

# *The Story of My Life*

BY VANCE FERRELL



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“I will lift up mine eyes unto [above; *Hebrew*] the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth . . . Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

“The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

“The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even for evermore.”

— *Psalm 121:1-2, 4-8*

***Upon reading it, one person said:  
“Fast-paced, takes you from one surprise  
to another.”***

Where I came from. The decisions  
which affected my thinking and my life.  
Why I did what I did. How this ministry  
began.

How the Lord guided so there would  
be a Pilgrims Rest.

Why it started when it did.

What happened when it did.

*The Story  
of My Life*

# Introduction

Life is an interplay of circumstances and principles and how they are accepted, rejected, or ignored. This book explains how this worked out in my own life, and why I did what I did.

Truly, each one of us has a personal involvement in the great controversy between Christ and Satan. When we get to heaven, how many will be the stories we will have to tell about the guidance of God. Reading this brief biography, you will find that I had many evidences of that guidance in my life.

Writing an autobiography is like making out a will; it is something most of us never do.

Yet, as I thought back over the living of these years, there have been so many incidents which

revealed the careful guidance and protection of a kindly heavenly Father, that I became convinced I should set pen to paper.

Moses spent years in the wilderness, to learn lessons which would prepare him for his future work. That is an experience which often happens to God's people. Unfortunately, we do not often recognize it.

In late 1979, a stupendous crisis in doctrine, standards, and fiscal conduct hurled us all into a new era in our denomination. When that hour arrived, we had to set to work defending God's truths for these last days.

This is the story of the wilderness training one man received in preparation for that crisis.

“I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”  
— *Jeremiah 29:11*

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.”  
— *Psalms 55:22*

“Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid. For the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song.”  
— *Isaiah 12:2*

“Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.”  
— *1 Peter 5:7*

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# 1 - The Early Years

It was a sleepy afternoon in San Diego County, California. Only two days earlier, on March 6, newly elected President Franklin Roosevelt had closed the banks. The great depression was at its deepest. The entire nation was in panic.

The assistant escorted the young couple into the physician's office. They had made an appointment to see him that afternoon, yet he was not certain as to the nature of the medical problem.

"We want our baby aborted," they explained. Since abortion mills were illegal back in those days, it had been with difficulty that the couple had located this particular physician. They had heard that he quietly carried out such procedures.

"Why do you want to do this?" he said. "It will probably be a beautiful baby." But they persisted, so he performed the abortion.

At least, that is what I was told sixteen years later, by my mother. Why I was born anyway was something of an enigma. Had the doctor failed to do the procedure correctly? If he had even partially done it, my body would have been grossly deformed. Or had something held him back from carrying out the abortion—when it was something he had done on other occasions?

I thank God for protecting me at that early age. To this day, I am strongly opposed to any form of abortion, at a time when so many Christians feel we should be quiet about the matter.

As my mother related the story to me, she chuckled and said my father would not look at me for the first couple days after I was born. Then he said, "He's sorta cute."

On Sunday, December 3, 1933, about eight months after the visit to the doctor, I was born in a small cottage on Vassar Street in La Mesa, California. Along with the house across the street, it forlornly sat on the side of a sand hill as all that remained of an intended subdivision which,

like most everything else at that time, had gone bankrupt.

In the summer of 1975, I visited the area with one of my grown sons. We found the home and took photographs of it. It was easily identifiable since my mother had earlier told me it was a short distance up the street, on the right. The rectangular shape of the drab green house was plainer than that of all the other houses, except the one across the street.

Times were tough back then. In order to save money, my father owned a motorcycle instead of a car. I was told I was riding around on that motorcycle before I was born. He bought a service station but could not make a go of it, even though he worked long hours each day. So he tried to sell the station, yet no one wanted the long hours along with little pay. So my father advertised for a partner. When one came, he gave him the station and left.

Hoping to improve their financial situation, my parents sold the motorcycle, bought an automobile, and moved to San Francisco a few months after I was born. But, in doing so, my father left behind a good job at a state retirement home. Shortly afterward, while unloading ships at the Embarcadero Street docks, a pile of telephone poles rolled onto my father's legs, crippling him for a time. Those were difficult days, compounded by the fact that, in childhood, my father had been forced to work on a central Illinois farm instead of going to school. He only had a third-grade education. A harvester had torn off part of his right index finger, so he had a difficult time writing. Yet he was intelligent enough that none of his associates realized he lacked a high school diploma.

My sister Ann tells me that, in San Francisco, my mother would go over to Fillmore Street to the welfare office for a grocery bag of food. Ann,

seven by this time, would tightly hold my little hand; for only Mother could carry the heavy bag. I was a little over a year old at the time. In December 1935, when Ann was eight and I was two, hearing that her first husband (not my father, who lived with us) was coming to get Ann, my mother took her on the ferry to Oakland and sent Ann back East on a train. I did not see my sister again until I was 16.

806 Webster Street formed my earliest memories. Behind the house was the Acme Brewery, and across the street a beer tavern. Every night I would hear the sound of “*Roll out the barrel, for we’ll have barrels of fun*” from that bar. It sounded menacing to me. Fortunately, neither my father nor mother smoked nor drank, and my father was faithful to the family. When the wind blew from the east, we could smell beer from the brewery. Neither the house nor the brewery are there anymore; both have since been torn down.

A little over two blocks away was a park on the side of a rather steep hill. It provided two city blocks of lawn for my little feet to run across. One day when I was quite small, my mother was resting on the lawn at the bottom of the hill where everyone else was. I decided to climb all the way to the lonely top—where, back then, few ever went. I can recall the incident quite clearly. I was in an outer corner of the park, and there was a car parked on Laguna Street, close to Eddy Street at the top of the hill. A man sat on the passenger side, with the door open and his feet on the curb. He was quietly motioning me to come to him. I was a trusting child and approached closer. But then I stopped. About twelve feet separated us.

The thought came, “*Run!*” And I did, down the hill as fast as my little legs could carry me. Mother had been sitting on the grass, talking with a lady. When I turned around, the car was gone.

As I think back on that incident, I wonder how I can be so certain as to how young I was at the time. It was my line of sight to the seated man I was viewing. I was extremely short in height.

My earliest dated memory was in January 1939; my mother walked with me to that same park (Jefferson Park) and waved good-bye to me. It was the first day of kindergarten, and I waved back as I walked diagonally across the grass to St. Paulus Lutheran Church School on the cor-

ner of Eddy and Gough Streets (the large church totally burned to the ground in 1995). In later years, I realized that starting school three weeks after I turned five was not the best for me. I should have been out running and playing to strengthen my little body. Yet my mother needed time each day to go out and clean houses, in order to help support the family.

A later vivid memory of that park also comes to mind. I was playing with other children at the bottom of it, by Golden Gate Avenue, when a lady invited us across the street to a meeting hall. Inside the converted storefront were a dozen or so children’s chairs. Upon being seated, we found they were telling us about Jesus and how He loved us. This was something I very much liked. Throughout my life, I always liked religious things. When you tell children that God loves them, you are planting impressions that may help them for years to come.

My father had been raised a Lutheran, but did not generally attend any church. My mother was a nominal Adventist. This is the story behind the Adventist connection:

Back about the year 1912, a colporteur stopped by a home in northern Idaho and sold a book to a family. Elizabeth Thorp, my grandmother, was fascinated by it. It was a copy of *Great Controversy*. About the year 1914, Elder Charles T. Everson, one of our leading public evangelists at the time, was holding meetings in the northwest. Grandmother Thorp and my mother were baptized at the close. None of the other five children in the family were. In the years that followed, my mother at times attended the Adventist Church.

In the mid-1990s, I visited San Francisco again, and found it to be extremely congested in traffic, with no curb parking spaces. How different it was back in the late 1930s! There were hardly any cars back then! There was a city ordinance that they all had to be garaged at night, even though there were not a lot of garages. Most everyone rode the streetcars.

Pennies were worth something then. I recall being handed six cents and told by my mother to go to Mr. Green’s Delicatessen, around the corner on McAllister Street, and buy a large loaf of bread.

Back then, the pictures on the walls were black and white. Everyone was excited when Standard Oil affiliate stations throughout the

nation began offering free full-color photographs of National Park scenes. Full-color prints were not normally available anywhere for common people to obtain. We treasured each one and tacked them on the walls.

Memories can be categorized by location. In May 1941, we moved to a third-floor rental flat at 1750 Page Street. Located in the Haight Ashbury District, only a few blocks from that, later infamous intersection. This was a good move, since now I had the Panhandle, only a block away, and the eastern end of the Golden Gate Park, two blocks away, to roam through. The name, "Hippie," would not be invented for another 24 years. Back then, it was a quiet little section of the city in the newer, cleaner, western part of city. Most of the shops in the area were on Haight Street.

Seven months later, the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and San Francisco was very close to the center of the action. Determined to stay out of the army, my 40-year old father immediately quit his job in a garage and went to work as a welder in a shipbuilding plant.

The nation seemed totally unprepared for the crisis. Every home was required to install black-out shades at each window, so Japanese planes would not be able to locate us. One afternoon, within a month after that attack, a man knocked at each house on our block and said we should come to a meeting in a nearby house. Arriving, the people were told we were in imminent danger of Japanese attack. Each family was handed an armband which said CD (Civil Defense) in large letters, a galvanized pail, and a hand pump which could be placed in it. Rapid pumping could, for a few minutes, hurl a pitifully small stream of water about eight feet. That was how we were to protect our homes in case of enemy attack.

The children in the neighborhood thoroughly enjoyed their new toys; and, within a few months, many of the cheaply made pumps were lost or broken.

From the best I can remember, it must have been 1941 or 1942 when a very special event occurred in my life. I was seven or eight years old at the time; and it was not until years later, when I was about 17, that my mother told me about it.

One Sunday, my father agreed to accompany my mother and me to the Hamilton Methodist

Church on Waller Street, a block up from Haight Street. For my father to accompany my mother to a church service was quite unusual. The following week, the pastor of that church dropped by our house and visited with my mother.

As she related it, he said, "*Why not leave the Adventists and come worship with us? That way you can unite your family.*" This was a tempting offer, and Mother said she seriously considered it. Harry seemed willing to go to the Methodist Church, but not to the Adventist Church.

But that night, as she related it to me a decade later, she had a dream. Now, I do not recall my mother ever talking about dreams, and certainly not religious dreams. She was not the religious type. But Mother said, "That night I had a dream. An angel came to me and said, '*Don't leave the Adventists, for Vance's sake.*' "

I was young enough that, if she had completely broken with Adventism at that time, I would very likely not have known Adventist beliefs and might never have discovered the Spirit of Prophecy. Yet because of that dream, I did. Over the past nineteen years, I have written thousands of pages of encouragement and warnings regarding dangers our people now face. Except for that dream, it might never have happened.

My mother had left her first husband because (as she told a friend in Beaumont, California, who told me in 1958), "he carried a Bible around with him." If my mother said an angel spoke to her in a dream, it must have been a very real experience.

By 1943, I was going to dance halls with my mother. She always liked dancing; and, since her husband had no interest in such things and was always working evenings and nights anyway, she would go downtown to a dance hall just off upper Market Street. She would only dance with other older women who had come alone. I would wait expectantly and then, between dances, I would slip my shoes off and slide back and forth across the waxed oak floor. When I tired of that, I would go downstairs where my mother was talking to women while they (generally not my mother) sipped liquor. I did not like the environment, but my mother occasionally wanted me to go with her. I was her buddy.

In 1944, when I was ten, my mother encouraged me to become a delivery boy for a newspaper route. This job, which I continued on for

seven years, was excellent training. Today, it is thought that children must not work, lest they somehow be injured. Yet useful work prepares the child to later become a useful adult. I am deeply grateful for my childhood newspaper routes. I could easily have gotten out of that work, but I liked work and responsibility. After school dismissed at 3:30 p.m. each day, I went directly to my newspaper drop-off point, folded newspapers, and delivered them. The delivery route took about two hours each afternoon. My involvement with those routes freed my mother so she could work longer hours outside the home.

Years later, as an educator, I read in a professional book that research findings disclosed most young people can be divided between those who want freedom and those who want responsibility. The first tend to become the problem people in life; and, the second, the hard workers who get things done. Train your little ones to enjoy work, and you will bring a lasting happiness into their lives.

For seven years I had newspaper routes, and I am thankful for them. The heavy weight of the newspaper bag gave me flat feet, but also a determination to carry a job through to completion. One of the great crimes of our age is the theory that young people should not work until they are 18. By that time, many are no longer interested.

The earliest memory which I can date to the day occurred on a sunny spring afternoon in 1945. I was on Haight Street, nearing the end of my paper route, when a man on the sidewalk called out to a passing friend, "Roosevelt is dead!" Soon everyone was repeating it up and down the street, and in the stores. The only U.S. president I had throughout my life had died, and the entire nation mourned. It was April 12.

Little events can produce big consequences; it was only a couple years ago that I realized the intertwining of several from my childhood. My mother had enrolled me in kindergarten nearly a month after I turned 5, for the second (January-June) term. At that time, in San Francisco, that could be done. Each subsequent year, I advanced to the next grade in January instead of September, as most children did.

But, in September 1944, my mother transferred me to a local church school, the Pillar of Fire School, owned by a Methodist offshoot. Since they only operated on a September to June

basis, I either had to be advanced one full grade or dropped back one. Mr. Truitt decided to advance me to the next grade, the fifth. That little detail resulted in placing me with older students throughout the rest of my schooling (including college), which meant I had to study harder. But it also resulted in my not being drafted into the Korean War. I will explain that later.

One afternoon that same year (1944), I noticed that a girl from around the corner on Cole Street was carrying home a big stack of books. At least, it looked like a lot to me. Inquiring, she told me she had checked them out from the public library. "They will only let me check out six a week," she said. The stack was five or six inches thick.

This intrigued me, for I did not bother much with books. True, she was about two years older than me (I was ten at the time), but how could a person read so much? So I went to the library, which was only a block away, and checked out one book. Bringing it home, I asked my mother to help me with it. I recall that first afternoon, she pronounced "cupboard" for me.

By the time I had finished that 150-page book, I no longer needed my mother's help. Before long, I was also checking out six books at a time. Although I was in the fifth grade, within six months my reading ability at school went from fourth grade textbooks to eighth grade school textbooks on the bookshelves. Exactly why that happened, I do not know; yet my advanced reading proficiency would greatly help me in years to come. I began to read extensively in history, science, and other subjects.

By the time I was ten, I was attending two churches each weekend by myself. On Sabbath, I would ride my bike the 27 blocks across town to the California Street Seventh-day Adventist Church and attend Sabbath School and the church service. Then, the next day, I would bike to one of the Protestant churches and attend Sunday School. I liked going to places where Christians were. Sometimes my mother would go to church with me on the streetcars; but, throughout my teen years, I generally biked over by myself.

I could easily have run the streets at night and gotten into trouble. My father worked nights, slept days, and was gone in the evening. My mother worked hard each day, and wanted an opportunity each evening to visit friends; so she

would leave. I heard of boys and girls in neighboring blocks who were getting in trouble.

Yet, in the providence of God, I chose to buy several used aquarium tanks and stock them with tropical fish. I divided my spare time between reading, biking to aquarium stores (with a white rat down my shirt), or, as one of its only four youth members, attending the San Francisco Aquarium Society meetings at the California Academy of Sciences in Golden Gate Park.

On August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. The next day, the Soviet Union conveniently declared war on Japan (so they could grab some territory). On August 9, the second bomb fell on Nagasaki (which happened to be the only Christian city in Japan!).

I knew something was likely to happen on the evening of August 14; so, with an older friend, I went down to Market Street. Remodeling scaffolding draped the front of the half-a-block-wide emporium. A sailor was swinging from bar to bar like a spider monkey. Below him, as we watched, sailors and civilians were rolling 55-gallon curbside trash drums down the street, then picking them up and heaving them through store windows. During the couple hours we were there, I saw no fighting, looting, or police. It was VJ (Victory over Japan) Day. The war had ended.

In September, we moved a few blocks away to 117 Beulah Street. My parents began making payments to purchase it. The total cost was \$4,500, at 5 percent interest! That two-story, eight-room house with a full basement would sell for over \$400,000 today.

Throughout that fall and winter, Chester Prout, the pastor of the California Street Adventist Church, held a six-month evangelistic effort. After my afternoon paper routes and a quick supper, for half a year I pedaled hard the many blocks to get to each one. I thoroughly enjoyed the topics on Daniel, Revelation, and other historic truths. "Trust and Obey" was sung at every song service. It is a great song. "Trust and obey, for there's no other way, to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."

However, the objectives of those in charge of the effort were not in my thoughts. They wanted baptisms, and I had given the matter no attention. Was I not an Adventist already? I loved it, and attended Sabbath services all the time, sometimes with my mother, but most of the time alone by the time I was eleven. Only a few months

earlier I had turned twelve.

One evening, the pastor gave a call to come forward. I watched with interest as several went forward. He said he was going to begin an advanced Bible class. That sounded great, so I went forward too. It turned out to be the baptismal class, but I saw that as no problem.

Both my father and mother were present the day I was baptized. It was the first time I had ever seen my father in an Adventist church. He did not step inside another one until I was pastor of one.

After being baptized, I began to feel that I was doing wrong in continuing to attend movies each week with my parents. They had always taken me with them to one of the large motion picture theaters on Market Street; and how was I, a twelve-year-old, to tell them I wanted out? This continued on for about a year, until I grew strong enough to resist their wishes.

I refused to swear, as my parents did; and, in later years, I realized that, refusing my parents' request that I go to movies, attend theatrical plays, go to dance halls, learn dancing, drink coffee, taste liquor, date worldly girls, eat meat, etc., had an unexpected effect on me. You see, I was raised as an only child, my half-sister having left when I was two years old. It is true that my mother said I was always a cheerful, happy child, never the rebellious type. Yet another quality was also needed: a determination to stand for the right, in the face of opposition.

That lack was supplied in my teen years when, for five years, I had to resist duly recognized authority in order to practice my religious beliefs and do what I knew to be right. My parents did not crush it out, nor did they easily give in. By the time I was 13, in matters related to religion and health, I was functioning independently of my parents. Yet I was not doing this in a spirit of rebellion. As a result, by the time I was grown, I had become accustomed to standing for my convictions. Resisting duly authorized authority—when that authority deviated from God's Word and began issuing wrong directives—had become the right thing to do. This little trait would have a powerful impact on my later life.

One day when I was fourteen, I took a pair of shoes to a shop on Haight Street for repair. Looking at them, the man said, "You are going to be tall!" That seemed out of the question, since I was a couple inches shorter than my mother, who

was five foot, four inches. In the next twelve months, I grew a foot; and, the following year, I grew a little more.

When I was fifteen, Mr. Daily, the newspaper distributor in the Haight Ashbury area, offered me the most profitable route he had: St. Mary's Hospital, on the other side of the panhandle park. My assignment was to knock each day on every door in that 400-room hospital and sell papers to the patients, do it all cheerfully, handle problems which might arise, and keep the staff happy.

This was a new experience for me, since I was a quiet soul. But that route, continued for the next two years, taught me to knock on doors, be bold to meet people, be unafraid to enter new situations, move fast, and be able to handle the unexpected.

After being there about a year, one afternoon I entered the room of a priest. Like most of the priests in bed, he was smoking. In order to excuse it, this one commented, "Jesus didn't say we couldn't smoke." I answered, "I don't smoke." I could sense that my reply irked him.

The next day, another priest was sitting in a chair next to him as I entered. I had seen him in the halls and had the impression he had some type of managerial role. Immediately, I sensed something was up; he was watching me closely as I spoke to the priest in bed, without saying "Father" to either of them.

The following day, that second priest stopped me in the hallway and said, "You say 'Father' to the priests and 'Sister' to the nuns, or we'll get someone else to deliver papers in here."

I prayed about the matter that night. The next day when I went to the hospital I did not see him. I never saw him again, and never said those words. He must have been transferred to another assignment. To this day, I refuse to use "Reverend" or "Father" as a title of a man in anything I write.

In a practical sense, the most valuable class I took in high school was typing. It made it possible for me to prepare lengthy reports for classes in high school, college, and graduate school. I would heartily recommend to any young person to take typing!

Since I was a year younger than others in my class, school was a little more difficult for me until I entered high school. It is always safe to

assume you only have average abilities, and that you will have to work very hard to succeed. With this in mind, by the 11th grade, I was generally at the top in nearly every subject.

At Polytechnic High School, I was told I would have to take a year of Spanish or Latin. Spanish seemed more practical, so I signed up for that. The first day of class we were given a list of words to learn, and I ignored it. The next day we were tested and I flunked the test. It was clear that everyday there would be a test and, worst of all, all the material would be cumulative; what you learned today, you would use all year. One could only succeed by studying beforehand, not afterward. From that day forward, I received straight A's in that class. The only other student who did so was the lone Mexican in the class. He never opened the book. That class prepared me for later foreign language study.

During those high school years, I would spend an hour each evening, from 9 to 10, reading a worthwhile book before going to sleep. One book I went through was Uriah Smith's *Daniel and Revelation*. Another was *Great Controversy*.

I feel sorry for those young people who have the rare privilege of growing up in a Christian home, yet strive to avoid religious opportunities and activities. If they only knew the miserable adult life they are thus preparing themselves for. Avoiding God and the study of His Word will only get them in trouble down the road. Many spend their lives running from their Best Friend. Can we not learn from the mistakes of others? Must we continually repeat their mistakes?

In my home, we never had family worship. Yet I consistently chose that which others cared little about. Those young people who, growing up in Christian homes, forsake the God of their parents have only themselves to blame for what lies ahead.

I look back on it now and know, without a shade of doubt, that it is the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy which gave me the principles and the solidness of character I so much needed.

Both my parents were well-meaning. Neither smoked nor drank. They were hardworking folk. Yet there was such a depth of happiness which I have had which they never experienced,—happiness which is alone obtainable through a relationship with Jesus Christ and an obedient study of His Inspired Writings.

By the time I was 15, I was beginning to receive requests to do various things at the Adventist Church. (By that time, I had stopped attending Sundaykeeping churches.) I decided that I would do whatever was asked of me—even though, initially, I often had not the slightest idea how to do it. When asked to offer my first prayer on the platform, I carefully wrote a short one out ahead of time and then read it. I never had to do this again; one time was enough to break the ice.

When asked to preach a sermon (the first was at the Filipino church), I preached on Elisha, knowing that there were so many stories in 2 Kings on his life, that I surely would not run out of something to say before I was done.

One evening at mid-week prayer meeting, a young man in a leather coat arrived and sat down. He said little and, although no one paid any attention to him, after the meeting I spoke with him. The conversation went on until about 11:30 p.m. It turned out he was a young soldier stationed for a time at the Presidio (at that time a federal military reserve). I was happy in my faith, and glad to share it with others. Since he seemed a little hazy about our beliefs, I reviewed them with him at some length. He listened carefully and asked questions.

It turned out that this had been the first time he had ever been in an Adventist church, and he knew nothing about us. The next Sabbath, he came back to church and asked the pastor, Daniel E. Venden (Morris and Louis' uncle), for baptism. After studies he was taken into the church. As I write these lines, I received a letter again from him just a few weeks ago. He has, to my knowledge, been faithful throughout the intervening years.

One Sabbath afternoon in 1950, Elder J.L. Tucker spoke at our church. I was astonished at the remarkable godliness of the man. It was evident in every look and word. Several years later, he corresponded with me, because, at his home in Redlands, he was regularly hearing my XERB radio broadcasts (which followed his own).

From time to time, I attended church gatherings for the young people. On one occasion when I was 16, we met out at the ocean beach one evening for a campfire. But we were having trouble getting a little pile of salted driftwood to catch on fire. Someone handed me a nearly empty gas can to help it along; so I poured gaso-

line on the fire.

As any older person would expect (but there were none there just then), the fire instantly traveled right up the line of pour to the can. It should have exploded the fumes in the can, injuring me severely. But, as soon as the fire reached the can, the flames went out. I have since read of people who had this happen to them. Some were killed and others severely injured, blinded, or crippled. Yet the source of ignition to the can might be a cigarette a foot away.

Everyday of our lives we need God's help. Live your days in a spirit of prayer.

As some may be aware, nearly every General Conference Session between 1918 and 1954 was held in San Francisco. Because of that happy fortuity, I attended portions of several of them. Grandmother Elizabeth Thorp would travel down from Washington State, stay with us, and encourage Mother to attend with us.

In one of the meetings at the July 1950 Session, I was deeply convicted with the thought that I should become a minister, if it should be His will. I wasn't sure, however, why He might want me, since I was not very capable. But a sense of great relief and happiness came as I realized it was God's Spirit convicting me to make this decision.

A month-and-a-half later, I began my last year of high school. The conviction of my personal responsibility deepened even more strongly. So I laid plans to attend the nearest Adventist college, which was Pacific Union College.

Learning of this, my mother tried to dissuade me from going into the ministry. She said that, if I would attend the University of California at Berkeley, she would buy me a new car and pay my way through to graduation. She recommended optometry, but said I could take any course.

Yet I was convicted that I should attend an Adventist college and take the ministerial course. In preparation for it, I decided to canvass that summer. My folks did not favor that either, and there were no experienced colporteurs in the city to provide any encouragement or guidance. The attitude of the people in San Francisco was so frigid that seasoned colporteurs, as well as the student canvassers, carefully avoided it.

The first day I went out was especially difficult. I had no idea where to go and not much more about what to say, even if someone opened a door and let me in.

So I prayed and drove. I turned down this street and up another. I finally parked halfway across the city, climbed a rather steep hill, and knocked at a three-story flat. No one was home on the first floor, and the lady shut the door at the second. But, when I rang the top-floor bell, an older lady let me in.

She wasn't interested in the book I had. (I had wanted to sell religious books, but the conference office told me I could only sell the one-volume, *Modern Medical Counselor*: the book which their committee deliberations determined should be the one pushed in San Francisco. Everywhere else in Central California, the student canvassers were selling *Bible Pageant*.)

Turning from the book I had in my hand, the lady asked what church I attended. When I told her, she said she was interested. She had known an Adventist family many years before, and liked them.

The California Street Church was about 12 blocks away, and I arranged for a family to pick her up each week. She regularly attended thereafter.

When the summer ended, it was time to head to college. Do I have any regrets about my youth, things I did which I wish I had not done? Yes, I have three: the three night jobs I had—a six-month night *Examiner* newspaper delivery job in San Francisco, and two later night jobs while attending the Seminary. There is no gain in tearing down your health. But I have no other regrets in my youth; thank God for it.

By 1951, when I finished high school, the Korean War was in progress. Only within the last

two years did I realize the timing of events that kept me out of that war; back then, I paid little attention to the matter.

That war began on June 25, 1950. I was 16 in the summer of 1950, and not eligible for the draft. I should have graduated from high school in June 1952, six months after turning 18.

But, many years earlier, my mother had started me in kindergarten in January, just after I turned five. Then, in September 1944, she transferred me to a school which only operated on a September-to-June basis. That teacher decided to advance me one grade. Because of this, I was still 17 when I graduated from high school, and that fall I was attending college as a theology student. This entitled me to a "ministerial exemption." The war ended two years later while I was still enrolled in college.

Reflecting on all these events, I wonder at how God protected my life during those early years. I also marvel at the fact that He moved on my heart to love Him, when so many around me seemed not to be aware of His existence. They may have been fine people, yet they were so busy getting through life that they had little time for the things which counted.

I am painfully aware that neither of my parents are likely to be in heaven, and I am quite saddened by the fact. It has been over twenty-five years since they passed away. Wherever we are in life, we must learn all the lessons we can from the paths we have trod, and keep pressing forward in fullest faith in God and in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"The Lord is good unto them that wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him." — *Lamentations 3:25*

"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." — *1 Thessalonians 5:24*

"The Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord will give grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." — *Psalms 84:11*

## 2 - The College Years

In September 1951, my parents drove me up to Pacific Union College, and I unloaded my belongings into my dorm room on the second floor of Grainger Hall.

I waved as they left; then turning, I walked back up into the lobby. From what I heard one student telling another, I knew that, just as I had to be on guard at public high school and on the streets of San Francisco, I would have to be guarded here. Only solid Christians were selected as close friends.

Two weeks later, I visited my folks over the weekend, but San Francisco was no longer the same. I had been in the country for two weeks; and the jangle, traffic, concrete, and asphalt of the city no longer held any appeal to me.

A major transition in my life had taken place.

My first year of college brought with it First Year Greek. This is the class every theology student secretly fears. Yet I found it to be no problem, for I used the same method I had used earlier in Spanish class. Study and be prepared ahead of time. Soon one older man and myself were at the top of the class, and remained there.

The doctrinal apostasy and worldly programs in our colleges, in more recent years, has been unfortunate. If the administration and faculty would operate them according to the blueprint, our colleges would be invaluable aids in preparing our young people—and our entire denomination—for deeper consecration and better service to God.

But, back in the early 1950s, the situation was different. I personally found college to have two outstanding advantages:

The first was that I could study under noble, godly teachers. This was something I very much needed, which had been lacking in my home. All of my college Bible teachers were such men.

One might inquire what makes the difference between those teachers back there and the ones

we have now. None of the Bible teachers back then had doctorates. They were hired for their deep Christian experience, years of solid experience in the work, teaching ability, and grasp of and confidence in our historic beliefs, the Bible, and the Spirit of Prophecy.

Today, men are hired because they have doctorates. They arrive at the college employment office, having been molded into modernism by atheists and Sundaykeepers in worldly universities. Very often they have never pastored a church, never given a Bible study, never held an evangelistic effort, never won a soul,—and frequently have serious doubts about Adventist fundamentals.

The second advantage was a small number of the young ladies there who were genuine Christians. Each year I would escort only the best of them to the Saturday evening programs in Irwin Hall.

However, my first year I made a mistake and began seeing more of one girl. She had the kind of cheerful, radiant personality which I liked. Already a competent pianist when she arrived at college, she had previously been the personal secretary of the manager of the Voice of Prophecy the year before in Glendale.

One evening, accompanied by a faculty member's wife who drove the car and another couple with us in the backseat, we went down to attend a Standard Hour broadcast symphony orchestra in Oakland. On the return trip, as the other couple was doing things they ought not, the girl with me wanted me to put my arm around her. It was obvious that she wanted more than that, although I did not proceed further.

Arriving back at the dorm, I felt confused. Then I made the resolution that this must stop. I never dated her again. This was a crucial decision. I had to stand for the right, even though it meant forsaking a newfound girlfriend I had

come to like.

Let me at this juncture explain my position on this. Any young person adopting it will be greatly helped: To the young men I would say, do not touch a woman. If you become engaged to be married, then you can hold her hand, but nothing more. When you are very close to marriage, you can kiss. To the young ladies, I would say, conduct yourself in the same manner.

It may sound way out, but it works. People become so impassioned that, prior to marriage, they do that which they ought not to do.

We have here a twofold situation, which this pattern nicely solves: It takes time to be sure you have the right one; yet, during that time, you must not become inflamed with passion.

No one told me the above procedure; it was self-evident. There is a right way. First and foremost we must honor God. Do we not say we belong to Him?

If the other one wishes to violate such a principled course, he or she is not worthy of your respect, much less your love.

What was the aftermath of the above incident? At the end of that school year, the young lady who wanted to go further with me married the other man in that car backseat—who had been fondling another girl (who happened to be the driver's daughter). The newly married couple were back the next year, and two facts were obvious: She deeply respected me for my conduct, and her husband was very jealous of her. Their marriage lasted only a few years; and she died in Oregon, of cancer, about 15 years ago.

That first year I took part each Sabbath afternoon in a branch Sabbath School in Novato. Only non-Adventist children were present. It was a rewarding experience.

Following my first year of college, it was time to find a job for summer 1952. I first interviewed at The White House, a large department store in downtown San Francisco. They wanted me for the job; but, I still remember, when I said I could not work Saturdays, the interviewer replied in shock, "The only person in this store who does not work Saturdays is as old as my grandmother's teeth!"

The second interview was at a high-rise office building in the finance district. They needed a helper in their printing department. This was a job I would have liked to have had. By the time I had been interviewed by the third person, I

knew I was accepted. This was a Monday-to-Friday position; but, once every three or four months, it was necessary to come in on Saturday. So why need I worry? Yet I knew I should not take such chances. When I mentioned that, in case Saturday work might eventually be needed, I could not work Saturdays and explained why, the interviewer wanted me but, checking with the printing staff, found they hesitated to have someone who would not stay by them on weekend jobs.

This was discouraging, yet it is a cross for Jesus that Sabbathkeepers must bear. If we are to inherit eternity, are we not to suffer with Him down here?

The third application was made to Aetna Fire Insurance. They needed an assistant underwriter. No Sabbath work was ever required. I worked there all summer.

At the beginning of my second year of college (1952-1953), I asked Elder Graham Maxwell if I could be his Greek reader. This was an honored position, for I would grade all Greek and other papers for his classes. Because I was one of his two top students, he consented. I held that job throughout my years at PUC. The school year went well.

I was also placed in charge of all Sabbath afternoon, off-campus literature distribution programs and, if I recall correctly, continued in that office till I graduated.

Either that year or the next, one day a friend invited me to drive down to the Oakland area with him. The student body had voted to purchase large curtains for Irwin Hall, which could be used during the Saturday night programs. But no one seemed to have time to make the final fabric and color selection.

A number of colors and textures were available—green, blue, brown, and so on. A wrong choice would look horrible. We selected a delicate rose, which would match the woodwork in Irwin Hall. A few weeks later these curtains were hung and used for many years.

On the way home we stopped by Berkeley, the largest university in America. It could have been my school, but I was thankful I had made a better choice.

The next summer, 1953, I visited Oregon with a friend and then drove to Los Angeles, where I worked in excavation at the York Theater. It had

been purchased by the Southern California Conference and was being remodeled as an evangelistic center.

While in the area one evening, we drove over to visit a man I wanted to meet: Murl Vance, who, since 1941, had carried on extensive research into the 666 and ancient mystery religions. He gave me a considerable amount of information and material. Several years later, while at the Seminary, Murl arrived for a brief summer's work to complete his master's degree, and we visited again several times.

Several years ago, I wrote a brief overview of his research findings, and will eventually enlarge on it.

During my third year in college (1953-1954), I increased the weight lifting I had started in my second year, to the point where I could lift 180 lbs. over my head. I only weighed 160.

The following summer, 1954, I spent in San Francisco, catching up on two courses needed so I could graduate at the end of my fourth year. I took two graphic arts courses at San Francisco State College, and a full year of World History from Home Study Institute. I was now 20.

It seemed to me that if I had an overall understanding of world history, I could attach later facts more easily to the basic framework of data in my mind. So I decided to master those basics that summer. This included memorizing key facts and historical relationships. When I returned to school that fall, I had a discussion with a fourth-year history major, and he told me I had a better understanding of history than he had. He had lots of knowledge patches, but I had a rounded grasp of the whole picture. In the years that followed, my thinking proved correct. As I collected other historical facts, it was easier for my memory to place them in their proper relationship to the whole.

The 1954 General Conference Session was held that same summer in San Francisco, and I attended some of the meetings. At one of them, clapping suddenly broke out in part of the audience. At first it was somewhat sporadic and hesitant. The church leaders on the platform looked surprised. What should they do? They should have reproved it, for they were being applauded. Unfortunately, they remained silent. A few minutes later, a far more rousing applause was heard. From then on, applause set the pattern

at the evening meetings at the Sessions. In the years since, those meetings have focused more on entertainment than on enlightenment and spirituality, and men bask in the applause. Yet it injures those who give it and those who receive it. There are ways to be appreciative, but only God should receive our praise.

Another large gathering also convened that same summer at the Civic Center: the annual Convention of the American Medical Association. I happened to be downtown one day and, remembering that the convention was in progress, walked over to the Civic Center. Since I had a suit on, I decided to try getting in. Walking steadily toward the door as though I belonged there, it just so happened that an older couple fell into step just behind me. The security guards opened the door and let us all in. People did not wear name badges back then.

Inside I found dozens of medical exhibits of various kinds. One that interested me was a memorial exhibit to Albert Schweitzer. But of far greater significance was an exhibit of photos and documents describing a recently completed in-depth research study linking cigarette smoking with lung cancer. Such a study had never been done before, and I was greatly surprised that this exhibit, which delegates passed by with little notice, was not in the headlines.

It turned out that the following day, this research report was presented to the delegates from the podium—and the story made headlines across America. The AMA had finally declared war on tobacco, and they never backed off in the years which followed.

Arriving on campus for my fourth and final year at Pacific Union College (1954-1955), I unpacked my things in Newton Hall and noted the announcement, that a welcome would be held for freshmen students that evening in the large gymnasium.

As the high point in the program, one of the best speakers from among the sophomore men stood up and extended a welcome from the student body to the incoming freshman class.

Then a freshman girl arose and gave the reply in a remarkably clear, musical voice. I was entranced. Then she sang a song, and did it remarkably well. She had a very beautiful voice.

After that, from time to time I would see her on the campus, but she was not dating anyone. Planning to become a medical doctor, she did

not want to waste time on the young men, although a number asked her to accompany them to the Saturday night programs.

That fall, I lost all interest in dating for the Saturday night program; for it seemed as if my mind was already made up. Every other week I would ask her for a date and, when she turned me down, I would very politely accept it. (I later learned that some had not been as polite when they were refused.)

Then one day in the late fall, she was in her dormitory room when a girlfriend from off-campus was visiting her. Looking out the window, she remarked, "Oh, there comes that guy again, to ask me for a date!" Looking out the window, her friend saw the tall, lanky form of Vance walking along the path, carrying a closed umbrella in his hand. So she said, "Why don't you go out with him once; that will get rid of him."

So that day, Cherie said she would accompany me to the next Saturday evening program.

The program that evening was presented by a scientist who had spent the preceding year exploring the Greenland glacier. His team had been the first to discover that it is over a mile thick.

Such programs are divided by a 15-minute intermission. So when it arrived, an unplanned thought came to mind. I said, "*Would you like to go back and meet the man?*" Cherie was taken aback by this remark, for people just do not do such things. But she was the adventurous kind and replied that she would. I was used to knocking on doors at St. Mary's Hospital and always quite ready to do things differently.

So, as the student body sat there with nothing to do but watch us, I escorted her the length of the balcony, down the stairs, to the stage, and into the back room. The scientist was very gracious and spoke to us for several minutes about his work. Then we parted and I escorted Cherie back up the stairs to our seats. One might imagine that I had planned this, but I had not.

I was always willing to do that which others would not do, as long as it was proper. Cherie was the type who would go with me. We made a good team. In the years that followed, we would go many places together.

When she arrived back at the dorm that night, another girl, known for her ways of handling men, burst into Cherie's room and said, "Hey, he's good looking! When you get done with him, let me have him!"

As she later told me, this irritated Cherie; and she thought to herself, "*I'm not going to let you have him!*"

Not wishing for her to feel boxed in, from then on, I would only ask her for a date every other Saturday night. She always accepted.

I would discuss religion, read favorite passages from *Great Controversy*, and similar activities destined to ruin a less spiritual friendship. But it did not detour Cherie; I could see she liked spiritual matters—something I wanted to know.

But now I had concerns mounting. In a few months I would graduate—and be off to Washington, D.C.

So one evening I escorted her over to the front entrance of Irwin Hall, where we could view much of the campus, and asked her to marry me.

Saying she would have to think about that, Cherie asked her mother what she should do. As mothers always do, Esther had the perfect answer: "Ask him if he'll wait a year. If he won't wait a year, he's not worth having." Her mother was as perky as she was.

So Cherie asked if I would wait a year. Since I was something of an unusual idealist, I replied, "I will wait for you twenty years." Then I told her the story of Albert Schweitzer, and how he decided to wait till he was 30, before beginning missionary service. In the interim, he acquired three advanced degrees (music, medicine, and theology). So, I said, "If you want to take medicine, go ahead and I'll wait till you've completed it."

As far as I was concerned, she was the one; so I was quite happy to wait. Although no definite answer was forthcoming, happy weeks passed; for we visited together frequently in the weekday evenings. By this time, we were attending every Saturday night program together.

That year, the Religion Department students elected me to manage the Friday Evening Ministerial Vespers. This was something new to me. I had an entire year of programs to develop. On top of that, it seemed like a good idea if I added a yearful of ads for the student newspaper, the *Campus Chronicle*. Surely, this would be something to struggle with throughout the coming months. But, looking candidly at it, I saw that it did not have to be that way. Suspecting that people would accept speaking appointments if they were weeks away, I arranged all the appoint-

ments for the entire year over the next couple days, and then sat down and quickly wrote nice display ads for the paper. The job was done. Everyone I asked accepted, because their appointment was later on. Two of those I asked seemed relaxed and ready to speak, so I gave them the nearest appointments.

When spring came, Dr. V. Hendershot, president of the Seminary, arrived on campus to interview prospective students. I spoke with him, and noted that his part of the interview seemed mechanical and his thoughts elsewhere. Before the end of the school year, he had been caught by police in an affair in Washington, D.C. and ousted.

There was a ping-pong table in the recreation room of Newton Hall, the newer of the two men's dormitories. A man we shall call Craig (not his real name) was the acknowledged ping-pong champion of the school. This was not surprising, since, when he was not in class or sleeping in preparation for his night job, he played ping-pong all day. Craig was the head cleanup and night watchman for the Science Hall, where all premedical studies were held.

Near the end of this—my (and his) last year at the college—the administration finally discovered that Craig had, for four years, routinely broken into faculty files. At night, when no one else was around, he would copy the subsequent tests, memorize them, and obtain near-perfect grades. During the day, he played ping-pong.

Although he totally flunked the standardized test given at the end of the year, certain legal reasons prevented the college from blocking his graduation. Since he was a pre-med and a Hispanic, he went to the university in Guadalajara, Mexico, to take medical studies.

In later years, I often told young people about Craig. Really, now, what did he accomplish? He paid four years of tuition, and learned essentially nothing. Upon graduation, he went to a Mexican university to take medicine; and the PUC administration probably warned them not to hire

him for a night job in their science building!

Even if he did cheat on exams there also, and finally obtain an M.D. degree—would you want him to operate on you?

But, more likely, he probably flunked out of Guadalajara the first year.

What did he accomplish by cheating?

Instead of taking a major and minor, I had elected to take a double major: in Theology and Biblical Languages. All this may sound very good; but, in later years as I become more practical about life, I realized I should have skipped the language study and taken a minor in printing or education.

Fortunately, in later years I learned a lot about both.

On graduation day, my parents came up to the campus, and so did Cherie's parents. Later that afternoon, the two of us walked over to the men's dormitory. A car was parked there, and Cherie recognized the occupants: It was her pastor, Elder Benjamin Reile from the Stockton Church.

She introduced me to him, and told how I was going to the Seminary for advanced training. Then he turned to me, narrowed his eyes, and said, "When you are ready for a call, let me know."

I gave this hardly a thought, for I had much to do in a very few days. Within a couple days, I had to be in Washington, D.C. to start classes. The Master's degree required five quarters of work—summer, fall, spring, and second summer. So no summer vacation for me.

Within an hour before I was to leave with my parents from our Beulah Street home for the airport, a phone call came. It was Cherie. She said, "*Vance, I will marry you.*" It turned out that she had been helping her mother in their home in Stockton, when her mother said to her, "What's wrong with you?" Cherie replied, "I don't know." Her mother said, "You're in love; why don't you call and tell him you'll marry him!"

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible." — *Mark 9:23*

"Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

— *1 Thessalonians 5:24*

## 3 - The Seminary Years

It was June 1955. At the San Francisco Airport, I enplaned on a TWA prop (they had no jet airliners back then), stopped briefly in Chicago, and landed at the Washington National Airport. A friend, who had graduated from PUC a year earlier, met me and we drove out to Takoma Park. There I found a room with a family who lived about three blocks from the headquarters cluster of buildings: the General Conference, Review, and Seminary. The owner worked in the Review.

Every couple of days Cherie and I sent letters to one another. The separation was difficult for both of us. I was 21 and Cherie was 18.

That summer, as part of an introductory class, we were given a researcher's tour of the Library of Congress; but I discovered it was difficult to locate what you wanted (since many books were not on open, accessible stacks) and, after waiting half an hour for book requests to be filled, a majority of them were not available. Surely, the congressmen did not have that many books tucked away in their offices!

Many times I have been asked where to find what you are looking for. If they are looking for Adventist-oriented books, I tell them to go to the Andrews University Library or the Loma Linda University Library. Both have excellent Adventist collections. Also notable is the General Conference Archives in Silver Spring.

Of the many students enrolled at the Seminary back in those days, only a handful were young men. Many were older workers trying to get back into denominational work after being sidelined. Because of this, it was jokingly known by church leaders as the "Adventist cemetery."

One afternoon I spoke with a pastor in his late 40s, from the Dakotas. He told me it was terrible up there. He had five churches, each a hundred miles apart; and if he did not reach all five Ingathering goals—he had to pay all his In-

gathering travel expenses himself. Both he and his wife, who had joined the conversation, were extremely bitter about the matter. They had quit and come to the Seminary.

They had a plan of action: His wife and teenage daughter obtained a job to support the family and he was working his way through to the highest religion diploma in the denomination at the time, the Bachelor of Divinity degree.

To improve his job saleability, he was not satisfied merely to do the class work. He went on every available overseas tour to Europe, Egypt, and the Holy Land. He bought an expensive camera, took pictures, and bought still more from commercial outlets. Adding an expensive semi-automatic slide projector to the collection, he began giving travel lectures throughout area churches. Eventually they achieved their goal, and he was hired as an academy Bible teacher. They had escaped from the Dakotas.

What was this Bachelor of Divinity degree?

The equivalent of the Master of Divinity degree, currently obtainable at the Seminary, it required two years of study beyond the five-quarter Master of Arts degree. I had decided to obtain both degrees.

The Review, General Conference, and Seminary buildings were all located on the same large city block—just inside Washington, D.C. Across the street was Takoma Park, Maryland, where most of the workers lived.

A Californian, I had never before been in the East, and found the climate radically different. Hot and humid, in the summer, and bitterly cold in the winter. It was something that required time to get used to. I learned to dress for the winter.

I spent my spare time that first year doing yard cleanup, working for a floor sanding company, and with a painting crew in newly constructed public schools.

During the Christmas break, I joined a group of students (all of them older denominational workers) who had the same goal in mind—drive to California and return within two weeks. They kept the automobile going day and night. Free-ways were in the planning stage at that time; so our entire trip was on two-lane roads through every little town. In three and a half days, I arrived in San Francisco, and then visited in Stockton with Cherie and her family.

Returning to the Seminary, I obtained a part-time janitorial and night watchman job at the General Conference. (Friends are surprised when I tell them I was once a General Conference worker.) My assignment was to alternatively relieve the men working on each of the floors for their day off. This was a 7 p.m. to 1 a.m. job. In addition to cleaning and polishing hallways and offices, I had to walk a circuit once an hour and punch station time clocks.

Later that spring, I was asked to accept a full-time job as second-floor janitor/night watchman. So now I began working all night, from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m., and attending classes during the day. On my floor were the offices of Elder Reuben R. Figuhr, General Conference president, and Elder Walter R. Beach, General Conference Secretary. (The Treasurer, Elder C.L. Torrey, was on the first floor.) Elder Figuhr's office was the largest in the building and the only one with a carpet, yet he was rarely there.

Also on the second floor, at the opposite end of the building, was Leroy Edwin Froom's office. It was always clean. Froom did his research work at home. That year no papers were stacked there, as they were the next year.

During the spring quarter, an older pastor approached me. He was a kindly man whose wife had recently passed away; and, in order to forget his grief, he was planning to tour through the Holy Land and Egypt that summer. He asked me if I wanted to accompany him at no cost; he would pay all my expenses. I declined this kind offer, for I had another appointment in June.

June arrived; and, as I sat in the Takoma Park Church listening to a graduation speech (I believe by Elder F.D. Nichol who had just been awarded an honorary D.D. that evening), I jotted notes on final packing details.

I was handed my Master's degree diploma, and rushed to the home where I was staying to

finish packing.

The next day, I boarded a Greyhound bus with a fellow student who had also received his Master's degree the night before. We were bound for California; he was to be one of my best men at my wedding. Since he was from Switzerland, he planned to visit Yosemite afterward.

Onward we went, night and day for three days. As we neared California, I began silently wondering what I would do when I met Cherie at the San Francisco bus depot. I knew she would have friends with her. It turned out she was wondering the same thing. We both had been so polite during our engagement.

Cherie was there with her former college roommate and other friends. But she was prepared for the situation, and rushed into my arms. So we kissed.

Within a week we were married in an outdoor ceremony in a walnut grove behind her parents' home. Because she was so well-known, having worked for years at Pinecrest Summer Camp, 11 ministers came to our wedding. Elder Graham Maxwell officiated. There was no foolery or tricks. It was an excellent wedding. The date was June 3, 1956. I was 22 and Cherie was just under 19.

After breakfast, the next morning, we climbed into a used, green DeSoto that my father had given me a few days earlier, and drove into Nevada and thence up to the Tetons and Yellowstone National Park.

The next day, we climbed nearly to the summit of Tewonot, the second highest peak in the range and close to the Grand Teton. This was a foolish thing to do, for we made the climb without notifying the rangers. We were just kids and did not know better. Fortunately, we did not have an accident up there. Then we went to Yellowstone.

Arriving in Takoma Park, we drove directly to the newly completed Seminary Apartments. The plan had been to locate the forthcoming Seminary campus next to it, on a smidgen of land behind Takoma Academy. But that never happened. Two years later, just as I was graduating, the decision was made to move the Seminary to Berrien Springs.

I was now beginning my second (1956-1957) year at the Seminary.

It had been only half a week since we were

married in California. The first night that I went back to work at the General Conference Building, I took Cherie with me so she could see what it looked like.

As we were strolling down the hall, suddenly the second most powerful man in the building, Elder C.L. Torrey, the General Conference Treasurer, came around the corner. He wanted to see who was there. Starstruck, I said, "Elder Torrey, I want you to meet my new wife!" He mumbled something under his breath, turned and left.

By the way, from the tension or lack of it among workers, I would say that Elder Walter R. Beach and Elder Roy Allen Anderson were the third and fourth most powerful men there. It was because R.A. Anderson was so influential, that the Evangelical Conferences took place.

One night, I found an 8½ x 11-inch booklet, one copy of which had been tossed into nearly every department wastebasket. Opening one of them, I found it to be an excellent Spirit of Prophecy compilation on marriage and divorce standards for the church. Written by Dr. Roy and Dr. Margurite Williams, a husband and wife medical team in Arizona, it had been sent by them to every office in the General Conference. On my floor, those invaluable Spirit of Prophecy compilations were consigned to the garbage.

I took home about a dozen copies and shared them with friends. In late 1980, thrilled with my Pilgrims Rest tracts, Dr. Roy Williams phoned me. In our conversation, he told me he was elderly and his wife was dying; and I told him about that incident 23 years earlier, when the General Conference was dumping their books in the garbage. A couple years later, I learned that both he and his wife had passed to their rest. They had stood nobly for the right and God will reward them. You have probably seen their final book on the subject: *The Seventh Commandment*. I summarized it in one of four tract sets: *Our Historic Standards on Adultery, Divorce, and Remarriage—Part 1-3 [WM-589-591]*. I plan to re-issue them all in a booklet.

As I was cleaning rooms and emptying trash one evening, a large note was on top of one wastebasket: "Burn this!"

All the waste we collected was paper; and all of it was dumped into a hole on top of a reinforced concrete incinerator in back of the building, to be burned the next day. This "Burn this!" notice attracted my attention, so I took the time

to look through the wastebasket before tossing it into my trash bin.

What I found was a large pile of top secret questionnaires, each one with several pages. I had in front of me the results of a thoughtful survey, sent to over a hundred church leaders throughout the world field. After tabulating the responses, the papers were earmarked for destruction. All the questions could be summarized in one sentence: *Should we keep the College of Medical Evangelists (now Loma Linda University) or close it down?*

The questions reflected the fact that leaders were well aware of the rampant liberalism at Loma Linda and, of special concern, the fact that only a small number of its graduates were going into mission work. The school had thus lost its reason for denominational support. Yet each year one entire church offering was earmarked for the support of CME; while its medical faculty were growing rich on their outside practice which they were permitted to carry on in that denominational facility, free of hospital charges.

I spent half-an-hour reading and scanning through the questionnaires. Repeatedly, the responses varied from a "I wish I knew how to solve the problem" to "I'm afraid we ought to stop supporting it." Not one respondent, that I noticed, voiced the opinion that all was doing well at the college.

The sequel to this story is that, apparently, the brethren ultimately decided that too great a crisis might be evoked if they abandoned CME financially. So, in the years which followed, one offering a year continued to be channeled to Loma Linda. (In more recent decades, a percentage plan is followed. Called a "budget," a nice percentage is allocated to Loma Linda University. So a percentage of all your non-tithe offerings to the church go to further the adventures taking place in Loma Linda.)

"When hesitant, don't do anything" is a policy which has cost our church a lot over the years. Leaders fear to trust in God, stand for principle, and meet the iceberg head on.

In the spring of 1955, Donald Grey Barnhouse, a leading Evangelical speaker and writer, and his associate, Walter R. Martin, a cult researcher, began holding meetings with Roy Allen Anderson and Leroy Edwin Froom. These came to be known as the "Martin-Barnhouse Evangelical Conferences" or, more simply, the "Evangelical Conferences." The most complete historical

write-up available anywhere on this matter is my lengthy *The Beginning of the End—Part 1-18*. It is the only complete historical study available, and includes extensive documentation. It is now in our *Doctrinal History Tractbook*.

Those meetings (spring 1955 to spring 1956) and the preparation of the General Conference-subsidized book, *Questions on Doctrine* (1956-1957)—which resulted in something of a doctrinal sellout to the Protestants—were primarily held during the time I was attending the Seminary (summer 1955 to summer 1958), next door to where many of the meetings were conducted.

As a result of those ongoing meetings, changes in some of the doctrinal teachings at the Seminary became noticeable in my second (1956-1957) year there. A finished atonement at the cross and diverse positions on the nature of Christ began to be made.

Unexplainably, I was the only one who took vigorous exception to such changes in the classes. I would quote Bible and Spirit of Prophecy and protest while other students remained silent. They wisely knew that keeping their jobs and/or ensuring placement was more important than fussing with teachers about a matter as small as changes in doctrine.

I did not make myself a nuisance, yet I did speak up. Heppenstall was especially irritated about this. However he was an interesting man. It was not until later that I realized he actually liked to see someone in his classes who would stand for something.

During the 1956-1957 school year, each night when I cleaned the second floor of the General Conference Building, there were now stacks of the latest mimeographed chapters from his book, *Questions on Doctrine*, on Froom's desk. There was no doubt in my mind that Froom wrote that book, although the fact was never publicly acknowledged. In addition to the fact that the project was centered in his office, QD contained the same writing style found in his other books.

These copies, stacked in his office, were mailed to leaders all over the world field for review. I later learned from a worker in one field that copies sent to his division office were ignored. They did not feel they had time to bother with them. Probably many other busy leaders felt the same way.

It was obvious that Froom worked at home; the office was never used, except as a place to

stack those papers. However, one night when I went in there, a letter was on his desk. It was centered and squared at the edges, as only a careful researcher like Froom would do. Ironically, the letter contained such a bombshell that Froom had left it there overnight.

As you will see below, underneath each letter was another one.

Now I am not the type to read other people's mail—and I never read anything else on a desk in the General Conference—but it seemed that I should stop just then and read that letter. I did not copy the letter, nor did I take it, yet I have often recalled its contents over the years.

A teenage girl had recently accepted the Adventist message and been baptized. Upon learning of this, her father and mother were deeply upset. So they wrote to a well-known defender of Evangelical Protestantism of the day, Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, a well-known speaker as well as editor of *Eternity* magazine.

Explaining the terrible thing that had happened to their daughter, they pled with him for counsel as to what they might do. *What could he say that might help them convince the girl of the error her ways?*

Underneath the top letter, I found a second: Dr. Barnhouse's letter of reply. As with the first, it was the original letter. In it he said that he and his associate, Walter R. Martin, had been carrying on a deepening series of consultations with the Adventist leaders in Washington, D.C. for about a year. He then told the girl's parents that, although these contacts had not yet been made public, *he and Dr. Martin were working to bring Seventh-day Adventists into harmony with Evangelical Protestantism—by, he said, actually changing their doctrines*. He concluded by encouraging the couple with the assurance that there was clear evidence that he and Mr. Martin were succeeding.

Upon receiving Barnhouse's letter, the parents felt relieved. Then they decided to give Barnhouse's letter to their daughter, in the hope that she would see that even the Adventist leaders felt their doctrines were so bad, they were planning to change them! The daughter, in turn, gave the letter to her pastor. He then wrote a cover letter to the General Conference, and enclosed the original letter from Barnhouse. The letter from that pastor was underneath the second letter. The Adventist pastor had let the cat out of the bag—clearly alerting General Conference

leaders as to the Martin-Barnhouse plan of action.

The letter from Barnhouse had *Eternity Magazine*, printed on top, with *The Evangelical Foundation, Inc.*, beneath it. At the bottom, to one side in smaller print, was Dr. Barnhouse's signature, with a notation beneath that a secretary had typed it.

Beneath this letter was yet another one. It had been written and signed by Leroy Froom to Donald Barnhouse the previous day (the day before my post-midnight discovery in Froom's office). The thought of the letter was this: I have not heard from you for so many weeks (a number was given), and I do not understand. I have written you several letters and you have not replied. I have never had reason to question your motives, but the fact that you do not reply is causing me to wonder.

Froom did not intend that to be a clear letter. Indeed, Froom had banked his reputation on a good outcome from these Evangelical Conferences; so he had a right to be concerned!

Why he wrote the letter instead of merely phoning Barnhouse, I do not know. Other evidence, given in my lengthy study on the subject, indicates that Barnhouse was frequently out of his office on lecture trips. A prominent Evangelical leader at the time, he regularly spoke to interested audiences both in the U.S. and overseas.

I carefully arranged the letters on the desk, emptied the waste basket, and left.

This letter from Barnhouse to those parents revealed a primary reason why Martin and Barnhouse were involved in these extensive meetings with our leaders, from the spring of 1955 to the summer of 1958. If Martin merely wanted to write a book, he could have done that without embroiling Barnhouse and several top Adventist leaders in meetings which lasted over a year. *Their concern was to convert an entire church!*

Yet this correspondence also revealed that Froom was not an accomplice with Martin, in the sense which some have charged. Froom believed that he was somehow helping to improve the image of his beloved church, in the eyes of the Evangelicals, by readjusting the wording of our doctrinal positions. I do not believe he intended harm; yet his notorious chopping of Spirit of Prophecy statements into tiny quoted phrases, here and there (in his later book, *Movement of Destiny*), which twisted her meaning, his belief

that Evangelical doctrinal positions were the norm ours should be adjusted to, and his attempts to introduce those positions in *Questions on Doctrine*—has brought much grief to our people in the years since then.

I recall very distinctly that it was not less than a week after reading the above correspondence, that I sat in the chapel at the Seminary, with the assembled students and faculty, and listened to a summary update by Elder Froom of his contacts with Barnhouse and Martin. Froom distinctly said something like this: "In all the time that I have known Dr. Barnhouse, I have never had reason to doubt his motives." That statement did not agree with the letter I had read a few days earlier. This riveted his words into my memory.

Walter Martin was the principal protagonist at those Evangelical Conferences. Across from him at the table were Froom and Anderson. It was later disclosed in *Ministry* magazine that Martin gave three sermons to our people during that time: Takoma Park, the Seminary, and Loma Linda. I heard two of those talks. Martin was in his prime back then and talked like a machine gun. He had a phenomenal memory and a driving personality. Sitting opposite him were two men anxious to please the Evangelicals and "gain acceptance for the Adventists." It was an unequal match.

One day, according to his own later report, Martin walked into the room with a big suitcase, plopped it on the table, and announced in a tone as if the world were about to fall in, that there was heresy in the books inside it. He had collected the books, he said, at our ABCs (back then called Adventist Book and Bible Houses), and had brought them as evidence.

Froom and Anderson, he later wrote, were quick to offer to change those books. And, he added, they did so. The above incident was later printed in an Evangelical journal.

Such were the happenings next door to the Seminary. The entire story, detailed in my *Beginning of the End*, is a fascinating one. We are today living with the sorry results. The outcome affected our doctrines, with a rebound effect on many aspects of our faith and practice.

From the spring of 1955, through the summer of 1956, General Conference leaders tried to keep under wraps the conferences which were taking place and the doctrinal agreements being made. But, in September 1956, the "bombshell

article” in *Eternity* magazine was published. Written by Barnhouse, it opened to full view the ongoing meetings, told that Adventist leaders were now strenuously denying earlier published beliefs and included Barnhouse’s comments, that a bunch of the beliefs still retained (such as an investigative judgment) were utter foolishness. Students at the Seminary immediately obtained copies of this and later articles, and modified doctrinal positions in Seminary class presentations became more common. Cautious articles began appearing in *Ministry* magazine. All of this is detailed in my lengthy study.

When the book, *Questions on Doctrine*, was printed in 1957, thousands of copies were mailed free of charge to every religious college and seminary library in the world, in the hope that they would be convinced we were like them.

Edward Heppenstall, newly arrived from a lengthy teaching position at La Sierra, had just moved into one of the 16 Seminary Apartments where we lived my second school year (1956-1957).

Heppenstall was to be my major professor; I took more classes under him than anyone else. Dr. Heppenstall was a man of strong self-discipline and decided convictions.

Like many others, he knew how to use half-truths to his advantage. The reader may not know that an old speech adage, among men who know how to grip and hold audiences, is this: “All startling statements are half-truths.” I doubt that all are, but many are. Let me cite an example:

One day, Heppenstall concluded his class lecture with a quotation from Augustine (the Catholic monk who could not control his passions, yet was sainted by the papacy because he preached absolute submission to the Roman hierarchy). The statement was this: “*Love God and do as you please.*” What a concept! It is tantalizing, and sounds somewhat true. Actually, it is a half-truth. In one sense it is true that, if you love and submit to God’s guidance, He will order your life; and, while you remain submitted, you will tend to think right thoughts. Yet, in reality, one only succeeds on the Christian pathway by clinging to God, resisting wrong thoughts, distrusting self, and pleading for continual help.

The fact is that half-truths tend to be lies (although not necessarily intentional). “It always rains here!” is a half-truth. To say, “It rains here at times” is the truth, and a comment hardly

worth listening to. But to say, “It always rains here!” is a startling statement which commands attention, yet it is not true. Actually, it is a falsehood mingled with a truth, for there is nowhere you can go where it rains all the time.

In this sense, all error is a half-truth; for all error is always mingled with a truth which it feeds upon and corrupts. Think about it.

(Years later, I learned that the year after I obtained a Bachelor of Divinity and left the Seminary, Desmond Ford arrived from Australia. I was told that Heppenstall and Ford did very well together—especially since Ford, himself, was full of theological half-truths.)

While attending the Beltsville Church, I started Bible studies with a family, which eventually resulted in a baptism.

Partway through this fall term, I obtained a job as chaplain of Hadley Memorial Hospital, on the other side of the District. Working there during my afternoons, I wished I could minister more fully to the needs of the patients.

That same school year, we learned that a fifth-grade teacher had quit at the Cynthia Warner School, and they needed a replacement till the end of the year. This was an expensive private school, located next to our own Takoma Academy. They also needed a temporary bus driver for a few weeks. We both interviewed, and Cherie was given the teaching job and I drove the “bus,” which was a station wagon. One of my riders was the granddaughter of Rachel Carson, the author of *The Sea Around Us* (and her later book, *Silent Spring*).

Cherie only had six children in her class and Cynthia Warner quickly discovered that she was an excellent teacher.

Cherie decided that, as a good teacher, she ought to visit each of her pupils’ homes. So she made appointments and, on six evenings, together we visited each of them. Three of those visits were especially interesting:

In one, the father was a member, from England, of a special three-member commission of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. (The other two members were American and French.)

In the second home, the father was a research scientist. Grabbing a Geiger Counter, he took me outside and showed me the amount of fallout on his soil in Maryland, from atomic bomb testing in the American West and in the Soviet Union. It was a significant amount. In recent years, far

more information has surfaced on the amount of radiation which has fallen on Americans, their crops, and livestock from nuclear tests in the Nevada desert.

In the third home, the father worked at the National Institutes of Health, in Bethesda, Maryland. After discussing for a time his research assignment, which was the possibility of cancer from underground uranium deposits in Washington County, Virginia (a project he admitted to be unlikely to produce any worthwhile information), he offered to take us out to the Institutes.

About a week later, he took us to his office on the perimeter of the NIH facility, and we spoke with his supervisor, who spoke glowingly of their project. Then he walked us over to the heart of the organization. There, on either side were two gigantic high-rise buildings—all of it dedicated to U.S. governmental medical research.

Turning to me, our friend asked, “What department would you like to go to?” As a worker, he was able to get us into any facility we desired, but I knew that in his allotted time I could only select one. I replied that I would like to see where nutritional research was conducted.

Checking at the directory in the lobby of one of the two buildings, sure enough, there was a department where such research was conducted.

As we stepped out of the elevator and turned down the hall toward that section, as if on a signal, a man rushed out of an office and toward us. “What are you doing here? What do you want?” he demanded. Perhaps he had a periscope to watch for intruders. Without the intervention of our friend, I knew we were going to be quickly escorted back to that elevator.

But our friend introduced himself as a fellow NIH worker, and said he would like to have a tour of their facility.

I then asked the question, “Do you do nutritional research on the relation of diet to cancer?” Turning to me, he said acidly, “*We leave that to the quacks!*” In view of the prominent position he held in the only NIH department which would ever conduct such work, I will never forget that remark.

Minds are closed. The concept that vitamins, minerals, or good food could prevent or alleviate cancer was not considered a subject for investigation. The possibility that any chemical additive or junk food could lead to, or intensify, a malignancy was also ruled out.

We were then taken into a room with cages

of chickens, guinea pigs, rats, and mice, and told that, only the year before—for the first time ever—they had succeeded in keeping rats barely alive on pure amino acids, starch, fat, plus every known vitamin and mineral. Then came the significant comment, “*But if we add some alfalfa, they immediately make excellent growth.*” That indicated to me that many, many nutrients have not been discovered, which are in greens. Vitamins and minerals are invaluable additions to one’s diet, but the basic foods are also needed.

A few months later, a friend, who was taking postgraduate work at George Washington University, stopped by to see us. He was circulating a petition among local pastors and leaders at the General Conference, Review, Seminary, Washington Missionary College, and some students. In view of the fact that, due to Spirit of Prophecy principles, the General Conference should not be located there, the petition was a request to leadership to move it out of the city.

That was a straight-forward request, and I immediately signed it. My friend looked at me thoughtfully for a time and said, “*You and only one other man were willing to immediately sign this paper.*” He had already presented the petition to about three dozen individuals.

Why is it that, when it comes to employment, people fear to stand by Spirit of Prophecy principles? Must we always be chained to policy?

In the spring, an acquaintance visited us from California. He had graduated from PUC a year ahead of me, and did not complete his Seminary Master’s degree until half-way through my first year at the Seminary. In the fall of his final year at the Seminary, he began taking supplemental work in the Department of Philosophy at nearby University of Maryland. By doing that, he was obviously opening his mind for capture by satanic delusions. In his heart, my friend was searching for reasons to avoid the strict standards of Adventism.

Late that fall, he wrote a paper for UM, entitled “*The Existential Causes of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.*” Big words impart the appearance of great intellect, as you will find if you bother to read the writings of the “great theologians and philosophers.” In this case, the word “existentialism” referred to the religious theories of the Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855), were much in vogue at the time in the seminaries of America—including our own.

(Kierkegaard's "existentialism" was the basis upon which neo-orthodoxy had been later built by such men as Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Paul Tillich.) In everyday language, my friend's research title said this: "What were the actual reasons, existing in the mid-1800s, which caused the Adventist denomination to be formed?"

One day my friend rushed to our Seminary apartment. His face flushed, he was excited. Amazed would be a better word. He had begun the research project, determined to prove that the Adventist people arose out of a series of naturalistic events—which would confirm his hope that the movement was not founded by the God of heaven.

"Vance," he said, "I have gone through archival material at the Library of Congress and in several other locations—and I found only one reason for the origin of the Seventh-day Adventist Church! —*It was the prophecy of Daniel 8:14!*" My friend was deeply impressed that the Adventist faith, which he was tending away from in his own life, was, indeed founded on Scripture. God had stepped into human history and started our denomination!

One afternoon that fall, at his urging, I had accompanied him to two of his classes at UM. The teachers seemed shallow and the content worthless. Compared to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, the world has nothing to offer. "Philosophy" is nothing more than the theories of men. In the course of my earlier reading into many subjects, I had scanned a book which summarized the concepts of the "great philosophers," and found it essentially useless.

After completing his Master's degree at the Seminary in December 1955, this acquaintance had moved to Los Angeles and began Spring Semester work in the Philosophy Department of the University of Southern California. Since he had married into a very wealthy family, he had the money to travel around and study wherever he wanted.

At spring break (in my second year at the Seminary) he returned and wanted to speak with me. *He said he had new light on theology which he needed to share with me.* We sat down at our kitchen table; and, as we were about to begin, he paused and said, "We should leave the Bible—and especially the Spirit of Prophecy—out of our conversation." I then made a mistake;

I agreed to do that.

Then he told me his new discovery: *There is no sin, only ignorance.* This was a provocative thought, and extremely attractive. After he departed for California, I briefly gave consideration to it.

Such a concept, of course, would eliminate sin, the fall of Lucifer, the Garden of Eden, the atonement, Calvary, the Bible, and God.

But I knew I loved God and Christ; they were all I had. Within a rather short time I discarded the notion as foolishness.

*However, the experience taught me a most powerful lesson, one which was greatly to affect me in the years which followed.* Indeed, it has provided a bedrock strength undergirding my work here at Pilgrims Rest:

*If a religious concept is not in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, I cannot accept it. The position must be plainly stated, and not implied.*

In the years since then, I have brushed shoulders with a remarkable variety of theories and people promoting them, yet the Word of God always has the answer. It alone is solid. *This experience became a landmark for all the years which followed.*

As I now write these words over 40 years later, I would say that this spring 1957 incident represented a major event of my life. Prior to that time, I genuinely believed the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, but I also believed the mind was the measure of all things; that is, that my thinking was the decider of the correctness of what I read. My mind was superior to God's Word, for it had the ability to sit in judgment on it. (This is actually a concept which many Christians, without realizing it, live by.)

But henceforth, the Inspired Writings (the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are equally inspired) must be the ultimate standard in my life. I must learn them, submit to them, obey them, and reject anything not clearly stated in them.

What should you do when someone comes to you with a new theory, and urges your acceptance of it? *Tell the person you will have to wait and pray and study about the matter.* Also inform him that you intend to remain with the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. When you do that, you are likely to find that he becomes upset. He wants you to take only his interpretation of the Bible. He does not want you to give priority to the Spirit of Prophecy, the only inspired com-

mentary on the Bible. The very fact that he is upset reveals he is a dangerous friend, someone to avoid! A true child of God will want you to take time to search God's Word for counsel as you engage alone in earnest prayer. When people press you to modify your beliefs, leave. Go by yourself, pray, and read the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.

That same spring, another friend asked me to be a character witness at his trial in the District. He was an Adventist and worked in the accounting department at Hadley Hospital. One day as he was walking on the street downtown, he had been arrested on a false charge, and released on bail. His circle of Adventist friends knew he was innocent.

Arriving at the District Courthouse, in downtown Washington, D.C., we sat in the courtroom for about three hours as one case after another came before the judge. At the front of the courtroom, between a couple cases, the prosecuting attorney would walk over to my friend's attorney and confer with him. They seemed very friendly.

Then our friend's attorney called to our friend, who went over to where he was. Returning, our friend whispered to us: "He told me that if I will pay a \$600 bribe to the judge, he will dismiss the case. But I told him I don't have the money." Within half an hour his case came up before the court. A friend and I were called up as character witnesses; but, essentially, our accused friend had no chance. It was a policeman's word against his. His was found guilty, and ordered to pay \$700—or go to jail. Our friend went to a loan company, borrowed the money, and paid the fine.

This happened in the U.S. District Courthouse, only a few blocks from Capital Hill and the White House! It was an experience I shall never forget.

All this time, I was conducting my chaplaincy work at the hospital each afternoon. That spring, the thought came to mind to drop out of the Seminary at the end of the year, and go back to PUC and take pre-med. In this way, I could better help patients, such as those I met each day in my work at Hadley Hospital.

This may have seemed a way-out idea, yet we both were quite young (I was only 22), and had no children.

With this in mind, I stopped by the General

Conference and spoke with Dr. Theodore Flaiz, head of the GC Medical Department. I asked him about going through the College of Medical Evangelists (now LLU), if I did not afterward give drugs. Keith Anderson, who not long before had been kicked out of CME just before his graduation for that very reason, came up in the conversation. Flaize said drugs were useful, and CME did not want any more Keith Andersons.

That June, we packed up and headed back to California. Shortly after arriving at Cherie's parents' place, I pulled a lawn chair out back under the walnut trees and sat down. As I sat there, the thought came strongly to mind that I could not go ahead with the plan of taking medicine—for I could not give poisonous drugs.

We headed to PUC to work there for the summer; I in a work crew flattening the roof on Grainger Hall and putting stucco and better windows on its sides, and Cherie in charge of the cash and carry store. That summer we made a number of new long-term friends.

I also had my first introduction to house construction, something I would be involved again in later years. After the Grainger project was completed, we built a complete duplex home. The experience I gained from this helped in various later interior construction and remodeling jobs, which I later expanded to work in roofing and concrete work and, finally, plumbing contracting.

Arriving back in Takoma Park, we rented a terrace apartment half a block from the Review, and I began my third and final year (1957-1958) at the Seminary.

When I saw Dr. Heppenstall again, he broke the news to me that, during the summer, he had tried to obtain a grant to send me through for my doctorate. I was astounded that he would have such faith in me. He probably did not get very far, but he said he pushed for it. He saw in me something beyond what I saw in myself.

It seemed that the General Conference had decided, for the first time in its history, to subsidize the expenses of sending two men on for doctoral degrees at outside universities. Heppenstall asked that they send me, but they finally chose Frank Marsh. I could very well understand why, since he was a seasoned veteran of many years' experience in the work. In spite of my concern for doctrinal positions which sometimes ran counter to his, Heppenstall liked me very much.

I never understood what that was all about, until, in 1997, when I wrote a detailed historical book, *History of Adventist Creationism*, which will be released this year.

General Conference leaders began realizing that non-creationists were beginning to fill our college and university science departments, and they wanted to counter it by sending some men off for their doctorates, who afterward could defend creationist positions and help stem the tide among our scientists. I, of course, was not a scientist, yet Heppenstall wanted me added to the list of those subsidized through to their doctoral dissertations. Marsh, an older man, focused on speciation, but the entire project backfired in the 1960s when the two other doctoral scientists involved in the project turned out to be semi-evolutionists. Much more on this in the book.

For a time, I worked with a friend, doing house painting. One day I was on a roof, painting gutters. After painting a section, I would hop backward and paint another. It was a beautiful, sunny day and I was enjoying the work. Suddenly, the thought came, “*Look back!*” I was on the edge of the roof, and the next hop could have resulted in a broken neck.

I had helped a friend take my Hadley chaplaincy job when I left for California in June. Now he helped me obtain a job at Hadley as the afternoon stockroom clerk and evening Bible worker. I continued with those positions till graduation the following year.

On several afternoons, the two of us visited possible Bible study interests. One was a non-Adventist lady in the District who had checked into the hospital for several days. They had no idea of her weight, since her capacity exceeded every scale on the premises.

Seated in her living room, we saw before us a great blob of flesh in an overstuffed chair. She totally filled it and seemed to pour out somewhat over the sides, like a loaf of bread dough which has risen too much. Then she told us her story.

About twelve years earlier, a Seventh-day Adventist neighbor became interested in helping her. Putting the overweight woman on a careful diet, her friend worked with her for nearly two years. In that time, she lost over 300 pounds.

To my question, “What happened?” a faraway look and a strange satisfaction seemed to transfix her for a moment. “It was a jelly tart,” she

replied. Down to about 240 pounds, she was cleaning off the table after a meal one day,—when she spotted a jelly tart that no one had eaten. Of course, such food was forbidden on the restricted diet her friend had placed her on.

“I ate that jelly tart,” she said, enjoying the memory of the experience. “From then on, my weight just gradually came right back.”

That great, modern time-saving tool, the photocopier had finally been invented, and one had been purchased by the Seminary. For some reason, I became the unofficial photocopy man for the students. Most of them feared to deal with the lady in charge of it, who was the president’s wife; and I did not seem to have any such qualms. So students would give me copies of all kinds of excellent studies, which I would make copies for myself and the group. The process was slow and the finished copies tended to be smudged, yet it was the best we could do. I placed those studies in a large, three-ring notebook. To date, I have not had time to use the data from even one of them in my Pilgrims Rest publications.

One of the men who slipped documents to me to photocopy was Fritz Guy. Short in height, with a high-speed personality, it was obvious he was going places. When the new theology mess broke in the early 1980s, he was in the Andrews faculty and involved in it.

Earle Hilgert was in the New Testament Department at the Seminary back then. He was a dedicated believer who was faithful to the Spirit of Prophecy. As my third and final year drew to a close, Hilgert appeared more troubled. The leaders had told him they would send him off for a doctorate to a university of his choice. He was hesitating between Edinburgh, Scotland, and Basel, Switzerland.

He finally selected Basel, because Karl Barth was there. When he returned several years later, I heard he had become a changed man. As I reported in the 1980s, in my extensive studies on our Ecumenical connections, in the 1960s, church leaders in Takoma Park wanted to have representatives on the World Council of Churches; so they used the ruse of asking B.B. Beach and various Seminary teachers to serve as “personal representatives.”

This little fiction enabled General Conference leaders to tell its members that the denomination had no representatives on the WCC—while in reality they did have them. This subtle device

was initiated by two very different denominations the same year: 1966. Both wanted close contacts with the WCC, without appearing to have visible WCC membership. These two were the Roman Catholic Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Hilgert served as one of the Adventist representatives for several years, during which time he made contacts with non-Adventist churchmen who offered him jobs. Regularly expressing skeptical sentiments at the Seminary, he eventually turned in his resignation and accepted a position in a Protestant seminary. It is my understanding that he left the Advent faith entirely.

This is a classic example of what happens to so many of our men who go on to the outside universities. Unfortunately, not fully realizing the danger at the time, I was thinking of obtaining a doctorate in nearby Baltimore, under William F. Allbright at Johns Hopkins in Archaeology, or at the University of Chicago in Biblical Languages. I knew this would be my last opportunity, for eventually we would have a child.

At about that time, Elder George Vandeman came to town. He had just completed a pilot evangelistic effort in central California for his new "It Is Written" approach, and he wanted to demonstrate it in an effort at the Washington Armory in downtown D.C., in order to win support from the brethren at world headquarters. (He was successful in this. *It is Written* went on the air shortly afterward as a church-subsidized television program.)

When Vandeman came to Hadley Hospital to hold a pre-campaign meeting for the staff, we became friends and I asked him for his advice. He said I was a caring pastoral type of person, and strongly urged me to go into the ministry instead of obtaining a doctorate.

In many of the religion classes at the Seminary there was an inordinate amount of "Barth said this," "Kierkegaard said that," and "Brunner made this comment." I had prepared a study,

which Dr. Murdoch very much liked, which overviewed the teachings of several of those neo-orthodox theologians (Kierkegaard, Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr, Tillich, etc.). So he asked me to present some of that data for my final orals. (I never wrote any theses at the Seminary since, at that time, students with a B+ average were not required to do so.)

As I neared graduation, I recalled that Elder Reile, back in California, had said to write him when I was ready for a job in the ministry. So I wrote him. Although I did not realize it at the time, he happened to be the conference president's best friend, and was on the conference committee. They were both tough, old German stock; and Carl Becker, the president, would do whatever Ben Reile requested.

Hearing that we had been hired, but needing employment until a van came for our belongings, after graduation I got a job at the Golden Rule Dairy. Adventist owned and operated, it delivered milk before daylight. In this way, it could effectively compete against the other dairies in the area.

I was given two milk routes, which kept me busy from 11 p.m. till 7 a.m., six days a week. Throughout the night, in the darkness, I would run bottles of milk to the doors. One never knew when he might encounter a tricycle or a vicious dog.

One worker told me he met such a dog, and broke a quart of milk over its head. It was a six-quart-a-day customer, and they immediately canceled the service. But a month later, they returned as a regular customer.

Unknown to us, the conference van had come and loaded up the belongings of the men headed to the Northern California Conference. The van driver knew there was someone else's furnishings he was supposed to load, but he had lost the paper. He should have phoned the conference office. So we eventually received a belated call, that another van was coming.

"Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you."

— 1 Peter 5:7

## 4 - The Pastoral Years

After the van was loaded and gone, Cherie and I headed west. Because the house painter I had worked for was the son-in-law of Glen Coon, we stopped at his place in Roan Mountain, Tennessee. Glen's cheerfulness was effervescent, and he told us about a fine little book with some Bible promises. Stopping by Nashville, we bought a copy. I still have it. That experience got me into collecting Bible promises. My writings frequently include them, since I have found the sweet promises to be so invaluable in helping a person. It was Glen who got me started doing that. Eventually I compiled a 366-day classified collection of Bible promises, entitled *The Promise Year*. It has brought encouragement to many.

In Albuquerque, we stopped over the weekend at the home of my mother's first husband who, with his wife, were outstanding Adventist believers. After my mother left him, he married an Adventist nurse and eventually graduated from Loma Linda as a medical doctor. Since their home did not have enough beds for our family, he arranged for me to sleep on H.M.S. Richards, Jr.'s, king-size bed. Richards was pastor of the Albuquerque Church.

When Harold Richards had time to sit down and visit with us that weekend, he was intrigued with our vivacious ways, *and he said we must stay in the Texico Conference!* I protested, saying we were headed to northern California. He said he would phone the conference office and take care of that. Knowing I did not dare do that, I declined, and off we went.

In the years since, I have noted that Harold and his brother, Kenneth, are extremely fine people—like their father, H.M.S., Sr.

Arriving in California in July 1958, we unloaded our belongings into a duplex on McConnell Avenue, in Santa Rosa. Elder Reile had the Santa Rosa Church, and my assignment was the

Petaluma Church, about 20 miles south.

If you will check the Adventist history books, the first Adventist church in California was founded in Petaluma. They were still meeting in that same church when we arrived, but were about to begin construction of a new church on the northern end of town. A construction firm, based in Tracy, built it for them; and the church members helped with some of the odds and ends. We all had a good time in the process.

My first two sermons were poor, and I knew it. This needed to be solved, so I set to work to rectify the problem. The solution obviously was a combination of earnest prayer for guidance, and work.

I was convicted that I needed to break loose and preach from my heart; yet, in order to get this pattern started, I needed to memorize my sermon.

Only the divinely inspired Word of God is powerful, so I memorized a chapter in *Christ's Object Lessons*, and gave it the next Sabbath. Because I knew the content, I could put myself fully into its presentation—and it is, indeed, a book with urgent messages. Amid prayer and the blessing of the Lord, the presentation was powerful. I did that several more times, and eventually I was able to switch to brief outlines. Before, and after, each sermon I prayed earnestly for the people.

From then on, as long as I pled with God before and after each sermon for help, I was generally a powerful public speaker, reaching the hearts of the people.

Let me tell you a story at this point. It might help someone who has a burden to preach God's Word and help people.

Charles Spurgeon, who by his preaching had built a large church in London about a century ago, one Sunday presented a flat sermon. He decided afterward to make it a test case. So he

prayed earnestly afterward that someone would be reached for Christ by it. Ten conversions were the result.

The next week, he preached his usual powerful sermon. But he did not pray over that sermon afterward. As a result he traced no conversions.

The lesson is this: It is important to pray after the sermon as well as before! The reason many of our people despair of the dead, dry sermons they hear at our churches is because the talks mean nothing to the pastors either. They are not concerned to help the people; they have not pled with God for help. It is just a speaking appointment to fill. The results show it.

The preacher must enter the pulpit with a strong burden for souls and the message he must deliver. This can only come from time spent alone with God, wrestling for help. And such prayer must occur after the sermon as well as before.

Within a few weeks after we arrived, a gathering was held in the yard of a church member's home in Santa Rosa. Perhaps it was a wedding; I do not remember.

As the people were conversing afterward, Elder Reile called Cherie and me aside and said he wanted to speak with us. Leading us to a secluded corner of the garden, he faced us, narrowed his eyes, and said we should have nothing to do with Al Wolfsen or other health reformers, or we would be fired! As a former pastor in Stockton, he knew that Cherie's father had been friends with Wolfsen, a naturopathic doctor up in the Sierras. He told us we had to be very careful how we conducted ourselves, or we would be out.

I said very little, and Cherie was horrified. We left the gathering and headed to our duplex. I knew that trouble could be ahead, although we had done nothing to provoke such an outburst.

Years later, in the early 1990s, I was interviewing Leah Schmitke for a book about her experiences with widows and orphans, and her contacts with Ellen White's grandchildren who had given her access to special Spirit of Prophecy counsels.

During the taped interview, Leah told the story of how, at one time in the early 1940s, she and her husband were living in Lodi, California. When she presented a Spirit of Prophecy compilation on the glories of heaven to the Lodi church, a number of the people there deeply appreciated

it and told her so. But, the next morning, the pastor came to her husband (who that year was a teacher at Lodi Academy) and told him he would be fired if he or his wife ever again recommended or quoted the Spirit of Prophecy.

Leah's husband had a vulnerable personality, and he was so shaken that he became a permanent, raging devil, bringing great misery to Leah and their daughter.

Then I asked Leah the name of the pastor of that largest German Adventist church in America at the time,—and was told it was Benjamin Reile! (You will find the complete story in my book, *Leah and the Benevolent Work.*)

So we had a problem on our hands. Both Reile and the conference president, Carl B\_\_, were tough characters. B\_\_ made a hobby of harassing to death any kind of independent ministry he heard of in his territory.

Mildred Lewis, the highly educated sister of Dr. Lewis, a book editor at the Pacific Press, lived in the Sacramento area; and, for a number of years, she solicited funds to place *Desire of Ages* in motels. B\_\_ tried in every possible way to get her work stopped.

A small group in the Sierras started a healthful recipe magazine for children (called *Little Cooks and Cookettes*). It was really nice. But B\_\_ was determined to stop the project. He did not control it, and, besides, it emphasized healthful, vegetarian living. After considerable wheedling, they turned over all rights to the conference office so it could continue issuing the journal. Within a few months, B\_\_ went back on his promises and publication ceased.

An older church member wanted to do something for Jesus; so he had the words, "Jesus is coming again," superimposed over a painting of Jesus coming in the clouds. Then he had it printed as small stickers for envelopes. B\_\_ issued such threats to the man, that he gave the project to a close friend of mine, Doug, whom you will hear more about later in this book. Doug continued to sell those stickers into the 1970s. In the mid-1980s, I produced our Sabbath Seals—which has had outstanding success. The idea came from those earlier envelope stamps which infuriated B\_\_.

An Adventist builder, who specialized in constructing Adventist churches and pastors' homes, bid on homes for B\_\_ and, later, his Religious Liberty secretary. The builder told me personally that both refused to let him build, un-

less he used union labor—which he refused to do. He told them he was not required by law to do so, but they were adamant.

B\_\_ regularly advocated meat eating to his associates and the pastors who worked under him. I was one of those he told to eat meat.

Within a few months, the new Petaluma Church had been completed and we were worshipping in it. It is there today on the north end of the city. Ours was a cheerful little family of church members, and we had many happy times together.

One day, after mimeographing the church bulletin on a machine owned by Paul Hawk, a Santa Rosa church member, at his store near the courthouse, I walked on down the street to a religious bookstore and asked if they might have a book about George Müller. I had read a little about this remarkable man, and wanted to learn more about the principles on which he conducted his work of faith. The owner said he had a used copy somewhere. Since he was not able to find it, I left. As I reached the end of the block, he ran out of the store and called to me; he had found it.

Reading that book about George Müller's work with the orphans in Bristol, England, was another landmark experience in my life. Trusting in God for help, and stepping forward to do what was right, could be done. It was entirely a matter of trust and obey, obey and trust. *This was a lesson I was not to forget.* It greatly affected my future work.

That fall, Cherie and I drove down to San Francisco, and unloaded a few things into a room already reserved for us in a hotel on lower Market Street. The occasion was the Pacific Union Conference Quadrennial Session. Every minister and church officer in the union, able to travel, was seated on the main floor of the Civic Center as the meeting was called to order by the union president.

The treasurer's 1956-1957 report was of special interest. It contained about 12 pages and, as most church financial reports do, only skimmed the surface of monetary income and outflow. A copy was handed to each worker to examine as the treasurer discussed it, page by page. In my estimation, one section in particular stood out. It outlined the ins and outs of how tithe was processed. Only church workers were ever handed copies of this information. One subsec-

tion was entitled "*Tithe Reversion*," and gave the figures for the preceding two years. A brief annotation explained that, of the percentage of tithe sent on to the union office by the conferences, a portion was returned to the conferences to be used for non-tithe purposes. It said that in print.

In 1964, I asked Elder David Bauer, son of Elder C. L. Bauer, Pacific Union Conference president in the early 1950s, how that worked. David said they just waved their hands over the pile of money and said "Hocus-pocus," and that changed it to non-tithe money. Then they sent it back.

Unfortunately, in later years I lost my copy of that report, although I was able to collect other information which, more recently, I published.

That winter we went to a conference ministerial retreat at Hoberg's. The conference had arranged for off-season rates at an otherwise expensive resort in the wooded hills of Lake County, near Clear Lake. Many cabins were scattered under the pines and firs, along with a central auditorium and cafeteria.

At one meeting, Elder B\_\_ angrily denounced the "speckled birds" (a favorite subject, based on Jeremiah 12:9). He would read the verse, and then rail against Adventists in the conference who were not in subjection to him. They had started projects which he had never approved. However, in practice, the closest he came to approving a project was to eliminate it. He was a one-man search-and-destroy team.

At another meeting at Hoberg's, a union officer stood up and told the assembled workers that Elder J.L. Tucker (who at the time was still broadcasting in Oakland prior to moving to Berrien Springs) was someone they should be suspicious of. Since everyone in the audience remained very silent (as they knew they had better be), he warmed to his subject and said Tucker was receiving money in the mail—and some of it might be coming from Adventists! Indeed, some of it might even be tithe! Then B\_\_ stood up and added his comments. I thought to myself, "Must they even attack Elder Tucker?"

At another meeting, Dr. Jack Provonsha gave a remarkably frank presentation on how the College of Medical Evangelists was drifting into the practice and instruction of hypnosis. He said he was trying to save the college. At the time, he seemed to be on the side of the Spirit of Prophecy; but, by the 1980s, he had become a strong

liberal. Loma Linda has a way of doing that to people of influence at that institution.

One afternoon, Cherie and I drove up from Santa Rosa to Pacific Union College. While there, we visited briefly with Dr. Graham Maxwell. He had at last completed his thesis requirement, and now had a doctorate. He told us he had received repeated requests from the General Conference to go to the College of Medical Evangelists (a General Conference institution) and chair its Religion Department. That was a key position, and the brethren were hoping to somehow reverse the downward slide of that immense teaching/medical facility. Dr. Maxwell explained that Elder Figuhr, the General Conference president, had recently stopped by to plead with him to take the job. Fearing for the future of that institution, it was hoped that the godly example of Maxwell could somehow pull the school back from the abyss toward which it was headed.

Not long afterward, the Maxwells moved down there, but it was like casting lambs among the wolves. In the years that followed, the men there succeeded in winning Maxwell over to much of their liberalism.

Not far from Santa Rosa was the home of Elder W\_\_ H\_\_, the conference public evangelist. He was quite friendly. Well-aware of his many abilities, he was supremely self-confident. Because of what happened later, Wieland and I were to be closely associated for a period of time.

One day, W\_\_ mentioned that, on one occasion, he had hit on the idea of going on the radio in a town for a month or so, and then holding an evangelistic effort there soon after. He believed the radio broadcasts would bring more people into the church. The hold of television over the people was not as strong back then.

That sounded interesting, but he then added that B\_\_ would not let him do it. Puzzled, I asked why. With that special grin on his face, W\_\_ replied, "He doesn't want anyone else in the conference to have too much power." Although that comment came from W\_\_, I believe it. Carl B\_\_ repeatedly showed himself to be a man more interested in control than in soul-winning.

Everyone at the conference office was required to call him "Chief." When he met a worker, B\_\_ would punch him in the arm, stare in his face, and look for the appropriate response (an attitude of submission). He did this to all the

men employed by the Northern California Conference.

In June 1959, Cherie and I headed to Lodi, to prepare for the annual camp meeting. My wife knew an elderly widow, Mrs. Sanders, who lived in that town, and we stayed with her. She was a godly soul. From time to time, she would go out to the back part of her homemade house, and try to enlarge it with hammer, nails, and old boards she managed to obtain somewhere. Over a period of about 15 years, she had built most of her home in this manner. Occasionally, a friend would stop by and help her a little. She told me she would pray before each hammer blow, "Help me, Lord!" Then she would strike the nail with an arm thinner than the hammer handle, and cry, "Thank you, Lord!"

One Sabbath, during preparatory work on the campground, as Cherie and I were walking down the street, we met a family sitting on a porch. They knew Cherie. (My wife had attended Lodi Academy, and lived about 15 miles south in Stockton, where we were married.) When we stopped to talk, the wife told me their story, and she was still heartsick about it.

You are going to meet someone who needs to hear this story:

When their child was about 7 or 8, he had become very ill. He was such a godly boy that his mother earnestly prayed for his recovery. As she explained it, "I demanded that he be healed; I did not pray 'Thy will be done.'"

It appeared that the boy was going to die, but then took a turn for the better and fully recovered. In his late teens, he totally left God and the church. That was a number of years earlier, yet his mother still grieved over what had happened. She recognized that God was planning to lay the boy in the grave to save him.

Remember this, if a loved one who is a child of God dies. Never blame God because it happened. I have encountered several instances in which a person had come back to God or found Him for the first time, and shortly afterward died. God had saved him.

Indeed, I would urge everyone reading this: *Never blame God for anything!* He never, never does anything wrong! One of the most dangerous things we can do is to blame God for the problems we encounter in life. As soon as we begin blaming Him, our minds become confused and we cannot think as clearly. We are tempting Satan to tempt us.

A full week before it began, the conference pastors began preparing Lodi Academy grounds for the annual ten-day camp meeting. It was time to begin, and I was assigned to one of the five-pastor crews whose job it was to set up small tents.

As we worked, each minister on our crew expressed his concerns and interests. One said he was studying philosophy in his spare time. He said it strengthened his mind. The other ministers did not know what to make of that; but I was acquainted with the field and told him it was dangerous, and that he should study the Spirit of Prophecy if he wanted to increase his mental capacity. The Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, as we read and act upon it, strengthen the mind and the will as nothing else can. My words meant nothing to him.

A second minister, pastoring in the Sacramento area at the time, said he was getting a law degree on the side. I asked him why, and he gave the feeble excuse that it was good to know law. That is how he spent his time.

This kind of thing was rampant down in southern California by the mid-1950s. Instead of caring for their flocks, Adventist ministers would go to outside universities during the week and get doctoral degrees—with the full approval of the conference. Church leaders thought that doctoral degrees strengthened the church.

Then another young minister spoke up and told how he was spending his time. He had been assigned to a small-town church; and, since he could not find any housing, he had spent the year building a home. I could not but respect his abilities, but I felt sorry for his flock.

That was the conversation among three of the five of us ministers assigned to this one tent-setup crew. The fourth was Elder W\_\_ H\_\_. He was the conference evangelist. Tall, well-built, handsome, and extremely self-confident, W\_\_ was a powerful speaker who regularly brought many into the truth. He had been blessed with many personal gifts by Heaven; yet, unfortunately, W\_\_ himself needed conversion.

At noon, one day, the ministers had all entered the cafeteria and were waiting for lunch. W\_\_ strode in the door, and began singing loudly in his very rich baritone voice, "Lady of Spain, I adore thee, lady of Spain, . . ." and on he went. Everyone looked up, and that was what W\_\_ wanted. He grinned, and said, "Welcome, gentlemen!"

There was some reason why W\_\_ knew he could get away with that. I suspect it was the common denominator behind much of the hidden power in the church: blackmail. Men who have been in the work a long time are never fired, only transferred. W\_\_, who was in and out of the conference office and on close speaking terms with every worker in the conference, knew enough about what was happening, that the conference office did not dare reprove him. B\_\_ just looked up from his table with a smile on his face.

One minister on the campground spent his time warning the others about "the fanatics at Wildwood." This was the first time I had ever heard of Wildwood Institute, in Wildwood, Georgia. They are nice folk, trying to obey the Spirit of Prophecy as best as they know how. But this minister was condemning them. He had transferred in recently from the Georgia-Cumberland Conference.

As for me, I spent my spare time asking ministers what they did to win souls. This was a topic which interested me very much. Yet I found that it was a subject which provoked little response.

As I conversed with various ministers, I was impressed these men needed to gain a much deeper appreciation for the needs of the people who would be coming to the camp meeting. They needed to pray earnestly that God would prepare their hearts to better help them. They needed a heart longing to help the people they would be ministering to soon.

Mrs. Sanders, the elderly lady in whose home we were staying during camp meeting, said she was earnestly praying that the ministers would be able to help the people when they came to camp meeting. This was pitiful. Here was a godly woman, elderly and frail, who was pleading daily on her knees with God that the ministers would feed the flock with spiritual food; yet so many of those strong, college-trained ministers seemed to care little about such matters.

So I prayed about it also. Then the thought came to mind that I should earnestly plead with those ministers to prepare their hearts to help those who would be coming to camp meeting that summer. Of course, a wiser mind would say this is not the thing for a young minister to do. He is supposed to keep his mouth shut.

But, ignorant of the politics of life, I only saw the need. Yet how was I to do this? It just so hap-

pened that, each morning, someone was selected to speak for 15 minutes to the assembled ministers, before the concluding instructions were given about the day's activities. Would it be possible that I could be placed on that speaking schedule? So far, only the veteran ministers and conference officers had given the talks.

Camp meeting would begin on Thursday; would it be possible that I could speak at the meeting the day before? I had heard that all the workers—including those in the conference office—would be there just before camp meeting started. With this in mind, I approached the minister in charge of the scheduling. He looked over his list, and said that one day was open, and that was Tuesday, two days before camp meeting began. I was happy to get that date, yet was crestfallen that it was a day before all the conference personnel would be present.

Praying earnestly, I was led to the *Desire of Ages* chapter, "The Walk to Emmaus," and prayed all the more.

On Tuesday morning I came to the meeting—and everyone was there, including the entire office personnel from Oakland. This had not occurred on any other day. So, with a prayer in my heart, I preached earnestly about that walk so long ago, and how the hearts of the men burned within them as a result. Then I told them about the elderly lady in the community who was earnestly praying that they would be able to help the people, suggested some of the needs to be met, urged them to prepare their hearts to help the people throughout this ten-day gathering, and then closed.

I had not run overtime, and hoped that God would use my words to help many who were present. I spoke to them with respect; yet, they were judgment-bound souls, just as I was, and we had work to do.

When I had taken my place in the audience, C\_\_ B\_\_ rose to his feet, and seemed, for several seconds, not to have words to speak. Then, haltingly, he began talking about some matter in a tone which exalted his own position. I believe the Spirit was convicting his hard heart for a moment, but he succeeded in brushing it away.

The next day, Wednesday, arrived, and almost no one was present at the morning meeting. Nearly everyone had departed to get their families and return that evening.

I mention this incident, not only to reveal how

God can use little, unimportant people who have a burden and will pray, but also because this story figures into a later incident which helped take me out of the ministry.

Camp meeting began on Thursday, and I was assigned to the Junior Tent. The minister in charge was a strong extrovert, and he had constructed a cardboard *Saturn-5 Rocket* on one side of the platform. It stood about eight feet tall, and, as advertised on a nearby sign, "launch countdown" was every morning at nine. Showmanship, noise, and much hoopla was the pattern.

The next day, Friday afternoon, Cherie announced that she was close to delivery time. I immediately obtained permission to leave camp meeting. We packed and drove up to the St. Helena Sanitarium, overlooking Elmshaven. Sabbath was spent walking around the quiet, sunny grounds together, and that night she went into labor. Then next morning I was presented with a sweet baby girl, Linda.

Early that fall, Elder Reile was driving south on the interstate, headed to the conference office, when a man who had worked all night fell asleep—came across into his lane and struck Reile's car, killing him instantly.

The conference needed to locate a replacement, and hit on the idea of asking W\_\_ H\_\_ if he would take the Santa Rosa Church. This would save the conference from having to pay moving expenses for a replacement. Although he conducted efforts all over the conference, W--'s home was not far away.

Since he had been holding efforts for well over a decade, W\_\_ accepted the call. He decided it was time to settle down.

One day while visiting in the homes of the flock, I heard of a man who lived off Sebastapol Road, who had once been an Adventist. His name was Ernie. Arriving at his home one night, I tried to make a contact, but he appeared steeled against religion. His wife sat there and smoked, taking no interest in my efforts at conversation with him.

About a month later, Ernie suddenly appeared in church. Dressed in a frayed suit, he was there throughout Sabbath School and church service. Speaking to him afterward, I found him to be a changed man. Excited, he said he had a dream the night before. The Mark of the Beast was being applied and the end of the

world was taking place. Ernie awoke in a cold sweat. He could hardly believe he had been dreaming. He knew he must immediately retrace his steps and make changes, or he would be lost.

Shortly afterward, Ernie told me his story. He had attended Pacific Union College many years before, and may have graduated. But he loved the saxophone, and it took him away from God. He began playing in dance halls at night for extra cash, and let popular music take over his life. Soon he was entirely separated from God's people and God Himself.

Ernie knew all the doctrines, and he knew he must make a total turnabout or he would be a lost man.

About a week later, Ernie told me he had sold his saxophone and destroyed all his phonograph records. He said his wife and friends urged him not to do it, but he said he must get rid of that which had led him away from God.

When Ernie came to church then, his face was beaming with the sunlight of God's grace and acceptance. He was a joy to behold.

Elder Henry also took an interest in him, and, because Ernie had worked in drywall and now as a Sabbathkeeper was out of work, Wieland told him to ask for a job at the Sonoma County General Hospital in Santa Rosa as an orderly. But a couple of months later, they told him he would have to work Sabbaths. His duties primarily involved cleaning floors.

Since he respected him highly, Ernie went to Elder H\_\_ for counsel, who told him it was all right for Adventists to work in hospitals on the Sabbath. So Ernie kept that job instead of quitting and trusting God to help him find another one. I warned him he must quit, but Ernie replied that Elder H\_\_ was a man of God and his counsel must be good.

Within a month he had left the church, and soon after was as hard and unapproachable as before.

That same fall, Arthur Gyger came to stay with us for a month or so. Arthur was one of my church members. His wife had been ill in the Sonoma County Hospital since before we arrived, and Arthur had a hacking bronchial cough.

So I brought him home and gave him hydrotherapy treatments. While he was at our home, I learned a lot from Arthur. He was one of that rare breed of people who creatively thinks of new ways to do things, and then set to work to do it.

Many years before, Arthur had been in Texas

and, with a burden for souls, prayed for guidance. He was canvassing at the time and, one night, Arthur had a dream. In it, he saw the people coming up a ramp from below and stopping to buy our books at a stand.

When he awoke, Arthur was thrilled and went searching for the place and found it within a few hours. It was the outlet to an underground station, of some kind, in that large city. There was the stand, exactly as he saw it in the dream. Walking up to the manager, Arthur asked him how things were going, and was told the business was good but the man wanted to get out of it so he could do something else. Arthur bought the stand and moved his books onto it. For a time he had success; but, learning about his project, church leaders refused to sell him books, declaring they must be sold from door to door. They said he was hurting the work of colporteurs.

In later years, while living in Santa Rosa, Arthur devised a no-plow method of planting. I was never clear as to his method, but he guaranteed that it would grow good crops.

Being a salesman, Arthur decided to make money on his idea by traveling up and down the state, holding meetings. With characteristic creativity, he was certain he would need a male quartet to bring the people to the meetings. As you can see, Arthur was original.

Since the great depression of the 1930s was in full force, there were ministerial students at Pacific Union College who had no prospects of employment. To four, working at the Sanitarium, Arthur offered jobs if they would come sing with him. With his quartet, he went touring and met with remarkable success. Sure enough, the singing group (which, since he was from Texas, he named the *Lone Star Quartet*) brought in the crowds. Then Gyger would tell the people his method and sell them a booklet to go with it.

When he reached Los Angeles, a young preacher, by the name of Richards, had a fledgling radio broadcast which was lagging. He needed something to push it along. Then he heard of Gyger and his quartet. Richards asked the young men to join his project, which was operated out of his backyard garage. These young men were thrilled, for they wanted to get into the Lord's work.

But Gyger had earlier signed them to a contract, and would not release them. As Gyger explained it to me, they kept badgering him day after day, until one afternoon he released them

from the contract. Richard's project greatly improved, and Gyger's collapsed. If you ever chance to read a biography of H.M.S. Richards, Sr., you will learn that his first quartet had been named the *Lone Star Quartet*.

Arthur later moved to Petaluma, and eventually decided to open a bookstore on the main street. Renting a facility, he made slanted wooden book shelves and painted everything white. Then he filled it with Adventist books. Business was beginning to hum, and so Gyger asked Elder Sutton to stop by and see it. As Elder Sutton, accompanied by Elder Reiswig, approached the door, Sutton stopped, would not enter, and just stared without saying a word; then left. Gyger said efforts were then made to cut off his book sources, and he eventually had to close down the shop.

I knew both men; for, the summer I canvassed, Elder Sutton was union publishing secretary, and Elder Reiswig was Central California Conference publishing secretary. Reiswig was a very kindly man; Sutton was strictly business. I am sure both meant well, but that may not have included getting the truth-filled books to the public in large quantities. The canvassing work needed to be protected.

One day, as I was passing through the living room of our home, Arthur was sitting by the fireplace, and he said softly "While I was musing, the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue." I asked him to repeat that again, and he said it was a Bible verse (Psalm 39:3).

Sitting down, I asked him why his wife was so ill and he was in such poor condition. I knew they were dedicated Adventist believers and careful health reformers. Something seemed odd about the situation. Arthur looked down for a long moment, and then said, "My wife is dying in the county hospital, and I will tell you why."

Then Arthur proceeded to tell me this story: As you may observe from later events in my life, I remembered it through the years which followed. It greatly affected my thinking, and how I would relate to church leaders in the future.

About three or four years before I arrived, Arthur was living in Petaluma and wanted to devise a means of reaching souls with the Advent message. He was not the type to be regarded by an educated conference official as anyone special. He was just a homespun Texan with a drawl. Yet he had canvassed for years, and knew

how to talk to people. God's Word tells us the humblest people can be used for the greatest work. Indeed, that is the only kind that God can really use at all.

As Arthur prayed about the matter, the idea came to start a radio broadcast. Television still did not have the gripping hold on the people that it now has, and many regularly listened to the radio. As he explained it to me, Arthur felt that the way to do it was to just pretty much ad-lib his way through each broadcast. He would write up an outline ahead of time; and then, on the air at the radio station, he would talk his way through it with only his Bible before him. Gyger felt that this would make his presentation natural.

So he went down to the local Petaluma station and began broadcasting. He told me each broadcast went out live on Sabbath afternoon, and he would begin each broadcast with the words, "God's holy Sabbath is ending . ." Arthur Gyger was not one to hide the message. From the very start of each broadcast, everyone knew where he stood in relation to the Bible Sabbath.

Soon the station was flooded with letters, including some from areas that the station manager said could not possibly be reached. Arthur kept broadcasting.

Then Carl B\_\_ heard about this "independent" project over in Petaluma. Another speckled bird. He told Arthur to come to the conference office in Oakland. Arthur was happy at hearing this. He would be able to tell Elder B\_\_ about the success he was having. Perhaps the conference office might wish to repeat it on stations in other parts of the conference.

Seated in the office, B\_\_ asked Gyger what he was doing. Arthur had begun to explain, but was interrupted by B\_\_, "It's not in our policy books," waving his hand toward a stack of books on a nearby wall.

Years later, I asked David Bauer about that, and he sniffed, "That is not true. Those conference men just make up 'policies' out of their heads to suit the occasion, knowing the members cannot search the actual policy books."

Then B\_\_ looked at Gyger and said, "Who told you to do this?" Arthur replied, "The Lord told me to do it!" B\_\_ sneeringly replied, "Oh, do you hear voices?" The words were spoken in a sliding tone of utter derision.

Arthur Gyger immediately replied, "*Of course I do, don't you? The Bible says, 'My sheep hear*

*My voice, and they follow Me.'* ”

Surely, a response like that ought to have touched him, but B\_\_ was too hardened to catch the point. Yet, by this time, he realized he needed to undercut this in a gentler way. So he began speaking in a softer tone, and said, “You know, Brother Gyger, you want to work with the church, don't you?” Arthur concurred.

“Well, then, you need to stop these broadcasts while we discuss this. Then we'll get back with you, and tell you when you can start up again.”

As Arthur told me the story, almost crying by this time, he said, “Vance, what should I have done? Vance, I said to myself, ‘It is my church, and I want to work with my leaders. I should stop, until they tell me to start again.’ ”

I replied, “I love you, Arthur, and God loves you; know that. But you should have continued those broadcasts. *You're working for God to win souls; you're not working for those church leaders.*”

Arthur then explained that he drove back home, thoroughly disheartened and told his wife. The realization of what had happened was too much. She was so discouraged that she became sick, and had been sick ever since.

Of course, B\_\_ never gave him approval to begin broadcasting again.

I sat back, put my head in my hands, and prayed that I would have strength to stand for the right, in spite of church pronouncements.

Then I said, “Arthur, what happened after that?”

“Do you know M. Amaral?” Gyger asked. I said, “Why, he owns the cement and gravel company at the south end of Petaluma; he has one of the biggest companies in town!”

“M. Amaral and his wife were both interested in my broadcasts; and, when I stopped broadcasting, he phoned me and said, ‘Gyger, why did you stop broadcasting? If it's money, I'll pay for those broadcasts!’ ”

Gyger paused again, then said, “I shouldn't have done it, but I told him the facts: I said my conference president told me to stop broadcasting. Amaral was silent for a moment and then said, ‘If that is the kind of church you belong to, I'll never join it!’ Pastor Ferrell, I received letters from all over, asking me to stay on the air. But I had promised B\_\_ I would stop till he gave me permission to start again. And he never did.”

As their pastor, I later preached the funeral sermon for Arthur's wife.

The preceding year, I had worked night after night with the singing band from our church; and, going down one street and up another, we had Ingathered Petaluma and Novato, which for decades had been in Petaluma Church territory. Each year the little church obtained its full Ingathering goal, and then some.

So now it was time to go Ingathering again. Out we went again in the cars and toured through tiny Petaluma and Cotati (Rohnert Park and the university did not exist then). Then, one night, we drove down to Novato, which was much larger, to begin working there. But we quickly discovered it had already been covered.

We had been raided. Knowing very well what he was doing, the young pastor of the Fairfax Church had driven up with his members and Ingathered Novato before he did any of his other territory in Marin County. He had available to him a string of towns and small cities north of the Golden Gate Bridge, from Sausalito on up to San Rafael and Ignacio; yet he felt that would not make a sufficient impression on the conference office.

So our Ingathering was abruptly completed early, having reached only about 60 percent of its goal. Outwardly, I said how terrible this was; but, inwardly, I shrugged it off. The matter was done, and could not be reversed, and I am not the type to hold a grudge. Salvation and living in Jesus is so wonderful, we do not have time for bitterness. Now I had more time to prepare for an evangelistic effort.

When the ministers all drove down to conference headquarters to give their Ingathering reports, F\_\_, from up in the Sierras, stood up. He had the personality of a steam engine, ready to run with you or run over you. Either climb on board or get out of the way. He had gone well over his goal, and in a very loud voice, announced the dollar figure, and then sang out, “*In the saving of souls and the winning of goals,—[his church] is at the top!*” B\_\_ smiled appreciatively. Maintaining competition and rivalry among the ministers was something he liked. It brought in more Ingathering. Shortly afterward, F\_\_'s brother-in-law, the younger man who had the Fairfax Church, stood up and gave his report. It was far over twice their normal goal.

I was actually surprised at his thievery; for, although a little pushy, he otherwise seemed like a nice person.

When I announced what we brought in, B\_\_ made almost no comment. He well knew the story behind it.

The Fairfax pastor later went to the Far Eastern Division, and pioneered English language schools. Today he is in the General Conference; actually, he is a very capable man. I would hope he is not stealing things today.

For our late winter evangelistic effort at Petaluma, I enlisted the help of the church members and began laying plans. When W\_\_H\_\_ heard about it, he was shocked. "Vance," he said, "you shouldn't do this!" "Why?" I asked. "Because it will hurt your reputation. You should wait until you have many interests to be baptized."

But I felt that evangelism should be done for its own sake, not in order to build reputation. It would be better to have one or none, and keep at it. It is in the water, not on the land, that we learn to swim. We must hold evangelistic efforts because we should and in order to learn how to keep doing them more effectively. If God's people did things because they were right rather than whether they thought they would work or whether the brethren approved, they would not tire the angels so much.

The outcome was that we had some baptisms; I no longer remember how many. One girl, about 18 years old, lived out toward Bolinas. She wanted to be baptized, but hesitated to do it right then, and said she would wait till the next time. More on her later in this story.

During the years I was in the ministry in northern California, the Rio Lindo project began. Lodi was the only boarding academy in the conference, and it had been decided to build another one north of Healdsburg on high ground, in a bend of the Russian River.

One Sunday, the ministers were told to drive to Rio Lindo. Becker used it as an opportunity to exalt this, one of his great accomplishments. It was an immense project to carry out; yet the spirit in which he presented it, as he walked us around the property, was jarring. Everyone, including Elder Apiggion who did the actual pushing of the project through to completion, wisely kept quiet as we proceeded.

Finally, we came to an overlook where we could see the river about 700 feet below us. The forest spread beneath us and far off in the distance. Becker stood in front to one side; and, waving his hand, he said something about this

great accomplishment that he was providing for the people of the church.

It was a panoramic view, and Elder Melvin L. Venden (Morris and Louis' father) started singing "*O the Beautiful Hills*." All the ministers immediately joined him, and together we stared across the valley before us and sang. I looked over at B\_\_, and the look on his face was a masterpiece to behold. He looked as if he was being bypassed. The ministers were praising God, not him.

Cherie and I were very much liked by our local church, in spite of the sermons I was giving them full of warnings and counsels from the *Testimonies*, *Early Writings*, *Great Controversy*, and the other books. After one sermon outlining the reasons why we should not eat meat, Brother Ira Stahl, my head elder, walked up to me. With his Oklahoma drawl, he said, "Elder Ferrell, that is the first time I have ever heard a Seventh-day Adventist minister speak on this subject!" He liked the message very much, and knew it would help the flock. Many of our people really do want to go to heaven, and they want shepherds who will help lead them there.

For prayer meetings, I gave an extended series of Bible-Spirit of Prophecy studies on last-day events. These studies continued on for months, and my flock valued them. My present set of 18 *End Time* booklets, which contain the most complete, chronological Spirit of Prophecy compilation on the subject, is an expanded version of those studies back then. The booklets are excellent for personal or group studies.

Some of the situations in our district of several churches were becoming a growing concern to me.

One example was the worldly performances, given by paid non-Adventist professionals, which were regularly held on Saturday nights at our junior academy (the Redwood Empire Junior Academy, not far from Santa Rosa). Because I was a pastor in the district, I and my family were supposed to attend.

One evening, for example, two performers from San Francisco were on the stage. Both the man and the woman wore black sequined clothing which sparkled as they moved their lithe bodies. They played various worldly selections on the marimba, or one would play while the other sang worldly love songs.

I was from San Francisco, and this was just

like the live theatricals, on the stage of the Golden Gate Theater on Market Street, I saw with my parents when I was young. I had chosen to abominate this kind of trash; yet here I was, by my presence, approving of what was going on. It was sin to even be here.

Yet I was a pastor in this district, and my presence was expected at this and all other kinds of multi-church events.

What was I to do? I knew what I should do.

Beside me was Cherie. When she was young, her parents had, for a time, trained her for a role as a Hollywood starlet, and had taught her dancing. She loved it as a girl. The swing and sway of what was now in front of her was making her feel emotionally sick.

Leaning over, she whispered, "Vance, I can't stay here." I whispered back, "Follow me," and we got up and left.

It was obvious that my days in the ministry were numbered, and I was the one doing it. Our interests, tastes, and standards were different, made different by years with the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy. And I had no intention of reversing it.

I mentioned my problem over the phone to my former college roommate, who said he knew someone who could help me. It was Elder F. He said Elder F. was a pastor in the Oakland area (Alameda, I believe), and was "one of the most principled pastors in the conference." My roommate assured me that, if that man could take such a clear stand for the right and survive in the ministry, surely I could also.

This intrigued me. There was a pastor in the conference who was standing for the right? We agreed that my roommate would arrange the appointment, and that we would meet at the pastor's office study.

When I arrived, the pastor knew why I was there, and we had the assurance he would maintain confidentiality about the visit.

I had only briefly introduced myself, without having yet said anything definitive,—when he spoke. By his tone, it was clear he was going to set me straight as to how to succeed in the ministry, and I was all ears to hear what he had to say. I can still remember the pattern of his thoughts quite well. With measured tones of eloquence, he said something like this:

"Young man, I once was on a conference committee, and the president wanted a certain proposal passed by the committee. I could have re-

mained silent, and I knew my lone vote would accomplish nothing. Yet I chose to be counted. I voted No.

"The president did not like that, and soon after I was transferred to a different conference."

Then, leaning closer, he said in a tone that indicated he was imparting a great truth which ought to settle the matter in my mind:

"I thought to myself, I am like the steward in the parable, what shall I do? for my president may take away from me my job. I cannot dig, to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved as to what I shall do: *I shall live by my wits.*"

I replied simply, "I shall stand for principle."

I was utterly astonished at his reaction to that bland statement,—a statement any Christian would be expected to make. He replied flatly,

*"You will not last in the ministry!"*

The utter finality in those words terminated the conversation. We thanked him and left.

It has been 40 years almost to the month since he spoke those words to me, yet they are burned into my brain. Frankly, I must say, he was a good friend. He told me the truth, a truth I had been gradually moving closer to: I did not belong in the organized ministry.

If you cannot stand for principle, what are you worth? *Indeed, if you cannot stand for principle, can you even be saved?*

Outside, my former roommate, shaken, shook his head. "Vance, Elder F. is one of the most stalwart pastors in the conference," he muttered.

Elder F. was a sincere man who had a family to support. As had the man in Luke 16:3, he had found that being a policy man was safer than adhering to "principle for principle's sake."

By this time, W\_H\_ was preaching sermons in the Santa Rosa Church about his talents. "I could have been a great architect," he said, "but I became a minister. Now, I want to rear a great church in Santa Rosa for glory, God's glory, which I shall design."

He wanted everyone to get behind the effort. Money was needed to pay for it. This is the story behind it:

When we initially arrived in Santa Rosa, it was meeting in a large, old church which the city had recently condemned. So, with Elder Reile's full support, they had moved their services into the local Odd Fellows Hall. The rent was extremely low,—less than the maintenance on a proposed new church.

But W\_\_H\_\_ was determined to build a church, especially since he was going to design it. The plans he drew up called for glass walls, along the entire east side, and other fancy things which the congregation did not want.

But the problem was a lack of funds; so, this is where Petaluma came in. W\_\_H\_\_ hit on the idea of stopping all extra student transportation to the Junior Academy. You see, three students came from an impoverished home in Cotati; and, with their parents, they attended my church. For several years, they had been bused daily to the central school, with the cost of doing so equally divided among the four churches. Since the Santa Rosa Church was the largest, it paid the most. How much money did this amount to? Less than a hundred dollars a year (gas was 40 or 50 cents a gallon back then).

W\_\_H\_\_ decided that if he could keep those three students from going to the church school, it would provide extra money for his church.

Now I know this sounds strange; but desperate people think in unsound ways, and W\_\_ was desperate to build the church he was planning on paper. As he repeatedly said, "It will be a great monument." (I drove by that church two years ago with my son. It had no glass walls, so apparently W\_\_H\_\_'s dream was not fully realized.)

One evening I was attending the monthly school board meeting, and W\_\_H\_\_ tried to ram something through. Brother Bramham, the chairman, tried to fend him off. Bramham was pretty good at putting W\_\_H\_\_ in his place. I said nothing.

After the meeting, I stood outside for a few minutes and laughed and joked with W\_\_H\_\_. Then I climbed into my car and drove off, all the while talking sternly to myself. "Vance, if you keep this up, you will lose all your principles and Christ too!" The compromises I was living with, in order to stay in the ministry, were beginning to have an effect on me.

A little later, along with many others, I was at the school early one Sunday morning, helping to clean it up. An older brother walked over, whom I recognized as an old saint. Retired, he lived close to the school and was there most of everyday, helping out at no cost.

"Elder Ferrell," he said, "I just heard that the family with three children in Cotati may not be here next year, because there will be no bus to

bring them. They are sweet children, and I know them well; but, if they are sent to the public schools, they will be lost. I know what I am talking about! —Elder Ferrell, I will bring them myself at no charge."

I was thrilled. This would eliminate the driver's cost, but he would still need to use a school-subsidized vehicle.

I hurried over to where W\_\_H\_\_ was, and said, "W\_\_, Brother \_\_ said he would drive the three children up at no cost!"

W\_\_H\_\_ looked at me fiercely; and, in a blaze of anger, told me to go home. Since he had more clout with the conference office than I did, I left.

Then he strode off to stop that effort to save souls, which he did. (For your information, all three of those children went into public school the next year, and were later lost.)

As I drove home, I thought about the ever-increasing amount of wrongdoing I was party to.

Arriving at our house, I tried to hide my feelings. Apparently, I did it well enough that Cherie did not suspect anything. Why disturb her happiness just now, as she sang her songs while washing dishes and working around the house with baby Linda?

But within half an hour, W\_\_H\_\_ drove up. Marching in, he sat both of us down at the kitchen table and began blasting me. He was really angry. He told me I was a problem; Cherie was a problem. I was trying to keep him from building that church, and B\_\_ did not like me. Then, in his rage, he explained why: I had preached that sermon at camp meeting, and it upset B\_\_.

After several minutes of that, he stomped out and drove off.

This tantrum came as a total shock to Cherie. She was near total collapse; the thought came to mind that we get in the car and drive a little while.

We drove at a moderate pace down one country lane after another. On and on we went. But it was not working, regardless of whether I was quiet or spoke. Instead she said through half-closed lips, "Vance, I think I'm becoming paralyzed." I prayed out loud, and the thought flashed into mind to start singing, and I sang one gospel song after another. She later told me it was the singing that brought her out of it.

We came home and ate lunch; then I said, "Let's go out by the creek." It ran through a grove of trees, beyond a field behind our home. We

went out there and I brought with me a volume of the *Testimonies*, selected at random. We prayed and I opened it. I always loved to see what my God would have for me. The passage I opened to said “Go forward,” and talked about stepping into the river. We kept turning and opening. We came upon more promises of encouragement to do what we knew to be right. The decision to leave was mine, but not once in the entire experience did Cherie ask that we remain in the ministry.

*I remembered Gyger’s wife, and I thought, “They are not going to kill my wife!”*

I contacted the conference office and asked that I might have my summer vacation early that year. It was arranged that I would have it in May.

When it arrived, I packed our vacation things and drove up to Yosemite for a few days. Because it was early, not many campers were there and the bears were hungry.

That night, as we heard a rustling and banging outside, we knew what it was. Any sensible person would zip the tent and go back to sleep, but I rushed out to chase the bear away. Here was this long-legged man, with only white winter underwear on, coming at him. I ran straight toward him and the bear stopped in his tracks, then turned and ran. If he had been a smart bear, he would have laughed and torn me with a swipe of his paw.

After a few days, we packed up and drove to Al Wolfsen’s and stayed for part of a week.

Wolfsen was astounded; and, the second day we were there, he looked at me and said, “Do you know where you are? You are a minister of this conference!” He knew B\_\_ well.

I just smiled. I no longer cared. I was with Spirit of Prophecy friends for a few days, and we could relax. I did not tell him what I was going to do.

Then we drove down to Tracy, where my mother’s first husband was then practicing medicine. I told him I would be living in the Sacramento area soon, but I did not say more.

Arriving back home, it was time to begin working on the foundation of the new church W\_\_H\_\_ wanted to build in Santa Rosa. Frankly, this was something I could thoroughly enjoy. Outdoor construction work of any kind was always relaxing, and it was a pleasant time of year.

Yet it was time to write a resignation and mail it to Elder B\_\_, which I did. The next day, I

went to work on the job and helped the head carpenter shoot his measurements, string lines, and hammer in batter boards. All in all, it was a happy day for me.

I knew it could not be for Cherie; but, fortunately, that would be taken care of soon.

After a short break for lunch, as we continued laying out stakes and setting lines, a man from down the street ambled up. Retired, with nothing to do, he began helping us. As he did so, he told us his story. When he was younger, he made his living by stealing dogs. He would drive them down to the University of California Medical Center, a large facility located on Sutro Mountain not far from my former home on Beulah Street. The medical doctors knew him well, and would buy the animals, no questions asked, for \$15 to \$25 each. Enlightening.

The next morning, I received a telephone call from Wieland to come, with Cherie, and meet him at the conference office. They had received my letter.

As far as I was concerned, this was an anticlimax. The crisis was already past. We were getting out. B\_\_ sat at his desk, in front of Cherie and me, and W\_\_H\_\_ sat off to one side. We spoke cordially. B\_\_ could not understand what the problem was and I had no burden to say much—until he said that Cherie must have gotten me to do this. I said it was my own decision. At this, W\_\_H\_\_ recognized an argument was near, so he graciously interrupted and got B\_\_ to make closing arrangements. My resignation was accepted, and we were given the following month’s salary.

We all shook hands and left.

The following Sabbath we were at the Petaluma Church. I had said nothing to any of the members, and the news came as a surprise to them. They were sorrowful. W\_\_H\_\_ spoke, but the members knew him well and were not impressed.

Outside the church, as Cherie and I said good-bye to members as they were leaving, that young lady from over by Bolinas walked over. She was in tears and said she wished she had been baptized during my effort. By her side stood a young sailor. He appeared very naive about all that was going on.

I only mention this because, in November 1989, I received a letter from Dr. George Knight, teacher and writer at Andrews University. He told

me he was that young sailor who stood there that day by the girl, and that I was partly responsible for his becoming an Adventist. As a result of my evangelistic effort, his girlfriend came into the church, and later he did also.

A non-Adventist that day in Petaluma, he knew next to nothing about the church. But he had been baptized, gone through our schools, obtained a doctorate, and became a professor in the Department of Church History at the Seminary.

I deeply respect him for how far he has gone since I met him at Petaluma in June 1960, and I very much admire the number of books he has been able to author. But I recognized that he and I are in opposite camps: He advocates liberal positions which I oppose; so, unfortunately, we cannot work together.

The day after that last Sabbath at the Petaluma Church, I immediately packed a truck and

we left the area. It was the summer of 1960.

My years in the ministry, and all the years preceding them, were preparing me for Pilgrims Rest. But I was not ready for the responsibilities of caring for a larger flock through my present work, and neither was the church ready yet for those publications. There was more to be learned, more decisions to be made by many people. The crisis within the church was twenty years away.

Years later, my roommate (whose name I do not give, since he is now in denominational ministry himself) told me that if I had been in some other conference I would still be in the ministry.

Maybe so. Perhaps Elder F. was mistaken, and there were places in the work where principles were not violated and those who stood for them were valued. That could well be.

“The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open unto their cry . . . The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.”  
— *Psalm 34:15, 17*

“Thou shalt make thy prayer unto Him, and He shall hear Thee.”  
— *Job 22:27*

“But He knoweth the way that I take.” — *Job 23:10*

“Commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.”  
— *Psalm 37:5*

“What He had promised, He was able also to perform.”  
— *Romans 4:20-21*

“My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory.”  
— *Philippians 4:19*

## 5 - The Sacramento Years

I needed time to think through my next move, so we headed to Al Wolfsen's place. He was a humble man who believed God's Word, and we would be safe with him for a few weeks.

Al Wolfsen had purchased a little property in Amador County, near Pine Grove. Calling it the Promised Land, he built several cabins; and, at his little outpost, he regularly treated the sick with natural remedies.

We stayed there for about a month. For several months, I had been considering the possibility of opening a small treatment center in Sacramento.

But there was a flaw to this plan. Neither Wolfsen nor Ferrell could do this legally in the State of California. He was hidden out in the country, and Sacramento was the state capital. Yet Cherie and I were young, and we had more lessons to learn.

We determined that we would live in the country—on the edge of, or outside, Sacramento. But such rental units simply were not to be found in that area. In spite of the obstacles, our kind Father in heaven helped us find a house in the middle of a 20-acre field, in a sparsely populated part of Jackson Road (today called Jackson Highway) on Highway 16. The place was old, but we were happy there.

I had George Müller's view of life in mind: Do the work of God, and trust to Him to provide your necessities. We had been given one month's worth of additional salary. What would happen after that?

We plunged in and set to work. Friends, whom we had never known before, stepped forward and said, "Vance, I want you to have this for your work," and we kept going.

As I considered the matter, it seemed that there was more to the project than initially anticipated. Not only did we have to locate a suit-

able place for the health center, but we needed to know what we were to do in it.

Whether or not we were able to complete the project successfully, there was a need to identify exactly what the Spirit of Prophecy blueprint said should, and should not, be included.

My time had to be divided between both aspects of medical missionary work.

Someone reading this might protest, "That is not where you start! You first need to take some courses at Loma Linda!"

But our approach was different. We were less concerned about what Loma Linda offered than about what the Spirit of Prophecy taught. The question should be, "How does God want the work done?"

The more I studied it, the more convinced I became that, as a church, we were approaching medical missionary work incorrectly in a number of ways.

It was clear that what was needed was a blueprint manual for medical missionaries. No such book existed anywhere. So, in addition to working on the treatment rooms, I set to work to compile it. All that was available was the one-volume *Index* to those writings. So, instead, I read through every Spirit of Prophecy health and healing book, from *Ministry of Healing* to *Loma Linda Messages*, and more, and compiled the sentences and paragraphs into the classified arrangement they naturally fell into. The result was the *Medical Missionary Manual*.

I had been through four years of college and three years of seminary. Yet in compiling this book, I gained a remarkable education in practical living—from those Spirit of Prophecy writings.

We bought a mimeograph machine and a friend began churning out copies of the separate chapters. Other friends in the Sacramento area took and mailed them to acquaintances all

over America. The complete book we sold for a nominal cost. Fortunately, I was able to keep two complete copies. In recent years, we typeset the entire book and it is now available in print (*Medical Missionary Manual, 340 pp., \$9.95, plus \$3.00 p&h*). The book is totally unique; nothing else is like it.

The months passed and work continued on both projects. But, gradually, it became clear that a natural treatment center should have been located in a secluded place in the country, not next to the State Capital. We were warned that trouble was ahead.

One day I received a phone call from Arthur Gyger. Would I please come to Petaluma and give the funeral sermon for his wife? Arthur and his wife were God's children, and I was happy to help him.

Several years later, Arthur also died prematurely. I am sure it was of a broken heart. I will never forget him; he was a child of God.

During the two years we were in Sacramento, we made a number of contacts with members of the Adventist Reform Movement. The ladies talked to my wife, and the men talked to me. In addition, we met individuals who had belonged to the Reform for a time, learned what it was like, and left. These contacts resulted in acquaintances with former reform leaders who provided historical, financial, and doctrinal information. You will find an extended comment on those contacts in our book, *The Adventist Reform Church*. We never joined either branch. We learned much about their teachings, their leaders, their past history, and the way they treated their own members. Here is an example:

Learning about our missionary project, an Adventist lady came with her son to our meetings. We frequently invited her to visit us on Sabbath afternoons, since she had no friends. She told us her story:

She was a faithful Adventist who loved her church family, but an agent of the Reform Church people worked to win her to their organization. When she decided to enter it, they told her to write a letter to her church, denouncing it, which they helped her write. This was done so she would be too embarrassed to ever leave the Reform. But later, when she found out what their leaders were like; she separated from them. But, having written that letter, she felt too ashamed to return to the Adventist church family. When

we left Sacramento, she continued worshiping alone.

A leader in the Reform left it while we were in Sacramento; and he told us how, a few years earlier, the Reform leaders had their members Ingather Woodland and part of Sacramento, pretending they were part of the main church. This fraudulent deception netted them a large amount of money.

One day, a friend told me there was another former Adventist minister living in the Sacramento area. As soon as we had opportunity, we drove over to his home to visit with him.

When he opened the door, he was puzzled as to who we were. I told him that I also was a former Northern California Conference minister. Amazed, he invited us in and told us his story.

I no longer recall his name, so shall call him Elder Smith. Elder Smith was a gentle soul who would not hurt a fly. He had been pastor of the Woodland SDA Church, not far from Sacramento. One day at Lodi camp meeting, as Smith was passing the little wooden structure which housed the president and treasurer's offices during the meetings, the treasurer stepped outside on the porch and looking at Smith with a smile, made a fist with his thumb down. Those literate in ancient history will know this was the sign, in the Roman Colosseum, for the gladiator to be slain.

That was the same treasurer who was there when I was in the conference ministry, although I never had any problems with him.

Smith knew that B\_\_ was displeased with him, but he never really did know the cause. It was quite obvious to me that Smith was a very gentle soul, and the type to make peace if he could at all do so.

About a month after camp meeting ended, Smith's salary check did not arrive. No comment, nothing said; just no salary check. He called the treasurer but could not seem to get a worthwhile response. The next month, no salary check. Smith was not the type to stir up rebellion nor try to take the church out with him. He and his wife just hunkered down and tried to keep on going. By the third month, they gave up and moved to Sacramento; he got a job as a social services worker.

An inherent problem in the denomination is that, if he is not a Christian, the leader of any entity can be a little king, lording it over his workers. Some men disregard the warning of 1 Peter

5:3; and, because they do so, they will lose the crown promised in the following verse.

Within a few months after we moved to Sacramento, I had a dream one night. It was so vivid, I could hardly believe I had been dreaming. The details were so clear, and there were no extraneous oddities as are often found in dreams.

Cherie and I were on a ship in the ocean. Elder B\_\_ was the captain, and the conference workers who heartily cooperated with him were on board. Things were happening that were not right, and I told Cherie we must get off of the ship. Looking over the side, the waters did not look like a pleasant place to be; yet, I had no fear of them. The situation on the ship grew worse, and we both jumped out into the water. Although the waves were choppy, there was no fear about being there. By this time, a little distance from the ship, our eyes were drawn to the ship—for, as we watched, it sank with all on board!

What did this dream mean? I cannot say with certainty. It should be noted that it was only about one leader and his associates.

One day as I was at the health center working, a minister who had attended the Seminary for a short time while I was there walked in the door, accompanied by the union Religious Liberty secretary (whom I had considered to be a very fine man).

This minister had recently been appointed to the position of Health Secretary for the conference; and, not long before, we had heard him give a sermon on the “Eight Laws of Health” at the large Carmichael Church. He would mention one of the laws of health in *Ministry of Healing*, 127, and then ridicule the idea that it was worth anything. Then he would proceed to the next. The point of his message was that only fanatics made an issue of the so-called “eight laws of health.”

This day, he obviously came to the center for the purpose of verbally frightening me into stopping the project. Apparently, B\_\_ was infuriated that another speckled bird was on the loose in his conference. The minister talked as threateningly as he could, hinting of lawsuits, and I firmly held my ground. We went at it for some time. He would state a policy, and I would reply with a principle. He was obviously not used to a Seventh-day Adventist who was not submissive to the wishes of the leaders.

As we conversed, over his shoulder I could see the union secretary behind him, looking at me with a very understanding smile of encouragement. It was obvious he did not share in the views of the man he was behind. I sensed that he had actually come along for the ride to give me that smile of encouragement.

For a time, we attended one after another of the nine Adventist churches in the Sacramento area, but finally decided to attend the small Oak Park Church. I had met the pastor at camp meeting, and he was a kindly soul.

But we soon found that our presence placed him in a very difficult position. In the sad tone of a beaten man, he eventually told me he would rather that we go somewhere else. He had B\_\_ on his back, demanding this and that; and the poor pastor feared he would lose his soul if he treated us wrongly,—yet he did not want to lose his job.

Here is an example: After we had been attending the Oak Park Church a few weeks, Cherie and I asked that our membership be transferred to the Oak Park Church. The church clerk wrote for the letter, and the Petaluma Church sent it. The next step, according to the *Church Manual*, was for the full church to vote on the matter.

But B\_\_, finding out about it, phoned the pastor and told him to send our letters back to Petaluma. That, of course, was entirely contrary to *Church Manual* policy; yet such men violate church policy whenever they wish to do so.

Someone may say that I should not discuss such matters. But that is exactly what is wrong with the church: Neither the leaders nor the members will confront wrongdoing nor eliminate it. They will not cast out the lump. According to the thinking of our time, wrongdoing in the church is not really so wrong, but pointing it out and pleading for its removal is. Until this mindset is changed, the denomination will never have the spiritual empowerment to do the work assigned to it in these last days.

I wanted to start a non-profit corporation but, of course, had no idea how to proceed. I was told a lawyer was needed to work this out, but I could not afford one. So I went to the Department of State at the capitol building and my kind heavenly Father helped me process it myself, at several offices of the State Capital. The experience taught me a lot. That was the first of several corporations I would establish in a total of

four states.

Still exploring the possibilities for missionary contacts, one day the thought came to mind to take a clipboard and drive into Sacramento. An idea I had never heard before came to mind. I drove directly to a typical section of town and parked. Then I walked up to a house; and, when the lady answered the door, I told her we were making a survey to locate people who needed help. I had my pen poised on my clipboard, ready to write. This totally relaxed her, and we entered into a brief, but spiritually profitable, conversation.

Within a very short time, I had learned about a family on the block who needed help. In the process, I had a built-in opening at every home to speak to the person at the door about God for a few minutes and give each one a tract. I had found a useful way to go to every door. The way was also open to suggest Bible studies.

I told our group about this new method, and some of them went out and began using it. They also went back and tried to help the contact I found, plus other families that needed help.

Years later, I met an Adventist brother who had discovered a variant on this approach. More on that later.

During the time we were in Sacramento, I preached in a number of homes throughout a wide area. These were generally evening meetings. They were precious gatherings, as, together, we viewed the wondrous truths found in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy.

In one, given in the Pratt Valley, a few houses down from Elmshaven (where Ellen White lived her final years), the sermon was a simple one. As usual, I had earnestly prayed alone beforehand, that I could reach their hearts and bring them to Jesus in a new, deeper sense.

But that evening, it seemed as if, in a special sense, we were all brought into the presence of Jesus. Everyone in the room could feel the moving of the Holy Spirit. One of those in attendance was Doug, two others were Ralph and his wife. There was also a young artist there. Doug later moved to Missouri, to help us with our broadcast work. Ralph and his wife helped in other ways. The artist later went into other lines of work, and later became a businessman owning a factory; but, in the process, he gradually slipped away from the Lord. In the early 1980s, reading our tracts, he retraced his steps to the Lord.

One sunny morning, we drove up to Mokelumne (*Muh-KUL-uh-me*) Hill, a little town in the Sierras. At the time, Health Research, located there, was a well-known name among faithful believers. Dr. Wilborne, a non-Adventist chiropractor, started selling used health books and reprinting a number of out-of-print books. Many Advent believers were happy that he also reprinted some old Spirit of Prophecy books. Health Research is gone today; and Leaves of Autumn in Payson, Arizona, is doing much the same work. Yet back then, Health Research was all we had!

So we decided to visit him one day. His operation consisted of an old country house, with his book work crammed into the full-size basement underneath. Some materials he mimeographed, and others he had printed on outside presses.

Our conversation was an interesting one, but one-sided; for I did most of the listening. I asked him if he had circularized the Adventist people, so they could obtain those important out-of-print Spirit of Prophecy books. To my astonishment, Wilborne told me he had mailed out a list of all his Spirit of Prophecy reprints, such as *Loma Linda Messages*, *Spalding-Magan Unpublished Testimonies*, *Morning Talks*, etc., to the entire Seventh-day Adventist *Yearbook* of workers throughout the world field—yet had received very few responses.

Then I asked if I could purchase a copy of the *Spalding-Magan Unpublished Testimonies*; and he told me he would sell me one over the counter, but would not mail me one. These words were spoken with deep feeling. When I inquired why, he said in strong tones that, a few months earlier, the head of the Ellen G. White Estate had stood where I stood on the other side of his counter—and told him the denomination would sue him if he sold any more copies of that particular book!

Of course, I knew why. *Spalding-Magan* happens to contain a number of very important statements about how it is all right for the tithe to be paid outside the organized church, plus other matters.

Years later, when we were in southern Illinois, the printer at Leaves of Autumn quit so he could get into outdoor work. Stopping by for a few weeks, he helped us in our Pilgrims Rest print shop. While there, he told me that the new head of the E.G. White Estate had stopped by to

see Gar Baybrook, head of LOA. When he indicated that the White Estate would rather that LOA stop printing that particular book (*Spalding-Magan*), Gar (known to his friends and in his book lists as “Grumpy Gar”) retorted, “Why not!” The E.G. White head backed off quickly without giving a reason, and Gar still prints and sells that book.

For your information, the book consists of Ellen White’s letters to, and about, independent ministries in the southeastern states, which the General Conference wanted to stop or take over. For this reason, a number of important matters are discussed in that book. Fortunately, the book, originally published in carbon-copy format by two Adventist pioneer workers, A.W. Spalding and P.T. Magan, was never copyrighted, and is in the public domain. Anyone can print it.

One day we met a young Seventh-day Adventist mother at one of the area churches. Since their family was having a difficult time, Cherie and I collected some clothing, as well as supplies for the baby. Informing her by phone that we were coming over to visit, we headed off.

Since we were about to start an evangelistic effort to help bring folk into the church, I had handed her a copy of our announcement sheet.

When we arrived, the family was there, along with the local elder of that church. They had been studying the sheet and thinking negative thoughts about it.

Entering the house, we were confronted by a dark, cold atmosphere. The young lady wanted to know why we were doing evangelistic work without asking permission of the pastor or conference office. For the most part, the elder sat there and said very little.

I replied, “If you met a family down the street who were ready for Bible studies and wanted them, and if your pastor said not to give them, would you give them studies?” “No!” she declared. I responded, “I would work to save the lost, regardless of what the pastor said.” By this time, the elder looked ashamed, and we prepared to leave. But we remained cheerful and at peace, for we had truth on our side.

Then I said, “Just a moment, we have something for you out in the car.” Then we brought in a large boxful of much needed supplies, and left.

One spring morning, we drove up to Wolfsen’s place for his annual medical missionary convention. During one of the meetings, a number of

people had shared natural remedy and health data, and stories about people they had helped.

Then an older brother came forward and said, “I would like to tell you what happened to me back home.” Then he proceeded to tell us a farming story. I thought to myself, “What does this have to do with natural remedies?” Yet, by the time he was finished, I rejoiced; and, of all that was said at the meeting, I can only remember his and one other story:

This brother, who lived in Washington State, had planted potatoes in a large field. But then the potato bugs came in and ultimately ruined everyone’s crop for miles around. While the destruction was going on, this faithful soul got down on his knees with his son and pled with God for protection.

Then they decided to step outside and see how God had cared for them. They went along one row after another, and there was not one potato bug. Down one row and up another, always the same. Then they came to the end of the final row—and, on the last potato plant, there was a potato bug! But, as they watched, a different bug crawled over and ate it! So they caught that bug and sent it to the entomology department at the state university.

The experts there excitedly contacted them. That bug only lived in Africa!

Well, while you are thinking about that one, consider this second incident which began at that meeting:

Ralph, the friend of ours I mentioned earlier, had also attended this meeting; and, during the meeting, he asked Wolfsen for counsel. It seemed that a close friend of Ralph’s, an Adventist medical doctor whom I will not name, had lost his reason. He was not violent, but psychotic and out of touch with reality. Ralph was considering taking the physician out into the country in order to help him with Spirit of Prophecy remedies, and wanted to know if Wolfsen recommended it. Wolfsen, by this time very much aware of the legal dangers in helping people in California, counseled against it.

As Ralph later told me, this is what subsequently happened: Following the meeting, Ralph went home to his house (where I had held that earlier meeting), a few doors from Elmshaven. It was located in the small valley below the St. Helena Sanitarium (now St. Helena Hospital), where the physician had worked until he became psychotic. Ralph asked the doctor’s wife if he

could take her husband into the country and try to help him out of his problem. She was beside herself with worry and nearly said no, thinking that a mental hospital and its shock treatments or frontal lobotomies might accomplish more. But, praying about the matter, she was impressed to give Ralph a chance.

Ralph drove the physician, who was extremely placid and not a bit difficult to work with, to a secluded country location. The treatment was this: Ralph fed the doctor good food, and would then go walking with him. Ralph is a very gentle soul, with a sweet, calming voice. When the physician did not want to go farther, they would both just sit down on the dirt path. Then, after a time, they would get up and go on. The Spirit of Prophecy prescription was followed: rest, exercise, fresh air, sunlight, quiet and peace, prayer in the hearing of the doctor, trust in God, and all the rest of the natural remedies.

Within three days the Adventist physician was perfectly normal.

A faithful Advent believer, he later attributed the problem to such an overmastering fear of chemical additives in fruits and vegetables, that he had not been eating properly. He never again had a relapse.

Two weeks after the weekend convention closed, Wolfsen fled the state. Here is how it happened:

Al Wolfsen had friends all over those hills, including the sheriff's office. One day, the State Department of Public Health sent word to the sheriff, that agents were coming to arrest Wolfsen.

Al knew he had less than an hour in which to work, but he had previously thought out exactly what he would do when the authorities headed his way. He had a burn pit out front, and he quickly piled into it all his patient records. As they burned, he loaded his Volkswagon. The workers stood around, utterly shocked as all his papers went up in smoke. Then he was gone. When the men arrived, no one truly had any idea where he went.

(In 1985 we met Al again at a ranch in the desert, a little south of Carson City, Nevada. He told us he had driven to Nevada, north into Canada, and on up the Alaska-Canada Highway to Alaska, where he stayed with a son for about a year. He said that, at the present time, he was wanted only in Amador Country where he for-

merly lived.)

I spent a couple days studying state and federal law at the State Law Library, on the legality of using natural remedies as part of one's religion. It was clearly stated that we could practice our religion; yet, in recent years, the courts have narrowed the scope of this freedom. In addition, in a number of court cases, "practicing one's religion" could not be equated with caring for the sick.

We were also receiving warnings.

In addition to compiling and publishing the *Medical Missionary Manual*, we conducted several complete series of instructional classes for our people and those in the community. People came from Carmichael, West Sacramento, and occasionally from Auburn, Jackson, and Pine Grove. We held a cooking school and a series of health classes, anatomy and physiology classes, hydrotherapy classes, natural remedies, and a series on the eight laws of health (based on *Ministry of Healing*, 127), as well as an evangelistic effort. An entire family of six came into the church as a result of one of our series of meetings.

Soon, some of those working with us were involved in additional projects. Among the spin-offs were two brothers (one from Alaska and the other from the Bay Area) who decided to make their project the selling of Acme Juicers and helping the people in their homes.

One evening we had a new visitor. He was a middle-aged man, living in a house on the same block as our center. He seemed to thoroughly enjoy the meeting, which was an instructional class in natural remedies. Afterward he confided in me that he worked at the State Department of Health as an investigator. But, he told me, he was just here in his off hours. All I could do was send a prayer upward.

He came back several times, and then we saw no more of him for several months. Then, one evening, he entered our meeting hall just as it was ending. He was distraught and in tears. Telling us his wife had cancer, he asked for help. I had already told the others about his occupation, so they were aware of the danger. Yet we were convicted that we should try to help him. Some of our workers went to his house, helped his wife, and gave him and her a number of instructions. We had treated what we thought to be cancer in his own home. If he was going to get

us in trouble, this would be it. But he didn't. He seemed to genuinely appreciate the help.

Several months later, deeply appreciative, he

came over and warned me that we were being watched and that trouble was coming. I never saw him again.

“As for God, His way is perfect, the Word of the Lord is tried; He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him.”

— *Psalms 18:30*

“He knoweth them that trust in Him.” — *Nahum 1:7*

“He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord. He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him will I trust.”

— *Psalms 91:1-2*

“Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.”

— *John 16:24*

“If these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” — *2 Peter 1:8*

“And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father, which gave them Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand.”

— *John 10:28-29*

“If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me and drink.”

— *John 7:37*

“The Lord is thy shade on thy right hand.”

— *Psalms 121:5*

“Wait on the Lord; be of good courage.”

— *Psalms 27:14*

## 6 - The Radio Years

In May 1962, I packed everything into a homemade plywood-covered haul trailer, which I purchased for \$50, and we headed south to southern California, and then traveled eastward. We wanted to relocate to a place where the cost of living would be less. Driving at night near Needles, California, suddenly one of the tires on the old trailer blew. The weight of furnishings inside the trailer, plus the fact that the wheels were not truck-type, caused the inner tube to pinch. There we were in the blackness on a busy highway. Managing to get the vehicle off the road somewhat, we prayed. Immediately, a passing car stopped. The lone man in it came up and offered to help us. He drove me on into Needles, and back again. To shorten the story, I spent the next day unloading the old trailer into an open-top U-Haul trailer. Somehow, we had enough money to make the switch.

Off we went. As we were driving through a town in Arizona, even though the sky seemed to be pretty much clear, the thought suddenly came to mind that I must buy a tarpaulin. Near the edge of town, I turned around and drove back to a hardware store. I had barely cinched down the canvass on all sides when the rain came down in buckets.

One evening we pulled into Leslie, Arkansas, and asked directions to the home of Cherie's father. A man offered to show us. But, pulling the heavy load, our automobile could not make it up the last hill. Stalling, we backed into the side ditch.

Cherie's father, Albert (everyone called him Al), said if we did not immediately get it up the hill, it would be stripped by morning. We spent the next five hours unloading the entire trailer into his pickup. We did not finish until 4 a.m. Al had been trained as a dentist, but was not practicing during the time we stayed at his place.

A couple weeks later, Al and I delivered Ellen, my second-born. As you might guess, she was named after a good friend and counselor, Ellen White.

Conditions were very difficult; for we found that there was no electricity, running water, or telephone service on this hill. I hauled water in buckets, cut wood, and gathered large, flat stones from a creek bed for an entryway to the old house trailer we were living in. I also cut a road about 300 feet long with a two-man bucksaw, sometimes with friends, sometimes without them to a cabin site.

Back in Sacramento, I had wanted to help people more directly than through the health center. There were thousands living in the area, and there must be a way to reach them. Remembering Arthur Gyger, I began laying plans for a broadcasting work. Now, in Arkansas, I continued working on this.

About a month after we arrived, a car pulled in with an old travel trailer behind it. A friend from Sacramento and his wife had come to visit for a little while. Wally's wife, Kay, was expecting a baby. They wanted Al to deliver the baby. We were far from Marshall, the nearest town with a physician; and any complication could be dangerous to mother or child. Al agreed to help.

On the morning of the birth, Cherie rushed outside to where I was. The baby was turning blue! They wanted me to come in and pray!

Stepping inside the living room, there was Kay. The head of the baby had emerged and, in the brief moment I looked, it was turning bluer! From my studies back in Sacramento, I knew enough about obstetrics to realize the cord was probably wrapped about its neck, which was not yet visible. The afterbirth would have to come out as well, and that often did not happen for 20 to 30 minutes after the baby emerged.

Kneeling down, I pled with God to save the child. I had not prayed ten seconds, when the baby began coming out, bringing the afterbirth with it! The cord had been wrapped closely around its little neck. Al, Esther his wife, and Cherie witnessed the entire experience.

About two years ago, that same girl, now grown, visited us. A faithful Adventist, she has a boy of her own, and is living in southern California.

While we are on the subject, let me tell you of an incident which occurred several years later, after we had left the area:

Al's wife (Cherie's mother), Esther, was trying to help with the delivery of a baby. Because it had come unexpectedly, she was hurrying in the kitchen, trying to get the hot water prepared on a Coleman camp stove. But, when she poured in the white gas, the stove would not light. So she knelt and prayed, and was then able to light the stove. It was a good delivery. Afterward, she discovered that she had poured kerosene into the stove, not white gas.

One day, as I was writing up the first several of a series of doctrinal broadcasts, a family dropped in from Oklahoma. He was a seasoned colporteur who independently canvassed with paperback *Great Controversys*. This was the first time I had ever heard of this being done. (As you may know, we are now one of the largest suppliers of low-cost Spirit of Prophecy, and other, missionary paperbacks.)

About a week later, a fat envelope arrived in the mail for me. Opening it, I found the complete report by Elder Arthur L. White, entitled *The Circulation of Great Controversy*, which he presented to the Field Missionary Secretaries' Council at Sanitarium, California (just above Elmshaven), on September 30, 1938. In spite of all my years in college and the Seminary, I did not know that such a manuscript existed.

The canvasser's wife had laboriously written it out by hand and mailed the handwritten copy to me. In a brief note, she said she was impressed to send this to me, but did not know why.

I was awestruck by what I read. It was a remarkable history, given entirely in quotations from the Spirit of Prophecy, as to the importance of that book and how our leaders, from 1888 to 1890, would not let it be printed! Never before had I realized how important that book was!

I immediately went out into the woods, knelt

down and pled with God for guidance as to what I should do with that manuscript. I was there for over an hour, and came back a changed man. That book should be circulated everywhere! It was true that I did not have printing facilities, but I was planning to go on the radio. Immediately, I set my doctrinal broadcast scripts aside, and determined to broadcast *Great Controversy*.

About a year later, I was able to typeset and pay for the printing of an 11 x 17 tract containing that A.L. White document. It was the first 11 x 17 tract I ever prepared and printed. We mailed out many copies. Not long after, Inspiration Books, in Arizona, obtained a copy of our tract and reprinted it in a folder which they sent out by the tens of thousands. So the letter, laboriously handwritten by that humble colporteur's wife, was used of God to awaken many souls to the importance of the special book for our time in history. If you wish a copy of this tract, write and ask for *The Circulation of Great Controversy* [CE-30].

The next hurdle, in going on the radio, was a source of electricity to run a reel-to-reel tape recorder. I got a transformer and a battery, and drove the car down into the woods away from farm sounds. But when I tried to tape a half-hour section of chapter 1 (*The Destruction of Jerusalem*), the battery was gone before I could finish it.

Inquiring, we located a Baptist family who lived alongside of Highway 66. They were willing for me to make a tape recording in their living room. The lighting was poor, and I did not have good seating or table arrangement; yet this was the best I could do.

Yet the task seemed an impossible one. A car or truck went by with a muffled roar less than every minute. As the family watched, I got on my knees and pled with God to stop the traffic while I made the tape. Then I started recording. Not another vehicle went by for the next 29 and a half minutes. As the vehicles again roared by, one after another, the family said that such a silence just did not happen in the middle of the day.

Better facilities were needed, and we found an old, one-room Baptist Church in the little village of Oxley. Inquiring, I was given permission to make radio tapes in the building. The inside walls had not seen paint in a generation, yet it was quiet and had electricity.

Gradually, more tapes were made, and I made contact with KLRA in Little Rock, a station which covered the entire state and portions of surrounding states. Two months later we had enough money to tentatively begin broadcasting.

At about this time, I decided to request that our names be transferred to the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference Church. But the request was blocked in California. B\_\_ was still president. A little later, we were disfellowshipped in California because I was broadcasting *Great Controversy* without church permission.

Over the years, we have always tried to live in the country; but where we lived in the Arkansas hills was the snakiest area I have ever been in. We frequently came across copperheads—the silent type of pit vipers. I would rather have had rattlesnakes, but they were generally farther west. Over the months, we had a number of close encounters; and it was obvious that God was protecting us.

Cherie heard that some dogs were “snake dogs.” By their barking, they would warn when a snake was in the area, and then attack and try to kill it. Since we had two small children, Cherie prayed that God would send us a snake dog.

About a week later, a non-descript dog wandered in. He seemed certain that our home was his, and we did not know where he came from. We quickly discovered that he was a snake dog.

My wife’s faith had been answered.

(This is the sequel to the story: That dog was with us all the while we were at Al’s place; but, about a week after we moved away, a neighbor that Al did not know drove in one afternoon, for one reason or other, and, seeing the dog, said, “That is my dog!” Al was glad to give him his dog back, and both he and the dog were happy also. The man said the dog had just wandered off one day, and he did not know where it had gone.)

One sunny afternoon, I was down by Al’s house, and I asked him where a certain tool was. He pointed toward a piece of sheet steel laying on the broad lawn, about 25 feet from the house. Since, at that time, he had no outbuildings, he was using the metal to cover a number of items he wanted kept dry.

What happened next is totally unbelievable. Of the many physical miracles which I have experienced, I consider this to be the most startling:

I lifted that lid with one hand, and reached

down with the other to see what I was looking for. Underneath that sheet was a 20-inch radius of stuff: pipes, plumbing fittings, some hand tools, a couple small jars, a little rope, etc. I moved my hand across it all, touching and moving it around, yet unable to see what I was looking for.

Then I straightened up and, just before lowering the sheet, thought to take one more look down at the pile. There, in the middle, was a full-grown copperhead. He was coiled and extremely angry. Indeed, he could have struck out at my legs even yet. But he just sat there, furious.

I called out to Al, over by the house, to bring me an axe, and I dropped it on the neck of the creature. Al had been watching me rummaging through the pile, and he watched me kill the snake.

As I thought back on it later, the Lord guided that the snake would be there, so I would see how closely Heaven was caring for us. I was also guided to see it before lowering the sheet, so I would know how I had been protected.

In the months that followed, as I recorded *Great Controversy* broadcast tapes, I often dreamed I was fighting snakes at night. Yet I never felt any fear, and killed every one.

The devil is the old serpent; and, as we bring the final messages to those around us, we are in direct combat with him. But, thank the Lord, we have help from above!

Ever since we left the Northern California Conference ministry, we have tried to live in the country. However, in Arkansas, I learned that one can live too far out in the country. We were four hours from Little Rock, on old roads, and five hours from Springfield. We could not work effectively, so far from equipment, supplies, and repairs.

After being at Al’s place for about six months, we moved in November, 1962, to Springfield, Missouri. Since I was working with electronic equipment, we needed to be closer to a city. For a time, we stayed with Advent believers in their home in Springfield. But soon we found a home out near Ash Grove. For the price of one rental unit, we had the use of two houses, separated by about thirty feet. The second house served as the tape production center.

About three-quarters of a mile away was the mailbox, so our entire family would walk the distance every afternoon after lunch. Ours was

a happy home, with 3-year old Linda and little Ellen, less than a year old.

Over the years, we always took time for family walks, family worships, and some playtime in the evening with the children. We always spent our evenings together. Yes, ours was a very happy home.

In that home was a smaller side room, which we did not use a lot. It had a closet which contained the hot-water heater. Cherie would routinely store a dust mop in there. One day I walked into that room, and my eye went where it never did—to the crack underneath that closet door. A light was flickering. Quickly, I jerked open the door; the dust mop was on fire. The linty mop could not have been lit more than 30 seconds before I opened the door. Just as it did repeatedly every day and night, the gas water-heater pilot light had ignited the heating unit,—but this time the resulting flame had set the highly ignitable mop on fire. That fire could easily have happened at night, when we were all sleeping. The closet door in the little-used room could not be seen from the hallway.

One Sabbath morning I parked half a block from the church in Springfield, and my family went on in. Because it was early, I remained in the car for a few minutes to read the Bible. Then I prayed for the people who needed to know the Sabbath truth.

Just then, I heard someone calling out. Looking out the window, a little old man was sitting on a porch hollering at me in a squeaky voice. I could not make it out clearly, but he was saying something about Saturday.

Approaching him, I heard him more clearly: “Why do you people keep Saturday?”

He saw the people go into the Springfield Adventist Church each week on the day before Sunday, and he wanted to know why.

This led to Bible studies carried on by the pastor, since we lived out in the country.

One day I heard, from someone, that a Baptist church (one of those ubiquitous one-room, white churches found all through the South) was looking for a preacher. So I decided to apply for the job. I figured I could last one week.

An appointment was made and the next Sunday morning I arrived in time for Sunday School. The name over the church door was Dutch Baptist Church. The topic in the lesson quarterly (published by the Southern Baptist Board) was

Jacob’s conversation with his brethren after the death of their father. We got through that all right, and it looked like I still might preach.

No one asked what my religion was. In the Bible belt everyone is assumed to be once-saved-always-saved (a Baptist) or into tongues (a Pentecostal); each religiously avoided by the other.

Since it was unlikely I would be invited back a second time, for my sermon I had decided to run through everything. I began with the love of Christ, went into the law of God, gave the Sabbath truth, and ended up with the final judgment scene and an earnest appeal to accept Christ and His special truths before it was too late. It was a nicely rounded sermon, which emphasized the importance of obedience to God’s Written Word.

The audience was spellbound throughout the sermon. Some were drinking it in while others were softly gasping.

As we filed out of the church afterward, hardly anyone had much to say. They had too much to think about. I was praying in my heart that some would be reached.

Then one man walked up to me and began arguing. Well, that was not exactly unexpected, in view of the panoramic survey of truth I had just given.

But I was startled to discover what he was angry about. It was not the importance of keeping God’s law, nor the possibility that everyone should be keeping the Bible Sabbath. No, he was angry that, in giving an appeal, I had implied that anyone in that audience needed to repent! Such a concept, in his thinking, was heresy. Everyone in that church had already been saved—most at an early age! Never again would any of them need to repent. They were bound for heaven. Their salvation was finished at the cross!

By this time, everyone had crowded around to hear what was going on. After he had carried on for a little while, it was my turn.

I said politely yet firmly, “When were you saved?” “I was saved when I was twelve.” “Are you married?” “Yes, I am.” “Do you have children?” “Yes, I have several children.”

“Now, let us say that you were saved when you were twelve.” “Okay.” “And when you grew up and got married, you had several children.” “All right.” “And you were saved.” “That’s right.”

“Then, after a few years, you ran off with another woman—and left your wife and children.—Would you still be saved?”

Quick as a wink, he replied, “Yes, I would!”

“Because you believe you were saved at twelve, you couldn’t be lost, even though you left your wife and children?” “That’s right!”

“Well, I don’t believe that. You would have sinned a great sin against God, your wife, and children, and you could not be saved unless you repented of that sin, and left that other woman.”

At this juncture, the conversation was over; and I could see in the eyes of those around that they had learned something. One man walked up and apologized. That after-church conversation had explained the situation more clearly to some of them.

I was never invited back to the Dutch Baptist Church.

Then there was Brother Green. A Baptist to whom an Adventist friend introduced me, Brother Green was a true-hearted disciple of Jesus. Radiantly happy in Christ, he was living the best he could with the light he had.

Never with a lot of money in his pocket, one day, when I saw him, Brother Green came up to me with an even warmer than usual glow on his face. “Brother Ferrell, I just had a rich experience,” he said. “Tell me about it,” I replied.

“I was driving down the road with my family, and I got a flat tire. I got out of the car, examined it, and said, ‘Praise the Lord!’ I did not have the money for another tire.”

Then he continued, “So I put the spare one on and got back in and drove down the road; and, within a mile, I had to stop again. I had two more flat tires! So I stood there and said, ‘Praise the Lord!’ ”

That is the kind of man Brother Green was.

Eventually, an Adventist friend helped them go to a small self-supporting Adventist farm in Michigan, and Brother Green and his wonderful family became believers.

I will never forget him.

Where we lived, outside of Ash Grove, houses were scattered apart. In one of the homes, on the way to our mailbox, lived a woman who had smoked for years, and had emphysema.

Smoking, of course, is probably why she contracted it; and, as you may know, emphysema is considered incurable.

So after meeting the lady, Cherie went home and looked into our collection of books on natural remedies. The recent ones said nothing could be done about emphysema. Not satisfied, she checked into a couple of old 19th-century books.

In one of them, she found a formula for emphysema. It was what, we today, call the wet-sheet pack.

So, going back down to that home, she explained it to the lady, who was desperate enough to do anything. For the next couple weeks, Cherie would wrap the lady’s body in a cold wet sheet, then place a blanket around her, and help her lie down on a bed with a plastic covering it. More blankets would be piled on and she would remain there for a couple hours, as body heat gradually warmed up the pack.

Within a month, the incurable emphysema was apparently gone; and, most surprising of all, the lady never stopped smoking.

For a number of weeks, we met each Sabbath afternoon with a small group of the most spiritual members of the Springfield Church for a study hour. We would read a chapter from the Spirit of Prophecy and discuss it.

This worried the pastor greatly, and he said he would like to attend sometime. That was fine with us. When he showed up, we had a rich feast as we read in the Spirit of Prophecy and commented on its beautiful truths.

When we were finished, we turned to the pastor and asked him what he thought of it. He sat there silent for a moment, then said he did not know what to make of it. What worried him most was that he had never before heard of such a thing being done.

Our little group of historic believers decided it would be good to visit some of the other church members in their homes and encourage them toward higher standards.

One family Cherie and I visited was a dentist. As a professional, he was quite prominent in the local church, and frequently up on the platform.

He had heard we might be coming; and, as soon as we arrived, he said to me, “There is to be no Spirit of Prophecy brought into our conversation!” I agreed to this and we sat down. That was a mistake. Just as it had been a mistake, six years earlier at the Seminary Apartments, for me to agree to not refer to God’s Word in a conversation, it was just as wrong not to be able to use the Spirit of Prophecy in talking with a professed Adventist.

The dentist started to give me a severe tongue-lashing. He was so vehement that I did not bother to reply. I just excused ourselves, and we left.

Within three months, he had left his wife and the church and run off with his office secretary.

You may recall that Spirit-filled devotional study we had in a home close to Elmshaven, back in the winter of 1961-1962.

Doug, one of those who had been there, moved out to Missouri to help us in our broadcast work. He had a government pension and needed no income.

The young artist at that meeting helped by drawing an excellent scratchboard sketch of Christ as our High Priest; we used this in our tract set, *The Inexpressible Gift*, which we once again have in print.

Another family who attended the meeting that night, Ralph and his wife (yes, the same Ralph who helped the physician recover his sanity), decided to help also. Ralph was an anesthetist, and his income was somewhat better than the average registered nurse. He decided to send us all his tithe, to help in our work.

Now, there will be those who might be aghast at this possibility. Not having read what the Spirit of Prophecy has to say about such matters, they believe that the tithe can only be paid into the church; a decision that is fine, if that is what they are convicted to do.

However, Ralph decided to do something different. He had a burden for the work we were doing, and the Lord convicted him as to how he should help. Shortly before he began sending his tithe to us, he signed a contract with a group of Adventist physicians in Portland, Oregon. He would do all their anesthetic work, and they would pay him a percentage of all the profits from their surgical operations. At the time they signed the contract, this was quite agreeable to them, since none of them were doing too well.

Yet, as soon as Ralph began sending us the tithe, immediately the operations increased. They doubled. They tripled. This went on month after month for over a year.

The physicians were really taking in the money, but the problem was that Ralph was also. That bothered them greatly, so they told Ralph they wanted to write a new contract with him.

He told them that this was the contract that they signed; and, if they wanted to break it, he was quitting and would leave the area. Fine with them; this would help them rake in even more, for they could get a different anesthetist who would receive far less of their lucrative profits.

But, as soon as Ralph left, within one month the bottom dropped out of their surgical operations business. God was blessing our missionary project. At the time, Ralph and Sam were two of our primary supporters.

Sam was a friend from college days, who owned a medical lab in the Bay Area. He also sent us all his tithe, and his work load sizeably increased as a result.

I would ask you: Why did God bless Ralph and Sam—when they were not paying their tithe into the church? It would be foolhardy to reply that the devil helped them. Why would the devil want to help a work which God wanted done, which the church would not do?

Someone might ask why I accepted those funds, knowing their nature. But I did not ask Ralph or Sam for their tithe; I did not ask them for anything. I just prayed to my Father for help, and He moved on their hearts to send it. Was I to refuse what God was moving on others to send? Was I to say, "No, I do not want the Holy Spirit to work this way; I want Him to work some other way?"

Day after day, I prepared more Great Controversy radio broadcasts, and mailed them to the radio stations on a regular schedule. As Elder J.L. Tucker later told me in his living room in Redlands, he regularly listened to his broadcast over XERB out of Mexico. (Because of its directional antenna, it covered all of southern California.) But, one day, he left the station on after his broadcast was finished—and there was our broadcast! He was amazed. The book, *Great Controversy*, was being broadcast to all of southern California!

So he wrote us and we became friends. More on our friendship later.

Now that I had adequate living and working quarters with electricity, I could get more done. I was able to purchase a used IBM Executive typewriter. It was the first, fairly efficient electric typewriter ever produced which had proportional type. One problem was that, since the letters varied in width, backspacing was extremely difficult. In addition, it could not justify (that is, produce an even right margin), and its one size of type tended to unduly use up space. Because the letters were thin, reductions tended to make the print look like hairlines.

But we did the best we could with what we had. Using this machine, I was able to type out

that important 1938 A.L. White study, *The Circulation of Great Controversy*, which, in her own words, revealed the efforts made in 1888 to 1890 to stop the publication and sale of that book. As noted earlier, our 11 x 17-inch tract printing of this compilation—soon led to a more-widely circulated reprint of it by Inspiration Books in Arizona. The results of that handwritten letter by a colporteur's wife in Oklahoma kept multiplying and multiplying, as more and more people learned about the importance of that book.

Years later, in 1981, I again placed that same A.L. White study in print, and it has been available from us ever since.

What is the most panoramic chapter in the entire Spirit of Prophecy? It is chapter 29 of *Great Controversy*, entitled, *The Origin of Evil*. This chapter provides a sweeping coverage of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, from before the fall of Lucifer, down to the end of that conflict of the ages.

After broadcasting that chapter, we received a letter from someone who said that the author of the script for that broadcast was either a genius or inspired of God.

While in Ash Grove I typeset that chapter in an 11 by 17 tract, and shared it widely. It was my second tract. Later, when I started Pilgrims Rest, I typeset that chapter—and over a dozen other *Great Controversy* chapters—and published them again. They are still in print.

I also wrote and published the three-part *Inexpressible Gift* tracts. Written for those not of our faith, the set told how to come to Christ, and explained the truth about the law of God and the Bible Sabbath. The coverage was excellent. We again have it reprinted as a booklet, entitled *The Inexpressible Gift*.

From time to time, I would drive into Springfield, walk along the downtown streets, and hand out tracts. This was a new experience to me, which I had not seen others do. But I quickly found that the way to do it was to step over to a person walking in the other direction and say, "Here, this is for you!" or "You will like this!" or to one behind who saw me give out a tract, "This is your copy!" or "You will want one too!" They feel they are special, and appreciate it. I speak to them in a genuinely happy, enthusiastic way. Since it is only a two-second contact, no one feels pressured and relatively few refuse.

If someone does refuse, I skip the next per-

son or two following him, and again begin handing out tracts to someone who did not see the refusal. (If someone sees that the person in front of him refused a tract, he is far more likely to automatically refuse it also, and a chain reaction begins.)

If one person was following too close to the one I had just handed a tract to, I would skip him since he might feel pressured. If there were several coming toward me together or if a couple were walking together, I would hand the tract to the one most likely to accept it. Read the face.

If you will try doing this, you will thoroughly enjoy the experience.

In later years, I began doing this at craft shows or county fairs. I would put a pile of tracts in each back pocket, and keep about a two-inch thick stack in one hand. When I ran out, I would go back to the car and load up again.

If, when I had handed them all out and I then had time on my hands, I would then walk around and pick up the few which had been thrown down and hand them out.

As we progressed in our work, the *Great Controversy* broadcasts gradually extended into 16 states, primarily in the south-central, northwest, and southwest portions of the nation.

In addition, friends living in our own area paid to broadcast the series over the Springfield, Missouri, station. Each week, when it broadcast, we would go to my car (which had the only radio), and listen to the program. Each broadcast was dramatic and powerful, for I had read the book with careful intensity.

I recall the day that chapter 35 (*Aims of the Papacy*) was broadcast. The impact seemed overwhelming. I personally doubt if anyone could broadcast portions of that book over the radio today. Even back then, we were generally refused permission on the religious stations. Since then, of course, television has gained even more prominence in the lives and attention of the people.

However, our financial support, always slim, did not seem to improve; and Cherie was becoming discouraged.

If I had stayed there, I probably would have started a publishing work. But it was only the spring of 1964, and the Lord knew that the 1979 new theology crisis—and the dramatic changes it brought into the church in the following decade—were yet distant.

The irony was that my area of greatest per-

sonal ability was in writing; I had yet to really get into it on a full-time basis. In college, I scored 98 percentile in verbal, and I always knew I could write articles and books on any subject I applied myself to. Yet it had seemed I should enter other fields, where I saw a special need. So the writing remained on hold, and the years kept passing.

I was finding that few of God's people seemed to be interested in bringing *Great Controversy* into the living rooms of the people. This was depressing. We felt that perhaps we should go on the road and travel. With this in mind, I prayed that, if the Lord wanted me to do this, He would provide a truck, a camper, and a travel

trailer.

Over the next several months, amid very difficult circumstances, He provided all three. Ralph had by this time quit the Portland medical group and was in transition to a move to Arkansas, so broadcast funds were tight.

At this juncture, my father wrote that he would give me \$1,300 with which to purchase a used travel trailer. We managed to obtain a truck and used camper. Gradually we were obtaining an experience in a broader number of fields.

In the spring of 1964, we moved back to Leslie for a few weeks, before heading to California. I was 30 years old.

“Thou wilt light my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.” — *Psalms 18:28*

“They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses.” — *Psalms 107:19*

“Their soul shall be as a watered garden, and they shall not sorrow any more at all.” — *Jeremiah 31:12*

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord. According as His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue.” — *2 Peter 1:2-3*

“This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.” — *John 17:3*

“The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants, and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.” — *Psalms 34:22*

“The God of Jacob is our refuge.” — *Psalms 46:11*

## 7 - The California Years

We headed to an independent camp meeting in California and made a number of new friends. While there, I was asked to go to southern California and take charge of a major publication project: a *Great Controversy* tabloid.

This would be an 11 x 13½-inch newspaper, with 16 or 32 pages (I do not now recall which). A number of folk wanted a low-cost publication printed for very wide distribution. They had read the tract, *The Circulation of Great Controversy*. The handwritten letter by that colporteur's wife was still continuing to exert a powerful effect.

I was placed in charge of the entire format, section arrangement, and illustrational material. I entitled it, *The Newspaper of Tomorrow*, and set to work. Ironically, our biggest problem was the typesetting done by the Los Angeles newspaper which we sent the copy to. They repeatedly made typographical errors. When galleys (narrow columns of typed material) were sent to us, we would carefully read through the material, mark the mistakes and send it back to the printing house. But, instead of correcting the mistakes, they were apparently retypesetting the whole thing, and there would be different mistakes. We finally got this problem corrected, and eventually the *Newspaper of Tomorrow* was published.

As part of my work on the project, several times I drove into Los Angeles in my truck. On one occasion, I decided to take five-year-old Linda with me. The camper was on the back of the truck, and she wanted to take her child's baby buggy with her. Carefully she loaded a number of her treasured trinkets into it: a special dolly, its blanket, and a couple other things. I shut the camper door and away we went. Arriving at one place in Los Angeles where I needed to go, Linda asked to go back and make sure her precious cargo was safe. We opened the camper door; and, yes, the baby buggy was there,

with all those special things in it.

Off we went to another place, about 20 blocks away, and thence to a third place, another 20 blocks or so. Then Linda asked that she might go back and check to see if her baby buggy was still safe. But, going to the back of the camper, we found the door open and the buggy gone!

It could have rolled out anywhere on the busy streets of Los Angeles. Oh, did I feel sick. Sending a prayer up to Heaven, the thought came to mind, "That buggy rolls so easily, it may have rolled out two stops back just after we last checked on it." The two of us prayed together that, somehow it had not been crushed in traffic or stolen; off we went. Arriving at that location, the buggy was nowhere to be seen. Little Linda was understandably heartbroken.

We had parked at the exact spot we had been before. Next to us was the open garage door of a business. The thought came to step inside and inquire if anyone had seen it. There, not far inside, was the buggy, upright, unharmed, with the dolly, the blanket and everything else in it! The man said he thought to look outside, and there it was, upright, with everything in it, on the sidewalk! So he brought it into the shop till someone should call for it. Yet, when the buggy rolled out from that high door, it should have tumbled and scattered everything all over in the street instead of standing upright on the sidewalk.

On one occasion, as I was on the freeway, heading east out of Los Angeles, I saw the sign, *Boyle Heights*; and, on an impulse, turned off to see what the front of the new White Memorial Church looked like. I had not seen the church since the summer of 1953, when I regularly attended it in the old building. I drove past the new church—and ahead I saw the large White Memorial Hospital. There, walking in front of it, was an old friend whom I had known at Pacific Union College.

Quickly parking, I visited with him for a time. A research physicist, he was a very perceptive individual. Extremely disgusted with the situation, he told me flatly that the medical view at Loma Linda Medical School, and its (at that time) extension at White Memorial Hospital, was anti-Spirit of Prophecy. Waving his hand toward the building, he declared that those men were teaching that the Spirit of Prophecy was useless as far as any scientific, medical, or health information it might contain.

About 25 years later, I reestablished contact with that Adventist scientist when he read some of our tracts and phoned me. He was still living in Los Angeles and his opinion had not changed.

As part of my work, I was asked to visit a radiologist who worked in Santa Ana. A wealthy man, he had, for over a year, been telling all his friends that he was going to help subsidize the publication of a *Great Controversy* tabloid.

Life in the church was not too different back in the 1960s than what it is now. If something was being done by independents, it was terribly suspect. If it involved *Great Controversy*, that only added to the concern. (Yet there was one decided difference between the 1960s and the 1990s: Back then most of the faithful were still in the church. They were not being chased out.)

When I arrived and was escorted into the physician's office, he was visibly embarrassed. Then he told me his story. Yes, it was true that he had been telling everyone, for over a year, of his zeal to see the tabloid published and his determination to help subsidize it. But then, pausing, he said this:

"Vance, where you are sitting, Elder Robert Pierson sat a few weeks ago. He said he flew out here all the way from Washington, D.C., to plead with me not to help subsidize the printing of that tabloid. He said its publication would hurt the work in foreign nations."

Then, pausing again, he said in a sense of desperation, "Vance, what do you do when the General Conference president comes from the other side of the continent and asks you not to put money into a project?"

The incident had totally shaken him. I thought of Arthur Gyger. For some reason, not entirely clear to him, the leaders of the church did not want the information in that book widely distributed. He had earlier read A.L. White's *The Circulation of Great Controversy*, and how the brethren in the late 1880s had tried to keep the

book from being printed; and, even after it was printed, they tried to block its distribution to the people. Yet his mind was confused.

The obvious answer was that we should do in the 1960s what Ellen White was fighting to have done in the late 1880s: ignore the leaders and get the book out anyway.

But that visit from Elder Pierson had so shaken him that, now when we were close to going to press, he felt he dared not help on the project.

Other people had to provide the funds. One was a wealthy man in Texas who owned a plumbing supply company.

While on this, let me mention an additional irony: Satan has tried harder to discredit that book more than any other which Ellen White ever wrote. Although she fought in the late 1880s to get the 1888 edition of *Great Controversy* in print;—yet, in our time, many Advent believers have accepted the deceptive statements of Herman Hoehn and others that the 1888 edition (and its essential duplicate, the 1911 edition) are worthless and should not be read or distributed. While God's people believe the lies, Satan laughs. What we should be doing is circulating any, or all, of those three editions we can get our hands on: the 1884, 1888, and 1911. For a more in-depth analysis of all three editions, obtain a copy of my 504-page book, *The Editions of Great Controversy*. It tells the entire story of that book, more clearly than any other book ever published.

(As this autobiography goes to press in late 1998, we now have a large print run of both the 1884 and 1888 editions available for you—at the lowest prices in years!)

One young man, who lived in San Diego, was aware of the project; and, as soon as the *Great Controversy* tabloid was printed, he received one of the first copies and glanced through it with satisfaction. But, since it was bedtime, he laid it on the coffee table just as his non-Adventist father walked into the room. The teenage son remarked in passing as he left the room, "That is the only copy of that in San Diego."

Curious, the father sat down, opened the tabloid and began reading; he continued for several hours.

The next morning he announced at breakfast that he wanted to become a Seventh-day Adventist. His convictions were firm, and studies were arranged with a local pastor. Baptized,

he remained solid in the faith in the years which followed.

During the time we worked on this tabloid project, our family stayed with a godly couple on the outskirts of Mentone, California, close to San Bernardino, Riverside, and Loma Linda. We regularly attended the Mentone Church with them.

One morning, at the beginning of the service, a young couple gave special music. Irene, the elderly wife in whose home we were staying, whispered to me that they were "Rodites." Having lived in the area for decades, she knew a lot; and she recognized that a group of Shepherd's Rod folk were in the audience. She told me the name of the church member, a teenage girl, who had arranged for them to give special music. The pastor and most of the congregation, of course, were totally unaware of what was transpiring.

One would think that the group would have capitalized on this penetration before they were discovered; yet their leader, a young man named Benjamin Roden, had peculiar thinking patterns.

I went out into the parking area as soon as church let out, and was surprised to see Roden standing in the parking lot, calling out like an army sergeant to his workers to quickly sheet all the cars. They placed a little booklet on each automobile, the kind that has sloppy sketches of six-winged angels in it.

Immediately I walked over and spoke with him. He identified himself by name. There was a strong shine in his eyes and an inordinate excitement as if he had just completed a great victory. There was something wrong with this man's mind.

Yet Benjamin Roden was the acknowledged leader of the largest split-off from the original Rod group in Waco, Texas, which Florence Houteff (the wife of the deceased founder, Victor Houteff) had disbanded two years earlier in 1962.

Roden had earlier declared that Florence's time setting for Christ's return (1959) was incorrect, and that it would occur in the 1960s. However, his followers seemed to have forgotten that, following the 1962 breakup at Waco, he declared himself to be the antitypical David, king of Israel. Much more could be said about this, and I would refer you to my 96-page book, *The Davidians of Waco*. Ben Roden was the one in charge of Waco who, on November 3, 1987, had a shoot-out with Vernon Howell (a.k.a., David Koresh). After killing a man in 1989, Roden was

committed to a Texas insane asylum the next year.

While working on the tabloid, I asked a very capable free-lance Adventist artist, living in the area, if he would provide us with some illustrations for the tabloid. He said he would not do so because it was not a Brinsmead project. So we used halftones (photos) instead.

I have discussed Robert Brinsmead and his errors in greater detail in a number of my tract studies. Those errors included belief in original sin (we are born sinners) and the concept that our sinning must inevitably continue to the judgment of the living when, suddenly, the sinning will be magically removed from us.

The truth is that we are *now* to put away our sins; and that, when the judgment passes to the cases of the living, as a result of the National Sunday Law crisis, the records of the sins of those who have done that will be blotted out of the records of heaven. For far more discussion on this, see my other writings, including my *End Time Series* of 18 booklets, which, in classified format, contains the most complete collection of Spirit of Prophecy statements on final events ever published.

Many of those who stayed with Brinsmead, as did that artist and his wife, later left the Sabbath and Spirit of Prophecy when Brinsmead did so in the early 1980s.

One Sabbath afternoon, a man named Erwin Blake stopped by to see us. He had developed a new concept which, in the years which followed, was accepted in various forms by a number of Advent believers. His concept was that we, today, must keep nearly all of the Old Testament and Levitical ordinances. This would include the feast days and a variety of other things. To this list, he had added the wearing of beards.

His basic list of do's and don't's was keyed to his stated concept that "everything not fulfilled at the cross must still be kept." When asked, he said that circumcision was fulfilled at the cross. I told him that circumcision was not fulfilled at the cross, but was just done away with. He had no reply to that. Read *Acts of the Apostles, chapter 19 (pp. 188-200)*. It clearly shows that, guided by the Holy Spirit, Paul discarded those old laws, and he worked with the leaders at the Acts 15 conference to throw them out. Also compare AA 400-406 and PP 363-373, noting page 365. "Paul knew the mind of the Spirit of God concerning

such teaching and took a firm and unyielding position which brought to the churches freedom from Jewish rites and ceremonies" (AA 200). "The Holy Spirit saw good not to impose the ceremonial laws on the Gentile converts, and the mind of the apostles regarding this matter was as the mind of the Spirit of God" (AA 194). Blake was sincere, but he was wrong. Those who wish to wear beards and keep the feast days are welcome to do so, but they are not required by God and have no relationship to salvation.

One Sabbath we attended the imposing Loma Linda University Church. During Sabbath School, the home missionary leader lamented that they had just discovered several thousand dollars in a fund, and did not know what to do with it. He asked the vast audience for suggestions. Since no one in the audience had the slightest idea how to use the money, he said they would just let it sit in the fund. I thought of the thousands of small churches that could use that money to hold meetings for the lost.

After church we were walking out when, in the foyer, I met an old friend from college days. As we were speaking, he said, "There goes Bill." Bill had been a pre-med back at PUC who spent most of his time directing the college band. A happy-go-lucky type, he mixed well with the liberals on the campus.

As I turned, just then Bill looked back as he was walking away and stared intently at me for a moment, then proceeded on. The features had totally changed, and were now twisted into an evil appearance of suspicious malice. I shall never forget it. I learned that, after obtaining his M.D. from Loma Linda, he had taken psychiatry at Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. As a result, devils now raged within him. Within just a few years he committed suicide.

The entire greater San Bernardino area, where we were staying, is essentially a sandy desert. One day, little Ellen picked a certain type of small cactus leaf and ate it. That evening, she was very ill. We prayed. Irene, on whose property we were staying, was an accomplished herbalist. So, working together, we tried to do what we could for our little girl. The situation did not look good; but then, following prayer, she went into a relaxed sleep and was perfectly all right the following morning.

One afternoon we drove over to Redlands and visited our friend, Elder J.L. Tucker. He was deeply

happy to meet us. In years past, he had listened to my *Great Controversy* radio broadcasts on XERB, covering all of southern California; and he had written letters of encouragement to us—which, as you might imagine, meant much to us in our impoverished, discouraging situation back then.

That grand old man showed us his library, his recording room, tape duplication area, booklet storage area, and explained how he started his work, along with problems he faced in Oakland with Becker, and, later in Berrien Springs with the Michigan conference president when he started broadcasting again. After retirement, he had moved to his present quarters in Redlands.

Seated in the living room, we discussed many things of interest.

Then Elder Tucker said this:

"Vance, if you wish to move to this area, I will let you use my facilities, free of charge, to once again carry on your *Great Controversy* radio broadcasts. We will even mail them out for you."

I was deeply surprised at this, for it revealed the strong confidence he placed in me. Yet when I discussed it afterward with Cherie, we recognized that, to live in that area, could mean the loss of our children.

In November, 1964, we packed and headed north. We were bound for Madera, a short distance above Fresno, where I was scheduled to hold a series of meetings at a non-Adventist black Baptist summer camp which, at that time of the year, was not in use. We were kindly permitted, without charge, the use of the facilities.

At one of the meetings, the Spirit moved powerfully upon the congregation and there were confessions, weeping, and the asking of one another for forgiveness. I had not known that such a situation existed in the hearts of some of those present.

Traveling on up the coast, we held meetings in other areas. Some were sweet, devotional topics; others were herbal and water therapy instructional classes. Those meetings continued for months.

While holding meetings in Carson City, Nevada, I stopped by and visited with Elder David Bauer, who lived (and still lives) in South Lake Tahoe. He also had left the Adventist ministry, and his experience was quite interesting.

One day I drove up to Reno and handed out tracts about how to come to Jesus, on (at that

time) the main one-block gambling street of town. I said, "You will want to read this; it is about Jesus." One lady, who took one, looked at me intently and said, "You must be an angel." She was astonished that, in this hell hole, anyone would share anything about Jesus Christ.

I entered the largest casino, Harold's Club, and walked through it from the top floor to the bottom. Nowhere did I see one cheerful face. If it is fun to be in such a place, the people should have been happy. Instead, everyone looked worried, fearful, or tense. They had the appearance of humans placed in a trance by demons.

While holding meetings in San Leandro, Cherie and I drove across the Bay Bridge to San Francisco. The Haight Ashbury District, where I had grown up, did not look very different. A year or two later, the word "hippy" was coined, and 20,000 hippies moved in—and Haight Ashbury was forever changed. (Two years ago, I returned there again and found that even my high school was gone. It had been torn down because, to shield their children from the dissolute young people wandering around, all the parents of teenagers had moved away.)

While holding meetings at Calistoga, an acquaintance gave me an update on several happenings in northern California. It had been four years since I quit the denominational ministry.

This friend (I do not remember his name, so I will call him Jim) had been appointed as a delegate to represent his local church at the conference constituency meeting. At the meeting, Jim was surprised when he was placed on the small nominating committee. That committee generally consists only of pastors. The members mistakenly imagine that their pastors are the best qualified for the decisions which must be made, yet they are the most helpless. Their jobs depend on how they conduct themselves, and they have had years of being trained to please higher-ups.

There were very few laymen in the room. As was customary, the union president was on the podium, presiding over the meeting. This gave him great power to sway the situation one way or the other, as would best serve policy interests.

The first office to be filled was that of conference president. Yet it was clear to the union president that there was a strong reticence about returning Carl Becker to office. However, no one

would commit himself to speaking. So the president said, "Arise and speak; we want to hear you. All the tape recorders are off, and what you say will not be repeated outside this room."

The ministers feared for their jobs and would not arise. However, after additional coaxing and promises of confidentiality, one arose, and then another. Then still more stood up to discuss Becker's abuses of authority.

At the conclusion of all this, the union president assured them that he respected what they had to say; but told them the brethren felt it was necessary to return Becker to office, since he had been economical with conference disbursements.

And so it happened. The ministers, having for years been trained to spineless subservience (I say this to the shame of the Adventist ministry), voted Becker back in for another term.

But that was not the end of the matter. Jim had many contacts—and afterward learned that the union president had, indeed, disclosed the entire discussion to Carl Becker, even giving him the names of the protesting pastors! I said, "Are you sure of this?" Jim said, "Yes, I have a contact in the conference office who told me."

Carl Becker lived on until the mid-1980s. I felt sorry for him, for he will someday have much to answer for. But his efforts have been in vain. Before he died, there were more speckled birds than ever.

In the San Joaquin Valley, we held meetings at a friend's place. While there, I visited the individual whom, throughout this biography, I have spoken of as my college roommate. He was now a conference pastor. He said, "Vance, I want you to meet someone." That evening, he drove me over to a parishioner's home.

The husband had been a student at Pacific Union College after I left, and had seemed very religious. He married a fine girl, and they now had several children. But, after marriage, he totally left God; and his wife had privately told the pastor she would probably have to leave him soon, in order to save the children from his atheistic sentiments.

That evening, he showed me an outstanding rock collection in an illuminated, glassed-in case which covered an entire wall. Then we sat down to visit. Everything went all right, until I mentioned something religious. Instantly, a devil took control, his countenance changed, and he ranted. I would not mention this visit except for what happened at the conclusion of our conversation.

He said to me, “You only believe in God because He is going to reward you! You wouldn’t believe in Him if He was only going to give you a kick in the pants!”

As quick as anything, the answer came from my heart, “I would love and serve Him even if He slew me in the second death!”

And I meant it. I later thought about that from time to time. This was a key factor underlying my life: I genuinely love God. I believe He is wonderful, and should be served *for His own sake*. It was my love for Him that enabled me to keep going. I love Him for what He is, not for what He does for me. He is good, always good, regardless of what happens here on earth.

From California, we traveled up through western Oregon, holding meetings. While we were holding meetings in Oregon, I met an elderly Advent believer in Central Point who, when he was younger, would hold evangelistic meetings without waiting for the conference office to do it. It was refreshing to speak with him.

I asked him how he gained such a solid un-

derstanding of our doctrinal beliefs. He replied that he once had a friend whom he fully believed was honest and would accept the truth if he could be shown from the Bible that our beliefs were Biblical. Carefully studying God’s Word, he gradually convinced him of every aspect—except the punishment of the wicked.

He said he studied with his friend for two years. In the process, he ransacked the Bible and obtained a strong grasp of Scripture. He finally settled the matter in his friend’s thinking when he showed him from Scripture that (1) the wicked will burn on the surface of the earth, (2) that streams of sulfurous, burning fire will flow on the earth’s surface at that time, and (3) the promise is that the meek will inherit the earth. They could not inherit it, if the wicked burned on its surface forever. That convinced the man and he became a solid Adventist.

From there, we went on up into western Washington, and thence to the central and eastern part of the state.

“Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will joy in the God of my salvation.”  
— *Habakkuk 3:17-18*

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord.”  
— *Matthew 4:4*

“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths.”  
— *Proverbs 3:5-6*

“He giveth power to the faint.” — *Isaiah 40:29*

## 8 - The Washington State Years

The winter of 1965-1966 we stayed with a group in eastern Washington, preaching, researching, splitting wood, and shoveling snow. We were only 70 miles south of Canada. The logs I split for our woodstove had been hauled out of the mountains—and were 20 to 22 inches in diameter! Did you ever try to split a log that size into kindling, with only a regular axe? There is a way to do it.

Since we had decided to remain till spring, we rented a house in Usk. That winter when the weather was bad, in addition to other Bible and Spirit of Prophecy research, I decided to translate the Gospel of John from the Greek text. After completing it, I did most of Romans by the time the weather cleared. I read each portion as I completed it to the group, and they very much liked what I presented. I have no plans to ever print it.

It was a beautiful area, with evergreens and herds of mule deer. Behind our house was a large lake with Canada geese on it throughout the winter.

Just across the road from our house, but included in the rental, was an old garage which we did not use. One morning a man knocked on the door. When I opened it, he identified himself as a neighbor and asked if he could park his car in that garage at night, free of charge. He looked like he could be a tough character but I was impressed to help him. Immediately, I smiled and said, "Sure, we're glad to help you."

He seemed surprised at the response, and then said, "I just bought this property, and I was planning to kick you out in the snow today. But I got the idea of asking if I could use your garage. If you said, No, I was going to evict you."

We had not been settled in a home for quite some time; and I made the decision to obtain a job. The children were getting bigger, and living

in a travel trailer needed to stop. Although, everywhere we went, we had many happy times together, they needed a home, not a travel trailer. It was the spring of 1965, and we had been supported by faith since the summer of 1960.

Driving to western Washington, I worked with an Adventist electrical contractor for a month or so, and then obtained employment as a Washington State caseworker. Headquartered at the courthouse in Goldendale, I cared for all the old-age assistance cases in the eastern part of Klickitat County. Since Medicare went into effect throughout the nation the same month I began work, I was placed in charge of that also.

Upon arriving in the Goldendale area, Cherie met a young family in town. When they learned we were Adventists, they were thrilled since they were also. Driving out to our place, they visited with us and appreciated our youthful, Christian enthusiasm.

They told the pastor, and he contacted the conference office. Records, which laymen never see, were shared; and the pastor told them we were troublemakers and to have nothing more to do with us. When we arrived at church, everyone treated us coolly. This pattern continued for years. Each time we moved, reports would be sent on to the next church.

The next week, Cherie saw them in town and they told her how the pastor said he had checked with the conference, and had told them to have nothing more to do with us. The couple was confused, for we did not appear to be two-headed monsters.

I was the medical caseworker for nearly everyone in the Simcoe Manor Nursing Home, on the edge of town. One of the patients was Mr. McKewan. Throughout the day he sat in a chair, with a restraining band about both him and the chair. All day long, he would quietly, but repeat-

edly, try to rise out of the chair.

Another of my clients was Mrs. McK\_. When I visited her one day at her home, she wept. She said she had tried for years to get her husband to exercise and he refused, saying it was bad for his health. But he did not consider heavy meals and drug medications to be a health problem.

Now he was at the nursing home, with no mind left, exercising all day long.

During our visit, since Mrs. McK\_ was distraught, I prayed with her and led her to Christ. You cannot imagine the joy on her face. I departed that day, knowing that, if the state authorities learned that I had prayed with a client while on the job, I could be fired.

One week later Mrs. McK\_ died. I believe the Lord took her at the best time. When I last saw her, she had great peace of heart.

One afternoon, Al Wolfsen and his wife, Yoshiko, stopped by. Not having seen Al in years, we had a good visit. While we were talking together in the kitchen, suddenly we smelled smoke. Al, quick-witted as ever, rushed over to the flu behind the woodstove. Calling for an axe, he began chopping away at the area. It turned out that the flu had been built, years before, encased in wooden planks! It was a fire waiting to happen; but, instead of occurring at night while we were sleeping, it began when Al was talking to us in the kitchen.

While we were in Goldendale, Dr. George Rue wrote me a letter and offered to buy us a home if we would come help him work on his monthly *Adventist Layworker* in Hesperia, in the high desert to the north of the San Bernardino basin. Having worked together earlier on the *Great Controversy* tabloid project, George knew us well; he needed help and knew we were able to provide it. We were surprised at the level of his confidence in us; but, having discussed it together, Cherie and I agreed that it would not be the best place to raise our children. In addition, we would soon be facing the homeschool problem. So we turned down his kind offer.

During those years, homeschooling was illegal everywhere in America. The following year, Linda would be of school age. For the next 20 years, I would be keeping one step ahead of the authorities (1957 to 1977)—until I once again returned to the work God wanted me to do—at which time the problem permanently vanished,

even though the children were not all out of compulsory school age. Much of the next 20 years was to be one long history of keeping one step ahead of the law.

From time to time, over the years, the thought occurred that I had done about everything except school teaching. I had theology, language, and ministerial training and had done pastoral work; held evangelistic efforts; conducted classes; and helped people in nutrition, physiology, herbs, and hydrotherapy; carried on radio broadcasting; engaged in traveling lecture work and preaching; and did various kinds of construction work. I knew our beliefs and the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy well, and had brushed shoulders with most of the offshoots—without ever a thought of uniting with any of them. *Why did I have this broad base of learning?*

The thought came distinctly to mind that, surely, God must be preparing me for something special. But what could it be? The situation appeared hopeless.

Indeed, what kind of work could I ever do in the future which would require such a broad background of knowledge of the church and so many projects and activities? I had been involved in everything but professional education.

My superintendent, Mr. Zinc, wanted me to advance to child services status in a few months, at much higher pay. Yet Linda would be of school age the following year; and the thought came strongly to mind to try to become a schoolteacher.

Among other advantages, teaching would provide us with greater flexibility to locate where our children could be homeschooled. But there was apparently no way I could get into that field. I had only taken one 5 quarter-hour course in Education at college. Instead of taking an Education minor, I had impractically chosen a second major in Biblical Languages.

Hoping that, somehow, I might break into the field, I signed up for two basic correspondence courses in Education from a university. But the situation seemed an impossible one; what I lacked was two full years of education courses, the basic requirement for a course in Student Teaching in the last semester of the second year.

Cherie had earlier expressed an interest in adopting a child; and, with my assent, at random selected 20 names of physicians from the Portland, Oregon, phone book. She then handwrote 20 letters, asking if they had a baby they

needed to adopt out. None wrote back, and we both forgot the matter.

One evening, I opened a copy of the *World Almanac*, and searched for a small state college in the Northwest which might give me Student Teaching. But I found nothing satisfactory.

Several months later, Cherie received a letter in the mail, postmarked Portland. It was from a physician. Upon receiving Cherie's letter, he had placed it in a special file. Now he was writing to tell us he had a baby for us; did we still want it?

The mother was a model who lived in Texas, and she had gone to live with relatives in Portland until an unexpected pregnancy was completed. We agreed to pay the hospital and delivery costs as well as one visit to a pediatrician.

It was a Thursday morning when the physician phoned us. "You have a beautiful baby girl. You can have it Sunday morning." We drove to Portland, stayed in a motel, and went walking in a hillside park in Portland on Sabbath. The next morning we were given our new baby, which we named Faith. She is now grown and, like all our other children, loves the Lord and is a faithful Advent believer.

A friend we had first met at our meetings in California dropped by one weekend. When she learned that I was looking for a school to attend, she told me to check at Lewis-Clark Normal School, in Lewiston, Idaho. She said she went there years before. I had not looked under the "Ls" in the *Almanac*, and so had not found it. She also had relatives who lived in Troy, a few miles east of Moscow, where the University of Idaho was located. A few miles west of Moscow was the University of Eastern Washington, in Pullman. Not far south, was Lewiston.

So after making an appointment to stay overnight with the family in Troy, I took off a couple days from work; and one morning drove east and stayed overnight with her relatives in Troy. The next morning, I interviewed with the head of the Education Department in both universities. My question was whether I could take Student Teaching. Everyone laughed at the idea, as might be expected. I only had 5 quarter hours of Education, and was currently enrolled for two three-hour courses by correspondence.

I knew the mission was impossible, yet I had been impressed to try anyway. On the return trip, I decided to stop by Lewis-Clark Normal

School. I later learned that this state college had been closed for over a decade and was struggling to reopen. It had so few students that a couple of the large buildings were still boarded up.

The lady at the front desk sent me up to the head of the Education Department. Hearing of my paucity in professional education courses, Mr. McQue, a surly kind of fellow, said "Absolutely, no," to my request. Then, for some reason, added, "You can go down and see President Sims, if you wish."

Downstairs, Mr. Sims' secretary told me he was speaking to someone and I would need to wait. A thought came strongly to not bother to wait, since I had a long distance to drive before I reached home (halfway across Washington State). Another voice said, Wait. Having come this far, it seemed right to wait. When in doubt, do what you are impressed is right.

Ushered 30 minutes later into his office, I told Mr. Sims (he only had a master's degree, not a doctorate) about my situation. He paused, looked at me carefully, and said, "Mr. Ferrell, I once was in your situation, and I got into teaching the hard way. Mr. Ferrell, I will let you take student teaching!"

I hurried upstairs to sign some papers at the Education office. When Mr. McQue, the head of the education department, discovered I had been accepted, he was angry and never did seem to get over it.

Quitting my job in Goldendale, we moved to a country home near Asotin, Washington, and I took a full 8 semester hours of student teaching. This was my passport to a job as a schoolteacher.

The classroom teacher I worked under, Mr. Freer, was extremely happy with my work. Since I had been teaching people for years, and could easily read and summarize books and quickly prepare tests of various kinds, the work was not difficult. He told me I was a born teacher.

The first Friday night we were in Asotin; the Clarkston pastor stopped by for a visit. He told us his conference president had called to warn him about us. *But this pastor was unusual*; he had a concern for people. He told me, "Brother Ferrell, I am concerned for your soul!" I replied, "This is wonderful, an Adventist minister who is concerned about my soul!"

We had a fine meeting that night, and I told him about our Sacramento health work and Ar-

kansas *Great Controversy* broadcasts which had gotten us in trouble with leadership. He said he would see what he could do about it.

When he contacted the conference president, he was told that if we were willing to be rebaptized, he could take us back into the church.

I believe the president expected me to refuse to do that, since I did not regard my earlier independent activities to be sinful. But I told the pastor that, yes, I would be willing to be rebaptized; for, after I was baptized in San Francisco, I had carried paper routes on the Sabbath for several years.

It so happened that a number of years earlier, Cherie and I had done a careful study of everything in the Spirit of Prophecy on rebaptism, and were very surprised at what we found. Check it out for yourself.

Shortly after that, on a sunny Sabbath morning we were baptized into the Clarkston Church. The members fully accepted us; and, since I was taking a teacher training course, they asked me to present a study on True Education at an evening meeting. I sat down and summarized the principles in the book, *Education*, and presented them one evening to a very appreciative audience.

When we later moved away, at the next church the gray curtain descended again. We continued to be pariahs, for reports continued to be sent ahead from one conference president to another.

For several days, a large male cat which, by its looks, had been wild for quite some time was around our home. He was interested in our mother cat. So one hot day, the thought came to mind to try and get rid of the animal. It was an arrogant cat, very sure of its abilities to defend itself against attackers; so it walked around our yard openly. But I decided to do something special. Because there was considerable danger, I put on a heavy coat and leather gloves, opened the backdoor of the car, and then walked over to the cat. It knew I would not dare bother it, so it just stood there. I then did something I should not have done: I reached down and picked it up. The cat began to growl as I lowered my hands; but, as I carefully picked it up; it remained motionless. I placed it on the backseat, and then shut the door.

By this time, I could take the outdoor heat no more. Stripping off the coat, gloves, and even an outer shirt, I was down to a T shirt. Climbing in the car, I started off down the road. Although

I had no protection if that cat wanted to come over the seat after me, it just sat there on the rear cushion, not even bothering to peer out the window to see where we were going.

Down the long valley to Asotin I went, then along the broad Snake River, which separated the two states, in through Clarkston, Washington, across the heavily trafficked vehicle bridge to Lewiston, Idaho, through the length of that city, and then, on another bridge for vehicles only, across the wide Potlatch River. On I drove for another five miles, exited the car, and somehow got the cat out. At not one time, did that cat look out the window.

The creature just stood there, as I drove off. Little did I know its brain was reorienting itself, preparatory for travel. That night, the wild cat was back—and full of fury. It entered the back porch and killed the kitten, and was terrorizing the mother cat when we discovered it out there early in the morning. When I opened the door and went out on that small porch, instead of jumping me, it went into a corner and glared. I got the mother cat out, closed the door, and called a neighbor. He came over and shot the cat. He told me the look on its face revealed it to be a killer.

We were living in a wild part of the West. There were cougars and bobcats in our area. In a field one night about half a mile away, the cows circled to protect their young—and trampled a cougar to dust.

One afternoon, little Ellen said, "Daddy, lamby!" I went to the window and looked out. There just outside was a large bobcat. It had reached the creek behind the house by the time I could run outside to chase it.

Then I met an old hunter who had lived in the region all his life. He said, "How do you catch a cougar?" From time to time, he and a friend would catch one, without using a trap and without injuring it, then place it in a crate and ship it off to a zoo.

The *Felis concolor* of North America (also called the mountain lion or puma) is generally 6 to 8 feet, including the tail.

Now, I will ask you: How would you catch an angry cougar, without injuring him in the slightest, and place him in a crate? Back then, sleep guns were not known.

My hunter friend told me how to do it (the next time you are up in Idaho, you might want to

try it out). Remember this was back in the days before tranquilizer darts had been invented.

When the hunter and his partner caught a cougar, they each threw a lasso around its head. All the while it was acting in a violent fashion, as any self-respecting mountain lion would. Each of them then walked around the beast, back and forth, zigzagging, tangling its legs in the ropes. When it was fully trussed, they placed it in a crate and shipped it to a zoo, collecting a goodly sum for their trouble.

Then I asked, "How did the zoo get him out of that?" The old hunter said, "I don't know; that was their problem."

Before leaving the area, I drove back up to Eastern Washington State University, and reentered the Department of Education office. Only a few months before the professor had laughed

me to scorn when I inquired about the possibility of taking Student Teaching.

I had now completed the course, and just wanted to check on the possibility of eventually taking coursework on the graduate level.

Recalling my earlier interview, the smile returned—but then he sucked in his breath when he saw my 8 semester hour Student Teaching transcript.

"We would be required to take you," he said. "With 8 semester hours of Student Teaching at LCNS, a fully-accredited college, you are eligible to teach anywhere in America." I was thankful to hear that; many colleges did not give more than 3 quarter or 3 semester hours of Student Teaching to their senior Education majors, but I had obtained the maximum amount.

"Heirs of the kingdom, which He hath promised to them that love Him."  
— *James 2:5*

"My grace is sufficient for thee, for My strength is made perfect in weakness."  
— *2 Corinthians 12:9*

"Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."  
— *Psalms 31:24*

"I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."  
— *Jeremiah 31:3*

"The Lord thy God in the midst of thee is mighty. He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy. He will rest in His love, He will joy over thee with singing."  
— *Zephaniah 3:17*

"Thou wilt show me the path of life. In Thy presence is fulness of joy."  
— *Psalms 16:11*

"Thou art my hope, O Lord God. Thou art my trust from my youth."  
— *Psalms 71:5*

## 9 – The Teaching Years

That spring, after making appointments, we drove a large loop throughout eastern Oregon, interviewing for a teaching position. After interviewing at Burns and Klamath Falls, I phoned up to the educational superintendent's office in Madras. I was told Mr. Dahlien had unexpectedly been called out of town. I was about to hang up, when the man on the other end said, "Come up anyway and I will talk to you."

Heading north, I was not certain what to do. We had a definite appointment at Canyon City, and to swing north to Madras would be decidedly out of the way. Yet our time was limited. Once again, the two voices were speaking, and I decided to go to Madras, even though we might miss Canyon City.

At Madras, Mr. Call was waiting for us. A kindly man, he was principal of Buff School and liked my concern for standards and gentle, but controlled, classroom control. He announced, "I am going to ask Mr. Dahlien to hire you for my school!"

Since we were headed that way anyway, we stopped in at Canyon City, and met with two officials. But no opening occurred there. We were also offered a position at a one-room school near Burns, but the teacher's home was 30 feet away. We took the Madras opening.

At the opening of the fall term at Buff School, the newspaper headlines told about teacher strikes all over the nation. It was August 1967, and the first time that teacher strikes had occurred. Great changes were to take place within the next few years. Prior to this time, only dedicated people entered the teaching field, since the pay was so low. But as the pay increased, lower-class men and women in public colleges all over the nation switched to education as their chosen field. It was relatively easy to get into, and the higher pay persuaded thousands of disolute worldlings to become schoolteachers.

Whenever they tell you that more tax money is needed "to improve education," what they mean is they want to raise the salaries of the teachers in the state, so their teachers' unions will, in turn, kick back more money to the politicians. And, as the salaries climb, more of the lower classes swarm into teaching.

Since Linda was now of school age, we rented a home in the next county south of the one I taught in. Partway through the school term, I told Mr. Dahlien, the superintendent, about the situation. He liked my work and said all would be well that year, but we would need to have Linda in school the next year.

Our plan was to keep Linda—and all our other children—out of school till they were eight, and then homeschool them. It was illegal anywhere in the United States to do this.

The home we lived in, just north of Prineville, had a three-inch open pipe in the backyard, out of which poured a 2-inch wide stream of water. Day and night, all year long, it flowed. The property we were on and one other about a quarter-of-a-mile away were tapped into an artesian flow. The water came from the Cascade mountains which we could see in the distance.

Once a week, a slow-moving railroad train ran on a 30-foot embankment next to the side of the house where we slept. One evening at about 10 p.m., the engine and most of the cars went off the tracks opposite our home, on our side of the embankment. But everything held in place, and the train did not come down and crush us. Our bedrooms were just below the side where the engine and cars derailed.

As I would drive to work each day, I could see white geese out in the fields. In the area around Madras, the farmers grew seed wheat, for the co-ops, and spearmint for chewing gum. The geese would not touch the mint, so they were

turned loose in the fields to eat all the weeds, which they made short work of. Occasionally, a goose would begin nibbling on the mint and become fond of it. But his legs would swell and he would die soon after.

At the end of that school year, we packed up, rented a U-haul, and headed East. Ralph and his wife encouraged us to move to their area; and, since it was a secluded country location in the hills, we headed to Huntsville, Arkansas.

The weather was hot throughout our trip, and the truck had vapor-lock problems and kept overheating under the heavy load. We had to keep stopping to cool the engine. Checking at the next U-Haul outlet, we were told we would have to wait a day or two while the truck was repaired. We prayed and started off. A rather small cumulus cloud came above our heads. As soon as it moved off, another one came overhead. Soon we realized that, although there were never many clouds in the sky, we always had a cloud shading us! When it moved off, another would come overhead. During the last 50 miles to our destination, the clouds departed and we had a more difficult time with the heat.

Just inside the backdoor of the truck, we had a mama and daddy guinea pig in a washtub. For months we had expected them to have young, but it never seemed to happen. During the trip, from time to time, little Ellen would say, "Daddy, the guinea pigs are having babies!" At the next gas stop, we would go back and check on them, and they were doing all right, still two of them.

Arriving, we finally settled into a home in the country near Huntsville. Every so often, little Ellen would say, "Daddy, the guinea pigs are having babies!" But, when we went to the tub, the situation had not changed.

One morning when we were eating breakfast, Ellen walked over to the tub and then returned and climbed up in her chair. Very matter-of-factly, she mentioned in passing, "Daddy, the guinea pigs had babies," and then started eating. That "had" intrigued me. I walked over to the container—and there was a tubful of miniature guinea pigs, looking exactly like their parents, except for size.

I was planning to teach in the public school in Huntsville, but Ralph and his wife persuaded us to take charge of a private school for several Advent believers. While there, I pastored an independent church in Eureka Springs. We had

very happy times together. It is wonderful how contented people can be together, when they all believe the same books.

One day I needed to get one end of a metal bedstead welded. At the welding shop, a skilled welder in his early 20s set to work. But he needed a cigarette to enable him to face the task. So, with the cigarette in one hand, he tried to work with the other. But he needed both, so he put it in his mouth and smoke went into his eyes. So he went back to holding it again. He was really having problems. Watching, I realized for the first time that cigarette smokers are one-handed.

He was young and at his height of physical strength; yet he could not lay out the metal for a simple welding job without a coffin nail in his hand. Since then, I have told many young people about that welder, and I ask them, "Do you really need another problem? Don't you have enough now?"

Within a few months, another child was slated to be born. Ralph was a registered nurse and knew how to deliver babies; but, as he and his wife explained it to us, he did not dare do it. It would be illegal. However, they said, "Phone us right away when the baby is coming, so we can pray for you!"

Well, that was comforting, but I needed help. Cherie was intent on having the baby at home, and I knew I lacked the necessary qualifications. The following month, I carefully read through Ralph's book on obstetrics. Cherie was not overweight, she was not a diabetic, she was still young, and had already had several good births. Everything favored a good delivery, but—

One afternoon in late November, friends we had known in the Northwest stopped by. As we waved good-bye to them as they drove off, Cherie said, "Vance, I am going into labor!"

Quickly, I phoned Ralph and Margie so we could have additional prayers to help us, and I helped Cherie into a large, fold-back stuffed chair in the living room. Out the back screendoor window, I could see the delighted faces of little Linda and Ellen, peeking out of the car where we had sent them. They were thrilled that soon they would have a little brother or sister to help care for. I was not feeling so thrilled. Baby Faith was sitting up in view in a crib in a bedroom next to us, but she was too little to know what was happening.

Delivery was very near, and I ran to the

kitchen to wring out hot blanket packs, to help relax Cherie's muscles so she would have an easier delivery. Yet I needed to be in there RIGHT THEN.

In that instant, Ralph and his wife burst in the door, and called out cheerfully, "Well, we were just driving by and thought we would stop in to say hello!" They had planned it this way all the time. He had brought his bag of equipment and supplies with him.

Soon baby Mark was in Cherie's arms.

Funds for the private school ran out in April, so I drove south to interview for a job in Quincy, Florida. I had been up awhile the evening before; and, as I drove, I became road tired. I was coming down a moderate slope at a fairly high speed; and, ahead of me, the road was level for a stretch. Somehow, my mind was weary enough that I did not see what was on the road in front of me. Although awake, I had blanked out.

Suddenly, there it was in front of me! A car stalled in my lane (on a two lane road). A man was standing in back of it waving at me to go around the car. At that instant, he started off to the side, knowing I was going to hit his vehicle. I was driving a highly maneuverable Volkswagon bug. Instantly, I turned the wheel and sped around his car, barely missing it. Another tenth of a second and I would have been killed. I never told my family the story.

Upon being interviewed, I was hired to teach the following year in a school in Gretna, Florida. Then I drove on up to Takoma Park. It had been 11 years since I had been in that town, and it had dramatically changed. The entire place was like a racetrack! Noisy, speeding cars and trucks everywhere! I thought to myself, Is this where God's people are supposed to live?

A block from Sligo Church and the college, I rented an upstairs room from an Adventist lady who was employed by the government. From April to mid-July, I worked with Wally in residential tree work. He was the friend from Sacramento whose daughter I prayed would be delivered safely while we were in Leslie.

My job was to help lower limbs, cut up logs and branches, and load them onto a pickup. Each day, I sent up a prayer that it would not rain that day; for, if it was overcast and rainy, I would have to work in it and I chill easier than most people. As the weeks passed, people began to notice that it did not rain. In fact, it rained

only one time I was there. If you have ever lived in greater Washington, D.C. in the summer, you know summer thunderstorms are frequent.

I decided that no one was praying for much of anything else. I was praying for no rain, and that is what my kind Father sent.

During my 11-year absence from the area, a new, very large Adventist Book Center had been opened. Since it was open on Thursday evenings, I would go there and see what they had. Most anything could be purchased there—but there was not one gardening book. Can you imagine Seventh-day Adventists not doing gardening? Apparently, no one in the area was interested in the subject. City life narrows people's lives.

I was also wondering what the General Conference and Review workers did on the Sabbath. When we lived there in the late 1950s, we were told by a veteran worker that they spent the afternoon in bed sleeping.

I was used to being out in the country when each Sabbath came; but here there was no country, in any direction of the compass, under an hour's drive. What did these people do on the holy hours of the Sabbath? just listen to the cars and trucks rush by?

Those of our readers who do not work at the General Conference are very fortunate. They do not have to live in that tangled mass of concrete and houses, called Montgomery County, Maryland.

(About the time I left, I wrote the Sligo pastor a letter, urging him to open the church on Sabbath afternoon so believers could come in and listen to organ music—since there was nowhere else within miles for an Adventist to go on Sabbath afternoon. He wrote back that he had taken it up with his board, and they were going to do just that on a trial run for a time.)

One day I met old friends. The husband had been on the faculty at Pacific Union College when I was there, and they were in town to help work on a graded series of elementary textbooks for our schools. They told me that N.C. Wilson, head of the North American Division; Robert Pierson, president of the General Conference; and Kenneth H. Wood, editor of the *Review*, were trying to get the denominational headquarters moved out into the country, but that they were bucking nearly every other influential leader, as well as most of the lower-level workers. As in the days of Sodom, everyone was settled, had their nice

homes, and did not want to move out of the city.

And it was a city! It stretched from far above Rockville, Maryland on the north, down past Silver Spring, Takoma Park, and Washington, D.C., to beyond Alexandria, Virginia, on the south, and upward toward Baltimore, in the northeast. It has been predicted that, within a few years, city, solid city, will run all the way from south of Washington, D.C. to north Boston.

One day I went to the General Conference building, where I used to be janitor. It was now called the "Central Building." A recently built high-rise "North Building," was down the street. But, when I tried to enter the building, I could not until someone inside pushed a security buzzer. They kept the place locked up all day!

And they had good reason to. Only the summer before, in 1968, a major riot had occurred, not far away, down on 13th Street in the District. Driving by it with Wally one day, we saw burned out and boarded up buildings and shops.

As you know, all attempts to move the world headquarters out of that megalopolis failed, until the late 1980s,—when all they did was move down the street a few miles to congested Silver Spring—where they built a new General Conference building, next to a noisy main highway.

While I was there that summer, bandits came in and robbed Sligo Church! Entering a backdoor, they forced the ushers carrying the offering plates to hand them over. Not long after, robbers burst in on the members of an outlying Adventist church near Greenbelt, Maryland. They took everyone's wallet and purse and fled.

Several years later, between Sabbath School and church, a man went downstairs at Sligo Church, led a child out into the parking lot, and nearly kidnapped her. But the child was impressed to run away before they reached the car. It is time to get out of the cities!

One day as I was working alone, cutting up a large fallen tree in the back of a suburban home, from time to time I noticed that, about 400 feet away at the back of a distant home, was a small chain link fence enclosing a German shepherd. Extremely angry with the noise I was creating, he ran back and forth, incessantly, barking.

About an hour later, as I was cutting on the tree (and happened at the time to be facing toward the dog pen), I looked up and saw that the large creature had somehow managed to knock the door loose—and was running at me as fast

as he could. Was he angry!

But I had a powerful weapon in my hands. The saw was running, and I kept the trigger down so it was going full blast. I stood motionless as he came on full speed, waiting for him to leap on me.

But, when he was about twelve feet from me, the animal came to a sudden halt. Silently, he looked at me for a moment; then turned just as suddenly and ran back home howling. I never saw him again that day.

In mid-July, I had arranged to leave the next morning for my home in Arkansas. Just one more night of listening to the police sirens, rumbling trucks, and steady traffic. I went to bed early, planning to depart at the break of day. But I decided I had enough; I was not going to hear that racket one more night. I arose and carried my belongings out to the car. Just as I finished packing, it started raining! At last, the rain was coming! I climbed in and drove off. The motel beside the freeway on Interstate 81, where I stopped later that night,—was quieter than half a block from the intersection of Carroll and Flower, where Sligo Church, Columbia Union College, and Washington Adventist Hospital were located.

My family rejoiced when I arrived home; even the guinea pigs seemed happy. Soon we began packing a U-Haul truck. We bid good-bye to our friends and were on our way. We were headed for a teaching position in northern Florida, but decided to live in Georgia, thinking our home-school would be less likely to be noticed. It seemed wise to not be living in the state where I was teaching.

We found a home north of Bainbridge, Georgia, but the driving time to the school in Gretna, Florida, was excessive. So we moved to a house closer to the border.

Then, one Friday morning, about a month after school began, a lady from the county office knocked on the door. Already knowing the answer, she asked if our child, Linda, was in school. She spoke with Cherie for several minutes and then left, with the words, "*Have the child in school Monday, or someone will be in jail.*"

During earlier house hunting, we had found a house which had not been lived in for several years, and it was in good condition. That Sunday, we quickly moved into it.

The following day, I dropped a postcard to

that lady with one comment and no return address: "We are no longer living in your county."

Our home was 30 feet inside the Florida State border. Later in the year, I discussed the matter with the health officer in the county in which I taught, and he gave a knowing smile. He said we could keep Linda out the rest of that year, but the next year she must be back in school. We knew we would have to leave again.

Every year I was not in the Lord's work, He kept us moving. Our kind Father had plans for us, and a work to do later on. He would not let me settle down until that time.

That school year I preached at two different black churches. They needed help, and thoroughly appreciated the encouraging messages we provided. The pastor was astounded, but pleased with our help.

Yet there was danger in doing this, of which I was well-aware. It had only been a decade since whites who helped blacks in certain localities in the deep South had been murdered.

At the large school where I taught, every student was black, and nearly every teacher and administrator was white. It was this school district's final attempt to satisfy Washington's demands. But it was unavailing; the following school year marked the first year of integration in Florida.

One day, Mr. Harrell, the principal, made a passing comment during a teacher's meeting, that we could "pray with the children."

Of course, this was illegal, so I asked him afterward what he meant. It was clear that he did not care if I prayed with my students—or even read the Bible to them!

So I began doctrinal studies with my class. I took them through every Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. They all listened very attentively.

In doing this, I had an advantage. Blacks did not tell whites what was going on—about anything. They had learned better than to do that. So I could carry on my studies, knowing that no complaints would be sent to the county office.

Later in the year, in the middle of one of the classes, one of my students raised his hand, and said, "*Mr. Ferrell, what do you do when your parents won't let you keep the Sabbath?*"

The room was hushed, and I replied in measured tones so the message would be clearly heard by all, "Sometimes, it is difficult to do that

when you are a child. But when you grow up, you can do what you want."

He appreciated that answer and thanked me.

There was a drinking fountain in the hallway outside my room. One day I was standing there just as my children had filed into the room. Two of my boisterous boys were by the fountain, and one said to the other, "After you, Sir"; and the other said, "Thank you, but No, after you, Sir."

Observing it, the teacher from across the hall, said, "Those boys are horsing around!" The school counselor was walking by just then, and interjected, "They are not horsing around; they are being courteous! I have not seen any other students in this school do this! Your students don't!" Although humorous, the incident only illustrated the power of Scripture; for the Bible was studied every day in my classroom. To my knowledge, it was not studied in any of the others.

On one occasion, we all went out into the large grassy field, just beyond where the students played, and erected four sizeable posts to indicate the length and width of Noah's Ark. The entire, large school was interested in seeing how very large it was, and students flocked to the area to see it.

In order to improve employment opportunities, I took the *Graduate Record Examination* in the field of Education. It tested whether a person had adequately completed a baccalaureate in Education and was prepared to begin graduate (master's level) work. Since all I had was a number of under-graduate correspondence courses in the field, it was not likely that I would do too well. However, I had a fair amount of knowledge and experience. When the results came back later, I had scored five months under doctoral reception level.

At the end of the year, we moved to Mississippi, which at that time had no compulsory education law. Upon arrival there, we lived near Senatobia for a few months, and then found a better home near Coldwater.

For a week or so that winter, there were black riots at the Tate County High School. It was the first year of federal-mandated integration in all southern schools—and Mississippi and Alabama are the heart of Dixie. In Mississippi, I found no

American flags in the schools, and no one pledged allegiance to the nation. In some ways, the state is still in rebellion.

Since the pay was so poor, I also drove a school bus; but that winter I began working evenings with an Adventist plumbing contractor. He taught me the trade; and, the next summer, I dropped out of teaching and began doing plumbing contracting. My hope was to provide a better income for the family. But I had to buy a number of specialized tools, including an acetelene torch and tank; and there was not a lot of work. In addition, I had purchased a Volkswagon Minibus to haul it all around.

So I interviewed for work as an independent contractor with Sears and Roebuck, in Memphis, to install water heaters. This required a city gas fitter's license, but I was good at taking tests. I had satisfactorily completed a plumbing test in De Soto County, Mississippi, which experienced plumbers I knew could not pass. They were masters at doing the work; I knew how to learn the technical details in the code books. Yet they, of course, knew far more than I did.

It was clear from the beginning that, if I could install two water heaters a day, we would be all right financially. But that never happened. There were three installation contractors, and not enough water heaters. Finally, I was convinced that God did not want me doing this. I quit on a Friday. When I came back Monday for my final check, Mr. Wilson asked me to stay on. He said one of the other installers had quit. But I had a rule to always leave when my Father was pointing me that way.

Shortly afterward, I got a job as a bond salesman in a high-rise downtown office building in Memphis. I found myself in a situation different than all others I had ever been in: The work area was a single room, the size of a small house. On every desk there was an 800-number telephone, and the men would phone businesses all over America and try to sell municipal, and other, bonds.

On Friday, I interviewed with the owner. He told me they had just finished a training class, but I could start work Monday. In a few weeks another class would begin. Until then, I could listen in on other calls and try making as many myself as I could.

When I arrived Monday, the news was already circulating among the workers. On Saturday

night, the owner was at a nightclub and one of the salesmen, partly drunk, was also there. He got in an argument and shot the owner, who was now in the hospital. Discussing it with us, Joe, the floor manager, said that the salesman had arrived half an hour earlier and wanted to know why he was fired. Joe said he told him, "Do you think you can shoot the owner and not be fired?"

So we started into the week; I was assigned the State of Indiana. The management did not expect me to have any success until the next training session began, so I was free to listen to sales pitches on the phone lines. I made a few calls, but without success.

On Tuesday, several men there who were high-pressure successful salesmen were pointed out to me by the salesman just behind me. One had been a shoe salesman; and, within a month on the job, he was netting \$5,000 a week. Another was making \$15,000. Joe, who sat in front, facing us all, was doing the best of all.

Yet, as I listened to conversations on the phone lines, it became apparent that the most successful were generally those who were not truthfully representing what they offered. Some would flagrantly falsify, and even invent information. On Tuesday, I saw and heard Joe do this in a theatrical manner. But it netted him a large bond sale.

Joe was hard-boiled; and, for certain reasons, I had reason to believe he was immoral. Early Wednesday afternoon, we were sitting there when he opened his desk drawer. A dove immediately flew out and began circling the room. Joe screamed in horror; and, as it flew around, he was crying, "Don't let it get me!" He was in abject terror that it would kill him.

One of the men grabbed the gentle dove and let it out the window. During lunch break it had been caught in a nearby park as a joke.

By Thursday, I was praying for a sign. I needed employment, yet was uncertain what to do. Perhaps the situation would improve. The next day, Joe announced that the men had not been selling enough bonds, so everyone would have to report to work on Saturday. That was what I was looking for; so, at quitting time, I told Joe that I was resigning since I was a Seventh-day Adventist. He was very, very apologetic but said he needed to have the men come in the next day.

When I came back on Monday for my final

check, the owner was back from the hospital. He had given orders for me to be sent to his office as soon as I arrived for my check. Very kindly, he informed me I could have my job, with Saturdays off, any time I wanted it. I thanked him and left. Whenever my heavenly Father indicated I should leave, I did. The men I left behind could rake in the profits from those phone calls.

During our stay in Coldwater, we attended the Olive Branch Church for a time. But, once again, we received the cold treatment. Those sitting in the same pew would not even look at me. The pastor had warned them.

Finally, one day, as we were driving home, I told Cherie I was not going back to church. This worried her, and she recalled a visit we had made a couple months earlier to the largest black church in Memphis. So she suggested that we start attending church there. I agreed; yet it was difficult, since it was an hour's drive each day and that enthusiastic congregation generally did not adjourn until nearly 1 p.m. each Sabbath.

Both the pastor and the 700-member congregation were thrilled. As the pastor announced from the front on several occasions, "*We are now integrated!*" They were good friends to us.

Some people say blacks are a problem, and others say that whites are a problem. But I say that anyone who is a genuine Christian is never a problem, and those who are not Christian always are.

Later, after we quit attending Olive Branch, Art, a spray plane pilot who attended that church, came to our house and apologized. He told us that the pastor had told them to have nothing to do with us, for the conference office had informed him that we were dangerous and tried to split churches everywhere we went.

Art was genuinely sorry for what happened, became an extremely close friend, and wanted to help us. Since, I was out of work, I told him I had contacted the Okeechobee, Florida, superintendent of schools and he wanted to see me. Art said he would fly me down there at no charge.

Soon after, we took off in his Cessna 180 and headed south. When we reached the Florida panhandle, we headed east, following Interstate 10. Like many others, I had toyed with the idea of eventually getting a pilot's license; but, as we journeyed, it was obvious that skill and extensive experience were needed so a person would not kill himself in a small plane.

Art was a professional, and had thousands of hours of flying time. Yet he had never bothered to obtain an instrument rating. Lacking this, he could not use major city airports and could not check on weather conditions ahead as he was flying.

As we flew over the Gretna School where I had earlier taught, I recognized it. Low weather forced us to land in Quincy, and we rented a motel.

The bad weather continued, and we had to remain there several days. During this time, I explained many things to Art about God's Word. He gratefully drank it all in.

On Monday, able to start out again, we headed out over the Gulf. Art was planning to fly across the bend of water and directly back into the state, to below Gainsville, and thence south to Okeechobee. But a dense cloud cover was over the land, and we had to remain out over the Gulf.

The view was stunning. Never, before or since, have I have seen anything like it. Below were tiny emerald waves of the ocean, intermingled with glisten. Eventually, Art said we only had a certain amount of gas yet, and that would be it. But still no break in the cloud cover to our left.

Then the clouds broke, and we headed inland. We were on a totally different flight path than Art had planned for.

As we circled over a country airport a little north of Tampa, Art said this was the Vandenberg Airport and it was owned by a friend; but, Art said, he was not always there.

We came in for a landing and taxied over to the fuel pump. A well-built man came out and warmly greeted Art. It was Mr. Vandenberg.

"What are you doing here, Art?" he asked. Art replied, "I have an Adventist teacher here, and I'm taking him for an interview in a public school south of here."

"An Adventist teacher!" Vandenberg said, "While you gas up, I'm going to call the conference office." Vandenberg was on a high-placed conference committee.

Remembering such people as the pastor of the Olive Branch Church, I had no faith in the results of that call, but went on into the small office. When the phone was handed to me, the secretary on the other end said that Mr. Griffith was attending a youth rally and would not be back till Wednesday. I made a very tentative appointment, "if I would be in

the area,” and hung up.

Turning to the two men, I said the conference educational superintendent would not be back for two days, and we would have to see what happened.

Before we took off, Mr. Vandenberg said to Art, “I was about to drive off, and then I saw that Cessna 180 circle once to come in. And the thought came to mind, ‘I knew someone once who had a Cessna 180; I should wait and see who it is before I leave.’ ” I would think that Mr. Vandenberg would know lots of people with Cessnas, but he was strongly impressed that he must wait till the plane landed before leaving.

We flew on to Okeechobee. As we were landing, we could see the mammoth lake just beyond the town. Upon landing, we were met at the airport by the assistant superintendent of education, and driven to the county office where I was interviewed. They liked me, yet there was an obvious problem which I knew he was aware of: I had changed teaching jobs nearly every year. Our efforts to homeschool our children were gradually ruining my employment record, which the stack of college transcripts I brought with me could not overcome.

Still, it seemed I might get the job, and we took off and headed northward.

Within a surprisingly short time, Art dropped down and landed at a private airport in Apopka. An ancient basin, which was once a lake, provided excellent soil for a sizeable vegetable farm; it was large enough that it had its own airport.

Art and his friend, the pilot there, conversed for a few minutes. Art was such a kindly person that he always had close friends wherever he went. Then one of the two noticed the contrails in the sky from a passing jet liner. I told them I had figured out that it meant frontal weather might be coming in; something they did not know. We all forgot the matter and I told Art we should head off the next day; it was unlikely anything would result from a meeting with the conference educational secretary. I well-knew that, if the local churches refused to have me, a conference headquarters was unlikely to either.

But, the next morning when we arose, Art said we could not go. It was densely overcast. So Art’s friend loaned him his car and we drove up the coast to Marineland that day.

But, since the following morning was Wednesday, and we were still there,—I was driven over to the Florida Conference office. The man in charge turned out to be my old friend from college days, Dorlin K. Griffith. He had been Elder Maxwell’s Greek reader, and I had taken his job when he graduated at the end of my first year at Pacific Union College.

D.K., as he was known to everyone, reminisced about how he had gotten into the teaching work instead of the ministry, and how much he enjoyed the challenges. A very capable man, he told me he would try to locate me a position. It was December 1971, and he thought an opening or two might be available within a week.

Since the weather had totally cleared, Art and I headed north and landed at the Dothan, Alabama, airport. As everywhere else, Art had a friend here also. A postal worker picked us up at the airport and drove us to his home, where we stayed overnight.

I noticed that this family seemed to have a very special regard for Art. Their daughter acted as if Art was the greatest person in the world. We visited for some time; and, then at their request, Art told me the story. He probably would not have done so otherwise:

The last time Art had been in their home was a year earlier. At that time, after visiting awhile, their daughter, about 11 at the time, said, “Art, I want to show you the new lock on our door!” This was not a topic in which anyone would be interested, but Art kindly went with her to the door which led from the kitchen into the garage. Stooping down, he listened attentively as she explained it to him. For some reason, the lock was unusual and unlocked in a completely different way than usual.

With that happy conversation completed, all retired for the night. But then, in the middle of the night, Art suddenly awoke. Something was wrong! He smelled smoke. Quickly he went to his bedroom door and opened it. The smoke was gathering in the hallway, and he crawled to the bedroom door of each family member, awoke them, and sent them out of the house. One ran across the street and called the fire department.

Meanwhile, with total presence of mind, Art crawled into the kitchen where the smoke was the thickest and, reaching up, found that lock. Although impossible to see anything, he knew exactly how to open it. Rushing out into the ga-

rage, he opened the door and pushed the car out, saving it.

He had probably saved the parents' lives, but definitely the girl's. Part of the house burned, but insurance helped rebuild it. An improperly wired appliance in the utility room, several months earlier, had resulted in the fire—which occurred on the night Art was visiting them.

The next day, we climbed into the Cessna and headed north, across Alabama and into central Mississippi. The sky became very overcast, and soon Art found it necessary to fly low for visibility. Then, as we neared our home airport, a dense rain suddenly struck. The windshield was flooded, and it was nearly impossible to see. (Airplanes do not have windshield wipers.) In seconds, as the situation worsened, Art lowered the plane. There we were, taxing down the runway of the airport we had taken off from a week earlier.

A few days later, D.K. phoned me. The Cocoa school was available, would I take it? I said yes, and began packing. Because I had to be on the job at the beginning of the second term on Monday, January 3, Art immediately flew me back down to Cocoa. The weather was fine all the way. Landing at the Merritt Island Airport, we were met by the pastor, a very kindly man who became a good friend.

One evening, spent checking through the schoolbooks, and I had a good overview of the program for the rest of the year. Everything went well, and I gave my class (consisting of grades 5 through 8) Bible and Spirit of Prophecy studies. I appealed to them to make sure Christ was their Saviour.

A couple months later, a baptism was held, and a remarkably large number of children from that class were baptized. The parents appreciated this very much, and I was very thankful to be able to do what I could to point the youth toward heaven. When the pastor heard me preach one sermon, he thereafter had me regularly preach all the sermons at the Titusville Church, while he remained at Cocoa. He was a good friend.

In February, I learned from my mother that my father had passed away. In the fall of 1972 she died also. Both were about 71 at the time of their death.

Our family had great times in our home, and

I played with my four children in the evening. With Cherie and the children, I would take walks in the cool of the evening and on weekends.

One Sunday, I thought it well to teach Linda and Ellen, the two older ones, how to meet people at the door without being afraid. This was an invaluable talent which could help them in the years ahead as they distributed literature, canvassed, or did any selling work.

So I told them a few lines to say, had them repeat it to me for ten minutes or so till they pretty much had it,—then said it was time to practice!

I had them go outside the front door while I shut it. Then one would ring the doorbell, and I would open it. I did this in a very funny way to dispel all their concerns. I might act interested, resistant, or very uninterested. We laughed and had a great time. Within half an hour, they were ready for action.

So we climbed into the car and drove down to a nearby group of homes, prayed, and they began going from one door to another, each taking turns speaking and offering a paperback *Steps to Christ* on a donation basis.

From that simple beginning, both Linda and Ellen later became involved in selling work at various times. The training helped them both blossom.

From then on, for several years, at every place we stopped the car for gas, with enthusiasm, Ellen would jump out and sell a *Steps* to everyone there for a quarter or fifty cents. Many years later, Linda went into canvassing.

The next school year, we had a new pastor who wanted to preach sermons at both churches each Sabbath. So I went over to a nearby small black church in Cocoa and began preaching there every week. Their pastor lived in Orlando, and did not even come over to preach when the bereaved placed their dead in the grave. One of the two times I saw him, he preached on the fun the black ministers had at a ministers' retreat on the Orlando golf links.

For several days in the fall, thousands were gathered along the Titusville waterfront, to see Apollo 16 lift off. The day before the liftoff, we took the entire school to Titusville and went In-gathering. The next day we saw the liftoff. Only one more moonshot occurred after that.

My students told me they could go on the beaches or to Disney World and frequently be

accosted by drug pushers. I inquired, "Even at Disney World?" One of my students replied, "They pay for tickets in the morning, and then sell drugs all day inside to young people who are not with adults. If anyone tries to catch them, they quickly run around the corner and are lost in the crowd."

That was 1973. Just imagine what it is like at those amusement parks today?

Cherie did not like the situation in Florida and told me she was going to take the children and leave me, if I did not move at the end of the 1972-1973 school year. Although the homes were somewhat scattered on the outskirts where we were living, it was the first time in our married life that we were living in a town. (Everything outside of town tended to be swampy and uninhabitable.)

I confided my problem with D.K. Griffith, and he checked around and found an opening for me in the Chesapeake Conference. We taught in Maryland from September 1973 to May 1975.

In Maryland, as we drove to school one day, the children and I heard a news report on the radio, that ground rats were being added to the hamburgers sold in America. When I mentioned this to the children at school, they went home and told their parents. The next day, I learned that a number of parents were angry because their children said they did not want to eat meat anymore. All of the children were from professed Adventist homes, and it was known that most of the parents served meat at home.

When the pastor discovered I could preach, he turned over one of his two churches to me, and I preached nearly all the sermons there.

When summer 1974 arrived, I was given the assignment of attending youth camp for a week as the head of the boys' section. I was now 40.

I asked for, and received, permission to give the talk at Friday night vespers. All the boys and girls (ages 11 to 13) were present, as well as all the staff. I spoke on a Biblical story, and then gave a strong appeal for those who wanted to accept Christ and be baptized to come forward. I had made the call very clear, and nearly every boy and girl came forward. They meant business; I could see it in their eyes. They were very solemn.

But the counselors were young teenagers; and Clyde (we will call him), the conference youth department head, spent his time acting like a

kid too. Absolutely nothing was done to follow up any of those interests! Nothing!

For as I sat down, Clyde strode to the front, totally changed the subject, and talked about the hilarious fun time they would have the next night. Then he got everyone laughing, and camp was dismissed for the night.

About eight years ago, I learned that Clyde, by that time a union youth leader, had been caught with another woman and fired.

That same summer, I went to Columbia Union College for a one-week teacher institute. One afternoon, when I entered the lobby of the men's dormitory, where I was staying, I heard a young man speaking to someone. Noticing that he had an Australian accent, I engaged him in conversation. Leading me to his room, we sat down and he told me about the project he was working on.

A pastor in a South Pacific Island, he had decided to obtain more training, so he went with his wife to Andrews where he was enrolled in a Master's level program. When the brethren there learned what he owned, they encouraged him to write a thesis on it; and, as part of the project, he journeyed to Takoma Park to carry out additional research in the General Conference archives.

Elder C.H. Watson, General Conference president from May 1930 to May 1936, was a careful businessman who, prior to being elected to the presidency, had strongly encouraged the leaders to get out of the stock market. He thus saved the denomination from incurring terrific financial losses when Wall Street crashed in October 1929.

After Watson's death, his personal papers were eventually given to this young Australian pastor's family, and he now owned them. He told me it was Elder Watson who saved the denomination from an immense loss.

In the mid-1980s, I learned—and reported—on the very large stock market investments our General Conference and subsidiaries (unions, conferences, hospitals, etc.) now have. Do we have any influential Elder Watsons to save us today? Our stock investments now are manifold greater than they were in the late 1930s.

Learning that a young man in the conference had developed a way to make door-to-door contacts for Bible studies, I made an appointment to see him on a Sunday at the conference office.

His system was a variation of the clipboard approach I had devised back in Sacramento. But his was keyed, not to finding health, welfare, and Bible study contacts, but solely to locating Bible study interests.

He would walk up to a house, clipboard in hand and ready to write, and tell the one who answered the door that a religious survey was being conducted. The person generally obliged, and he would ask for name, address, religious preference (if any), and a few more questions, then he would turn the conversation toward the terrible conditions in our world today. Because he was such a sincere person, by this time, he was generally invited in. Sitting at the kitchen table or in the living room, he would then comment on that topic a little further; and, taking out a small Bible, he would give a brief study on the first eight or ten verses of Matthew 24.

By this time, a significant percentage of the people he contacted were becoming absorbed with the subject and sensed their spiritual need. So he would pray with them and inquire whether they might like to study again "next week at this same time." Bible studies would begin. If it was a lady, he would return for each study with his wife by his side.

His system really worked, and he had brought many souls to Christ and into the church. He was very careful to include a study on the Spirit of Prophecy.

In the late spring of 1974, I recognized that Cherie was pregnant. She had suspected it, but I told her it was so. Neither of us said anything for a moment, and then I said, "We had Linda and then Ellen to keep her company. Then we had Faith and then Mark, so they could be together. We are older now, so *this should be twins.*"

Cherie was a twin whose sister died at birth; and she had twin sisters. Twins are not usually born in successive generations, so we were not likely to have a set. When we told the children, I let it be known that they would be twins. With the passing of months, it became a family joke: We told Mama that she was going to have twins, and she considered the idea foolishness.

Without being able to explain why, I believed she was going to have twins, since that is what we needed. As she got larger and larger, I began to wonder if it might be triplets.

Then Cherie visited a physician; he heard two heart beats, one slower than the other. I should

have guessed the meaning of that fact, but did not. At least, we now knew there were twins.

One evening in early February, 1975, Cherie said it was time to go. Because she was a multipara (a woman who had already borne several children), I could hardly go fast enough. Out the driveway we went, and down the road. On the highway, although I was going fast, I only passed one car. The doctor had earlier assured me that, because I had helped deliver two earlier babies, I could be present in the delivery room.

Arriving at the door, I left the car running and helped Cherie in. A nurse ran over and placed her in a wheelchair and off we went down the hall, up the elevator, and into the obstetrics section. But the nurse in charge said to me, "No, you cannot come farther; you must wait outside." I told her what the physician said, but she was adamant.

Just then, I remembered I had left the car running at the entrance. That was a mistake, so out I ran and parked it. Arriving back in OB, I strode down the now empty hallway, found the still-open door of the room where Cherie was, walked in like I belonged there, and sat down quietly at the head of the bed and held her hand.

The doctor was not there yet, and they did not know what to do with me; so they gave me a face mask.

Within a few minutes, literally, the twins were born. First came a tiny girl, and then her little brother. Ruth and Seth were now in our family. The doctor walked in about 15 minutes later. He looked quite pleased that it was done.

The next day in class, when I announced the births, one of the girls spoke up. She was in that lone car we had passed; and, noting my hurry, she remarked to her mother: "It is Mr. Ferrell; he is taking his wife to the hospital."

While we were in Maryland, I attended a union-wide teacher convention at Roanoke, Virginia.

The educational superintendent of the New Jersey Conference bought all the necessary gadgetry of magic that he had trained himself in. On Saturday night, he presented a hilarious magic show. I asked him afterward what he did with that back home; and he said he gave magic shows in every Adventist school, summer camp, and camp meeting youth department in several

conferences. The leaders apparently liked it, imagining that “it will keep the youth in the church.”

On the way home, I rode in the car with another Chesapeake teacher who confided a problem to me. Having a natural bent to mathematics, he had always been able to do addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division in his head. It was a marvelous talent. But, he lamented, he had lost the ability. To my puzzled inquiry, he told me he had studied the “modern math” textbooks the children were supposed to learn from,—and the meaningless gobbledygook in them had so confused his mind that he lost his math ability!

*What a testimony to the uselessness of so-called “modern math”!* While I was student teaching in Mr. Freer’s classroom, back in Lewiston, Idaho, I wondered what modern math was, since I had not had it when I was in grade school. So, finding an 80-page modern math dictionary of terms, I carefully read it through. That book explained what it was about, without damaging what math ability I had. I had learned enough to see that, whereas seasoned teachers formerly wrote the school math textbooks, now Ph.D.s in universities—totally out of touch with real life—were preparing them. Instead of teaching the arithmetic principles people use in real life, they were teaching fanciful concepts which only computer programmers and research scientists need, concepts which they can easily learn later at the university.

In all my years of teaching, I never once taught any modern math. Instead, I taught the old-fashioned basics.

Another controversy in the educational field concerns whether children should be taught reading by the phonics or whole word (sight) method. The fundamental fact both sides generally overlook is that some people are born ear dominant; that is, they tend to learn by listening while others are eye dominant and tend to learn by what they see. The method which worked best for the educator, when he was a child, is the one he thinks all children should be taught reading by. The solution is to provide both approaches in the classroom and be alert to let each child gain the most with the one he favors.

One day I had a conversation with one of the local Adventist pastors, and he told me his story. We will call him Wayne. A rather average type of

person in abilities, while growing up in West Virginia he had the good fortune of having a couple relatives who were elected officials in state politics.

When he was about 20, an official from the Democratic Party stopped by to see him. Wayne was told that the Party had selected him—and this was what they were going to do with him: He would be placed on a local ballot. Winning that (which would be a certainty), he would next be moved up to the state legislature. From there, he would be slid into a Congressional House or Senate seat. Fame and money would be his. All he had to do was cooperate—which, of course, meant always voting as the party bosses directed. His entire future was mapped out before him that evening.

But, having recently become an Adventist, he decided to forsake the tempting offer. Instead, he went to college and entered the ministry.

As that second school year drew to a close, Cherie called me up into the attic, so we could be alone. Then she said that at the end of the school year she was leaving with the children, and I could come along if I wished. Cherie liked to keep moving, but she also had good reasons for disliking conditions her children had to bear up under at Adventist schools. Our children had always been in homeschool, but they were in church schools in Florida and Maryland.

Should I continue on alone or should I remain with my wife? I knew her thoughts about the schooling problem were correct.

In June, we rented a U-Haul and moved to a friend’s place in West Virginia. Behind his house, up on top of the mountain, was an older house which he owned. It was quite a chore to get up to it. In fact, it required 13 trips with a Ford Bronco to get our belongings up there.

I soon discovered that no one knew what county we were living in. Officials told me the line running between Braxton and Gilmer counties “is somewhere around here.” No one there had yet discovered the U.S. Geodesic Survey maps, and I did not tell them. As a result, no one bothered whether our children were in their school district or not.

But living and working conditions were hard. There was no electricity, and we got our water out of a spring in a rock above our house.

For a time, I canvassed with Home Health Education books, and then with paperbacks

from Inspiration Books. It was this experience, along with my two earlier canvassing periods, which convinced me that certain things were needed in order to make paperbacks more saleable for colporteurs to use. Nine years later, I began making such changes in the paperbacks which I published for canvassers. Because I had canvassed with paperbacks, I was far more aware of what the colporteurs needed. I could fully understand their needs and hardships.

One afternoon as I canvassed, I stepped out of the car; and, with my case, began walking toward the family who were sitting outside in the yard. Out of the corner of my eye I barely noticed that, about 25 feet to my left, a German shepherd-sized dog, with his tail down, was hurrying around behind me.

I was still about eight yards from the family, when, suddenly behind me, there was the quick sound of rushing air and *grrr*, a sharp snap; I felt a hard blow, and then a frightened yelp from the dog. Turning around, he was beating a fast retreat.

What had happened was that the dog aimed for my Achilles' tendon. If he had bitten it, I could have been severely injured, possibly crippled. It is not a part of the body which is easily repaired. But as he made the final quick rush, his mouth snapped shut as my leg moved forward; and then, as it paused for the other foot to move, the dog's mouth and nose struck this tendon which joins the muscles of the calf to the bone of the heel. Frankly, the providential timing was exquisite. I thanked God for divine protection!

At one home, I was greeted by a lady in her late 30s. Inside, showing her the *Home Health Education* books, she so much wanted *Desire of Ages*! Sorrowfully, she told me that she was married to an old man, in his late 60s, who gave her nothing for extras. Her only spending money was provided in the summer when she laboriously picked a few dozen quarts of wild berries by hand and sold them.

I could not forget that woman's concern to have that book; and, later when I switched over to selling paperbacks, I prayed that I might somehow meet her again, so I could give her a free book. (In the intervening months, I had forgotten where her house was.) Then, one day, I stopped by the main grocery store in Gassaway; and, as I stepped out of the car, there was the lady and her husband! He had just driven up.

Exiting the automobile, he walked on ahead of her into the store, oblivious of her presence. Quickly I opened the trunk of my car, and ran over with a copy of every paperback I had: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Desire of Ages*, *Great Controversy*, and *Steps to Christ*. She was overjoyed!

I was living on the other side of the 1973 oil crisis, so gasoline was expensive. Compounding this was the way the homes were scattered throughout the West Virginia mountains. I was not selling enough to pay my way. So I cast about for other employment in the area, but found it quite closed.

One day, after checking at the Braxton County office of the education superintendent in Gassaway, I walked over to the Welfare office and applied for work there. Perhaps they might need a clerk.

Soon I found myself ushered into the office of the head of welfare services for the county. I do not recall his name, but he was obviously different than most of the people that lived in the heart of West Virginia. The man was an intelligent go-getter who wanted to accomplish things.

We spoke together for several minutes; and, at his request, I summarized some of my background and principles of action.

Suddenly, he spoke up and said, "*Mr. Ferrell, you are just the man I need here!* I want to reorganize this entire office—and dramatically improve how the welfare system works throughout this county! I want you on my staff, and I will place you second in command. Here is what I want you to do . . .

Then, in decisive comments, he explained a portion of the kind of politics which operates in many parts of the nation. He told me to immediately take the standard state employment exam at Charleston. A week later, he would be sent scores of three individuals who had scored above 30%. He would reject them, and ask for three more. Eventually he would come to my name—and would hire me.

This was how the leaders hired their friends, circumventing the civil service exam procedure which was supposed to obviate such favoritism.

When my score arrived in the mail, it was 93%, a remarkably high score.

Not hearing from my friend at the welfare office, I decided to stop back—and what I learned was a classic example of what had been happen-

ing for years. *The Lord would not let me get settled into employment where I could put my roots down.* Whether I was working in a state office, plumbing, installing water heaters, teaching school, or whatever, He kept me unsettled, always moving, moving on. He was saving me for something else.

Just as God called Cyrus to do a certain work, so He plans ahead—and calls you and me. Each of us has a place where God wants to use us. You have a special work. He has a special work for me also. We can be thankful that He has not set us aside!

In four years, the crisis would hit the denomination; and, in three years, He would have me start Pilgrims Rest. I was not to settle down near Gassaway, West Virginia.

I had gone back to that welfare office to see what had happened. It had been about three weeks, and my friend had not contacted me.

Stepping into the building, things seemed different. When I asked to see that superintendent, a young man seemed confused as to what to do. He led me to that same head office; and another young man, barely 25, hurried in and sat down to talk to me.

I inquired where the superintendent was, and the man looked uncertain as to what he should say; and then he blurted out what had happened:

It turned out that my new friend, the county superintendent, had been in charge of this, the Braxton County Department of Welfare, for a number of years. But, about two weeks ago, his wife suddenly told him he had to choose between her and the welfare work. If he did not quit his job, she would leave and divorce him. So he turned in a fast resignation, and the place had been in turmoil ever since.

The man before me had not the slightest interest in hiring me. Once again, matters had been arranged so I could not settle down.

Shortly afterward, because of my college degree, I obtained a low-paying job managing the work crew at Cedar Creek State Park, near Glenville. This was a somewhat different kind of assignment than I had ever had before: running a work crew of several men in their varied duties throughout a state park covering over a thousand acres. It was useful training for what would follow in later years. But, in order to hold down the job, I had to live in a room in Glenville, a

town about an hour's drive, along winding roads, from where my family was located above Rose-dale. This situation could not continue indefinitely. I worked there about six months.

In early November 1976 I turned in a resignation, to take effect several weeks after my family had moved. Once again we rented a U-Haul truck. We were doing our little bit to keep U-Haul, Inc., in business.

The question prominent in my mind was whether we could get that U-Haul up to our mountaintop house. The shorter route required the Bronco; so, with the help of two godly Advent believers who lived miles away, we decided to try going in the back way.

As the three of us drove up the road, I was concerned and kept praying. Finally we reached a slight saddle in the road, above which was a steeper slope than usual for about 30 feet, after which the gradient would be less. Overhanging trees had kept that slope from drying out as the rest of the road had.

We took a run at it, but slid back! I felt terrible, but a thought flooded my mind—and I jumped out of the cab, calling out: "Make the run once more; I'll get behind and push and the angels will push with me—and we'll get this truck up the hill!" I knew everything would be all right.

I ran to the back and pushed the back of the truck. It rushed forward, leaving me behind, and sailed right on up that hill, as though there was dry concrete underneath. Stopping above, I climbed back in and we thanked our kind Father.

Since there had only been about 20 feet of level area in that saddle below that section of the mountain slope, it was impossible to build up speed to make a run for the hill. Add to this that patch of wet, slippery ground. Really, that day it could not be done;—yet, with God's help, it was done.

Loading everything in, we headed down again. That night, it poured; and the rain continued for a week, when the weather worsened and snow fell. One day later, and the truck could not have gotten in till spring.

Shortly afterward, I left the area and headed west. It was time to get back to civilization. Unknown to any of us, within less than three years the church would be embroiled in a crisis exceeding that of all earlier ones.

## 10 - *The Illinois Years*

We had moved to southeastern Illinois, below Harrisburg, a little east of Delwood. Our home was on top of a rolling hill. North of us everything was flat all the way to Chicago. Because of this, and the fact there were few trees, the wind could surely blow at times. In the winter, we covered the windows with plastic to help keep out the cold. But this had the effect of putting us in a cave with translucent panels; from inside we could not see out.

We had not been there long, when I took the family up to a motel in Harrisburg for an advertised free family photograph. While there, always interested in learning something, I spoke with the person who stood in the back while the photographer snapped the pictures. It turned out this man was the owner of the business. Based in Dallas, he had a fleet of photographers taking pictures all over the central states. When they were processed, the pictures were shown by salesmen who made more money than the photographers.

Since I needed work, I discussed the matter with him. He wanted me badly, and promised to get back to me soon with a salesman position. In the meantime, by appointment, twice in the next week, I spent time with one of his salespersons, in Marian and Carbondale, as she sold pictures to those who came for their free photograph.

When I heard no response from the owner of the company, I tried to phone him, but he was always out. Finally, a month after I first met him, I reached him by phone. He told me the situation was incredible. The bottom had dropped out of his business. It was unexplainable, he said. Nothing had changed in the U.S. economy; yet, suddenly, he could sell no pictures, and was having to lay off workers.

When I hung up, I knew the Lord had closed that door also. I knew that, as soon as I gave up

on the idea, the owner would be able to once again sell pictures.

Since Southern Illinois University, one of the ten largest universities in America, was not far away, I enrolled for the spring semester in the Special Education department. I had heard that job openings were especially good in that field. But this required rooming with an Adventist family in the Carbondale area throughout the week. I began a full semester of work. When it was finished, ironically, along with the courses I had gradually taken in the past eight years, I would have the equivalent of that education minor I missed in college: two full years of professional education.

In order to better understand the next event which occurred, I need to explain something. I had always been slim. As a child, my mother could not understand why. The problem was that I had inherited her problem: hypothyroidism. However, underactive thyroid function can manifest itself in a variety of ways; she was overweight, I was not. In more recent years, I read more into the subject. It is the cause of a variety of factors which I have learned to live with, such as slow digestion, poor nutrient absorption, slow pulse, poor heat production, iron anemia, and so forth. Careful living and eating had enabled me to live with the problem and still get a lot done.

The nearest church was in Eldorado, and the pastor was a diabetic—actually a somewhat severe one, since he required 50 units of insulin a day.

One Sabbath, he said to me, “Vance, I think your problem is diabetes. If you will take some insulin, it may solve your problem.” It sounded worth a try, so he started me on 15 units a day.

Immediately, I felt terrific. It was not until several years later that I read that, the first full week after starting on insulin, the person will

feel great—and then everything will dramatically drop to a lower level thereafter.

In my case, I was not really a diabetic, yet that reaction occurred anyway for seven days. With this new energy, I thought to myself, “*If God has given me all this strength, I must dedicate it to Him!*”

*I then went up, alone, into the attic room in our home, knelt down and told God that I was giving Him the rest of my life. I would return to whatever work He would show me to do. And I would never again go out and do any other work.*

It was the spring of 1977, probably about March. This was a major turning point in my life. Indeed, I consider it the most important pivotal event since I resigned from the Northern California Conference.

Please understand, that the submission involved in that prayer in the upper room involved more than willingness to again do His work. I was very much aware that, by doing so, I would be kicked out of the church again. A specific part of my prayer was, “I am willing to be kicked out of the church.” For years we had been treated as non-existent when we sat in church. I had no doubt that if I did whatever the Lord wanted me to do, I would eventually be disfellowshipped. But I was ready now to go back to that. My face was set as flint.

The difficulty is that, when I go to work for the Lord, I do what is right in relation to the Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and God’s guidance. I do not check with religious authorities to see if they approve (even though I am very willing to cooperate with others). I am not in rebellion; I am just working without first asking men for permission.

God cannot use people as effectively, when they feel they must have someone’s approval before they obey God. The need for official approval before doing something has, over the centuries, greatly reduced the effectiveness of many of God’s children.

Jesus is going to explain to some of the saved in heaven, that which they should have learned on earth. They will then discover that, while in this dark world, they should have trusted God more, and men less.

(Interestingly enough, now that I had returned to the Lord’s work, never again did I have a homeschool problem. We lived in southern Il-

linois six years, and have been here in Tennessee 15. As soon as I made that decision, no longer did I have to move every twelve months.)

A week later, the physical downsizing occurred, and I was myself again. The initial impact of the insulin had worn off. But it mattered not; I had felt the Holy Spirit’s approval when I made that decision in the upstairs attic—and I was going to stick with it.

Taking 15 units of insulin a day meant that I had to take a little honey between meals to keep from having an insulin reaction. Perhaps I could reduce the insulin. So soon I reduced it to 10 units. Then I kept lowering it, till, within less than a month, I was taking one unit a day. Shortly after that, I quit insulin entirely. I was not a diabetic after all.

Because I was over halfway through the school term at the university, I completed it. The school work required but little attention (I received all A’s and B’s at the end of the term), so I spent my free time making radio station contacts and checking on taping equipment.

It was obvious that the higher-priced equipment back in the early 1960s was no match for the cheapest equipment today. Also I noted that the broadcast rates had doubled. Previously, I had produced 29-minute broadcasts, now I decided to do 14-minute ones.

Another advantage was my earlier experience in broadcasting and some publishing. I had learned a lot, knew where I had made mistakes, why I failed, and how I had succeeded. All this greatly helped as I set to work.

I began preparing scripts, working out timing factors, etc. Time passed, as I worked on 42 scripts, one for each chapter in *Great Controversy*. I prepared excellent little openings and closes.

Later, when I began broadcasting, one man wrote from southern California, that our broadcast was one of only three on the radio (he named the other two) which had an outstanding balance and presentation throughout each program.

I was able to purchase a microphone and two low-cost tape decks, so I could make cassette copies. Stations would accept cassettes, but they preferred open-reel tapes which were far more expensive.

It was about September (1977) when I felt I was ready to begin broadcasting. Kneeling down, I prayed earnestly for guidance as to what I

should do. I did not have the money to get the broadcasts started. The thought came to mind to call a friend. I phoned Dr. George Rue and told him of my project. As you may know, he had been editor of the *Adventist Layworker* for many years. Upon learning of my project, he said he would send me \$400 to help get it started.

I was thrilled and thanked the Lord. This money was set aside and used only for actual broadcast time. The broadcasts began that month.

I needed a name for the broadcasts, but what should it be? I wanted a title which was sweet, and would reach the heart. As I thought about the matter, I recalled an old one-room church with peeling white paint I had seen by the side of the road in another state. Occasionally we would drive on that road, and there was that little church, with a sign over the front door: *Pilgrims Rest*. That little sign seemed so friendly, so encouraging, every time I saw it; so that became the name of the radio broadcasts.

At that time, there was no plan to have a publishing work, although it seemed best to begin mailing out a one-page sheet of paper as a newsletter to tell donors about progress on the radio broadcasts, which by that time had already begun being broadcast.

Fortunately, I had the Selectric typewriter which I had purchased new over a decade earlier. But what should I call the newsletter? I thought about that awhile, and recalled that old hymn in *Christ in Song*, number 586, "Look for the Waymarks, as You Journey on," by Frank Belden, Ellen White's nephew. It quite nicely expresses an important aspect of our faith. (You will also find it in the *Church Hymnal*, number 671, and the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, number 596.)

So I called the newsletter *Waymarks*. That was several years before a close friend used the word in a booklet he was writing, entitled *Waymarks of Adventism*.

The first edition of *Waymarks* was made by typing a page on the typewriter, with five carbon copies underneath. After typing it, I put in more sheets and typed it again. I then had enough copies for mailing, plus an extra or two. The next three issues of *Waymarks* were made in the same manner. Then, one day when I was in town, I noticed the office supply store sold a photocopy machine. Inquiring, they told me that they let

regular customers make copies on one of their machines. From then on, I typed one sheet of paper, and made copies in town.

I started with what I had; but, fortunately, I kept making improvements. Otherwise, I could still be typing on carbon paper.

By January 1978, *Waymarks* was being sent each month to eleven people! We really were growing!

Eventually, we were able to obtain a Tiac reel-to-reel tape recorder, for mastering, and two low-cost reel recorders for copy work.

The broadcasts ultimately went into several states. We broadcast in Pennsylvania, Little Rock, Spokane, and XERF (the successor to XERB, one of the stations which, years before, we had broadcast over—which Elder Tucker listened to us on). It covered all of southern California.

Several years later, Rolly Herrin, a non-Adventist who lived down the road several miles, told me he regularly listened to me every morning over a station in another state. He remembered my name. I was amazed he could hear the broadcasts that far,—and especially so, since he heard them in the morning, and I paid no station to broadcast them in the morning! Apparently, some station liked them well enough that it used each week's tape to fill an empty time slot the following morning.

*A major transition was on the verge of taking place.* It started in this way. I wanted to put all, or most, of *The Sufferings of Christ* booklet, by Ellen White, into an 11 by 17 tract. One evening as I was about to retire for the night, I was praying about it and wondering if it would be sufficient to paste pages from the booklet sideways onto sheets and print them. But that seemed inadequate, and I could not do the job properly. The Selectric was only a typewriter and could not tolerate photo-reductions for printing.

Then the thought came strongly to mind that what I needed was a typesetting machine! In an instant, there flooded into my mind things I could do with such a machine! I could put chapter 29 of *Great Controversy* (*The Origin of Evil* chapter) into a tract! I could put other *Great Controversy* chapters into tract form!

Strongly sensing that God was leading in this, I checked around. At the time, there was only one efficient, low-cost typesetting machine—and that was the IBM Selectric Composer. (Back in Goldendale, I had checked into the manually

operated Verityper, and found it quite impractical.)

Off to Evansville, Indiana, I drove and was given a demonstration of a new Selectric Composer. This machine could do what I wanted to do, but the price was \$12,000. I prayed that I might somehow obtain one.

Cherie would not tolerate my taping inside the house, which was understandable; she had too much work to do. A sympathetic friend, who wanted to help me in the broadcast work, gave me a small, decrepit 17-foot travel trailer in exchange for a couple power tools I had from my plumbing and electrician days. We parked it near the house and ran a power line to it.

But, when, in the late summer of 1977, I tried to make a radio tape inside the trailer, the outside noises of birds, wind, and the children in the distance would record onto the tapes. So I worked out a system whereby I would open the windows to air it out, then enter it clad only in bathing trunks, shut all the windows—and record a broadcast. There was no other way I could do it without extraneous noise. In the sweltering heat, by the time I was done, I was as wet as though I had gone bathing.

I knew this pattern would not be practical when fall came and I needed some form of heat in there; space heaters were noisy. But I would work while it was today, and wait and see what my Father would bring to supply tomorrow's needs.

Fred Nogle lived in the area. Someone had given him a copy of *Desire of Ages*, and he loved it. Unfortunately, he could not conquer cigarettes, although we all tried to help him do it. However, over a period of time, he accepted the Bible Sabbath and our other beliefs.

Fred had an inheritance; so he did not have to work for a living. He would buy \$30 Bibles and give one to any child who wanted one and said he or she would read in it. This was the kind of man Fred was.

Becoming interested in our project, one day that fall Fred told me he would give me a house trailer to do my taping in. He found a used one in Carbondale and had it hauled over and parked behind the house we were renting.

Nearly a year later, Fred later loaned us the money to purchase our first A.B. Dick press. We later repaid him in full.

But, afterward, Fred got into trouble. Some-

one handed him Mike Clute's papers, teaching that God will never kill the incorrigibly wicked. Then he found a booklet teaching that only a certain ancient Hebrew word, a "sacred name," must be used when speaking of God. As my later book on the subject clearly explains, no one knows how that word was pronounced in ancient times; and, indeed, ancient Hebrews refused to pronounce it.

So it was that, one day in 1981, Fred called me on the phone and said he was going to sell all his Spirit of Prophecy books. When I asked why, he said this: "Last week I read that God does not kill, and this week I accepted the sacred name theory. *I know that Ellen White did not accept either idea, so I have rejected her writings.*" That was what he said!

We were all deeply saddened. He phoned the Adventists in the area and notified them, that they could come over and buy his books, which they did.

Without the Spirit of Prophecy, Fred was a doomed man. He rapidly became violent; and, within four months, his wife took the children and left him. Then he moved up to central Illinois; and, a little over a year later, we learned that he had gone out into the closed garage, started the car, and gassed himself to death.

For a rather complete rebuttal of both of those errors, read my *Terrible Storm* (about the error that God never kills any wicked; it is now in my *Offshoots Tractbook*) and my book, *The Sacred Name*.

For a time, I made tapes in that 60-foot trailer. But when the rain began falling in October, there were leaks everywhere. I climbed onto the roof and painted it with a thick roofing tar, but it did not stop the leaks. In addition, as it became colder, I could not provide enough heat in that trailer.

Uncertain what to do, I contacted a widow, named Maxine, whom we knew from earlier years when we lived near Huntsville, Arkansas. Her husband had passed away, but she still lived there.

Linda, my firstborn, was 20 by this time; so she offered to accompany me. One morning in November 1978, as we drove off, a storm started blowing in. The family later told us that winter came that day.

While in Arkansas, we made several new friends in the area; and I prepared nearly the entire series of radio tapes.

One day a friend in Texas phoned me, and said there was a man in Oklahoma I should see. He said the man had money to help worthy Adventist causes, whenever he chose to do so.

So I made an appointment; and, accompanied by Linda, drove to the home of an older German couple living near Okeene, Oklahoma.

This family owned two active oil wells, plus a sizeable acreage on which they grew wheat. The home was as sparse and bare as if they had forgotten what furnishings were. The next morning I laid before him my concern to obtain a press and a typesetter, so I could prepare missionary literature and tell our people about Spirit of Prophecy standards. He liked that, but was a gruff old German. So he replied, "I will send you two \$5,000 checks for you to buy that equipment with. But I will never give you a dime more. Do not ask for any."

He did exactly as he said he would do. I understand that, by the late 1980s, the couple had passed away. He had given a lot of money to Adventist academies.

Soon after, in the spring of 1979, Linda and I returned to our home in southern Illinois.

When I received the money, I considered how best to allocate it out. From a used printing equipment dealer in New York, I ordered a second-hand Selectric Composer. It would be essentially like the one I had seen demonstrated in Evansville. (With the remainder, I later obtained a Multilith 1250 printing press, which was later replaced by the better press Fred Nogle loaned us money to purchase.)

This composer could set type, and in a variety of fonts; yet it required a manual change whenever a different size or type of font was attached. There was no monitor (screen) to see what one was doing. This made for great difficulties in editing or correcting earlier lines which were in machine memory. In addition, total memory would only hold about three-quarters of a page.

But it was still a typesetter; and, within its limitations, could do the work of a 10,000 lb. hot-lead linotype machine.

It was July 1979 when I took possession of the typesetter. That was another major turning point. The important transition I mentioned earlier was now moving into place more rapidly.

*What was happening was that I was transferring my interest from the spoken word to*

*the written word.* I had been on the radio for several years, and had preached for decades. The results could be excellent: yet the words left the mouth, went out into the ether, and then were gone. The memory of what had been said rather quickly faded from the minds of the hearers. (What did you hear at church two weeks ago?)

But the written word—that which was printed—was far different. It was there, would remain there, and could help people for years to come.

Please understand that I am not against preaching, but I had to focus my own work, and my focus was changing. It is for these reasons that I stopped the radio work. *I could not do both*, and I had come to have more confidence that what I wrote would help more people than what I said.

While we are on this subject, if you will check in the Spirit of Prophecy, you will quite consistently find that it will be the printed materials which will be the most powerful in preparing souls for the Final Crisis, and even during that crisis! It is the truth-filled books and papers which will be the basis of the Third and Fourth Angels' work! Carefully read *7 Testimonies*, 138-144. Other pertinent passages include *9T 61, 69; CWE 181; LS 214-217; Ev 114-115; GW 25; 6T 315-316; 6T 313-314; 7T 150-151; and 9T 66-73*. Each of the preceding passages is a jewel! They are quoted on pp. 37-55 of my 624-page book, *The Colporteur Handbook*, which explains how to canvass.

I knew we would need better facilities, but was not sure what to do. Then, one day, Fay, Cherie's sister who lived down the road a mile, told me she was going to buy a used schoolhouse in Harrisburg, and have it hauled to her farm. A little later, she told me I could use it free of charge. Like all her family, Fay is a very kind person and a true friend.

The building consisted of two 75-foot house-halves which, when joined together, formed one large room big enough for a family to live in.

Moving into it, I made more tapes. Throughout those early years of the work, my family helped me. For a time, Linda helped me with the receipting of funds as I typeset. Later, Ellen helped me, and Faith at times. When I obtained the press, my son Mark began helping in the office. I had no doubt that the Lord would have to bestow on him mechanical ability for the task before him, and the Lord did. Mark was only

11, but he was running equipment that, normally, only adults ran. When he encountered difficulties, we would kneel and pray, and the Lord would provide solutions.

Sometime later, we found that the roof tar I had applied on a cold October day the year before to that house trailer, which Fred Nogle had given me,—in the summer heat had flowed outward and filled all the cracks! The trailer no longer leaked. So we hauled it over to Fay's farm, positioned it behind the house she let us use as an office, and stored tracts in it.

Our first press was a Multilith 1250, but we had nothing but trouble with it. The print quality was excellent, but getting the paper from the feeder to the receiving tray—from one end to the other—was the problem. Eventually, we traded the machine in on a used A.B. Dick, and our problems were greatly lessened. However, we still lacked a folding machine. As we worked, we continually encountered problems of every kind. But we would not give up. When we were stopped for a time, we would do something else. And, day after day, when not doing something else, I kept typesetting tracts.

From July 1979 to the end of December, I prepared 20 Sabbath tracts (*BS-1 to 20*), which contained original research material; the 16 Great Controversy tracts (*GC-1 to 16*), which contained the best of the book; and 5 Final Crisis tracts (*FC-1 to 5*), which was another typing of the heart of the 16 tracts. One day, an Adventist family who was visiting Fay stopped by and asked what I was doing. I said I was preparing Sabbath tracts. She looked puzzled and then replied, "Oh, I see, tracts for Adventists to read on the Sabbath!"

It had been so many years since the Adventist Church had missionary tracts for the lost, explaining the truth of the Bible Sabbath, that this lady did not know what a Sabbath tract was.

Why did I prepare all those Sabbath tracts? I did it because *Great Controversy*, page 605, says that, in the Final Crisis, it will be "the great test of loyalty" and "the point of truth especially controverted." In the providence of God, the Sabbath is the special teaching of Scripture demanding a decision in these last days—a decision which can only be made in acknowledgment of the holiness and perpetuity of the Law of God.

I also prepared the first two tracts in the Remnant Standards Series (*Out of the Cities*

[*RS-1*] and *The Narrow Way* [*RS-2*]), and the first two tracts in the Indwelling Christ Series (*You Can Overcome* [*IC-1*] and *The Center of the Crisis* [*IC-2*]). These four tracts primarily consisted of vital Spirit of Prophecy quotations.

Eventually, we made a homemade light table, and the first tract I laid out for printing was *Out of the Cities*. That 11x17 sheet contained all the best statements in Ellen White's booklet, *Country Living*. It was time for God's Word to speak to the people.

*Then, near the end of December 1979, a very important event occurred.*

Unknown to us, Desmond Ford had given his epochal lecture at an Adventist Forum meeting on a Sabbath afternoon, two months earlier in late October. As my daughter Ellen helped in the office, she would at times play a tape recorder with earphones, so she could hear simple Christian songs as she worked at the table. But, from time to time, friends mailed us other tapes. Some of these she listened to also.

One day, Ellen did something that was to have profound consequences. She said, "Daddy, you have to hear this tape!" I replied, "I do not have time," and went on typesetting on a *Great Controversy* tract. Pretty soon, she called over again, "Daddy, you need to hear this!" I replied, "I do not have time," and went back to work.

Then, as I was typing, she walked over, clamped the earphones over my ears, and turned the machine on. I heard Desmond Ford, saying, "Marching, marching, always marching backwards!"—and then ridiculing our historic beliefs.

I said, "*What is this all about!*" and listened a little more. Then I handed the earphones back to Ellen, and went back to typing.

A little later, she walked over again, and repeated the process. I heard a little more of the lecture. Turning to Ellen, I assured her I would listen to the tape as soon as I had finished the tract I was working on.

By this time, I was nearly through typesetting the tracts listed a few paragraphs earlier, so I quickly finished them. Then I sat down to carefully listen to that Desmond Ford tape. As I did so, my mind whirled. I knew he was wrong, but it had been years since I had been deeply involved in those technical doctrinal issues. Radio work, teaching, construction work, health and healing work, and more had filled my attention for years. I prayed to God for help, and set

to work.

Placing a tape recorder by the typesetter, I would listen to a few lines, type out the key sentences, then reply to it, complete with supporting references. Gradually, I worked my way through it, satisfactorily replying to every argument which he offered.

When I was finished, I had a typewritten reply to his entire October 1979 lecture, which filled eight tracts. I titled the tract set, *How Firm Our Foundation*; for I wanted to demonstrate how very solid our historic beliefs were. A few months later, I took those eight tracts, and all the others I had written as a refutation and exposé of Ford's errors, arranged them in their logical order, and called them the *Firm Foundation Series*. Those first eight tracts became *FF-8-15* in the series. That was my first collection of doctrinal tracts, containing warnings to our people. (It was such a fine title that, later in the 1980s, a friend took the name for his monthly journal.)

When I completed that first eight-part tract set (*FF-8-15*), I just sat there astounded. A variety of objections had been offered by Ford—the best he could bring forward;—yet, as I prayed and typed, I had easily gone through and answered them all. Was I really doing this? *It was obvious that I had help from above. The words flowed onto the paper as I typed!* Most of the time, I typed as fast as I could. Yet many of his points were entirely new to me. As I came to an item, the thought would come to mind what I should say.

In that moment, I realized that my God was going to help in the months and years ahead—to help our people in many ways.

No, I was not, and am not, an inspired prophet. Ellen White is the only one we need in these last days. The rest of us are prone to much error, and I surely am. Yet I was, indeed, receiving guidance from above, just as you may; and I was thankful for it!

The preparation of that eight-part tract set was a major turning point in my work.

Between January and June, I wrote and typeset the first 30 *Firm Foundation* tracts.

Meanwhile, Desmond Ford was in Washington, D.C., taking speaking appointments throughout the Eastern states, to spread his errors in our churches. In later years, faithful believers would be disfellowshipped for defending

historic beliefs in our churches.

Up to this point, we were still crippling along in our printing work. Only recently had we been able to replace the useless Multilith 1250 with an A.B. Dick press; and we still did not have a folding machine. But, finally, in the spring of 1980, we were able to scrape enough money together to buy a folder. Mark began printing and folding tracts in earnest. Ellen would come in and help us. Faith helped us also. (Linda stayed at home to help with the twins, who were only five by this time. The older ones would alternate at home to do the cooking, washing, and cleaning.)

By June 1980, 60 tracts had been completed, and a sizeable number of the *Firm Foundation* tracts had been printed. We well knew that, after the April 17-26 General Conference Session in Dallas, a major theological meeting would be held at Glacier View, the Colorado (now Rocky Mountain) Conference summer camp, on August 10 to 14.

With this looming crisis in mind, we mailed a boxful of key *Firm Foundation* tracts to Neal C. Wilson's office at the General Conference, so they could be distributed to the church leaders and Bible teachers attending Glacier View.

Of course, the fact that I did so reveals my naiveté at the time in imagining they would be distributed. But I was trying to help my church. *Those papers contained Bible, Spirit of Prophecy, and historical answers to the Ford assertions.*

About September, the thought came to mind to telephone Wilson's office about those tracts; I was told, by his personal secretary, that the large box was still sitting beside her desk. Realizing where they would soon be placed (in that incinerator behind the building, where as a janitor I used to dump the wastebaskets), I asked that they be mailed back to me, and I promised to pay the postage. All of those tracts were later mailed out to our friends for widespread distribution.

Our first tract mailing was also in June, and included the first printed issue of *Waymarks*. It was *Waymarks-18*. Why number 18? Because all the earlier ones (1 to 17) had been those carbon paper, photocopy, and mimeograph editions (we had a mimeograph machine for a few months, and then sold it to the pastor). Awhile back I found a copy of one of the 17, which urged

the readers to widely circulate *Great Controversy*. All the rest are gone.

That same summer, our family went to the southern Illinois camp meeting which, back then, was still held at Little Grassy Lake campground.

Steve, a faithful follower of Robert Brinsmead, was there, busily passing out Brinsmead's *Verdict* magazines to those in attendance. Inquiring, he told me he had requested and received permission from the conference president to distribute them. At that time, Brinsmead and Ford were both essentially teaching the same thing—and Ford's positions had been rejected at Glacier View. A little later, Brinsmead rejected the Sabbath outright and left Adventism entirely.

Ben was an Adventist who, with his family, lived on a farm in the middle of a national forest near our home. Not long after camp meeting, one Sabbath afternoon I walked with my family out to Ben's place. Steve and his wife were living there at the time, and the two of us sat on the porch and spent the afternoon discussing the pro's and con's of Desmond Ford's theology. Steve would bring up a point and, with a prayer in my heart, I would answer each one to his satisfaction. When we concluded, I was thankful when he agreed I had answered all his points. Yet he said he wanted to think about it a little more. It was clear that Steve was emotionally attached and did not want to separate from the excitement generated in his life by defending Ford's positions.

The next morning, I typed up our conversation and printed it under the title, *Hebrews Nine and the Sanctuary Message [FF-1]*. In the tract, I referred to Steve under the pseudonym, "Jim."

A few weeks later, I heard that Steve had decided he would remain with Ford. This was unfortunate; for, earlier, Steve had done canvassing and held the Spirit of Prophecy in high repute.

This decision greatly affected his future. As a relative told me in 1995, he and his wife separated; he remarried, left all religion, and then, about 1993, died of cancer. Over the years, there have been many personal shipwrecks as a result of the work of Brinsmead, Ford, Rea, Clute, and others who have rejected God's Word for their own theories.

An Adventist couple, Jeanine and Charles, bought a small parcel of Fay and Curtis' land, and moved a mobile home onto it. Since we still lacked a power cutter, one morning, one of my

children was trying to cut a pile of paper by hand—when the thought came to mind to go over and ask Jeanine for help.

Jeanine was a cheerful French Canadian; and, upon arriving, found that she enjoyed the work,—so she asked if she could come back and give more volunteer help again the next day. Soon I hired her. A fine person and a wonderful worker, we appreciated her very much.

Then, one day, Charles, her husband, walked in the door. Pretty soon we had him on salary also. Along with my children, the two of them became a mainstay to the project.

As usual, I was home throughout the evening with my wife and children. I did my work along the one broad wall in the office which had windows; and I used daylight as my primary light source. I was home all evening, every evening. On Sabbaths, we were together continually. In fact, for the first time since my third year of college, I began lying outside in the sun before lunch. I well knew I should not overwork, in view of the tasks which lay before me.

I never worked in the evening; and it could be expected that the husband would be gone during the day, supporting his family. But by this time, the fall of 1980, Cherie was becoming restive. She was used to years of moving every year and changing jobs; and she wanted me to close down Pilgrims Rest and get a different job.

When that did not happen, she went home to her parents in Arkansas for several months. As he later told me, one day Al, her father, said to her, "You ought to be with your husband!" and the next morning drove her back to us.

One day Cherie came over to our office on her sister's place, and pitched in and helped. Her repeated comment was "If you can't lick 'em, join 'em." From then on, she was very happy; and, as with everything she did, she was an energetic worker. Cherie has many outstanding qualities.

Just at dusk, one afternoon, I went for a walk out beyond the house along a wide path I regularly mowed for the family to walk on. It was getting dark; and, as I walked, the edge of my left foot hit against a stump. Just beyond that, the thought came to mind, "There is no stump on this path!"

Turning around, I saw a full-size copperhead rapidly uncoiling so he could slither away into the weeds. I was within striking distance as he

was uncoiling; and so I jumped back. But his concern was to get away.

What had happened was that he had lunged out to bite me as I was walking; and his mouth hit on the crease between the upper part and sole, near the front, of my left shoe. This gave him a hard pinch on the mouth. Assuming the rest of me to be as tough as the portion he hit, he was anxious to leave as quickly as possible. He had met his match.

Rushing back to the house, I took off the shoe and could see the discolored area caused by the snake's venom. I held the shoe down to Troka, our dog, who immediately jumped back in fear and began barking at it. Troka was not an attack snake dog, but a barking snake dog. She would alert us to a snake by barking till we came to dispatch it. The Lord had providentially given her to us several years earlier.

About a year later, little Seth was playing in the sandbox in back of the house. He was in a kneeling position, and felt something pushing the cuff of his pants back and forth. That cuff was hanging down from his leg. Looking back, he saw it was a large copperhead which was repeatedly striking at the cuff. Seth's leg and ankle were next to the cuff, but the snake only struck at the one area which could not be injured. Little Seth (only 6 at the time) jumped up and ran off.

At about this time, Ellen decided to send a story to *Insight* magazine. An announcement had been made that it wanted Christian stories which it could print for its readers. So, learning of a remarkable incident in which God protected a man near Harrisburg many years before, she checked with old-timers for details. Then she wrote it up and mailed it to *Insight*. I was intrigued and looked it over before she sent it off. The story was, indeed, a powerful one. It was well-written, the required length, and easily able to be shortened if space required it.

I was very surprised at the response. *Insight* sent the article back, and instead published stories sent in which appealed to the wilder element among our denominational youth. If *Insight* did not want to publish a true Christian experience in which someone had been helped in answer to prayer, one would think they would pass it on to *Our Little Friend*, which, with but slight adaptation, could be printed. But no, they rejected it outright. They did not want narratives like this. Here is the basic story:

Back about 80 years ago, there used to be

coal mining near Harrisburg, Illinois. Old-timers in the area still talk about what happened. One day, the roof of a coal mine caved in, and those able to do so ran out. When the men were counted outside, there was still one man in that cave. Wives and children quickly gathered, and everyone began praying. When they tried to go back in for him, they found the tunnel blocked at a certain point by immense rocks; beyond it they could not go. The situation appeared hopeless. But the families outside kept praying.

Inside the coal mine, a man sat huddled in a corner in the darkness. Somehow, he had lost his headlamp and did not know how to find his way out. So he sat there and wept. Then a man came over with a light, and said, "I can help you. Come, follow me." As he followed the man, he wondered how the one leading him could be wearing white clothes—without one stain of black on them. White clothes in a coal mine, where everything you touched turned you black! But he was too frightened to think much about it.

Soon his guide led him along the tunnel to a point where light from the entrance could be seen; and, just before turning to go back into the mine, he told the miner to continue on out.

When the man emerged from the mine, there were tears and great rejoicing. Then he told them about the man dressed in white, who had entered the tunnel and brought him out. Apparently he had gone back in to bring out more men.

Those outside told him that there were no other miners inside, that no man in white had gone into that tunnel; and, besides, the tunnel was blocked with rubble. That is why they did not go in to try and find him.

Beginning in the summer of 1980, when our little press began working full-time, momentous events in the denomination began occurring very rapidly. Prior to that year, the liberals were gradually increasing in strength and establishing strong beachheads in our churches, executive offices, academies, and especially our colleges and universities. But it was a quiet work. In 1980, the problem began to break wide open; changes in doctrines and standards became more apparent and accelerated, and consequent fiscal, and other, corruption began to be exposed.

Yet when worldlings, who secretly reject the discipline of God's Inspired Writings, gain control, a downward spiral is inevitable. Mismanagement and downright fraud begins to surface.

From the response we were receiving, our

*Waymarks* and *Firm Foundation* tracts were having an effect. The silence throughout the church on the new theology and other issues was deafening. Only a few voices would speak; I was thankful I was in a position to do so.

(By 1982, the few voices which I knew to have openly opposed the new theology in the previous two years—Bill May, Kenneth Wood, and Ralph Larson—had either been replaced, retired, or sent overseas.)

*Soon developments began occurring thick and fast. Here, year by year, is a very brief overview of the years which followed:*

**1980**—In addition to what has already been mentioned, I typed up an important analysis (our four-part historical study, *The Australasian Controversy*), which, as stated, was a transcription of a tape by Colin and Russell Standish, dealing with the entire history behind the rise of the Ford apostasy. The Standish twins are outstanding men. I later interviewed Colin and extended that historical review still further.

*At the time, I predicted that Australia was ten years ahead of us; and what had happened there, unless strongly resisted by leadership, would soon come upon the Adventist Church in North America. And so it happened.*

That same summer, a revision of the *Statement of Belief* was pushed through the Dallas General Conference Session in June. Delegates did not have time to make many alterations in the draft presented to them (which, incidently had been written by liberal Bible teachers at Andrews).

This rewording of our formal set of beliefs was made for two reasons. First, it would keep the Session delegates preoccupied, so they would not delve into other matters. Second, there was a strong need to revise the *Statement* into a watered-down, muffled phraseology which could be agreeable both to the conservatives and the liberals. In this way the liberals could say, “*I stand by the Dallas Statement!*”—and not be fired.

And so it worked out in the years to come. At a small-group meeting with Ford at 4 p.m. on Friday, August 14, just after Glacier View had adjourned, when it appeared that Ford was going to be discharged, N.C. Wilson asked him if he was willing to abide by the *Dallas Statement*, and Ford replied that he could support it. Wilson was astounded, showing that even he had not penetrated the plan of the modernists to so

liberalize the *Statement* that it would accommodate their beliefs. As quoted shortly afterward in *Ministry* magazine, Ford “responded that the brethren had made tremendous progress in the past few days [at Glacier View], and that the church’s position was closer to his than it had ever been before. He expressed the thought that if we have come this far in four days, imagine how far the church will in [the next] four years” (*Ministry*, October 1980).

On the holy Sabbath, the day after Wilson removed Ford from the ministry, most of the faculty of Pacific Union College sent a telegram to Wilson, protesting the action. (Desmond Ford has remained an honored member of the Pacific Union College Church down to the present day.)

A few days later, a sizeable number of the faculty at Andrews wrote a protest letter to Wilson. We published on all these events, plus much, much more, including reprints of various documents.

Down through the years, I had noted that many newsletters and periodicals would give a dab of this and a little of that, so they could string out the reader; yet, in reality, those newsletters and periodicals did not give the reader much at any one time.

But, when I wrote on a topic, I put everything I had into it, certain I would not have anything for the next issue. By the time that issue came along, I had more to give the flock. I was determined to be a pastor who, not only warned the flock, but fed them.

I was not trying to placate or entertain; I was trying to inform and convict our people with the seriousness of the times. Many have asked how I can give so much. It is because I give as much as I can. The people need it, and there is no time for delay.

I do not intend to be a dumb dog who will not bark.

That fall, a friend called from Washington State. He said that, while speaking privately with his pastor (a young man recently brought in from Andrews), he protested the modernism the pastor was preaching in church. The pastor replied, “We [the liberals in the church] *are going to win. Year after year, we are turning out more pastors. We are going to take over the church. And then we will get rid of people like you!*”

That remark made a deep impression on my mind, and I quoted it several times in the years

to come. The pastor, fresh out of Andrews, knew what he was talking about. He had been carefully trained. Unlike all the earlier apostasies in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, this one was carried on by a unified group of men, each working in a different department or location in our schools and church. But the engine of change was fueled by modernist college teachers and administrators. It was our colleges—which, year by year, were sending out more pastors and teachers—which were feeding the work of destruction.

On September 2, PREXAD (the General Conference President's Executive Advisory Committee) reviewed the Ford situation and voted to give its approval to Wilson's decision to fire Ford. Their decision was partly based on "twelve points" of doctrine which Ford had listed in an August 26 letter to Parmenter, the Australasian Division president (later quoted in *Ministry* magazine). Ford said that they were twelve Biblically solid reasons why he had to stand by his new theology positions. Shortly afterward I learned of this, and wrote a *Reply to Desmond Ford's Twelve Points [FF-31]*, in which my kind Father helped me explode the twelve points, revealing them to be hollow and unscriptural.

In November, I published the shocking *Cottrell Poll*. In preparation for Glacier View, Raymond Cottrell had polled our Bible teachers throughout the world field. The results indicated that a large number of them were liberal.

Events were cascading thick and fast. On October 23, an article, arranged for by Walter Rea, was published in the *Los Angeles Times*, resulting in his being discharged from the ministry by the Southern California Conference on November 13. The following February, I began publishing the first of a series of lengthy rebuttals, which defended the veracity of Ellen White's character and writings. Rea's charges do not hold water.

In December, a young believer who related his former experience in the Sundaykeeping churches at camp meetings, phoned me. He explained that a local pastor had confided in him about a terrible financial crisis which was soon to hit the church in the United States. Learning the details, I wrote the *Exposé Crisis*. Without naming names, it was the first hint of a different kind of crisis which began the following July—which shock the whole church in North America.

**1981**—The first Adventist homosexual camp meeting was held in Arizona. Quoting their papers, in April I showed that, instead of repenting of sin, their objective was to bring sodomy into the church.

On July 22, I received a phone call from a lady who worked in a conference office. She had called me several times before, and was thinking of coming to work for us. As she spoke, she sounded almost frightened as she reported that some terrible thing had occurred. And the leaders in the building were frantic.

Soon after, we learned that, on the morning of Wednesday, July 22, Donald Davenport walked into the Federal Building in Los Angeles and filed bankruptcy papers.

Later, in May 1983, I began releasing the only comprehensive report on the entire Davenport scandal ever to be printed—a 15-part tract set, including extensive quotations as well as photographs.

That report revealed how conference and union leaders and local pastors were paid handsome "finder's fees," for loaning church funds to Davenport and talking widows, and other members, into handing their life savings over to the man. Yet all this money—private savings and church funds—were handed to Davenport without receiving any securing paperwork.

In the months which followed, the entire financial scandal was dealt with by a variety of delay tactics which resulted in no firings; yet which cost the church an incredible amount of member confidence. Facts emerged that certain church leaders were receiving as much as 40 percent per annum interest on their personal loans—in order to buy their influence on committees which approved immense "investments" of church funds to Davenport. Incredibly, no one was ever fired (although certain leaders quietly resigned and moved into high-paying jobs with Adventist Health Systems).

Do not trust men; many of them will be lost. You can only place your trust in God.

In August, we reprinted the *Atlanta Minutes* of the Friday-Sabbath, June 12-13, business meeting of Adventist college and university new theology teachers in North America. It was a private convention; but someone sent us the notes—which told of the concern of those teachers, to keep inventing theology, unrestrained by church

leaders, while making sure they were not fired in the process. Seventeen of those in attendance, and several who were not, were named in the minutes.

In September, we revealed the new theology background of Fred Veltman, the Pacific Union College teacher and a close friend of Desmond Ford, who had been assigned the task of “defending” Ellen White against the plagiarism charge.

More revelations occurred in forthcoming months, which provided warnings for our people.

Early that year, I sent a tract to William Grotheer, with a handwritten comment that I would place him on our mailing list. It was a friendly gesture, with no evil intent in mind.

He promptly wrote a brief letter in reply, which was remarkably condescending, yet commanding. He said something to the effect that it was wrong of me to quote the Spirit of Prophecy in defense of doctrine, but that it would be all right for me to quote those writings in some other contexts. The tone instantly alerted me; and, with rare exception, I cut off all further contact with him.

I learned from mutual friends that he was extremely angry that I was sending out tracts. Some people fight the fire; others fight the firefighters. Grotheer, in his publications, has attacked many historic Adventists including the faithful older pastors in Australia who opposed Desmond Ford, John Adam who opposed Davenport, and even Wildwood and kindred units.

That summer, at David Bauer’s invitation, I flew to California to look through his files at his home in South Lake Tahoe. One morning, I drove down with him to the post office. As we walked out of it, he opened a letter which had just arrived from William Grotheer. Bauer had been invited to speak at Grotheer’s 1981 camp meeting, to be held near Leslie, Arkansas. The letter contained the speakers’ schedule, along with a note that no one, speakers or audience, would be permitted to quote the Spirit of Prophecy. I was very surprised, but David was not. He remarked that this was typical of Grotheer, who held doctrines which did not agree with those inspired writings.

My sister-in-law attended that camp meeting, and later told me how Grotheer forbade those in attendance from quoting the Spirit of Prophecy in any comments from the podium. The clos-

ing meeting was conducted by Bauer; and he presented a fine talk which was liberally sprinkled with Spirit of Prophecy statements.

Afterward, he said, someone walked up to him and commented that he was brave to oppose Grotheer’s directive. To that he replied, “*I take my orders from God!*”

Returning from my trip to California, I drove with Linda, Mark, and Faith to Andrews University. Recognizing that I had much to do in the coming years, I thought I would see what data I could photocopy from the large Andrews library.

It was the first time I had ever been on the Berrien Springs campus of my alma mater. (The year after I graduated from the Seminary in Washington, D.C., it was moved to Berrien Springs, as part of the new “Andrews University.”) We stayed in a room in the men’s dormitory, and I spent several days at the library.

Locating material to be copied, I would hand it to Mark or Faith, who would run off to one of the three copiers in the hallways. Meanwhile, Linda took stacks of my tracts opposing Desmond Ford and walked about the campus, handing them out to students and faculty. Many of the ministerial students made remarks which indicated they had already accepted Ford’s positions.

I was browsing in the Jesuit book section at the library, when Linda brought a man to see me. He had asked her why she was distributing these tracts, and she had directed him to me. He did not know that I was the author and publisher. He asked what I was looking at; and, when I told him, “Jesuits,” he looked uncomfortable and quickly changed the subject.

Introducing himself as the Dean of the Graduate School, in order to impress me, he launched into a soft-toned lecture on why Desmond Ford was a good man. I began to reply, but realized he was saying so much I should keep my mouth shut; so I listened with rapt attention. Appreciating this, and believing he was making his point, he told me that Ford had many excellent ideas; and that, instead of firing him, the General Conference should have sent him to labor in England at our college there.

It was obvious that the objective of these liberal teachers was to win every Adventist intellectual and scholar to their side. He did not know who I was; yet he recognized that I was an Adventist thinker of some kind—and he wanted me in the liberal camp.

That evening, arriving back at the dormitory, I made careful notes of our entire conversation. The next day, I thought I would press the matter a little closer if I saw him again. While I was looking through the card file, he stopped by again; so I asked him, "Is there a Sanctuary in heaven?" His reply was the classic kind of response, intended to instill skepticism in the students, without getting himself in trouble: "*How do I know, I've never been there.*"

Two months ago, I spoke by phone with a friend who was there at that time. He told me the individual I named was only Associate Dean of the Graduate School, and never a full Dean. And he added that, a year or two later, the man ran off with another woman and left his wife and the church.

While at Andrews, I spent an afternoon looking through the books at the University Bookstore; I was surprised to find every possible kind of attack book against Adventist beliefs for sale. This included books arguing against the Bible Sabbath, Brinsmead books questioning historic Adventism, and Desmond Ford's books;—but there was almost nothing in defense of controverted beliefs.

I asked the woman at the checkout desk why they sold such materials. To which she replied with a note of pride, "We carry controversial books here!" Apparently, this idea of "academic freedom" extended not only to the teachers, but to the bookstore as well.

A friend, enrolled at the Seminary at the time, told me there were only about four Bible teachers, total, in the college and seminary who were historic Adventists!

**1982**—Early this year, I reprinted *Collegedale Tidings*, a one-time lay publication intended to arouse the constituency of Southern Missionary College (now Southern Adventist University), that error was being taught there. My publication of that report spread the matter all over the nation.

But I was also working on another report. I had been collecting data and documents spanning most of the 1981-1982 school year at Pacific Union College; and I began mailing out the eight-part series in April. The series documented how deftly the matter was swept under the rug—by the simple expedience of delaying a final decision from one board meeting to another.

Throughout the 1981-1982 school year,

friends had mailed me copies of the Pacific Union College weekly newspaper, the *Campus Chronicle*. It recorded the steady deterioration of standards on the campus. In addition, that same year, an ongoing attempt to reform the college had been carried on by alumni and church members on the West Coast. At one point, nearly a thousand members had signed a petition to eliminate the new theology and the staff at the college adhering to it. The entire experience is discussed in detail in our 32-page *PUC Papers—Part 1-8 [WM-53-60]*, now in our *Schools Tractbook*.

But, out of it all, I learned two important lessons: (1) Nearly any problem or scandal can be sidestepped by leadership—simply by stalling for time, and then taking little or no action. (2) The college president and the union conference president are the only ones in charge of the college; it is not the board nor the administration. A basic problem in the denomination is that, at any given level or in any entity, only one or two men decide what will be done.

In earlier years, I had wanted to be a conference evangelist, but recognized that I did not have the robust health required for the job. One day, I received a phone call from an individual who had been one of our leading North American evangelists in the 1960s and 1970s, whose work I had so much admired. If I were to name him, many would recognize it. Now retired, he expressed over the phone the deepest appreciation for the work I was doing, in warning our people about these problems. I told him I had wanted to do the evangelistic work he had done. He replied, "*Vance, you are doing a more important work than I have ever done. I brought souls into the church, but you are warning our church and trying to keep it on track.*" This conversation was a great encouragement to me in the years which followed.

This same year, we searched for property on which to establish a permanent base for Pilgrims Rest. We visited several properties in the East and Midwest.

Then, in September, a friend phoned and told me he had found what we were looking for. He said he could get it for under \$100,000. We could hardly scrape together \$5,000; so I paid little attention to it. Shortly afterward, he called back and said, we could have it for \$35,000, and to come down right away.

His description sounded like what we wanted:

isolation, but with ready access to cities for equipment, service, and supplies.

Arriving at his home in Altamont, Tennessee, he took us out to see the property. Here is the story behind it:

About four years earlier, an Adventist brother we never met was convicted that his local church should start a camp for their young people. Wealthy people on the board agreed, and so he went looking for property.

He eventually found an ideal piece in the form of a square, which fell away on two sides into valleys, and was enclosed by thick woods on all sides, but a single entrance road along which a few neighbors lived. His local church bought the property and invested about \$35,000 into a gravel road, outhouses, a covered well, and a meeting house with a concrete slab. He took the young people of the church on several camping trips to the wooded property.

Then, suddenly, the young man developed advanced diabetes and died. The camp project died with him, and time passed. A realtor was told to find the property and sell it. Although having years of experience in locating real estate, he searched and could not locate it.

So the property sat there more months. Then our friend heard about that land; and knowing our need, after phoning me, called that realtor and said he might have a buyer. The realtor said he did not know where the place was, and our friend told him to come up and he would show him.

Driving him to the top of the hill, by the well house (just above our present office), and showing him the rock underfoot in that area, declared, "See all this rock, this place isn't worth much!" The realtor agreed, and lowered the price to \$35,000 for 127 acres.

We drove down, saw the place, went on down to the realtor's office, paid \$5,000 down, with no interest if we paid the remainder in six monthly payments.

Whether legend or true, Adventists in this area declare that Ellen White was being driven in a buggy through the Sequatchie Valley, to the east of the Cumberland Plateau where we live—and, pointing up to it, declared, "I have been shown that God's people will find a refuge up there."

As we drove back to southern Illinois that evening, it was time for evening worship. Cherie

was driving, and I opened the *Morning Watch* book we had been reading through that year: *Maranatha*. Remembering that, in the excitement, we had not read yesterday's reading, I opened to it: *Maranatha*, page 270, for September 19.

"During the night a very impressive scene passed before me. There seemed to be great confusion and the conflict of armies. A messenger from the Lord stood before me, and said, 'Call your household. I will lead you; follow me.' He led me down a dark passage, through a forest, then through the clefts of mountains, and said, 'Here you are safe.'"

That afternoon, we had stood on a rocky eminence at a cleft in the rocks, similar to that overlooking the valley which stretched ten miles out before us. When you visit us, we will show it to you. It is right next to our present office.

We appealed to our many friends for help and, six months later, the property was completely paid off, and we moved in.

About a month before we made the move to Tennessee, the pastor of our church in southern Illinois stopped by to see us. "Vance," he said, "you should request a transfer in your membership right now!" I inquired why, since we had not moved yet. He was an experienced pastor and acquainted with conference politics.

He said that the Illinois Conference president did not like our work and intended to block the names of all our family members from being sent on to Tennessee. But, if we asked for the transfer at this time, he would permit the letters to pass on through. I asked why, and was told the Illinois Conference Constituency Meeting was scheduled to be held very soon; and the president would not dare block it prior to then, since he wanted to be reelected. These Machiavellian political tactics seemed mysterious to me; yet we turned in our requests, and the transfers were made. A couple years later, because of certain actions, that president was ousted by an irate constituency when certain activities came to light.

**1983**—The *Fall 1992 Senior Sabbath School Quarterly* was authored by Norman Guley, my friend from Seminary days. Unfortunately, in the years since, he had been sold a bill of goods by the liberals; and his quarterly—and the book accompanying it (*Christ, Our Substitute*)—showed it.

Errors regarding the atonement, the human nature of Christ, and the relation of obedience

to salvation were prominent in those two publications. We published a series of tracts, exposing this problem; and they stirred up church members across the nation.

Suddenly—for the first time—Pilgrims Rest was spoken against by local pastors and conference leaders. As long as we wrote about Desmond Ford, Donald Davenport, and Walter Rea, they were silent. But now we had spoken negatively about a *Sabbath School Quarterly*.

All over the nation, pastors attacked us. It would appear that an advisory letter had been sent them to do so. Yet that which we were reproving were obvious doctrinal errors in Gulley's quarterly and book. The charge was made that we had "spoken against the church." When a problem is pointed out, instead of correcting it, the guns are leveled on those who plead for adherence to historic standards and beliefs. They are denounced as "troublemakers"—and the only problem which exists.

Although at a cost to us, those papers produced two very beneficial effects: First, they alerted our people to be more careful about what they read in the quarterly and other church publications; and, second, the General Conference never again placed so much error in a single *Senior Quarterly*. So, all in all, it was a victory.

Because a significant part of the new theology attack was against our historic Sanctuary belief, early this same year I compiled the *Sanctuary Message*, an 18-part Spirit of Prophecy study. Here you will find the truth about the meaning of the Sanctuary as it relates to your spiritual life and salvation. There is nothing like the Spirit of Prophecy for clarity and accuracy.

In March, there appeared the first of our 18-part history of the Martin-Barnhouse Evangelical Conferences, entitled, *The Beginning of the End*, which I had been working on for several months. It is the only definitive study on this matter available anywhere.

During the spring, the first of a number of tracts detailing the truth about the nature of Christ were printed. I had avoided discussing this problem until I could take the time to properly cover it in some detail.

In May, I released the first of the 15-part, in-depth historical overview on the Davenport crisis, mentioned earlier. Apart from an occasional apologetic article in the *Review* and the

union papers, nothing was available on the subject.

In October, I brought out the first three of over a dozen tracts against abortion. Some of them concerned our own church involvement in the horrible practice. You will find few Adventists, church salaried or independent, who will speak up on this topic.

In the fall, I released the first of six tracts on the church's heavy involvement in the stock market. Friends supplied us with a sizeable amount of material on this subject.

Also that fall, the first of many tracts on the billion-dollar Adventist Health Systems' debt was released. These tracts produced worthwhile effects. Heretofore, AHS leaders said their operations were more effective and prosperous because of the massive debt. But, within a month after the release of our first tract set on the subject, they announced in the *Review* that they were going to drastically reduce the debt within the coming year. Yet they had gotten all branches of their AHS systems conditioned to so freely spending money, wildly—that, a year later, they were up to \$2 billion in debt!

Judge this in light of the fact that, at that time, all other debt of the denomination in the United States—in all its churches, offices, publishing houses, etc.—amounted to less than \$4 million.

In the fall, I released the 35-part *Biblical Sanctuary*. To my knowledge, it is the most complete Biblical refutation of Ford's errors regarding the Sanctuary message (as it relates to the books of Hebrews, Daniel, Leviticus, and Revelation) ever prepared. There is nothing even remotely like it anywhere. It includes a table of contents and index in front, and over 200 studies, some of which are key Hebrew and Greek word studies. This material proves our historic Sanctuary beliefs *from the Bible only*.

Shortly after releasing the material, I received a phone call from Bill May, Texas Conference president at the time (now deceased), who deeply thanked me for what I had done. He said he was going to write something, himself, on the subject, but that now he could use my material instead.

Articles on our church participation in church growth seminars, as well as an exposé of the *Graybill Thesis* concluded the year.

It is remarkable how, two years after I started Pilgrims Rest and three months after I began typesetting, the crisis in the church began erupting on such a wide variety of fronts. Members

began to feel that they were under siege; yet we were merely reporting, in broad brush strokes, what they were hearing in sketchy reports in the *Review* and union papers.

“Thine ears shall hear a word from behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it.” — *Isaiah 30:21*

“Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.” — *Psalms 55:22*

“The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom.” — *Proverbs 15:33*

“He will fulfil the desire of them that fear Him. He also will hear their cry, and will save them.” — *Psalms 145:19*

“For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” — *Hebrews 4:12*

“If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me and drink.” — *John 7:37*

“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path . . . The entrance of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.” — *Psalms 119:105, 130*

“Turn Thou to me, and I shall be turned; for Thou art the Lord my God.” — *Jeremiah 31:18*

## 11 – The Tennessee Years

In April 1983, we moved to Tennessee; and I began writing and printing in that building which the youth camp director built several years earlier.

The previous year, while back in southern Illinois, I had gone to an optometrist in Harrisburg. The intensity of eyework required for my writing and typesetting was bothering my eyes. He checked them and laughed, saying I would have to have bifocals within a year. That was a depressing thought, for I had managed to avoid them for years. I had 20/40 vision since childhood, but had gotten by with only occasionally wearing my glasses.

But, by the summer of 1983, I was having trouble seeing what I was doing while typing. Stopping in at another optometrist's office, here in Tennessee, I asked for a pair of reading glasses and a pair of distance glasses.

Arriving back home, I found that neither pair was fitted properly. I thought to myself, “*Will my eyes go first?*” I knelt and asked my kind Father for help. I set the glasses aside and have not used them since. The eye discomfort entirely left—permanently. I still used my old pair of glasses occasionally when driving at night, which I rarely do. Oddly enough, by 1995, I noticed my visual acuity was improving somewhat. Everyone I know of, on either side of my parents' families, wore glasses.

Would you like to take care of your eyes? Here are suggestions which, amid my intense eyework, have helped me: Never strain to see. Never do “eye exercises”; they weaken the eyes. Eat moderate amounts of nourishing food. Get enough rest. Never read late into the night. Avoid night driving.

**1984**—Unknown to us, in January of this year, Neal C. Wilson had gone to Budapest to settle a 20-year-old squabble between the Hun-

garian Union officers and the faithful believers who were trying to stop the apostasy in that union. Wilson “solved” the problem by disfellowshipping about 1,200 faithful members from the church.

He did this, in spite of the fact that he had been personally warned by faithful Hungarians who visited him in Washington, D.C., prior to his departure for Budapest, that, if he took this drastic step, those people would very likely never again be able to worship God in a church building! They told us so. Soviet rule was in place at the time; and it was a state law that only one church would be recognized to which anyone of a given set of beliefs could belong. Unfortunately, his decision was typical: If it is a local church, the pastor is backed; if it is a conference, etc., even though it is in the wrong, the officers will always be backed. *Maintaining the organizational structure is always considered more vital than defending or adhering to Bible-Spirit of Prophecy principles.* It is for such reasons that our denomination is going to the dogs.

Our involvement began in early March; someone we did not know, who lived in Arkansas, contacted me and said there was a terrible crisis in eastern Europe, and that I should dial a certain phone number in Canada. When I did, a revelation began which continued for several years, and led to the eventual production of about two dozen tracts. An Adventist pastor's wife, fluent in Hungarian and English, translated document after document, and sent them to me for typesetting and comment. (Several years later, her husband was discharged from the ministry for protesting to leadership over their misuse of the tithe.)

Over the months which followed, I wrote a total of 31 tracts about the Hungarian crisis.

Because of my strong concern for the faithful in Hungary—I was worried that the govern-

ment might begin arresting them for being faithful Adventists—I wrote two letters.

In order to safeguard the believers, I told no one of the first letter. It was very carefully worded; and it began by mentioning that I was an important publisher in the United States, whose publications were read by thousands. Citing factual data showing the broad economic progress the nation of Hungary had made in recent years (which it had), I noted how the West was concerned that this continue and that their treatment of their people would assure their continued friendly business contacts with the West. I mentioned the faithful Adventists and said that the thousands of our own readers, as well as many others in the Adventist Church in the West, were expecting that they would treat their citizens, including faithful Adventists, justly.

When finished, I was impressed that God had helped me write it well. Several years later, I sent the Hungarian government a second letter. Evidence supplied by certain organizations indicates that such letters, from Western thought leaders, can help. At any rate, the faithful in Hungary were never arrested for continuing to worship.

I also wrote another letter, this one to the General Conference Committee, which, at the time, consisted of about 360 men. They were slated to meet in their Annual Council at the Takoma Park Church in Maryland, in October.

I wrote an earnest appeal, which I printed, for them to help the faithful Hungarians, by rescinding the action of N.C. Wilson. Although the report was factually written, unfortunately, because of information included, it could not be considered complimentary to Neal Wilson.

I prayed about the matter, for I so much wanted to reach those men. Then I was able to obtain the names and positions of each of those 360 men. After inserting the envelopes, we hand-addressed each one. But what should I do with them? The thought came to mail them to those world leaders, c/o the General Conference.

Included in this mailing was *An Appeal to the General Conference Committee [WM-84A-B]* and *The Ecumenical Connection [WM-95-97]*. The latter was a powerful time line, with references, briefly outlining the history of the Ecumenical Movement and the Martin-Barnhouse Conferences with our leaders, from December 1939 onward, and showing specific Adventist involvement with the Evangelicals and Ecumenicals over a period of many years. (Our

denomination's Ecumenical connections were closely involved in the Hungarian Union apostasy; that is why I linked them together in the materials sent to the General Conference Committee.)

Friends who attended Annual Council later told me what happened. The leaders needed to realize what they were countenancing, and my Father arranged that circumstances brought the message to those men at just the right time. All the letters arrived on exactly the right day. The leaders stopped by the General Conference to pick up their mail that morning; then they walked across the street to the Takoma Park Church, seated themselves, and opened those letters. As our friends watched from the balcony, there they were, carefully reading that material, for a half-hour or so—and then Wilson walked onto the stage and up to the podium.

We had no idea to embarrass the president; our concern was to move the GC Committee to reverse his decision to disfellowship those faithful souls (which they had the authority to do). But Wilson was quite obviously humiliated. He stammered and tried to put a good face on the Hungarian crisis. The entire incident, which produced questions from the men for him to respond to, was a noteworthy interruption which, if they had fulfilled their duty to the people of God, could have ended the crisis. But they chose not to take any action, nor even suggest that any be taken. It is a dangerous thing to be a church leader. The tree on the mountaintop is in far greater danger than the tree in the valley. Whatever level of authority a man is on, it seems always to be his first concern to hold onto his job.

It was in this same year that I brought out, in a three-part series, the first indication that our world headquarters, the General Conference, was currently involved in the new theology apostasy. *Ministry* magazine had printed a full-length article which categorically denied that Christ went into the first apartment of the heavenly Sanctuary and ministered there for 18 centuries (which we are told in the book of Hebrews and chapter 23 of *Great Controversy*).

In October, we disclosed insights regarding the startling extent of the alcoholic problem among our young people in our churches and on our college campuses.

At the end of the year, we gave notoriety to an improper action, taken by that same Annual

Council, requiring that subsidiary organizations (such as Voice of Prophecy, etc.) must secretly return tithe, sent them by the donor, to the donor's conference—without notifying the donor of that action! This was the first of three strengthening resolutions over the next 13 years, which culminated in a tight control over Faith for Today, Amazing Facts, Breath of Life, Voice of Prophecy, Adventist Pioneer Missions, etc. As of 1997, secret tithe returns were totally enforced and always carried out. Leadership was trying to lock the laity into obeying its wishes rather than permitting them the religious freedom to look to God for guidance in this as well as other matters. The only way to sidestep the problem was by deceptive practices in sending tithe to such organizations.

The same year, here at Pilgrims Rest, we began typesetting several books and preparing them for printing. We also printed the 210-page book, *Dowsing*, by Ben G. Hester, which revealed the satanic background of water witching and the use of a weighted stone (the "pendulum") for divining purposes.

I also prepared and published our much-appreciated sheets of *Sabbath Seals*, which are colorful stamps to be placed on envelopes.

Either in 1983 or 1984, a friend stopped by visit us. He was a very intelligent person who was a student at Southern College. He told me he had many conversations with teachers and administrators at the school. One evening he phoned a certain teacher, whose name I know, and spoke to him for about an hour. Believing it safe to talk, when asked why he was doing what he was doing, the teacher arrogantly replied that it was his, and his associates' goal, to change the beliefs of the church. Then my friend pushed him a little harder, and said, "Actually, the things you teach in class do not even agree with the Bible!" The teacher replied, "I don't believe in the Bible!"

He knew he could safely say this; for, if later quoted, he could say the student was lying. Yet, unknown to him, the student had attached phone taping equipment—and taped the entire conversation!

The student then drove down to the Southern Union office in Decatur, Georgia, and played the tape to one of the three top leaders there. As a result, that teacher was transferred to a different department. He is still teaching in one of our

colleges and has since written a book, published by the Review, ridiculing our historic belief in obedience by faith.

In 1984, a hundred years after the 1884 edition of *Great Controversy* was released, I was convicted that I should reprint that book, and also the 1888 edition. We began typesetting both books in an easier-to-read typeface. I also began writing several other books, all of which we began publishing in 1985.

You may recall that I had an unusual dream in 1960; I had another in 1984. It was so utterly vivid and clear, that I awoke, in the middle of the night, as if in a shock. It seemed that the predicted Final Crisis had come.

As the dream began, I was standing in a large room with a tiled, marble floor. The walls also were of marble. The glare of skylight was seen through a large, open, double auditorium door that I was facing toward. I wondered what was outside that door. But then I turned my attention to see what was in the room.

Looking about, along both sides and behind me, there were three raised step tiers for seating, set back on three sides. On them were metal folding chairs, somewhat disarranged. A few people were still standing or seated, talking together about nothing in particular.

Then my attention was drawn to a small book lying closed on one of the chairs on my right side, halfway to the door. Going to it, I could see it was a very old book. Opening at random in the middle, I began to read some of it—and was stunned. It was warning about a terrible storm that was soon to come. I pulled over one of the chairs; and, sitting down, I read in it some more. The book not only warned about the coming storm, but detailed its ferocity and the extent of the damage it would do. Then I saw that it also told how to prepare to meet the storm.

At this, I jumped up, very concerned. *Everyone must know about this book! A terrible storm was coming which would bring terrible ruin to this city. The people were not ready!*

Running out into the street, there was bright sunlight; but it was somewhat windy, blowing from the right as I emerged from the building. To my left, the street slanted slightly downward, and I ran down the street and told one person after the other about the little book back in the auditorium. But hardly anyone seemed to care. Many laughed and said the city was perfectly safe,

while others paid no attention to my words at all. Such a storm had never occurred, and never would.

Indeed, everything did look safe. The buildings appeared like strongly made marble government buildings, with nicely styled columns, friezes, cornices, and facia such as one would find in ancient Roman and Greek architecture. The detail in the dream was exquisite. An impression of well-built solidity was all about me.

By this time, the wind was blowing more strongly, and I remembered that book. A strong fear gripped me that I might lose it! As I ran back up the street toward the auditorium, the wind was increasing in momentum; and, as I was about to enter the auditorium, small chips were beginning to fly off some of the buildings.

Hurrying inside, I was relieved to see that the book was still there, lying open on the chair where I had left it. Picking it up, I read a few lines. It was clear the storm was going to be even worse than I had before imagined. And the signs revealed that it was about to begin!

Holding the book—I dared not lose it,—I ran to the door. People were screaming, as masonry flew by in the fury of the gale. Tremors were occurring and huge blocks were falling off buildings. *This was the crisis the little book had forewarned!*

Then I awoke.

I sat there for about 20 minutes and thought about what I had seen. This was something I must not forget. The next morning, I wrote it down. It was obvious that the little book was *Great Controversy*. We had already begun typesetting it in both the 1884 and 1888 editions. This dream greatly spurred me with the urgency of placing that special book in low-cost, larger typeface format. Fortunately, with the smaller 1884 edition, we were able to do this the most easily.

**1985**—In January, the Baby Fae baboon heart transplant at Loma Linda broke, and we provided coverage. In March, we disclosed the New Age Seminars which workers at Loma Linda were required to attend.

That same month, we disclosed the first RICO (anti-racketeering) lawsuit against a religious denomination in the United States. It occurred when a worker in a conference in the North Pacific Union was discharged because of he had expressed concerns about loans being

made to Davenport, as well as other financial irregularities. However, the suit was later dropped because the former worker and his wife were badgered by workers and members, wherever they went, over their disloyalty to the best interests of the church. They could not withstand the pressure of social isolation.

This same year I compiled a large collection of documents and statements about Adventist Church connections with the National Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. I was not content to publish a little here and there, as is generally done; I printed everything I could find on the subject, and it was large. In the fall, we began releasing our massive 20-part *Hands Across the Gulf*. Not counting our later exposé of the Hungarian crisis, over 140 pages were ultimately printed and distributed on our denominational ecumenical connections.

All this material, and most everything else I published before 1992, is now reprinted in our series of *Tractbooks*, which we began producing near the end of the decade. From that time onward, our tracts were collected yearly into *Yearbooks*.

That same fall, we broke the news about the sun worship song in the new hymnal, which was consistently voted by the entire hymnal committee to have included in the book.

Then there was the financial mishandling at Fuller Hospital in New England, which worsened because church leaders ignored it for years.

Also produced were the first of several tracts about false prophets in Adventism, as well as the first of several about the errors of the Adventist Reform Movement.

Steadily working on books, we began publishing several in large quantities, available at lowest cost when purchased in boxful quantities. Books printed this year included the 1884 *Great Controversy* and three books I wrote: *Mark of the Beast*, *Beyond Pitcairn*, and *Prophet of the End*. Nearly every year, thereafter, more followed.

The thinking behind *Mark of the Beast* is this: Ellen White had said to present Daniel and Revelation to the people. For a small book, the heart of those two books is Daniel 7 and Revelation 12-14. There we find the attempted change of the Sabbath (*Daniel 7:25*), the church in the wilderness (*Revelation 12*), the warning

about the Mark (*Revelation 13*), and the Three Angels' Messages (*Revelation 14*). The heart of the final crisis is to be found in those four chapters.

So I wrote a carefully arranged explanation of those chapters, at appropriate places, including statements by historians and churchmen. The result was a powerful presentation.

Then I selected 60 key pages from *Great Controversy*, and placed that as Part Two of the volume. The result was a powerful little book! It continues to be heavily purchased and widely distributed.

The story behind *Beyond Pitcairn* is this: While preparing 30 Sabbath tracts in the fall of 1979, I decided, in one, to briefly tell the story of Pitcairn Island, and mention at the end how the inhabitants there, free from European prejudices and traditions, had discovered the Bible Sabbath.

After we got our press going in 1980, whenever I heard there was a nearby county fair or craft show, I would go there and hand out Sabbath tracts to the people. Experience comes with doing it, and I had handed out tracts and books all across America since the 1960s.

Within half an hour, I would pleasantly distribute several hundred Sabbath tracts. Then, I would retrace my route and pick up the ones tossed down—and hand them out again. I might find 10 to 25.

One day, I made the significant discovery that, when I handed out that tract on Pitcairn Island,—no one discarded it! I only found one copy on the ground, and none anywhere else. I even looked in the garbage cans. Everyone who received that tract had saved it so they could read it later! They wanted to read that story. People were sitting on benches, intently reading it.

With this fact in mind, when I started to prepare books and was ready to write a book on the Bible Sabbath, I wrote *Beyond Pitcairn*. Having told the story of Pitcairn Island in the first three chapters, I opened every successive chapter with a fascinating story to hold the reader's attention. The success of that small book has been strong, and has resulted in a number of known baptisms. If a person begins reading the book, by the time he lays it down—he knows the truth about the Bible Sabbath. If he reads on through to the end, he will probably accept it. Every facet of the Sabbath truth is interestingly presented in its pages.

(I later wrote to Pacific Press and offered to let them print and sell it, with or without my name, and with no royalties. Someone wrote back a few weeks later that he did not like being the one to write the letter, but that the committee had voted to refuse the offer “because the book had earlier been printed.”)

*Prophet of the End* was written to meet a strong need for a book about Ellen White. It combines a biography, a complete Bible study, the witness of science, and even a defense against certain charges. The book concludes with key excerpts from *Great Controversy*, and is suitable both for our own people and the world.

We were also able to bring out an edition of the 1888 *Great Controversy*. Like the 1884 edition, it had larger type; but, because of its greater size, and small print-run, it cost more (about \$1.15 in the case) and did not sell well. That edition is now out-of-print.

I also edited and published *Better Health Made Simple*, a set of simple lessons with transitions to doctrinal topics, originally prepared by one of our missionaries in India. It had been used very successfully there.

**1986**—In March, we disclosed to the church Dr. William Jarvis' secret spy network, based at Loma Linda, to report on, and hail into court Adventist physicians—and any other practitioners—who might be using natural remedies.

In April, our five-part biography of Canright was sent out, to warn our people against following in his pitiable steps. He attacked the Spirit of Prophecy, although he knew his deceptive theories and claims were untrue. He came to a miserable end.

That summer, more data on our ecumenical connections, which had been sent to us, were released; and the fact that Adventist Health Systems was now up to \$2 billion in debt was uncovered. Our first extensive report on New Age errors was released this year.

In August, the urging of W.J. Arthur, vice president of the British Union, to Margaret Thatcher for enactment of a National Sunday Law was disclosed. (It was called the “Shops Law” over there.) Faithful believers in Britain had alerted us and sent documents. (The following May, we reported that, within a few months after we gave notoriety to the matter, Arthur was elevated to the position of British Union president.

Why was he rewarded for urging a national Sunday law in Britain?)

September brought news about the startling General Conference-produced liberal Sabbath School quarterly for our college students, called the *Collegiate Quarterly*. We published extensively on the whole mess. Even articles about and by Catholics were included.

The next month, the surprising attempt, by Loma Linda University, to swallow La Sierra and sell its campus came to light. That same month, we quoted all the official doctrinal beliefs of our denomination, going back to the beginning and comparing them.

In November, the conclusion of the Proctor case against the church was reported; and, the following month, Wilson faced off against the entire North Pacific Union constituency, demanding that they meet his terms. Shortly afterward, in a separate action, he closed down Harris Pine Mills. Regarding the Harris Pine closure, we received extensive news clips from the Northwest, which we shared.

We also published *Shelter in the Storm*, which, in large print, combined *Steps to Christ* and 60 of the most crucial pages from *Great Controversy*. An excellent little book, it balanced an appeal to come to Christ with a clear presentation of the cause, nature, and outcome of the final crisis over the Sabbath.

I had written and published five booklets, each one designed to include a message which many would want, and need, to read: *You Can Quit Tobacco*, *You Can Quit Alcohol*, *Hard Drugs Can Ruin You*, *Abortion and You*, and *Arthritis and Rheumatism*. In the back of each book was a powerful chapter on the Bible Sabbath.

Then I reprinted the five in *Help for your Family*, an excellent collection of helps, containing the material in those five booklets. The same excellent study on the Bible Sabbath concluded the book.

The same year, I wrote and published the 294-page *Water Therapy Manual*.

It was this year that, for the first time, we hired an Hispanic translator to help us place materials into Spanish.

All the while my children were growing, and my family and I had many happy times working together, taking walks together, and going out in nature on Sabbath afternoons. But, of course,

through the day I had to work, as any laboring man supporting a family would have to do.

**1987**—In January, we released the first of a sixteen-part study, entitled *Alpha of Apostasy*—containing the biographies of J.H. Kellogg, A.T. Jones, and A.F. Ballenger, along with a thoughtful analysis of the “Alpha,” which consisted of the apostasies occurring in 1903 and 1905.

That same month, we reported on a high-level decision our earlier leaders and workers would have refused to make: At the November 1986 Year-end Meeting of the North American Division, an action had been taken, to require pastors to baptize into membership those who wore wedding rings! Later in the year, we reported that this decision was totally illegal, since matters affecting the local church can only be approved by the local church or by a General Conference in Session. In May, we reported on pastors who were threatened with firing if they did not baptize such half-converted people.

In February, we unveiled the first of several reports on the ongoing Lake Region financial scandal. Some years later, in 1993, we published a 98-page documentary tractbook, also with legal papers, discussing the debacle in great detail. This was, up to this time, the largest Adventist conference-level financial crisis in our history.

In May, we released a tract (*Satan’s Plan to Destroy the Church [WM-153]*) which disclosed the story of an Adventist missionary in South America who was told by a witch doctor Satan’s plan to destroy the Adventist Church by getting them to watch television. But the man was told that, if he shared this information with others, he would die. Both happened.

Afterward, we were told that the story was not only ridiculous—but fictitious. However, through friends, we verified the truth of the story. In addition, we were told of a retired Adventist pastor in Maryland who, while serving in a mission field in Africa, was told something similar by a witch doctor. As a result of sharing the information, he lost a child. When I phoned him, he confirmed the story, but said he did not want to discuss the matter for the memory of it all was too terrible. I was also told of a third party, now living in the central states, which had a similar experience, but we were not able to make contact with them.

In June, as part of an ongoing set of studies on the matter, we reported on the deepening problems, financial and otherwise, developing at Adventist Health Systems. The situation there continued to worsen, and we were discovering that church leaders would vote whatever AHS leaders wanted, because later their children, and themselves when they retired, would be given high-paying AHS positions!

Someone will say that we should all be quiet about such matters. Should we, for the sake of politeness and self-protection, let men destroy the church? Throughout the course of this downward path, who really loves the church? those who keep their mouths shut or those who plead for a return to Bible-Spirit of Prophecy principles?

In August, we released the first of our comprehensive series on the Eight Laws of Health. It was later expanded into a booklet (*The Eight Laws of Health*) which included a Bible study on a key doctrine at the end of each of the eight chapters—and placed in a low-cost booklet.

That same month, we published the first tracts on those horrible trademark lawsuits, by which the General Conference tried to eradicate local, independent Adventist churches. In the coming months and years, we published 48 tracts on this terrible development. A small clique at world headquarters were using a Roman Catholic lawyer to threaten and sue faithful believers for the crime of calling themselves Seventh-day Adventists. Yet not one division, union, or conference leader throughout the world field would stand up and protest this monstrous—and extremely expensive—effort to destroy souls.

In the late 1970s (because of the Marikay Silver case against Pacific Press), an Annual Council passed a resolution that church members who sued the church would be disfellowshipped. Yet a decade later, the church began trademark lawsuits against believers whose only crime was worshiping God in peace—and the church did not disfellowship the General Conference for doing so!

It was becoming obvious to many that the fundamental character of our church was changing. It seemed as if the very moral fabric was breaking down.

Over a period of time, we released 1,716 pages, primarily consisting of legal papers, in six tractbooks on the ongoing trademark law-

suit crisis. The suits cost the General Conference millions of dollars in legal fees; all of it, by admission in a letter by GC attorney Robert Nixon, was paid by the tithe of the church members. The best detailed summary of the whole affair will be found in my 1997 book, *The Story of the Trademark Lawsuits*.

In September, we released *Murl Vance and the Master Number*, which was a very brief report on Murl's discoveries about the true nature of the 666—showing it to be the master number of the ancient mystery religions which the Roman Church is built upon.

You will recall that Murl had been my friend back in the 1950s. In the late summer of 1952, I had visited him at his home in Glendale, California and had learned much. Later, I had opportunity to again visit with him when he came back to the Seminary in Washington, D.C. in the late 1950s.

He started his research into the 666 about the year 1941, and had amassed a vast amount of material. In January 1972, he is said to have died while taking a shower at his home in western Oregon. The timing was significant, for he had just retired and had waited until that event to organize and publish his extensive findings on the 666. Some theorize that the Jesuits murdered him. We cannot know.

At any rate, after I published this September 1987 tract, I received a phone call from a friend who told me he had been the best man at Murl's wedding, and knew the entire family. Yes, he said, Murl's research documents might still be available. I was told that Murl's widow was living with her second-born daughter in the Portland area. The widow had moved there soon after Murl's death. I was also given the phone number of an Adventist who had lived on the Vance property since Murl died. Phoning him, he told me that the priceless research materials had lain out in a barn for years, and that the man who had married their third daughter had asked the widow if he could have them, in the hope that someday he might find time to publish the material.

This individual was currently an academy principal in Central California. Anyone acquainted with the climate of a large Adventist academy well knows that the principal is forever overloaded with work. Calling him, I was told there were 35,000 pages of microfilms in the collection! Murl did his work before photocopiers, so current technology in his time consisted of

an inverted 35mm camera on a tripod above an open book page.

I was told that my request would be carefully considered. Recognizing that I would have an absolutely immense job on my hands, if he said yes, I prayed and waited. Classifying all that material, writing a clear explanation of it, and selecting the best of the 35,000 pages for publication—could take quite a while.

About a month later, he phoned back and said he would keep the materials, in the hope that he could himself do something with them some day. He had lengthened my life by several years. It is unlikely he will ever produce anything.

Eventually, I plan to release a full book, based on Murl's data which I have, along with other relevant material.

Meanwhile, here at Pilgrims Rest, we held a one-week *Medical Missionary and Canvassing Training Session*. It was followed up by a second one that fall.

This year, we also published an 814-page edition of *Desire of Ages* in inexpensive paperback.

Friends continually called for back copies of our tracts; yet, by mid-1987, they totaled over a thousand titles. So, that year, we began collecting the back issues into 8½ x 11-inch *tractbooks*. At the present time, a decade later, they include over 50 *tractbooks*.

**1988**—In February, we released the first of what eventually amounted to over a dozen tracts on the national Sunday law in the island nation of Fiji. In connection with this, a friend mailed us the money to send one of our workers to Fiji for a couple weeks to gather detailed information, as well as newspaper announcements and other documentation, on the history of that crisis and how it affected our people there.

In June, we issued an eight-part report on the new doctrinal book, *Seventh-day Adventists Believe*, which replaced the out-of-print 1957 book, *Questions on Doctrine*. As mentioned earlier, QD been prepared in order to codify in print, some of the doctrinal changes worked out in conference with Walter Martin and Donald Barnhouse during the infamous Evangelical Conferences. But we found that many of the errors in QD were also in the new doctrinal book. In our report, we carefully quoted and compared the errors printed in each book.

In August, we reported on the first bond de-

fault by an Adventist-owned entity in the history of our denomination. This was Adventist Living Centers, a subsidiary of AHS/Northeast and Mid-America (NEMA). We later learned that certain leaders at NEMA, for their own benefit, siphoned money out of this and certain other subsidiaries, and then let them collapse.

By this year, the boiling pot of General Conference trademark lawsuits was spilling over into new areas; and part of our time was occupied with reporting on, and protesting, these developments.

In December, we released a three-part study detailing the implications of the recently enacted Genocide Treaty, along with a complete transcript of this international agreement. Ours is the only complete account, including documentation our people have been provided with. Later, I included a good summary of the Genocide Treaty in my low-cost missionary book, *National Sunday Law Crisis*.

This year we also printed *Patriarchs and Prophets* in low-cost paperback. Ultimately, we had to let it go out of print because of slow sales.

This same year, we completed the typesetting of *Bible Readings*, and published it. This was an important book which I wanted to see in low-cost books—something which had never before been done. Here is how it was prepared:

I took the original 1888 edition, and gathered out of it everything worthwhile, while omitting sections which were no longer relevant (such as a chapter tabulating world population counts, to encourage participation in overseas missionary work). Some excellent chapters, which we included, had been dropped from later editions. One example was a chapter explaining why polygamy was unbiblical.

Then I took the current edition of *Bible Readings*. There were chapters in this edition which were not in the earlier one, yet were excellent. One of those, not found in the 1888 edition, dealt with Revelation 12.

So we now had the best of both editions. Then I took the 1915 edition, which had a note on the nature of Christ (on page 174 of that 1915 edition) which was not found in the 1888 edition and was later changed to an erroneous note in the 1946 edition. R.A. Anderson mentioned the change in the September 1946 issue of *Ministry* magazine, commenting that “this particular point in Adventist theology had drawn severe censure

from many outstanding Biblical scholars both inside and outside our ranks.” (In both the 1915 and later revised editions, the disputed note was in the chapter entitled “A Sinless Life.”)

Our resultant 678-page hybrid was an excellent book! It is still in print and is very much in demand.

This same year, we published a 512-page *Ministry of Healing* and a 368-page *Christ's Object Lessons*.

We also published a Korean language edition of *Great Controversy* for friends who paid for the print run. We knew how to get it printed, and they wanted to distribute it widely. We charged nothing for our services. In 1990, we arranged for the printing of a Korean edition of *Ministry of Healing* for them.)

**1989**—Following his death, we prepared a summary report on the remarkable influence exerted by Walter Martin on the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, along with additional reports on the Fijian Sunday law, the Hawaiian trademark lawsuit, and the ongoing crisis in Hungary.

It was at this time that the Celebration Church crisis suddenly developed in several localities in North America. Gradually it spread as a sampling of liberal pastors from various conferences were paid to go to Portland, Oregon, for advanced training in how to introduce drums, bands, dramatic skits, projected songs, clapping, pastoral blessing on people's heads, and the raising of hands into our churches.

In March, we sent out the first of a six-part report on Wayne Bent's LOR Church (Life Supports) and the hypnotic methods he used to capture Adventists.

In September, the first lawsuit by one Adventist entity (Arizona Conference) against another (AHS/West) was discussed in detail. The lawsuit continued in court for several years.

In December, we reported on the first of several bills, which were brought before Congress, that would apparently simplify the enactment of a National Sunday Law. (In January 1994, the newly established Republican-controlled Congress enacted essentially the same law.)

That same month, John Marik was jailed in southern California because his little flock of nine members in Hawaii refused to take down a sign

on their little church (“Congregational Seventh-day Adventist Church”), although that was what their beliefs were. When asked, the General Conference replied that “Marik had brought it on himself.” The truth is they spent several million in legal fees, paid for by the tithe, bringing it on him.

This same year, a friend of ours went to Collegedale, signed up for a couple courses, and began using their library. The first day in class, the teacher opened his remarks by mentioning that there was no Sanctuary in heaven. Then he looked around at the students to see if there was any objection. When none of the students cared or dared to object, the teacher was satisfied and began teaching new theology in this fall-term class.

In the library, our friend began checking on data about the Jesuits, and Xeroxing some of it. The head librarian, upon learning of this, placed a sign on the Xerox machine, “Out of Order.” When our friend came back a couple hours later, the head librarian was out to lunch and the sign was gone. So he used it again. But then the woman returned, hurried over, and told him he must not use the machine because it did not work.

This went on for several days, and additional obstructions were placed in his way. So he gave up and quit school.

He also told me that, several years earlier, he had carried on a self-supporting ministry at the University of Florida in Gainesville. Although not conference employed, he considered himself a conference pastor; so upon hearing of a forthcoming ministerial retreat, he attended it with conference approval.

After one of the meetings adjourned, he walked over to a huddle of pastors in one corner. It turned out that the men in that group were all fairly recent Southern College ministerial graduates, and they had just been joined by one of their Bible teachers. Not noticing my friend's arrival, they gave their full attention to their former theology instructor.

To my friend's utter astonishment, the Bible teacher was talking to them about how more graduates were coming out each year, and gradually they were changing the doctrinal positions of the entire conference. It was obvious to my friend that the youthful pastors were drinking in his words with relish.

At this point, instead of keeping his mouth shut so he could learn more, my friend spoke up and made an astonished comment. Every eye was instantly fixed upon him, and everyone walked off in a different direction.

That same year, two more of my books were printed: the 112-page *National Sunday Law Crisis* and the 640-page *Colporteur Handbook*.

*National Sunday Law Crisis* detailed the development of Sunday laws in America, warned of the final one, and included an important chapter summarizing the danger of the Genocide Treaty. It is a powerful little book.

*The Colporteur Handbook* contains over 350 replies to 250 objections, about 40 book canvasses to 25 books, several hundred closes, dozens of basic Spirit of Prophecy principles, and a variety of source material to get one started selling the books which should be sold at this time in history. It was based on a boxful of material I had collected over the previous decades. For one job, back in 1971 in Memphis, I could only sell at night yet had to attend a sales meeting every morning. So I spent the days researching everything I could find at two large libraries on selling. This and other material went into that book.

In addition, we reprinted Haskell's two books on Daniel and Revelation, as well as several smaller ones for children. Haskell's books were very spiritual and superior to Uriah Smith's more mechanical approach. Yet the books had a slow sale, so we eventually let them go out of print.

In the fall of this year, I first began work on a set of Creation-Evolution books. Working on it brought me a lot of encouragement, since my wife had left again. I also had my children for fellowship.

**1990**—In April, we published on the *Witches' Den Opera* at Southern College. It is a classic example of the insidious apostasy that is developing in our church, an apostasy that few will speak up about or directly oppose. Should we have told our denomination what was happening at Southern College?

I had been notified that an announcement had gone out over the college radio station, WSMC, to everyone in the greater Chattanooga area, that Southern College would perform *Dido and Aeneas* on Sunday, March 18, 1990, at 8 p.m. at the college. Those who arrived, trusting that the college was a Christian institution, were

in for a surprise—for it was a performance in witchery, enchantments on people, and a full-blown heathen philosophy. On stage, the sorceress and her fellow witches bound spells on people, swore by the ancient pagan gods, stirred a pot of enchantment in their cave as they muttered incantations. The witches finally triumphed as the man they were cursing fell dead on the stage. You don't believe it happened at one of our colleges? Ask for a copy of *Witches Den Opera at Southern College [WM-275]* and read all about it. The "opera" included the combined musical and dance groups of the college, plus four innocent grade-school children who sang weirdly in one corner as the witches stirred their brew.

This is but one example of the type of corruption that is gradually taking control of our church.

Some people simply cannot accept the fact that standards are eroding in our denomination, and that they need to arise and demand a return to earlier foundations. But, while church members twiddle their thumbs, the apostasy worsens. Wrongdoing should be exposed for what it is, and earnest protests should be made that it be stopped.

This year, additional growth in so-called Celebrationism occurred, as more of the churches went in that direction.

In July, we made the initial announcement of our foreign mission program, as we began supporting foreign missionaries. Additional announcements and updates followed in later months and years.

In June, I released the three-part *Captive Sessions*, a careful analysis of how scheduling and other details of General Conference Sessions are arranged so the delegates will not be able to devote more than a small part of the total time to the transaction of church business. This tract set is a classic.

In preparation for the 1990 General Conference Session, I prepared the *Four Crisis Tract*, which summarized and warned against Celebration Churches, trademark lawsuits, the worsening financial structure of Adventist Health Systems, and the wedding ring and standards crisis. Friends distributed these in large numbers in local churches and at the Session in Indianapolis, which began on July 5.

After that Session ended, we printed a five-

part summary of events at the ten-day meetings.

In November, an additional three-part study, *Impact of Indianapolis*, was released—which detailed the behind-the-scenes play and counterplay of various special interests, which resulted in the election of Robert Folkenberg and certain other developments. Special caucuses and voting blocks were formed.

In August, we broke the news of the Kettering lawsuit. This tragic litigation occurred because Adventist Health Systems was trying to siphon money from Kettering Medical Center. The wealthy leaders of Kettering, Ohio, were determined to gain control of the hospital which they had paid to build. The suit was not settled until the spring of 1993.

Shortly afterward, Adventist Living Centers went into monetary default. ALC was the largest of our denominationally owned nursing home organizations. It owned 57 nursing homes, with a total of 6,043 beds. So this loss ranked with that of Harris Pine Mills.

Two years earlier, in July 1988, the bond market was shocked to learn that ALC was dipping into its bond payment reserve. In July and August 1990, ALC did not make its bond payments. In the first week of October, it notified its bond trustee in Chicago that it would no longer pay bond payments. It had defaulted on its loans.

You might inquire, “*How could all these things happen from 1980, onward?*” But it did, and it continues on down to the present time. Every year the situation grows worse.

*Because, as a people, we have left our historic beliefs and standards; we no longer have the protection of Heaven that we once had. Men who believe it is all right to sin are now in control, and they are leading the Advent people down strange roads.*

It is a remarkable coincidence that Pilgrims Rest did not begin publishing until 1980—and so was in a key position to report on what was taking place.

Meanwhile, this same year (1990), we printed a series of *hardback* books, to help small-book colporteurs: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *Desire of Ages*, *Great Controversy*, *Ministry of Healing*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, *Bible Readings*, and *Shelter in the Storm*. The purpose of these books was to help canvassers out in the field, and they were a dandy set of books! Unfortunately, they

are no longer in print, for there was not enough demand for them in hardback. Yet I will categorically say these sturdily made books were the best bargain we ever made available to canvassers. Each book, costing a little over a dollar, could easily sell from house to house for \$10.

This same year, we took the opportunity to reprint four excellent out-of-print books: the 118-page *Origin of Sunday Law observance*, by W.E. Straw; the 212-page *Story of the Waldenses*, by J.A. Wylie; and the 850-page *Character Building Stories, Vols. 1 and 2*, a compilation of a number of children's stories from the turn of the century.

Did you ever wonder why the Somali War occurred in 1980, since the U.S. did not directly intervene in any other tribal wars in Africa—before or since? A friend (I no longer recall his name) was told, by a retired intelligence officer living in the southern states, that we entered that war for an entirely different reason than the one published in the press. There was a secret Soviet submarine base located there; and, with the collapse of the Soviet empire, under the guise of helping to stop a tribal war, we went in there and destroyed that base.

**1991**—Training courses in LAB, neurolinguistic programming, behavioral transfer, and introductory Ericksonian hypnosis were important areas of concern this year—for we learned they were being given to Seventh-day Adventist workers.

Closely related is the false-memories syndrome, produced by Ericksonian hypnosis, which we also wrote about. A total of 19 tracts on these topics were written and mailed out. All certified counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists must take this hypnotic training. With it, they are able to hypnotize individuals—while they remain awake! Do not go to certified counselors! Do not let your spouse or children do so either! Only counsel with earnest fellow Christians or pastors.

In April, the 5-part *Secret Writer's Charge* against Ellen White was refuted in some detail. This error that other people wrote the great majority of her books, is taught by Herman Hoehn and certain others. It is a devilish teaching and totally false. There are men who would have you tear pages out of God's Word. Have nothing to do with such men. They will destroy

your soul.

A six-part fairly detailed history of the World Council of Churches and the entire Ecumenical Movement was produced, along with several concluding studies on the trademark lawsuits.

We printed *Mutiny on the Bounty*, a pictorial book about Pitcairn Island, which contained the Sabbath truth. Also this year, we reprinted the 950-page songbook, *Christ in Song*.

A fair amount of my time this year was dedicated to completing the 3-volume *Creation-Evolution set*, which was printed the following year.

Because it was becoming too much work to revise them yearly, December 1991 marked the end of our classified tractbook compilations. Henceforth, we publish each year's tracts in a *Yearbook*.

**1992**—This year we published on a great variety of topics, including a three-part 4,000-year history of Jerusalem and the Temple Mount. The Jews will not have returned to Jerusalem, in a real sense, *until they own it*—and can tear down the Islamic mosque on Temple Mount, rebuild the Temple, and reinstitute the sacrificial system. But this will never happen before the Second Advent of Christ. God predicted that the Jews would not be fully restored to their own land.

We also printed the *Lake Region Documentary Tractbook*, the *LOR Documentary Tractbook*, and *The Sacred Name*.

Also printed this year was my 383-page *Promise Year*, containing classified Bible promises for every day in the year, and the 15-book *Bible Says Series*. These were small booklets, approximately 32-pages each, with two complete doctrinal Bible studies. It was the culmination of years of finding and collecting Bible promises.

**1993**—Important studies this year included a four-part analysis of the purple book, *Issues*, published by the General Conference, and several studies on the Waco disaster and the Shepherd's Rod splinters. The western movie, produced by Keith Knoche (a southwestern California Conference evangelist) about prostitutes, liquor, and killing, was a shocker and required several tracts. A little later, he was fired.

Here at Pilgrims Rest, during this year and the next, we produced 21 videos in which I presented various topics, including *The Basic Con-*

*trovery in the Great Controversy between Christ and Satan, The Lake Region Crisis, and How to Avoid Being Hypnotized.*

The 18 *End-Time Series* videos, quoting the best of what the Spirit of Prophecy has to say on coming events was also released; along with 18 *End-Time Series* booklets which contained the largest collection of Spirit of Prophecy statements on final events ever produced—and all of it was classified in chronological format.

The 340-page *Medical Missionary Manual* (a newly typeset reprint of my 1962 Spirit of Prophecy compilation) and the 116-page *Vaccination Crisis* was also printed.

The initial attack on the Waco complex by the BATF on Sunday morning, February 28, so shocked America that the twin towers blast in New York City—which had only occurred two days earlier—was wiped off the headlines. Before the devastating fire occurred later, I had already prepared most of a history of the Shepherd's Rod, from 1929 to the present, which we published soon afterward.

About two years later, we learned a secret from a former member of Koresh's Waco compound, who was temporarily living in Tennessee: Koresh's primary source of income in his last years before the attack was gun-running to contacts south of the border.

It would be impossible to provide you with a biography of my life, without very briefly mentioning the following development:

In May 1987, Cherie decided to attend an eschatology meeting in another state for a couple weeks, and was gone until September. Upon her return, she moved into a mobile home elsewhere on the property.

In March 1988, Cherie again left. Having learned of this, Linda (our first born, who had not married) quit her job elsewhere and came in May to help me raise the twins, Seth and Ruth, who were only 13.

After an 18-month absence, Cherie returned in September, and stayed on the property till the following May (1989).

That month, Cherie again left. From that time onward, she never again lived in our home nor in the State of Tennessee, nor cared for the children. All six of our children, plus her relatives, were opposed to her actions in this matter.

Calling later from Florida, where she was working as a "TV Hostess," delivering daily tele-

vision schedules to the patients of a large Adventist hospital, she told me there were no fanatics there. I asked what a “fanatic” was; and she replied, “A fanatic is a person who won’t eat a little meat once in a while.” Unfortunately, Cherie was changing.

In mid-November 1992, a friend from out-of-state called and said, “Vance, there is something I should tell you. Cherie talked with me at length in August. *She told me she has a lawyer, and that she is going to break the corporation and get all the money out of it she can. You should know this.*”

In December 1992, Cherie joined *Country Connections*, a non-Adventist Missouri singles club. Through it, in January, she contacted a kindly farmer in central Illinois whose wife had died a few months earlier. Jim was a Pentecostal who, Cherie told others, faithfully attended church each week. Relatives who have met him say he is a very quiet, kindly man.

Cherie was living near Springfield, Missouri, and Jim alone in Illinois. That spring and summer each made several trips to visit the other.

In late March, I received divorce papers, dated March 15, only a few weeks after the twins turned 18. The divorce hearing was held on September 13. The judge considered the case. He refused to penetrate the corporation, declaring it would be illegal to do so; he also granted Cherie the divorce she sought, plus alimony for five years until September 1998.

Three weeks after the divorce date, and one week before it was legally finalized, she married Jim on a Friday afternoon in a private ceremony. Three weeks later, he asked her to leave, which she did. She has not since remarried. Pray for Cherie. In many respects she means well.

I had married into a fine family, and Cherie was outstanding; but, unfortunately, she left. I was thankful that my daughter Linda came to help me raise the twins. The Lord bless her for it. Her godly influence in the home during their final teen years was so beneficial.

**1994**—In this year, Charles Wheeling began to openly attack the Spirit of Prophecy writings, and we reported on it, quoting extensively from his own written and taped statements.

A number of other smaller reports were also sent out. One was the four-part *Branson Report*, which was released in June. This historical analysis overviewed an important event in our

history. On October 30, 1935, William Branson presented the report of his commission to the Autumn Council. The controversial question was whether our denomination should permit our colleges to seek accreditation.

We, today, live with the sorry results of permitting it to begin. Educated worldlings instruct our young people, and they come out with a training in new theology and related errors.

My old friend, D.K. Griffith, visited us this year. You may recall that, at an earlier time, he was the Florida Conference educational superintendent. He now held the same post for the Georgia-Cumberland Conference. I had always respected him highly, but it quickly became obvious that he now considered me a troubler of the people. He held the view common to so many, that loyalty to the church meant silence when wrongdoing was done. I had betrayed that supposedly sacred trust.

Turning the conversation to the nature of Christ, he declared that Christ had a different nature than ours, otherwise He could not have resisted sin. Poor Dorlin; he had bought into the new theology. After a brief visit, he departed. About a year later he died.

This year, we produced the last of 19 videos, and printed my 504-page book, *Editions of Great Controversy*, which provided an in-depth comparative analysis of the four editions of that important book, along with a history of how it was written. This is the only book of this nature ever produced.

Between May 1994 to April 1995, I wrote a set of twelve 24-page *Pathlights* magazines, which we mailed out.

**1995**—Bill Stringfellow, a respected preacher, went public with his belief that there is no Holy Spirit and Christ is a created being. In a special video, he taught this error—declaring that those who did not accept it were part of Babylon, and would receive the Mark of the Beast and the plagues!

In response, I produced a refutation of his point-by-point presentation in tract studies which detailed the Bible-Spirit of Prophecy truth that Christ is fully divine, has existed from all eternity, and that the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead.

It was this year that the North American Division tightly bound all denominational entities

(such as the Voice of Prophecy, Amazing Facts, Faith for Today, etc.) to an agreement to return tithe donations to the conference of the sender. Because denominational leaders have majority control of those boards, the boards are locked into compliance.

In four tracts, we reported on the Torres case, and produced a number of tracts disclosing the Bible-Spirit of Prophecy positions on divorce and remarriage. We also revealed church policy changes which now permit our ministers to quietly divorce and remarry, not on Biblical grounds—and remain in the ministry!

A three-part tract set disproving the need to keep the feast days was produced, along with the first of an ongoing series on the David Dennis lawsuit.

Before and after the Utrecht General Conference Session, eleven tracts were sent out, which detailed the issues, actions, behind the scenes politics, and aftermath of this momentous session. At this Session, and the previous Annual Council, Robert Folkenberg pushed through dozens of changes in governance, which granted him extensive powers over workers and brought the *Adventist Review* under his control.

Another fallout from Utrecht was also discussed: the spate of women ministers' ordinations which began taking place at localities in the United States where liberals were strongly entrenched. These began in the summer of 1995 and have continued since.

In December, we disclosed the astounding fact that a Roman Catholic monk had given the annual Week of Prayer meetings at Pacific Union College. Friends in that area had mailed us several sermon tapes, and we quoted extensively from them.

How many such church changes, crises, and apostasies—such as the ones I have summarized in the past 20 pages—can you recall that occurred in the 1970s? in the 1960s? Hardly any!—We have quickly overviewed a compressed view of an immense downward spiral which has occurred since the fall of 1979. —Yet it was only a few months earlier that I purchased my first typesetting machine and began preparing Sabbath tracts.

The God of heaven carefully guided all through these years, that someone would begin exposing the apostasy *in print*—as soon as it hit

in full force in the summer of 1980 and thereafter.

In the summer of 1995, I visited one of my sons, who now works in California. Together we drove through the Haight Ashbury District in San Francisco, still a wasteland from the Hippie era. We went into the St. Paulus Church where I attended kindergarten (it burned to the ground a few months afterward). We drove by the Petaluma Church and saw the Santa Rosa Church which was just beginning construction when I quit the ministry. We stopped by Pacific Union College, but the front of the building where I had proposed to Cherie had been torn down. We drove up to Sacramento and found the location where the Jackson Road house used to be. My son flew down with me to San Diego; and, after visiting the zoo, we drove out and found the home I was born in. Relics of the past, but I am so thankful that, by the grace of God, we can have a brighter future than earthly things and an earthly grave.

**1996**—In February, we reported on the astounding fact that Porter Hospital, in Colorado, had united with the Catholics. (Later in the summer of 1996, we obtained merger documents, which revealed that *majority control* of three former Adventist denominationally owned hospitals in the Denver area had been given to a Vatican subsidiary hospital.)

The first of several tracts dealing with an accelerated apostasy at Walla Walla College was released, including one mailed to all the members of the North Pacific Union constituency about the problem, just before they met.

The financial crisis at Atlantic Union College threatened to close it down. This situation, which we discussed in some detail, followed years of serious moral decay at that institution.

Unfortunately, this same year, Robert J. Wieland came out openly in defense of the new theological errors of Jack Sequeira.

Steve Daily, a pastor at La Sierra for over a decade, wrote a notorious book, endorsed by a number of our leaders, in which he advocated a broad number of liberal doctrines and standards. It required detailed analysis, which we provided in three tracts.

The plan of Seventh-day Adventist liberals, to gain church acceptance for homosexuals, was chronicled, along with the holy laughter apos-

tasy, now taking hold in Protestantism.

Throughout all these years, missionary contacts continued to be made, as we sent quantities of tracts and books, at no charge, to Africa, the Philippines, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America, as well as to prisoners in the United States.

We printed a number of books this year, also a three-book series on the historical and Spirit of Prophecy call to the benevolent work: *The Forgotten Work*, *Seventh-day Adventist Benevolent Work*, and *Leah and the Benevolent Work*.

We also printed the *Eight Laws of Health*. At the end of each chapter of the eight chapters in this book, a transition to a key doctrinal Bible study was provided.

Other books of mine included *Collision Course*, *Marian Messages*, *Donald Folkenberg Transactions*, *Gay Takeover of America*, and *Sequeira and Wieland Documentary Tract-book*.

During 1996, I began youth summaries to our Creation-Evolution books, so that younger readers could make use of them. The project was big enough that we did not complete it until the next year.

**1997**—In the spring, two landmark tract sets were printed: *Frontiers of the Battle* and *Objectives of Liberalism*, which delineated the remarkable extent of modernist inroads into the Adventist denomination in recent years.

A major three-part compilation was mailed out in July, entitled *Do Not Reject the Spirit of Prophecy*. This was a compilation I had wanted to do for years. It included the most crucial statements pertaining to the importance of those writings and the great danger in rejecting them.

In the summer, a friend from Massachusetts telephoned that an acquaintance who was a theology student at one of our colleges had heard that Charles Wheeling's organization had put together an "E.G. White Packet." Thinking he could use it to help convince others that Ellen White was a true prophet of God, he ordered it. When it arrived, he read it through—and then threw out his Spirit of Prophecy books and quit college and Adventism. So we sent for the packet, which consisted of a grab bag of skeptical remarks about her and her writings. A handwritten note at the top of the pile instructed us that, when we had finished reading this stack of pa-

pers, to write for "E.G. White Packet-2." We immediately ordered it, and found it just as thick and miserable.

So I published on what Wheeling was doing (*Wheeling's Encyclopedia of Attacks on the Spirit of Prophecy*). A year or so earlier, Luis Munilla told me personally that he quit his position as treasurer of Wheeling's organization because Wheeling was diverting donations, sent in for free distribution of *Great Controversy* books, to the preparation and sending out of taped sermons and other materials attacking her writings.

In September, we sent out the first of our 13-part historical study, *The Concordia Crisis*, which revealed that a series of 1977 articles in the *Review*, prepared the minds of our leaders so they would tread lightly when confronted with the liberal crisis in our own church, which broke two years later. This was an epic report.

Books which I wrote and printed this year included *The Great Week of 7,000 Years; Story of the Trademark Lawsuits; Christmas, Easter, and Halloween; E.G. White Did Not Plagiarize; and Promise Keepers' Objective*.

We also completed a project which took a fair amount of time to put together: *Great Controversy Portions in 23 Languages*. We printed the three most important chapters (3 - *The Apostasy*, 25 - *God's Law Immutable*, and 29 - *The Origin of Evil*) in 5 booklets, totaling 300 pages. These key chapters can be photocopied and scattered widely.

We originally wanted to print *Great Controversy* in a variety of languages. So, back in 1982, letters were sent to every Adventist printing house in the world field, requesting prices on their *Great Controversys*. Surprisingly, the responses took months to come back! The disorganization in our overseas publishing houses must be immense. According to the replies, the complete book, *Great Controversy*, was only available in 22 languages; plus a small abridgment in Zwahili. From *Leaves of Autumn*, I was able to obtain an out-of-print copy in Icelandic, bringing the total up to 23.

Obtaining the books was the next challenge and, after ordering them, more months passed before we received the copies in the mail. In May 1992, we announced that we could print three key chapters from the 23 books in tract format and, if desired, could print entire books. We received a number of requests for tracts, but none

for books.

In 1997, we reprinted those three chapters from 23 books in five booklets. Many have been sold, so they could be locally photocopied or printed in selected languages.

(In early 1998, a dedicated young man from Hartland received thousands of dollars in funding to put *Great Controversy* on the internet. Since, aside from the E.G. White Estate, we were the only ones possessing a large collection; he came to see us. Thrilled with the possibility, we loaned him our entire 23-language collection, plus the Swahili abridgment. His group is now in the process of placing all those books on the internet! This is thrilling. I understand he managed to obtain a couple other languages elsewhere.)

The book, *Teachings of Morris Venden*, was also released this year. Consisting of quotations from Venden's books, and topically arranged, they clearly reveal his strange beliefs.

The largest publishing project this year was the printing of my 25-book, 1,772-page *Evolution Disproved Series*. Based on my 1,326-page three-volume set, these books included sections for children and teenagers.

Beginning this year, we began making available, to inquirers, copies of my 30-page MINDEX (the *Master Index* to my publications) which alphabetically lists, by topic, my various books, tracts, tapes, etc. It is updated about every six months. Not included are nearly 300 tracts in the *Inspirational Nuggets* and *Checkpoints* series.

In July, we announced the fact that our *Creation-Evolution Encyclopedia* (a large summary of my Creation-Evolution 3-volume set) was on the worldwide web. It consists of hundreds of pages of rebuttal to the errors of evolutionary theory.

Gradually, we continued adding additional worthwhile material on the internet. Our web page is [www.pathlights.com](http://www.pathlights.com). Soon we added our forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Alternate Remedies*, with 500 pages for over 500 disorders, abortion material, and (in 1998) a complete set of Bible studies.

Partway through 1997, I began releasing one new book each month. At any given time I have about eight or ten which have been completed, but not yet printed and announced. The prob-

lem is we are a small group and cannot publish very rapidly. There is no doubt in my mind that, without the help of God and very light eating on my part, the preparing of these needed materials could not be done.

Writing this biography took nearly three weeks, and it is now late February 1998. Yet, even though it may be months before this autobiography is published, I will stop the narration of events, as of about the end of 1997. We need to stop someplace.

May our kind Father bless you and keep you. It will not be long and we will meet in the air with Jesus.

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**NOVEMBER 1998 ADDITION**—After completing this book (including the next chapter) in February, I set it aside in order to work on other areas of need.

However, when I laid down to sleep each night, that dream about *Great Controversy*, which I earlier described to you, would come to mind during the night. Recounting it in this autobiography had brought it back to mind, and night after night, it would stream through my mind again. Each aspect was vivid and clear.

So I prayed about the matter. My kind Father was trying to tell me something. The fact was that I had not actually done what I was supposed to do. True, in 1985 we had placed the 1884 edition in low-cost paperback for the first time in history, and it continues in demand down to the present time.

But we had not succeeded in producing a low-cost 1888 edition. (We selected the 1888, instead of the 1911, because—although they are identical except in historical quotations,—the 1888 contains the quotations Ellen White originally selected. However, both books are excellent.)

Because of its size (744 pages) and low print run, the 1888 edition we had printed in 1985 cost so much (\$1.15 a copy in boxful quantities) that few ordered it. In addition, the book was 1-5/8 inches thick, which also detracted from its desirability. As a result, sales were so poor that we let the book go out of print several years later.

In 1996, I conceived the idea of producing an 1884 and 1888 edition which could have helpful extras at the end of most chapters. After se-

lecting a type font, I set to work and, in about two months time, had completed the books. But then I discovered I had selected a font size which was just too small for good readability. While working on the project, I had not noticed this—since the activity had all been done on a computer screen.

Disheartened, and aware that we lacked the funds for a larger, lower-cost print run, I set it all aside.

But now, in March 1998, the burden was quite strong. So, once again, I set to work and—without discussing a lengthy task of several months—sent both the new 1884 and 1888 edi-

tions off to the printer in late October of this year. The books will be available by early January.

Through the use of special paper, the thickness of the 1888 edition will be only about an inch (yet it is 736 pages). Because the print run is significantly larger, with sacrificial cost cutting and subsidizing on our part, the boxful price of the 1888 will be only 60 cents, plus shipping! This is only a dime above the boxful cost of the book—when paperback editions of it first became available—in the late 1950s.

All this is a matter for great rejoicing, and it was the writing of this autobiography which started the project rolling again.

“He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him.”

— *Psalms 91:15*

“He that keepeth thee will not slumber.”

— *Psalms 121: 4*

“He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust; His truth shall be thy shield and buckler . . . There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.”

— *Psalms 91:1, 2, 4, 10*

“Ask and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For everyone that asketh, receiveth.” — *Matthew 7:7-8*

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.” — *Revelation 12:11*

“Be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.” — *Psalms 31:24*

## 12 - Conclusion

How shall I summarize the living of these years? Surely, I have so much to be thankful for.

I am now in my 60s. Consistently, friends who had not seen me since the mid- or late-1980s, have remarked how much better I look than before. Fortunately, with the passing of years, I keep growing younger! At least it seems that way. I have eaten carefully for years and have low blood pressure and low cholesterol. So the future is bright, and we may have many more years to serve the Lord.

Gradually the children have grown. We have had many happy times—working together in the home and around the place, and going for walks and to nature spots together. For 19 years, we have taken a canoe (which I purchased for \$150 in southern Illinois) out on nearby lakes. We have used it a lot over the years. It is the only “boat” our family has ever owned.

There is a variety of wildlife around our house; we have had lots of fun feeding squirrels on the back porch (sometimes as many as 22 at a time), plus chipmunks, and a variety of song birds, along with mourning doves and several types of woodpeckers at our feeding station. We have had fun with deer, foxes, raccoons, muskrats, opossums, weasels, and skunks; and our hummingbird feeder is always a busy place in the summer.

All of our children were homeschooled. For high school, we enrolled each one in American School. Based in Chicago, it is the largest correspondence high school in the world. We found it to be more useful and far less expensive than Home Study Institute.

Four of my children went on to college while still living at home. Each one worked off his own tuition and books. One married before completing course work, and the other three graduated. Most are now married. Each of my children has become a success in life, and I am so very thank-

ful for this. Best of all, they all love the Lord; and, at the time of this writing, I have four grandchildren.

We are a close-knit family; and, once or twice a year, we have a family reunion.

For nearly two decades, at no charge, Pilgrims Rest has sent books and tracts overseas and to prisoners. The amount of free materials sent to foreign localities has been quite substantial.

We have contacts on every continent, except Antarctica (the penguins never write). Our mailings go all over the world; we constantly receive book and tract orders, as well as free requests, from various places.

Beginning in 1997, in addition to the two tract mailings we had done for nearly two decades, I began announcing the publication of at least one new book each month.

Our internet site, which we started many months ago, is growing rapidly. We placed a summary of my three-volume set in it, and gave it the name, *Creation-Evolution Encyclopedia*. Then, near the end of 1997, we placed my soon-to-be-printed *Natural Remedies Encyclopedia* on our web site also. It lists nutritional, and other home remedies for over 500 disorders.

As of January 1998, our web site began receiving an extremely large number of hits.

It is **[www.pathlights.com](http://www.pathlights.com)**.

In December 1997, there were 1,313 hits and 8,735 Kilobytes of material copied—which is a lot of material copied!

In January 1998, there were 36,835 hits and 8,735 kilobytes copied.

In February, there were 143,138 hits and 1,179,730 kilobytes of material copied!

*Last-minute addition:* During the month of October 1998, 18,223 individuals visited our

web site. This is an average of 588 people a day! Within it they went to 253,443 locations (“hits”), and copied 1683,594 KBytes of material! We now have a complete set of Bible Studies on the web, and continue expanding the project. Go to [www.pathlights.com](http://www.pathlights.com).

As I look back over the past years, certain facts and events stand out: The decision to place God’s Word first rather than thinking that my mind and reason was the measure of truth. The extensive formal education I received (22 years of schooling, if counted on a nine-month school year; a Ph.D. normally achieves 18 years). My acceptance, early on, of the fact that I only had an average mind and would have to work hard. My enjoyment of work and doing a job well. My wonderful wife and children who helped me so much down through the years. My total belief that God is good and that He never does wrong! The innumerable providential circumstances which would not let me settle down, but directed me toward my present work. My refusal to consider any “new light” unless it was confirmed by the Spirit of Prophecy.

I am thankful for the unknown colporteur, back in Idaho, who sold that book to my grandmother. I am thankful that Elder C.T. Everson decided to hold meetings in that area a couple years later. I am thankful for what did not happen in that doctor’s office in San Diego County during the heart of the depression. I am thankful that my mother had that dream when I was about eight, in which an angel told her not to leave the Adventist faith. I am thankful that God called Ellen White to be His special messenger for these last days. The wisdom in those writings has helped me so much.

I have been asked why I stick with the Spirit of Prophecy when so many have abandoned it. Most of the real blessings which I have received in my adult years, I owe to those books: careful diet, healthful living, country living, a good wife, outstanding children, and a wonderful future.

My life is a powerful evidence that little people can be used by God. One does not have to have a powerful body, brilliance of mind, or great wealth. All that is needed is a sincere desire to be used by God and a willingness to let Him have your life.

Our wonderful Father has a place for each

one of us; He has a special work for you. It is for this reason that I wrote this autobiography: I wanted to provide renewed assurance that God is guiding each of our lives.

As I conclude this, here are a few special passages which have greatly helped me over the years.

Let me tell you how long it has been that the Father and the Son have been thinking about how to help you, so you could be saved—and live with them forever in heaven:

“Let those who are oppressed under a sense of sin remember that there is hope for them. The salvation of the human race has ever been the object of the councils of heaven. The covenant of mercy was made before the foundation of the world. It has existed from all eternity, and is called the everlasting covenant. So surely as there never was a time when God was not, so surely there never was a moment when it was not the delight of the eternal mind to manifest His grace to humanity.”—*7 Bible Commentary, 934 (Signs, June 12, 1901)*.

Let me take you to the highest place you can ever go:

“Without the cross, man could have no connection with the Father. On it hangs our every hope. In view of it the Christian may advance with the steps of a conqueror; for from it streams the light of the Saviour’s love. When the sinner reaches the cross, and looks up to the One who died to save him, he may rejoice with fullness of joy; for his sins are pardoned. Kneeling at the cross, he has reached the highest place to which man can attain. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God is revealed in the face of Jesus Christ; and the words of pardon are spoken: Live, O ye guilty sinners, live. Your repentance is accepted; for I have found a ransom.”—*5 Bible Commentary, 1133 (Review, April 29, 1902)*.

Let me explain why the pathway to heaven is through humble, repentant obedience to the Word of God:

“The life we live is to be one of continual repentance and humility. We need to repent constantly, that we may be constantly victorious. When we have true humility, we have victory. The enemy never can take out of the hand of Christ the one who is simply trusting in His promises. If the soul is trusting and working obediently, the mind is susceptible to divine impressions, and the light of God shines in, enlightening the understanding. What privileges we have in Christ Jesus!”—*7 Bible Commentary, 959 (Manuscript 92, 1901)*.

Here are several additional promises, which

I know you will value:

“There is no greater deception than for man to suppose that in any difficulty he can find a better guide than God, a wiser counselor in any emergency, a stronger defense under any circumstance.”—*2 Bible Commentary*, 993 (*Manuscript 66*, 1898).

“We are doing our work for the judgment. Let us be learners of Jesus. We need His guidance every moment. At every step we should inquire, ‘Is this the way of the Lord?’ not, ‘Is this the way of the man who is over me?’ We are to be concerned only as to whether we are walking in the way of the Lord.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 192 (*Manuscript 96*, 1902).

“When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, 312.

“Men’s weakness shall find supernatural strength and help in every stern conflict to do the deeds of Omnipotence, and perseverance in faith and perfect trust in God will ensure success . . . God has promised us all power; for the promise is unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.”—*2 Bible Commentary*, 995-996 (*Letter 51*, 1895).

“Promises are estimated by the truth of the one who makes them. Many men make promises only to break them, to mock the heart that trusted in them. Those who lean upon such men lean upon broken reeds. But God is behind the promises He makes. He is ever mindful of His covenant, and His truth endureth to all generations.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 942-943 (*Manuscript 23*, 1899).

“Everyone who will humble himself as a little child, who will receive and obey the Word of God, with a child’s simplicity, will be among the elect of God.”—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1114 (*Signs*, January 2, 1893).

“The truths of the Word of God are the utterances of the Most High. He who makes these truths a part of his life becomes in every sense a new creature. He is not given new mental powers, but the darkness that through ignorance and sin has clouded the understanding is removed . . . He who gives the Scriptures close, prayerful attention will gain clear comprehension and sound judgment, as if in turning to God he had reached a higher plane of intelligence.”—*My Life Today*, 24 (*Review*, December 18, 1913).

“In Revelation 14, John beholds another

scene. He sees a people whose fidelity and loyalty to the laws of God’s kingdom grow with the emergency. The contempt placed upon the law of God only makes them reveal more decidedly their love for that law. It increases with the contempt that is placed upon it.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 981 (*Manuscript 163*, 1897).

“Happiness drawn from earthly sources is as changeable as varying circumstances can make it; but the peace of Christ is a constant and abiding peace. It does not depend upon any circumstances in life, on the amount of worldly goods, or the number of earthly friends. Christ is the fountain of living water, and happiness drawn from Him can never fail.”—*Mount of Blessings*, 16.

“God’s plan, for the salvation of men, is perfect in every particular. If we will faithfully perform our allotted parts, all will be well with us. It is man’s apostasy that causes discord, and brings wretchedness and ruin. God never uses His power to oppress the creatures of His hand. He never requires more than man is able to perform.”—*2 Bible Commentary*, 999 (*Signs* May 19, 1881).

“We should meditate upon the Scriptures, thinking soberly and candidly upon the things that pertain to our eternal salvation. The infinite mercy and love of Jesus, the sacrifice made in our behalf, call for most serious and solemn reflection. We should dwell upon the character of our dear Redeemer and Intercessor. We should seek to comprehend the meaning of the plan of salvation. We should meditate upon the mission of Him who came to save His people from their sins; By constantly contemplating heavenly themes, our faith and love will grow stronger. Our prayers will be more and more acceptable to God, because they will be more mixed with faith and love. They will be more intelligent and fervent.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 109 (*Review*, June 12, 1888).

“Scarcely can the human mind comprehend what is the breadth and depth and height of the spiritual attainments that can be reached by becoming partakers of the divine nature. The human agent who daily yields obedience to God, who becomes a partaker of the divine nature, finds pleasure daily in keeping the commandments of God; for he is one with God. It is essential that he hold as vital a relation with God as does the Son to the Father. He understands the oneness that Christ prayed might exist between the Father and the Son.”—*7 Bible Commentary*, 943 (*Letter 43*, 1895).

“Christ in the weakness of humanity was to meet the temptations of one possessing the powers of the higher nature that God had bestowed

on the angelic family. But Christ's humanity was united with divinity, and in this strength He would bear all the temptations that Satan could bring against Him, and yet keep His soul untainted by sin. And this power to overcome He would give to every son and daughter of Adam who would accept by faith the righteous attributes of His character."—*7 Bible Commentary*, 927 (Review, January 28, 1909).

"The Lord has determined that every soul who obeys His Word shall have His joy, His peace, His continual keeping power. Such men and women are brought near Him always, not only when they kneel before Him in prayer, but when they take up the duties of life. He has prepared for them an abiding place with Himself, where the life is purified from all grossness, all unloveliness. By this unbroken communion with Him, they are made collaborators with Him in their lifework."—*My Life Today*, 51 (Review, October 23, 1900).

"While Satan is constantly devising evil, the Lord our God overrules all, so that it will not harm His obedient, trusting children."—*3 Bible Commentary*, 1141 (Signs, July 14, 1881).

"The strength given to Christ, in the hour of bodily suffering and mental anguish in the Garden of Gethsemane, has been and will be given to those who suffer for His dear name's sake. The same grace given to Jesus, the same comfort, the more than mortal steadfastness, will be given to every believing child of God, who is brought into perplexity and suffering."—*5 Bible Commentary*, 1123 (Signs, June 3, 1897).

"In the future we shall see how closely all our trials were connected with our salvation, and how these light afflictions worked out for us 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'"—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1099 (Letter 5, 1880).

"All who would be soldiers of the cross of Christ, must gird on the armor and prepare for conflict. They should not be intimidated by threats or terrified by dangers. They must be cautious in peril, yet firm and brave in facing the foe and doing battle for God."—*2 Bible Commentary*, 1003 (Signs June 30, 1881).

"Those who occupy responsible positions as guardians of the people are false to their trust if they do not faithfully search out and reprove sin. Many dare not condemn iniquity, lest they shall thereby sacrifice position or popularity. And by some it is considered uncharitable to rebuke sin. The servant of God should never allow his own spirit to be mingled with the reproof which he is required to give; but he is under the most solemn obligation to present the Word of God, without fear or favor. He must

call sin by its right name. Those who by their carelessness or indifference permit God's name to be dishonored, by His professed people, are numbered with the transgressor,—registered in the record of heaven as partakers in their evil deeds."—*2 Bible Commentary*, 996 (Signs, April 21, 1881).

"The love that the Lord has for His children passeth knowledge. No science can define or explain it. No human wisdom can fathom it. The more we feel the influence of this love, the more meek and humble shall we be."—*5 Bible Commentary*, 1141 (Letter 43, 1896).

"When the law of God is most derided and brought into the most contempt, then it is time for every true follower of Christ, for those whose hearts have been given to God, and who are fixed to obey God, to stand unflinchingly for the faith once delivered to the saints."—*7 Bible Commentary*, 981-982 (Review, June 8, 1897).

"The gift of God to man is beyond all computation. Nothing was withheld. God would not permit it to be said that He could have done more or revealed to humanity a greater measure of love. In the gift of Christ He gave all heaven."—*Sons and Daughters of God*, 11 (Manuscript 21, 1900).

"Those who, in the strength of Christ, overcome the great enemy of God and man will occupy a position in the heavenly courts above angels who have never fallen."—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1113 (Manuscript 56, 1899).

"The great God whose glory shines from the heavens, and whose divine hand upholds millions of worlds, is our Father. We have only to love Him, trust in Him, as little children in faith and confidence, and He will accept us as His sons and daughters, and we shall be heirs to all the inexpressible glory of the eternal world."—*4 Testimonies*, 653.

"Those who come out of the world in spirit and in all practice may regard themselves as sons and daughters of God. They may believe His Word as a child believes every word of his parents. Every promise is sure to him that believes."—*6 Bible Commentary*, 1102 (Manuscript 11, 1901).

Back in 1964, we had just completed a long journey across the plains and desert to California. Arriving at an independent camp meeting in the Sierras, we were thankful, for a few days, to have fellowship with Spirit of Prophecy believers.

One afternoon, as a meeting adjourned, friends we had known many years before at Pacific Union College were about to drive down to their campsite. The wife made a parting remark,

and I asked her to repeat it.

“Only know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure.”

She then told me where it was found in God’s Word. Knowing and believing God’s love, of course, involves submissive obedience. It is impossible for the stubbornly rebellious to trust, as a child, in God’s love. Later, when I started Pilgrims Rest, I found there were three matching statements, which formed a stepladder:

“The one thing essential for us in order that we may receive and impart the forgiving love of God is to know and believe the love that He has to us.”—*Mount of Blessing*, 115.

“The very first step in approaching God is to know and believe the love that He has to us (1 John 4:16); for it is through the drawing of His love that we are led to come to Him.”—*Mount of Blessing*, 104-105.

“Live in contact with the living Christ, and He will hold you firmly by a hand that will never

let go. Know and believe the love that God has to us, and you are secure; that love is a fortress impregnable to all the delusions and assaults of Satan.”—*Mount of Blessing*, 119.

Truly, we live in most difficult times; and in the great Crisis ahead, only the little ones who love God, trust His care, and obey His Word will make it through those difficult days. But, to “who-soever will” His wonderful promises will be fulfilled, and they will be with Him in Paradise through all eternity.

“If you will seek the Lord and be converted every day; if you will of your own spiritual choice be free and joyous in God; if with gladsome consent of heart to His gracious call you come wearing the yoke of Christ,—the yoke of obedience and service,—all your murmurings will be stilled, all your difficulties will be removed, all the perplexing problems that now confront you will be solved.”—*Mount of Blessing*, 101.

“He became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him.”  
— *Hebrews 5:9*

“It is Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”  
— *Romans 8:34*

“God that comforteth those that are cast down.”  
— *2 Corinthians 7:6*

“I, even I, am He that comforteth you.”  
— *Isaiah 51:12*

“The Lord openeth the eyes of the blind; the Lord raiseth them that are bowed down.” — *Psalms 146:8*

“In all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us.” — *Romans 8:37*

“Thou art my Rock and my Fortress.”  
— *Psalms 71:3*