got to me first and began to pray for me and God answered our prayers and I am ready to go. I am so glad I gave you my hand for prayer last night, for as soon as I got that death blow I said, 'Brother Roberts is praying,' and God assured me that the prayer had been answered and the burden of sin had been lifted from my heart."

Esco was shot at eleven o'clock forenoon and died at eleven o'clock that night. They told me that just before he died, he called his mother and father and girl friend to his side. He told them that he was going and made them promise him that they would meet him in Heaven. Then, in the hushed hours of the night, while angels hovered low to waft his sweet young soul beyond this vale of sorrow and death, he peacefully slipped away to be with Jesus who had saved him just that morning. How close.

The man we had previously prayed with that morning, who was so gloriously saved, died just before the meeting closed. I witnessed something in that meeting I had never witnessed before, or since. I saw two people saved and preached both of their funerals in the same meeting.

I believe with all my heart, that if Esco had not given his hand for prayer that Sunday night, he would have been lost forever. Before they moved him from the garage, where he had been shot, he told them that Brother Roberts was praying for him for he had shaken hands with him on the proposition of prayer that he would be saved before the meeting came to a close. Then he told them to call for me. It was his last call.

We never know when the last call is coming. The only reasonable thing to do, is for all of us to answer His call now unto salvation and be saved and safe when the emergency or the inevitable arises:

Esco was shot accidentally. The boy who shot him, though grieved deeply at what had happened, was also saved in that revival meeting. But why do we wait until the accidents or emergencies befall us before we cry out to God to save us? Some folks belittle prayer and salvation while in good health and in the hours of ease and contentment. There is a verse of song, which I would like to give to you in closing. It is,

"You may be happy and care-free today,
Never a frown nor a sigh;
But don't forget 'twill not be thus always,
Surely some sadness will come by and by."

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 13

The Mighty Awakening In Bourbon County

Among my first revivals was a Tent-meeting on the Litten Farm about 7 or 8 miles from Paris, Kentucky; Bourbon County. The Rev. Robert Wilson was my co-worker in this meeting. The beginning of this engagement did not look so encouraging. We had borrowed a small tent. It was not only small but a very poor affair in which to conduct services. It was ragged and worn, and had seen better days. We did, however, get up enough good religious nerve to put it up and stretch it over as much space as possible. To most everyone, it was looked upon as a very small affair.

We used long slabs for seats placing them across on rocks which served as the supports. The accommodations were anything but inviting or encouraging. Never-the-less we, being merely boy preachers, trusted in the goodwill of the people and in the power of God.

A Tent-meeting in that section of the country was a new thing. To the delight of us, two young preachers, the people came. Each night saw the attendance on the increase, and it had not gone more than a week when our little ragged tent would not begin to accommodate the crowds. The crowds became so large that there would be two or three times as many on the outside as were in the tent. Our faith at the beginning was so great that we erected an altar from one side of the tent to the other. It was not long before we saw the altar filled with seeking souls. Even then, it would not accommodate the number of precious souls who came forward for salvation work, and at times, the entire tent was an altar.

This revival was within ten or twelve miles of the Old Cane Ridge Church, the site of the great awakening of the Cane Ridge Revival which went down in Church history as one of the mightiest revivals of those days. The nearest Methodist Church to the revival we were holding was in a little village called Little Rock, about 8 miles away. It was very weak with only a few members. It was in such sad circumstances that it was about to be abandoned. The pastor and what few members were left, were looking for a new location to build a new Methodist Church, but were having difficulty in finding the site which would best suit them.

There was a man in our revival who was a deep-dyed sinner; he was also a very large man. His name was Dick Harrington. One night, as the altar call was being given, to the surprise of the entire community, Dick Harrington arose and came to the altar and all but fell at the altar, crying for the mercy of God. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say, that for one hour and a half or longer, he was in great agony, weeping and crying and praying to God for mercy. He did not seem to pay any attention to his instructors, but prayed until he struck rock-bottom. Being a very large man, and it being very warm weather; as it has been said of John Wesley, when he prayed each morning; he had perspired so freely that, "his clothes were wringing wet."

Dick Harrington prayed through and touched the Throne of God and got results. When the fire fell, he arose and shouted and praised God up and down the aisles of the tent, then went outside and shouted and praised God out there. I believe he shouted and praised God for well over one hour.

On the outside of the tent was a group of drunks, and sinners, looking on. When Dick Harrington came through and shouted the praises of God for what He had done for him, one fellow among a group of drunks, said, "I am going to watch Dick Harrington and if he got what he claims he did, I will believe that there is something to it. It was not long after that until that same fellow who made the statement, was gloriously saved and became one of our great "Fire-baptized" evangelists. His name was J. A. McClintock. He has traveled over this nation preaching a full salvation, winning thousands of precious immortal souls to God and into the effective work of the church.

After Dick Harrington came down from the third heaven, and got his feet on the ground once again, he said, "I understand they are looking for a site on which to build a Methodist Church. I have a farm right on this highway and I will give them from one-half to as much as they want and will help them build the Church." Then he went to shouting again.

The people looking for the Church site, did not think the site Dick Harrington offered them would be suitable. So, he sold the farm and bought another one on another highway and sent them word for the Pastor and the Location Committee, to come and look it over. After they had looked the place over they decided it also was not suitable. So he decided that with God's help the best thing to do, would be to build a Church himself. He put his good decision into action and started to build a Church.

He had a neighbor who belonged to the Christian Campbellite Church, who seeing what Dick Harrington was doing, offered to help him, as they had no Church in that section. So a Methodist and a Christian Disciple began erecting the Church building. When a group of people from the Church of God heard that they were going to build a Union Church, they offered to help them finish it, as they had no church building of their own. So the three Denominations built the little Harrington Chapel Church.

A few years after they built the church building, they began to have church differences, as all Union Churches do sooner or later. The Christians, or, Campbellites, as they were called then, wanted the Church in their name. The Church of God also wanted it in their name. So one evening in a Church Business Meeting, they all agreed if they could get this "Writer" to accept it as a pastorate, preaching twice a month, they would let it stay as a Union Church, willing to accept me as their pastor.

I was then in the full time evangelistic field, but I agreed to preach for them twice a month and hold revivals the rest of the time. I was the pastor of their Church for two years, when they finally agreed to deed it to the Methodist Church. A few years later, the Methodists built a more beautiful and serviceable building, and today, Harrington's Chapel is one among the most outstanding rural churches of the Kentucky Conference.

During this revival in which Dick Harrington was saved; to this day, I remember the number of professions and definite experiences received. There were 105 to the count. All of them were eternally valuable, but if there had been no other but Dick Harrington, it will take eternity alone to reveal the results. Dick Harrington preached for 25 or 30 years and was instrumental in bringing hundreds into the Kingdom, besides the evangelists that have gone out from Harrington's Chapel.

Brother Harrington went to his eternal reward a few years ago, an old soldier of the Cross, shouting his way through the Gates into the City not made with hands. To our blessed God be all the glory. It will not be long until we will meet again, not in the little old ragged and tattered tent, but in the Father's House of many mansions.

"What a Day that will be, when Our Lord we shall see,
As He sits upon His everlasting Throne.
And we shall hear Him say in that glorious Day,
Faithful servants, "Welcome Home."

This great revival was said to be the greatest revival in that section of the country.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 14

A Sermon On Repentance

Text: Acts 17:30; "And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent."

INTRODUCTION

Paul on his third missionary journey was taken prisoner and they brought him in their travels to the City of Athens. Athens was the wonder city of the world at that time. It was filled with people of high culture and learning, people of wealth and people who loved the beautiful and the artistic. But, these people were idol worshippers and Paul's heart was stirred as he witnessed their superstition and idolatry. Paul was not condemning their worship, but that which they worshipped. They were sincere, but the inscription Paul referred to revealed the fact that they did not have a knowledge of the true and living God, whom Paul was trying to reveal unto them. He tells them that there was a time when God winked or overlooked this kind of worship, because of man's lack of knowledge of a better way or form of worship. But now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent. It was a different dispensation. Jesus had come to fulfill the law and banish forever superstition and idolatry. Matthew 5:17, "Think not that I am come to destroy, but to fulfill."

We want to notice the conditions of and requirements for Biblical repentance.

I. A Godly sorrow for sin.

We find in God's Word that a Godly sorrow proceeds repentance. II Corinthians 7 :9-10.

(9) "Now I rejoice not that you were made sorry, but that you sorrowed to repentance: For ye were made sorry after a Godly manner that ye might receive damage by us in nothing."

(10) "For a Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation that need not to be repented of."

Out of this Godly sorrow and conviction for sin comes a radical change of mind.

II. A Change of Mind.

The Prodigal Son is a concrete example of this. When he came to himself he said; "I will arise and turn my steps toward father's house." One's mind must be thoroughly made up that he is through with the world, sin and the old life.

III. Confession.

A Godly sorrow not only brings a change of mind, but repentance involves confession of sins.

(a) As the Prodigal Son confessed his sins to his earthly father, so the penitent must confess his transgressions to the Heavenly Father. Hear the Psalmist as he cries from out of a back-slidden heart. "Against thee, and thee only have I sinned - I acknowledge my transgressions and my sins to thee" Psalm 51:3-4.

And like the leper man, who came to Jesus and cried out from the desperation of his soul, "Lord if thou wilt thou can make me clean." He acknowledged his uncleanness and when he had made his confession, Jesus in his compassion, stretched forth his hand and touched him, saying, "I will, be thou clean," and immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

So everyone who comes to Jesus must acknowledge that he is a sinner in the sight of God and stands greatly in need of His Atoning Blood. Then He can and will say, as He said to the leper man. "I will, be thou clean."

(b) This confession also involves to whom confession is due. If we have wronged our brother or remember that our brother has ought against us, we must go to our brother and confess or make right any wrong that exists between us, thus bringing about a reconciliation. Then, and only then will a reconciliation be made between the sinner and Jesus. We read in Matthew 5:23, Jesus own words regarding this truth, "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother has ought against thee leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way first be reconciled to thy brother and then come offer thy gift." Therefore, if we expect to receive His pardoning Grace and reconciling smiles, we must be willing to confess and bring about a reconciliation with those whom we have wronged or who have wronged us. God will then accept our offering and bless our waiting hearts.

IV. RESTITUTION

The next step in genuine repentance is restitution. Hear the word of God , Ezekiel 33 :15, "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he has robbed, walk in that statues of life without committing iniquity he shall live, he shall not die."

We, also, have an example of this in the New Testament contained in the story of Zacchaeus, Luke 19:8, "If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation I will restore him four-fold."

It is a sign of sincere repentance when restitution is being made. I have witnessed this in my revivals where people have restored things which were obtained under false pretenses and almost without exception they have stood true to Christ and the Church. We have noticed that those who have counted the cost, paid the price, repented on Bible lines, do not want to go over the same ground again. Therefore they are not only "Getters," but "stickers."

V. FORSAKING

The last thing we want to notice in regard to Biblical repentance is the forsaking of all sins. There must be a full abandonment of sins. God's Word tells us, "We must come out from among them and be ye separate, said the Lord and touch not the unclean thing, then I will receive you," said God. Also in Proverbs 28 :13; "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whosoever confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." When we shall have repented to the extent that we loathe sin, turn our back on it, with the contract signed that we are everlastingly done with sin, with our faces turned toward the Cross of Calvary and with a mighty faith, that comes to a truly penitent heart, a faith like to that of the woman who entered the Pharisee's house and at the feet of Jesus not only had the fountain of tears broken up, but repented of all her sins and reached the climax of faith when she broke the Alabaster box of ointment and heard Jesus proclaim, "Thy faith has saved thee, Go in peace." Words are inadequate to describe the peace and joy and victory that comes to a human heart that has thoroughly repented of all its sins and has reached out with the arms of faith and touched the hem of His Garment and has been made every whit whole. Glory to His Name! Then can the penitent really feel he has taken all the steps that the poet tells us about.

"I was once far away from my Saviour
And as vile as a sinner could be
And the thought filled my heart with a sadness
There's no help for a sinner like me.

"I wandered on in the darkness,
Not a ray of light could I see
I wondered if Christ, the Redeemer
Could save a poor sinner like me."

"Then in that dark, lonely hour
A voice whispered, sweetly to me.
Saying, Christ, the Redeemer hath power,
To save a poor sinner like me."

"I listened and low 'twas the Saviour
That was speaking so kindly to me
Saying, Christ, the Redeemer hath power
To save a poor sinner like me."

"I then fully trusted in Jesus
And, Oh! what a joy came to me
My heart was filled with His gladness
For saving, a poor sinner like me."

"No longer in darkness I'm walking
The light is now shining on me
And now unto others I'm telling
How He saved a poor sinner like me."

"And when life's journey is over
And I my dear Saviour shall see
I'll praise Him forever and ever
For saving a poor sinner like me."

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

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CHAPTER 15

Is A Preacher's Road Easy?

To a great many people the preacher's life, especially the evangelist's, is a very soft one — running around eating fried chicken, old ham, cake and ice cream. It's too bad that everybody doesn't have a try at the business just to really understand what a preacher is up against.

Once I heard of a preacher's wife telling her husband that she was tired of staying home eating hog-jowl, water gravy, and other such coarse foods while he had chicken, ham, angel-food cake, and ice cream. So, to give her a respite from such a life of misery, he invited her to accompany him on his next appointment to share in the good things with him. She accepted the invitation with high anticipation.

They visited his appointment for that Sunday. At the close of the morning service, everyone left except them they had no invitation for dinner. In the emergency he told his wife to stay there and he would go see if he could get something to eat. He went to a little country store not very far from the church, to buy some cheese, crackers, bologna, and a few stale cakes. As he came back by a little spring he secured a can of water. Then he called his wife to come out under the shade of a tree in the church yard and prepare for dinner.

They found some newspapers, spread them out on the ground, arranged what he had brought from the store, and asked "grace" upon the humble menu. Then to be most polite, he offered the cheese and bologna and told his wife to have some fried chicken; he passed the crackers and told her to have some hot biscuits; then for dessert he passed the stale cakes and water and said, "Have some angel-food cake and lemonade."

As he ate with a hearty relish, he did not look to see how his good wife was faring, but as he offered her more cake he noticed the big tears coursing down her cheeks. Looking at him with a startled expression and trembling lips she said, "John, have you been doing this all the time since you have been on this charge?" He replied, "No, I seldom eat any dinner at all when I come to this church; they are poor people, and I never expect very much here." Then she said apologetically, "I'm sorry I misunderstood, and I want you to forgive me for being so very wrong about it all. I assure you I'll never complain again, and I'll always be sure to fix your lunch when you come to this church."

I was not there when the supposed incident happened, nor do I vouch for the truthfulness of it; but it illustrates what I am about to say.

It is not all sunshine and flowers, ice cream and cake, in the evangelistic field. But I have seen the time when I would have been very glad to have shared in that lunch that day in the church yard. No, the folks who see us in our best clothes with the light of God on our faces and the joy of heaven in

our souls, think we never have a care, a burdened heart, or a temptation. They do not know about the sleepless nights and the heavy obligations and burdens we carry in our hearts in their behalf. No, if we are faithful to the trust He has given us, the evangelistic work is not always on the sunny-side of the street. We are soldiers in the army of the Lord. Our enemies of the world rise up against us; and we have the flesh and the devil to cope with; but, thank God, our Captain, will never let us be defeated if we stay in His will. So, I am sure, if you had followed this preacher over this nation you would be convinced when we returned that the true evangelist does not have a soft job and a big time. As I have often said, there are no victories without battles, and the harder the battle the greater the victory. " Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease, While others fought to win the prize and sailed through bloody seas. Sure I must fight if I would win, increase my courage Lord, I'll bear the toil endure the pain, supported by Thy Word."

I want to relate a few testings as I experienced them first-hand. Some years ago we closed a camp-meeting in Kentucky and went directly to one in Iowa — we had about three hundred miles to travel. We would have borne it much better if we could have rested a few days between these 'camps', but out of one right into another is quite a test. In all my life I have tried to avoid extravagance, and in traveling by train through the night I seldom, if ever, sleep in a berth. I had traveled to Chicago in the regular passenger coach, but was so tired and weary when I arrived in Chicago I decided to obtain a berth in a sleeper-coach. As soon as I could after I boarded the train in Chicago, I 'hit the hay," fell asleep and did not awaken until late the next morning. After I had completed my morning arrangements, I went into the regular passenger coach and asked the conductor where we were. He told me that we had just entered the state of Iowa. By that I knew we still had a long journey ahead of us. I was very hungry; it had been quite some time since I had eaten. In just a little while the conductor called out a station and said we would have ten minutes for lunch. Everyone seemed to be as anxious to get to the lunch-counter as I, for we all made a bold break for something to eat.

I finally secured a sandwich and a cup of coffee. Ten minutes was not a very long time for a fellow to eat his breakfast. The coffee was steaming hot, and as I tried to eat the sandwich and washed it down with the hot coffee, I burned my lips and only half chewed the sandwich. I hurried back to the train, which soon pulled out, and we went down the track a mile or two and stopped. The conductor informed us that there had been a bad wreck down the road and it would be quite sometime before we could proceed. What puzzled me most was why they had to leave that lunch stand where we could have eaten all we desired and could have taken our time in doing it.

We had stopped in a very deep cut. The day was very sultry, my lips were burning, and my stomach was still asking for more food. It looked like it was either burn up or starve. I had spent twenty cents and seemed no better off. To add insult to injury a lady just a few seats down the coach was trying to raise a window but was making no head-way. I went down to help the lady in distress and said if she would step out into the aisle I would try to raise the window. Giving the window a quick lift, it went up with such a sudden force that it caught my thumb between the lower and upper sash. My thumb nail was mashed flat and in a few minutes it was blacker than the porter's face.

There I was hundreds of miles from home, over a hundred miles from my destination, withering heat, mashed thumb, empty stomach, everyone strangers — just a few of the little trials of an

evangelist. But my hope and courage were in God and the object of my journey kept me pressing toward the goal. Finally we understood that the wreck had been removed and the road was once again clear. To the great delight of all, the wheels began to roll and the good fresh air began to allay the suffocating heat.

We reached the camp-ground just as they were closing up for the night. Not realizing that I had only had that one sandwich and cup of coffee the whole day, they hurried me off to the cottage where I could retire and get a good night's rest. They saw that I was very exhausted. As I was preparing for bed, my stomach was strongly complaining about not being cared for. I rebuked it and promised it the best breakfast I could find the next morning, if there was enough food in the dining room to meet it's needs. I could do nothing but retire for the night, but I didn't sleep very much. My thumb pained worse than a jumping toothache, and when I dropped off into a doze I would dream of hot coffee, deep cuts, train wrecks, stuck windows, and lunch stands. My stomach sounded all night like a faithful watchdog.

Never was I happier to see the light of another day than I was the next morning. My thumb was causing most of my suffering, and making the acquaintance of a local preacher that morning, I asked him if he would release the congealed blood under the nail. He very sweetly complied and immediately it ceased to give me any more pain. I felt like kissing the preacher for his precious kindness.

I am sure my appetite and stomach said "grace" for the morning meal before I did. At last I settled down to a more regular routine of living though it was several days before I was on the shady side of the street. When the meeting got under-way and in full swing, I crossed over to the sunny side. When the altar filled with anxious seekers, and happy finders, I felt I was abundantly paid for any and all the suffering I had gone through. Bless His Dear Name, we had a great camp-meeting. And, when we have fought our last battle and won our last victory, and He says it is enough—come up higher, I expect to meet a host of Blood-Washed saints from that Iowa Camp. I give to Him that is worthy all the praise, glory, and honor for it all.

It is true, all of us regardless who, have our trials and hardships. But never think that just because a fellow is an evangelist, he has less than anyone else. Like the "pony express," the evangelist must go through; the work must be done; in the great challenge he drives himself to the task, incurring many times more hardships than most folks imagine. Let me tell you of another little experience which I encountered another one of my many experiences.

In my early ministry I would go from one meeting to another; not thinking much about it. I have preached as many as four times on Sunday. I once held a meeting for a pastor who was in charge of seven churches, and filled his appointments outside of the church where we were holding the revival. I never felt the effects of these meetings while under the burden for souls and working during the revivals. When I finished a meeting and the burden for souls was lessened, I would seemingly collapse.

I came home one time from a chain of meetings, so worn and weary that I decided not to make other engagements until I had time for rest and recuperation. This lasted only two or three days, and

I should have had two or three weeks. Happy in my expectation of such a rest, I was soon mistaken. Rev. W. R. Johnson, called me on the phone and wanted to know if I had any meetings booked for the next two or three weeks. I told him I didn't have and didn't want to book any until I had rested sufficiently. Then he said, "I was to go to Brother So and So's the last of this week but I am sick and have been in bed and I will not be able to go. Will you take this meeting?" I replied, "No, I have been doing so much it has been telling on me and I must get some rest." He continued, "You have three days and nights and I know by that time you will be as fresh as the morning dew." He and I had been co-laborers in the evangelistic field and he knew how to work on my sympathy. I made every excuse I knew, then he said, "If you will take this meeting I will call the pastor tonight and make it alright with him." I finally agreed, hoping the pastor would not accept me, but he did, as much as I needed the rest, I went at the appointed time for the meeting.

We had to go by train, and in Junction City, Ky., we were to change trains, but had to wait several hours. The Queen and Crescent and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Companies, whose lines crossed at Junction City, were somewhat at outs and one road sought to make it as hard as it could on the other. One traveling man said he had been traveling for ten years and had spent two years in Junction City waiting for trains.

I finally boarded my train and about three o'clock in the afternoon, I arrived at the town where I was to conduct the revival. The pastor had started the revival and was just closing the afternoon service when I arrived. He went with me to show me the place where I was to sleep. It was a nice little cottage just a little distance from the main residence. It was up-to-date in every way. The pastor said, "You will take your meals at the hotel and this family will look after your room and see that you are well cared for." After he had left, I unpacked my bags, arranged everything according to my notion, and then looked at the nice clean bed; and congratulated myself at having such a wonderful place to rest my tired, weary body.

At the close of the evening service I went to my room and was not long retiring. I soon dropped off into a doze getting ready for peaceful slumber, when all at once I was awakened by a little quick sting on the back of my neck. I said to myself, "No, it couldn't be!" I was convinced that it could be, and was. I arose and lit the lamp, turned down the covers and discovered to my consternation that I was not attacked by just one or two blood-thirsty fellows but by a whole regiment; and they meant business, for they were going in every direction looking for me. To add to my fear and trembling, they brought up reinforcements and flanked me on every side. With one desperate sweeping swing I swept the enemy from the field of battle with my only weapon, the pillow. Then I placed the lighted lamp at the head of the bed and wishing that they would not come to the light, I slept very well the rest of the night.

The next morning I took it all to My Lord in prayer as I knew I could not fight both battles at the same time. I said, "Now, Lord, You know how tired and worn I am, and I will have to get some rest and sleep." I was sure God had heard my prayer and felt in my heart that he would undertake for me. I made no complaint to the pastor but just left it with God assured He would work it out for the best for me and the good of the meeting.

From that morning until the close of that meeting I never saw another one of my enemies. The last battle had been fought and the peace treaty had been signed and we had one of the best revivals of all my ministry. Many precious souls were saved. It was a coal-mining town and district, one of the largest in the state, and a number were saved two miles under the ground. I would like to tell you some of the wonderful things which transpired in this great revival, but I must refrain.

At the close of this meeting I told the Pastor of my first night and the fierce battle and terrific conflict I went through and how God delivered me out of it all. This is what he said, "Now, Brother Roberts, the secret of it all is, the good lady of the house watched that bed and kept those blood-seekers off. I am sure they were not in the bed, but fell from the ceiling." I was sure that it was not carelessness on the good woman's part, those things just happen, but many times very inconvenient." "Well," I said, "I am like the old Negro woman who was praying in her cabin for God to send her some bread. Two little boys heard her and ran to the store and got a half of a loaf of bread, climbed up on the roof of the cabin, and threw the bread down the chimney. When she saw the bread she began to shout and to thank God for answering her prayer. The little boys ran to the door laughing and making fun of the old Sister and said, "The Lord didn't send the bread, we went to the store and got it and then threw it down the chimney." She just kept on shouting and said, "Glory to God, I does not care if the devil did fetch it, the Lord sent it."

So I thought, maybe the devil did send those bed marauders but God sent the good lady to keep them away.

I have fought bed-bugs, flying, buzzing mosquitoes; have been 'cussed' and discussed, stoned, but never hit, rotten eggs thrown through windows intended for me only to smash on the pulpit, or hit the chandeliers, and hit others soiling their dresses and suits; but like the "Hebrew Children" in the fiery furnace, I came out without a lick or the smell of rotten eggs on me. And almost invariably, many of those my worst enemies, would get saved and become my best friends.

No, it has not all been sunshine and flowers, but many rough roads and many bitter struggles. I have been paid a thousand-fold for the tough battles fought and the persecutions and sufferings in the hundreds of precious souls I will meet Yonder, washed in the Precious Blood of Jesus, dressed in robes of spotless white, shining beyond the radiance of the sun. I thank God for the health He gave me to wage so many battles for Him, for the Joy of His fellowship with me in sharing the yoke, for the many friends and co-laborers, for the many who listened to my messages of warning and loving counsel to surrender all for His sake and their eternal salvation. No one can realize how short time is but those who have come so close to the end of life's way As I look back upon those days and experiences, I say from the very depths of my heart, I did my best, I may have made mistakes, not intentionally, but back yonder in those young manhood days when I said that one eternal "yes" to Jesus-that I would preach His Gospel, and I have no regrets. I would do it again. I hope that He is satisfied that I tried to do my very best for Him; it was all I had, I gave Him all I had. May He be gracious and merciful to me that I may attain unto His Resurrection. And if I beat you there by a few short steps, I will meet you just inside the Eastern Gate. There we shall meet to sorrow never, just beyond the shining River. There we shall enjoy His beauties and glories, and then say, "All done on earth, what wilt Thou have me do here? I am still at Your bidding." I cannot think of heaven as a

place of idleness or loitering. I believe He has greater missions for us than we have ever had here on this earth.

May God add His blessings to the readers of this book, and think seriously on these things, "His arm is not shortened that He cannot save, nor His ear heavy that He cannot hear." If you are not saved, get saved. If you are saved, go on for all that God has for you and meet me in the morning with our Christ. "Glory and Praise forever to Him."

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

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By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 16

The Good Shepherd

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul. He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; Thou anointest my head with oil. My cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

David had been a shepherd since his boyhood. He tended his father's flock on the hills of Judea. He knew the habits and needs of the sheep and was well aware of the many dangers and responsibilities of a good shepherd. In just a little while he was to be called of God to be the shepherd of the people of Israel.

Perhaps, as he had contemplated many times there on the Judean hills, and while he was seeking to be a true king of Israel, knowing what it meant to be a true shepherd, he mused in his heart the thought, "And who is my shepherd?" Then remembering the many personal experiences and tests of his past life in relationship with God, he came to the startling realization that God was his shepherd. Then with a heart swelling with divine power and inspiration, he wrote one of the most beautiful songs ever to be canonized in the pages of Holy Writ, the twenty-third Psalm.

David's first statement clinches the rest of the facts of this Psalm and all other facts, for that matter; "The Lord is." No one was ever more conscious of this salient fact than David. It was not a guess, nor even a half-hearted expression of belief; but a direct statement of fact based upon a personal experience with God. "The Lord is." If David knew this, everyone else can know it too.

1. "The Lord is my shepherd."

A shepherd was one of the most resourceful persons in all that sheep country. His duties were many. He was a provider. In every need, whether hunger, thirst, sickness, peril, weariness, or the safety of the fold, the shepherd was the one who met every requirement necessary to the welfare of the sheep.

2. "I shall not want."

There is a constancy of need whether it is with the human race or the lower animal kingdom. A need which goes too far, soon ends in dire want. But David said, with God being his shepherd, "I shall not want." His needs were to be amply and continually met. What a satisfaction. Isn't that a most comforting assurance? "I shall not want." His needs, both materially and spiritually, were to be met continually. When physically and spiritually hungry and thirsty, there would be food and drink. There is no hunger greater than the hunger of the soul. Jesus said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

When weary and tired and weak; when sick or tempted or tried; David knew the answer. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures." To lie down and rest and refresh the soul. Jesus corroborates the sentiment with divine authority, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." What a peaceful scene it is; beautiful green pastures; quiet and rest, under the watchful care of the Good Shepherd. Peace will be ours; our every need will be abundantly met. "I shall not want."

In a true spiritual sense, the beautiful green pastures of God's possessions are far removed from the dry, hot, parched, rocky, fields of sin. Sin's proffers are sorry compensations for life's choices and participations. Led by evil suggestions, one is liable to drink, lie in the gutter, live in hovels, victims of lust, which many times leaves those who indulge as diseased, broken in health and blighted in spirit. But the sheep in God's green pastures are far removed from such dangers of sin's consequences. God is a holy God. If we are the sheep of His pastures, we will enjoy the purity of God's love, live in His Holy atmosphere, and revel in His sunshine. Knowing that He is our good shepherd, we will have peaceful surroundings unmolested by fear or danger of sin's benighted gloom.

3. "He leadeth me beside the still waters."

Oh! Our Heavenly Father! how peaceful. Can you not, my friends, see the gentleness of this picture? What is more restful than to stand beside a beautiful body of water and look out across its beautiful shimmering expanse? Or, to stop beside the clear running brook, or the stream that wends its way patiently down to the sea? When weary and tired by travel, hot suns and stifling hot winds, then to be led down into a peaceful cool valley and draw into the soul may be gently flowing in its placidness, yet down through rapture of the peaceful, restful, stream? Though the water its entire content it is satisfying and restfully still. So it is with the soul that rests in the care of God's shepherding, satisfied and restfully still.

"He Leadeth me."

Oh, blessed thought. The good shepherd never drives his sheep; he goes before and leads the way. If there are dangers, he is the first one to bare his breast against the odds. So God, through Jesus, has elected to go before his sheep to lead the way. He went by the way of the Cross and paved the way of safety from evil, sin, and its consequences. We will always be guided aright when He leads the way and love him and seek to keep His commandments.

4. "He restoreth my soul."

When cast down by temptation, trials, and weakness, He is ready to forgive and lift us up and restore us back to the safety of the fold. If along the line we wander away, disobey His will, or come short of His glory, if we will but ask in prayer; He will forgive our transgressions, He will love us freely, and restore our souls to their rightful fitness. He says, "I will blot out your transgressions and will remember them against you no more forever."

I once sinned, but God through Christ forgave, lifted me up, filled me with the blessed Holy Spirit, and now I am His trusted servant. You can come back into the fold again, too, if you have sinned against Him, for He is able and willing to forgive. He will restore your soul, and you will be His without rebuff or chastisement. In tenderness He will bring you back into the safety of the fold.

5. "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name sake."

"What He hath promised, that He is also able to fulfill." All his promises are at stake in His children. "Will God cast away his people? God forbid." It is the upholding of his own righteousness, the fulfilling of His promises of righteousness in his people, and the praise His people will bestow upon him by leading them aright in the paths of righteousness. It will also prove his quality of leadership and purpose to a sinful world in proving true in every case to those who are His people.

6. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

What a blessed consolation! When I am sick and near death, I will have nothing to fear, for God will be with me. I will be without evil or the approach of evil. I shall be comforted even in the valley of the shadow of death. God through Jesus shall bring peace to the heart and drive out fear, and we can rest in peace even in sickness or facing death; for He shall be with us. Let us get in touch with God through Christ Jesus; and be saved from sin and filled with the Holy Spirit, so that we may have nothing to fear even in the most extreme case.

Let us notice that David did not say the valley of death, but the valley of the shadow of death. Jesus said, "He that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die." If there is a shadow of death, death must be somewhere to cast the shadow. The picture is more menacing than it appears to be. David is talking about eternal death. Eternal death is too horrible for words to describe. I shall fear no evil of eternal death, for Thou art with me. As we walk down into the valley of the shadow of death, He will lead us through it and up out on the other side where the eternal light of God's glory shines through one eternal day. The poet had it pictured right when he said, "There's a light at the River a light at the River: a light at the River I see. The Lord will stand and hold in his hand, a light at the River for me."

7. "Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me."

Most all people have seen the picture of the Good Shepherd. Quickly discernible is the staff. Some pictures have portrayed a lamb which has wandered off of the beaten path and near a steep precipice and in danger of falling to the rocks far below. The lamb is beyond arm's reach, but the shepherd, by extending the crooked end of the staff so that it is firmly hooked around the animal's

neck, it is gently drawn back to safety. The staff is used for many useful purposes. It helps the sheep to be guided clear of evil as it may block a wrong pathway. It is used in the protection of the sheep in driving off wolves and other wild animals. When the flock is led into the fold, as the sheep enter, each one is touched with the rod in the count as they were when they left the fold. What a comforting feeling, to feel the rod laid gently across the back and numbered with the Father's flock.

His spiritual staff can lift us up and out of the byways of sin and danger and place our feet in the right pathway of righteousness. We are protected in a spiritual way from the enemies by faith and prayer. If, perchance, we stumble out of the way, his staff will aid us in regaining the right way, for God is ever alert to the possibilities of eminent danger on the journey through life. Let us always be ready to cooperate with Him in his right leadings and His efforts of rescue in times of danger. He will rescue; He will save; for "His rod and staff, they comfort me."

8. "Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies."

Out there on those Judean hills and lurking in the shadows, were those ravenous beasts of prey anxiously waiting the chance to catch the sheep to satisfy the craving pangs of hunger. But while they look on, the good shepherd spreads out a bountiful table for his sheep and they eat in contentment and satisfaction in the presence of the enemies.

God's people have enemies. While they are ever ready to destroy the sheep, the Good Shepherd satisfies His people with the fat of the land. We are in the presence of unbelievers, and our Christian way of life is threatened; in the presence of enemies, whose evil intentions are ever toward the destruction of our souls, and who try to drag us down and away from all that is good and sure, God through Jesus prepares a soul feast to strengthen our spiritual lives. He will guard against those evil influences while we eat of the good things He hath prepared for us at His table.

9. "Thou anointest my head with oil."

Oil, in the Scriptures, is one of the most significant and useful necessities. Its meanings are numerous. In one case, it means acceptance. Whenever a new king was chosen as the king of Israel, he was anointed with oil signifying that he had been accepted of God and the people. Christ is called the Anointed One. Though He was not anointed with oil, He was anointed with the Holy Spirit which is another symbolism of oil. Oil was used in sickness and injury; it was used against the hot rays of the sun that beat down upon the heads of the sheep, and to guard against the bites and stings and annoyances of insects. "Thou anointest my head with oil." He was so very kind. In God's love and sweetness and kindness, He is constantly anointing our heads with the Holy Spirit of acceptance.

10. "My cup runneth over."

Enough, and yet more, is it for the sheep of God's pastures. Satisfied with abundant food and drink, browsing deep in green pastures, led beside the still cool refreshing waters, safe from every harm, the ever ready touch of love and kindness and assurance, and fed full of the best that can be found, and yet more and more. "This wonderful stream of salvation, it never runs dry." My joy is full, he keeps adding more and more until my cup of blessing runs over to bless others and to glorify my

God. "A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over," is the experience of the sheep of God's care. "I will open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that you will not have room to receive it all," says God through Malachi to all the people.

11. "Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

a. After all the days of journey over those hills and through those green pastures, there comes the day when they all must go home. The good shepherd looks out across those hills toward the home base in the distance. Animal instinct leads the sheep to sense the end of the grazing period. As the shepherd turns his feet in the direction of home, the sheep turn with him and the homeward journey is begun. Perhaps miles and miles of travel, but every step brings them closer and closer to the end of the trail. Down through the valleys and up over the hills across familiar pasture lands and through the forests of cedar and oak, until, at last they come in sight of the beloved haven where rest and quietness and safety lay in the shelter of the fold.

b. The good shepherd has led and guided his sheep aright all the way. His sweet voice has soothed and comforted his sheep in those days and nights of the long pilgrimage. His sheep have listened and obeyed his voice, for they know not the voice of strangers.

c. Is there anyone who has not needed guidance in life and to be shown the way? I have been led many times. We constantly need a guiding hand to lead us in the right paths. There is no surer guide in all life than the Spirit of God through Jesus Christ, Our Lord, Who is, as David said, "My Shepherd." He is the Good Shepherd. He calleth his sheep by name and leadeth them out and they follow him, for they will flee from strangers. He is the Good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

d. One day, after the hey-day of life is past, the Good Shepherd will make the final call, "Come Home". The sheep will turn at His call, and they together will begin that last long journey home. What a wonderful day it will be when we come into sight of the homeland and the old familiar faces come beaming on our sight. What rapture when we see the Eternal Fold, where peace and love and eternal security awaits, and what a comfort to feel the touch of the rod as we step across the threshold, numbered with the heavenly host.

e. How personal is the acquaintanceship of the sheep and the shepherd. How do we hope to arrive safely in the shelter of the fold if we have never known the Good Shepherd? His Word says, "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." We will always be welcome in his flock. There is ample room for more in His flock. There is room for everyone. Knowing God through Jesus Christ is not a difficult thing. Listening to His teachings and His teachers, will enlighten us to His spiritual leadership. He is not a hard and difficult shepherd to follow, on the contrary, He is gentle and kind and tender in love, and when the Journey ends in the heavenly fold, we shall dwell in the Father's house forever.

May we say with David and know as David knew, that, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want."

Constructed and presented by Paul Thomas Roberts, son of the Author of this Book.

HIGHLIGHTS OF MY LIFE AND MINISTRY

In Old Time Revivals

By

Thomas P. Roberts

CHAPTER 17

Is Jesus Christ The Son Of God?

This is a much disputed question. Many believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and many believe that He was only the son of Joseph. If He was the Son of God, He had a miraculous conception and birth.

Right in the beginning, I am a firm believer that He was the Son of God. I am going to reason from my own personal opinions and theories. I will cross the path of opposition several times because to answer the question I cannot avoid it.

We will start from the point of miracle. —

2. Reality alone is a miracle to the finite mind. None of us can grasp the full force of life in its original and mysterious operations. We are here. The known is here. It is so great that we can only wonder and imagine. The Universe is so infinite that the finite mind is at a loss to understand why it is here and how it functions.

Speaking of miracles, there are miracles all about us. What man is unable to understand, after all research has been exhausted, is a miracle. We cannot account for it or of it. Life, the germ, the origin, is a miracle to science and the evolutionist. They know it is here, but to account for it how it got here, its origin, and its motivating power is beyond their comprehension. All they can do is guess. Most of H. G. Wells theories about life and the history of primitive man are guess and suppositions. Science and evolution stop where life begins.

A miracle is a mystery. All mysteries are miracles. It wouldn't be a miracle if we understood it and everything about it, for then it would be a fact. If we knew all about God—all about the origin of life, the very power and purpose of God nothing then would be a mystery all would be clear and we would understand how God can do the things which to us now seem quite impossible.

2. All Christians believe in the resurrection of Christ, whether bodily or Spiritually. But either is a miracle. Its operating powers and to us accepted facts only admits that the Christian believes in miracles.

That which man cannot do or rather, duplicate, in common with God is a miracle. We cannot make a tree. We cannot make a flower. We cannot make anything possible without the help of God. What we can do was here before we came; how it came to be here is a miracle.

How can God raise the dead is a mystery — a miracle ;yet He has the power to do it because all Christians believe in the resurrection of Christ; also, in the resurrection of everyone who dies in the faith in Christ.

If we can believe in so many miracles, why would it be beyond reason in the light of these other things for God to have caused a miraculous conception and birth of Christ? If He performs miracles all the time, why discredit the miraculous conception and birth of Jesus? If we could see how and by what power God does such things, we wouldn't marvel so much, for to Him they are only natural.

3. Great men have risen, have caused the world to somewhat lift their eyebrows, and in some instances have influenced somewhat of a following; but their names and exploitations have gone down in history with the common man. Perhaps the greatest followings have come about through such men as Pagan religious leaders: Mohammed, Confucius, Buddha, and others. Perhaps, Mahatma Ghandi was one of the strongest leaders. But in most cases it was a matter of some supernatural belief on the part of their followers.

At least in the Christian world, no one has ever yet threatened to be such an outstanding person as was Christ. Other people have died on the cross, have been burned at the stake, have given their bodies in some sacrificial offering, but none has ever been able to hold more than a small recognition.

We cannot say that of Christ. I don't believe any common human being could ever obtain such a recognition or following in a million years and that time is conservative.

There was one Christ, a great Teacher, a great Friend, a great Philosopher, one Cross, one Tomb, one Resurrection, one Faith, one Human Hope above all others. As one said of Him, "Is not this the Christ?"

Many of the accounts of Scripture have been questioned, sought to be changed or thrown out all together; doubts, critics, skeptics, and such. Whether we wish to believe any or all of it; Christ and His Office, and His relation to it is so interwoven throughout that you can hardly do away with any of it.

In all of it, wherever there is a direct reference made of Christ, He is the Son of God, Lamb of God, or, even God Himself. Some would like to only ascribe the title of Jesus in the same respect as all men can be called sons of God. But in reference to Jesus, He is called THE Son of God, not a Son of God. He is God's ONLY Begotten Son. There is only one true Son of God.

The oldest and largest denomination in Christendom, in possession of perhaps older historic documents and records, the Roman Catholic Church, holds uppermost in all her beliefs and at the front of all other beliefs, the fact that Jesus is the Son of God and that His Mother, (Mary) is the Mother of God. Practically all other Christian denominations so believe it. All Christian Churches of past history of any repute, so believed it.

4. As we go across to the relationship of Christ's Office and Mission to this world, the specific cause for His place in the world, at once places Him far above the average man.

God selected One to come into the world for the purpose of restoring the world back unto Himself. Jesus was selected. (Not happened). Predestined. It was a choice selection as of a Lamb without spot or blemish. Can you think of any common ordinary person fitting that description? It was a choice selection for the purpose was no ordinary thing. Listen to the Annunciation Angel Gabriel, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." Can you think of an ordinary man saving anyone from his sins. let alone the world's? Indeed, He can be called the Son of Man - He took upon Himself the form of man - He had a human mother and a Divine Father. Son of man, and Son of God.

In another Scripture we read, "No man can forgive sins but God;" yet, Jesus was quick to forgive sins. It was a natural thing for Him to do.

I can see no other reason why anyone would want to discredit Jesus as the Son of God other than it places one in an embarrassing position to account for the Supernatural as against the natural. The true cause for this can only be to bid for popularity and an easy religion. Itching ears crave the weakened argument. So far as Jesus being the Son of God, I don't see how that fact can hurt anyone. God did it, Jesus was, and we are merely bystanders I have always contended that if there is anything to religion and God, there is everything to it. But to discredit Jesus as the Son of God, there are more subtle reasons, also. There are other Scriptural theories and to the sin sick soul, dreaded admissions which, they too, would like to change to fit their case.

Man looks for something above man, out of this world, as his highest ideal and God of adoration and worship. How true it is that no man can forgive sins. Man also looks for someone far superior to the ordinary human race to forgive and cancel his sins. **WHEN HE LOOKS TO JESUS, HE IS LOOKING TO THE RIGHT AUTHORITY.** Therefore, man has a supernatural Being to worship and a supernatural Being to forgive him.

5. No man could have ever met the requirements of interceding at the Throne of God for lost mankind; but God's own Son met the requirements. No human being could have demanded so much from God and the Power to set men free, to have sent the Holy Spirit by promise, to walk and talk and guide men in the right direction, added with the given power to man in man's struggle to live the good life; but Jesus Did.

There is no gospel so persuasive, no. Power more effective than the power and the Gospel of Christ. Wherever He is preached, it reaches and penetrates. And to SO preach. it is what the world needs today.

Nothing is more convincing to the soul, that seeks for pardon and receives the power of the knowledge of those sins being forgiven, than when Jesus comes in, forgives, cleanses, and takes control. Nothing can make man more successful in the salvation of other souls than to take Jesus along with him.

All man can do or has done to discredit Jesus as the Son of God, has never or will never affect the rightful Power of Jesus. He will forever exercise and express His power regardless-and man will soon come to acknowledge. For Jesus to be the Son of God means everything. To hold that He is not the Son of God dispels all our hopes - Yet, it can never dispel His Power. It's still there, brother.

To discredit Jesus as the Son of God, you will just have to discredit the entire Word of God. For it is out of the same Book that we derive every information about God. We would not have been so informed about God had it not been for the Bible. Now, to strike at Jesus as the Son of God, you must question the same Book that accounts for God and from this Book, we learn of God; first learned.

The names, God and Christ, are so closely related in Scripture that at times it is difficult to distinguish between the two identities. Jesus said to Philip "Have I been so long time with you and yet hast thou not known me Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father and yet sayest thou, show us the Father?" When the Rich Young Ruler said to Jesus "Good Master Jesus said "Why callest thou me good, there is none good but God. And yet, dare we say that Jesus was not good? In another place Jesus said, "I and the Father are One." The Crime Jesus was sentenced to die for above all others was blasphemy — because, "He said, I am the Son of God."

Jesus also clearly states His preexistent state with God His Father. "The Glory that I had with Thee before the world was." Again, "The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," again, "I came from the Father, I go unto the Father."

Even in the Old Testament we find some very pronounced statements about Jesus' being Divine. How could those prophets living many hundreds of years before Jesus' first advent into the world, so talk about such a Christ? Because, the Entire Scripture is bound up in that fact. Let us look at just one prophecy. There are plenty more, but let us take one from the prophet Isaiah. 9:6 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: His name shall he called Wonderful; Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." An even more pronounced Scripture of them all, Isa. 7:14. "Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name, Immanuel." This refers us to St. Matthew I :23. "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." I can't see how it could be made any clearer.

6. The last thought. — If Jesus is not the Son of God we have no one to point sinners to but God, and it is out of the same Book we even get the idea of God. It is true, God can save and God can keep, God holds supreme authority to handle all salvation work, but to dispense with Jesus as our sufficient Saviour breaks the drawing power of salvation as certainly as the snapping of a high power line would plunge us all in darkness. Can you conceive the prevailing strength of today in the Gospel of Christ as the world's Saviour and God's Son, existing once He is discredited as the Son of God? The All-sufficient Saviour? It wouldn't amount to any more that a Shakespeare, Longfellow, or a Wordsworth. The heart of the story would be gone and with it the interest in the story. Souls would begin to grope in the darkness of an objectiveless religion, hope and assurance would be as vague as the haunts of the farthest star, the song of the Old Gospel would be in the trash heap, and night would engulf the world.

But Truth will never be downed. A proper power goes on unmolested. Gravity still holds good regardless of man's attempt to reverse it. The earth revolves each 24 hours The sun comes up. The stars shine. Everything so regular and orderly that regardless how fine man can get machine precision, God's order holds superior and man cannot change it.

The great success of the Christian Church in the past must be accredited to a sure Gospel. God will not permit wrong interpretations to go too far. He has men and women who will preach it as God desires it to be preached, and as long as there is one man left on earth to so preach it, it is enough, God will honor it.

And now, the thing which has convinced me and millions past and present, is the faith in such a Christ as the Son of God and all sufficient Saviour to prove its merits This is the thing that will change anyone's life, and also his skeptical and critical mind. "Ye believe in God believe in me." "In my Father's house are many mansions." How did He know?

One of the most deplorable conditions which exists within the Church today is the lack of interest on the part of young and old. Our young people's work is pitiful in the local churches, especially, the Denomination to which I belong. Revivals are waning. Spiritual upheavals are denounced. The Bible is an old questionable book of many fallacies. The altars are barren.

Our altars and all our Church activities would be more abounding through a Gospel which demands a true workable faith in Jesus as the Son of God. If the foundation is destroyed the whole structure will come crumbling down.

I am highly elated at the thought of Jesus being the Son of God as the Bible clearly states. I have, therefore, a faith and a relationship with the High and Exalted One which lifts me into realms of spiritual rapture which no human being could ever do. I would not take away from Him any of His Divinity. He is sublime and sufficient. I do not have to go to any man or church for my spiritual existence, I can go to the Christ the Son of God and get the answer.

Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I am the Resurrection and the Life." Could any one small insignificant human being dare to make such assertions today? He would at once be branded as a dictator and thrown out. But Jesus dared to make them because He had the authority to make them. Who has the authority and power to forgive sins? " Who can forgive sins but God only?" Jesus Did.