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*Biographies*

# TRUTH ON FIRE

By

*John and Bona Fleming*

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

**Spreading Scriptural Holiness to the World**

Wesleyan Heritage Publications

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# **TRUTH ON FIRE**

by  
John and Bona Fleming

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**TRUTH ON FIRE**  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

**DEDICATION**

We dedicate this book to the loving memory of our dear mother, born and reared a Roman Catholic, who led the way to Christ and arose from an altar of prayer in search of her sons.

John and Bona Fleming

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**COMMENDATION**

It is with sincere pleasure that I welcome the announcement that the messages and the testimonies of the Fleming Boys are to appear in book form.

For the past ten years I have listened to them annually at the Cincinnati Camp Meeting. The people there always count upon them as among the chief features at this great Feast of Tabernacles on the "Mount of Blessings." They never weary of them; in fact, like the OLD, OLD Story itself, "those that know them best seem hungering and thirsting to hear them like the rest."

John and Bona Fleming are wonders -- if not miracles of grace. The testimonies of their conversion and the evidences of their preservation do truly honor the Holy Ghost; and the power of their ministries proves that the day of Pentecostal Revivals is not yet past.

These messages in print will contain the fuel of their fiery ministries; and if the Holy Spirit will but have dipped their pens, as He has loosed their tongues; and if the people that read will "listen in" for the "still small voice" as the crowds in God's Bible School have had their ears anointed to hear these two "sons of thunder," not only will many be blessed, but revivals will be born all over the land.

Joseph H. Smith

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

**FOREWORD**

After much prayer, we have consented to grant the numerous requests from friends, and have published our testimonies and a few messages which were delivered at various times at the Revivalist Camp Meeting, also at the Chapel Services with the students of God's Bible School and Missionary Training Home, Cincinnati, Ohio, and over the Radio.

We had no thought when these messages were delivered that they would ever be printed in book form. We realize that there is plenty of room for criticism, but we do know that their delivery was honored and blessed of the Lord.

Our earnest prayer is that the pages of this book will help awaken sinners to their need of a Saviour and build up the saints in the most holy faith.

If you like this book, let us know, and we will try to bring out another one. If you do not like it, pray for us.

John and Bona Fleming,  
Ashland, Kentucky

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

**INTRODUCTION**

To the people in general, everywhere, who love something interesting as well as startling, I write in this book, feeling that they will find not classics, neither literary art, but power and demonstration in the Holy Ghost.

To know these men (boys) now, and to have known them some twenty-five years ago, you would scarcely realize they were the same persons. God found them in sin and degradation -- a terror to the law of the land, from drink. Their livery barn was a place where whiskey could be found most any time -- but I shall refrain from speaking of this part of their lives, as they have told their experiences. Oh, to you who know them, and shall know them, I wish I might be able to tell the transformation; suffice to say, I am glad I heard the call from God, "Go thee to Kentucky and preach!" when I was down in the jungles of Africa, 285 miles from the coast. When we arrived, (wife, son and I) the first place we landed for preaching was Willard, Kentucky. For weeks we held on for a revival. God was faithful, even though the evangelist was waylaid. John and Bona declared they would whip the preacher, but God took care of His own and no harm came to him.

In a crowded house, one night, at the invitation, "Who would like to be prayed for?" Bona, in the rear of the building, stuck up his hand high and cried out loudly, "Pray for me!" He was under the influence of whiskey at the time, but from that time on he became a seeker after God.

As you read their experiences, you will learn something of their seeking God, but I feel the half will never be told.

To write an introduction to a book is quite a task in any case, but to try to introduce a book of this character is beyond my skill; suffice to say, these men are in a class to themselves, and these sermons and discourses and experiences are not the product of schools, colleges and literary art, but come to you in the power and demonstration of the Holy Ghost. They came direct from heaven, and hence the freshness of the message.

To all who read, the writer wishes to say, "Meet the conditions they met, and you, too, may have a wonderful experience at this present hour. The God that answers by fire is still on the throne!"

May God bless every one who reads this book,

Yours and HIS,  
W. W. Hankes

TRUTH ON FIRE  
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**CHAPTER 1**

**OUT OF DARKNESS INTO MARVELOUS LIGHT**

(John Fleming's Experience)

Text: 1 Cor. 5:10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am."

I am on this platform tonight to give my experience. I give it because God uses it, and because so many people have asked me to continue giving it, and because I have an experience to give.

I never was a bum; was raised in a good home. My mother was born in Ireland and brought up in the Catholic faith. My father belonged to a Protestant Church, but I never heard him pray or testify. We lived in a community where everybody went to church, but I often said there was nothing to religion. I did not want the kind they had around there where I was raised, and thank God, I did not get that kind.

I believe the first time my heart was ever touched by the Spirit of God was when my mother was thought to be dying. She said to my father, "I would like for you to have me baptized before I die. I am not going to get well."

I cried and said to myself, "Water will never do her any good."

My father sent for his preacher. When he came he sat down before the fire, chewed tobacco and spit amber into the fire, and told funny yarns while mother was lying in the jaws of death. My mother called father and said, "Get that preacher out of here. I cannot stand it any longer."

Again I said, "There is nothing to it!"

The Lord spared my mother and she lived. A few months later my grandfather was dying and they sent for the preacher. When he arrived, he sat down unconcerned. Grandfather said, "Pray for me." But the preacher said, "I am tired and have to rest."

He went to bed and the next morning he took a bottle of liquor in his pocket and left Grandfather to die without anyone to help him. Just before he died he put up his hands and said, "Haven't I a son who can pray for me?"

That experience increased the hatred in my heart against religion. I said to my brother Bona, "There is nothing to it!"



I want to warn every preacher, in the name of Jesus, when you go to people who are dying, take time to pray.

Another time several of the church folk took a walk and I went with them. We went to a certain home where the conduct of the young preacher who was there was such that I said, "If that preacher ever asks me to join the church, I will whip him if he is the last preacher on earth."

They never asked me to get saved but to join the church. For years I never darkened a door of the church on Sunday morning, but away off in Africa a missionary was out one day in prayer and God spoke to him from Heaven and said, "Go back to Kentucky and preach!"

He did not see how he could go, but the Lord said, "Go back."

He told his wife that he had to go back to Kentucky. She thought it was the devil talking to him. He told his wife he would stand by her, and he loved her but that he would have to go back to Kentucky. In a few months that man and his wife arrived in our little town shouting and shining. I went up to the meeting and heard that woman praising God with her hands up, shouting and having a good time. I said, "There is something in this old town that has never been here before."

I still believe that when a man of God comes to town the folk will know he is there. This old dried-up stuff never moves anything. I have promised God that while I am here on this earth I will keep up enough steam to keep folk awake. God give us something that will put a shine on our faces, something that will make us shout in morning prayers. While the meeting in Willard, Kentucky, was going on I took a government man out in the country to take out whiskey, and I got to drinking. I did not know anything when I came home. Bona said, "John, J. W. Hunter has been saved."

I thought if God could save Hunter there must be hope for me. I went to the meeting that night. The people were having the greatest time I had ever seen. Sister Hanks' hand would go up and she would praise God and rejoice. My father was a church man and my mother was as good as ever lived, but she did not know God. On Friday, while we were sitting at the table, Father began to cry. He looked across the table and said, "John is gone. There is no hope for him. He is going to drink himself to death."

I jumped to my feet and said, "I cannot stand this!"

I went to the livery stable, got the jug again to try to drown my troubles. My sister said, "He is gone!"

No one ever dared to speak to me about my soul; but Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, looked down upon me and said, "I died on Calvary that John Fleming might be saved."

Thank God! I started out through the country. I tried to eat but could not. I was in trouble, but I was such a hard case that no one bothered me. I told one fellow if he did I would cut his throat from ear to ear. The deputy sheriff had a warrant for me but he did not serve it. I begged the Lord to spare

me to get back home. That was the first prayer I ever prayed. I have lain awake all night and would have given my right arm if I could have met a man like Bud Robinson here on the platform.

When I returned home my mother said, "John, you have broken our hearts."

I said to her, "Mother, I will never drink another drop."

I started out with that determination but had so much of the devil in me that I could not pass whiskey without drinking it. Mother would wring her hands and wonder if her boys would come home alive. I said, "I am going to quit." But no one believed it and I did not believe it either.

I said to my father, "Let's go to church."

That night it seemed as though snakes crawled out of my shirt collar and they came out around my mouth and crawled over my head, and everywhere I went the snakes were after me -- in the bed and in the barn, everywhere I went I was contending with snakes and creeping things. I saw them as plainly as I see that Book lying there. No wonder I shout, the reason I do not make more of a fuss is that my fusser is not big enough.

I told Bona that I was not going to drink any more. I said, "Let's go to church."

We locked the barn and went to a church but nothing was going on there. Bona always did anything I asked him. The people at church looked at us. We behaved like gentlemen in the church. When we went back home I said to the crowd, "I am going to hear Mrs. Hanks preach tonight."

They laughed and said, "You just want to hear a woman preach."

That night we went to church again. That godly woman, who has been in Heaven now for several years, arose and took her text, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

I thought, "O God, I have sown enough."

I wanted to cry but thought it would be awful to cry before all that company; so I braced up. Directly the tears began to flow, I brushed them away. The preacher kept pouring on the truth, but when she made her altar call not a soul would go. She stood there and cried and pleaded with the people to come to the altar. Some one went but I could not see who it was. I heard the preacher praying and then everything was silent for a minute. Then somebody got up and put up her hand and said, "I believe the Lord has forgiven me."

I said, "Who is that?"

Someone said, "It is your mother."

Praise the Lord! My mother started down the aisle and did not say a word to anyone. She passed my brothers and passed my sister without speaking to them. They asked her who she was looking for and she answered, "I am looking for John."

God knows she found me in a terrible fix. I was all doubled up with a crowd of boys and girls around me, and I was bawling like a calf. She put her hand on my head and said, "Your mother has been saved, but she can never live this if you don't help her."

She asked me to go to the altar. This was the first time anyone had ever asked me in all my life to get saved. I said, "Mother, I will go," and I pushed everybody out of the way and ran to the altar. The choir of young girls just fell all around me. This godly woman would pull them off to one side and tell them to let me alone. They were good girls and wanted to help me but were unsaved themselves. They have told me people were crying all over the house. I did not know what was going on. I crawled from one end of the bench to the other and prayed at the top of my voice for the Lord to have mercy. My brother Bona said that he would not have been more surprised if I had taken wings and flown away than he was when he heard my cries at the altar. There was one thing I thought I never could get forgiveness for, and I will never tell what it was. I said, "O God, I am afraid I cannot make it." I told the preacher, "God cannot save me!"

My father looked down and said, "John's gone."

But the good sister said, "The Lord is able and we will never let go of the horns of the altar until the Lord saves you." Thank God for her and her husband!

At two-forty in the morning I said, "Good-bye, sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I give up." And the Christ of Calvary met me and saved me.

I went home that night, or morning rather, got down by the side of my bed and prayed, "O God, help me and keep me."

I got out early and got on my knees. No one ever had told me to do this. The old devil said, "Don't you want a drink?"

I said, "No, I don't want any drink."

The devil said, "Don't you want a smoke?"

I said, "No, I have given up everything and Jesus has saved me."

I had never heard anybody say anything against tobacco. They all seemed to use it. I walked down to the barn, helped water the horses and clean things up in general. Bona told me he was going to buy a horse. I told him it was all right, but I was not interested in horses that day; I had something better than horses. He said, "Well, if you are going crazy, I am going to buy that horse."

I rode down in the front of the store where there was a crowd of people, and I jumped off my horse and said, "God saved me last night and I believe He wants me to have a prayer meeting right here on these scales. Get on your knees!"

Every one of them got down. I cannot remember what I said, but I prayed. I had not been saved twelve hours yet. One fellow said, "I believe you are in earnest, John. There is an old lady down here dying; get on your horse and come to see her."

He went with me. The sick woman was eighty years old. I ran into her room and said, "God saved me last night."

She said, "If God saved John Fleming there is hope for me."

We prayed for her and she put up her hands and began praying and then said, "Jesus has come! Jesus has come! And He has taken my sins away." And in a few days she went to Heaven.

I ran into the kitchen and said to the servant girl, "It is time for you to get down here and get right with God."

She fell on her knees and began praying like the world was burning up. The world is dying and going to hell through old dry professions. There was a blaze of Heavenly fire in that kitchen.

I went back to church that night and walked up into the choir. How glad they were to see the new convert. I had bought a New Testament that day, and they gave me a song book, and right there I started to sing. They wanted to know if anybody had a testimony. I said that I was on top. That was all I knew. I had the devil down and was sitting on top of the world. Everybody knew it, and it spread like wildfire that John Fleming was converted. My father was lost, my brothers were all lost, my sister, a good church member, was lost, and I had a job on my hands. I said to Mother, "Let's start family prayer." And we began to ask the blessing at the table.

It was not long until Bona fell in, all over, and got converted and he has never got out yet. I suppose we did not use much wisdom. We went right after folk and said to them, "We know you church members, you drank out of the same jug we did, and you danced while we played the fiddle."

My father said that we would have to stop having such a fuss, but he had just as well try to stop the creek with corncobs as to stop us now and we said.

"We cannot stop." That stirred father worse than ever.

We would laugh and shout and let nothing stop us. You cannot put lightening in a goose quill and stop it from shining. We were having the time of our lives shouting and praising God. I joined the church and asked the preacher to baptize me. He said, "Better wait until next Sunday." I said, "No, I want to be baptized tomorrow."

So he got up in a cold formal way and told the people that John Fleming would be baptized down at the sycamore tree the next morning. It looked as though a show had come to town. The banks of the creek and the railroad and all around were lined with people. He took me in and immersed me, but when I got loose in the water and came to the bank, I was throwing water in every direction and sprinkling the whole crowd, making Methodists out of them.

I was out with Brother and Sister Hanks helping in a meeting. When I came home they told me they were going to try me and put me out of the church. The boys in town said, "For what? He's the only brother in the church that can pray; we have no one else to pray. But the preacher that chewed tobacco got up and said, "We will try him."

They appointed three fellows to wait on me. I can see the man yet with his mustache full of amber as he told me. He said, "What are you going to do, John?"

I told him that I had already done. He said, "We will have to take your name off the church book if you don't quit shouting and stomping the carpet."

That was the only charge brought against me as far as I have heard. They erased my name but God knows I never felt it. They turned me out and locked the door of that church and quit having prayer meetings in order to keep us out. Years have rolled by and there are no prayer meetings or church services to go to. The carpet is still there. They used to have large crowds at church and Sunday School, but no church, no Sunday School -- an empty building sits there today.

Bona and I began to see our need of making restitution. Brother Hanks had preached restitution and things loomed up higher than mountains. It did not look as though we could ever go through and make it, but this godly woman preacher stayed on her knees until after midnight and God told her we were going to make it. We sold our livery barn, our horses, and all we had, which was not very much. We went upstairs and sat down and began to jot down the names of the people whom we had cheated and wronged, and what a list we had! I will say one thing: there were no checks left when we came downstairs. Mother asked how we came out. I told her we came out without a horse, a bridle, a saddle or anything, but we came out with the Lord. I would rather have Him than anything else in the world. We had to straighten up with hundreds of people.

We did not know anything about the experience of holiness; the preacher preached mostly on hell, as no one was ready for holiness in our town when they struck it. I was standing on my mother's porch one night and a traveling salesman came up and talked to me about the coming of Jesus and about getting sanctified. I knew nothing about it. Up until I was saved I had not read one verse in the Bible.

This traveling salesman had good common sense. He said, "Well, do you see that stump where that tree has been removed? If that stump is not taken out, next spring, there will be sprouts coming up all around it."

"What does that have to do with me?" I asked. He said, "John, you have a stump in your heart." It scared me. He said, "The stump is there. You have had your sins all taken away, but there is a

stump. You must have it taken out, or sprouts will come up around your life and pull you back into sin."

We went in mother's parlor and prayed, "O God, take the stump out, take the stump out, take the stump out!"

Do you know what I believe? If people did not know so much they would get through quicker. They know too much. That was a good prayer, asking God to take the stump out. That man walked in and put his arms around me and said, "John, God will take the stump out."

I rose to my feet and like a flash the Holy Ghost came and blew that stump out. My father sat back, reading his paper and chewing tobacco. I said, "Father, I have the stump out!"

He moved his glasses down on his nose, looked over them and said, "Stump out, what are you talking about?"

"I don't know," I told him, "but I have it out."

I went to the kitchen and said to Mother, "I've got it. I have the stump taken out."

She said, "I believe you have."

I said, "I cannot stay here."

I went up the street and around the corner, just tearing. Some of the men at the store had been converted, and there must have been twenty-five men gathered there. I said to them, "I've got it! I've got it!"

They said, "What?"

I told them that the stump had been taken out. One man leaned back against the counter and said, "I will have it or die right here."

The crowd began to scatter. Some said, "He has gone crazy."

I shouted them all out of the store and asked God to sanctify that man who was praying. About that time the big, fat traveling salesman caught up with me and I left him at the store. I ran across the field into a home and fell on my knees. The mother said, "What's the matter, John?"

I told her I had the stump out. She fell by my side and said she was going to have it out, too. She is in Heaven today. About that time the big, fat man caught up with me again. I passed him and went to the post office. That is one time Uncle Sam furnished me the whole post office to shout in. The man at the window moved his glasses down and said, "What's wrong?"

I told him I had the stump out and could not keep still, that I would shout as long as I lived. The big fat man caught me again. I ran down the street and some girls said, "Mother, John Fleming has backslidden and gone on a spree."

I got on one that night that has lasted all these years and I hope it will last until Jesus comes.

A big fellow walked out on his porch and I jumped on the porch and said, "I've got it! The stump has been removed."

He said, "John, what on earth is wrong?"

I told him the Lord came and took something out of me and had filled me up. I knew nothing about theological terms, but I knew that I had an experience from Heaven. About that time the traveling man caught up again. I was just hitting the high places. I did not know where I was going. I went down the road like a young mule turned loose, or a stall-fed calf, and the big fat man right after me. The people all along the road were watching. He surely had the holy fire in his soul as well as I.

We reached his home which was out of town a little, just as the servant girl was putting the bread in the oven. I said to her, "I've got it! The stump has been removed."

She said, "Good-bye, old stove, I will have it or die!"

Well, I do not know what became of the bread but she surely got the blessing from Heaven.

Bona came home and asked, "Where is John?"

Father said, "I don't know. He has the stump taken out and has gone."

Bona said, "I must see John."

He walked to the kitchen and asked mother. She said, "He has the stump taken out and is gone."

Bona went upstairs, got down on his knees, laid off a few things and then said, "Amen," and "Praise the Lord," and got up.

He walked out into the room and said, "Father, I've got it."

He was doing his best to believe he had it. Father just moved his glasses down on his nose and said, "No you haven't; go see John."

My father did not believe in holiness, but he knew that Bona did not have what I had. Bona went into the kitchen and said, "I have the stump taken out."

Mother said, "I would not discourage you for the world, but you had better hunt John."

The poor fellow went down the road. He said the hardest job he ever had in this world was to make himself believe he had something he did not have. He went to the livery stable and said, "Boys, I have it."

They laughed and said, "You had better hunt John up."

He tried to make himself believe he had it just like some of you. He went to the preacher's home and was going to tell him that he had it, but when he opened the door and saw Brother Hanks, he said, "Pray for me!" He lost it when he saw somebody who had it.

He said, "I want to see John."

We saw him coming. He looked like a hound that had run all night and been out in the rain all day. This traveling man and I were just shouting and praising God and the people were looking at us. It was pouring down rain, but we did not care. The fire was falling in that home. When Bona came in, I said, "I've got it! I've got it!"

He said, "John, pray for me!"

He got on his knees and the wisdom I used with Bona was just to pound him on the back and say, "Pray, old fellow!"

He would get pretty faint sometimes, then I would say, "Get it, Bona; hold on until the fire falls!"

Directly he got on his feet with one hand up, and the traveling man shouting him on, but that girl who had put the bread in the oven was striking him over the head and telling him not to stop until the stump was out. I have never seen such a time from that day to this, as we had there in that room when the fire fell on Bona. The children got scared and thought we were going to tear the house up. We were not tearing anything up, the Holy Ghost never breaks furniture and He never destroys property. They just thought we were. (The speaker turned to Bud Robinson and asked if he should keep on telling his experience. The answer was, "Keep on until you die of old age." "That answer," said Fleming, "is worth a thousand dollars to me.")

A lot of backslidden preachers have tried to get me to quit giving my experience. Brother Joseph H. Smith said, "Give it everywhere." Brother Kulp said, "Go ahead!" Brother C. C. Brown said, "Tell it over and over!"

Many folk say that I make people doubt. If they give their experience, why should they doubt when I give mine?

Bona and I could not stay in the traveling man's home any longer. We went to where ten or twelve school teachers were boarding. They were acquainted with us. I ran in and said, "Girls, I have got it! God has taken the stump out and He wants to save you!"



Pencils and books began to fly and in five minutes one of those girls was saved. The woman of the house came in and asked us what was wrong. I told her I had the stump taken out and one of those girls got saved. She said, "I believe it. Pray for me!"

We turned that whole house into a prayer meeting that night. We got through there and started up the street. I want to confess to you that we did not go alone. We had a crowd with us. They filled that preacher's home, the bedroom, kitchen, dining room -- every room was filled. The front porch and the windows were filled. Bona gave his testimony and then said, "Pray!" And everybody in that house but three went on their knees as though they had been shot. The people came on horses and hand cars on the railroad and every possible way. They said that the world was coming to an end. Some said that we had the fire and it was going to burn up the world. Thank God! the fire is burning right now.

It was two-forty-five in the morning; the rain was pouring and it was dark, but as we went along we sang, "Oh, This Is Like Heaven to Me." A man's wife heard it and said, "Listen, Papa, what is that?"

Papa rose up in bed and said, "That's the Fleming boys who were so wild."

The man's wife said, "If that is John and Bona Fleming, the boys who used to drink and shoot around here, at this time in the morning, singing, 'This Is Like Heaven to Me', and if those boys have something that will make them sing at this time in the morning, it is time we were doing something." And she fell out on one side of the bed and began to pray.

God called us to preach. I got down on my face and said, "I will preach." I said, "Bona, let's have a meeting."

We knew of a little church down in Fleming County, so I said, "We will go. I have no money but I believe we can make it. We have a one-eyed horse and we will go."

We drove that horse and arrived at the place where we were going to hold the meeting. I had been married only a few weeks but we had the meeting. On the way we stopped at night and had meeting in a home. I could not have quoted a text of Scripture to save me. We just shouted and praised the Lord and told the people that God had saved and sanctified. In ten days many had been saved. They came forward with the offering and gave us four dollars and said it should have been ten. The devil said, "What are you going to do now?"

I said, "I am going to preach."

I knew of a Methodist church we could get into. We went and held a meeting but when we got through they never gave us a penny. They said, "Boys, come back; we enjoy your meetings."

The devil said, "You will starve to death."

We had our next meeting and they gave us one dollar and sixty-five cents. We held three meetings on five dollars and sixty-five cents. Again the devil said, "You are starving."

I looked him in the face and said, "I am going to preach the Gospel if I have to live on cornbread and beans." And from that day to this I have not had a burden for finances. God looked down and saw that there was a fellow who was going to preach at any cost, and He has supplied every need. Brother, if you cannot get any place to preach, I am afraid you have missed your calling or something is wrong.

A fellow left the Presbyterian Church and came to a holiness church and said, "I want you to recommend me to camp meetings."

I said, "You begin in schoolhouses like we did and then you will be ready for camp meetings." But he went back to selling tobacco. I have not gone to but one place in sixteen years where God has not given a revival, and that place locked me out. I have had thousands upon thousands of people bow at the mourners' bench. I seldom, if ever, close a meeting without some fifty or seventy or one hundred at the altar. I give God the praise for it. He does it all.

I have not been mad since God sanctified me. I used to get so angry they had to lay me on the floor and tie me, but since I have been serving the Lord, I have been stoned and cursed and lied about and everything else, but He has kept me. When God Almighty saves and sanctifies a man He gives him something that will carry him through the floods and the fire and everything the devil can bring against him. You can get something in your heart so clear and definite that the preacher's testimony will not have any effect on you. God can give you something that will send you back home a flame of fire, something that you can take back home to your church and everywhere, so that you can witness for Him.

God has taken us into practically every state in the Union and let us work in the best camp meetings and best churches of the nation and with practically every holiness preacher. Of all the people we have worked with, we have never had trouble with any of them. We give God all the glory for what He has done. He alone knows where Bona and I would have been today had we not found the Lord.

If you do not have God, I want you to know that you can get Him tonight. Is the Holy Ghost showing you that you do not have Him? You have tried to get fired up and warmed up, but if you will let Him, He will give you something that will carry you through.

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 2

### THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(Sermon by Bona Fleming)

Text. John 17:17-21, 23.

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth ... that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

There never was a time in the history of the world, since Christ died, when there have been so many books written for and against Christ as today. More men are writing against Him and more men are writing for Him.

Did you ever stop to think that in this high priestly prayer, Jesus did not say: "Father, when great men write in my favor, the world will believe that Thou hast sent me." He did not say: "When great men or statesmen like William Jennings Bryan (who fought for the Bible and for Christ until he died, whose name will go down in history as a martyr) write in my favor, the world will believe that Thou hast sent me. Christ did not say, in this high priestly prayer, that the world will believe on Him because of great men. He did not say: "Father, when great churches, auditoriums or temples are built, the world will believe that Thou hast sent me." He did not say when great preachers deliver great sermons, the world will believe that Thou hast sent me." He did not say: "Father, when the sick are healed, the world will believe that Thou hast sent me." He did not say, "When the blind eyes are opened, the deaf ears unstopped, when lepers are cleansed, or the dead are raised, the world will believe that Thou hast sent me." They had been seeing all that; they saw Him raise the dead, cleanse the leper; they saw people healed and the blind restored, but they said, "He is not the Son of God." He did not say they would believe when all dressed alike. Now, don't mistake me, it is all right to have a uniform like the Salvation Army does.

You know, friends, it will surprise us, if we will just take the Bible! I hear this so many times: "If we take off this, or do this or that, the people will believe." But Jesus said: "Father, sanctify them ... that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. It is a divine act.

The English dictionaries will give us a better notion of this than most preachers have; see what they say:

Webster's Dictionary: SANCTIFY: to make free from sin or to cleanse from moral corruption or pollution; to purify. (John 17:17) SANCTIFY: an act of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified or alienated from sin and the world and exalted to the supreme love of God.

Century Dictionary: SANCTIFY: In Theology, an act of God's grace by which the affections of men are purified and the soul is cleansed from sin and consecrated to God.

Standard Dictionary: SANCTIFY: The gracious work of the Holy Spirit, whereby the believer is freed from sin and exalted to holiness of heart and life.

Two of these dictionaries say that sanctification is an act of God. Then it is instantaneous. All of them say that sanctification purifies or frees from sin. One of them says it is the gracious work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer (not the sinner) is cleansed from sin. Then it is a second work, subsequent to regeneration, as the Scriptures teach. All of them teach that it is done by God, so it is not of men's growth, or striving; it is not produced by education, or culture or self-discipline or death or purgatory. You may define sanctification, then, as the cleansing of the believer's heart from inbred sin and depravity, wrought instantly by the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire, and filling it with the perfect love. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." -- Matthew 3:11. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." [Acts 15:9]

Many of you believe that He was praying for His people in the 9th verse of the 17th chapter of John: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine." And the 10th verse: "All mine are thine, and thine are mine: and I am glorified in them." No, He was praying for the crowd of people who knew Him, to do a Divine work in their hearts, "that the world might know Thou hast sent me." If they never read a book on the divinity or deity of Christ, they might know by getting in touch with a sanctified man or woman, that Christ is Divine. The proof of His deity is to come in touch with a man or a woman, boy or girl, old or young, rich or poor, black or white, who is sanctified; that is the proof of it! We can talk about the theory of it, but He says: "Give them this experience, that the world may know that Thou hast sent me," that they will know that I am not the son of Joseph, but the Son of God.

Now, what is it about the sanctified man or woman that will cause the world to believe in Christ? -- that causes the world to know that God sent Jesus Christ from Heaven, that He had no earthly father; that causes the world to know that He is the Son of God?

I was in a city in Ohio, preaching, and said one night, "It is not the color one wears that shows the condition of the heart." The next day I got a seven-page letter; it was on large sheets of paper. It read thus: "Brother Fleming, we want you to apologize tonight for what you said last night." Of course there was no name signed to the letter. I get many letters like that. When a fellow doesn't want to sign his name, I think of the Scripture, "Perfect love casteth out fear." (1 John 4:18). They wanted me to apologize; they said that the world will never be convinced that Jesus is Divine until the people put on black. "You preached to people on different colors; you know God could not bless that. The men ought to all wear black, and the women also." Fortunately I had on a black suit. I read the letter several times in my room and the thought came to me, How is it that God made the rainbow and put so many beautiful colors into it and did not put black in it? The Lord could have made apples black as well as red or yellow; He makes millions of red apples and millions of red, pink and white

roses every year, and has never made a black one. When apples get black they are rotten. Then, I read in Isaiah 68:1, 2, that Christ's garments would be red. It made me think some more. I never wear anything red, neither does my wife. I think that girl in front of me with the red sweater is as good as the one sitting next to her with a white one on. I tell you, we can put black on, but that will not change the heart. I have never been accused of holding up for the world, so far as I know; no one has ever said that I preached for worldliness, but I am going to say this, Christ did not speak of this once. You say, "Well, if they get the experience, they will do it. I do not believe that they will have to put on black to be sanctified wholly. People may wear solid white, and men may wear white shirts and collars and their hearts can be pure.

I asked in my meeting, if that person was in the audience, if he would stand up and tell me how it happened that God made so many colors, why did He not make everything black. "Now," I said, "clouds, cyclones, tornadoes, smoke, the pit, filth and dirt are black, and the Word speaks of the blackness and darkness forever."

Christ prayed, in His high priestly prayer, for God to sanctify His children, that sinners of the world might know that God sent Him from heaven. What is it, then, about a sanctified man or woman? The sanctified man or woman is Spirit-filled. Paul did not say we ought to know all about the stars (we do not know much about the stars, we do not know much about the age of the rocks). He said in Romans 6:6: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

It is pretty hard to understand the Spirit-killed man or woman. You can just about walk all over them, and mop your feet on them; while you are mopping your feet on them, they are going to rise and shout the victory. You can't understand the fellow who is dead to the world, to his surroundings, there is something that has been killed. That song I hear so many times:

"Come and fill me, Lord."

You do not need to pray for the Lord to come and fill you; when the Lord comes and kills you, He will fill you. A lot of folk would like to be filled with the Spirit to show off; we do not need to pray for the in-filling, but the in-killing.

I heard a man say that the Holy Ghost is like a piano coming into the home; He comes in for us to learn how to use Him. That is almost sacrilegious to me. The Holy Ghost comes in to use us; He doesn't come in to show us off. A lot of folks pray for the power for service, and will not talk about the power to kill. Jesus Christ said, being made holy, being purged, being cleansed. If we get the purging and the cleansing, we are sure to get the in-filling, praise His name forever! He does not have a tongue, but He wants to use our tongue; He does not have any eyes, but He wants to look through ours; He does not have any ears, but He wants to hear through yours and mine; He does not have any feet, but He wants to use yours and mine; this is His temple, our body, the temple of the Holy Ghost, right here.

You know there are a lot of people within the sound of my voice who would like to do certain things for the Lord, without being Spirit-killed but you cannot do it. Why, you are like the young girl

who married the old man; she was seventeen and he was seventy-nine. This young girl who married the old man did not love him, of course. It was not very long until she fell in love with a young doctor. She loved the doctor and the doctor loved her. He said to her, "If you love me, leave the old man and come and go with me." She said, "I love you and want to be your wife, but can't." He said, "Explain yourself; you say you want to get rid of the old man; you say you love me and want to come with me, why do you not come then?" She said: "I can't, I have the old man on my hands." There are people like that. They want to do things, but the "old man" hinders them. The young doctor said: "Now listen, if you love me, if you will turn over the old man to me, I will fix him so you can come." She pulled her face around and blubbered and blubbered, and at last consented. After she turned him over and had forsaken him, what do you suppose the doctor did? Do you suppose he went to Woolworth's and got a little spray and sprayed him with perfume? Do you suppose he got a needle and gave him a hypo and put him to sleep for a little while? No, he would have come back to life again, and given him some more trouble. He didn't give him a hypodermic, he opened his mouth and poured carbolic acid down his throat, and put him to death.

Now if you love the Lord, and if you will turn the "old man" over to the Great Physician of the skies, He will not give him a hype; He will give him the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire that will kill him and put him out of business. That is what we need. The big job for you is to consent to turn him over to the Great Physician; it will bring the fire upon you, bless the Lord. You cannot understand a fellow like that!

Paul said: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit." -- Eph. 5:18. Men do not get drunk on wine with one or two drinks; there is a resemblance between the intoxicated person filled with wine, and the one filled with the Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, the people accused the folk who had been in the upper room of being drunk. Peter did not deny being drunk, but he said, "Standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: for these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out, in those days, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." Their actions were like those of men filled with wine. When folks are filled with the Spirit, there is a great variety. They are not trying to imitate someone else; if they imitated someone else, they would be out of the Spirit. Probably you were never around where people were filled with wine; you might see some fellow sitting there as happy as a June lark, just sitting there laughing and smiling; you see someone else there who is holloing; someone else that is walking; there is one thing with everybody that gets filled with wine; they are all on the same level -- liberal -- everybody filled with the Spirit is liberal. You never saw a stingy Christian; they are liberal. You never saw a stingy person in your life that was filled with the Spirit.

Before we boys were saved we dealt with different kinds of people; we dealt with folks who liked to drink whiskey. There was one fellow who lived about three miles from us. He would go to church and take communion. That old fellow would take bread and wine and then he would come over to our place and take something stronger from us boys. He always came on horse and put the horse in

our barn. Everybody called him "Uncle." We got tired of giving him a dram of whiskey every time he came to town; he would carry coffee in his pocket to kill the smell of liquor on his breath. He would say he did not know why folks wanted to hollo about it and make such a racket when they drank. He said, "I have drunk for years and nobody knows it; the preacher doesn't know it and the people do not know it; they have never suspected me of drinking. I don't see why you can't just be nice about it and enjoy it just as much." We got tired of this old man and of giving him whiskey.

One day he came down, riding his beautiful saddle-horse and asked us if we had anything to drink. We took him inside. I got him and held his mouth open and John put the bottle in his mouth and held his nose and emptied it down his throat. We filled him. There was no dram drinking about that, we filled him. We had to hold him for a few minutes for the whiskey to take effect and when it took effect, I think he was the happiest man I ever saw. The old fellow laughed, cried, talked and holloed and danced. He was so full he could not contain himself. He did not care who saw him or what they thought of him. We wanted to get him off the ground in a hurry, we saddled his horse and helped him onto the horse. The horse gave a little jump and he was off in the alley, with his face skinned and the blood running down; his hands were bloody, too. He did not get mad, no, he was too full to get mad. He rubbed the blood off his face, using his clothes for a rag, waving his hand. We helped him back on his horse. He went fifty or sixty feet on the main road, and his horse turned one way and he went another. The people were walking along and he was holloing, "Hello, Brother this or that." Some one said, "What is the matter, brother?" "Oh, nothing." "Are you hurt?" "No." "Are you suffering?" He just went down the street laughing and talking with the people. What was the matter? He got beyond the people; he got full! He always said that he would never act any way but nice while he was drinking. He didn't know how he would act, when he never had been full! How do you know how you are going to act if you have never been filled with the Spirit?

I have seen some young people who wanted to act like someone else whom they admired. But don't try to imitate anyone. Get filled with the Spirit and be yourself. The world cannot understand about that variety. I have often said that I wished I had a bunch of infidels, skeptics and unbelievers on a platform and let them look over a Camp Meeting crowd here, and see the variety, see the shine on the faces; see some laughing like they were at a wedding, and see, right at their side, someone weeping as if they were at a funeral! Any person of sense would know that something was going on to see that variety, where there is nothing to laugh at, nothing to cry about, and some have their hands up, some are walking the floor, some are prancing the aisle, and some are sitting still. When you see a person laughing as though they were at a wedding, and at the same time weeping as though they were at a funeral, put it down, there is something supernatural that has taken hold of that person.

Now the world puts on a lot of things, but one thing we know, no show in this city can put on anything like a demonstration of the Holy Spirit. They cannot get thousands of people together and have somebody laughing like they were at a wedding, others weeping not putting it on, but positively weeping like they were at a funeral and a hundred and one different things going on in that crowd with no confusion whatever. That is one of the things which is going to convince the world that Christ is Divine, by seeing sanctified people who are not only Spirit-killed, but Spirit-filled and Spirit-guided. The Spirit will guide us into all truth. You cannot understand the spiritual guidance of a person.

I know a preacher who was a good man, a praying man, who held a meeting in North Carolina one night and the next morning he was to get out of there at four o'clock. He dressed and went to the station and boarded the train for Washington, D. C. He rode one hundred miles and a station was called out. The Spirit said, "Get off here." He said, "Lord, what does this mean? I have got my ticket bought for the trip and my trunk is in the baggage car?" But the Spirit said, "Get off!" He reached for his grip and got off the train, some people got on and the train pulled out. He walked into the depot and the old devil said, "That is a pretty way to do; that is a nice way to spend your money." He said, "Lord, help me, you put me off, I do not know why." He walked into the ticket office, bought a ticket to Washington, D. C. Then he had quite a battle. He had paid for two tickets. He prayed and walked around in front of the depot. Directly the operator came out, but he looked like a corpse. The preacher was the only man out there. The operator said, "Look, what I got!" The preacher read the message that was handed to him and, after reading it, said, "Thank God!" The operator said, "Thank God for what? What do you mean? Thanking God for a railroad wreck, when people have been killed and others have been wounded!" The preacher said, "I am not thanking God for the wreck, but I am thanking Him because He spoke to me and got me off that train." "Who spoke to you?" the operator said. "I am an Ingersol man; I do not believe in anything." "I cannot help what you are, I am telling you facts." He said, "What do you mean? Who are you?" He saw that the man was a nice, clean-looking fellow and not insane. He said, "I left North Carolina this morning at four o'clock; that conductor has my ticket on that train now, and my trunk is on that train. The Holy Ghost told me to get off that train. I just walked into this depot and bought another ticket for Washington, D. C." The operator said, "I am an infidel, but you have my curiosity aroused; come on inside." The preacher went inside and took a chair. As the preacher sat down and told him the story, he said, "I want to hear it." He went back and told him how he met the Lord Jesus Christ in the corn field; how the Lord saved him from sin and a few months afterward He baptized him with the Holy Ghost and fire and sanctified him wholly. He told how that the Spirit that lived in him and guided him into all truth and in things that are right. Directly the tears started down the cheeks of the young operator and he said, "Do you reckon I could find your Christ?" "Why," he said, "sure, you can; let us pray!" The man knelt, calling on the Lord, and in three or four minutes the Lord wonderfully saved that young operator. The Lord had a twofold purpose in that. He knew that young man who was an infidel would never go to church anywhere, and He knew that no preacher would have a chance at him; so God wanted to bring him in touch with a sanctified man that the Spirit had killed, filled and was guiding. And the young man said, "I have often thought since I heard you, how my old mother prayed for me. She prayed for me long before she went to heaven, that God would save her boy at any cost, at any loss, at any cross." You may not agree with me, but I believe that thousands of prayers will be answered after people are in glory. This mother prayed for God to save her son at any cost. It cost the preacher double fare, but what did the Lord care about making the preacher pay double fare to get the young man the Gospel and get him saved?

O my friends, if you have the Holy Ghost today, walking in the Spirit, walking with the Holy Ghost, Spirit-killed, Spirit-filled and Spirit-guided and Spirit-kept, He will take you through and make you a blessing. He will keep us! He will keep us under pressure! He will keep us when hell is turned loose on us and folks curse us.

A few years ago a young preacher from Ohio came out where my mother lived and said, "Bona Fleming, the Lord sent me here to get you to take me over to a church and introduce me to the



people." He was going to take charge of the church as pastor. He begged me until I yielded. We walked six miles that night in the country, up and down the hills. He preached that night, Sunday morning and Sunday night. After he got through Sunday night, he sat down and asked me to close the meeting. I was going over the catalog of sins that a gentleman would not do -- he would not whip his wife, and a lot of things. I mentioned a certain sin that stirred some fellows in the congregation. One said, "Let's go home!" They started out of the church and in a little while one big fellow came back, came down the aisle and close to me; he was going to take me. The women began yelling and crying. I told them to be quiet; that if the Lord wanted a martyr, I was ready. When I said that, he stopped right in front of me, cursed me to everything he could lay his tongue to -- every name he could think of he called me. No man ever talked to a dog as he talked to me. I stood there and asked God to bless him with conviction, and said, "J\_\_\_\_\_, I have nothing against you, I still love you, I am not after you at all." He turned, walked down the aisle and out of the church.

This man lived about two miles from where we were, but the next morning we started out in the opposite direction from which he lived. We walked about a mile and came to a little hill, and if the Lord ever spoke to anyone on earth, he said to me, "Go to the woods!" That sounded strange when there was no road of any kind through the woods, but I told the preacher that I would have to go through the woods. He followed me and we went over rocks and cliffs and brush; we did not know why until two or three weeks afterward.

That man was indicted for disturbing church services; they came and summoned me as a witness and I had to go to court and testify against him. My brother John went along with me to the courthouse. I told the court how the man acted, but that I did not want this man fined. I said, "This man has known me from the time I was born." The jury went out and in a few minutes they acquitted him. He came down to the train and started to shake me and the conductor was calling, "All aboard!" He let me loose and we got on.

After we got on the train he pulled me to one side and stood at the window and shook me against the car with all the power he had. I could not see, but I kept conscious, and every time I could I prayed, as he shook me, for God to bless him. I did not know what he was doing, but I knew God was keeping me with perfect love in my heart. I could have said, "J\_\_\_\_\_, I have a brother who is unsaved, I will turn you over to him," but I did not do it. He let me loose, I staggered down the aisle and went where my brother John sat in the car. He said, "Are you hurt?" I said, "Yes, I think I am; you did not see the half of it!" Then this big man walked down the train again, and the women were saying, "Catch him, catch him!" I did not know until he shook me in the train, why I went through the woods, I didn't know anything more about it than you do now. Well, he shook me and said, "Bona Fleming, it is a good thing you went through the woods. I got up before daylight and went past the church and rode a mile up the hill to the old blacksmith shop. I was going to kill you with a pole." He would have beat me to death with that pole, but the blessed Holy Ghost said, "Go through the woods!" You can live without the Holy Spirit if you want to; I don't want to do it!

The man came to me the third time in the train and dropped on his knees and said, "Bona, forgive me, you have whipped me by asking God to bless me. Will you forgive me?" I said, "I have already forgiven you." That was Holy Ghost conviction that God had put on him. He did not know what to

call it but God put arrows of conviction on his heart and he said, "Now listen, the hatchet is buried forever; I want you to come and see me and eat with me." I said, "I will at the first opportunity."

The next time I saw the man, Camp Meeting was on -- if I would take time to tell you all of the things that man did for me before he died! I believe he made it to heaven, but he was not won by preaching, but by the Lord keeping me while he shook me. He told me he never cared to hear me preach, but I had convinced him that I had what I had been preaching and professing. The Lord wants to sanctify you and take everything out of you that the devil ever put in you, and make you wholly His until the world will know that "I am the Son of God and not the son of Joseph." You will never amount to anything for God, I don't care what preacher or person tells you differently, until you die out and get the Holy Ghost in your soul! God bless you! Are you sure His work is done? Has He sanctified you? Has the Holy Ghost come to abide?

TRUTH ON FIRE  
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### CHAPTER 3

#### GOD'S "WHOSOEVER WILL"

(Sermon by John Fleming)

Now if you will turn with me to the 22nd chapter of Revelation and the 17th verse, you will find my text: "And the Spirit and bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." In this verse, I want to use this word, "COME."

If I would stand here and tell my audience all the reasons why this world should come to God, no doubt we would be here until noon, trying to enumerate them, but we are not going to preach long this morning, so we will bring this down to three or four reasons.

The first reason why we should come to God is that the world is going the wrong way. Every man from every walk of life believes that -- lawyers, preachers, teachers, politicians, farmers and all -- and it doesn't seem that anyone has power to stop it or change it. There is no reason why we should go wrong because the world is going the wrong way; they do not want holiness today, even in families where the Bible is taught and the children pray! Fathers and mothers are pushing the Bible aside; they are pushing the Bible back in the schools; folks who used to go to church and worship God are now going to theaters, shows and dances, and places of amusement, trying to satisfy their hearts. They cannot find it there; the world is going at an awful rate. I doubt if there ever was a time when there were so many heartbroken fathers and mothers -- a girl is gone, a boy is gone -- the jails are crowded, the penitentiaries are crowded, the insane asylums are crowded! The only person that is safe is the one that has stepped out of the world of sin on God's side, is saved and out of the devil's territory, is right with God. I read in a magazine that 80,000 girls left home last year and were wrecked and ruined, and their lives were blasted. And out of the 80,000 there were 40,000 under the age of fourteen years -- I wept when I read it, I got out of my chair and down on my knees and asked God to help me to warn as many as I could reach. 60,000 girls had gone from their homes and loved ones and no one knew what had become of them! Mothers all over the country come to me and say, "Brother Fleming, pray for my boy! pray for my children! they have gone away from home and we do not know where they are." If they had gotten right with the Lord back there, they would not have gone wrong. We do not have to go the wrong way; we can get right with God.

The second reason why we should come to God is that of His faithfulness to mankind. He came to earth and walked with our foreparents in the garden of Eden, but it seemed like everything God had said: "Thou shalt not" do, the devil has been determined to make men do. When God said, "If thou dost ... shalt surely die" -- God said, "Sin and die;" the devil said, "Sin and live;" and they believed the devil, disobeyed God, and died spiritually. They lost the Divine image, but He was faithful and did not cut them off suddenly in their sin.

He gave the commandments to Moses. The first commandment was "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." But before the tenth commandment was finished the people had taken off their jewels and made a golden god of their own which they were worshipping. But God was faithful; He did not cut them off.

He gave them the judges, but the judges failed to satisfy the people; they asked for kings. He permitted them to have kings, but it seemed that the kings were a complete disappointment. He gave the major and the minor prophets, men like Isaiah, but they said, "We do not want to hear men preach whose lips have been touched with a live coal from the altar; we will saw him in two with a wooden saw." But God was faithful and sent the weeping prophet, Jeremiah. It seemed that every time he came to the people he had a burning message. In Jeremiah, 7th chapter and 9th and 10th verses, we read: "Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not; and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations?" They asked for smooth things to be preached to them, and when Jeremiah refused, they put him in the miry pit. They stoned and killed the prophets, but God was faithful and sent His only begotten Son from heaven. He came, preaching and warning the people, but they said, "We will not have this man to rule over us!" They put Him to death because He told them that they must be born again. God was faithful; He did not cut them off. He said, "They have refused to walk with me, they have broken my commandments, they have refused the judges, and the kings have been a disappointment. The prophets they have killed and stoned to death. They have crucified my Son, but I will send One to that lost and fallen world that they cannot put on the cross, on whom they cannot use a saw, and whom they cannot touch with a stone. I will send the Third Person of the adorable Trinity, a Personality without a body." Thank God for the Holy Spirit. He came to reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

The third reason that we should come to God is, the shortness of life and the certainty of death. We are here today and gone tomorrow. Now, probably you have not agreed with everything I have said this morning, I do not ask you to do that, but I know you will agree with me that death is in our land. Death has come to your home and to mine.

I remember when the old monster came to our home and took our precious Mother, eighty years of age. I had no power to keep him away. I would have given a lot to have kept my mother a few more days or months, but he rushed right in without any care for us, and took her and she had to go.

If I should get sick, I would want a doctor and a preacher, but death does not care for either. Not long ago I was rushed across the city to the bedside of a dying girl. I took a good, sanctified doctor with me; we knelt at her bedside; her father and mother were there; the doctor began to pray and directly I heard a faint struggle and looked up. The mother said, "She is gone." What did death care for father or mother, preacher or doctor? He came in, pulled all aside and put his cold, slimy, icy hand on her and said, "I have come to take you away, daughter." She died without God!

Friends, if you want to die the death of the righteous, you will have to humble yourselves and live the life of the righteous. We can never live like sinners and die like saints. Wesley said: "Our people die well." The reason those old-time Methodists died well was that they got right with God and lived well. Balaam said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!" Yes, everyone wants to die the death of the righteous!

Some time ago I was rushed to the bedside of a dying mother. She was ninety years old, she was the mother of four sons and two daughters. I hurried to that beautiful home, where I got on my knees and began praying for her; I had prayed just a little while when one of the girls ran in and shook me and said, "Mother is just as good as you or anyone else." I quit praying and got up. But one of her sons told the daughter that he had asked me to come as his mother wanted me to pray for her. I went back and prayed again. Soon the mother began shouting in her weak voice, saying, "He is come! He is come!" I said, "Who is come?" She said: "Christ of Calvary, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star. He is come and my sins are forgiven! Brother Fleming, I have been down to the river but there was no bridge, and it was so dark, but now there is a bridge and I don't have to go down in the river!" Thank God there is a bridge we can cross over the dark river! She asked for her baby boy, a young man; they brought him in but he could not stand alone any more on his feet; they all passed by and kissed her, each of the children; then she asked Frank if he would meet her in heaven. She said: "I have been a good mother to you." He said: "I know it, Mother, I will meet you in heaven." A sister passed by and kissed her, and one of the girls said: "If he meets her in heaven, there will have to be a change." A short time afterward, I came back to the city and heard that this young man was going to make a speech in a large hall that night. I slipped in one of the back seats to listen. He came forward to speak and looked over the audience before he began. He saw me away back there and lifted high the little Testament which he had pulled out of his pocket, and said: "Brother Fleming, my mother's God is my God, and I have been saved and am on my way to heaven."

Death is in the land! You are here today and gone tomorrow. You may have a car picked out that you are going to buy, but instead your next ride may be in the hearse; you may have a new suit picked out that you are going to buy, but instead, your next suit may be a shroud.

Some time ago we had a call to officiate at a funeral for one of the poorest families in Kentucky. The mother came out dressed in a calico dress and sunbonnet, but barefooted, with a baby in her arms and four others behind her; the father was dressed in a pair of overalls and a blue shirt, also barefooted. The little casket was carried out to the little country grave. I do not know when I ever preached a funeral service that caused so much suffering. The little casket was ready to be lowered in the grave, and a little sister elbowed her way, wiping her eyes with her sleeve as she had no handkerchief; she had a little flour sack in her hands, containing the belongings of her little brother. His father had said that the little boy had requested that all his belongings be buried with him. I opened the sack and took out a little pair of overalls that looked as if they had not been washed for months and stretched it over the corpse, then a little shirt covered with patches, and a little hat that looked like it cost five cents.

I had just been to that wealthy home and death was there. Now death had come to this poor home and entered there. He is no respecter of persons. He may lay his icy, chilly hand upon you. We all

have to die; the rich, the poor, the learned, the unlearned, the mother, the father, the child. All the presidents except two have had to pass out. He may come for some of you this day. Some people get it in their heads that they can come whenever they please, but that is not true. No man can come except the Spirit draw him.

The fourth reason why we should come to God is, the danger of grieving the Spirit away.

I have seen people try to come after the Spirit had departed, but they had no power to come. I remember one of the leading evangelists was holding a campaign with me in a certain city and that meeting had run three nights without any preaching. The tide was high and the altars were crowded, but on the last Saturday night things cleared up and the good evangelist with me preached. When he gave his altar call, they came to the mourner's bench from all parts of the house.

Just then a man, sitting in the third seat, picked up his hat and started down the aisle toward the door. When he reached the door, I leaned over the pulpit and cried out: "Brother H\_\_\_\_, come back!" The good evangelist ran down the aisle and tried to persuade him to come back. His wife and other sisters rushed to him to get him to return, but all in vain. I suppose I called him, urging him to come back a half-dozen times. At last he opened the door, waved his hand at me and stepped out on the steps, walking across the street to his home. This was on Saturday night; the meeting closed on Sunday night.

Thursday, I was called to his home and found him in a critical condition. He had taken the wrong medicine and was poisoned. He looked up into my face and said: "If I owned worlds, I would give them if I could stand back in that church and have the feeling I had last Saturday night, but when I waved you good-bye and stepped out on those steps, I said something to God, and something in me snapped; in fact, the Holy Ghost left me, and I am a doomed man." I did all I could to get him to come to Jesus, but all in vain.

The next day I was rushed back to see him again. His wife had fainted, his little children were begging me to pray. I had other good folks around the bed, praying, but he laid his cold hand on my head and said: "Stop that praying; I am a lost soul! I would like to come, but I have no power to return."

The following day I was called again and never will forget that hour when I went in! Some of his teeth had come out of his head; his lips were all eaten off; they had his head back trying to give him a little milk to keep him alive, as he rolled his glassy eyes at me and said: "Brother Fleming, I love you. Don't have any fight over me; you did your best. But last Saturday night the Spirit of God left me and your cry: 'COME BACK' has been ringing in my ears every minute. Soon I will be in the long, dark night where no traveller has ever 'come back'!" He took my hand, and said, "Promise me that you will warn people, all over this nation, never to leave a church when the Spirit is striving with them!" Then he said, "Oh, if I were back in that church and had that feeling!" His little girls came to me and begged me to stay, saying that their papa was dying without God. But I had done all that I could do, so I left. And at nine o'clock that night, he stepped out into that great beyond. Just one week from the time he got his warning and last call he was gone!

Never will I forget that sad funeral! I had charge of it. They rolled him in the same door out of which he had gone, and in front of the same altar to which he had been invited. There sat his wife and six children; of course I could not preach; the meeting was broken up and we started to the cemetery. When we arrived there the undertaker said to me: "Brace up, we will never get this over if you do not help me." I said, "Man, I can't brace up. You don't know this case like I do." I said a few words at the cemetery and the wife fainted again. I told the undertaker to lower him down and I can almost hear those little voices of his dear children, as they gathered around the grave and cried out, "Good-bye, Papa, you have been good, you have provided for us so well, but Papa is lost!" As the undertaker and I carried them back and put them in the automobile, and I got in with them and we started back to their home, all along the street, I could hear their little voices crying, "Good-bye, Papa, you were so kind and good, and a good father, but you are gone forever!" He would have liked to come in his dying hours, but the Spirit was not calling him.

"The Spirit and the bride say, COME. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." In the day that ye hear his voice, harden not your hearts! COME! COME! COME!

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 4

### WHAT GOD HAS PROMISED

(Chapel Talk by John Fleming)

If you will turn to the 4th chapter of Romans and the 20th and 21st verses you will read: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God: and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

That Scripture encourages me when all the devils are turned loose upon me. What He has promised, He is also able to perform. If we started out from this text, we would never get through. I have preached from it in different ways. They tell me there are thirty thousand promises in the Bible; there is no end to this one -- "What God has promised." You could preach on it for ever and never get through. He has promised us a lot of things in the Bible.

He promised the world a Savior. Thank God, He is here this morning. That is enough to make us get blessed. He promised the Church the Holy Ghost. He is here this morning, I know that! He promised in this Bible to keep us; bless God, I know He can do that. Don't be afraid to step out on God's promises; don't be afraid, for they will hold you up!

Now we have a devil in the land. I believe in a personal devil. I believe in a devil that talks to people. I am told that nineteen million people in the world go to mediums, hearing voices just as you hear John Fleming's voice. A man told me that they put a guitar on a table and, with no human hands touching it, there came forth the most beautiful music in the world -- there was not a person about it! You say, you are just speaking. Well, the devil knows my voice and he knows yours; he knows everything I have done and he knows everything that you have ever done. He can talk like us a hundred years after you and I are gone. The devil can speak and he is doing it and is trying to drag us down. But, glory be to Christ, He is more than a match for him. The Lord is speaking to us also and we do not have to go to a medium, for there is one Mediator between God and man, the Man, Christ Jesus. We can go to Him.

When they thought my mother was dying, a few years ago, (and she did die) someone said that she ought to have a priest as she had been raised a Catholic. "Your mother will die so much easier," they said. I am a fellow to let folks have their way, and I said, "If Mother wants a priest she can have one." We went into the room and said, "Mother, they think you ought to have a priest before you die, what do you think?" She said: "No, I don't want one. What do I want with a priest when I have the Lord Jesus in my heart to talk with?" We do not need to talk to priests or mediums when we have the Lord Jesus Christ with whom we can talk.



Now wait a minute. He has promised to keep us! Don't you believe He can do it? Some one says, "Brother Fleming, I would like to serve the Lord; I would like to start out, but I can't live it; I can't hold out." I can't live it either without God, but Christ can come into your heart and help you live it. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Students, put up your heads this morning and do not get down every time the old devil comes around you! If I went to the altar every time the devil got after me, I would be at the mourners bench the biggest part of my time. He is after me from the time I get up until I go to bed. Folks hear Bona and me praising God and having a big time, and they think we are never tempted. That's all you know about it! Every temptation that comes to you comes to me, the Bible says so; that "no temptation has taken you but such as is common to man." Do you know what I do when he comes around me? I sing a good old song. If he doesn't leave me then, I get on my knees and pray; if he doesn't leave me then, I walk the floor and whistle; if he doesn't leave me then, I read my Bible a while; if he does not leave me then, I say, "Get behind me, Satan!" I am not going to let him put a saddle on my back and ride me around! Shake him off this morning, young people! Folks see me on the platform and they think it is a great delight for me to preach. You may think I am bold and want to talk, but it is the test of my life to go before a crowd. I would rather take a whipping than go out and preach! When I was a little boy, I could not get up and recite pieces in school; I could not recite "Twinkle, twinkle, little star!" The devil tells me that no one wants to hear me preach and I know some people like to hear me preach. Then he will come around and say, "You cannot preach at all." I know he lies, for I can preach a little bit. When he cannot get me on that, he says, "Oh, everybody likes to hear you preach." I know he is lying and I head him off there. Then he tries to come at me and puff me up and says, "You are a great preacher." I say, "Old devil, you are lying to me again." If he cannot get you one way, he will try to get you another way; if he cannot get you puffed up he will do his best to shove you overboard; I mean that!

I was over near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and had a great meeting. Brother A\_\_\_\_\_, a friend of mine, was holding a meeting in Reading, Pennsylvania, at the same time. These cities are close together and after our meetings closed, we came home together, as we both live in the same town. I was going to Oklahoma for my next meeting and Brother A\_\_\_\_\_ was going to Detroit for his next revival.

One morning he called me over to his home. There was a fellow sitting in his home. He was nicely dressed, had two nice grips and a typewriter. Brother A\_\_\_\_\_ said, "He says he knows us, but I do not know him." I said, "I do not know him either." I went in and shook hands with him. He said, "I know you well; I attended your meeting." I said, "What are you doing here?" He said, "I do not know." "Where are you going?" He said, "I do not know." I knew he was a crank right then, and that there was something wrong with him. As he sat there, I said, "What are you here for?" "God tells me to go with you and Brother A\_\_\_\_\_." I said, "I am not sure that is God." He said, "Well, I am." "So God told you to go with both of us. It is a strange thing for God to tell you to go with Brother A\_\_\_\_\_ and me. I am going to Oklahoma, and he is going to Detroit next." He said, "I don't care, God told me to go; if you don't take me, God will never bless you again." I said, "I know that is not true. Have you any money?" He said, "Not a penny." I said, "Who is going to take you?" "The Lord

told me that you boys were going to take me." I said, "I am not going to pay your way to Oklahoma." He said, "Do you know who you are talking to? I can preach like John the Baptist, and I am as strong as Samson." And when he said that, he went right after me. He jerked off my glasses and turned a chair over. I was scared at first, but I got him by the throat and said, "I will see if you are as strong as Samson or not." Brother A\_\_\_\_\_ was almost dying, laughing, and his wife was scared almost to death. I put the chair down and had him by the nape of the neck, then I had him on the floor and was holding him down. When he got up, he said, "Boys, I will tell you what I must do. I have got to go to Alabama." I said, "Who is going to take you?" He said, "The Holy Ghost tells me that Brother A\_\_\_\_\_ is going to pay my way." Brother A\_\_\_\_\_ said, "I am not going to do it." That man went to the depot and lay around there, and my youngest brother had to send him back home.

Do you see how the devil was leading him? He came from a good home, a good church, and at one time was a wonderful man. If the devil cannot pull us back, he will run us into fanaticism if he can. It means a lot to strike the middle of the road, love God and shout the victory. God help us to do it! He has promised to keep us!

I was on the train some time ago, and a fellow came in and sat down by me. He said, "I am saved and sanctified, baptized by the Holy Ghost, then by the fire, and speak in tongues. I asked, "Where do you live?" "Oh," he said, "me and my wife are wonderfully happy. It is wonderful what God is doing for us. My wife is getting revelations and God shows her things that are not in the Bible at all." If the devil comes up and begins to tell me something, I am going to see if it corresponds with the Bible. If it doesn't correspond with the Book, throw it in the waste basket; that is where it belongs! God will keep us if we only let Him, He has promised to do it.

Another thing that will help you. Someone asked, "Brother Fleming, does the devil ever try to get you to the altar?" Thousands of times! Sometimes after I preach he will say, "You haven't got it; get down at the mourners' bench" -- right in a revival. Sometimes he has come to me in the biggest meetings I have had. Now if the devil gets me to a mourners bench, he will have to put his finger on the spot where I have lost Jesus Christ and if he cannot do that, I am going to shout the victory and go on down the highway loving God! Every time the enemy comes up and says I am a backslider, I am going to find out where I have backslidden. If the devil can't tell me, and can't put his finger on the spot, I am going on. There is a devil and a tempter in the land, and he is going to do his best to down me, but what God has promised, He is able also to perform!"

Years ago Bona and I went down to the creek for a swim. We were just little fellows. We got ready on the bank. I started first and put only one foot in the water. "Oh," I said, "Bona, it is cold!" He said, "Get out of the way, John, I am going in!" He stepped in and said, "Whew! it is cold." I said, "Jump in, Bona." He said, "You can, if you like, but I'm not going to," and Bona came out. I will never forget that little John Saliers who had gone to the barber shop and had his head shaved! He came along and said, "Get out of the way, boys!" He didn't paddle around in the edge of the water, he got on the springboard and dove in. Then he said, "Come on, boys, it's fine out here!" My brother and I stood around, afraid to go in.

I have seen a lot of folks who said: "I am going to get holiness, but if I do, what will the preacher say?" I am not able to say! Some other folks are just like the little Saliers boy; they jump in all over

and go to swimming. As Ezekiel said, there would be water to swim in. I believe some of us are just paddling around, fooling with God's promises. There is no telling what God will do for men and women if they will let Him have His way! Step out and believe Him, let us believe God!

When I pray to the Lord, I believe He hears me. And I do not pray about everything in the world; I pray and expect God to give me what I ask of Him, praise the Lord. God said, "I will supply all your needs." Not my wants, if He gave me everything I wanted, it might ruin me, it would ruin my children if I gave them everything they wanted. It would ruin yours. Many families would break Henry Ford up in forty-eight hours if they had everything they wanted. God said, I will supply your need. I may not need a lot of things, and if God would give me what I do not need, it might ruin me.

Bona and I were in California in meetings. We were in a big church and had a great time. There were 1,500 people in the auditorium and galleries and over 800 in the basement -- both of us preaching at one time. On Saturday and Sunday there were about 600 people at the mourners' bench. On Sunday there were 400. Everything was blazing. They brought the fire wagon out and set it in front of the church so it could take quick action should a fire break out, and the next day they made a law for us to keep the people out of the church and not let it get so filled any more.

On Monday night, when I got up to preach, I could not preach. My tongue would not work. I tried to shout a little, but that did not work. I just preached around a little while and quit and gave up. Brother Hatfield began to give a few whoops and gave an altar call, but no one would come. We were dismissed. The day before we had nearly four hundred at the altar and Bona, on the next night, tried to preach but he got in the brush worse than I did and he never did get out. The crowd went in with him; we could not turn a wheel. When we went back to the hotel, both of us prayed and prayed. Bona said, "One thing, John, there is a Holy Ghost." "How do you know?" He said, "He helped us in the past, but He did not help us these past two nights; we were left to try to do it ourselves and we failed." I looked up and said, "Thank God, He said He would supply all our needs. Bona, we were soaring so high on Saturday and Sunday, if we would have kept on we might have neglected prayer, fooled around and gotten cold ruined ourselves and backslid. God wanted to teach us a lesson to lean on His arm and trust Him." We began to have a breaking up through the meeting and over fifteen hundred people were at the mourners bench. So I am glad that I had a hard time to preach and walked the floor and cried after having such a good time. Thank the Lord for letting me down. He was telling me things and making me dig. God Almighty promised to supply our needs and He will do it.

A lot of people think supplying of our needs is for us to be shouting and singing all the time. That isn't so. Sometimes it is hardship, sometimes your best friend may turn you down, but the Lord has promised to keep you. He says that He will never leave you nor forsake you -- "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." "I will put my wing over you and my everlasting arms beneath you, and a wall of fire around about you." Bless the Lord! You can do as you please and say what you want to, but I am not looking for a place to fall, or backslide. I am not looking for grace down yonder twenty years; I am not looking for grace for tomorrow, I am looking for grace now. He has kept me these years, and if He can keep you one minute, He can keep you one hour; if He can keep you one hour, He can keep you one day; if He can keep you one day, He can keep you one week; if He can keep you one month, He can keep you one year; if He can keep you one year, He can keep you right here on this earth with victory until Jesus Christ calls you home! Let me tell you, God

is more than a match for the devil and He will take all the trials and temptations and make them stepping-stones to heaven; God will help us if we will do it!

I want to tell you when the devil fights me, is when I'm away from home. Perhaps I will get lonesome -- I start singing, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." The old devil will say, "I can't get him; I will go to someone else." If he comes to you, you sing, "Jesus Lover Of My Soul," and he will go to some other fellow. You sing "Down At The Cross Where My Savior Died," and he will say, "I can't get him; I'll jump over to this other fellow." You sing, "Rock of Ages, Cleft For Me" and he will go to some other fellow. You sing "Amazing Grace, and the first thing you know the devil will be gone. **WHAT HE HAS PROMISED, HE IS ABLE TO PERFORM!**

Lord, you said you would never leave nor forsake us, you would stand by us! But if the devil comes to you and says you are backslidden, you say, "Well, I believe I am. He will say, "Nobody likes you," and you say, "I know it." "No teacher in school has any confidence in you; if I were you, I would go home." You say, "That is just what I am going to do." I don't know, but I can almost guarantee that I have a snapshot of you, and it doesn't cost you a penny. The devil says, "Nobody wants, to hear you pray," and you say, "I am going to quit." When you testify, he will tell you that people drop their heads, and you will agree with him, "I see it." I am telling you, we have an old devil.

You don't feel good? No! I don't feel good either, but I am not living on feeling. Feeling is like a thermometer, up and down; faith in Jesus Christ will stand every storm. Hallelujah! God bless you, I have to make myself get out of bed; I had to drag myself to this platform; I begged someone else to speak. I had to make myself announce my text, I did not feel like preaching; it is not a question of feeling. Do you think I am going to get down because I don't feel good? If I went on feeling, many times I would go home. I have a good home and a nice family. I love them and they love me. I will not be home but one Sunday between June and Christmas. I got my grip in my hand one time to go home, but I shook the old grips loose and laid them down and said, "Glory to God, I am in the fight; they can run around like little babies, but God needs soldiers." A lot of us are not feeling good, but that is no sign that we are going down. I am not talking to people who you know do not have the Holy Ghost or are backslid den. I am talking to the people that are sanctified and in the will of God.

Nobody knows when I am hit in a meeting. I say, "Amen" to everything. If somebody preaches something that brings light to me, I say, "Amen." That means that I will walk in the light. If they don't hit me, I will say, "Amen." That means I am not struck. I am saying "Amen" to everything that is right. A fellow in preaching may strike you in forty places; if you are sanctified wholly, and if you have the blessing, you will say, "Amen." If you do not, the first thing you know, darkness will come and hover over you! Let us walk in the light, as He is the light, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son will cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Now listen, you may think that John and Bona like to get folks to the altar. I like to get sinners and backsliders to the altar and I like to get folks to the altar to seek the Holy Ghost; but so help me, blessed Jesus, I never want anyone to come to the altar who knows he is sanctified wholly. Some have come to our room and said, "What will we do?" We said, "Don't go down; the devil is telling you to go down, but you stand if you know you have the Holy Ghost."

We are led to work with many different people. I have worked with preachers and could not swallow everything they put out. I do not believe in putting tests like some people do, such as if you could put your hand on your heart and ask God to kill you if you were not sanctified. I don't want God to kill anyone, but I want Him to give them the Holy Ghost. Some say if you are hoarse or have a sore throat, you have not the Holy Ghost. I said, "I don't believe it," because I know people who have the Holy Ghost who get hoarse and have a sore throat. They say if you do not have a strong body, you do not have the Holy Ghost, and maybe my blood pressure would be about 200 when they were giving the test, and I knew I had the Holy Ghost. I am not going to ask God to kill you if you do not have Him.

I might preach on feeling and unchristianize you and get you down. I have just been preaching out of my heart, and I would not get you to the mourners' bench for anything in the world if I thought you had the Holy Ghost. If you have Him, stick to it. I do not want to unchristianize you; you might get to wobbling around and never get straightened out. Stand! Stand! Learn to fight with faith, prayer and the Word.

Don't think these preachers sitting around here have no devil to fight. Don't think that Bud Robinson, Brother Shelhamer and these other preachers are just sitting around without any temptations. Don't think that John and Bona Fleming are praising God without temptation! You see John and Bona Fleming when they are at their best; you see us when we got on our best; you don't see us sometimes fighting demons; you don't see us riding the train three or four days with nobody to whom we might talk. Folks think that all preachers and evangelists have to do is preach, shout and have a big time! No, the devil fights them!

I do not say this boastfully, God forbid that I should. I could not be sanctified wholly and boast, but I get enough calls to keep a dozen men busy, and could slate up for three years at a time. With all of that, my biggest temptation is to quit preaching. You would be surprised to know what a fight I have along that line; with all of these calls, the devil tells me, "You are going to run out and will soon be on the shelf; nobody will call you." But it is to be seen what God will do for anyone who step out and trust Him. The devil told me some time ago that a certain preacher would not call me for a meeting. He said, "He would not have you in his church!" In less than a month that man called me for two meetings before I had held the first one.

If you pray every morning and read your Bible, and ask God for a fresh supply of grace, you will have power to resist the devil and trust the promises of God. The Lord bless you!

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 5

### ESCAPE THE WRATH OF GOD!

(Sermon by Bona Fleming)

I want you to get my text if YOU get nothing more that I say. "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell ... O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end! ... their foot shall slide in due time." -- Deut. 32:22, 29, 35. "And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep." -- Rom. 13:11

A friend of mine told me of being in a little Kentucky town after midnight and the night policeman was walking along making his last beat when he saw the roof of the hotel in flames. The policeman did not go down the street, laughing and acting as though he had not seen anything nor did not know anything; he began to shout "FIRE! FIRE!" as loud as he could. The people were awakened and ran to the street, but he was not satisfied. He knew there were people in that burning building, sound asleep. He took his revolver from the holster and shot into the air six times, still shouting, "FIRE! FIRE!" He reloaded his revolver and shot again into the air, and kept shouting, "FIRE! FIRE!" as loud as he could. His cap was off and his hair disheveled. He shouted until someone came to him and said: "Policeman, every room is vacated; every man and woman is safe on the ground." Then he stopped shouting, "FIRE!" and put his revolver back in its holster, and went on his beat. That man was awake; that man could see danger!

Sam Jones told of being in a certain city when a hotel got on fire. They were running to the rooms, rapping on the doors, and the people were running for their lives. He said there was one room for which two men had registered at a late hour of the night. The occupants they could not arouse. At last they ran back upstairs, grabbed a bar of iron and broke the door in. They took hold of one of those men, pulled him out of bed, put him on his feet, and said, "Man, run for your life! This building is in flames." The man grabbed his clothes and ran to the street. They pulled the other man and shook him and said, "Man, wake up! This building is in flames! Run for your life!" He said, "Let me alone. I have paid for this bed and don't want to be disturbed. Go away, and let me alone!" He got back in bed and pulled the covers over him. They had to run for their own lives, and in less than three minutes after they had reached the street, the ceiling dropped through and the man and the bed went down in the flames.

Now, that fellow did not believe the message. He was asleep and that was the reason he talked back. He was asleep; he could not see any danger in going back to his bed! But listen, friends, his unbelief and his being asleep did not save him, and he did not escape the fire by being careless and hard to awaken.

I have been believing for years that this world is asleep. Every day that I live I believe it more and more. When it comes to being awakened to what it really means for folks to be lost, I believe most of us are asleep. I am praying, night and day, for God to keep me awakened to what it is going to mean for men and women to go through revivals and through camp meetings, over Gospel messages and heaven-born songs, and then to take their leap into eternity unsaved! I am asking God to keep me in a place where I will never get careless about things that are eternal.

God has been good to this old world! It is not our enemies who warn us. The man in the country who hangs out the light at the country bridge is not your enemy. The law requires him to give warning. They have to warn passers-by or they suffer for it. I want to tell you, God says that except we warn the wicked, their blood will be required at our hands! God has been good to us! Moses said that the "fire is kindled" in his anger against sin, and if He had stopped with Moses, and never given us another warning, it looks as if we would have been without excuse; but He did not stop with Moses.

He touched the lips of David, as we read in Psalm 11:6, "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup." He said: "Upon the wicked," whether in the church or out of the church, whether in the pulpit or in the pew, whether on the platform or on the outside -- "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone." Moses said the fire was kindled, but David said the fire would be poured out "upon the wicked." If the Lord had stopped warning us there, we could not go to the judgment and say that we did not know.

But He touched the lips of Isaiah with a live coal from off the altar, and Isaiah said: "Lord, here am I, send me!" And God sent that prophet with a message to that people. He said: "Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it." -Isaiah 5:14.

Friends, hell is a place, just as real as Cincinnati is a place. Moses Said the fire was kindled; David said the fire was poured out "upon the wicked," and Isaiah said they would go into hell.

John the Revelator saw the size of Heaven. There are men who have measured the distance from this earth to the sun, around the world; the depth of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, but Isaiah said that hell is without measure, and that people will go there. Neither did God stop with Isaiah.

He gave Ezekiel a vision of what it was going to mean, and He said: "The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell with them that help him." -- Ezekiel 32:21. There is a language in behind the sweltering walls of the pit, just as real as there is a language among the people who are in this meeting tonight. "The strong among the mighty shall speak to him out of the midst of hell." Wake us up tonight!

Oh, how many times have I been up in the night when no one would hear me, I did not want them to hear me. I have slipped out of my bed, gone out of my room and gotten on my knees. I have taken my Bible and put it to my heart and said: "Bona Fleming, do you believe this Bible? Do you believe that there is a hell like you preach about? Are you living up to this Book as you believe this Book

teaches?" O beloved, I got saved by believing this Book, I got sanctified by believing this Book, and I am kept by believing this Book, and I get things out of this Book that bless my soul. I read other good books and buy good books, but there is some part of me that other books can't touch; I put them down and get my Bible, turn a few pages and say, "Here it is, Lord, something that touches the part of my being that no other book will touch."

But God did not stop with Ezekiel! He sent Jesus Christ to this world. He preached and warned dying men and women as no other one who ever lived did. He looked at that crowd of moral people, that crowd of tithers, that crowd of prayers, that crowd of church members who loved their church, that crowd that dressed right, that wore long robes, and He asked them the question: "How shall ye escape the damnation of hell?" Then He put the capstone on when He said, "If thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better or thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt." -- Mark 9:43-49.

I am sure that we would have been without excuse if He had never spoken and given another warning. But listen, He filled the disciples with the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost, and later we hear Peter preaching, saying: "If God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment; and spared not the old world, but saved Noah, the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly; and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly." -- 2 Peter 2:5-6.

If God put angels out of heaven for sinning, He is never going to take Bona Fleming or anyone else in this crowd to heaven with sin upon us or sin in us. I have talked with my brother, and said, "John, I believe just as much as I believe I am living that God requires us to live without sin. It is one thing to talk living without sin, and another thing to do it." What one person calls sin, most of the people call a mistake; we cannot make a mistake today and make the same one the next day and keep it up for years and years and still call it a mistake! If we do, we shall come up short in the last day. But God did not stop with Peter.

He carried John the Beloved over there to the lonely Isle of Patmos and gave him a vision of what was going to take place. He said: "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night." -- Rev. 14:10-11.

I doubt if there is a man or woman living who has ever grasped what it really means to be saved from sin and to be ready for Heaven; to be ready at any moment, to go from time to eternity, without



a spot or wrinkle on our garments. On the other hand, I doubt if there is anyone living today who is grasping what it is going to mean for the sinner, without God, to leap from time into eternity! As someone has said, "We see so much in the papers about storms, cyclones, battles and all these things that we get hardened to them. I tell you, my friends, I have to pray to keep tender, to keep the burden of souls on me; pray that I will not get careless; and, when folks leave the meeting without coming to the altar, that I will not go away and rest easy about it. I want the burden on my heart.

I was over in Philadelphia and went down to Wanamaker's store to hear the greatest organ in the world played. We went up several stairs, then the guide told us to stop. We stood there for about five minutes and the music began to roll. It had only been playing a few moments until tears began to run down our cheeks! I had never heard anything like it! I had heard Billy Sunday's choir and lots of good singing, but I never listened to anything in my life that pulled me toward heaven as that organ did! It made me think of heaven and what it is going to be! I said: "What is the music of the skies going to mean? What is it going to mean to go to heaven?" I said to the guide: "I cannot play anything; before I was saved I tried to play a violin; my brothers played, but I never could learn music. I have tried a little since I was converted, but never made any success in music; but when I get to heaven, I believe He will give me a harp upon which I can play. I believe I will be in a choir that can help to make music like this great organ, with 17,000 pipes and 270 stops." I thought: "O Lord, if man can make an instrument and make it work like this, I want to go to heaven and hear the music there!"

As I thought of that, my mind turned back to the meeting in which I was engaged. I said: "O Lord, if I were in heaven, all I could do would be to enjoy heaven; help me to see what it is going to mean for mothers' boys and mothers' girls to die and go from our meetings out into the dark and never return and go where light, love, mercy, music, singing, or shouting will never come; where babies will never be; where the birds will never sing.

The Lord gave John the Beloved another vision, and he tells us who is going to inhabit that lost world -- "the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death." -- Rev. 21:8. He heads the list with the "fearful;" the people who are afraid of what people think about them. You know you have the biggest time of your life in this meeting, but you know how that fearful feeling comes over you back home; how the preachers sit down on you and you let them do it; you are afraid to testify! You can just be afraid of preachers and backslide! Next, the "unbelievers." We do not have to commit adultery, we do not have to steal some man's pocketbook, we do not have to murder any one, we do not have to do those things, we have only to refuse to believe what this Book says to be lost.

But God did not stop there! He has put His Spirit upon some of the greatest men that have lived since Paul, such as Luther, the Wesleys, Fox, Spurgeon, Moody, Talmage, Finney and others and every one of them preached on hell and warned people to flee from the wrath to come! I am not going to set aside the holy prophets, Jesus Christ and apostles, and the greatest men that lived for nineteen hundred years, and believe some no-hellite! I expect to hug this Book to my bosom and ask God to bring Bona Fleming's life up to measure with this Book!

Now, there are some people who wake up, but they wake up too late! The Word says: "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" We are considering present things that are around us; men are wiser along many lines than ever in the past, but Moses said: "O that they were wise concerning this, "their latter end." God wants us to be wise concerning the time when the icy hand of death comes upon us, when the cold sweat breaks out upon our brow, when our heart pulse does not pump our blood to the ends of our fingers and our toes, and when our nose is pinching in, and when the rattle is in our throat; He wants us to consider that time. For it is a poor time to call for the insurance man when the roof of the house is falling in! It is a poor time to call on the Lord after we have rejected His love and mercy and come to our dying pillow!

"It is appointed unto men once to die!" It is useless to stand here on this platform and preach to men that they have to die. We all know that. But we are asleep to what it is going to mean to die without God! What will it mean if a man or a woman will not get saved and sanctified in a meeting like this one, with praying, singing, shouting and preaching with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven? What is it going to mean in their dying hour, if they will not get through here?

If we had some way to get the whole truth from this audience, tonight, the Lord knows we would be astonished. Some people would say, "There is a lack in my experience; I am not where I ought to be." With your heart in that condition, if you let this service pass by and go back to your home, there will not be much preaching there, there will not be any altar calls. How are you going to get through there? If the enemy of your soul can chloroform you and keep you asleep now, and keep you from this altar of prayer, keep you from getting reclaimed or from getting saved or sanctified, how much easier will it be for him in your dying hour, when your body is racked with pain and you are doped with drugs?

I have said it many times; I believe that there are few hypocrites. I believe the majority of people are deceived and asleep. Across in Kentucky, in a little town a few years ago, a friend of mine told me an experience that he had with a lady who burned to death. She attended camp meetings and revival meetings; she did not care anything about seeking God; she would stand back and look over the heads of the people and others who were seeking. She was considered a nice lady in the community; she was asleep spiritually! She said: "I will never need it." The reason she said that was that she was asleep in sin! The meetings were over and this woman never felt better in her life; her family were all well. You know people can make almost any kind of statements when their pulse is beating seventy-two times a minute and the family is well and they have three good meals a day; but I want to tell you, there comes a time in their lives when things change. One day this woman built a fire in the grate, in an old-fashioned chimney place, and left the little boy, three and a half years of age, in the room while she went to the spring to get a pail of water. He got too close to the fire. He started to run to meet his mother. She was coming with the water and saw the flame running up his little body. She dropped the pail, went and grabbed the little boy in her arms and, like a mother, she began fighting the fire with all her might. At last she got it partly out, but her own clothes caught fire and were burned from her. She saw her condition and her child's condition and began screaming and calling for help. Some men in the cornfield heard the screams and wails of this dying woman. They started to where she was and saw her condition; then ran back and got some women on horseback. They ran to her rescue and got her into the house and into bed. Then this poor woman saw her condition. There she was so near death, and so she began to scream for some one to pray for her.

But these women could not pray; they did not know how. At last a man was found who could pray and he dropped everything, jumped into his buggy and whipped the horse across the hill and ran to the home. He was gifted in prayer and he said that he fell down beside that dying woman and began to pray. He was there but a few moments when the little child went to heaven, and when she realized that they were taking her child away dead, she began to scream as loud as she could and said: "Oh, do pray for a lost woman; her baby has gone to heaven and she is not ready; do pray for a lost woman!" This friend of mine dropped on his knees again and tried to pray, but could not. We can laugh at altar services tonight; we can say that we do not believe in praying, but look out! There is coming a time that we are going to believe in prayer! That woman said: "Pray for me!" My friend told me he fell down on his knees again, but he could not pray. She said: "Man can't you do something for a poor lost woman whose baby has gone to heaven and she cannot go?" He told me he never felt so helpless as he felt at that moment. But remember, friends, that woman had opportunity after opportunity, she had been through revival after revival, and she had sat back just like people in this audience are sitting back tonight. She didn't expect to be lost; she didn't expect to be burned to death, but she put off salvation a little too long and died saying, "Pray for me! Do something for a poor lost woman!" The man told her to look to Jesus and she said: "Oh, He is so far away now. That is what the Bible says: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." She was awakened, but awakened too late!

That man of God told me that for three or four days he could hear that woman's groans and wails. If one woman dying and going into eternity without God can have such an effect upon men that they will think about it for three or four days, I want to ask the unsaved of this dying congregation, "What is it going to mean when you take your leap into the dark, sweltering slimy walls of damnation, there to pitch forward, there to fall backwards, there to writhe and scream and groan and wail and curse and look back at the camp meetings, look back at the songs, look back to the altar services and to remember that hope is gone forever? O God, wake us up! Help us to pray tonight as we never prayed before!

M. W. Knapp said, when he was dying, "Wake them up! Wake them up!" They asked him if he meant the students, and he said, "No, wake up the lost people!" And Brother Arthur Ingler wrote that wonderful song:

"Millions now are dying,  
Dying in their sins,  
Hell's foul mouth is open  
Taking millions in!"  
Wake them up! Wake them up!

Many expect to start for heaven sometime in the future. They have promised loved ones on death beds and promised themselves at funerals that they would change and meet their loved one in heaven, but have failed to keep their vows to their God and their dying loved ones or to themselves. The Spirit is knocking at the door of hearts and saying: "Son, daughter, give me thine heart! Come! Now is the time! The Gospel train is rolling by! Get on! Get on!" This Camp Meeting is thrown across your pathway and saying, "Come on!" But you are rolling sin under your tongue as a sweet

morsel and saying: "I will risk it a little longer; I will go just a little further." I beg of you, don't delay! You may be too late!

Let me give you an incident that happened right here in your State. A young lady, just as intelligent a young lady as any in this meeting tonight, went to a revival meeting. The power of God was on the meeting; sinners were being saved and believers were being sanctified. This girl was deeply convicted; tears began to roll down her cheeks; she took her handkerchief and wiped the tears away. Her father, a well-to-do farmer, stood outside with others and looked across the large tent. He remarked to a friend: "If my daughter goes to that altar, I will wade blood to my neck to take her out of there." But a young man was standing by her side and she did not go that night. The father drove home and the young man took the young lady home. When she got inside she saw her large father walking the floor. She knew that something was wrong. She said, "Papa, what is the matter with you? Why are you not in bed?" He answered, "I have stayed up to give you your orders." She said: "What have I done?" He replied, "I looked across that tent tonight, and saw you weeping, and if you go to that mourners bench, I will wade through blood to take you out of there, and when I get you home I will wear withes out over your back." He put it down so strong that she knew he meant what he said. She went to her room and there in the darkness settled it that she would not go with God. She was a beautiful girl; between nineteen and twenty years of age. She closed her fists and said: "O God, I will never seek Thee. Take this feeling away from me. I want to have a good time during this meeting and don't want you to bother me any more. I will never go to that altar. Take this burden away from my heart." The Lord heard her prayer and the Holy Spirit left her and conviction was gone. She went to her bed and slept. Because you can go to bed and sleep, don't you think you are safe! Many people go to bed and to sleep to whom God will never speak again.

The next morning this young lady got up and went about the chores of the day and went to the services that night. Her father stood in the same place as he did the night before and kept his eye upon her. When the altar call was given, he looked across and saw her standing with a young man, laughing. He took his neighbor by the arm and said: "Look at my daughter; I conquered her last night before she went to bed. She will never go to that altar."

But listen, the meeting closed on Sunday night, just like this meeting will close tonight, and settled the destiny of dying men and women. The tents were taken down and the preachers left the grounds. On Monday morning this girl went to school as usual, and all that week. The next Monday morning, one week after the meeting had closed, she said: "Mama, my head is hurting me." Her mother said: "Go along to school." But she returned in a few hours and said: "Mama, my head is hurting me so that I could not stay." She went to her room and was in bed three or four days. On Thursday afternoon she sent for her mother to come up and she said: "Mama, I am sure you and papa do not know my condition, I want to send for a doctor. I am in an awful condition and I am going to die." Her mother was excited and said: "I will," and she had the family physician come. He felt her pulse, took her temperature. He touched her big, strong father on the shoulder and asked him to come outside to the automobile. He loved the family; they had been kind to him. He said: "You have been true to me, and I must be true to you. You have called me too late. Your daughter will soon be in eternity. If you have anything to tell her, tell her at once, it is no use to tell you I can help her or to call for another doctor, for in a few hours she will be gone!"

The neighbors, almost a mile away, heard that father! What do you suppose he thought of the first thing? Yes, the night that he conquered his daughter and she settled it not to go with God. He left the automobile and went into the house, wringing his hands. He fell at her bed and said, "O May, seek the Lord; Pray! Give your heart to God!" She put her hand on his face and said, "Papa, please don't haunt me with the name of God! Please don't mention His name to me! My heart has been like stone since the night you gave me my orders." Then she told what she did and said and asked the Lord to let her alone. "And," she said, "He took me at my word!" Then she told him she was conscious that her doom was sealed, and from the beginning of her illness she knew she was going to die. She said: "Papa, what time is it?" He answered, "Four o'clock in the afternoon." She said: "How slowly the hours are passing by! But, just think! I am going to a place where there will be no time." They had built a new home out on the pike; the old home stood back in the field and there was the well with the old moss-covered bucket. She said: "Papa, go to the old moss-covered well and bring me a fresh drink of water." He went and brought the water and put it to her lips and she drank it. She said: "Papa, pull me up, for my feet are sinking." He drew her up in the bed, but that didn't stop her. I presume she was like many here tonight, who had never taken the time to read the Bible where it says: "Their foot shall slide in due time." She could not say with the old poet:

"On Christ, the solid rock I stand,  
All other ground is sinking sand."

For she was like the one that Christ spoke about who built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it." Then she said: "Papa, go back to the old well again and bring me one more fresh drink from our own home well, for I will soon be in a place where I will never get any water." He ran to get the water, but when he returned, he found his beautiful daughter with her fingers clenched in her beautiful golden hair and her teeth upon her tongue, her eyes open -- she had gone! Her mother had fainted and little sister was trying to pray for God to save the dead sister. If I would take time, I could tell you of this heartbroken father, how he goes to buy at the hardware store and forgets what he wants; how he goes out to salt the cattle and forgets to leave the salt.

One thing more and I will close. I feel in my soul just now, as I felt the other night when I went down the aisle after Brother Kulp had preached an awful sermon to sinners. I am not like the old track walker that waved a broken lantern in front of the crowd to stop the train, I don't have a broken lantern to put across your pathway, because, blessed be God, nineteen hundred years ago, Jesus Christ hung a light on Calvary which the storms of hell, the lightnings, the thunders, all the infidels, skeptics and modernists of this world have never been able to put out! It is burning and shining tonight and God calls you to heed this warning and escape from the wrath of God. He said, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Oh, that they were wise, that they would consider their latter end. I beg of you to consider your soul's eternal welfare and make your peace with God.

(213 people came to the altar under this message that night!)

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 6

### "TEACH US TO PRAY"

(Message by Bona Fleming)

I want to read a few verses of Scripture from the eleventh chapter of Luke, verses 1-13.

"And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?"

Now, of course, you would think I would take the last verse for the text, but I am going to take the first verse. My text this morning is, "Lord, teach us to pray."

It may seem strange to preach on prayer at this meeting, to one of the greatest praying crowds on earth. But here we find in this text a bunch of good men, good praying men, followers of the Lord Jesus. They had been with the Lord, they had heard Him preach, seen Him perform miracles, raise the dead, cleanse the leper, cause the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak. In fact, they had just ceased from praying with Him when one of His disciples came to Him and said, "Lord, teach us to pray."

They got up by His side and made this request. They did not say, "Tell us how to pray."

You can teach a Poll Parrot to say words but you cannot teach him to pray. Much that is called prayer is not praying at all. I have stayed up all night and tried to pray, but I did not tell the people the next morning that I had a night of prayer.

When I go to a city for a meeting I usually call up someone over the telephone. I first meet the conditions, go to the office, get a clear line, before I do any talking. We have never prayed until we pray through any more than we telephone until we telephone through. A lot of times we just talk when we are not in a condition to pray. Some people think that nothing will hinder prayer but sin, but suppose some of you folk here this morning had received a telephone call or a telegram that your parents, or your brother, or your sister, or your relatives, or your friends had been struck by an automobile and taken to the hospital. Your mind would be so filled with this that you would not be able to get down and keep your mind on prayer for a revival meeting. It would not be sin to have this on your mind, but it would hinder your prayers just the same. Someone who did not have anything on his mind could pray through in a minute or two. You may stay an hour to try to pray and just say words, for your loved ones would be on your mind. However, it would not be sin.

I do not know what I would have asked if I had had the same opportunity that those disciples had. I do not know what request I would have made. We have never had the opportunity that those disciples had, the privilege of being with Jesus in person. He had been from heaven about thirty years. He knew everything about heaven and earth, and everything between. I do not know whether He was kneeling or standing or sitting. It does not say the posture of the body, but I think He was kneeling down. They could have got down by His side and made a request like this, "Tell us how old the world is. Tell us how old the rocks are?"

They could have gone a step farther and said, "We see the sun; we wonder how far it is through it and how far it is around it. We wonder how old it is. Tell us all about it."

And they could have gone still a step farther and said, "We look up into the starry heavens, we wonder how large the stars are, how many there are."

He could have named them just like you and I name our brothers and sisters, for He made them and "without him there was nothing made."

The disciples could have gone another step and said, "Tell us about heaven; the golden streets, the walls of jasper, and the gates of pearl. Tell us about the angels. Tell us how many angels there are, how old they are."

Would not that have been wonderful? There is no one living but what would like to know more about the stars and more about the heavens. But the disciples had something more important on their hearts than the making of a world or angels or heaven. What was it? "We want to be taught to pray." They heard the Pharisees pray. They heard them use the most beautiful language that ever was heard, (they prayed their words like laying up bricks for a New York skyscraper) but that was not what they wanted. They wanted Him to teach them to pray. They had heard Him say, "Father, when I pray Thou dost always hear me."

He hears me, but He does not always answer in the way that I would desire. I will tell you something that is an encouragement to me. I do not know whether it came from heaven or not. I never heard anyone else say it. If you were cursing the Lord would hear you and if He heard you curse, He surely would hear you pray. If you curse, God is going to hear you. If you pray, God is

going to hear you. If you get everything out of the way, God is going to answer your prayer. It does not say how long the disciples prayed.

Elijah did not have to pray long after Baal and his crowd gave him a chance. There had been a drought over the country for three years and six months. We think we have a drought if it does not rain for three or four weeks. People were dying, death and disease settling in everywhere. The streams had gone dry, the grass had ceased to grow, there were no green fields. The people came to the man of God and said, "You are the cause of the whole thing. You know you are. You are the fellow that is bringing this on us."

Elijah said, "No, no; I am not the cause of this. If you are right, I am willing to give up. We will put this to a test. The God that answers prayer by fire, let Him be God; we will bow down and worship Him. I am not willing to give up my religion until I find something better, neither do I ask you to give up yours until you have found something better."

You know the details of the story, if you read your Bibles, without my telling it. You know how they erected the altar, jumped up and down and cut themselves in gashes, but nothing happened. Then the man of God erected an altar.

Do you know how long he prayed? I have counted his words with my watch in hand. He did not pray an hour. He did not pray a minute. He prayed just twenty seconds, but just long enough to get through to God and hear from heaven. He called upon the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He believed God would hear and answer. After twenty seconds the fire fell and proved to this great crowd who was the true and living God. There is nothing under heaven that will prove to a gainsaying world that God lives, like you and me getting our prayers through. People can preach and sing and go through that, but when people get their prayers through it puts a padlock on the enemy's mouth.

I have heard from heaven since I came to this meeting. When we hear from heaven something takes place. Did you ever stop to think that Elijah did not stop for six months to tell this experience? He started praying again right away. If you and I had an experience like that, I expect we would take the next six months to tell it.

The worshippers of Baal fell on their faces and worshipped the true and living God. Elijah had not had anything to eat since early morning. Night was coming on. King Ahab said it was time to eat, and Elijah said, "Go on, Ahab, if you want to with your crowd, but I want to pray."

Whenever you see a person that would rather pray than eat, you will find a person that will astonish people that do not know God. Elijah went to the mountain top and got down on his face and started praying. But he told Ahab at the foot of the mountain, "I hear a noise, I hear a rumbling in the heavens. I hear a sound of abundance of rain," when they had not heard a sound for three years and six months. King Ahab and his crowd could not hear that. They had ears as good as Elijah's but he had a spiritual ear that that crowd knew nothing about.



Elijah told the servant to go and see how it looked. He looked about like Bona Fleming would look, and said, "Nothing doing." He sent him seven times, and the last time he said, "I see a spreading cloud like a man's hand."

Elijah said, "Go to the foot of the mount in a hurry, a great rain is coming" -- not a shower, but a great rain. He heard the sound before the clouds appeared. Ahab got up in the chariot, put the robe around him and started off toward the city. He was taking it easy. There was a great rain coming and he was anxious to get back home. We never have to exhort anyone to take it easy. People always take it easy enough when it comes to religion. Where one goes overboard, there are thousands going underboard and doing nothing for God. We always have plenty of riders but they never hear from God. Read your Bibles. Elijah heard from heaven and from God twice that day. He did not climb up in any chariot to ride. Why? The chariot was too slow. Elijah ran and passed the chariot, Ahab, and the horses and the whole crowd, and went into the city first. Why? Because there is nothing in this world that puts a move on a person like hearing from heaven. There is nothing so encouraging under heaven as hearing from God. It is the most encouraging thing to the church, the home, or the individual.

I have been in Washington, D. C., many times; have gone to the White House. I have friends there who would have introduced me to the President, but I did not think it wise to take his time to come out and shake hands with me. I would like to meet him, but would not give much for him to touch me; but I will go a long ways to meet the Lord, to have Him touch me. I would stay up all night to get God to touch me in the morning. Why? If the President touches me I will be just the same, but when God touches anyone they will never be the same. He puts a sparkle in your eye, and a spring in your heel, and a shine on your face, and a determination to go through with Him. He will send you down the highway to swim every river and cross every mountain, and go through every tunnel, and He will bring you out a conqueror on the other side. Bless His name forever! When the Lord takes you and breaks you up, the fire begins to burn, the scalding tears begin to run down your face and you get an experience you will not forge t tomorrow.

Now come over into the New Testament and see how the Church got together at Pentecost and prayed until the place was shaken. When Paul and Silas prayed, God looked over the battlements of heaven and the whole crowd got a shaking up before daylight. Paul and Silas were preaching and they put them in jail, but they began to sing and pray at midnight. Supposing Paul and Silas had not prayed through that night? They would have stayed in jail and the jailor and his family would have stayed in sin. God help us to pray until we pray through.

The God that heard back there is the same today. The God that heard prayer and poured out His Spirit upon them back there is doing the same today. The same God who heard prayer back there, saved sinners, sanctified believers and filled them with the Holy Ghost, lives today. I believe He wants to give the Holy Ghost to every man and woman that comes on these grounds in the next ten days. You could not get any Christian to say in words that God had gone off on a journey, but we say it in actions. We say that God used to hear people's prayers and God used to do wonderful things. I do not believe God ever did anything more for anybody in this world than He will do for you and me. I do not believe anybody ever had a better experience with God than you and I can have. I do not believe God loves them any more than He loves you and me. Just a few years do not change God.

Some seem to think God does not want to give them victory any more. That is not so. We have moved away and left God. We do not believe.

I have been in meetings where the people could not sleep at night. People were praying for them; for three days and three nights they could not sleep. They did not know it was conviction. They did not know what was the matter. I have seen them start to an altar of prayer and God would meet them in the aisle. He saved them and honored their faith before they ever reached an altar. I do not believe we have to tease God for days and weeks to save us or sanctify us wholly. He wants to do it. He wants us to pray through for people that do not have victory. He expects us to believe and hold on until He lets down the fire on their souls.

I was telling them in a meeting some time ago about an old lady. After she had buried her husband, her son was thought to be dying with typhoid fever. They were six hours away from ice, and the doctor said he would have to have ice in three hours or he would die. She went out to the barn and prayed and the Lord sent a hail storm and she had plenty of ice inside of three hours.

After the service a preacher stepped up to me and said, "Bona Fleming, I do not believe God does those things."

I said, "No, and you would not get any ice from heaven either."

That is the trouble. We do not believe this and we do not believe that, until we do not believe anything. We would have victory in our souls if we would claim it. God wants you to hear from heaven.

I believe I will just leave this message with you. I do not even like giving an altar call. I am just going to leave this with you this morning and if you have not gotten through, get hold of God for your own soul. Let us go through! If you are one of His disciples and not sanctified, you can pray through and hear from heaven. Let us keep praying for this meeting and believing God. We are going to see wonders performed. God is no respecter of persons.

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 7

### SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM

(Message by John Fleming)

The Scripture reading is found in Colossians 3:1-4.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

"If ye then be risen with Christ." Paul here was speaking to Christians. "If ye then be risen with Christ" -- not with the preacher but with Christ -- seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth."

You know the reason we do not get much out of the lessons that Christ gives? The Lord does not have a fair chance at us like the world has at folks. Do you know people of the world set their affections on things of the world? You take Edison for example. We could think on electricity for a thousand years and would not get started. Do you know why Edison made such a great success in the electrical field? Because he set his affections on electricity. He has been spending from fifteen to eighteen hours out of twenty-four for fifty years. When he was a newsboy on the railroad train he would go through the train trying to sell apples, oranges and candy and then he would come back to a place he had fixed and would work on different chemicals. He was trying to get an electric light bulb.

One time, down in Florida, Edison was asked what he considered his greatest discovery. He said, "The phonograph."

You and I put the record on the machine and do not think much about it, but he was shut away from the world for many years, fifteen to eighteen hours a day. We do not know where the words are or where the sounds are, yet people in this city and in every city use the phonograph practically every day. All we see is just a piece of material with fine circles in it and we slip it on the machine, but there is the human voice. We listen to it and enjoy it but do not know very much about it. Why? We never set our affections on it. Edison gets a thrill of a lifetime by listening to what he has produced.

We do not get much out of electricity. We press a button and on comes the light. We do not know that a man spent years and years and set his affection on electricity to get something out of it, that we do not know anything about. We study the stars and read a few books on astronomy but we do not get much out of it, we get practically nothing out of it. But I want to tell you some people that

do. Those people who do not take time to shave their faces for weeks, nor comb their hair. They are not taken up with cards and theaters and broadcloth suits. They do not have their affections on how they are going to look, but they have their affections set on the stars that they are studying night and day with telescopes. Their affections are not set on things on the earth but things above. They get a thrill when they talk on astronomy. Scientists have discovered things that we enjoy. We think we have a big time over them but they have a much better time talking about what they have received and spent years working on.

You hear someone play the piano who is a great pianist. You get a little thrill. I enjoy music. I know when folks make a discord but I cannot play. Do you suppose I get anything out of it compared to the fellow who spent hours and hours feeling those keys after other people had gone to sleep? He would be somewhere with the piano and music in front of him while others were enjoying themselves at entertainments. His affections were set on music -- to play the piano or die. He did not just set his affections there and then go off and leave the piano for five or six months and never touch the keys; no, he set his mind and affections on the piano and he got something out of it.

You talk to a great musician about music and he will straighten up, throw his shoulders back and put his chest out. He gets a thrill over talking about music. He gets something out of it because he has so much into it.

Take a real farmer, a dairyman or a man on a poultry farm. I was on a great chicken ranch a few years ago and a man showed me thousands of chickens. He told me that his large chickens ran in price from \$25 to \$100. He asked me what I thought some were worth. I told him they looked as though they might be worth sixty or seventy-five cents.

He said, "No, that one is worth \$300. You cannot see their feathers."

All I could see was white feathers but that man had been in that business for fifteen years. His whole life was wrapped up in chickens. He would wash them with peroxide to get them ready for shows and every feather was in its place. His affections were set on fine chickens.

Do you know why we get so few things from Heaven? Do you know why we receive so little from God? Because we fail to set our affections on things above. They are set for a few months and then we get to watching worldly things, and then we try again to get the Lord back on us. The apostle said, "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above."

If you know Christ has given you life in your soul, then set your affections on things above. We are not here at School studying farming, or teaching, or the poultry business, or electricity, neither are we teaching girls to cook or be housekeepers, but we are here to learn of spiritual things. That is the only motive anyone should have who comes to a place like this. If we fail to set our affections on things above, it would be better for us to leave now. If we fail to do this, then we will get very little out of our religion or spiritual things.

I meet boys and girls who set their affections on things above while they were in school and they still have their affections there today. I know, for I have traveled around and over this nation. I meet

them and they are making a mark in the world for God. I meet others that have gone through holiness schools and graduated from colleges and are accomplishing nothing for God. Their affections are on earthly things. They seem to have lost their way, but if we would use as much common sense as an old setting hen we might amount to more. She does not set on her eggs a while and then go off for four or five hours and leave them. If she did there would be no chickens. She sets her affections on her chickens.

If we set our affections on things above we are going to be spiritual boys and girls. We are here to get an experience and to get more spiritual. One fellow told me, "Do you know what I am going to do? I am going to get me a long coat and preach to the aristocrats."

The last time I saw him he smelled like a tobacco house. His affections were set on something big but not on spiritual things. He is not doing anything and is out of the ministry today. There is only one help for us and that is to be spiritual. Take the boys and girls all over the nation who are making a mark for God and you will find that they are the ones that set their affections on things above. Others have thought they need not be spiritual and could get along with their personalities, but there is no personality that can take the place of God. These people drop out of God's work. The boys and girls that are willing to scrub floors and do anything you give them to do will go through on the old-fashioned line and make a mark for God and amount to something.

Take Brother Warren Posey for instance. He used to tie the soles on his shoes when he was in school. He had only one shirt and a celluloid collar. He would wash his shirt and dry it on the radiator at night, but he worked his way through school and is now making a mark for God. He is pastor in one of the best churches and one that has the largest Sunday School in Michigan today.

If we want to amount to something for God, He said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Are you doing it? I believe I am talking to a great many who are. Get your mind off from carnal, perishable things and set it on things above. Set your affections, set your mind, on things above and God will take you through. Some young people think that if they go with the Lord they will not amount to anything. That is not so. If you go through with God you will amount to something. God can take a worm and thrash a mountain. He did not say He would take a mountain and thrash a worm. He can take you and use you if you will let Him.

This morning if you will determine in your hearts you are going to be saved and sanctified and be spiritual young people, God will put something in your soul so that, when you go back home, back to your cities, back to your home towns, and back to your churches, they will know you have been with Jesus and learned of Him; they will see you are different from people of the world. This old world is expecting a great deal of Christian boys and girls who go to holiness schools. There is much expected of us if we will go through with God and let Him clean us up. When we get out of here we will not want to flirt with the world. We will help to pray people through, sing and shout and let our light shine that "others may see your good works and glorify God."

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 8

### WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT DEPARTS

(Sermon by Bona Fleming)

I wish to call your attention to the text in the twenty-eighth chapter of First Samuel, the fifteenth and sixteenth verses.

"And Samuel said to Saul, Why hast thou disquieted me, to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do. Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?"

There are many sad things in this world. There is no use for anyone to tell you or preach that if you get right with God you will never have any more sadness, because there are many sad homes in this city and nation. There is sadness everywhere.

It is a sad thing to go to a home where one of the boys has departed from the parents. They do not know where he is, whether dead or alive. That is a sad home. It is a little worse it seems to me when one of the daughters has departed. They do not know where she is, but they know she is gone. No one ever hears from her. That is a sad home. But it is sadder yet to me to go into a home where the husband has departed from the wife and children. They do not know where he is. Children without a father and a wife without a husband. That is a sad home. It is a bit worse to go into a home where the mother has departed from her husband and children. They know they have not buried her, but they do not know where she is; they never hear from her. That is a very sad home. I have been in homes just like these I have been speaking of, where son, daughter, husband, or wife has departed, but this could hardly be compared to my text tonight.

Saul says, "I am sore distressed; for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more." He had no power against the enemy, they were beating him back. His men were falling and on top of this God had departed from him and he said, "God answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams." "Then Samuel said, "Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy?"

Now to me that is the saddest Scripture I have ever read, and the saddest testimony that could be given. This man Saul was no common man. He was well-born, he had good parents. It is a wonderful thing to be well-born and have good parents. This boy had been well reared. His father and mother could trust him away from home. He would do just exactly what they told him to. This young man

could be trusted by his parents. Not every young man can be sent on an errand by his parents and will carry it out as this young man did.

He was on an errand looking for his father's stock when he met the prophet Samuel on the mountain top. As he turned away the Lord gave him another heart. After this The Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he was turned into another man and prophesied, which means to "boil over." Saul was one of the finest characters that anyone ever read of; in fact, I have never been able to find one mark against this man's character even before he met the Lord. There are few people like that, against whom you cannot find one black mark, but you cannot find one against Saul in any place in his life. He was a moral man before he was converted, there was nothing against him. When Israel asked for a king, God had His eye on this fellow, for he was head and shoulders above any man in all Israel. They had asked for a king and God granted their request. He was anointed king, he had a band of men with him whose hearts had been touched by the Lord.

Saul was a humble man. They had to seek him out when they wanted to anoint him. He was not strutting and saying, "I am it." He was a great man but did not think he was anything great. The only thing that made him great was God. That is the only thing that makes anyone great -- to have God -- and if you and I could have seen Saul we would have thought he would never go back on God. But a message came to him, new light came to him, a very strange message came. God has some strange messages sometimes. God spoke to Samuel and told him he was to go and carry His message to Saul. He gave him the message and Samuel gave it to Saul just as God had given it to him. He did not alter or change the message. God said to go and destroy the Amalekites, high and low, rich and poor, fat cattle and lean cattle.

I wish I could show you this princely king sitting in his saddle with the reins in his hand, with his army of two hundred and ten thousand, with the horses chewing the bits, with their swords and their armor. We would think it would have taken a great army to capture this man and his crowd. We look for a great army to capture them, but a great army did not capture them. Sometimes while we are watching for big things and looking for the devil to come with horns and hoofs and a pitchfork, he will come as an angel of light.

Along came King Agag with a meek voice asking for mercy. God's man knew the message God had given him, that he should destroy that wicked king, but he sets him aside and spares him. He gets all the beautiful fat cattle and spares them, slaying the lean ones. Then he comes to the beautiful sheep with wool almost to the ground and he spares them and slays the lean. He puts the best cattle and sheep aside. During the night the Lord appeared to Samuel and told him exactly what Saul had done. When Saul saw Samuel, he said, "Good morning, Samuel, I have performed the commandments of the Lord." But he had not finished a lying testimony until Samuel heard something. He pointed his finger at Saul and said, "Saul, Saul, if you have performed the commandments of the Lord, give me a reason for the lowing of the oxen and the bleating of the sheep which I hear in my ears. If you obeyed God there would be no cattle to low, and no sheep to bleat."

Saul said, ""The people spared them and brought them back to give them as an offering to the Lord."

The old prophet looked him in the face and said, "Saul, obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Saul, you know what God wanted. It is not the smell of burned flesh of heifers and bulls and rams. What God wants is obedience. You have wilfully sinned against God."

Then Saul wanted to be honored. He said, "Yes, I have sinned but honor me before the people. Do not let the people find out I sinned."

This is exactly what the majority in the churches of today are doing; they want to be honored, they want to be put up before others, they want someone to palaver over them, but God and God's people are not in that job. I believe that 98 per cent of you believe that if King Saul had repented in sackcloth and ashes and gone back to God, that God would have forgiven him and restored him. He told Samuel he had sinned but he did not confess his sin to God. Instead of repenting and coming back to God, what did he do? Let us follow him:

He goes farther and farther away from God. Read your Bible. There is no sin too deep for a man or woman to go into when they start away from God. There was a time when I was surprised at certain things people did, but I am not surprised any more. When they lose God (and no man or woman after facing God's truth and refusing to go with God, is going to live very long on the same plane of morals as he or she has lived in the past) you never know what they will do. You can get an automobile and start the motor running. It will run along for a little while by itself but it was never made to run without intelligence behind the steering wheel. A small pebble in the road will change the entire course of an automobile, and the bridge or precipice is never too high for the car to jump over when intelligence has left the steering wheel. You may run along a little while, my friends, but you were never made to run alone. If you refuse to let Him steer your life, the precipice is never too high for you to go over when God is not at the wheel. There is no sin too awful nor too great, nor too deep for a man or a woman to go into when they break with God and refuse to come back to Him. God help us! I do not say that in carelessness, for I mean I want God to help us.

Listen, I used to wonder, and I had reasons for it, some people know I did, why some commit suicide. I do not wonder any longer for I believe I have solved the problem. When twenty-three to twenty-five thousand people commit suicide every year (ninety-four millionaires committed suicide in one year; sixty-six preachers committed suicide in one year) it is about time we were investigating. Some say, "Oh well, it is financial embarrassment," but millionaires are not in that condition.

Some time in your life you have been tempted to put an end to everything. You can say what you please, there are not very many people but what have been tempted to commit suicide. You ask, is that a sin? It is no sin to be tempted. The sin is in yielding to temptation. There is a devil in this world. I knew it before I knew there was a God. I knew nothing about the Holy Spirit. I did not know the Holy Ghost had ever withdrawn from anybody, I had never been told about it. I knew something had tempted me and said, "Jump in the river. Take a revolver and blow your brains out. Take a drug." I had these temptations come and I do know, too, there was another influence that said, "Don't do it." There was an unseen force working on me, striving with me. The temptation came to jump in the river, and then I was so impressed not to do it, and as long as the Holy Spirit is striving with a man or woman He will win out. I do not believe anybody ever drew a razor or a revolver and killed himself until after the Spirit had left him. I have run suicides down all over the nation, from Maine



to California, from New York to Mexico, from millionaires to paupers, from university professors to eighth-grade boys and girls. I have not found one, rich or poor, old or young, but what could be traced back to a place where the Holy Spirit dealt faithfully with them. If you can find one person that has taken his life and you cannot trace back to the place where he had an opportunity to find God, give me that man. I want him. No, you know tonight the time in your life when something bade you give up everything and then something said, "Don't do it."

You cannot keep saying "No" to Jesus Christ and keep putting Him off, for in due time He will go away and let that man or woman alone, saying, "Let them alone, they are joined to their idols." When the Holy Spirit is withdrawn, God will take His hand off and then when the temptation comes to throw yourself in the river, there is no Holy Spirit to say, "Don't do it." You are left to fight your own battles and you and I are too weak to fight a battle like that. May God help us and wake us up!

Look across here at the adjoining State, at Mr. B\_\_\_\_\_. I have been through his plant and it covers acres. He started with space not half as big as this platform, but it now extends over acres of floor space. He was as fine a looking man as I had seen. He was a multi-millionaire and had a godly wife, a praying woman who loved God. That woman prayed for him and loved him and did her best for him. He said, "It means too much! It costs too much to go with God." (That has been said to me this week, "I cannot do it, it means too much." It does not mean too much to go with God, but it means too much not to go. The cost is not too much to be a Christian, but it is too great not to be one.) This woman prayed on for her husband. He came in one day and said, "Wife, do you know I am tempted to commit suicide? I am tempted to use my revolver to blow my brains out. God is after me and I cannot give up."

Four or five years later he came in and said, "I have been keeping this a secret from you for several months; my heart is like stone and God has left me. I have crossed the dead line and I am not bothered any more."

She tried to pray but could not. He said, "I have lost all my love for you. I am going to divorce you, I am engaged to a young girl and we are going to get married and travel for I know what my doom will be after this life." He said, "Wife, I know the Bible is true, for it says the Spirit that strives with man will cease to strive, and He has ceased to strive with me."

The poor wife tried to reason with him but could not. He had the money and his godly wife did not fight in the court. He fought the thing through and got a divorce. I cannot tell you how long it was after that that he got married, either six days or six months, but he was on his way to California on his honeymoon in a short time. He had a beautiful suite of rooms and while awaiting for the boat to leave for the Orient (this wife had spent three thousand dollars in one day; that was not so much for a multi-millionaires's wife) he was left alone in his room with no godly wife to pray and no Holy Spirit to say, "Don't do it." The old tempter said, "Tie a string around your toe."

He tied the string around his toe, then the tempter said, "Tie the end around the trigger of your gun." He did, gave his foot a kick that blew his heart out. Back of that was opportunity after opportunity. But saying "No" to it, he was playing fast and loose with the Holy Ghost.

If someone like Samuel had gone to Saul and said, "Saul, you are going to turn to be a murderer and try to murder your own son-in-law David," Saul would never have believed it, for He loved David like his own children. But read your Bible. When they returned from battle and the women began rejoicing saying, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," jealousy rose up in Saul's heart and the jealousy turned to murder. He chased David by day and by night, across mountains and rivers and rocks and hills, to try to get close enough to stab him -- to kill the man he once loved.

Then if someone had gone to him and said, "Saul, you remember you were warned that you would turn to be a murderer, but I am going to give you another final warning; if you do not repent and come back to God, down in the years to come you are going to wake up when it is too late," no doubt Saul would have said, "Horrors! Horrors! Never! If my thinking faculties and reasoning powers are as good as they ever were, I could never do a thing like that." But no one knows what he will do when he turns God down and refuses to serve Him. Some historians say twenty and some thirty, but somewhere between twenty and thirty years after this, Saul began to wake up. He said, "I have played the fool; I have erred exceedingly. The Philistine army is making war against me.

This was bad, but God had departed from him and Saul said, "He answereth me no more."

Saul begged someone to kill him. When he refused, he fell upon his own sword and put out his spark of life. This man, if he had obeyed God and repented of his backsliding, would have gone down in history as one of the greatest men that ever lived. I would rather play fast and loose with the Kaiser in the year of 1917 than to play fast and loose with the Holy Ghost. Hosea said for us not to pray for certain people. "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone."

Jesus looking over Jerusalem wept saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Where is your house? Not where you sleep and eat! It is this temple. You do not see me, you only see the house I am living in, and the most desolate being that lives on this earth is the man or woman, boy or girl, whom the Holy Spirit has left forever.

Christ invited them to come to the feast; all things were ready. They began to make excuses. One said, "I have bought a farm," and another said, "I have bought some oxen, and one said, "I have married a wife." They asked to be excused. What did Christ say? "Not one of these men that were bidden shall taste of the supper."

What did He do? He excused them and excused them forever. You know, my friends, God does not need you and me to run this world. He ran the church before you and I were born; He can do it if we drop out now. He does not need us to run Heaven, but we are going to have an awful time one of these days if we are without Him. It cannot be long, it may be soon. No scientist, or philosopher, or preacher, or physician knows how soon we are going to have to meet God. We are within three heart beats of eternity. We do not know the moment our heart will give the last click and someone

will fold our hands and the cold death-damp will stand out on our foreheads. When our heart fails to pump the blood to the ends of our toes and fingers we are going to wake up when it is too late.

Right here in your beautiful State of Ohio a few years ago a very striking incident took place in a certain city. I have been in that city five times and I am going back again in a couple or three weeks. I have had some glorious revivals there. In one of my meetings on Sunday night the church was packed and the galleries were filled, and after preaching I went back to speak to a nice looking gentleman. He said, "No, Mr. Fleming, not me."

Something seemed to stop me and I went back to the platform. Some one said, "Brother Fleming, do you know the man you were talking to?"

I did not. I was told, "That man tells the people that eighteen years ago in one of the Methodist churches in the city, when he was twenty-two years of age, during a revival, when they rose to sing he was standing by a young lady and felt that he should go to the altar and get saved. He had been dealt with many times; the Spirit had been faithful to him, but when he was thinking the matter over the last night of the meeting, this young lady touched him with her arm and began to make slighting remarks about the altar. He said, 'I never moved a muscle that I know of, but I decided in my heart and mind that I would not go, and when I did, I felt something was gone.' "

I watched that man the following week and the last Sunday night I went away back through the Sunday School room under the galleries and found him in one of the ladies' class rooms. I took hold of his arm and said, "My friend, I have come after you."

He said, "After me? Do you know me? Did anybody tell you?"

I had to tell him the truth. He said, "There is no use for you to come after me." and he went on to tell me how for eighteen years at no time had the Holy Ghost ever spoken to him. He said, "I buried my mother and there was not a tear. I buried my sister and there was not a tear. I got married and have buried two babies and there was not a tear. I have never had a tear since. My heart has been like a stone for eighteen years." He said, "I am gone."

I asked him to come up on the platform and tell the congregation what he told me. He said he was not a public speaker, but I told him it would make a tremendous impression on the people. I told him a lot of people did not believe the Bible, and he said he would go. The place was packed so this was not done in a corner. He followed me down through the crowd. There were some thirty at the altar then. He began to tell his story but he never finished. The folk came from all parts of the church and gallery to the altar. We took eighty-five Christians out of the center of the building and filled it with seekers, and they began to fill the aisles until every aisle was filled with seekers to the door.

The Lord said, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," but there was a man telling his own testimony -- telling the people that he had crossed the dead line and the Spirit did not speak to him any more and had not for eighteen years.

We had to rush off that night to get a train for California. This was not some preacher telling an experience he had read about, but it was a man telling his own experience and not asking anyone to pray for him. but he said that the Holy Spirit had left him.

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 9

### ABIDING IN CHRIST

(Message to Students by Bona Fleming)

I am going to read a few verses tonight from a very familiar part of the Bible -- the fifteenth chapter of John, verses 1-11.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full."

The eleventh verse of this chapter says, "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." This is not my text but it is a good one. You find the person that has no joy and you have found a powerless person. You find a person with joy and you have found a person with power; for the "joy of the Lord is your strength." You may be a physical giant but not a spiritual one. Find a person that never smiles, never praises the Lord, and you will find a powerless person.

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

If Jesus were to preach today as He did while He was here upon earth, and if He used the same illustrations and got points from the same source, they would say that He could not preach. He did not tell us anything about the planets or the stars. He could have, but He preferred to get right down to earth for His illustrations.

He was going along one day and He told His disciples to stop. He preached them a sermon about the sower going forth to sow. He went a little farther and saw the sparrows flying overhead. He stopped again and preached to them about the sparrows. He said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father Fear ye not therefore, ye

are of more value than many sparrows." If your Heavenly Father takes care of the sparrows He will take care of you. He made them feel as though they were worth something.

A few steps farther on Jesus looked into the field and saw the lilies, and He preached another sermon to His disciples that the world has not got over.

Then He went a little farther and saw the sheep going into the door, and He stopped and preached a sermon about the sheep. He said, "Verily verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

He preached about the old hen and her chickens. If a man were to preach about chickens today they would say, "He is in the poultry business and that is all he knows about."

He could have taken His illustrations from the stars, the sun, and heaven, but the crowd would not have understood them. He preferred to talk about things of everyday life. They had been walking along where they saw rocks and the vines hanging down over them and they saw the fruit on the branches. He stopped them again. You see a branch has no power to bear fruit but the vine must bear the branch. The branch must bear the fruit. They all could see that. "Now," He said, "I am the true vine." That indicates there must have been a false vine that looked almost like the real vine. He said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." He told them they could do nothing without Him. He was showing them spiritual things.

David said, "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord: and in His law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season: his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

He said his leaves should not wither. Whether folk are going to pat us on the back or not, look cross-eyed at us, push us, or whether folk boost us, we have been planted by the rivers of living water.

When I was a little boy, we did not have Christmas trees as we have now. They usually had one large tree in the church. The first one that I remember seeing was when I was just two years, five months, and twenty days old. It was in a country church and there was the green tree on the platform. We had those beautiful cedars in our yard which looked like the Christmas tree. This tree had all kinds of fruit-apples, oranges, grapes, bananas, etc., hanging on it. Later I found out that those things did not grow on Christmas trees. The usher took the fruit down the aisles and distributed it. The fruit was all borrowed. It grew in the far south where the snow never comes and the icicles never hang over the roof of the house. It was all tied on.

Now you know many people are like that. They are just tied on, as far different from being a part of the true vine as this fruit on the cedar tree. People can borrow. They learn how to testify and shout and pray and how to conduct themselves, and how to sing and how to lead singing and preach, and do all of that without the Spirit. Just a lot of people have a good memory and they know nothing

about walking with the Lord. Perhaps they attend good spiritual services often and hear people testify and pray so much that they can imitate to the very tone of the voice. This is a true Christmas-tree experience. But we want something more than that.

Many go to the store and buy a new piece of furniture. Some will look like walnut, others like maple, but you look only at the veneer. You find caskets that cost two and three hundred dollars, but if you could see them made -- see the rotten pieces of wood and worm-eaten boards they put in those caskets -- you would not think you were getting so much for your money. It is the same way with religion. We are satisfied with almost anything today.

My mother used to plant flowers around the porch so that they would climb up on the porch and keep the afternoon sun out. When the sun went down at night and the dew fell, the flowers would open up. They were morning-glories. You never saw a morning-glory in full bloom at twelve o'clock noon because under the heat of the sun the morning-glory closes up. What causes it? It has no depth. The hot sun would kill it.

There are a lot of people like that. They get up in the morning, wash their face in cold water and fix themselves up and feel quite religious, but feeling religious and being a branch of the True Vine is altogether a different thing. Under the pressure and crushing influence and tests of the day they go down as they have no depth.

Then we have another flower called the four o' clock. It never blossoms until after four in the afternoon because it has not depth. It comes out after sunset and stays open all night.

There is another one called the touch-me-not. There are touch-me-nots all around us -- touch-me-not, for if you touch me I will go to pieces and there will be something doing.

We were out visiting and my brother's little girl was with us. The lady had flowers all around the porch. The little daughter stepped off the porch and picked some of the flowers. She came and said, "Touch it." We went to touch it and it fell all to pieces. She said, "That is a touch-me-not."

We have plenty of those around us, but we want something better than that. We have another called the snap-dragon.

There are some people who talk about others, find fault about them and talk about them behind their backs. If you have something to say, say it to their faces; do not be guilty of snapping at them behind their backs.

On one of my trips I stopped in a depot in St. Paul, Minnesota. I had a few hours to wait and was walking around in the station. I saw a nice looking man with his wife and two children. He was smoking a cigarette in the depot, which he had no right to do. I watched him as he stepped up to the window and bought his ticket. He had a clergy book but he was smoking a cigarette. I was thinking that I preached against cigarettes. Just then something said, "Why not go to him face to face?"

I did. I said to him, "Why don't you give your wife and daughter and little son a cigarette, then you could all smoke together?"

He said, "Man, are you crazy?" Do you think I want my wife and little children to smoke cigarettes? How can you speak to me like that?"

I said, "I see you are a preacher. I saw you take your clergy book out there by the window."

He said, "I am. Who are you?"

I told him it did not matter who I was. He said, "Where I preach all the men smoke cigarettes."

I told him he was a minister and should be an example to those to whom he preached. His wife was nodding her head to all I said and seemed to agree with me. He said, "Man, you have no right to talk to me like this."

I told him I had already talked to him. He walked around, still smoking. Directly he stepped out the door, and when he came back he came and sat by me and said, "Where are you from, and who are you?"

I told him my name and my occupation. He said that he never had a man talk to him like that. He said, "I got angry and thought you had no business to do so. You are the first man who ever spoke that way to me. I went outside and cleaned my pockets of all the tobacco. I told the Lord I would never smoke another cigarette while I live."

I helped that man by going to his face. Do not go around to people's backs talking about them, but go to their face. I believe what I am preaching.

We have another plant called the everlasting plant. It is a beautiful little plant. A lot of folk believe in that and they call it "Everlasting Security," but it has been known to die. We have something different. What is it? It is called the old-fashioned rose.

I found this rose in a flower book in my home. It said that the old-fashioned rose was hard to find. I went to the library to find why it is so hard to find. The book said this -- "It does not have to be watered, you can walk over an old-fashioned rose and its fragrance will be upon you wherever you go." It does not seem to care whether it rains or not, whether it is planted in Arizona or New Mexico where nothing grows but jack-rabbits and sagebrush, its roots go down to find the water. It will never stop with shallow underground streams, it goes on down and strikes the hidden rivers that never run dry. One of those roses had roots which were found eighty feet beneath the surface. It went after water and got it. It had touched a hidden spring that the morning-glory, the four-o'clock and the touch-me not knew nothing of. This may be why the old-fashioned rose is so hard to find. They have taken this rose and grafted on to it and put it in hot-houses until it has been made much more beautiful than before, but it lost its fragrance, and the fragrance of the rose is the soul of the rose.



I have walked through many gardens of flowers in this nation. They looked beautiful but they had lost their old-fashioned fragrance. We can live on the surface and go to church and instead of going on down and striking the hidden springs, we are satisfied with something less. God wants us to get the old-fashioned fragrance in our souls.

I was reading about some girls who, as they walked down on the farther side of the street, the perfume from them reached to the other side. They were not trying to send out the fragrance; they were not conscious of the fragrance. The girls worked in a perfume factory where the windows and doors were closed and their clothing and hair were saturated with perfume and the fragrance filled the air. I believe God can so fix us that we will not need to have a sign on to tell folk who we are, but there will be a spiritual fragrance in our lives that will make folks recognize we have learned of Him and that He dwells within.

I was in a large city and picked up the Saturday paper, as I always do, and looked over the subjects the preachers were using for Sunday morning. I read the subject of a preacher who had seventeen hundred members. What do you think his subject was? "Better Streets for the City." Later, I inquired what he preached on and was told that he preached on street improvement. Now you bring in a blind man or blindfolded person and let him listen. Ask the blind man where he is, and he would think he was listening to the Mayor making a speech to the Council. But you bring a man in God's house and with God's man in the pulpit and God's people in the pews, and he will not be there long until he will be sensible of an old-fashioned fragrance. Someone will praise the Lord. Someone will say Amen. Many people will not be able to understand.

I was up in the north a few years ago, where the snow was deep, and they were coming to church in sleds. One man came to me and said, "I want you to go home with me for dinner." I told him I would like to go to the farm, but I was afraid I would catch cold riding so far.

He said, "I will put you on a feather bed, cover you with blankets, and you will not even smell the cold."

I told him all right, I would go. He did just as he said he would do. After dinner we got to talking about the farm. He said, "Let's go out to the barn." It was a big barn with horses and cows and sheep. On one side of the barn was a big tank and water was just rolling into the tank. "Where does this come from?" I asked.

"Down in the field I have an artesian well."

"Let's go down and see it."

He said, "The snow is deep. It will be drifted in and we will be up to our knees."

I told him I did not care, we would go down there.

He said, "All right, since you are determined we will go."

He took a large wrench and down through the field we went to the artesian well. He took the big wrench and unscrewed the cap and the water shot up fourteen feet in the air. The snow all around and the water going up into the air made it look like a million diamonds. It got hold of me and I said, "Brother, that is what I have in my soul."

"What do you mean, Brother Fleming?"

"I mean what I say."

He said, "You will have to explain that."

"I mean there is a well in my heart."

He said, "Man, I never heard anybody talk such stuff as that."

You read it over and over in the Bible. In the fourth of John what does it say? You remember when Christ's disciples were gone to the city and He was tired and sat down by the side of the well, and the woman came to draw water? He told her that if she would drink of the water from that well, she would thirst again, but if she would drink of the water of life she would never thirst, but it would be in her a well of water springing up unto everlasting life. She got the well and then went back to the city and many believed on Him through her testimony. Jesus used this figure of the well -- not a pump, nor a pond, but a well of water springing up.

I was down in Texas preaching, and one day a man took me to a river. He tried to show me that no bottom had been found. He said he did not know where it came from, the whirling, whirling pool. If a person placed anything dead in it, it would whirl it away; it would not keep anything dead around it. I said, "That is what I have in my soul."

He said, "Where do you get that?"

I told him in the Bible. John speaks of rivers of living water. He said that all believers should have rivers of living water. When a sinner repents he gets a well of living water; when the believer is sanctified the Scriptures say, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

Isaiah said, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." This was under the law. The water had to be drawn, but Jesus said the well would spring up, and when the Holy Ghost comes in the river will flow out.

The oil men in Oklahoma drilled a little deeper a few years ago and struck such a gusher of oil that it blew the machinery out and threw oil into the air for eleven days, and sprayed people's houses and farms for miles and miles around.

The reason people fail to get a gusher today is because they do not go deep enough. Brother, there is a gusher coming. You can have it tonight. All the people in the world cannot keep you from striking a gusher, if you will go deep enough. You do not have to wait, you can have it tonight. Look up to God, and tell Him you are not going to stop until you strike the hidden streams of living water that He wants to put in your heart. Don't you want it? Don't you want to strike the hidden river? Don't you want to be a branch of the Living Vine? He will come to your soul and start the birds to singing and the flowers to blooming. Will you accept Him?

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 10

### THE WONDERFUL CHRIST

(Sermon by John Fleming)

I am going to read a few verses of Scripture from the second chapter of Titus, the eleventh through the fourteenth verses

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

In this great Book that I hold in my hand (and there is no book like it in all the world), there are chapters, words, letters, promises, and warnings. I am going to take just two letters out of it for my text, "He." "That he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

We look back over centuries and we find that when angels fell and went down, there was no way whereby they could ever get back; but we find that when man fell. God met him with a promise: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head."

The people began to look to see if they could not find the One that was coming to deliver them, to bring them back. When different children were born, they thought each was the proper child. They thought Moses was the one. Moses made so much noise at three months of age that they had to hide him. Some folk have been converted for three years and no one has found it out yet. But Moses was not that one.

Job had a vision of Him and looked down over centuries, when his friends and wife and everyone had left him, and said, "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." Thank God! There are some things we can know.

I did not know Abraham Lincoln. I never knew George Washington. I was not acquainted with Hoover. I was never acquainted with Roosevelt, but I know Jesus. Praise the Lord! I never had a president in my home; I never received a letter from one, but we have some wonderful letters from our Saviour.

Isaiah stepped on the scene and said, "Lord, I am a man of unclean lips." He got a vision of himself before he looked at anyone else. Do not get the idea everyone else is backslidden. Thousands

upon thousands would be willing to lay their heads on the block this afternoon for Jesus Christ, if necessary. I find good people all up and down the country. If you want to get a vision of a fellow full of mistakes, do not look at others; look in the glass before you go to church, and you will see a man with many of them.

Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." The Lord said he would fix him up. So He sent an angel down to the altar and he took a coal of fire from off the altar and touched the lips of Isaiah and he shouted out and said, "Here am I; send me." God sent him with a burning message, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:6.

Talk about shouting over a ball game, praise God, I am getting ready to shout right now. If ever the name of Jesus becomes dull to me, I am going to be a seeker for salvation. There is power in Jesus' name.

Many of you have heard this. I heard it while just a young man. Dr. Carradine traveled all the way from the far east, rushing to the bedside of his friend in the west. The physician in charge of the case said, "Doctor, he will never speak again. He does not know a thing that is going on around him."

Dr. Carradine went and stood by the side of the bed and looked down at his friend, and said, "Do you know me?"

There was no response. Dr. Carradine went away and cried. Then he came back again and this time he said, "B\_\_\_\_\_, O B\_\_\_\_\_, this is Dr. Carradine. I have come all the way from the far east to see you. If you cannot speak just lift your hand or make some sign." But no sign was given.

The others said, "He will never speak again."

After a while Dr. Carradine came back. The death rattle was in the man's throat and the dew was on his forehead, and Dr. Carradine said, "B\_\_\_\_\_, do you know Jesus?" His hand went up.

I say that there is power in Jesus' name. I would give everything I have and everything I ever expect to have, if I could bring out what is in me. Bless His dear name forever!

I will have to come down to Malachi the last prophet of the Old Testament, the one who preached very hard on some lines. He preached hard on folk paying one tenth of their income. I want to tell you something. If you ever get in trouble in a meeting and cannot keep them from shouting, get up and preach on the tenth and you will have order in three minutes. Malachi said, "But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." Malachi 3:2, 3.

But he was not the One.

We see the people in the time of John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, standing on the banks of the Jordan when he thundered out the truth. They had never heard such preaching, but John was not the One. Then one day John threw up his hands and said, "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." John was not the One. He was the forerunner. He cleared the rubbish out of the way.

Then the angel came down and said, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

All right, we have Him here now, and I am going to go to preaching. He is a wonderful preacher. Someone said, "Who is the greatest preacher you know of?"

I have heard some get in the brush and never get out, but I tell you the greatest preacher that I know of. It is the man or woman who gets Jesus Christ in the heart and lives salvation, and believes it, and shouts it. They may be in the pulpit, the home, or the cornfield. They have what the world is dying to see. The world is not dying to hear me preach. They are dying to see us take off our hats and live what we profess. God wake us up!

He is a wonderful preacher. I will tell you why I love His preaching. He comes down where we can get hold of Him. All you have to do is to read the Sermon on the Mount and you understand it. A sixteen-year-old boy could understand it. He puts the cookies down on the lower shelf where we can all get them.

When Bona and I were little boys down in Kentucky, mother used to make those little sweet cakes, and Bona and I used to steal them. One Saturday she baked a dishpan full and put them on the old safe and covered them over with a tablecloth, and she said, "We are having company tomorrow and I do not want you boys to eat them all."

We were playing outside, and Bona told me to go in and see if I could get some. So I went in and climbed up, but I could not reach them. The tears began to roll down over my cheeks. When my mother saw the tears, she reached up and got the dishpan and pulled off the old tablecloth and said, "Help yourself."

She put them on the lower shelf. Now, the point I want to get to is this -- I love His preaching because He came down on our level. He could have preached about the sun, the stars, the heavens, the golden streets, and the angels, but we would not have understood much about those things. He came down on a level where we are living.

Jesus came down the highway one day and said, "Do you see those vines?" Then He began to preach to them about the grapevines. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." The vine does not bear the fruit, but the branches bear the fruit, and God expects every man and woman under the sound of my voice to be fruit bearers.

But He did not stop there. He went on farther and said, "Do you see those flowers?"

But He did not stop there. He went farther and saw a flock of sheep and goats, and said that some day the Shepherd would put all the sheep on the right hand and all the goats on the left. Do not get mad at me, but there never was a sheep that chewed tobacco. What I have said, I have said. Let it go. There never was a sheep known to eat tobacco, but the goats will eat it. Some day God is going to divide the sheep from the goats; the sheep to the right hand and the goats to the left.

Then Jesus came farther down the road and He began to talk about the chicken that put Peter under conviction. Think about the Son of God taking illustrations from the vine, the sheep and the goats to bring out His point. He was not only a great preacher, but He was a great teacher.

Before I was saved, down in the hills of old Kentucky, I never looked inside the Bible but once. I said, "There is no God. I do not believe in the Sunday School. Away with the church!" But I met Jesus Christ and He saved me and I bought a Bible. I didn't know Genesis from Revelation, but I began to read and pray and talk to my wonderful Teacher. I have been able to make it so far. A wonderful teacher! I have had Jesus Christ to teach me, Brother Smith. He will teach you how to pray. He will teach you how to pay.

I had better fix that up a little. A man said the other day, "Put that fellow down. He owes me some money."

I said, "If you are going to put him down for owing money, we will have to shut the whole bunch up."

I would like to see the fellow out of debt stand up. (No one stood.) Pretty good! If you cannot pay your debts, shout on. Do not let the devil whip you; but if you can pay and will not, keep still. He will tell you how to pray. That does not mean that you will pray at somebody either. Every prayer like that needs to be thrown in the scrap basket. Some will not tell a fellow to his face, but they will get down and pray at him.

Brother Shelhamer said something about getting a baptism of love. I walked down the aisle, going out of here, and said, "There isn't anyone I do not love." You need not think that everybody pats me on the back and says, "Goody, goody." They have knifed me and tried to kill me, but I am up. Praise God forever! The best thing in the world to fight with is love.

A man called me up a few years ago and said, "Where are you going to preach tomorrow?"

I told him and he said, "All right but be prepared to take a whipping."

I said, "Where?"

He said, "Right in the church."

I asked another man if he could not do something, but he said he would whip me as sure as the world. I stayed on my knees and said, "Lord, what shall I do?"

He said, "What have you been preaching over the country?"

I said, "Holiness, and I will go down there and preach holiness."

As soon as I said that, every burden lifted. The man came to the meeting with a package; threw it on the floor. It was the man that was going to whip me. He said, "Pray for me. I have been in hell all night."

I fell by his side and prayed for him. God answered and set him free. He went over and grabbed the package and when he unwrapped it, it was a big ham of meat. He said he could not sleep. Something kept ringing in his ears, "Go get John Fleming to pray for you and take him a ham of meat."

I got him converted and got a good night's sleep, and got a good ham of meat in the bargain, and he is one of my best friends in the country.

This great Teacher teaches you how to love people and how to love your wife. He will tell you how to keep your hands off other men's wives. I am going to say this and I want you women to shout me through. I have traveled all over this nation preaching the Gospel and I can say, with God's Book in my hand, there has never been but one woman who ever tried to flirt with me, and I sang, "Jesus Lover of My Soul." Ninety-nine out of a hundred women will stay in their place if the men will stay in theirs. I am not lifting up John Fleming or anybody else, but I am lifting up a Saviour who can keep you anywhere this side of the gates of hell, if you will let Him. I am off my text a little but God knows I am close to my audience now. I know exactly where I am. A wonderful Teacher!

He could perform miracles, and the days of miracles are not past. The people said Bona and I were all right when we got converted, if we would hold out, but when we got sanctified they said, "The boys are all right, if they will just hold in."

Bless the Lord, I am not going to hold in. Thank God, there are some places where we can turn loose. It is the ground where we are now standing. Talk about getting the world converted. If somebody shouts they say, "Shut up." The poor saints have been set on until they are afraid to shout.

A man in my town said to me, "If I go down to that big church and shout, what will they do?"

I said, "Turn you loose."

He said, "I am going if they will turn me loose."

They would have a hard time keeping this crowd down. Let us take our freedom.

Folk are talking about the days of miracles being over, and they point to Divine healing, but the greatest miracle Christ ever performed was when He went down in the muck and mire and pulled out some sinner, took the devil out of him, filled him with the Holy Ghost, and led him like a lamb.



I have caught the devil in a lie. He was in my room a while ago and I had a fight over this service. I knew there would be thousands here this afternoon, and the devil came right to me and said, "I will give you the chase of your life."

And I said, "You old split-foot, get back in the pit where you belong!"

That's exactly what I said to him in my room on my knees. and I felt him leave. And I heard a voice say, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

I said, "Blessed Jesus, if you are with me, I am going."

The days of miracles are not past. Christ could perform miracles while on earth. He touched a fellow's eyes and he saw men as trees walking. He touched them again and he saw clearly. Christ walked out miles into the sandy desert and spoke the words of life. He met a funeral procession coming down the road and He touched the dead body and gave the son back to his mother. He met a man with a withered hand and He said, "Put your hand out," and his hand was whole. The sea was raging one night and they went down and told the Saviour, and He came up on deck and said. "Sea, lie down!" I can see in my imagination the disciples take off their hats and say, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

Hurrah for Jesus Christ! (Great shouting in the crowd.) If they want to hurrah over a ball game they can do it, but I am shouting over a living Saviour. If they want to hurrah over beer, they can, but I am drinking from the fountain that never runs dry. Praise God! They say, "Beer and good times!" Yes, beer and hell on earth!

I have gone for years over this country and I have seen more drunkenness in the last ten months than I have in years. People are saying prohibition is a failure. I say it is not a failure. I know what I am talking about. I will fight the devil. You folk ought to shout over that -- the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire will take the politics out of you.

I was near Philadelphia some time ago holding a meeting. I saw the first football game of my life. I could see the field from the window of my room, so I said to myself, "I am going to see what this is like."

I pulled my chair up before the window and sat there long enough to see them carry off three men like dead people. One mother was hysterical, sobbing and crying over her boy. That crowd whooped and yelled and shouted, and I heard that there were a dozen preachers there shouting with them. Then if John Fleming gets to shouting a little someone will say it is wildfire and fanaticism. I am not afraid of that. I am afraid of formalism. Let that soak in good!

Christ died of a broken heart. My sins and the sins of the world came on Him. He was the poorest of men, the poorest man that ever traveled a dirt road. He had not even a Ford. We see Him riding on a borrowed colt. One time He got His breakfast from a fig tree, His dinner from a cornfield. He said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." He was born in a stable; died on a cross; buried in a borrowed tomb. They had no

need to build one for Him. He needed it only three days. He died to make you and me rich, "Having nothing, yet possessing all things." Praise His name forever!

There are three hundred names in the Bible for Him. If you are among the rocks, He is the Rock of Ages; if you are among the sheep, He is the Shepherd; if you are among the lions, He is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah; if you are among the lilies, He is the Lily of the Valley; if you are among the roses, He is the Rose of Sharon; if you are standing gazing at the stars, He is the Bright and Morning Star; if you are thirsty, He is the Water of Life; if you are hungry, He is the Bread of Life; if you need comforting He will comfort; if you need a friend, He is "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" if you need a brother, He is a Brother; if you need one to bless you; He will bless you. Praise God! If you want one to come after you, He will come after you one of these days. (About 3,000 people were shouting at this time.)

I feel this afternoon like the little boy who slipped off from home and went to the river, swimming. He was going down but he had his little hand up saying, "Help! Help!"

The crowd threw ropes but he missed them all. He was going down and all they could see was the tips of his fingers. He came up again and said, "Help!"

A man threw a board and when the board went past him he took hold of it. The man drew the little boy to shore and said, "Sonny, let's go home."

The boy picked up the board and said, "I will never let it go. I will never let it go."

The man said, "Sonny, you are all right now," but the little boy said, "When I was sinking and going down the last time, the board reached me and was my savior. I will never let it go."

When I was sinking and about all they could see of John Fleming was the tips of his fingers, and my mother said, "He will never be saved," and my only sister said, "He is going to be lost and will never be saved," and the crowd gave me up, I said, "Help! Help!" And the Man of Galilee came to my rescue and I am here this afternoon. I am going to keep Him. I would not let Him go for all the world. He was my Saviour when I was going down the last time. Thank God! He will save you and sanctify you and keep you. He died of a broken heart. They put the meanest accusations in His face they ever put before any man; they said, "You have saved others, yourself you cannot save." He looked down over centuries and saw you and me on a hellward march -- tramp, tramp, tramp. He said, "I will cling to the cross." He was there six hours, spoke seven times, and said thirty-four words. He prayed one short prayer and said, "Lord, forgive them." Another time He said, "I thirst." Another time the crowd was gathered around Him and He hung His head and said, "It is finished."

"It is finished." There was a place from then on, and we do not need to go down. But wait a minute! As I said, they took Him down and put Him in the new, borrowed tomb. He was there thirty-six or thirty-seven hours. It was about five o'clock in the morning and the sun came over the hill and the angel rolled away the stone. Christ came out conqueror of death, hell and the grave. He said, "I am he that was dead, but am alive for evermore." I am not serving a dead Christ, but a living one. He is living in me. "The life that I now live I live by the faith of the Son of God."

The first word He ever spoke after He arose, was "Mary." Has He ever called you out?

Every evangelist has heard this -- many times away from home I have been so lonesome I thought I would die. I would go to bed and try to go to sleep, but I could not. I have had Him speak to me and say, "John." I have slept with this Book on my heart and said, as I would to my wife, "Good-night, Jesus." I have heard Him speak so clearly to me, "Go on, I am pleased with you." I would rather have Him speak to me than to have all the world.

One day Peter and John went out to sea in a boat, and Peter said, "John, who is that?"

John said, "It is the Lord."

Peter said, "If it is the Lord, I am going to Him." He started out and as long as he kept his eyes on Jesus, he was all right. He prayed a short prayer and Jesus saved him. It is not the long prayers that get you through, but the quick surrender.

Once He led them out and blessed them. The law of gravity was changed. He started up above their heads and above the trees and the clouds, and they stood there looking. Then two men came down who said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

I do not know when He is coming. The thing to do is to get ready for His coming. If He comes now, I am ready -- prayed up and blessed up.

I was in a plant some time ago where automobiles are made. It took me five hours to go through. It was late in the afternoon when I came out. I saw something go over the top and down into the yard, and something on the ground began to leave, and I said, "What is that?"

The guide said, "that is a big crane."

I said, "I knew that, but something on there has tremendous power."

He said, "That's a magnet, and when it comes down the pure steel leaps to it, and then it comes back after another load. And," he said, "that thing has such power that steel that has been buried for months will come out of the ground and leap to it."

I said, "Glory to God! I see it now."

He said, "See what?"

I said, "That is exactly what my Saviour is going to do one of these times. He is coming down and He has such power that the sod will split, the tombstones will fly and the coffin lids will come off, and the saints of God are coming out."

Praise God! You cannot keep them down. They are going to come out. We that remain on the earth will be changed before you can wink your eye and we will be carried away. Do you want to go?

A friend of mine was invited out to dinner one day, and when he made his appearance at twelve o'clock they said, "We meant six o'clock."

Of course, he was raised in the country and did not know any better. They call it breakfast, lunch, and dinner, but I am going to call it breakfast, dinner and supper. A man gets his breakfast after he comes through the night. I had been converted and now I had had my breakfast; but it was not long until got hungry, but I did not get a lunch, I got the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. That was my dinner. So I know I have had my breakfast and dinner, and now I am waiting for the trumpet to sound and then I can go to the marriage supper of the Lamb. (Great shouting in the congregation.)

Are you going to be ready? "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Have you a holy heart? There will not be Methodist or Baptist or Presbyterian, or Nazarene, or some holiness church, but the holy in heart. I am not going to put anyone to the test, but just ask you if you have had your breakfast? Have you had your dinner -- the baptism of the Holy Ghost? I will ask everyone that wants to be saved or sanctified to stand to your feet. (Between one hundred and fifty and two hundred rushed to the altar of prayer.)

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

**CHAPTER 11**

**PRAYER**

(Radio Message by Bona Fleming)

I was speaking at seven o'clock, on Prayer, and I think I will take the same text: Luke 11:1.

"Lord, teach us to pray." The disciples were making this request of the Lord, to teach them to pray.

After the day of Pentecost, we find Peter and John speaking; you know prayer gave them boldness; they were speaking to the scribes and Pharisees and the priests in the temple. They were preaching Jesus and the resurrection from the dead. The rulers put them in prison until the next day: "And it came to pass on the morrow, that their rulers, and elders and scribes were gathered together." Peter and John were in Jerusalem, "And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole: Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole." (For the sick man who was lame from birth went leaping and praising God in the Temple.) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

What greater thing could have been said concerning them? "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus."

"But when they had commanded them to go aside out of the council, they conferred among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath been done by them is manifest to all them that dwell in Jerusalem; and we cannot deny it. But that it spread no further among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name. And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, Judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

They are the things that have been taught us through Him; we knew Him before He died; we have met Him in His resurrected body; He let us put our hands in His side and our hands felt the nail-prints in His hands; we heard Him speak in His glorified body there on the Mount, before He

went away; He blessed us and told us to go and tarry in the city of Jerusalem until we were endued with power from on high; we obeyed the command and we were in the upper room when the fire fell -- "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

"So when they had further threatened them, they let them go, finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people; for all men glorified God for that which was done. For the man was above forty years old on whom this miracle of healing was shewed. And being let go, they (Peter and John) went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is ... And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word."

No, they did not say they were sorry that God caused the man to leap and praise Him, but they asked to be made more bold -- "By stretching forth thy hand to heal; and that signs and wonders, may be done by the name of thy holy child, Jesus."

Thank God, that signs and wonders are still being done when men and women pray and believe God! Praise His name forever! "And when they prayed." Who prayed? They were not God's angels; it was not the Lord praying, but they prayed to the Lord. We say prayers at times, but do not pray; most of us, when we pray, simply talk into the air. The Word says: "When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

When we get a crowd filled with the Holy Ghost, all praying and believing God, something is going to be shaken. Do you know what this old world needs? It is not larger churches, nor greater singing. We have the greatest leaders, the greatest preachers, the greatest singers and the greatest musicians the world has ever known. What we need is a good old shaking up; we need to pray until God comes and gives this nation one real shaking up before the Lord comes back. We believe it is possible; I believe that we ought to pray and believe God to that end.

This crowd the Bible talks about in the 4th chapter of Acts did not just say prayers; they put faith in their prayers; they held on until the heavens opened, until "the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." We go behind a curtain so many times and talk about the Lord as though we were ashamed of Him. We ought to pray until the Lord blesses with the fire from heaven, and until we can go out and preach the resurrection, the saving and sanctifying power of Jesus Christ, telling the world, "He is the same yesterday, and today, and forever."

I believe the heavens are just as full of revivals as they are of electricity; they are just as full as they ever were. We preach so much and pray about so much that the Lord cannot bless. I tell you, friends, God is on the giving hand. He wants to send a revival, a spiritual cyclone, a spiritual earthquake; God wants to bless this old nation and this old world and give it one more great revival. God help those who are listening in over the air: we ought to pray for an old-time revival, not just

a local one, but that God will send a world-wide revival of old-time religion. We ought all to lay aside our foolish notions and believe God!

I am talking to many preachers who are listening in. I pray that God will help you to go to your secret closet of prayer and wait on God until He anoints you with the Holy Ghost to speak the Word of God and not question it, but speak the Word of God with boldness as did Peter and John. The multitudes that believed were all one; they were not divided, they were of one soul. They had all things in common; they were not saying, "I like this person and I do not like the other one." We should get back on this Sabbath Day to worship God in the beauty of Holiness.

Yes, the apostles witnessed the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great grace was upon them all. We are satisfied with little grace, when God has more grace for us! I do not believe God is ever pleased when people are satisfied with a little grace when He has more grace to pour upon us, to get in through us, to get in our minds, our hearts, our muscles and our bones, and give us holy fire sent down from heaven, so that we will go out and speak the Word of truth until the crowd will know the grace of God is upon us.

We need a lot of things today; the nation needs a lot of things; the Red Cross needs millions of dollars; the Salvation Army needs money for the poor of the land, but the great need is that great grace be upon God's people all over the land. When God's grace comes upon His people, things change

I was in a home some time ago where there was an old gentleman and his wife. It was in the country. I was attending a camp meeting and went out on the hilltop with them and stayed all night there. The old gentleman was 72 and his wife was 79. We had an old-fashioned prayer meeting and then his wife thought of something she needed from the store. She walked to the old-fashioned telephone. It was not like those in the city, and she had to ring it three times -- two long and one short. She rang several times but there was no answer. She went back and washed her dishes and she rang again. She kept ringing and ringing, and I got interested in what she wanted. She went back to her work, picked up her broom, and swept out the kitchen, back porch and the walk about the house; she came back and rang again and again; but there was no response. She sat down and read a little while, then she rang again. I did not hear anybody speak to her; finally someone spoke at the other end of the line. She had been three-quarters of an hour, calling and calling. At last the party answered. She told her name; "This is Mrs. Z\_\_\_\_. Send me up a pound of butter, please," and then she hung up the receiver. I was reading, but it got me under conviction. I said, "O God, I pray a little and think I have accomplished great things, and expect the Lord to open the heavens and save half of the country." Here was this woman, working forty-five minutes to say, "Send me up a pound of butter, please."

Do you know that great things can be done in this day and age for people if we will pray and believe God like this woman worked for a pound of butter? Let us pray and believe God! God bless you, everyone!

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 12

### HOW I MET THE CHRIST

(Personal Testimony of Bona Fleming)

I am speaking this morning by request. A number of folks write in and ask for us to give some of our experience over the radio. But it would be impossible for us to go into detail very much this morning in the few minutes that we have.

While we never did kill anyone, never were arrested, never locked up, never fooled around with the bum crowd, we were sinners, as everyone else is who has not found the Lord. God knows how far away from Him we were! And how little we cared about the Church and the Sunday School or anything spiritual! In fact, we had never met anyone that was spiritual in all of our lives. We did not even know what conviction was, but the Lord spoke to Brother Hankes away over in Africa, and put it on his heart to come back to Kentucky to preach. He lives up in Ashland, Kentucky, now. He had known me from the day I was born, but he had moved away. He was saved and sanctified, and had been sent to Africa as a missionary. He had quite a battle over leaving Africa, to come back to Kentucky to preach. Every one told him he was making a mistake, but he obeyed God, even borrowed the money to return to America. He came out to our little town to make some pictures of his old home town. They asked him to preach and then they asked him to hold a meeting in one of the worldly churches. He preached until the people got under conviction.

I did not hear him at first, but heard the people talking about it. I became interested and went up. I never heard such preaching, or such singing! It was in the Holy Ghost! He uncovered sin and made cold chills go up and down my back, telling the people where they were going. I often said he just pulled the covers, blankets, sheets and all off, and stripped us and hung us up before the Lord. We thought someone had told him all the things we were doing; he hit us on every side. So Brother John and I made up our minds that we were going to whip him for talking about us publicly. We went down the street one night and hid in the alley; we were going to whip the preacher because we thought somebody had told him all about our lives. He did not call anybody's name, of course; he did not know about us. He came along down the street, walked by us and the Lord protected him; we stood there like dummies.

It was not long until the Lord got such a hold on us that my brother John got saved and my mother got saved. She was born and raised a Catholic, and her people were all Catholic. She got saved the first night she went to the meeting. She led my brother John to Christ that night. Of course her life was different from ours; she lived a good moral life.

I went to seeking the Lord. You know the Bible says that if you seek the Lord with all your heart, He will be found of you. Many good people seek the church, seek the preacher, go to the preacher,



shake his hand and have their names recorded on the church book, then the next morning go back to the world. I had been watching boys and girls many years, joining the church and being baptized, but there was no change in their lives whatsoever. But I saw my mother's life transformed by the power of God in a moment of time. I was with brother John night and day and saw that he was a new creature, that an unseen power had touched him and untied every knot that hell ever put on him!

The church folks, where we were raised, would talk about the Lord and say that He lived 1900 years ago, but they did not seem to know that He is living today. They acted as if He had moved away off somewhere. It is the people who have moved away from God. He is the same Christ who walked the shores of Galilee, who opened the blind eyes, unstopped the deaf ears, brought Lazarus out of the grave; the same Christ today and He wants to meet every sinner.

I did not get saved during the revival; I was alone in seeking the Lord; there was no revival on. The people said all there was to it was just join the church, be baptized and go on doing the best we could. But I told them that I was so disgusted with seeing that, that I was going to prove the Bible to be true, for it said: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." -- 1 John 1:9. This is the first Scripture that I ever looked up in the Bible. I was seeking the Lord day and night. I was out with a traveling salesman one afternoon, had put him out of the buggy and had started home. I put up my hands and told Christ that "Live or die, sink or swim, survive or perish," I was going through. I confessed to Him, told Him that I would straighten up with every man, woman, boy or girl that I had ever wronged. He knew I was telling the truth. Quick as a flash of lightning, the Christ of Calvary met me; the Man who wore the seamless robe came into my heart and broke the chains that bound me, cast away every fetter, set my captive soul at liberty, put my name in the Lamb's Book of life and started the joy bells of heaven ringing in my soul!

I grabbed the whip, struck the horse and went for town. The first man I met was an enemy. We had not spoken for weeks. I had it in my heart to kill this man, but God broke it up and saved me. I saw him going in his home and called for him to come back. I asked him to forgive me when I knew he was in the wrong, and know it today, but that did not justify me for having hatred and murder in my heart against him. He said he would forgive me. I gave him my testimony. I got him in the buggy, by my side, and down through town we went. I was praising God to the top of my voice. We went into the barn, climbed out of the buggy, put away the horse, and I told the crowd what the Lord had done for me.

I ran into the house, combed my hair and ran -- actually ran -- to the church, ran into it and down the aisle. I told Brother Hankes I had met the Christ of Calvary and that He had saved me.

Then we sold out our barn and horses and took every dollar we got for our property and went to making restitution, paying back to the people whom we had wronged. O my friend, when you find Christ, you will go back, as the wise men did when they found Him in the manger; they went back to their country another way. We will go back to our people to our friends, to our enemies, to every man and woman we have wronged and to straighten up. We hear preaching in the church and preaching over the radio, but do you know we ought to have a testimony.

I am glad, this beautiful morning, that the Lord has saved me and kept me with victory in my soul. I have had no desire for the old life. No, I have found something better! The poet said:

"Jesus Christ is made to me,  
All I need, all I need.  
Wisdom, righteousness and power,  
Holiness for evermore,  
My redemption full and sure  
He is all I need."

The people said they would give us two weeks, some said a month, but years have come and gone, and the Lord has sent us up and down and across this nation, in forty-seven different states; and in Canada and old Mexico; we have held revivals and camp meetings for practically every denomination; we have preached to tens of thousands of people; have seen multiplied thousands at the altar of prayer getting right with God. It is wonderful what the Lord can do when we turn ourselves over to Him. Bless His name!

You who are listening in over the radio this morning, be not afraid, young people, fathers, mothers! Jesus Christ will meet you where you are this morning; He will meet you where you are standing; He will meet you if you are on a bed of affliction; we don't have to go to church, we don't even have to bow our heads; some of you could not bow your heads, you are on your backs, suffering; it is not the posture of the body. He will meet you when no one can see or hear you, and start the birds singing in your soul, the flowers blooming; He will put Divine fire in your heart and start you down life's pathway all a blaze, telling this old world that Jesus Christ lives today. Bless His name! He is God for evermore! He said: "Behold I am alive for evermore, whosoever believeth in me shall never die."

Do you believe in Him this morning? If you do, keep on believing!

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

**CHAPTER 13**

**THE THINGS OF CHRIST**

(Sermon by John Fleming)

I have three texts this evening; first, "Without faith it is impossible to please him," Heb. 11:6; second, "Without shedding of blood is no remission," Heb. 9:22; and third, "Follow peace with all men and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12:14.

My first text is, "Without faith it is impossible to please him."

There are a number of things we do not need. Most every one I ever knew can get along without a lot of things. There is no question about that. I will just give a few.

Most of us have eyes that are too large. If we did not have such large eyes we might get along better. We see too much today. There is plenty to see if we want to look all the time. I am not looking at everybody in the church. People come to me in certain churches and say, "What are you going to do with the folk sitting on the platform?"

"Not a thing on earth."

"What do you mean? Don't you see?"

"I do not," I said.

They say, "Where are your eyes?"

I tell them, "On Jesus Christ." I am not looking around all the time to see what I can find to preach about; I can find enough to preach about without looking at the people.

I do not know whether anyone here has heard this story about the little dog that was going down the sidewalk. He had long ears with lots of hair on them, full of snow and sleet, and the little fellow kept stepping on his ears and then over he would go. He would shake himself and start out again. He was falling over his ears. There are a lot of folk over the country that have been falling over their ears. We hear too much today. Never get the idea into your head that people do not talk about you. A fellow walked up to me the other day and said, "Brother John, I want to tell you about something a fellow said about you." He seemed to be rejoicing because he had something to tell me about what the other fellow said. I said, "Wait a minute. I'll tell you what the same fellow said about you." He cooled off and had no more to say. If they talk about me, they will talk about you. Let us stop our ears to a lot of things that are going around. We would have more victory if we would do it.

There are a lot of us who have tongues that are too long. We talk too much. There was a fellow walking by the side of his sweetheart and he never spoke for thirty minutes. The girl said, "Charlie, why don't you say something?"

He said, "Will you marry me?"

She said, "Yes."

He never opened his mouth for another thirty minutes. She said, "Charlie, why don't you talk some more?"

He said, "I have already said too much."

The most of us talk too much.

I came home some time ago with a little cut on one of my toes. I went to the doctor. He was a good fellow and a Christian man. He examined it, and I have never forgotten what he said. He said, "If it were my toe, I would lance it. It may get well and It may not."

I said, "It is yours. Do what you think best."

He lanced it and dressed it for me, helped me into the car and drove me home. When he left me he said, "I cannot guarantee this. We are having hot weather and you may have blood poisoning. Don't be scared, but understand I am not guaranteeing it."

I asked the Lord to help me. Most of us want to pray the Lord's prayer when we think we are going to die. God whispered three things to me then, and I am going to tell you what the Lord told me. It is going to hit everyone in this audience. The Lord spoke to me and said, "You do not read your Bible enough."

I said, "That's the truth." That hits everyone here.

Then He said, "You don't pray enough." I said, "That's so." And that hits almost everyone.

I do not believe there are many people here but if they thought they were approaching death, they would say, "O God, I have failed to read my Bible enough, I have failed to pray enough, and I have talked too much." Let us ask God to bridle our tongues.

Here are three things I want to give you: First, Faith. I do not say this because I am preaching and I do not say it carelessly or because I want to be saying something, but I say it because it is a fact. Never in my life have I had faith in my God as I have had in the last six months. I do not say that every prayer I ever prayed has gone through, but I do mean to say that I have not prayed for a thing in six months that I wanted to get through, but what I got it through. I have faith in my God tonight, have you? Hallelujah! I have been saved by faith, sanctified by faith, kept by faith, and I am walking by faith. I refuse to let the devil and his whole outfit put me down because I do not feel good. I have

faith in a living God. When darkness comes, when temptations come, and when hell is turned loose, if you have not done anything, look above the whole thing and shout the victory and go on with a conqueror's tread. I believe we ought to have more faith in God.

I meet folk all over the country -- meet them almost every day -- who just grieve my heart and I leave their homes with my heart bleeding. One man whom I have in mind, a preacher, said, "I have just about got to the place where I have lost faith in everything and everybody."

I said, "Don't do that. There is a God and a Saviour, and the Bible is true; the fault is not in other people, it is in you. You have been slipping, you have not been praying, you have drifted away from God."

He said, "I just cannot have faith in anybody."

You may think that way if you want to, but I have faith in people. I have faith in people all over the country. I have faith in evangelists up and down the land. I have faith in pastors. We do not want to loose faith in people. I do not want my faith in people to go down. If everybody here goes back on God tomorrow I still want to be a believer in Him the next day. I love these preachers on the platform.

A man said to me, "If Bona Fleming were to backslide, I would become an infidel." I wouldn't. If Bona Fleming backslid tomorrow and left his wife the next day, and got drunk the next day, I would want to get out of my bed believing God and say that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth me from all sin." My faith is not pinned to anybody. Let us get warmed up, let us keep prayed up, let us get to the place where God can bless us, what do you say? I am going to ask the Lord to give you all just the blessing you need. I want faith like Paul and Silas had when they were put in jail. They prayed and had faith in God. I hear Paul say, "Silas, let's sing."

Silas says, "What shall we sing?"

The Bible says they sang praises unto God. The jailor and his wife heard Paul and Silas in the midnight hour, in the dark dungeon with the prisoners around them, singing and shouting. I hear Paul say, "Silas, pray."

He prayed and Paul said, "Pray on; I feel the power coming, Silas."

Silas prayed on and pulled fire from heaven. The prison was shaken and their chains fell off. I see the prisoners come out and stand there and I hear the jailor say to his wife, "What is that?"

He said, "I don't know. That sounds like those holiness preachers I put in jail."

She said, "That could not be, for those preachers were whipped almost to death and their backs were bleeding and their feet were fast in the stocks. They aren't able to stand. That could not be them."

He gets out of bed and goes down and there they are shouting the victory and praising God. The jailor took his sword and was going to kill himself, but Paul said, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here."

There was not a "come-outer" in the whole bunch. Praise the Lord. The jailor fell down on his knees and said to the apostles, "What must I do to be saved?"

They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house."

He was saved and his family was saved. What was it? It was faith in a living God. Praise the Lord.

Then, I imagine someone coming to Paul and saying, "Paul, how is it? Where are your folks? Have you got your old friends now?"

He says, "No, I have not. I do not have them now. They are scattered."

"You used to be a great fellow to dress. Have you plenty of good clothes now?"

"No," Paul says, "I haven't. That makes me think, when you come again bring that old cloak. It is getting cold and I will need it."

"Well, Paul, you used to make things move among your Jewish brethren. Where are they?"

"They have forsaken me. I have been among false brethren."

"How is your back, Paul?"

"My back is not so good. I received forty stripes save one."

"How are your eyes?"

"My eyes are not so good."

"Paul, you have kept company with false brethren; your books are scattered; your clothes are not so good; and your eyes are bad; your own nation has forsaken you, and you have been whipped. What have you kept?"

Paul answers "I have kept the faith."

I want to tell you, brother, sister, if you have faith in a living God, you can get most anything you want. We would like to have faith like Daniel when they put him in the lions' den. Daniel was praying and they put him in. The men who put him in walked all night but Daniel lay down and slept. I am going to let the other fellow do the walking and I am going to do the resting.

What brought Daniel through? Faith in a living God. What brought the Hebrew children through the fiery furnace? Faith in a living God. What brought John through when they tried to scald him? They put him in boiling oil, but John was hotter than the oil. Faith brought him out. What brought me through on the train that time when I was going to a camp meeting and did not have the money? I went to the depot thinking I would find someone I knew and could borrow the money. When I arrived at the depot there was no one I knew. I said, "Lord, what will I do?"

I walked around the depot with no money and the conductor called, "All aboard."

The Lord told me to get on. I just had two minutes. I said, "Lord, help me; I have no money and no ticket. I am due to preach at a camp meeting tonight." But the Holy Spirit impressed me to get on.

When the conductor said, "All aboard," I mounted the train and walked back in the car and sat down. I had not done anything to anyone that I had to repent of, not a thing to confess. The large conductor came through saying, "Tickets, please." When he came to the seat just in front of me he had a little trouble with the party and when he got to me he was already out of fix. I told him I had no ticket or any money but that I would send it to him the next day. He said, "What made you get on here?"

I told him I felt the Lord put me on. He said, "I will put you off at the next station. The train stops five miles from here and you get off."

I told him I was a preacher and had never bummed a train in my life, showed him my clergy book and told him I would send him the money the next day and that I had to preach in a camp meeting that night.

He said, "I do not care anything about that. I mean it. I am going to put you off at the next station."

I told him if he had to stop it was all right with me, but not to stop to put me off.

He said, "We are going to stop and you are going to get off."

He opened the door and walked off into the coach, he called off the station. A crowd got off and a crowd got on. I never moved, but kept my seat. The Lord put me on the train and I was going to wait for Him to put me off. The conductor came along saying, "Fares. Tickets, please."

When he came back and saw me he began to smile and said, "Here you are."

I said, "Yes sir, I am right on board with you."

He said, "Didn't I tell you to get off?"

I said, "You certainly did."

I rose to talk to him and a fellow from the other car came and stood and motioned. I said, "Who does he want?"

The conductor said, "I think he wants you."

I walked down the aisle to his seat. He said, "I am the meanest man on this train."

I said, "O Lord, help me. Here I am with no money; the conductor is going to put me off and this man is going to whip me right here."

He said, "What is your name?"

I said, "My name is John Fleming."

He said, "What are you doing?"

I told him I was a preacher.

He said, "What kind of a preacher?"

I said, "A holiness preacher."

I looked up and saw tears coming out of his eyes and he said, "I am drunk and full of the devil. I am from Wisconsin but I have two brothers preaching holiness." I knew I was on safe ground.

"I never laid eyes on you in this world until you got on this train but when you got on, you may not believe this, but God told me to give you some money and I didn't do it." God had the man on the train.

He said, "I want to give you some money."

I told him he owed me nothing, but he wanted to give it to me. He took out a roll of bills and started giving them to me. I took them as fast as he gave them. Then I went down the aisle, looking as though I had enough one dollar bills to run a camp meeting. I said, "Conductor, I am going to pay you every cent I owe you." I paid him and had plenty left. I went to the camp meeting and preached holiness that night.

I want to tell you another thing though -- I never did anything like that before, nor have I tried it since. Please do not get on a train to try this out. They may put you off and break your neck. Faith brought me through and faith will bring us all through. "Without faith it is impossible to please him."

Now, we come to the second point of my text: "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin."



Everybody here believes in the blood of Christ. If I had a voice large enough and strong enough, I would wake up the city and I would shout out, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." If my voice were strong enough, I would ring it around the state of Ohio and shout, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." If my voice were a little stronger, I would wake up the nation and shout, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth me from all sin." If my voice were a little stronger, I would wake up the world and shout, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

Then if my voice were stronger still, I would shout so every angel could hear me, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." And if it were yet stronger, I would shout it until the foundations of hell were moved and I would say, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

You remember when Moses was bringing the children of Israel out of Egypt, how the Lord commanded them to kill a lamb and put the blood on the door-posts and over the door on each side covered with blood, surrounded with blood, but no blood to trample on. The command was to get the lamb and they were successful in finding the lamb. Thank God, I have found the "Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

John the Baptist said, "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

The command was to kill the lamb and eat it.

I am feasting on the Lamb tonight. God knows we need the Lamb today in this lost world -- more Lamb, less shows; more Lamb, less hell; more Lamb, less foolishness. I tell you, brothers and sisters, a man cannot be kept and live on the husks of this old world. The blood was on the door-posts, over the sides. I have the blood applied. Have you?

I never try to muddle people. I do not want you to get it in your mind that the devil never tells me the things he tells you. He tells me sometimes I have backslidden. He may tell you that you have crossed the dead line when you have not. Tell him to get behind you, that you have the blood on the door-posts of your soul and are going right on. If he were to tell me I had never been converted, I would not believe him but would go right on. I am telling you that to try to encourage you. I want to tell you I am going to stand on God's promises, no matter what this world does.

Now we come to the third point, "Without holiness." You notice my text has three "withouts" -- "without faith;" "Without the blood;" and "Without holiness."

Now holiness is good while we are living; it will be still better when we are dying. Not many of us will ever accomplish much in this world or leave anything for our children, but my prayer is, (my wife does not know it and Bona does not know it. I never pray out loud on these lines) "O Lord, let me die with the holy flame of fire in my heart that my children may stand around the bed and say, 'He has not left us a dollar nor any stocks or bonds, but our father left a testimony that we can never forget.' "

It is good while we are living. I am not boasting, for I make my boast in the Lord. God has kept me saved since my conversion, up to the present time. I do not mean that I have not made blunders and mistakes, but as far as being an out-broken sinner and going into sin, I have never done it since that day. God knows it. He has kept me while hell was turning loose against me. He kept me when people lied on me and cast out my name as evil. He has kept me when folks were going to whip me.

A few years ago I was in a meeting. One of the best preachers in the nation had preceded me and had stirred up quite a bit of trouble among the colored people, not intentionally, of course. I had not heard anything about it, and in my sermon I said something about colored people. Three colored men rose to their feet. Two went to the door and the other one came down the aisle, rolling up his sleeves. He was going to whip me. A big two-hundred-pounder handed his baby to his wife, and laid off his coat. Turning to me he said, "I'm from Kentucky. If you say the word I'll break that colored man's neck."

I told him not to do it, I did not want the man hurt. Women began to scream and the children began to cry. It broke that meeting up and I was not able to preach any more. I tried to explain to the colored fellow that I did not mean anything in what I said and was not trying to cast any reflections on them. It took three or four men to lead him out of the church. Two big fellows went to my room with me. Now, I know the Book says, "Perfect love casteth out fear," but it does not say it will cast out fear when a big colored man gets after you. I did not object to those men taking me home.

I thought it was all over. I had told the man I was sorry. But the next morning the singer and the pastor and I went to the post office. They told me they would meet me in the bank. Just as I crossed the street I saw the colored man coming. I saw something was going to happen. I was told that he was the worst man in the community. He came up to me and said, "What did you mean last night?"

I told him I did not mean anything.

He said, "I am going to kill you."

I had only time to say three words, "God help me." And if God helped Daniel in the lions' den, God helped John Fleming when that colored man was after him. He struck at me with all the power he had and surely would have hit me. His fists came within two inches of me, but God struck him and he rolled his eyes back in his head and leaned up against the wall and never moved until they came and took him and rubbed him. Someone said, "That preacher has stabbed him with his knife."

I told them I never touched him. Then the colored man told them I did not. He said, "It is all over," and he broke down and cried. He said, "Fleming, I had made up my mind to kill you. I meant to kill you this morning. I was going to knock you down and lick you, until you were dead, but God stopped me. Will you forgive me?"

I told him I would and if I die today and never preach again, I could say that I had no stir in my heart, never thought of hurting that man nor trying to. Holiness is good while we are living. The sheriff said, "I am going to get him."

I said, "If you want to get him you can do it, but I don't, want him hurt. God protected me and I am not going to bother him."

Some one may say, "John Fleming, you were always a good boy and never had much of a temper."

There was a time when I had such a temper they had to tie me. Bona and I used to clinch; sometimes he would get the best of me and sometimes I would get the best of him. But we have not had a fight nor a racket since God saved us.

There was a man living just three doors from a home where I was staying while I was holding meetings in a certain town. I had my family with me. This man was a tough fellow and his wife was half Indian. One night just before dark we had some company and my little girl who was quite small was playing with this man's little girl. Their little wagon turned over and both children fell out and got hurt a little. My child came in crying and his little girl went home crying too. When he saw her what did he do? He started toward me. I was sitting on the porch with my feet on the banister. He said, "What did you do? I'm going to whip you."

I looked across the road and there came his wife with a big revolver saying, "Step out of the way, husband, I will get him."

Friends, you can talk all you please, but I was praying. One after me was enough, but there came that woman with the revolver, saying, "Get out of the way, I'll kill him."

All at once she dropped the pistol in the grass and turned and went back. The neighbor across the street saw it. The man was mad when he saw her go and he began to curse and stamp. I let him roar and never took my feet down from the banister. He went home. I walked into the hall and said, "Lord, how did I get through?"

God answered, "I brought you through."

The Lord seemed to impress me to go to the telephone and talk to the man. I went to the phone and called him up. He came to the phone talking as if he was still angry. He asked who it was. I told him I was the man he tried to whip. He asked me what I wanted and I told him I wanted to tell him I loved him and was not going to bother him with the law. He cooled down and said, "Mr. Fleming, will you forgive me? I was too hasty. I have an awful temper."

The next night while I was in the yard a nice Methodist fellow walked over and started talking to me. He said, "I have been listening to you preach in your meetings. I heard you preach on holiness. Do you remember, you tried to get me to the altar? I never believed in it. I have heard you testify that God kept you sanctified, but I never believed it until last night when that fellow was after you, and his wife was after you with the revolver."

He said, "My boy had to hold me from going after him to whip him. Brother Fleming, there is something in holiness. I am going to ask God to reclaim me and get me right and I am going on and get sanctified wholly."

He did. He got reclaimed, came then to the altar and got sanctified wholly. Not long after that he took sick. I told him about Bona getting healed, but he said, "I am to go to the hospital soon, but if God healed your brother, He can heal me."

I said, "Sure He can."

He had some folks in his home who prayed for him and the Lord healed him.

I did not reach this man by preaching to him but won him by demonstrating a good spirit when my enemy was after me. I do not believe in sour holiness. I believe in holiness that will keep you sweet. I am a preacher of holiness and have the Spirit tonight. Do you go to pieces and have a mad fit every time the preacher fails to shake hands with you? I believe God will fix you up and keep you sweet no matter what comes. You can live in the same house with your mother-in-law and shout the victory, if God wants you to.

I am here to tell you that God can sanctify you wholly and cleanse you if you will come to this altar. I believe it. He can do it for you quicker than lightning ever flashed. If you have the Spirit stick to it. If you have not the Spirit, do not depend on how long or how much you fast or how many hours or days you spend at the altar. It is not time that sanctifies you, but the Lord, and He will do it right now.

TRUTH ON FIRE  
by  
John and Bona Fleming

## CHAPTER 14

### MY HEALING

Bona Fleming

I have been telling what the Lord has done for my soul, and I have been asked to give a little of my experience of Divine healing, on August 6, 1930, at Mooers, New York. Mooers is in the northeast corner of New York State, about two miles from Canada and about ten miles from Vermont. I was there in the great camp meeting. I had preached on Sunday afternoon, and on Monday night, August 4, I was stricken with appendicitis, with awful suffering. Tuesday morning, August 5, a nurse who was on the ground was brought to my room, and she told me I had a very bad case of appendicitis. They put cold packs on my side and did everything they could, on the ground, for me that day. I thought I would get better, but I grew worse, and suffered intensely. I always have been strong and healthy, had scarcely known what suffering was, since I was a child. They seemed to think that I did not know how bad I was. When I requested some medicine to help me sleep, it had no effect on me; so I reached over and got all the medicine the nurse left and took it all at one dose. I went to sleep and got some rest; the next morning, August 6th, I was much worse. Things looked very dark. The folks around the camp began to get uneasy, very much so. I had been told it was a bad case of appendicitis, so we sent to Champlain, New York, to get a good physician. Everyone seemed to have great confidence in him. He came twelve miles to see me. He gave me a thorough examination and told me I was in a very bad condition, that I must go to the hospital as soon as they could get me there. They told me he was a religious man; his pastor was on the ground. I told him that I would have to pray about it before I went to the hospital, that for years I had not gone into anything without first praying. His eyes filled with tears and he said, "Brother Fleming. it is all right to pray, but you have got to go to the hospital and don't put it off. Gangrene might set in; you don't know your condition; with your strong heart and body, you do not realize the suffering you are in." He would not take a cent for the trip. He said he could not charge me anything, as I was so far away from home. My wife and two little boys were with me on the grounds; we were driving that summer; he told them to take me to the hospital.

As soon as the doctor left, they backed a large Packard car up to the cottage door and got me into it, and drove me to Plattsburg, New York, to one of the best equipped hospitals in the country. Some of the greatest surgeons in the nation are there. They did not let me tell my two little boys good-bye. One of the preachers, his wife, my wife and Brother Fitch, a merchant at Mooers, got into the car with me, and Brother Fitch, who owned the car, rushed me to the hospital. They put me in a chair at the hospital and rolled me through the hall to the elevator and took me up to the fourth floor. They undressed me and put me in bed. The doctor came in and gave me an examination, a blood test and all of the tests that they give to people who have appendicitis. They asked me if I was willing to be operated on (I suppose someone had told them that I was a little slow about being operated on). I said, "If it has to be done." The doctor said it ought to be done and that I was a day late then; I should

have been there a day sooner. They had not let my wife come up to the room yet. Three or four nurses and one man nurse were with me; I knew there was a little excitement; they got me ready, painted me with iodine, put the bandages around me. I was ready; no hand needed to touch me any more until the surgeon's knife was drawn. I asked how soon it would be. They said, "Five minutes." I told them that I would have to talk with my wife.

I was not exactly clear, the Holy Spirit seemed to check me, and told me to pray. They would not give me time to pray in the cottage. They brought my wife in and permitted Brother Long, the good Methodist preacher, his wife and Brother Fitch, the merchant, to come in also. I told them that I would have to have help; that the Lord seemed to check me, and that I would have to pray before I would let them operate. The doctor told me not to put it off, that it would be too bad if I did. I told them to give me fifteen minutes and asked everybody to leave the room -- the nurse, the doctors, my wife, the good preacher and his wife, and the merchant. I told them if they would give me fifteen minutes alone with the Lord, and if then there was no change, I would consent to being operated on.

They all stepped out and closed the door. I was all alone. I turned my face to the wall and quoted the Scripture that Hezekiah quoted to the Lord when he turned his face to the wall: "I beseech thee, O Lord, remember how I have walked before thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in thy sight." Now I added a little to this. I said: "O Lord, I have done my best; I have never compromised with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, I have held Him up, that He could save, sanctify and heal the people. I have told it to the people in the East, West, North and South -- all over the nation and out of it." I told the Lord that I had made plenty of mistakes, but that He knew I had done my best. I asked Him to heal me, and said if He did not heal me in fifteen minutes, I would be operated on, but if He would heal me I would refuse the operation. I said, "Lord, you see where I am. I have promised to hold meetings for many months ahead, You can heal me in a moment."

In one minute or less time, the Lord came in that room and went through me, removed every ache, pain and all soreness in a moment's time. I was as well as any man that ever lived, or as I am this day; there was no trace of the appendicitis left. I got up, tore the bandages off -- just tore them off. I did not take time to take the pins loose. I threw my feet out of bed. My wife came in and I told her I was healed. She did not oppose me. I told her I was going back to the camp. The merchant and the nurse came in, and one of the nurses cried and said: "Mr. Fleming, please get back in bed, the medicine may have caused you to be excited." But I said, "I am not excited." I told her I wanted my clothes. She said that the medicine had gotten me worked up, that I would die if I left, to please get back in bed and be quiet. I told her I could not get back in the bed any more. The Lord had healed me and there was no danger of my dying. The merchant, a good sanctified man, believed the Lord was able to heal, but did not know about my leaving the hospital. But I kept putting on my clothes and the nurse got another doctor to come in. He seemed to be angry and he said: "You will die and your wife can sue the hospital; there is no one to sign your release." (Someone had to sign the release before I could go out of the hospital.) I told him that I was well and had to go back to Mooers camp meeting and preach. He said: "No one will sign your release." I asked him if I might sign my own release. He smiled, and said that was something new, that no one had ever signed their own release before. He asked me to wait until he had written it out. I sat down and talked to the folks a little, and when he had written a long list of things he gave it to me. I did not read more than one-fourth of it; I looked at the first few lines and it said if I went out I would go at the protest of the doctors and the

nurses and the faculty and so on. That is all I read. I laid it down on the stand and signed the whole thing. I did not know what all was on it. I had met the Lord and He had healed me, and I knew my wife was not going to bother them. When the Lord makes a fellow well, He does a good job of it. Years ago I had met the Lord and He had saved and sanctified me, and a fellow who knows the Lord can save and sanctify him would not be afraid to trust Him. I knew that the Lord had taken all the soreness away and I was absolutely healed! I felt as fine as I ever felt in my life. I told them I wanted to get something to eat, that I was hungry. We left the hospital and they took me to a drug store and got me a hot malted milk. The folks did not know whether it was real or not; they could hardly realize it!

I was glad when supper time came at the camp meeting that night! I went to the big dining room on the camp grounds and they had roast beef and potatoes with the skins on and white bread. I was so hungry that I mashed the potatoes up, put a little butter, salt and pepper on them, with some gravy, and I ate roast beef and drank two glasses of milk. I had a real supper. I then went into the meeting and took my place, made the announcements and took the offering. I never felt better in my life! When it came my time to preach, I went right on shouting and praising the Lord, taking turn about with the other workers. The camp closed on Sunday night. I got into my car, drove a thousand miles, through Canada and on into Michigan for another camp meeting. I have been perfectly sound as far as appendicitis is concerned, from that time to this!

Now someone will say, "That is great!" That is a small thing for God to do; He is able to do the "exceeding abundant, above all we can ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." I might have been operated on and probably it would have been a success. They said, "Here you are in one of the greatest hospitals in the country with the greatest surgeons in the land, and it is not going to cost you a penny: we are not going to charge you a cent for the operation." I appreciated all that, the kindness of the nurses and the friends making it possible for me to be operated on without costing me a penny, in the greatest hospital of the country, but the Lord healed me! How much better it was to be healed than to go through that operation!

I feel like the little boy who came across the water. He was a little ragged, dirty boy whose father was dead. He got on the boat and hid behind the sacks and barrels. Someone told the captain that he was on board and the captain went down in the hull of the boat and found him, dragged him out, and cursed him. He said: "Get off here!" The little boy slipped back through the crowd and hid behind the sacks and barrels again. They took him by the collar and led him away, threatened to kick him over board in the water. But when the boat pulled out the little fellow swam out and just as the boat pulled away the captain found him and shook him, turned him around, calling him, "a dirty little brat." He said: "I will kick you into the water." But just then a fine looking, wealthy man stepped up and told him to stop. He asked what the captain was doing and was told that he was about to kick that boy overboard. The little boy said: "I have a mother on the other side." And the big man said to the captain, "Turn that little boy loose. He is helpless; he hasn't a penny and no one to help him. I will pay his fare. Take your hands off that boy!" The captain had to turn him loose, the big man paid his fare and said to the boy, "This boat is yours. Go and take a bath, get a new suit of clothes, have your hair cut." They dressed him up completely; he sat at the table with the rich; everything was paid for on his ticket. The man told him, "You have the best time of your life, your fare is paid." The boat had been rolling through the water for a few hours, the little fellow had been cleaned up and was

walking on the deck beside his big friend who had paid his fare, he looked up into the big man's face and said: "Big man, I love you! And if I ever get across to the other side, you know what I am going to do? I am going to tell my mother about you. She will never hear the last of you. When I was helpless, undone and penniless and dirty and ragged, you stepped up and paid my fare."

Now, listen, friends, I was like that little helpless boy. The old enemy had me and was shaking me up and down. I had no power to break loose from him. My father, my mother, my sister or my friends could not help me. I could never have paid my fare, because we could never be redeemed with corruptible things such as silver or gold, but Jesus Christ, my Big Brother, stepped on the scene and told the old devil to take his hands off and turn me loose, that He had made me free. Then He told me to go up and down the country and tell this old dying world who paid my fare. He said to the wicked one, "Touch him not!" Thank God, the Christ that left the empty tomb and came out saying, "I am he that was dead, but behold I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and death, and whosoever believeth on me shall never die," will turn you loose if you will let Him.

I never expect to stop telling this old world what Jesus did for me. I love Him! I love Him! I love Him!