

GOD'S GENERALS



“The Apostle of Faith”

I saw that God wants us so badly that He has made the condition as simple as He possibly could—“Only Believe.”

It is arguable that there is no more significant patriarch of the Pentecostal Movement than Smith Wigglesworth. While he was not the catalyst for breakthrough revivals such as the one in Wales led by Evan Roberts in 1904 or that of the Azusa Street Mission in 1906 that was led by William Seymour, it was Smith Wigglesworth’s steady faith and staying power that made the Pentecostal revival the most significant Christian movement of the twentieth century.

Where other Pentecostal ministers would emerge overnight and then disappear from the public scene almost as quickly, Smith Wigglesworth traveled widely from after the death of his wife in 1913 until not long before his death in 1947. During these decades his ministry of faith and miracles changed the face of Christianity and set the stage for the Charismatic Renewal that would restore the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the modern church.

An Early Call To Evangelism

Smith was born in a small village near Menston, Yorkshire in England on June 8, 1859. Smith’s younger years were marked by a hunger for God, even though his parents were not Christians at the time. His grandmother was an old-time Wesleyan, and she always made sure that Smith attended meetings with her when she could. When he was eight, he joined in with the singing at one of these meetings, and as he began, “a clear knowledge of the new birth” came to him. He realized in that moment just what the death and resurrection of Jesus meant for him, and he embraced it with his whole heart. From that day forth, he never doubted that he was saved.

Soon he began operating as the evangelist, which would be most of his life’s focus. His first convert was his own mother. When his father realized what was happening, he started taking the family to an Episcopal church. Although his father was never born again, he enjoyed the parson, who just happened to frequent the same pub as he did, and remained a faithful church-goer through Smith’s youth.

When he was thirteen, his family moved from Menston to Bradford, where Smith became deeply involved with the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Even though he

couldn't read, it was at this time that Smith began the habit of always having a copy of the New Testament with him wherever he went. Then in 1875 when Smith was about sixteen, the Salvation Army opened a mission in Bradford, and Smith found a powerful ally in his desire to see people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. In the meetings he attended with the Salvationists, he soon learned there was great power behind prayer and fasting.

At seventeen, Smith met a Godly man at a mill who took him in as an apprentice and taught him the plumbing trade. He also told Smith about what the Bible taught on water baptism, and soon afterwards Smith gladly obeyed and was baptized in water. During this time, he also learned more about the second coming of Christ and strongly believed that Jesus would come at the turn of the century. This made him ever more vigilant to “change the course” of everyone he met.

The Favor of God

In 1877 at the age of nearly eighteen, Smith decided it was time to set out on his own. He went to the home of a plumber and asked for a job. When the plumber told him he had no need for any help, Smith thanked him, apologized for using his time, and turned to walk away. Immediately, the man called him back. He said, “There is something about you that is different. I just cannot let you go.”† At that, the man hired him on the spot.

By the time Smith was about twenty, the man he worked for could not keep him busy anymore—he just worked too efficiently! So Smith moved to Liverpool to find more work. There he began to minister to the children of the city. Ragged and hungry children came to the dock shed, where he preached the Gospel to them and did his best to feed and clothe them from what he made as a plumber in the area. He also visited the hospitals and ships, praying and fasting all day on Sunday, asking God for converts. As a result, he never saw fewer than fifty people saved each time he ministered. He was also frequently invited by the Salvation Army to speak at their meetings, but though he saw great results, he was never eloquent. He often broke down and cried before the people because of his burden for souls, and it was this brokenness that brought people to the altar by the hundreds.

Smith Meets Polly

It was also around this time that Smith watched with great interest as a young, socially affluent woman came forward in one of the Salvation Army meetings and fell to her knees. She refused to pray with any of the workers until the speaker known as “Gypsy” Tillie Smith came and prayed with her. When they were done,

the young woman jumped to her feet, threw her gloves in the air, and shouted, “Hallelujah! It is done!”

The next night as she gave her testimony, Smith felt as if she belonged to him. As Smith later said, “It seemed as if the inspiration of God was upon her from the very first.” The young woman’s name was Mary Jane Featherstone, but everyone called her “Polly.” She eventually received a commission as an officer in the Salvation Army from General William Booth. Smith did what he could to work near her, and in the coming years a romance bloomed between them.

As Smith and Polly grew closer, Polly eventually faced the difficult decision of choosing either to continue with the Salvation Army or her love for Smith. Even though Smith never officially joined the Salvation Army, he was considered a private in their ranks, and Polly was an officer. There were strict regulations against officers and lower ranks having romantic relationships, so even though they always remained true friends of the Salvationists, Polly retired from their ranks and took up mission work with the Blue Ribbon Army. Those in her Methodist church also recognized her calling and asked her to help evangelize their churches. Hundreds were converted as a result.

A Divine Partnership

Polly had from the beginning the eloquence Smith longed for but couldn’t learn. When in 1882, Smith returned to Bradford, he and Polly wed. Polly was twenty-two years old and Smith was twenty-three. In their thirty years of marriage, the Wigglesworths had five children: Alice, Seth, Harold, Ernest, and George. Before each child was born, Smith and Polly prayed over them that they would faithfully serve God throughout their lives.

Smith and Polly had a burden for a part of Bradford that had no church, so they soon opened the Bradford Street Mission and began ministering together. Polly did most of the speaking, because she was the stronger and more accomplished of the two as an orator, and Smith oversaw the needs of the rest of the work. While she preached, he was at the altar praying for more to come to Christ. Of this relationship, Smith later said, “Her work was to put down the net; mine was to land the fish. This latter is just as important as the former.”§

A Cold Winter

The winter of 1884 was very severe in Bradford, and plumbers were in high demand. As a result, a time of intense work began for Smith that would last for the next two years, and he became literally consumed by his natural occupation. His

church attendance declined and slowly but surely his fire for God began to grow cold. In the light of Polly's increasing faithfulness, Smith's backsliding seemed all the more pronounced to the point that her diligence began to wear on him.

Then one night, this came to a head when she came home from church a little later than usual. Smith confronted her: "I am master of this house, and I am not going to have you coming home at so late an hour as this!" Polly quietly replied, "I know that you are my husband, but Christ is my Master."** At this, Smith forced her out the back door, then closed and locked it. However, in his annoyance, he had forgotten to lock the front door, so Polly simply walked around the house and came in through the main entrance, laughing.

When Smith finally saw what he had done, he caught her laughter and realized how silly he had been. Together they laughed about the matter, but to Smith it was also a revelation of how cold he had grown in the things of God. Shortly afterward, he spent ten days praying and fasting in repentance, and God gloriously restored him.

Smith Meets "The Lord that Healeth Thee"

On a trip to Leeds for plumbing supplies, Smith heard of a meeting where divine healing was to be ministered. He attended and was amazed at what he saw. What others saw as fanaticism, Smith recognized as sincere and of God. On his return to Bradford, he would search out the sick and pay for their way to attend the Leeds healing meetings. When his wife grew ill once, he told her about the meetings, somewhat afraid that she would think he had finally gone off the deep end. Instead, she accepted it and agreed to go to the meetings with him. When the prayer of faith was offered for her in Leeds, she received an instant manifestation of healing.

They both became passionate about the message of divine healing and their meetings began to grow, causing them to need a larger mission space. Soon they obtained a building on Bowland Street and opened the Bowland Street Mission. Across the wall behind the pulpit they hung a large scroll which read: "I Am the Lord That Healeth Thee."†† Not many years after this, in the first years of the 1900s, Smith received prayer for healing a hemorrhoid condition he had battled since childhood. He was soon fully healed and never had a problem with this condition for the rest of his life.

Embracing Divine Healing

Over the years that followed, the healing available through God increasingly

became a part of Smith's sermons and ministry, though healings were not frequent nor truly spectacular at first. Then those in the Leeds Healing Home recognized Smith's faith and asked him to speak while they were away at a convention. Smith accepted only because he felt he could get someone else to do it once he was in charge of the meeting, but all others refused, insisting they felt God wanted him to speak. Smith ministered his sermon hesitantly, but at the close of the service fifteen people came forward for prayer, and all of them were healed! One of them had hobbled forward on crutches and began dancing around the room without them after Smith prayed for him. He had been instantly healed! No one was more surprised by the results of his prayers than Smith himself.

Desiring More of the Spirit

In 1907, Pentecost had reached Sunderland, and Smith heard that people there were being baptized in the Holy Spirit and speaking in other tongues. Smith felt he had to see this for himself. Smith was among those who believed that sanctification and the baptism in the Holy Spirit were the same, so he felt he already had this baptism. Others warned him that these people in Sunderland were not receiving the Holy Spirit, but demons instead. Other friends with whom he prayed urged him to follow his own leadings.

When he arrived at the meeting in Sunderland, which was being led by Vicar Alexander Boddy (who had attended some of Evan Roberts' meetings in Wales during the Welsh Revival), he was surprised at the dryness of it in contrast to the moves of the Spirit he had experienced elsewhere, especially among the Salvationists. In fact, he grew so frustrated at this, he interrupted the meeting, saying, "I have come from Bradford, and I want this experience of speaking in tongues like they had on the day of Pentecost. But I do not understand why our meetings seem to be on fire, but yours do not seem to be so."†† Smith was so disruptive that they disciplined him outside of the building.

Smith Receives the Baptism

He soon decided he needed to return to Bradford, but before doing so decided to go to Vicar's home and say, "Goodbye." There he met Mrs. Boddy and told her he was returning home without speaking in tongues. She told him, "It is not tongues you need, but the baptism."§§ Smith asked her to lay hands on him before he left. She agreed, praying a simple but powerful prayer, and walked out of the room. It was then that the fire fell, and Smith had a vision of the empty cross with Jesus exalted at the right hand of the Father. Smith opened his mouth to praise God and

began instantly speaking in tongues. He knew immediately that what he had received of God now was much fuller than what he had received when praying and fasting and asking God to sanctify him.

Instead of going home, Smith went to the church where Vicar Boddy was conducting the service and asked to speak. Vicar Boddy agreed. Smith then spoke as he never had before, and at the end of his “sermon” fifty people were baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in other tongues. Even the local paper, the Sunderland Daily Echo, picked up the story and headlined the meeting and what Smith had experienced. Smith telegraphed home about what had happened.

“That’s Not My Smith!”

Upon arriving home in Bradford, Smith found a new challenge to what he had experienced. Polly met him at the door and firmly stated, “I want you to know that I am just as baptized in the Holy Spirit as you are and I don’t speak in tongues. . . . Sunday, you will preach for yourself, and I will see what there is in it.”*** When Sunday came, Polly did see what there was in it, as Smith preached with a power and assurance she had never heard in him before. She squirmed in her seat thinking, “That’s not my Smith, Lord. That’s not my Smith!” At the end of the sermon a worker stood to say he wanted the same experience Smith had received, and when he sat back down, he missed his chair and fell to the floor!

Smith’s eldest son had the same experience. In a very short while there were eleven people on the floor, laughing in the Spirit. Then the entire congregation was absorbed in holy laughter, as God poured even more of His Spirit out upon them. In the coming weeks, hundreds in Bradford would receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues—one of whom was Polly. The couple soon began traveling throughout the country, answering calls to speak and minister.

This experience also caused Smith to pursue God more than ever through prayer and fasting. He answered every request he could of those asking for divine healing. Sometimes he took a train to the nearest city and then borrowed a bicycle to ride another ten miles to reach the person. Soon he had no more time for his plumbing work, so he vowed before the Lord that if he were ever in severe need again in his life, he would return to plumbing; otherwise, he would serve as a minister for the rest of his days. The Lord made sure Smith never returned to plumbing.

Polly Goes Home to Be with the Lord

Not long after this, while waiting at a train station to leave for Scotland, Smith received word that his beloved wife, Polly, had collapsed at the Bowland Street

Mission from a heart attack. He rushed to her bedside only to discover her spirit had already departed. But Smith rebuked death, and she came back. Smith had just a short time to visit with his wife again, and then he was impressed that it was time for her to go home to be with her Lord and Savior, so he released her again. Polly passed away on January 1, 1913, and it was as if her dedication and spiritual power went with her husband after that and multiplied the effects of his ministry.

Immediately, Smith started to minister again throughout the country, traveling with his daughter, Alice, and her husband, James “Jimmy” Salter. Smith continued to preach a simple Gospel of “only believe.” In a time when other ministers seemed frail and failing despite the enormous revivals that had come through their ministries, Smith soon rose to prominence in Pentecostal circles because of the undeniable power in his ministry and the uncompromising stability with which he operated. His convictions would never change in the next four decades, and Smith remained a growing force for God and Pentecostalism right up until his death in 1947.

The Apostle of Faith and His Worldwide Ministry

In the months following Polly’s passing, Smith’s fame in England grew, and in 1914 he began traveling abroad to minister. By the 1920s and 1930s there was no more sought-after speaker in Pentecostalism. Although he never accepted the cloak, his acknowledgement as the “Apostle of Faith” made the Pentecostal world look to him as one of its greatest patriarchs, even though he had never been involved in any of the revivals that started the movement. Miracles, healings, the dead being raised, and other signs and wonders followed his ministry as he continued in the uncompromising and blunt style that no one could ever emulate.

Truth be told, Smith just never seemed to feel the need to be polite when chasing out sickness, disease, and other works of the devil. His sentiment was also that if the Spirit were not moving, then he would move the Spirit. This was not arrogance, but confidence in the work God wanted done on the earth. Smith would create an atmosphere of uncompromising faith in the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit would never fail to show up.

In 1922 Smith traveled to New Zealand and Australia, among other places, and in a few short months saw thousands saved and several Pentecostal churches birthed in the greatest spiritual renewals either nation had ever seen. In 1936 he traveled to South Africa and delivered to David du Plessis a profound prophecy of the upcoming revival of the Charismatic Renewal that would not even start until after

Wigglesworth's death. By this time Smith was in his seventies and probably the most well-known Pentecostal in the world.

Going Home

Then on March 12, 1947, while attending the funeral of a fellow minister, Smith bowed his head in the midst of a conversation and went home to be with the Lord without any pain or struggle at the age of 87.

While Smith would never form his own denomination or write a book, let alone a systematic set of doctrines and theology, his simple faith still impacts believers today. His relationship with God produced power that had not been seen on the earth for many centuries. For this reason, God also showed him things that others only dreamed of seeing. He never wanted to be put on a pedestal and worshipped, but be instead, an example of what every Christian can experience if they would "only believe."

"The Catalyst of Pentecost"

When people run out of the love of God, they get to preaching dress, and meats, and doctrines of men and preaching against churches. All these denominations are our brethren... So let us seek peace and not confusion... The moment we feel we have all the truth or more than anyone else, we will drop.

William J. Seymour is best known for ushering in the Pentecostal Movement that began with the Azusa Street mission in 1906. He was one of the first to preach and minister around the importance of being baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues. As hungry believers sought this experience, as they prayed and pressed God to baptize them with fire, revival broke out in Southern California that gained momentum and sparked a Pentecostal "wave of the Spirit" that revolutionized evangelism and worship across the nation. Seymour's "Azusa Street Revival" gave rise to several charismatic denominations, as well as introducing the "nondenominational" Christianity so common today.

The Journey to Self-Discovery

Born in Centerville, Louisiana on May 2, 1870, to newly freed slaves, William J.

Seymour grew up during a time of racial unrest and injustice. Although they were free, his family continued to work the plantation afraid to go elsewhere. Seymour taught himself to read primarily through studying the Bible. It was there he learned his freedom lay in Jesus Christ. His hunger for the truth of God's Word increased throughout his youth, and from early in life he experienced divine visions and looked fervently for the return of Christ.

It wasn't until William was twenty-five years old that he broke through a self-imposed bondage that he was inferior because of his race, and finally ventured away from the mentality of the plantation to seek a livelihood in the North. He settled in Indianapolis, Indiana where he joined a Methodist Episcopal Church that had a strong evangelistic outreach to all classes and races. However, it wasn't long before racial lines began to harden in Indianapolis and Seymour was forced to move to Cincinnati, Ohio to pursue his dream of cross-racial ministry. As a follower of John Wesley, Seymour aligned with his doctrine that there should be no discrimination in Jesus Christ, but the Methodist church in general was moving away from her original roots. Eventually Seymour joined the "Evening Light Saints" which would later become known as the Church of God Reformation Movement.

These believers were strict in their beliefs about purity and holiness. They did not use musical instruments, wear rings or make-up, dance or play cards, but they were joyful in their faith and warmly accepting of William. It was among this group that Seymour received his call to ministry. He did not immediately yield to the call with his whole heart, and felt that a serious bout of smallpox, which left him blind in one eye and permanently scarred on one side of his face, was retribution for not more expediently obeying the call of God.

Heeding the Call

And so when he recovered after three weeks of horrible suffering, William Seymour left Cincinnati and traveled to Texas, evangelizing along the way. He found family in Houston so settled down there, and in the summer of 1905, came upon Charles Parham's evangelistic crusade in full swing. Parham had established a school of ministry in Houston where Seymour enrolled. After completing his studies there, the events that led Seymour to Los Angeles quickly transpired.

It was early 1906 when William Seymour, in the midst of making plans to start a Pentecostal church, received a letter from a woman who had sat under his leadership during the short period of time he was substitute pastoring in Houston. She invited him to Los Angeles to lead a small congregation that had just broken

away from a Nazarene church. Convinced the letter revealed his destiny, Seymour left for California late in January.

When he arrived in Los Angeles, there was already evidence of a growing spiritual hunger. Turn of the century evangelists had sown the seeds of revival through Southern California and many groups of people were praying and witnessing throughout the city. The entire city was on the verge of a great spiritual happening as many local congregations were earnestly seeking God. One such congregation eagerly waited the return of their pastor who had been on a three-week trip to Wales. He had gone to sit under the great Welsh evangelist, Evan Roberts. This pastor hoped to bring the same revival that swept Wales home to Los Angeles.

The congregation that sought Seymour as their pastor was meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Asbery when they grew so large that they had to rent a small mission hall on Sante Fe Street. Believing a stranger to the Los Angeles area could be more effective at commanding respect among them, a cousin of Mr. Asbery remembered Seymour from her visit to Houston. After hearing her testimony and praying at length, they all agreed to extend Seymour the invitation.

Delivering the Message

Because there was already a revival climate city-wide, Seymour felt he had stepped into divine destiny as he began to deliver his message to the group assembled at the mission hall on Sante Fe Street. He did not hesitate to make the most of this opportunity to expound on the gospel of divine healing and the soon return of Christ. He made no hesitation in setting forth his belief, based on Acts 2:4, that a person is not baptized in the Holy Spirit unless they speak with other tongues. He admitted that he had not yet received this manifestation, but nevertheless, proclaimed it as God's Word.

His message was received with mixed reactions. He was invited home to dinner by a couple in the congregation, and found upon returning, that he had been locked out of the mission where he was staying. Having no place to go, and little money, the couple who hosted him for dinner felt obligated to invite him to stay overnight in their home. Seymour remained in his room behind closed doors fasting and praying for several days. He then invited his hosts to join him in prayer, and soon other members of the mission gathered with them upon hearing of the prayer meetings. Seymour gained new respect as his reputation grew as being a man of prayer.

Not long after he was invited before the Holiness clergy in the area to discuss his doctrinal beliefs. He clung to his interpretation of Acts 2:4, and told the Holiness

preachers that unless they had the same experience as those who had gathered in the Upper Room, they could not claim to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. He declared that their dispute was with the Word of God and not him.

One minister who had been against Seymour would later say, “The contention was all on our part. I have never met a man who had such control over his spirit. No amount of confusion and accusation seemed to disturb him. He would sit behind that packing case and smile at us until we were all condemned by our own activities.”

The Mantle of Leadership

The calming leadership of William Seymour was noticed by all. Following his investigation, in February 1906, the Asbery’s asked him to move into their home where he began holding regular meetings. The meetings grew in attendance and hunger for the Holy Spirit, and soon Seymour announced they would hold a ten-day fast until they received the blessing of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The group fasted and prayed through the weekend and by Monday one of the members called Seymour to his home to pray for his healing. He was healed instantly and when Seymour was asked to lay hands on him to pray for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, Seymour did and the man began shouting in other tongues. The two walked together back to the Asbery house for the evening prayer meeting.

When they arrived, every room was packed with people already praying. Seymour took charge of the meeting, leading the group in songs, testimonies, and more prayer. When Seymour told the story of this man’s healing and subsequent baptism, the man raised his hands and began to speak in other tongues. The entire group fell to their knees worshipping God and crying out for the baptism. Then, six or seven people lifted their voices and began to speak in another tongue.

People rushed outside prophesying and preaching. It was said that the front porch became the pulpit and the street the pews. For three days they celebrated what they declared “early Pentecost restored.” It was during the third night of these meetings, on April 12, 1906, after everyone had left, that Seymour himself was finally filled and began speaking in other tongues.

312 Azusa Street

Everyone knew another meeting place had to be found quickly as so many were flocking to the Asbery house to see and experience what was happening in the Spirit. On April 14, 1906, Seymour and his elders set out find the perfect place. They wandered the local area until they came upon a dead-end street where an

industrial business section once flourished. It was in a former Methodist Church that had been remodeled for other purposes. When a fire destroyed the second floor, the cathedral-shaped roof was flattened and covered with the tar. Now the building was being used for storage upstairs and a stable below. Seymour was offered the building for eight dollars a month.

People came from all over to help restore the property. They did a quick job of renovating the building, and it was just in time to receive the swell of crowds who would come seeking hope and restoration after the great San Francisco earthquake of April 18, 1906. The next day shocks were felt throughout Los Angeles, and even the wealthy fled to Azusa to seek refuge in God's Word and the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes the services ran continuously for ten to twelve hours; sometimes they ran for several days and nights. Some said the congregation never tired because they were so energized by the Holy Spirit. Many gathered after the services in the early morning hours talking about the Lord under the streetlights. Azusa began operating day and night. The entire building had been organized for full use.

Great emphasis was placed on the blood of Jesus, inspiring the group to a higher standard of living. Divine love began to manifest, allowing no unkind words to be spoken of another. The people were careful to make sure that the Spirit of God wouldn't be grieved. Both rich and poor, unlearned and educated, sat together on the makeshift pews.

Gathering Spiritual Momentum

It was said that the power of God could be felt at Azusa, even outside of the building. Scores of people were seen dropping into a prostrate position in the streets before they ever reached the missions. Then many would rise, speaking in tongues without any assistance from those inside.

By summer, crowds had reached staggering numbers, often into the thousands. The scene had become an international gathering—one witness described it as follows: “Every day trains unloaded numbers of visitors who came from all over the continent. New accounts of the meeting had spread over the nation in both the secular and religious press.”

Many newly baptized in the Holy Spirit, would feel called to a certain nation. Men and women were now departing for Scandinavia, China, India, Africa, Egypt, Ireland, and other nations. Robert Semple had a friend tell him about the miraculous events he had experienced at the meetings. Semple excitedly told his

new bride, Aimee Semple McPherson, all he had heard before they left for China. When Robert later died there, Aimee returned to America and settled in Los Angeles from where her phenomenal ministry would rise.

When John G. Lake visited the Azusa Street meetings, he was deeply touched by Seymour. He would later recount in his book *Adventures With God*, “It was not what he said in words, it was what he said from his spirit to my heart that showed me he had more of God in his life than any man I had ever met up to that time. It was God in him that attracted the people.”

In September of 1906, due to popular demand, Seymour began a publication entitled, *The Apostolic Faith*, which grew to twenty thousand subscribers within a few months. This number had more than doubled by the following year.

The Rising Tide of Persecution

When some members arrived at the mission early one morning to find the words “Apostolic Faith Mission,” they felt betrayed by Seymour’s willingness to align himself with the denominational influence of his former mentor Charles Parham. They did not want to become just another in Parham’s large network of churches and Bible schools. One observer wrote, “From that time, the trouble and division began. It was no longer a free Spirit for all as it had been. The work had become one more rival party and body, along with the other churches and sects of the city.”

Division continued to plague the Azusa mission. Seymour’s trusted secretary left with the mailing list of fifty thousand names to rally the support of the centers that had earlier been established in Seattle and Portland. She mailed the May, 1908 edition of Seymour’s popular publication from Portland requesting that all contributions be sent to the offices in Oregon from now on. No article written by Seymour appeared by the June issue and by midsummer 1908, all references to Los Angeles were omitted entirely. The lists were never returned so that Seymour was unable re-establish his subscription base and thus ended the dramatic era of Azusa.

The Sun Sets on Azusa Street

Throughout 1909 and 1910, Seymour continued his ministry at Azusa, though the number of people decreased dramatically. He was forced to leave two young men in charge of the mission and take to the road in order to raise the needed funds to maintain the mission. While he was on his cross-country preaching tour in early 1911, a man by the name William Durham was invited to hold meetings at Azusa in Seymour’s place. Hundreds once again flocked to the mission to hear Durham’s dramatic preaching. Many of the old Azusa workers, from various parts of the

world, returned to the mission for what they called “the second shower of the Latter Rain.” At one service, over five hundred people had to be turned away.

The last conflict at Azusa took place between Seymour and Durham. The two differed greatly in their theology. Durham preached that people could not lose their salvation if they sinned, but were saved by faith. Seymour, believing that sins of the flesh would indeed cause a believer to lose their eternal reward, quickly returned to Los Angeles to confront Durham.

Unable to come to an agreement in their doctrine, Seymour locked Durham out of the mission. Durham, unshaken, secured a nearby two-story building that seated more than one thousand people, and continued to hold his increasingly popular meetings. The second story of his building served as a widely sought prayer center that was open day and night. Thousands were saved, baptized, and healed there while the old Azusa Mission became virtually deserted.

Finishing the Race

In 1921, William Seymour made his last ministry campaign across America. When he returned to Los Angeles in 1922, people began to notice he looked very weary. He attended many ministry conventions, but was never publicly recognized from the platform. Finally, on September 28, 1922, while at the mission, Seymour suffered a heart attack. Later that day his heart failed him completely and he went home to be with the Lord.

Though the legacy and ministry of William J. Seymour seems heartbreaking, the results of his efforts between 1906 and 1909 produced and exploded the Pentecostal Movement around the world. Today, many denominations attribute their founding to the participants of Azusa. Most of the early Assembly of God leaders came out of Azusa—and probably everyone in the Pentecostal Movement today can attribute his or her roots in some way to Azusa. Regardless of doctrinal disputes, William Seym

Maria Woodworth-Etter

I have been in great dangers; many times not knowing when I would be shot down, either in the pulpit, or going to and from meetings...But I said I would never run, nor compromise. The Lord would always put His mighty power on me, so that He took all fear away, and made me like a giant...If in any way they had tried to shoot, or kill me, He would have struck them dead, and I sometimes told them so.¹

Within a short time after Maria Woodworth-Etter responded to God's call to "go out in the highways and hedges and gather in the lost sheep,"² and people were thronging to hear her speak with signs and wonders following. By 1885, without a public address system, crowds of over twenty-five thousand pressed in to hear her minister while hundreds fell to the ground under the power of God.³ Woodworth-Etter not only shook up denominational religion, she rocked the secular world with life-altering displays of God's power.

Those who came to investigate, condemn, or harass her seemed most at risk of "falling out" in what was described as a trance-like state. Maria preached that these strong manifestations of the Spirit were "nothing new; they were just something the Church had lost."⁴ She was unwavering in her determination to break the strongholds that held people, communities, and whole cities in bondage. It seemed the more opposition she faced, the more she dug in her heels. Maria produced invincible strength through tenacious prayer that enabled her to take authority and minister with grace and power. She was known as a revivalist who could break towns open.

Maria Woodworth-Etter did not immediately heed the Lord's call to evangelistic ministry in her life. As a single woman in the latter part of the nineteenth century, she felt the need to position herself by first obtaining an education and then marrying a missionary. Her well thought-out plans were interrupted when her father suddenly died in a farming accident and she was left with the burden of helping support her family. She met P.H. Woodworth upon his return from the Civil War, and after a brief courtship, they married and took up farming.

Over the course of time, P.H. and Maria became the parents of six children. Farming life proved difficult and they struggled with the demands of making a living and raising a family. Maria was frustrated that she couldn't answer the call to ministry due to the demands of her life on the farm as a wife and mother of a growing family. She battled illness and disappointment that her husband did not share her desire for ministry. Then overwhelming tragedy struck as the Woodworth's lost five of their six children to illness. P.H. never recovered from this loss and Maria did her best to support him while raising their only surviving daughter. Instead of growing bitter, Maria applied the Word of God to her heart.

She came to understand through her study of the Bible that God had used women as ministers, prophets, and leaders. From the prophecy of Joel she read that God would pour out his Spirit on both men and women. Still, she felt inadequate and ill-equipped to be of useful service to the Lord. She continued to study and later

wrote, “The more I investigated, the more I found to condemn me.”⁵

Then Maria had a vision. Angels came into her room and took her to the West, over prairies, lakes, forests, and rivers where she saw a long, wide field of waving grain. As the view unfolded she began to preach and saw the grains begin to fall like sheaves. Then Jesus told her that, “just as the grain fell, so people would fall” as she preached.⁶ Finally, Maria yielded to the increasingly clear call and asked the Lord to anoint her for ministry.

And the Lord did. Shortly after she began ministering to small groups in her community, churches began inviting her to speak to their congregations. The result was always a deep conviction among the hearers as they fell to the floor weeping. Soon she was invited westward and began traveling extensively. It wasn’t long before she had held nine revivals, preached two hundred sermons, and started two churches with Sunday school memberships of over one hundred people. God honored Maria’s dedication and faithfulness restoring her heart and the years she had lost.

But it was not until she preached at a church in western Ohio that the meaning of her vision about the sheaves of wheat became clear. Here the people fell into what seemed like “trances”—an altered state which would come to profoundly mark her ministry and confound the wise of her day. “Fifteen came to the altar screaming for mercy. Men and women fell and lay like dead,” Maria recounted. “After laying on the floor for some time, they sprang to their feet shouting praises to God. The ministers and elder saints wept and praised the Lord for His ‘Pentecost Power’⁷—and from that meeting on, her ministry would be marked by this particular manifestation with hundreds miraculously healed, and hundreds more coming to Christ.

At every meeting she held, there was a demonstration of the power of the Spirit. One reporter wrote, “Vehicles of all sorts began pouring into the city at an early hour—nothing short of a circus or a political rally ever before brought in so large a crowd.”⁸ Maria couldn’t answer all the invitations she received to minister, but the ones she did accept created a national stir that has never been silenced. The writings of then young F.F. Bosworth described the spectacular meetings that took place in Dallas, Texas, from July through December. As a result, Dallas became a hub of the Pentecostal revival.

Along with Maria’s ministry success came great pressures and severe persecution. It was during a controversial crusade in Oakland, California—where she had met with unusually challenging opposition—she decided to leave her unfaithful

husband after his infidelity had been exposed. After twenty-six stormy years of marriage, they were divorced in January of 1891. In less than a year, P.H. remarried and publicly slandered Maria's character. He died not long after on June 21, 1892, of Typhoid Fever.

God, however, continued to honor Maria. As she persistently sowed, labored, and reaped a momentous harvest for the Lord, God sent her a true friend and partner in Samuel Etter. Again her sorrow was turned to joy as the two were married in 1902. Samuel became a vital part of Maria's ministry in every capacity and the two collaborated for Christ until his death twelve years later. Maria never wavered in her dedication to the healing and evangelistic ministry she was so powerfully called to. She seemed invincible in her ability to carry on in the face of tragedy and opposition. Her fame for miraculous healings and revival services grew, as did her critics. But God silenced them all.

She has been called the grandmother of the Pentecostal movement. None has done more than Maria Woodworth-Etter to shed light on the convicting power of the Holy Spirit, the role of women in ministry, and the power of miracle crusades to revive a nation. In addition, she brought insight on how to effectively administrate massive miracle crusades, build sustainable ministry centers and manage opposition in the public arena. Her commitment and dedication personally influenced such great heroes of the faith as Smith Wigglesworth, Aimee Semple McPherson, John Alexander Dowie, John G. Lake, E.W. Kenyon, F.F. Bosworth, and Kathryn Kuhlman.

Her legacy is evidenced by the ongoing ministry work of healing evangelists around the world. Though, for the last six years of her life, she confined herself to ministering from the Tabernacle she had erected in Indianapolis, IN, her healing anointing remained as powerful as ever. She continued to speak with power from the Word of God until her very last days. As she became weaker, she was carried in a chair to the pulpit, and finally ministered a touch of healing or a word of hope from her bed.

In 1924, at the age of eighty, Maria B. Woodworth-Etter fell into a deep sleep and went home to be with the Lord. Her passing was mourned by all whose lives she touched and was felt by the entire nation. She ministered God's healing power with the last ounce of her strength, proclaiming God's love with the last of her breath.

“The Father of Pentecost”

I returned fully convinced that while many had obtained real experience in sanctification and the anointing that abideth, there still remained a great outpouring of power for the Christians who were to close this age.

In a time when divine healing and moves of the Spirit had scarcely been heard of, Charles Parham introduced the American church to the power available through pursuing a Spirit-filled life. He revealed to the church the life-giving power found in the baptism of the Holy Spirit that was evidenced by speaking in other tongues. He sought to bring a balance of both the intellectual and experiential to the Body of Christ at the turn of the last century as a teacher, rooted and grounded in the Word of Truth, as well as a healing evangelist moved by compassion, commitment, and an amazing faith.

From envisioning and founding a Healing Home to establishing Bible Schools, Parham studied to show himself approved with a rare diligence while fervently working to prove the truth of God’s Word through the demonstration of faith. He gathered crowds exceeding seven thousand people while his ministry contributed to over two million conversions.

Trial by Fire

As with many of our heroes of faith, Charles suffered greatly as a child. He battled serious illness from infancy and then at the age of seven he lost his mother to a terminal sickness. Her parting words to him were, “Charlie, be good.” Though he had four brothers, he was overwhelmed by grief and loneliness. But the words of his mother rang in his ears and two years later, at the age of nine, Charles felt the call to ministry.

Though he continued to battle debilitating physical ailments throughout his childhood, Charles became increasingly hungry for God. Due to a lack of libraries and formal instruction, he read history books along with his Bible to educate and prepare himself for ministry. He practiced a life of service by helping his brothers do chores and preached rousing sermons to the farm animals.

Answering and Re-answering the Call

Up until the age of thirteen, Parham had only heard the sermons of two preachers, and it was after one of these meetings that Parham experienced a powerful conversion. He was walking home heavy-hearted humming “I Am Coming to The Cross,” pondering how he could be certain of his salvation, when he recalled experiencing a “flash from the heavens, a light above the brightness of the sun, like a stroke of lightning it penetrated, thrilling every fiber of my being.”

He soon began teaching Sunday school and held his first public meeting at the age of fifteen. He continued to preach before entering Southwestern Kansas College at the age of sixteen. It was there he became aware of the public’s disrespect for and the general poverty of ministers. Discouraged, he began to look for other professions. In light of his traumatic childhood illnesses he decided that the medical field would suit him well. Not long after changing his educational goals, he contracted rheumatic fever.

He suffered for months from fever and the guilt of leaving his first call. He cried out to God that if he would not have to beg for a living he would preach. Heavily sedated with morphine, and with nearly his last breathe, he prayed the Lord’s Prayer. When he arrived at the phrase “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” his mind cleared and he realized it was God’s will to heal. So he cried out to God, “If Thy will is done in me, I shall be whole!” As he did, his lungs cleared and he was completely healed. In that moment, Parham renewed his commitment to give himself fully to ministry.

Following Christ Alone, With Sarah

Not long after, at the age of eighteen, Charles held his first evangelistic meeting in the Pleasant Valley School House near Toganoxie, Kansas. It was there he met Sarah Thistlewaite who he would marry five years later. In the meantime, when Charles was only nineteen, he was asked to pastor the Methodist church in Eudora, Kansas. He fulfilled this position faithfully while continuing to pastor in Linwood on Sunday afternoons where Sarah and her family regularly attended services.

His congregation steadily grew in Eudora, but Parham did not feel bound to promote the Methodist denomination. He exhorted new converts to find any church home even if wasn’t Methodist. He proclaimed that being a member of a denomination was not a prerequisite for heaven and that denominations focused too much on promoting themselves rather than Jesus Christ. Parham’s primary aim was to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit regardless if it was contrary to any denominational objective.

Parham began to pray for direction. He felt the Lord leading him into the evangelistic field and decided to hold meetings in schools, halls, or any church willing to have him and believe for the Holy Spirit to manifest Himself in a mighty way. It was at this time that Parham proposed to Sarah. In a letter he explained that his life was totally dedicated to the Lord and that his future was unclear, but if she could trust God with him, they should marry. Six months later, on December 31, 1896, they wed.

A Revelation of Healing

The young couple was well received as they traveled and ministered across the plains of Kansas. Soon after the birth of their first son, Charles fell ill and began to weaken from heart disease. As he battled physical weakness, their tiny son was stricken with a mysterious fever. Doctors or medications could help neither father nor son. In his weakened state, Charles was called upon to pray for another ailing man. While praying for him he heard the words “Physician, heal thyself” ring out of his spirit and the power of God touched Parham who was healed instantly.

He rushed home to tell Sarah and pray for his baby. He immediately threw away all of his medications vowing never to again trust in anything but the Word of God. The fever miraculously left his son who grew to be a healthy child.

The joy of victory was soon turned to mourning as Parham received news that two of his closest friends had died. Despairing, he determined to proclaim the gospel of divine healing. From this time forward Parham’s ministry was marked by his dedication to preach the power of Christ to heal.

Signs Following

The Parhams moved to Ottawa, Kansas, where Charles held his first diving healing meeting. He boldly proclaimed the Word of God regarding His will and provision regarding healing. As Parham inspired the faith of his listeners, miraculous healings began to take place. A woman who had been given three days to live was instantly healed. Another woman who was blind received her sight.

Although healing crusades were taking place in other parts of the country through the ministries of John Alexander Dowie and Maria Woodworth Etter, the people of rural Kansas had not been exposed to such manifestations of the Spirit. Word quickly spread and many in fear and ignorance accused Parham of witchcraft. Accusations such as this drove him to withdraw and search the scriptures. Everywhere he looked in the Bible, healing was present. Parham realized that healing, just as salvation, came through the atoning work of the blood of Jesus, and

from that point on, persecution and slander never offended him.

The Spirit in Action

By early 1899, the Parhams opened a home for divine healing. Sarah named it “Bethel.” The purpose was to minister to the sick around the clock. Powerful teaching services were held daily while individual prayer was offered several times throughout the day and night. On the ground floor was a chapel, reading room, and printing office. Upstairs were fourteen rooms with large windows. The Parhams kept the windows filled with fresh flowers and the atmosphere charged with peace and beauty. This refuge also placed orphans in Christian homes and found jobs for the unemployed. In addition, Bethel offered special classes for ministers and evangelists to train and equip them for the ministry field.

Such an undertaking should have been more than enough to keep the Parhams busy! But because of Bethel’s success, many began to urge Parham to open a Bible School. After much prayer and fasting, Parham secured a large, beautiful building in Topeka, Kansas, in October of 1900. The Bible school was open to anyone willing to “forsake all” to follow the teachings of Christ. They were to come willing to study the Word deeply and believe God for all their personal needs.

Tongues of Fire

It was here that eager students were instructed to study the book of Acts over a period of three days and report back to Parham what they found. Every one of Parham’s forty students reported finding that all who received the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the book of Acts spoke in other tongues. Now there was a great excitement at the school surrounding the book of Acts.

Anticipation filled the atmosphere as people gathered for the evening Watch Night Service. A spiritual freshness seemed to blanket the meeting. A student named Agnes Ozman approached Parham and asked him to lay his hands on her so she would receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Parham hesitated not having received himself, but after she persisted, he humbly laid his hands on her head and she began speaking Chinese. She was unable to speak English for three days!

After witnessing this outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the students moved their beds from the upper dormitory and turned it into a prayer room. There they waited for two night and three days upon the Lord. Upon returning home from a meeting, Parham was led up to the room where he found twelve denominational ministers all speaking in other tongues. Overcome by what he saw, Parham fell to his knees praising God. He asked God for the same blessing, and after the Lord spoke to him

about revealing the truth of this mighty outpouring everywhere he went—and that he would face severe persecution as a result—he was filled and spoke with other tongues.

The Birth of a Movement

Soon news of what God was doing had the Bible school besieged with newspaper reporters, language professors, and government interpreters. They sat in on the services to tell the whole world of this incredible phenomenon. They had come to the consensus that these students were speaking in the world's diverse languages and their newspapers were headlined, "Pentecost! Pentecost!" Newsboys shouted, "Read about the Pentecost!"

On January 21, 1901, Parham preached the first sermon dedicated to the sole experience of the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in other tongues. Parham went through the country preaching the truths of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in wonderful demonstration. Once when Parham began to speak in a tongue unknown to him, a man in the audience jumped to his feet and declared he had been delivered of infidelity having heard Psalm 23 in his mother tongue. Parham's ministry was not limited to preaching divine healing. Now untold numbers were being delivered from all types of bondages as Parham revealed the freedom and power available to all believers through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Price of Victory

Along with fame and victory came persecution and sorrow. Not only did this mighty outpouring of the Spirit give rise to slanderous persecution, tragedy struck the Parham household when their youngest child died on March 16, 1901. The family was grief-stricken. Their sorrow was further compounded when those who did not believe in divine healing blamed them for the death of their son. But through it all, the Parhams showed tremendous character. They kept their hearts tender toward God and continued to preach with even greater fervency.

In the fall of 1901, the Bible school was unexpectedly sold out from under them. They moved into a rented home in Kansas City and Parham began to hold meetings around the country. Hundreds from every denomination received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and divine healing. A Kansas newspaper wrote:

“Whatever may be said about him, he has attracted more attention to religion than any other religious worker in years.”

Regaining Momentum

Despite persecution, loss, and disappointment, Parham published his first book, *A Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness*, in 1901. The book was filled with sermons on salvation, healing, and sanctification. Then in June of 1902, another son was born to the Parhams. In 1903, Charles had his first experience with fanaticism and dedicated himself to studying the nature of the Holy Spirit and teaching how to discern what is truly of the Spirit and what is not.

By the fall of that year, the Parhams moved to Galena, Kansas, where they erected a large tent. The tent could hold two thousand people, but it was still too small to accommodate the crowds. As winter set in they managed to secure a building although they were forced to leave the doors opened so that those remaining outside could participate. Huge number poured into Galena from surrounding towns when strong manifestations of the Spirit occurred, and hundreds were miraculously healed and saved.

Two national newspapers declared Parham’s Galena meetings to be the greatest demonstration of power and miracles since the time of the Apostles, writing, “Many come to scoff but remain to pray.”

Days of Glory

On March 16, 1904 another son was born into the Parham family. One month later Charles moved the family to Baxter Springs, Kansas, and continued to hold tremendous meetings around the state. In 1905, Parham was invited to Orchard, Texas. While he ministered there, the outpouring of the Spirit was so great that he was inspired to begin holding “Rally Days” throughout the country. Many from Kansas volunteered to assist in the outreach, which was successfully launched in Houston, Texas, just a few short weeks later.

The team returned to Houston once more due to high public demand, only this time they suffered severe persecution. Several of Parham’s workers were poisoned during one meeting making them very ill. They suffered with severe pain. Parham immediately prayed for each of them, and they all recovered completely. Parham’s own life was threatened several times. But not even poison enough to kill a dozen men could keep him down.

Undaunted by the persecution, Parham announced the opening of a new Bible school in Houston and moved his headquarters there in the winter of 1905. It was

here that William Seymour was introduced to the baptism of the Holy Spirit and attended Parham's school.

When the historic school came to a close, Parham moved his family back to Kansas where his last child was born on June 1, 1906.

The Beginning of the End

Around this time, Parham received letters from William Seymour asking him to come to the Mission on Azusa Street to help him discern the moves of the Spirit there. He was concerned that not all the manifestations being experienced were genuinely of the Holy Spirit. At the same time Parham felt led to hold a rally in Zion, Illinois in the wake of Alexander Dowie's decline there. The people of Zion were disillusioned and losing hope making them vulnerable to corrupt forces attempting to take control of the city.

Parham decided to bring the blessing of the baptism of the Holy Spirit to the discouraged people of Zion. He met with great opposition but eventually managed to secure a private meeting room in a hotel. After just one night he required two rooms and the hallway and then the meetings grew from there. Soon Parham was invited to hold meetings in the largest homes of the city—one of which belonged to renowned author F. F. Bosworth. The meetings were tremendously successful and prompted the most ardent persecution. Not only were the newspapers critical, but Dowie himself spoke out against Parham. The overseer of the city asked him to leave.

In October of 1906 Parham felt released to leave Zion and hurried to Los Angeles to answer Seymour's call. Parham and Seymour were unable to come to see eye-to-eye regarding the manifestations of the Holy Spirit, and after holding only a few meetings there, Seymour locked Parham out of the mission.

Parham returned to Zion in December of 1906, again unable to obtain a building. He set up a large tent capable of seating two thousand people and again had such powerful meetings that opposition soon arose. When he closed the meetings, he traveled alone to preach in Canada and New England leaving his family in Zion. The entire family suffered from harassment there. Finally one day Mrs. Parham received a devastating letter accusing her husband of scandalous acts. She was forced to move her children back to Kansas.

A Legacy of Faith

The Parhams suffered greatly at the maligning of Charles' character. His enemies were using any means possible to destroy his reputation. National headlines read that he had been arrested for sodomy with his supposed companion. All of this was proven false and later recanted by the newspapers. Parham later wrote about the ordeal: "The greatest sorrow of my life is the thought that my enemies in seeking my destruction have ruined and destroyed so many precious souls."

For the remainder of his life, Parham suffered as a result of the scandal. His ministry was threatened, as was his life on occasion. But he was steadfast in his commitment to continue traveling and preaching. He held tremendous meetings in the Pacific Northwest where thousands were healed and baptized in the Holy Spirit. It was in one of these meetings in the winter of 1924 that Gordon Lindsay found salvation and would later establish the international Bible college, Christ for the Nations.

In 1927, Charles Parham realized his lifetime dream of traveling to the Holy Land. He returned in April, 1928 with slides of his visits to Jerusalem, Galilee, Samaria, and Nazereth and spent the next year and a half showing them at his meetings. After spending Christmas of 1928, with his family, he was scheduled to preach and show his slides in Temple, Texas, and it was there while making his presentation he collapsed from heart failure. In a weakened condition he returned to his home in Kansas. He waited for his son Wilfred to return from ministry in California, while his youngest son, Robert, quit his job to be at his side. After many days fasting and praying, Robert came to Parham's bedside to tell him he had dedicated his life to the ministry. Parham was filled with joy and a great peace overcame him. He died quietly on January 29, 1929, at the age of fifty-six.

"A Woman of Destiny"

Show me a better way to persuade willing people to come to church and I'll be happy to try your method. But please . . . don't ask me to preach to empty seats. Let's not waste our time quarreling over methods. God has use for all of us. Remember the recipe in the old adage for rabbit stew? It began, "first catch your rabbit." ¹

Perhaps what Aimee Semple McPherson is most remembered for today is founding the Foursquare denomination that is still growing today. However, her life was

marked by an unprecedented boldness in speaking and ministry from early childhood. She accomplished what no man had yet been able to do in ministry when in 1922 she built a five thousand-seat auditorium in a prestigious area of Los Angeles, which became the envy of Hollywood theater owners. On opening day, January 1, 1923, the new Angelus Temple was featured on a float in Pasadena's Tournament of Roses parade—while the extravagant dedication service was given full coverage in the New York Times. What became the home of "The Church of the Foursquare Gospel" filled four times each Sunday and twice weekly. Aimee also ministered at highly sought after healing services during the week.

Movie stars such as Mary Pickford, Jean Harlow, Charlie Chapman, and Anthony Quinn were known to attend Sunday services at the famous Angelus Temple. As a dramatic, theatrical person herself, Aimee used drama, music, opera, and extravagant stage sets to convey the gospel. Over the course of her life, she composed 175 songs and hymns, several operas, and thirteen drama-oratorios.¹

In the same year she opened Angelus Temple, she founded the world-renown L.I.F.E. (Lighthouse of International Foursquare Evangelism) Bible college where Aimee was an avid instructor and took part in graduating over 8,000 ministers who gave rise to the countless churches currently associated with the Foursquare denomination. By the following year, in February 1924, she opened the first Christian radio station KFSG (Kall Four Square Gospel), and was the first woman to obtain an FCC license.

Her tenacity, creativity, and courage have left a far-reaching legacy both in Christian broadcasting and entertainment, as well as crusade evangelism and denominational practices. She reached the unreachable, and opened territory for Christ where literally no man had gone before. She set the stage for greats like Kathryn Kuhlman, who was just giving her life to the Lord in 1922, and who would later host the first televised evangelistic healing program. It is interesting to note that in the same year the world famous Aimee Semple McPherson was launching her radio station, Kathryn had just started preaching as a teenager, and Maria Woodworth Etter had breathed her last breath at eighty years of age.

The Birth of a Legend

Aimee Elizabeth was born to James Morgan and Minnie Kennedy on October 9, 1890, in Ontario, Canada, the only daughter of a wealthy farmer. Her mother was a Salvationist and prayed that if the Lord would give her a daughter she would dedicate her to the ministry to fulfill the calling that she had neglected to fill herself. And so the Lord gave her Aimee, and Minnie supported her in the work of

the ministry throughout her life. Both her mother and father treasured their daughter and she grew up with all the benefits that doting, wealthy, Christian parents could offer.

Aimee was beautiful and precocious, and as a pre-teen demonstrated her gift for public speaking and debate. She became well known in village theater productions and won the silver medal for speech at the Women's Christian Temperance Union at the age of twelve. She went on to compete for the gold in London, Ontario. By the time she was thirteen, Aimee was a celebrated public speaker in high demand at church functions and social events. She was headstrong and outspoken, often challenging teachers and church leaders. By the time she was seventeen, she had become disillusioned by the strict, religious doctrines of her Methodist church, being witness to hypocrisy, and struggled internally to reconcile her understanding of religion versus truth.

The Dawn of Destiny

The day after crying out to God to show her His true Self, she happened upon a revival meeting being held by Irish evangelist, Robert Semple. Being curious about the Pentecostal experiences she had heard of, her father took her to the meeting where her life would be forever changed. Robert had come to the experience of speaking in other tongues when it spread from Parham's ministry in Topeka, Kansas to Chicago. It was there God filled him and called him to full-time ministry. He became a very successful evangelist well known throughout Canada and the northern U.S. and was now speaking in Aimee's hometown.

When Robert Semple spoke, his words pierced Aimee's heart like an arrow and when he began to minister in other tongues, she understood every word. Three days later, Aimee stopped her carriage in the middle of a lonely road, lifted her hands toward heaven and cried out for God's mercy. It was there she was powerfully born again. Shortly after committing her life to the Lord, she was given a vision of a black river rushing past with millions of people being swept into it. They were helplessly pushed along by the current and falling over a waterfall. It was then she heard the Lord say, "Become a winner of souls."

She became hungry for more of God and the power to fulfill her calling. She began to attend "tarrying" meetings where believers sought the baptism of the Holy Spirit, even skipping school to "tarry," causing great alarm to her parents. One day, as she passed by the house where the tarrying meetings took place, she couldn't resist going inside. She went in and explained how she longed to stay and receive the baptism. As they began to pray, Aimee asked God to delay school, and

moments later an icy blizzard hit preventing her from traveling further. She was snowed in for the entire weekend. By the following morning, she began loudly speaking forth in other tongues waking the entire household. Among them was Robert Semple.

Robert traveled extensively but corresponded regularly with Aimee and by the spring of that year he proposed marriage to her in the same house she received the baptism a few months earlier. Six months later, on August 12, 1908 they were married in her family's farmhouse.

Stepping Out In Ministry

The Semples moved to Chicago in January 1909 where they ministered with William Durham. Later in the year they traveled with Durham to Ohio to work in another mission. It was here that Aimee had her first experience with divine healing. After breaking her ankle, she was told she would never have use of four ligaments again and to stay off her feet for a month. As she sat in frustration and pain staring at her black and swollen toes, she heard the Lord say, "If you will go over to the (mission) and ask Brother Durham to lay hands on your foot, I will heal it." She obeyed, and after Durham prayed for her foot she felt the bones and ligaments mend. Excitedly she asked someone to cut the cast off and as soon as they did she sprung up and danced around the church.³

Not long after, early in 1910, when the Semples were expecting a child, they set sail for China. On the way they traveled to Ireland to visit Robert's parents and then went on to London where Robert preached several meetings. While in London, Aimee was asked to preach for the first time in public. Although she was only nineteen, she wanted to be obedient to God's call. She ministered to the people from Joel 1:4 and got so caught up in the anointing that she couldn't remember anything she said, only the power of the anointing and the clapping and wiping of eyes when she had finished.

Trial by Fire

In June of 1910, the Semples arrived in Hong Kong where they were unprepared for the culture and living circumstances they found themselves in. The poverty and filth were alarming. Aimee was revolted by the Chinese diet of caterpillars, bugs, and rats. They got little rest in their tiny, noisy apartment, which they discerned was "haunted" by demon spirits. One day the Hindus burned a man alive outside

their kitchen window. Aimee was beside herself trying not to give into hysteria. Because of their poor living conditions, they both contracted malaria and not two months after they arrived, on August 17, 1910, Robert was pronounced dead.

One month later, on September 17, 1910, Aimee gave birth to a four-pound baby girl, Roberta Star. As she lay exhausted and mourning in the Hong Kong hospital, she was overcome by grief at the loss of her husband and overcome by the thought of carrying on alone. She was inconsolable. Finally, she received word that her mother was sending money enough for her to return home. As this young, grief-stricken missionary steamed back across the ocean, the tiny baby she held in her arms brought her comfort and hope.

The Turning Point

After mourning the loss of Robert for a year in her childhood home, Aimee became restless for the ministry and returned to Chicago and New York seeking to minister in the churches that Robert left behind. In New York she met Harold McPherson who was a solid and kind Christian man who offered Aimee a proposal of marriage. She accepted and they were married on February 28, 1912. By July Aimee was expecting her second child. A boy she named Rolf was born on March 23, 1913. As a mother, Aimee began to realize that an emotional maturity and stability were being built within her that would benefit her future ministry.

God continued to call Aimee into the evangelistic ministry. She worked around the community, teaching and preaching, but this did not satisfy the deep yearning God birthed in her to reach the multitudes. In 1914, she became gravely ill. After a series of surgeries there was no improvement. She became so despondent she even begged God to let her die. The physicians called for her mother and Harold's mother to inform them of Aimee's approaching death. As she lay in a lifeless coma, Aimee heard God's voice asking her, "Will you go?" From somewhere deep within her, she managed to whisper that she would. When she opened her eyes all the pain was gone and within two weeks she was up and well.

Answering the Call

From that point on, Aimee was determined to follow the call of God no matter what the cost. When Harold did not want to follow with her, she took her children and left for a camp meeting in Toronto, Canada. Soon she began preaching on her own, using any method to draw a crowd. In 1915, one of her meetings drew more than five hundred people. Her mother agreed to care for the children while she built her ministry. Besides her dramatics and anointing, she was a woman preacher, so everyone was curious to see and hear her.

The first \$65 Aimee earned went towards buying a much needed tent which was worth over \$500 dollars. When she unrolled the seasoned canvas she found that it wasn't such a bargain after all. It had been ripped to shreds in some places so she and her volunteers sewed until their fingers were sore managing to erect the patchwork tent by sunset. She continued to draw large crowds, and once saw Harold in attendance, who, before the night was over, was filled with the Holy Spirit. He joined her briefly in the meetings but could never reconcile himself to her vagabond lifestyle and eventually returned home and filed for divorce.

For the next seven years, Aimee traveled across the United States preaching and ministering divine healing in more than 100 cities, holding meetings that lasted from two nights to a month. By 1919, her message of healing and restoration was in such high demand that she realized a permanent place to minister would be of great benefit. The Lord led her to settle in Los Angeles in the wake of the Azusa Street revivals where the people were ready to receive her ministry; her supporters there even donated land and built her a home. Between 1919 and 1923 she traveled the country nine more times raising money for the building of Angelus Temple.

Momentous Times and Mysterious Headlines

After a meeting in Denver in June of 1922, when Aimee was interviewing with a reporter, someone asked her to pray for an invalid outside. She invited the reporter to accompany her and when they walked out a side door they were abducted by the Ku Klux Klan. Blindfolded they were taken to a secret meeting where the Kathryn Kuhlman requested Aimee to deliver a special word meant for them alone. She delivered a message out of Matthew 27 on "Barabbas, the man who thought he would never be found out." Afterward they pledged their national and "silent" support. Then the two were returned blindfolded to the hall in Denver.

The reporter published a great story about the kidnapping which brought Aimee even more publicity and garnered more funds for the building of the Temple. The Temple was completed in December 1922 and dedicated on January 1, 1923. While continuing to lead multiple services each Sunday, and conducting healing services throughout the week, Aimee launched the Bible college later that same year adding bible instruction to an already demanding schedule. Early in the following year, February 1924, she opened her radio station delivering messages across the radio waves.

The Kidnapping

By 1926, Aimee was in need of a vacation. Early in the year she traveled to Europe and the Holy Land although she ended up preaching and ministering throughout

most of her visit abroad. On May 18, she and her secretary enjoyed an afternoon at the beach. There she made some final notes on a sermon to be given that night and asked her secretary to call the information back to the Temple. When her secretary returned, Aimee was gone.

Over the next thirty-two days, Aimee's disappearance became the hottest news story in the world. The beaches were combed and the outlying waters searched for any trace of her. When a ransom letter for \$500,000 was received, the press went wild. "Aimee sightings" were reported from coast to coast. A memorial service was finally held on June 20. Then three days later Aimee walked into Douglas, Arizona, from the desert at Agua Prieta, Mexico. ⁴

Aimee reported that a man and a woman approached her on the beach asking her to please come pray for their baby. She went with them and was forced into a car where another man was at the wheel. They used chloroform to subdue her and when she awoke she found herself in a shack with the same woman and two men. At one point, the two men left her with the woman who tied her up with bed cloths before going to the store. She managed to cut through the cloth with the jagged edge of a tin can. Once free she crawled through a window and walked through the desert for hours until she came upon a cabin in Douglas, Arizona.

Following a night in the hospital, some fifty thousand people welcomed Aimee back to Angelus Temple. But the Los Angeles District Attorney accused Aimee of lying and went to great lengths to discredit her. He produced witnesses who said they had seen her at a Carmel Bungalow with her radio producer. The witnesses' stories were never the same, while Aimee's story was always consistent. Eventually no malice was proven, nor were any kidnappers prosecuted. Oddly, the District Attorney was eventually sentenced to San Quentin and sadly Aimee's attorney was later found dead. It has been suggested and believed highly probable that the mob was behind the ordeal.

In Search of Refuge

As her popularity increased, so did the misguided investments of her promoters who involved her in all kinds of business ventures. When they failed, the blame and unpaid bills fell on her. Lawsuits, settlements, and the depression weighed heavily on Aimee and it took the next ten years to pay off all her debtors. The strain turned out to be more than she could handle and in 1930 she suffered a complete emotional and physical breakdown.

Aimee was confined to a Malibu cottage for ten months under a physician's constant care. When she returned to Angelus Temple she had recovered to some

extent but never regained her former vigor. By 1931, the price of fame had caused great loneliness. In desperate need of companionship, love, and protection, she married David Hutton. He was not the virtuous man she believed him to be, and not long after they were married, another woman sued him for breaking his engagement to her. After a year of proceedings, the court ruled against him.

While Aimee was away in Europe, in accordance with her doctor's advice, Hutton filed for divorce. The years between 1938 and 1944 were very quiet years. There was very little said about her in the press. Much of Aimee's efforts during these years were given to pastoring and training future ministers, as well as establishing hundreds of churches.

In 1942 she led a brass band and color guard into downtown Los Angeles to sell war bonds and sold \$150,000 worth of bonds in one hour. The U.S. Treasury awarded her a special citation for her patriotic endeavor. She also organized regular Friday night prayer meetings at Angelus Temple for the duration of World War II, gaining the expressed appreciation of President Roosevelt and California's governor.

An Unexpected End

By 1944, Aimee's health was very poor. In September, she and her son flew to Oakland to dedicate a new church. Due to a blackout in the city, she and Rolf spent the evening together in her room for some ministry and family talk. When the evening drew to a close, Rolf kissed his mother goodnight and left the room.

Plagued with insomnia, Aimee was taking sedatives prescribed by her physician to help her sleep. As she continued to battle sleep, she took another dose and by dawn she knew something was wrong. She called her doctor in Los Angeles who was in surgery so she called another doctor who referred her to Dr. Palmer in Oakland. Before she could make the third call, Aimee fell unconscious. At 10:00 a.m. Rolf found her in bed, breathing hoarsely, and tried to wake her. He called for medical assistance, but it was too late. On September 27, 1944, Aimee Semple McPherson went home to be with the Lord at the age of fifty-three.

Sixty thousand people came to pay their respects over the course of three days as Aimee's body lay in state at Angelus Temple. The stage, orchestra pit and aisles were filled with flowers. Then on Aimee's birthday, October 9, 1944, a motorcade of six hundred cars drove to Forest Lawn Memorial Park; two thousand mourners along with seventeen hundred Foursquare ministers whom she had ordained looked on as she was laid to rest.⁵

A True Hero of the Faith

Not only did Aimee Semple McPherson break the barrier for woman evangelists during a time when women were not accepted in the pulpit, but she also built the largest church auditorium of her day, launched the first Christian radio station, established a Bible college, and birthed an entire denomination that is still growing today. She did all of this in the midst of the Great Depression during which one and a half million people received aid from her ministry.⁶ She was acknowledged by the President of the United States and U.S. Treasury for her war efforts—and by the media for her enterprising theatrics and daring in reaching the lost. She was and remains a true hero of the faith.

“A Man of Notable Signs and Wonders”

God didn't put His endorsement upon one particular church, but He revealed that the pure in heart would see God . . . Let the fellow believe whatever he wants to about it. These things don't amount to very much anyhow. Be brothers, have fellowship with one another.¹

William Branham was beyond doubt a man of notable signs and wonders. From birth, supernatural manifestations marked his life. He truly walked with God for a time, but in the latter years of his life, began to err in doctrine and veer from his true calling. He did indeed have a divine impartation to minister healing and deliverance. A modern day prophet of biblical proportion, he healed the multitudes and delivered the afflicted from all kinds of demonic bondages and strongholds. He walked in the Spirit, guided by visions and angels: For a period of time the supernatural seemed to permeate his life and all he set his hand to.

During the height of Branham's ministry, from 1946-1954, great men came alongside him to promote and partner with him; men such as Gordon Lindsey, F.F. Bosworth, and Jack Moore. Branham's healing team launched what became known as the Voice of Healing magazine, which gave rise to the great healing revival of the early 1950s. This movement directly impacted T.L. Osborn, Kenneth Hagin, Oral Roberts, and others so that today the wider church has a firmer grasp on the truths regarding faith and healing.

Meager Beginnings

William Marrion Branham was born to a fifteen-year-old mother, and an eighteen-year-old father, in a tiny, dirt floor shack up in the hills of Kentucky. They were poor and illiterate, and had no interest in spiritual matters. William grew up without any knowledge of God, the Bible, or prayer. Yet God had a special call on his life and would go to great lengths throughout William's childhood to get his attention. From a young age, William heard God's voice, and knew that he was being called to a different kind of life than those around him.

He didn't understand the calling or how to quiet the longing he felt in his heart. At the age of nineteen he decided to move away hoping that he would find solace in a new location. He moved to Phoenix, Arizona where he worked on a ranch, but he still couldn't escape the sense that God was calling him. When he received news that his brother had died, he returned home to his grief-stricken family. It was at the funeral that he heard his first prayer and knew then that he needed to learn to pray.

Answering the Call

He stayed close to home to be near his grieving family, taking a job at a nearby gas works company. After two years on the job, William was overcome with gas fumes when testing a meter and ended up in the hospital where he underwent surgery for appendicitis. As he lay in the recovery room, he felt his life ebbing away. His body grew weaker and his mind grew dark; and then he heard the familiar voice saying, "I called you and you would not go." The words were repeated again and again. William's inner voice answered back, "Lord, if that is You, let me go back again to earth and I will preach our Gospel from the housetops and street corners."²

He was released from the hospital a few days later and began immediately to seek the Lord. He found a small, independent Baptist church that nurtured and prayed for him and then six months later ordained him an independent Baptist minister. William obtained a small tent and began to minister with great results. It was in June of 1933 at the age of twenty-four, that Branham held his first major tent revival. Three thousand people attended in one night. It was during this time that a supernatural manifestation occurred.

Branham Tabernacle

William was holding a special baptism service where he baptized 130 believers in the Ohio River. When he had baptized the seventieth person, this is what William described happened: "A whirl came down from the heavens above, here come that light, shining down . . . it hung right over where I was at . . . and it like to a-scared

me to death.” Many of the four thousand that saw the light ran in fear, some remained and fell in worship, others claimed to have heard an actual voice.³

Several months later, in the fall of that year, the people who attended those powerful meetings built a headquarters for William’s anointed ministry calling it “Branham Tabernacle.” From 1933 to 1946, Branham ministered at the Tabernacle while working at a secular job. During this time he also met his future wife, Hope Brumback, with whom he had two children before tragedy struck in 1937.

The Price of Disobedience

While Branham was on a fishing trip, he came across a camp meeting of the “Oneness Pentecostals” (a denomination often referred to today as “Jesus Only”) and was asked to minister there. Shortly after he started to speak, the power of God engulfed him and he ministered for the next two hours. Pastors from all over the country invited Branham to speak at their churches so that he completely filled his calendar for the following year.

When he had excitedly returned home to share the news with his wife, her mother was there and scorned him for associating with the Oneness Pentecostals. Branham capitulated to her rebuke and cancelled all his meetings. He would later regret this as the biggest mistake of his life. If he had gone on to hold those meetings, his family would not have been caught in the great Ohio flood of 1937.

As it turned out, in the winter of 1937, Hope had just given birth to their second child. Because her immune system had not been completely restored, she had succumbed to a serious lung disease. It was during this period of recovery that the levee broke on the Ohio River and the floodwaters rose. She and her two young children were transported to several locations during which time both became seriously ill with pneumonia. Hope’s lung condition turned to tuberculosis and she died only weeks later. Although the older child eventually recovered, the younger infant’s pneumonia turned to a fatal spinal meningitis and the baby died the same night as her mother.

The Rushing Wind

The next five years were difficult for William as he reeled from the loss. He continued to preach at the Branham Tabernacle and have prophetic visions. No one seemed to understand him or the nature of his visions and he grew more restless. He did remarry during this time for his oldest child’s sake and worked to provide for the family as a game warden in addition to preaching at the Tabernacle.

One spring day, in 1946, he came home for lunch and sat with a friend under a

large maple tree. All of a sudden, according to Branham, “It seemed that the whole top of the tree let loose . . . it seemed like something came down from that tree like a great rushing wind.” His wife came running out to see what the commotion was all about, and after getting a hold of his emotions, Branham shared all the past experiences he’d had with the wind rushing above him in the trees. Since he was a young child, a “mighty rushing wind” haunted him, spoke to him, and compelled him to seek God for answers.

He then told her that he was going to find out once and for all what was behind this “wind” and recalled that he had said, “I told her and my child good-bye and warned her that if I didn’t come back in a few days, perhaps I might never return.”

A Visit from an Angel

Branham left for a secluded place to pray and read the Bible. He cried out to the Lord to speak to him in some way. That night he noticed a light flickering in the room that began to spread across the floor and then grew into a ball of fire shining on the floor. Footsteps approached and he saw a large man dressed in a white robe coming toward him. The man spoke,

“Fear not, I am sent from the presence of Almighty God to tell you that your peculiar life and your misunderstood ways have been to indicate that God has sent you to take a gift of divine healing to the people of the world. If you will be sincere, and can get the people to believe you, nothing shall stand before your prayer, not even cancer.”

William humbly replied that he was so poor and uneducated no one would listen to him. The Angel gave him two gifts that he would use as signs to help the people believe. The first would be his ability to detect disease by a vibration in his left hand; and the other would be the word of knowledge revealing the secret sin hidden in a person’s heart.

Walking Out The Calling

The following Sunday after returning home, Branham shared with his congregation what he had experienced. While he was speaking, someone handed him a telegram requesting that he come to St. Louis to pray for a gravely sick daughter. He quickly took up an offering for the train-fare and borrowed a suit of clothes. At midnight he boarded the train for St. Louis.

He arrived to find the girl dying from an unknown sickness. She was weak and wasting away, hoarse from crying out in pain. William was moved to tears and pulled away to seek the Lord privately about what to do. He saw the answer in a

vision and waited until the conditions were just as he had seen them in the spirit. He asked the people present if they believed he was God's servant and directed them to do just he told them, nothing doubting. He proceeded to ask for several things and prayed according the vision the Lord had given him. Immediately the child was healed.

News spread quickly and the people of St. Louis asked Branham to return. In June of 1946 he conducted a twelve-day healing revival there where tremendous manifestations took place. The lame walked, the blind saw, the deaf heard, and the dead were raised. A woman who stood mocking outside dropped dead from a heart attack. Branham went out to pray for her and she revived praising God. The healings that took place were beyond count as Branham often stayed until 2:00 a.m. to pray for the sick.

From St. Louis he went on to Jonesboro, Arkansas, where 25,000 people attended the meetings.⁵ On one occasion, Branham went out to pray for a woman who had died in an ambulance outside the meeting hall. She sat up healed and Branham had to sneak out of the front of the ambulance under cover of disguise to return to the meeting.

Relentless Revival

1947 was a high profile year for Branham. In Arkansas he acquired his first campaign manager. Time published news of his campaigns as his ministry toured the western states. While in Portland, Oregon, T.L. and Daisy Osborn attended his meetings and were greatly influenced by what they witnessed. It has been said that this was the refreshing and refocus they needed to launch their world-changing international ministry.

This was also the year that Gordon Lindsey joined forces with Branham. Lindsey became his administrator and organized and promoted one of the greatest healing revivals to this day. Accompanied by Jack Moore, the "Union Campaign" joined the forces of the Oneness Pentecostals and the Full Gospel circles for a series of revival campaigns held throughout the Pacific Northwest and Canada. Branham was successful at avoiding doctrinal differences and leading thousands to salvation and healing. Reports stated that 1,500 souls were born again in a single service and as many as 35,000 healings were manifested during that stretch of ministry.

The Voice of Healing

The Branham team wanted to give a greater voice to the message of healing that could reach beyond the confine of their meetings so decided to distribute a monthly

publication they called The Voice of Healing magazine. Not long after his quick rise to national success, Branham suffered a nervous breakdown. In 1948, it was thought he might die when another rising healing evangelist, Oral Roberts, rallied believers everywhere to pray for Branham's restoration. Six months later, Branham was back on the scene.

In 1950, F.F. Bosworth joined the Branham team and together they conducted another major healing crusade gathering crowds of over 8,000 at a single service. During the same year, Branham traveled to Scandinavia making him the first Voice of Healing evangelist to travel to Europe. In the fall of 1951, the Voice of Healing ministry team traveled to Africa and held healing campaigns there through December. It is reported that the meetings were the greatest ever in South Africa with crowds exceeding 50,000 in number.⁶

Deviating from the Call

Branham remained very influential in the ministry of divine healing for nine years. During this time healing evangelists began to surface all over the country. In 1952, at the height of the Voice of Healing revival, forty-nine prominent healing evangelists were featured in The Voice of Healing magazine. The revelation of divine healing had reached an all-time peak across the world. But from that year on, the healing revival fires began to dwindle. By 1955, Branham began to experience difficulties, and his ministry took a radical change.

Branham had a falling out with Gordon Lindsey, who was forced to leave the ministry. Without Lindsey, his organization was mismanaged and fell into financial ruin. He also began to err in doctrine without the balanced voice of Lindsey who brought stability not only to his administrative affairs, but also kept his teaching sound and bible-based.

As the glory days of the Voice of Healing revival began to wind down toward 1958, Branham searched for other ways to make his mark. He began teaching from his visions rather than from the Word of God. Not called to be a teacher, Branham began to veer off in extreme directions regarding his interpretation of truth. Disturbing doctrines were taught and emphasized throughout the remainder of his ministry.

God Removes a Prophet

On December 18, 1965, Branham and his family were traveling home to Indiana from Texas where William had preached for the last time at Jack Moore's church. His son was in the car ahead of theirs when a drunk driver swerved and missed the

son's car but hit William's car head on. Mrs. Branham was immediately killed. William was still alive when his son found him. He asked about his wife and when he was told she was dead, he instructed his son to place his hand upon her. His son picked up Branham's bloodied hand and placed it on Mrs. Branham. Instantly a pulse returned and she revived.

Branham remained in a coma for six days before he went to be with the Lord on December 24, 1965. Though saddened by his death, his ministry colleagues were not surprised. Gordon Lindsey wrote in his eulogy, "God may see that a man's special ministry has reached its fruition and it is time to take him home."⁷

Lindsey also accepted the interpretation of Kenneth E. Hagin—father of the Word of Faith movement—who had prophesied two years before that the Lord was "removing the prophet" from the scene. Branham died exactly when the Lord told Hagin he would. According to Hagin's prophecy, William Marrion Branham, the "father of the healing revival" had to be removed from the earth because of his disobedience to his call and the creation of doctrinal confusion.

"Generals in God's Army"

The chief danger of the 20th century will be religion without the Holy Ghost, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and Heaven without Hell.¹

William and Catherine Booth grew up in a dark England at the dawn of the industrial revolution. Unemployment, homelessness, labor abuses, and child prostitution were rampant in the British Isles. Both William and Catherine, from a young age, were moved by the plight of the poor and the devastating social injustice of their time—and both longed to serve the Lord in a mighty way. Neither separately might have changed the world for Christ, but together they were an unstoppable force for spiritual revival and social reform that would change history. Best known for founding the Salvation Army, which evangelized the poorest areas and provided food and shelter for the homeless, the Booths were also tireless advocates for the rights of factory laborers, working women, and homeless children.

William's & Catherine's Childhood

William was born in Sneinton, Nottingham, England in January of 1829, the only son of his three surviving siblings. By the time he was thirteen, his family was too poor to continue sending him to school so they apprenticed him to a pawnbroker. The next year his father died leaving his family in poverty. During the next six years of his apprenticeship, he started attending church and came to a personal revelation of Christ. He read the Bible hungrily and taught himself how to write and speak articulately in order to become a Methodist New Connexion minister (or lay preacher). He disliked the pawn broking business, and as soon as he was released from his apprenticeship in 1849, he headed for London to find more suitable work and opportunities to preach. Unfortunately, all he found were few chances to preach and only another pawn broking position offering much needed room and board that he reluctantly accepted.

Catherine was born in Ashbourne, Derbyshire, England in January of 1829, and suffered from several debilitating illnesses growing up rendering her housebound for most of her childhood. During her times of convalescence she studied the writings of John Wesley and Charles Finney among others, and by the age of twelve had read through the Bible eight times. Even as a youth, she was concerned about society's ills and wrote articles for magazines about the dangers of drinking alcohol. She was an avid supporter of the national Temperance Society and from an early age, felt called to preach. She also looked to reform the church's view of female ministers. At the time Catherine met William, he was an aspiring evangelist looking to make the ministry his sole vocation.

Divine Appointments

In 1851, William joined the Wesleyan Reform Union. It was about a year later, on his twenty-third birthday in April of 1852, that he left pawn broking to work full-time for the Reformers at their headquarters. It was during several meetings of this group that a mutual friend, Mr. Rabbits, introduced Catherine and William. The attraction between them was immediate, and after a long carriage ride home after the third time they met, they knew their lives would ever be connected.

William struggled between his affections for Catherine and his longing to become a traveling evangelist. After many sleepless, prayerful nights, barely one-month after that carriage ride, they became engaged on May 15, 1852. However, the two weren't married until three years later. In the interim, William was sent to Spalding in Lincolnshire, some one hundred miles away, to oversee several churches there.

Throughout this period of separation, William and Catherine grew ever closer

through daily correspondence by letter. They shared their deep affection for one another, as well as their political, social, and religious views. In addition, Catherine penned several well-articulated discourses on the biblical foundation regarding the equality of men and women in ministry. Most importantly, however, they encouraged each other in their faith and trust in the Lord.

Reunited At Last

William and Catherine were finally wed on June 16, 1855. William was so successful in his preaching duties on the Spalding circuit that he began to receive invitations from other areas. Booth was accepted as the Connexion's traveling campaigner but was given only a small stipend. It was a hard way to start life for the newlyweds, especially with a baby on the way, but they continued strong in their passionate pursuit of winning souls for Christ. In 1857, William was given charge of another pastorate. And a year later, he became a fully ordained minister and was transferred to yet another church. Frustrated at being "pinned down" by pastoral duties, William made the decision to follow his heart and give up his position with the Methodist New Connexion.

In 1861, William launched out as an independent preacher, and without any guarantee of income, the Booths traveled the country with a renewed evangelistic fervor. By now they had four children and had to rely completely on the goodwill of the churches where William preached. On Catherine's urging, William began holding tent meetings in London in 1865. It was during this time that William would come home bruised and bloody from the persecution he received on the streets. Evangelistic outreach to the roughest parts of London would be a turning point for the Booths and provide the framework for the remainder of their ministry efforts together. By the close of 1865, the Booths were the parents of seven thriving children, three boys and four girls. Their youngest, and eighth child, Lucy, was born in the spring of 1868.

The Rise of the Christian Mission

It was later that same year the Booth's founded the Christian Revival Association, which soon became known as the East London Christian Mission. Before long stations were opened in other parts of town so the work became known simply as the "Christian Mission." For the next decade, the Booth's labored under the banner of the Christian Mission all throughout London establishing what became twenty-six mission stations training and launching hundreds of voluntary speakers holding thousands of meetings in all sorts of places, increasing their numbers with every

passing year.

The Booths outreach efforts focused on the poorest areas, the slums and red light districts—they taught repentance, salvation, and Christian ethics to the most destitute including alcoholics, criminals, and prostitutes. They preached outside pubs and dancehalls, so often taking business away from the bars and public houses that a “Skeleton Army” was formed to harass and assault them as they ministered. It was dangerous work and many of the workers were severely injured and bloodied. The Booths and their volunteers, however, wore their wounds like badges of honor.

It was also during this time that the Christian Mission took on a social service aspect opening their “Food for the Million” soup kitchens and offering shelter to the homeless for a small price, or payment in labor hours. The Booths believed that to preserve a person’s dignity and sense of self-worth that they should be required to pay something for the assistance they received, even if all they had was time and two hands. Many of the mission beneficiaries became full-time volunteers, some speaking at meetings, others working as skilled laborers, to promote the growing cause.

The Volunteer Army Becomes The Salvation Army

In 1878, fifty-one new mission stations were opened. In May of that year, the “Volunteer Army” that the Booths were equipping to battle evil, officially became known as the “Salvation Army.” By early 1879, Booth was in command of 81 mission stations staffed by 127 full-time evangelists with over 1,900 voluntary speakers holding 75,000 meetings a year. In March of 1880, the Army opened work in the U.S. soon to be followed by missions being established in France, Australia, and India.² In the next ten years stations would be opened in Switzerland, Sweden, and most of the countries in the British Empire including Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, and Jamaica.

Booth was referred to as the General, he and all the Salvationist wore a uniform, and they carried a banner of red, blue, and gold with a sun symbol and the motto “Blood and Fire”—for the blood of Christ and the fire of the Holy Spirit—and were accompanied by bands marching military style playing military songs that were given Christian lyrics. The bands also played traditional drinking songs that they substituted Christian lyrics to, and of course an occasional hymn. The Army was a sight to behold and hear as they marched down the street waving their banner in full military regalia, drawing crowds as they played loud, victorious songs with a full array of instruments. Soon, because of their good works and persevering love,

they became more welcomed and supported by both the local citizenry and public officials who offered donations and police protection during their open-air crusades.

The Dangers of Match Making

During the 1880's, the Booths, Catherine in particular, were concerned by "sweated labor" where women and children worked long hours for low wages in very poor conditions. One particularly unfortunate circumstance was found in the cities' match making factories. The chemicals used for dipping the end of the matches were so toxic that the workers teeth would corrode before they were eventually poisoned to death. It was not uncommon for the entire side of the face to give way to decay, turning green and then black, leading to a certain death.

The Booths began campaigning to force the company to use safer chemicals. They publicized the affects of the toxic gases on the workers, and inquired about compounds used in other countries that were safer. The company insisted the matches would be prohibitively expensive and refused to change their methods.

In a bold move, the Booths set up their own match making factory that was well ventilated and used safer chemicals. They began selling their matches advertising that no workers were harmed in their manufacture and scolding shop owners who continued to carry the harmful matches. Although the Booths couldn't ultimately keep the factory open, combined with the bad press and competition, the old factories did make the necessary changes and provided working environments equal to what the Booth factory boasted.

Exposing the White Slave Trade

In one of the boldest moves, and certainly one of the most widely publicized in the late nineteenth century, the Booths, with the help of a journalist named W.T. Stead, set out to expose the white slave trade. This was a child prostitution ring that took advantage of poor, struggling families by buying their young girls to be placed in homes with false promises of a better future. The girls were put to work in brothels and sold to other prostitution rings throughout Europe.

Mr. Stead posed as a buyer and "purchased" a young girl from her mother with the help of a Salvationist who had been saved out of the prostitution. Stead documented the girl's travels right up to the point she was to be shipped off to the European mainland. When the story was printed in the paper and there was such a public outcry that Parliament was forced to change the legal age of consent for

young women from thirteen to sixteen. This public exposure also brought the force of the law down on the brothels. But this wasn't the end of the story.

Those who were profiting from the prostitution ring found the girl's father and charged Stead with kidnapping. By now the girl was saved and working at a Salvation Army mission in France. After a long and much publicized trial, the Booths were finally absolved any charges brought against them as a result of their association with Mr. Stead, and the journalist spent three, short months in prison. In the end, the Booths were recognized for all the good work they were doing and the Salvation Army received a boon of public support and publicity.

The Darkest Days

In 1888, Catherine was diagnosed with cancer. During her last years, the Booths, with the help of Mr. Stead, wrote a book exposing the tribulations of the poor and proposed solutions for widespread social reform. *The Darkest England and the Way Out* outlined the formation of employment offices, small loan bureaus, immigration and missing person services, and other social welfare strategies that seem the norm today.

The book was published in 1890, the same year that Catherine entered paradise. The book was revolutionary and became a bestseller for that time period selling two hundred thousand copies its first year. It has been reprinted several times, most recently in 1970. Widely read and considered a forerunner to textbooks on social change, *The Darkest England and the Way Out* left a legacy of social awareness that seems commonplace today.

Brought Before Kings

After Catherine's death and the success of *The Darkest England*, the Salvationist Army exploded onto the world scene. In that decade, the Salvationist Army continued to gain momentum under William's leadership and its presence was felt in all spheres the world over. By 1900, the Army was in twenty-five countries and had become a commonly known and widely accepted Christian service organization. Booth was highly respected by the general public, heads of state, and the mass media, all of who used the title of "General" with great reverence. He was granted audiences by the world's great leaders. In 1904, William was invited to visit with King Edward VII at Buckingham palace, and the following year was awarded a prestigious badge of honor on behalf of the city of London.

Throughout the last ten years of William's life, he tirelessly worked on behalf of the poor and continued to oversee the growing work of the now worldwide

Salvation Army. In 1907, General Booth made his last visit to the United States. Yet in 1909, at eighty years old, he set out on a six-month tour of England by motorcar, a novelty of that day. And then in 1910, he traveled throughout northern Europe and Italy encouraging the troupes only to return to England for yet another motor tour around the country.

He made his last public appearance on May 9, 1912, addressing seven thousand Salvationists at Albert Hall in London. He was now blind and his health had begun to deteriorate rapidly. He lost consciousness on August 18, and went home to Glory on August 20, 1912.

What are you living for? What is the deep secret purpose that controls and fashions your existence? What do you eat and drink for? What is the end of your marrying and giving in marriage—your money-making and toilings and plannings? Is it the salvation of souls, the overthrow of the kingdom of evil, and the setting up of the Kingdom of God? If not, you may be religious . . . but I don't see how you can be a Christian."³

“The Man of Reckless Faith”

God's going to open the eyes of the blind and cause the lame to walk, and the deaf to hear. He's going to do it right here in this church tomorrow night.¹

Jack Coe was an independent and determined force for Christ. He had an unreserved faith in the Word of God that he combined with a frank audacity which made him both controversial and effective as a healing evangelist. During the height of the Voice of Healing revivals, from 1945-1956, Coe ministered throughout the nation to multitudes of lost, sick, and dying. His crusades were unprecedented as his tent revivals grew to become the largest in history. He boasted of a tent larger than even Oral Roberts or the Ringling Brothers big top, and still turned away thousands every night.

But perhaps most memorable was his compassion for orphans. He built a home for children called the Herald of Healing Children's Home, as well as a Christian day school at the Dallas Revival Center he established. Among his other notable accomplishments were the construction of a live-in faith home for the sick where healing was ministered through teaching as well as prayer; the Revival Center

Church where people could attend services every night of the week; and the Herald of Healing publication that reached 300,000 subscribers by the time of his death in 1957 at only the age of 38.

A Long Road to Zion

Jack's youth was not a happy time. His father was a gambler and alcoholic leaving his mother to single-handedly raise their seven children. When Jack was nine years old it proved too much for her and she left Jack and his older brother at an orphanage. To make things worse, Jack's brother was hit by a car and killed when he tried to run away. When Jack was seventeen, feeling aimless and alone, he left the orphanage and took up a life of drinking and carousing. His health soon began to suffer and his doctor told him that his next drink could kill him.

Desperate for help, Jack moved to California where his mother lived hoping she might provide the accountability he needed to stay sober. As soon as he arrived, his sister invited him to a dance from where he was soon brought home in a drunken stupor. The next evening he grew very weak and thought he was dying. An ambulance brought him to a hospital where he was examined, and while there, he cried out to God for just one more chance. Suddenly, his symptoms disappeared and he went home fully recovered.

Getting Right with God

Jack took his mother with him to Fort Worth, Texas, where he was offered a good job as a manager for the Singer Sewing Machine Agency. He soon forgot about his promises to God and began to drink again. One night when he couldn't sleep after a night of drinking, he noticed his heart was bothering him. It would stop and start causing Jack to panic. Again, he cried out to God and heard Him say, "This is your last chance, I've called you several times, and I'm calling you now for the last time."² At this, Jack fell to his knees and pleaded with the Lord to give him until the following Sunday to set things straight.

When the next Sunday came, Jack arbitrarily chose a church out of the phonebook. His finger landed on a Nazarene church so that's where he decided to go. When the pastor made the altar call, Jack ran up to the front without hesitation. After he was prayed for, he knew his heart had changed and shouted, "Hot dog, I've got it!" Over the next six months, his hunger grew for God. His mother was so curious about what had caused such a change in her son, that she went to church to check it out for herself and got powerfully saved.

A year and a half later, Jack came across a “Holy Roller” meeting that intrigued him greatly. When he attended a service out of curiosity, the pastor pointed him out in the crowd and asked him if he had ever been baptized in the Holy Ghost and spoken in other tongues. Jack said he hadn’t nor did he want to. The preacher challenged him to go home and read everything the Bible says about it and so Jack did. Undeniably, the baptism and tongues were spoken of all throughout the book of Acts. Initially, Jack was reluctant to return to the meetings, but so eager was he to learn more, he couldn’t stay away. Ultimately, he yielded, and so powerful was his infilling that he spoke in tongues for three days, having to write English words on paper in order to communicate.

They Thought He Was Crazy

Not long after that, Jack attended an Assemblies of God Bible college for about a year. Then in 1941, after Japan bombed Pearl Harbor, he joined the army. Still on fire for God, he prayed and witnessed to his fellow privates and soon found himself in the psychiatric ward. He was moved to seven different companies over the course of fifteen months, each time spending a season in the psyche ward.

After his army service, Jack longed to preach. He approached a local Church of God pastor and asked for an opportunity. The pastor invited him to do altar work but Jack was insulted and turned to walk away. The Lord prompted him to return and tell the pastor he would be willing to do whatever the pastor needed. The pastor promptly put him to work as the janitor. To this he turned and walked out again, and after a sleepless night, once again returned to the church to be their new janitor.

His faithfulness soon paid off as he was promoted to Sunday school teacher, then song leader, youth minister, and finally associate pastor. At last, when the pastor was called to another church, Jack was asked to fill in as the interim pastor. When they hired a new pastor, Jack was ready to start his own church. During this time he met Juanita Scott who would soon become Mrs. Jack Coe. They set up house and slowly but surely began to prosper. They were blessed with gifts of furnishings, a car, and were even able to put a thousand dollars in savings.

Called to Divine Healing

Jack began to pray for an understanding of divine healing. He studied and sought the Lord until one night he had a dream. His sister was lying in a hospital dying, given up for lost, when suddenly a bright light entered the room and she was instantly healed. She jumped up shouting and praising God. The next day, Jack found out that his dream was true. His sister had suffered double pneumonia and

was given up to die. He went immediately to go visit her in the hospital and heard of the series of events that had transpired exactly matching his dream. This experience was a turning point for him.

However, in 1944, when Juanita was expecting their first child, Jack Coe became gravely ill himself. He suffered from tropical malaria and lost ninety-five pounds. He was now twenty-six years old and nothing but skin and bones. His fevers were high and recurring, and his spleen and liver had become painfully swollen. Jack was in agony and prayed that God would let him die. After crying out to God and repenting of all that God showed him, he told the Lord he was ready to go. It was then God said he didn't have to, his heart was now right, and he was miraculously healed. He would never suffer another attack of malaria.

The next night Coe went out to preach on the street. Three people were saved. Later that same year, the Assemblies of God ordained him into the ministry. In 1945, Coe went to Longview, Texas, where he continually studied and prayed on the subject of divine healing. He asked God for a special manifestation of His power, and then decided to announce a healing meeting.

Restoring Sight to the Blind

Coe boldly proclaimed that at his healing meeting the blind would see, the deaf would hear, and the lame would walk. When the next evening arrived, the church was full. People lined up for prayer after he finished preaching and then came the blind woman. Coe hesitated, asking the Lord what he was supposed to do. The Lord said, "Son, whatever made you think that you could open the eyes of the blind? Do what you are supposed to do, and I will do what I am supposed to do."³

Coe repented and then prayed and anointed the blind woman with oil. Her sight slowly came as vague impressions, so Jack prayed for her again, and then she suddenly cried out, "I can see! I can see!"⁴ From that point on, Jack Coe's healing ministry was launched.

His ministry was soon in such high demand that he would often stay until dawn praying for the sick. He traveled throughout the area staying in people's homes wherever he ministered, but those seeking prayer would come to the home where he was staying at all hours of the day and night and ask for prayer so that Jack couldn't get any rest. Finally, the Lord told him he needed to get proper rest and so he reworked his ministry strategy.

The Revival Years

In 1946, Coe joined forces with Lindsey in co-editing *The Voice of Healing*. It was in 1947 that the Coes sold their beautiful home and invested in a tent, a truck, and a trailer in order to travel the road full-time, but still have a place where he could get the rest he needed. By 1948, Jack felt the Lord calling him to Redding, California. It was here that a lame woman about to have her leg amputated was miraculously healed. Her testimony stirred the entire city when Coe aired it on the radio. Even the station manager was saved. That night a wealthy woman arrived in a chauffeur-driven Cadillac and was also saved.

Until this time, the offerings had been small and creditors threatened to take the Coe's truck. So Jack stood up and told the people he needed \$740 badly. When he did, a woman walked up to him and wrote a check for the entire amount. Two nights later he announced he would sure like an organ or some kind of music for the tent, and the same lady bought him an organ. The revival team would stay in Redding for seven weeks, receiving money enough to pay for the next crusade.

In 1950, Coe started publishing the *Herald of Healing* and by 1951 it had reached a circulation of 35,000. As the self-proclaimed fastest growing magazine, by 1956 the circulation had reached 250,000. During this same time Coe was determined to have the largest tent in America. In 1951, when he visited an Oral Roberts meeting, he measured Oral's tent and ordered one slightly larger. He boasted in *The Voice of Healing* that both tents were larger than the Ringling Brother's big top.

In 1952, Coe went on the radio. His broadcasts eventually grew to one hundred different stations per week. It was around this time that creative miracles—the miraculous recreation of missing body parts—began taking place in his meetings. Sadly, during the same year, the Assemblies of God felt Coe was too radical and independent, and expelled him from their circles. This caused Coe to envision establishing his own independent churches he would call Revival Centers to be duplicated throughout the country. In 1953, he launched the Dallas Revival Center, and by 1954 he had built the Dallas Revival Center Church.

Homes for the Hurting

During this time the Coes were also dedicated to building a home for orphans outside of Dallas. They built the *Herald of Healing* Children's Home complete with four dormitories and a self-sustaining farm. Jack's goal was to provide a home for two hundred children. He succeeded in playing the role of father to hundreds of children whenever he wasn't traveling—caring, clothing, and instructing each one as if they were his own. He made sure their clothes, manners,

and schooling was as fine as any child raised anywhere.

Nearby he built Jack Coe's Faith Home where those seeking healing could learn about faith as well as receive prayer. And not far from these homes was the Dallas Revival Center complete with a ministry training center and Christian school. When the Dallas Revival Center Church was built in 1954, bus service was provided for those who didn't have transportation, and free ambulance service was offered for those in the hospital who wished to attend the healing services.

An Early End

Jack Coe continued to hold healing crusades around the country, facing all sorts of persecution, including being arrested. By 1956, however, he was physically worn out. Doctors reported that he had the body of a ninety-five year old man even though he was only thirty-eight. It is believed that the Lord had told Coe about his early death a year earlier causing him to work that much more relentlessly to spread the Gospel.

Coe was diagnosed with Polio late in 1956 and was admitted to the hospital where he was unconscious most of the time. On a few occasions, he was able to speak to his wife to make his desires known, and relay that the Lord had said he was ready to take Jack home. Early in 1957, Jack went home to be with the Lord.

John Alexander Dowie

My tears were wiped away, my heart was strong, I saw the way of healing...I said, "God help me now to preach the Word to all the dying around, and tell them how 'tis Satan still defiles, and Jesus still delivers, for He is just the same today."

John Alexander Dowie shook the world at the turn of the century with his passion for truth and zeal for the work of the Spirit. He brought to the forefront divine healing and repentance by shaking up a complacent Church and slaking the thirst of a parched society. He is known as the Healing Apostle of the late 19th century. Untold millions came to a revelation of Christ and the living power of the Holy Spirit through his deep conviction, unwavering faith and expansive vision. Against hypocritical, opposing clergy, fierce slanderous tabloids, murderous mobs, and relentless city officials, Dr. Dowie wore his apostolic calling as a crown from God,

and his persecution as a badge of honor. Dowie was a force to be reckoned with.

Born May 25, 1847, in Edinburgh, Scotland, Dowie displayed from an early age a brilliance and enthusiasm for learning and a hunger for the truth of the Word of God. At only six years old he read the Bible front to back and upon encountering a humble street preacher named Henry Wright, Dowie gave his heart to the Lord. As a young man Dowie found much success in business applying himself wholeheartedly to all he set his hand to, but could not escape the deepening call of ministry upon his life.

At twenty-one years of age, Dowie answered that call and began studying under a private tutor in preparation for the ministry. Less than a year and a half later, he enrolled in Edinburgh University to study in the Free Church School. As a student of theology and political science, his professors found him to be full of fervor as he often challenged their shallow interpretations with complete brilliance and accuracy.

While still in Edinburgh, Dowie became the “honorary chaplain” of the Edinburgh Infirmary and it was his experiences there that would begin to shape his ministry forever. As he sat with the famous surgeons of that time, he came to an increasing realization about the primitive state of medicine and its inability to heal. Dowie exposed the lack of knowledge among these doctors and began to develop an intense aversion to the field of medicine. He brought their deceptive methods to light and was able to prove the accuracy of his accusations.

Not long after, Dowie received an invitation to pastor in Australia at the Congregational Church in Alma. Naturally, the forwardness of his preaching created a rift within the church and persecution ensued shortly thereafter. Dowie was unable to stir up passion within his congregation and resentment towards him was openly voiced. So reluctantly he resigned, feeling that it was a waste of time to stay.

Shortly after his resignation, Dowie received an invitation to pastor the Congregational Church in Manly Beach where he was warmly received. He stayed on with the pastorate though he felt frustration over their unyielding spirits to the Word of God. Eventually, his desire for a larger congregation consumed him and that was when God opened another door.

In 1875, Dowie began pastoring a much larger group of believers in a suburb of Sydney called Newton. While in Newton, a disastrous plague ravaged the area and filled the inhabitants with terror. Within weeks of his arrival, Dowie presided over forty funerals within his congregation alone. It was on one such night that he heard

a loud knock at his door. Two messengers had come bidding him to pray for a girl named Mary who was dying. Dowie rushed to her house and when he arrived he found her lying there, grinding her teeth and groaning in agony. Something in him at that moment snapped and he began to cry out to God. Suddenly she lay still. When asked if she was dead, he replied, “No...she will live. The fever is gone.”¹

From that point the plague in Newton had lost its power. Not one member of his congregation died from the epidemic and Dowie’s healing ministry began. It was not long after, at the age of twenty-nine, that Dowie married his first cousin, Jeanie. Through many trials and hardships that followed their wedding, Dowie made an extraordinary decision to walk away from the denomination in which he had found such ministry success. He could not tolerate the cold, lethargic state of their leadership as he increasingly longed to proclaim the message of divine healing to an ailing city. He felt constrained by denominational politics and “letter of the law” theology.

Deeply frustrated and disturbed by the lack of passion that the leadership and congregation demonstrated towards the Lord, Dowie targeted his mission towards those masses in the city who were uncared for, unnoticed and perishing, showing them that Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever. In 1878, Dowie secured the Royal Theatre in Sydney and began an independent ministry, selling his home and furnishings to keep the ministry afloat. Hundreds came to hear him speak despite rising opposition. Violent persecution rose from local pastors in response to Dowie’s merciless confrontations of the apathetic clergy. They became further enraged and conspired more vehemently against him as he continued to rebuke them with unprecedented accuracy and intelligence.

In spite of intense criticism, Dowie also had many friends and supporters. The Temperance Society, for example, saw the potential of his influence and urged him to run for Parliament. Initially he opposed the idea, but eventually felt that he might be able to influence more people on a political platform. So he ran but was soundly defeated. As a result, Dowie had disgraced his ministry and hurt his church. Not to mention, made himself the prime target of the local newspapers, who having been damaged by his ministry, waged an all out war against him. Soon things got even worse.

The time Dowie had spent campaigning for office had taken much away from his other responsibilities – not to mention the toll it took on his calling to preach divine healing. As a result of this pursuit he lost much ground in his ministry and spent the rest of his time in Australia in darkness and futility. Finally, in 1880, Dowie

realized his error and repented. He returned to his first love and hungered again for revival. As he once more focused on preaching divine healing, the gifts of the Spirit manifested in his life and ministry; thousands were healed and thousands more were touched by the Spirit of God as a result. But once again, with the overflow of blessing came the onslaught of persecution.

In 1888, Dowie felt led to travel through America and Europe and in June of that year he did. Upon the news of his arrival to the States, people came in droves from all parts of California for healing. Soon healing crusades ran up and down the California coast. After Dowie had traveled much of America he chose to settle down in Evanston, Illinois. Unfortunately, he did not receive a warm welcome there either. The Chicago newspapers denounced him as a false prophet and made it very clear that he was not wanted or welcome in the area. But Dowie continued on, ministering wherever he felt led to go. It may have been precisely because of the intense spiritual opposition he felt in Chicago that Dowie chose to locate his headquarters nearby—he raised up Zion, Illinois, on its outskirts.

By 1894, Dowie's newsletter, *Leaves of Healing*, had a weekly, worldwide circulation. True to his form, Dowie never minced words in his writings. He fervently denounced and exposed evil industries and warned readers against lethargic and controlling denominations. He offended the Postmaster General of Chicago, who revoked his second-class mailing privileges, forcing Dowie to pay fourteen times the usual cost. Dowie solicited his readers to write Washington DC and was granted an immediate audience with the Postmaster General in Washington who not only reinstated his mailing privileges, but made sure the U.S. government publicly denounced the Chicago newspaper and its editor, one of Dowie's greatest persecutors.

While in Washington, Dowie was also granted an audience with President William McKinley. After leaving the office of the president, who warmly thanked him for his prayers, Dowie commented to his staff that he felt the president's life was in danger. He later asked his followers to pray for the safety of the president who was assassinated on September 6, 1901 in Buffalo, New York.

By the end of 1896, Dowie had gained great influence over the city of Chicago. His enemies were all either dead, imprisoned, or silent. The police department and political officials were considered as friends. Few in the city had not heard the Gospel as a result of Dowie's outreach, while famous people from around the country received miraculously healings through his ministry. He literally ruled the city of Chicago for Jesus Christ moving the great Zion Tabernacle into its largest

auditorium filling its six thousand seats at every service.

In January of 1900, Dowie unveiled his plans to build a city called Zion outside of Chicago. It would be a “moral utopia” and it consumed him until his final days. He no longer gave himself to preaching divine healing, but to the matters of governing the rise of a new city. He considered himself to be a modern-day Elijah and set his sites on building what would ultimately be his own kingdom. He received counsel from no one and ended up letting personal pride separate him from the will of God. The city of Zion could not make it financially, and in the end, Dowie attempted to escape his woes through world travel. While he was out of the country, the city of Zion voted Dowie out of leadership, and though he fought the decision with his last ounce of strength, he was allowed to retire to his home there where he spent his remaining days. He died quietly on March 9, 1907

“Mr. Pentecost”

“Lord, they’re enemies.”

Then love them.

“How can I love people that I don’t agree with?”

Forgive them.

“I can’t justify them.”

I never gave any child of mine authority to justify anyone. I gave you full authority to forgive them. That’s all you have.²

While ministers such as Smith Wigglesworth and Kathryn Kuhlman took the Pentecostal experience to the masses in crusades and revivals, David du Plessis became the theological backbone of the Charismatic Renewal. He uncompromisingly and lovingly presented the biblical and theological justification of the Pentecostal Movement to the leaders of the traditional denominations the world round. Though this role was critical to the historical denomination’s openness to the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the fifties and sixties, and the fact that David was recognized at one of the eleven greatest “shapers and shakers” of Christianity in the twentieth century in the September 9, 1974, issue of Time magazine, it is sad to note that David is relatively unknown despite the significance of the legacy he left.

Regardless, this simple and unassuming South African is perhaps the most important figure in opening the door to Catholics as well as other traditional denominations, to the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

An Early Hunger

David Johannes du Plessis was born in a small town called Twenty-Four Rivers near Cape Town, South Africa, on February 7, 1905—just over a year before William Seymour opened the mission on Azusa Street in Los Angeles that would spark the Pentecostal Revival. Ever hungry for all that God had for them, David’s parents came into Pentecost in 1914 through the ministries of John G. Lake and Thomas Hezmalhalch, who had come out of the ministry of John Alexander Dowie in Zion, Illinois.³

In 1916, David’s family moved to Basutoland (which was renamed Lesotho in 1966) as missionaries. The area was often called the “Switzerland of South Africa” because of the beautiful, rugged, and often snow-covered peaks. Their mission station was halfway up one of these mountains. It was here David felt he first learned about simple and sincere faith. He knew that the Africans were illiterate, yet at the same time, much to his ten-year-old consternation, he also realized they knew Jesus in a much more real way than he did.

When Europeans were saved, noticeable change took some time to detect, yet among the Africans it seemed overnight. He saw that to them, if the Bible said it one way, then that was the way it was, no questions asked. He had been getting up and praying and reading his Bible every morning as long as he could remember, but at the same time he knew he did not know Jesus as these people did. A new cry came from his heart to know Jesus as authentically as the Africans did.

Jesus Saved Me

Later that same year, this cry began to be answered. While riding from their missionary compound to the distant post office and back again on a fellow missionary’s horse, David saw a thunderstorm in the distance behind him that put great fear into his heart. He decided to try to outrun the storm, but this proved futile, and soon he found himself in the midst of a downpour. He was about a third of the eleven miles home when a lightning bolt struck the ground no more than twenty feet in front of him and the galloping horse. Then came the deafening thunderclap. Half thrown from his horse already, he slid off the rest of the way and called out, “Jesus! Save me! Save me!”

Although no such appeal had before changed him, this call to Jesus did not go unanswered. Immediately upon his request, he knew in his heart that he was saved. Nothing around him had changed, but it was as if everything within had. The fear was gone and he knew that he was saved. He looked into the clouds wondering if it was in such clouds Jesus would return to the earth. He wanted so strongly to meet Him face to face! He mounted his horse again and headed home. When the mail was delivered and the horse was rubbed down and dried in its barn, David returned home where, his mother asked how he had gotten through the rainstorm. His answer was simple and to the point, “Well, Jesus saved me.”

A Thirst To Be Filled

A few years later, in 1918 at about the age of thirteen, David longed to receive the infilling of the Holy Spirit with all of his heart. While it seemed a strange request, he asked his high-school principal for a day off from school so that he could spend the day in prayer. This was granted. Because the Pentecostals were still regarded with great suspicion in the area, the only place they could rent to meet was the storehouse of a coffin maker. So David, his father, and some half-dozen others interested in helping in his quest gathered in this warehouse with him to fast and pray until he received this baptism.

They prayed all day Friday, through Friday night, and into Saturday. By this time they were worn out, and David’s nerves were fraying with frustration. A quieter youth who had gathered with them, a farm girl about a year older than David, came to him to give him a message she felt she had from the Lord, “If you will confess the thing that is on your conscience, He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit.”

Searching his conscience, he found that a lie he had told his parents seven years earlier still troubled him. It was the first sin he had ever been aware of making. He promptly confessed this to both parents who just as promptly forgave him, and with his conscience now cleared, he returned to prayer feeling anything but worthy of being filled with God’s Spirit. However, it was at this moment he received his first vision. He saw a book being held by two hands whose pages were totally white and clean. Then he heard a voice say, “There is nothing recorded against you. The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God has cleansed you from all unrighteousness.”⁵ His heart was filled with joy at this, and he broke forth in holy laughter which soon gave way to a flow of speaking in tongues.

David eventually arose from this to begin developing his skills and anointing as a street preacher in the weekly outdoor evangelism sponsored by his church in Ladybrand and elsewhere. In an increasingly strong and persuasive voice, he told

his testimony again and again and received strong responses from all of his audiences.

David's Early Years in Ministry

When David's funds ran short for continuing at university, he moved to Pretoria to find work with the South African Railways engineering department. While in Pretoria, he became a regular minister in the Upper Room, a series of rooms and a meeting hall above a chemist's shop a block from the largest Dutch Reformed Church in Pretoria. Since Pentecostals were still looked upon in those times as false prophets, it was always interesting on Sundays to see the two churches emptying into the streets where the city's and nation's highest officials and business leaders mingled with the poor, outrageous "apostolics."

It was as a minister in the Upper Room that one of the members of the congregation asked David to speak to his backslidden niece. When he met Miss Anna Cornelia Jacobs, he found out she had spoken a word from the Lord to one of the more distinguished women in her congregation and had been rebuked for it by the pastor. She had decided, because of this, that she would not return to church. At this, David asked about the genuineness of her conversion, and in telling him about it she melted and began weeping. While there had been no question about her offense, there was also no question about her love for Jesus.

Before the evening was over, she was restored to the faith, and David had had a very special word from the Lord about her. The Lord simply told him, "That's your wife." Shocked, he didn't know what to make of it, but he was grateful that she was so pretty. Two days later they had their first date, and their courtship lasted for eighteen months. They were married on August 13, 1927. They had seven children together—Anna Cornelia "Corrie" (1928–), Eunice Elizabeth (March-December 1932), David Johannes (1933-1985), Philip Richelieu (1940–), Peter Louis le Roux (1944–), Matthew Kriel (1947–), and Basel Somerset (1949–). Their marriage would last just short of sixty years.

David was ordained at the age of twenty-five. In 1932, he finished second in the elections of the general secretary of the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM) and won the post in 1936, which he held until he resigned in 1947. It was as general secretary of the AFM that David was in charge of organizing the tour and speaking arrangements of Smith Wigglesworth, when he came to the country the same year

David was elected general secretary. David was still a young man of thirty at the time.

Smith Wigglesworth Visits South Africa

When Rev. Wigglesworth came to him, David was no fan of the mainline denominational churches. His run-ins with the Dutch Reformed Church, which considered Pentecostals little better than heretics at best, greatly colored his opinions of the traditional churches of the time. His hope was that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit would sweep true believers out of the mainline denominations and into Pentecostal churches. Yet the essence of Rev. Wigglesworth's prophecy to him was that he would take Pentecost to them rather than the other way around—that this young man from South Africa would be chosen of God to travel to the United States and be a major catalyst of the Charismatic Renewal in the traditional denominations. Thus it was that Rev. Wigglesworth pinned this young man to the wall of his AFM office in 1936 and told him where God would lead him in the second half of the twentieth century.

In 1937, David was invited to address the General Counsel of the Assemblies of God in Memphis, Tennessee. This was not only his first trip to the United States, but also his first trip outside of South Africa. David was also key to the organization of the first Pentecostal World Conference that was held in Zurich, Switzerland in May 1947. David ended up giving the keynote address for the conference, a message entitled "Gather the Wheat—Burn the Chaff," about coming into the maturity Christ has for all of us. Not long after this, God spoke to David about more of a worldwide ministry, and he resigned as secretary of the AFM and moved his family to Basel, Switzerland.

Disaster Leads to Revelation

While traveling and ministering in the United States in 1948, David and Pastor Paul Walker had a major accident when their Packard ran into a train on a foggy West Virginia mountain road. While he was recovering, David had great blocks of time to pray and seek the Lord. During this time, the Lord again spoke to him about Rev. Wigglesworth's prophecy. He thought the Lord would bring him in like a prophet to pound them with the truth, yet God was asking him to go to them in meekness and humility and simply share. The revival would come through forgiveness offered without it being asked for. While David wanted to come in like Jonah and prophesy doom over them unless they repented, he was to come in as a servant and offer the truth. It would be a revival birthed from forgiveness, not fight. It took some time for David to get his mind around this fact, and he spent a lot of time meditating on 1 Corinthians 13 during the rest of his hospital stay.

David also continued to work on the details of the 1949 Pentecostal World Conference (PWC) from his hospital room and attended the meeting in Paris on his crutches. Here, armed with his more profound understanding of love and forgiveness, David was very effective in stopping the arguments so that the conference could go on in peace and growing unity.

The Door Opens to the Ecumenicals

One day as he was reading the newspaper (David and his family were living in Stamford, Connecticut, at this time), David came across a statement by Dr. John A. MacKay, who was president of Princeton Theological Seminary and a major Presbyterian leader. Previously, David had read that he had called the Pentecostal missionaries in Latin and South America “the fly in the ointment of Protestantism.” He had seen them as a hindrance to all that the Protestants were trying to accomplish in these areas, yet in this article Dr. MacKay said that the Pentecostal Movement was the greatest blessing to the church in the twentieth century. David was curious about such a change of heart. Could this be his open door?

He telephoned Dr. MacKay at Princeton and asked him about his quote. He found that Dr. MacKay had indeed had a change of heart about what the Pentecostals were doing, and he invited David to lunch. David went to Princeton, met Dr. MacKay and, as David himself described, “It was one of those rare and precious relationships in which both parties fully perceive the truth about the other—differences and all—and are in a twinkling of an eye united forever in the Spirit.”⁶ The friendship was indeed one that would last the rest of their lives.

A few days after this meeting, David felt prompted in the Spirit to visit the headquarters of the World Council of Churches in Manhattan. With little more than this, he went and fumbled in his introduction of himself to Dr. Roswell Barnes because he couldn't explain why he had come. However, Dr. Barnes and his staff were fascinated to have a Pentecostal in their midst, and David ended up spending the entire day with them as they asked him questions, and he explained what Pentecostalism and baptism in the Holy Spirit were all about.

When he contacted Dr. MacKay to thank him for his help, David was then invited to attend the world conference for the International Missionary Council (IMC) in Germany right on the heels of the 1952 PWC in London. David accepted, knowing he could easily extend his time for the PWC to attend the second event, but now he knew he was in the thick of it. The leading figures of the mainline denominations would be there, and he would be walking like Daniel into the mouth of a potential lion's den. But it just happened that Dr. MacKay was still president of the IMC,

and when David walked in Dr. MacKay greeted him quite warmly and introduced him around. David had planned on staying three days, but in the end he stayed for the full eleven days of the conference and had 110 interviews among the 210 delegates. It was from this meeting that people began to refer to David as “Mr. Pentecost.” David attended every WCC conference from 1956 until the end of his ministry.

In 1956, David was invited to speak at a retreat of ecumenical leaders in Connecticut. He was invited to speak candidly on the issues surrounding the Holy Spirit, the Pentecostal Movement, and the growing Charismatic Renewal. David poured out his heart to them, and they still wanted more. David remembered this later as one of the greatest meetings of his life.

The Door Opens to the Catholic Church

A new breakthrough came when David spoke at a gathering in St. Andrews, Scotland, by invitation of the Commission on Faith and Order of the World Council of Churches. This was in preparation for the third assembly of the World Council of Churches, which was to meet in New Delhi in 1961. It was here that David had his first encounter with a Roman Catholic priest, Father Bernard Leeming, who just happened to be a personal friend of Pope John XXIII. Through this relationship, God would eventually open the door for David to minister in Rome and the Vatican.

Despite this growing flow of the Spirit, in 1962 David received a letter saying that his papers as a minister with the Assemblies of God were being pulled, credentials he had obtained shortly after moving to the United States. There were no reasons given, just notice that he was no longer ordained by their body. David had too much work to do for the Lord to worry about who was ordaining him or not. While the mainline Pentecostals were no longer calling him to speak at their meetings, the rest of the Christian world was.

While the 1950s seemed to be the crucial years of breakthrough for David, the 1960s and 1970s would be major years of spreading the Gospel wherever the doors were opened—he would average over 100,000 miles of travel each year, ministering to the broadest group of people imaginable. These decades proved to be incredibly busy times. By then, David’s work had been again validated in the eyes of most Pentecostals, although his credentials as a minister were not reinstated until 1979.

In 1972, and as a result of Vatican II's desire to understand the growing Charismatic Renewal going on around the world in Catholic churches, David was crucial in initiating a series of dialogues between the Roman Catholic Church and a team of Pentecostals led by himself, and then eventually his youngest brother, Justus. Because he did not belong to any of the formal Pentecostal denominations, he became the perfect man for the job, as there were strained relationships between mainline Pentecostal denominational churches and Catholic churches around the world, especially in South America. These dialogues spanned four- or five-year periods continuing into the 1990s, but David served as the chairman of the Pentecostal side in the initial two, which spanned 1972-1976 and 1977-1982. It is easy to say that these dialogues would never have happened except for the constant efforts of David and his counterpart on the Catholic side, Father Kilian McDonnell. Martin Robinson described David as "the chief architect"⁷ of these talks, and as being instrumental to the tone and camaraderie of the discussions.

Another note of this incredible opening was that David himself ministered in St. Peter's Basilica as part of the 1975 Congress on Charismatic Renewal in the Catholic Church. The one frustration was that, despite the impact this had on the Catholic Church in paving the way for the Charismatic Catholic Movement, none of the Pentecostal denominations, in either the West (such as executives from the Assemblies of God in the U.S.) or the third world (such as Pastor Paul Yonggi Cho of South Korea, who was also invited to attend) would be involved officially, despite the best efforts of both sides.

Years of Faithful Service Are Finally Recognized

David was recognized time and again for his work, having been the only significant leader to be part of the three most noteworthy Christian movements of the twentieth century: the Pentecostal Movement, the Charismatic Renewal, and the Ecumenical Movement. In the September 9, 1974, issue of Time magazine, David was mentioned alongside such people as Billy Graham, Hans Küng, Jürgen Moltmann, and Rosemary Ruether as one of the eleven greatest "shapers and shakers" of Christianity in the twentieth century. On May 23, 1976, St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, presented him with the Pax Christi award.

In May 1978, he finally received a D.D. that honestly gave him the title of "Dr. du Plessis," when Bethany Bible College in Santa Cruz, California, awarded him an honorary doctorate. As a result of these things and a growing acknowledgement that David had been following God throughout his ecumenical involvement, his

Assemblies of God ordination papers were reissued in 1979. Then on November 9, 1983, David was honored with the Benemerenti Medal by Pope John Paul II, an award for outstanding service to all of Christianity. It was the first time this award had been given by the Roman Catholic Church to someone who was not a Catholic.

At the invitation of Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California, David formally donated his personal papers and library to what would become the David du Plessis Archive, which still exists today. Then from 1985 until his death, David also served at the seminary as their Resident Consultant for Ecumenical Affairs with part of his duties being to organize this archive.

David's final days came when, during a routine gall bladder operation in August of 1986, the doctors discovered David had inoperable abdominal cancer. David passed away within a few months on February 2, 1987, just five days short of his eighty-second birthday.

Kathryn Kuhlman

The world called me a fool for having given my entire life to One whom I've never seen. I know exactly what I'm going to say when I stand in His presence. When I look upon that wonderful face of Jesus, I'll have just one thing to say: 'I tried.' I gave of myself the best I knew how. My redemption will have been perfected when I stand and see Him who made it all possible.

In a time that was suspicious of both women ministers and Pentecostals, Kathryn Kuhlman shook twentieth-century Christianity back to its roots. Believers of all persuasions—Catholic, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopal, or whatever, it didn't matter—flocked to her meetings to be healed or filled with the Holy Spirit as they had read about in the book of Acts. Though she called herself “an ordinary person,” the effects of her ministry were anything but ordinary. Kathryn was one of a handful of ministers after World War II who prophetically reintroduced the Holy Spirit and His gifts to the body of Christ on the earth in what has proven the greatest revival of all time: the Charismatic Renewal.

Kathryn Kuhlman was born on May 9, 1907, to Joseph and Emma Kuhlman. A childhood friend described Kathryn as having “large features, red hair, and

freckles. . . . She wasn't dainty or appealingly feminine in any sense of the word. She was taller than the rest of 'our gang,' gangly and boyish in build, and her long strides kept the rest of us puffing to keep up with her."

One Sunday when Kathryn was fourteen, she attended church with her mother. As she stood singing, she began to shake all over and sob. A weight of conviction came over her, and she realized that she was a sinner in need of salvation and forgiveness. She slipped out from where she was standing, went to the corner of the front pew and sat weeping. At that moment Jesus lifted the weight from her shoulders and entered her heart.

In 1924 when Kathryn was about seventeen, she and her older sister Myrtle persuaded their parents that it was God's will for Kathryn to travel with Myrtle and her husband Everett in their evangelistic tent ministry. Then in 1928, after a meeting in Boise, Idaho, Everett decided to go on to South Dakota, while the women stayed behind and continued to minister there. The offerings collected, however, were not enough to support them and Myrtle soon decided to rejoin her husband. After this happened, a local Boise pastor offered Kathryn a chance to preach at an old pool hall that had been converted into a mission and Kathryn's ministry began.

From the "pool hall" mission, she went on to minister in Pocatello and Twin Falls and eventually ended up in Denver, Colorado. It was there that she founded the Denver Revival Tabernacle in 1935. That same year, Kathryn met Burroughs Waltrip, an extremely handsome Texas evangelist who was eight years her senior. Despite the fact that he was married with two small boys, they soon found themselves attracted to each other. Shortly after his visit to Denver, Waltrip divorced his wife, left his family and moved to Mason City, Iowa, where he began a revival center called Radio Chapel. Kathryn and her friend and pianist Helen Gulliford came into town to help him raise funds for his ministry. It was shortly after their arrival that the romance between Burroughs and Kathryn became publicly known.

Burroughs and Kathryn decided to wed. While discussing the matter with some friends, Kathryn had said that she could not "find the will of God in the matter." These and other friends encouraged her not to go through with the marriage, but Kathryn justified it to herself and others by believing that Waltrip's wife had left him, not the other way around. On October 18th, 1938, Kathryn secretly married "Mister," as she liked to call Waltrip, in Mason City. The wedding did not give her new peace about their union, however. After they checked into their hotel that

night, Kathryn left and drove over to the hotel where Helen was staying with another friend. She sat with them weeping and admitted that the marriage was a mistake. She decided to get an annulment.

The three women left Iowa for Denver in hopes of explaining what had happened to the congregation of Denver Revival Tabernacle. The congregation, however, was so furious with her for the secrecy of the marriage that they drove Kathryn “back into Waltrip’s arms.”

In a moment’s time, the ministry that Kathryn had so diligently built was completely undone. People stopped attending her services. Her ministry was dissolved. Kathryn sold her portion of the Tabernacle. She’d lost everything. Her relationship with the Lord had suffered because she had put a man before her God. But from the moment she made the decision to divorce Waltrip and to surrender herself fully to the Lord, she never wavered again in answering the call that God had placed on her life so many years before.

After Kathryn spent some time preaching in a mining community in Franklin, Pennsylvania, her ministry began to reshape. She traveled throughout the Midwest and the south into West Virginia and the Carolinas. In some places she was quickly accepted. In others, her past resurfaced and the meetings were closed. After an unsuccessful tour of the South, Kathryn was invited to hold a series of meetings in the fifteen hundred seat-auditorium of Gospel Tabernacle back in Franklin. It was there that Kathryn’s ministry was revived and the ills of the past eight years seemed to wash away.

Not long after she opened meetings at the Tabernacle, she began daily radio broadcasts. Responses to the broadcasts were so great she soon added a station in Pittsburg. At this time Kathryn was mainly praying for people to receive salvation, but she was also beginning to lay hands on and pray for people who came asking for healing. Though she despised the term “faith healer,” she attended the meetings of such ministers hoping to find out more about this phenomenon of God. Kathryn took a deeper understanding of the workings of the Holy Spirit from each meeting, though many of the things that she witnessed she found to be “unwise performances” and a misuse of the Holy Spirit. In response, she always exhorted people to focus on Jesus and nothing else.

As Kathryn searched the Scriptures about divine healing, she made a life-changing discovery. She read that healing was provided for the believer at the same time as salvation, and it was at this time that she began to better understand the believer’s relationship with the Holy Spirit. Then one night, a woman stood to give a

testimony of healing. At Kathryn's service the night before, without anyone laying hands on her and without Kathryn being aware of it, this woman had been healed of a tumor. She had even gone to her doctor to confirm her healing. Then that next Sunday, a second miracle occurred. A World War I veteran who had been declared legally blind from an industrial accident had eighty-five percent of his vision restored in the permanently impaired eye and perfect eyesight restored to his other eye.

The crowds at the Tabernacle grew. Auditoriums would fill to capacity hours before she was to speak, and thousands were turned away. Countless miracles took place, most without any touch or prayer by Kathryn. She would simply walk the stage and call out healings as they took place where people sat. Sections of those in wheelchairs would walk. In one service, a five-year-old boy who had been crippled from birth walked onto the stage. In another in Philadelphia she laid hands on a man who had received a pacemaker eight months earlier, and the scar from the operation disappeared. Later x-rays confirmed that the pacemaker had as well!

Great healing services continued and her ministry expanded to the neighboring towns. In 1950, a worldwide ministry began to develop and Kathryn's messages were heard all over the United States via radio and her television broadcast, *I Believe in Miracles*. She grew so popular that she made appearances on *The Johnny Carson Show* and *The Dinah Shore Show* among several others. For the last ten years of her life, she held monthly services at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, where she ministered to countless thousands.

Kathryn Kuhlman's last miracle service was held in that same arena. Three weeks later, Kathryn lay dying in the Hillcrest Medical Center of Tulsa, Oklahoma, after open-heart surgery. Oral and Evelyn Roberts were among the few visitors permitted to see her. As they walked into her room and began to pray for her healing, Kathryn recognized what they were doing and "put her hands out like a barrier and then pointed toward heaven." Kathryn gave her sister, Myrtle, the same message and on Friday, February 20th, 1976, K

John G. Lake

No words of mine can convey to another soul the cry that was in my heart and the flame of hatred for death and sickness that the Spirit of God had stirred within me.

The very wrath of God seemed to possess my soul!

These words summarized the passion that propelled the life-long ministry of John G. Lake. He spoke these words in reference to the intensity of emotion he felt as his thirty-four year old sister lay dying. He had already witnessed eight of his fifteen siblings die from illness--yet he had also witnessed the miraculous healing of his own childhood rheumatoid arthritis, as well as a sister's cancer and brother's blood disease under the ministry of John Alexander Dowie. It was already too late to take this sister who now lay dying to Dowie's Healing Home in Chicago, so he telegraphed Dowie with a desperate plea for prayer. Dowie telegraphed back: "Hold on to God. I am praying. She will live." That simple declaration caused John Lake to wage a furious spiritual attack on the power of death – and within the hour his sister was completely healed.

It was battles such as this—at death's very door—that brought John G. Lake face to face with his convictions. Was he going to stand by as the enemy took yet another loved one from him, or was he going to choose to stand in the enemy's way? Such an opportunity again presented itself on April 28, 1898, when his wife of five years lay dying. Jennie battled for breath in her final hours when Lake finally put his foot down. He would not tolerate the enemy stealing away the mother of his children and his spiritual partner. He determined to believe God's Word as it was revealed to him for her healing and at 9:30 a.m. he contended for her life in prayer upon which she rose up healed, praising the Lord in a loud voice. News spread of Jennie's miraculous healing, and from that time on, John Lake was sought after for the power of his healing anointing.

Such was the power of his anointing that he wrote about it as being like the lightning of Jesus: "You talk about the voltage from heaven and the power of God! Why there is lightning in the soul of Jesus! The lightnings of Jesus heal men by their flash! Sin dissolves and disease flees when the power of God approaches!" Lake would also compare the anointing of God's Spirit to the power of electricity. Just as men had learned the laws of electricity, Lake had discovered the laws of the Spirit. And, as God's "lightning rod," he would rise within God's calling to electrify the powers of darkness and solidify the body of Christ.

In 1901, at the age of thirty-one, Lake moved to Zion, Illinois, to study divine healing under John Alexander Dowie. But in 1904, when Dowie's increasing financial problems began to surface, Lake decided to distance himself and relocated to Chicago. When his personal investments in Zion properties left him in near financial ruin following Dowie's death in 1907, he bought himself a seat on

the Chicago Board of Trade and over the next year was able to accumulate over \$130,000 in the bank and real estate worth \$90,000. This prompted the notice of top business executives who asked Lake to form a trust of the nation's three largest insurance companies for a guaranteed salary of \$50,000 a year. He was now a top business consultant to top business executives making money on the side through hearty commissions as well. By turn-of-the-century standards, John Lake was making a fortune.

For a while he was able to juggle his great secular success and grow in his desire for God. He had learned to walk in the Spirit as he described like this: "It became easy for me to detach myself from the course of life, so that while my hands and mind were engaged in the common affairs of every day, my spirit maintained its attitude of communion with God." But by 1907, he yielded to the call to full-time ministry, and he and Jennie sold their estate and all their belongings. From that point on the Lake's relied on God for provision as they traveled the country ministering. By January of 1908, they began praying for the necessary finances to take their team to Africa.

In April of that same year, the Lakes and their seven children left for Africa with only money to pay for passage on the ship. In faith, they believed God for the finances necessary to gain them admittance into the country and for provision once they arrived. He provided what they needed as they were lining up to pay upon leaving the ship, and once aground, a miraculous housing offer presented itself before they had even left the dock. They immediately settled into a furnished home in Johannesburg. Days later, John was asked to fill in for a South African pastor who was taking a leave of absence. Over five hundred Zulus were in attendance his first Sunday in the pulpit, and as a result, revival broke out so that within weeks multitudes in from the surrounding area were saved, healed, and baptized in the Holy Spirit. The success astounded Lake so that he wrote: "From the very start it was as though a spiritual cyclone had struck." In less than a year, he had started one hundred churches.

Ministry success came at a price. Before the year was out, on December 22, 1908, Lake came home to find Jennie had died from physical exhaustion and malnutrition. He was devastated. Early in 1909, he returned to the States to recuperate, raise support, and recruit new workers. By January of 1910, he was headed back to Africa in the midst of a raging plague there. He was among few who ministered to the sick and dying. He proved to local physicians that the germs would not live on his body due to the Holy Spirit alive in Him. He actually verified this under a microscope showing that the germs died upon contact with his body.

Those who witnessed the experiment stood in amazement as Lake gave glory to God explaining that: “It is the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. I believe that just as long as I keep my soul in contact with the living God so that His Spirit is flowing into my soul and body, that no germ will ever attach itself to me, for the Spirit of God will kill it.”

In 1912, after five years of ministry in Africa, having produced 1,250 preachers, 625 congregations, and 100,000 converts, Lake returned to the United States. In 1913 he married Florence Switzer with whom he had five children. They settled in Spokane, Washington, where they founded the Spokane Healing Home and the Apostolic Church, which drew thousands from around the world for ministry and healing. In May of 1920, the Lakes left Spokane for Portland, Oregon, where he started another Apostolic Church and healing ministry similar to the one in Spokane.

By 1924, Lake was known throughout America as a leading healing evangelist. He had established forty churches throughout the United States and Canada in which there had been so many healings that his congregations nicknamed him “Dr.” Lake. In December of that year, Gordon Lindsey, founder of Christ for the Nations in Dallas, Texas, was converted while hearing Lake preach in Portland. He attended his services nearly every night for a week and considered Lake to be a mentor. Lindsey later contracted deadly ptomaine poisoning, but was totally healed once he was able to get to Lake’s home.

In 1931, Lake returned to Spokane at the age of sixty-one. He was weak with fatigue and nearly blind. God ultimately restored his vision after Lake had a “talk” with the Lord about it. Sadly, on Labor Day of 1935, after returning from a church picnic, John G. Lake went home to be with the Lord. He was sixty-five years old.

I can see as my spirit discerns the future and reaches out to touch the heart of mankind and the desire of God, that there is coming from heaven a new manifestation of the Holy Spirit in power, and that new manifestation will be in sweetness, in love, in tenderness, and in the power of the Spirit, beyond anything your heart or mind ever saw. The very lightning of God will flash through men’s souls. The sons of God will meet the sons of darkness and prevail.

“The Battle-Ax of the Reformation”

Unless I can be instructed and convinced with evidence from the Holy Scriptures or with open, clear, and distinct grounds of reasoning . . . then I cannot and will not recant, because it is neither safe nor wise to act against conscience.

Perhaps one of the most influential Germans ever to live, Martin Luther was instrumental in not only shaking loose from the foundations of the Catholic Church, but in bringing about the modern German language, as well as a renewed appreciation for the arts. Much like his predecessor, John Hus, he searched the Scriptures and discovered the truth regarding the love of God and His plan of redemption through faith and not works. And like Hus, he burned to bring the truth of the Gospel to the people in their own language. Though he was unreserved in his convictions, he seasoned his boldness with compassion. As a fearless visionary and leader, exceptional theologian, prolific writer, translator, and composer, he made time to converse with his students and dote on his children.

Luther sought to dispel the deception of the Church and expose its abuses. He challenged the Pope at every turn, from posting and distributing his ninety-five theses, to burning papal decrees and the Church’s canon law, to liberating nuns and priests “imprisoned” in convents and monasteries, and then marrying them off to one another. He even married himself while continuing his duties as a priest. He wrote a German mass and a catechism for both adults and children; and gave the people a Bible in their vernacular German. Luther composed hymns and led his congregation in revolutionary worship with singing and instruments, calling them all to attend a music practice weekly.

All the while, Martin Luther expected any day to be tried and burned as a heretic. Though he suffered continual ailments and illnesses, he remained a gentle husband and father, as well as a dedicated teacher and mentor. Luther was not only an unconventional pastor and priest, but he was a compassionate servant of the people, taking in orphans and needy students. He even intervened during times of social unrest to bring understanding between the peasants and nobles. Martin Luther is truly one of history’s most notable reformers, and certainly one of God’s most heroic Generals.

The Early Years

Martin Luther was born on November 10, 1483, in Eisleben, Germany. His father

worked in the copper mines, and eventually established two smelter furnaces. Through hard work, they were no longer looked upon as peasants and the family became social with people of stature in the community. Martin's parents were religious, praying with their children every night, as well as strict disciplinarians, never sparing the rod. The schools carried on the custom by administering whippings if students fell short in their Latin drills.

Martin flourished in this atmosphere of routine and discipline. He completed his baccalaureate and masters degrees in record time with the intention of studying law, which was his father's greatest ambition for him. An unexpected event would suddenly change the direction of his life when he was just twenty years old.

It was on July 2, 1501, as he was walking back to school after visiting his family, when a thunderstorm overtook him. As the lightning struck violently around him, he feared for his life as he remembered how a friend has been struck dead by lightning. Caught in a clearing with nowhere to hide, he cried out in desperation to the only help he knew, "St. Anne help me! I will become a monk." He kept his vow, and that is how Martin Luther entered the priesthood to the great dismay of his father.

In Search of Holiness

If nothing else, Martin seemed to do whatever he did wholeheartedly and without reservation. He threw himself into his new calling with gusto and joined the strictest monastery of his day, the Order of the Augustinian Hermits in Erfurt, Germany. He knew full well that he was committing to at least one probationary year of "scant diet, rough clothing, vigils by night, labors by labors, mortification of the flesh, the reproach of poverty and the shame of begging." Martin was so driven to appease God, that he couldn't seem to fast, pray, or torture himself enough.

After his probationary period, Martin vowed to commit his life to God and continued as the most devout monk in the degree to which he labored, fasted, and debased himself—yet for all his works the peace he sought with God ever eluded him. No matter how he strived for holiness and to be counted worthy in the sight of God, no matter how many hours he spent in confession, or how long on his knees praying, reading, or chanting, no matter how much he fasted from food, drink, or sleep, he couldn't bring himself closer to God. Yet it was through these dark years of pursuing endless works in search of holiness that he came to the revelation that the righteousness of God can only be attained through grace by faith in the Blood

of Christ.

The Long Road to Revelation

In 1510, Luther traveled to Rome as a representative from his cloister to settle a dispute with the Pope. While there, he discovered the priests to be irreverent in the way they rushed through Mass and the comments he overheard them make while preparing Communion. This was his first taste of disillusionment with the established Church. When he returned home he was transferred to an Augustinian Cloister in Wittenburg, Germany, which was a small town compared to the city of Erfurt. It was here that he found a mentor in Johann von Staupitz who would remain faithful to Luther until the end of his life.

When Luther seemed inconsolable in his efforts to find peace with God, it was Staupitz who gave up his position at the University of Wittenburg to Luther so that he might be absorbed by the challenges of studying and teaching the Scriptures. As a result, he was made a doctor of theology in 1512 at twenty-nine years of age, and so began his exodus into the freedom that knowledge of the truth brings.

And so Luther studied the Psalms and the Pauline Epistles for the next five years and entered into a growing revelation of righteousness and the justice of God. Meditation and study over this period brought Luther to a new theology of justice and justification. He wrote of his experience during this critical time: “At last, meditating day and night and by the mercy of God, I . . . began to understand that the righteous live by a gift of God, namely by faith. . . . Here I felt as if I were entirely born again and had entered paradise itself through gates that had been flung open.”

Coming to the Cross

Somewhere between 1518 and 1521, Luther’s final revelation came to him—and it would set off a revolution. He wrote of the days immediately preceding his breakthrough as a time when he was depressed. Historians refer to this transformation from depression into freedom as his “evangelical breakthrough” or his “tower experience.” You can almost feel the peace of God in Luther’s heart as he wrote of his revelation, “If you have a true faith that Christ is your Savior, then at once you have a gracious God, for faith leads you in and opens up God’s heart and will, that you should see pure grace and overflowing love. This it is to behold God in faith that you should look upon his fatherly, friendly heart, in which there is neither anger nor ungraciousness. He who sees God as angry does not see him rightly but looks only on a curtain, as if a dark cloud had been drawn across his face.”

Luther's new revelation of Scripture resolved all the worries about falling short of God's approval that had been instilled in him since childhood. All his personal battles of unworthiness stopped with the Cross and he could see there the mercy of God and Christ's victory over Satan. This new understanding of his position in Christ as a result of the Cross is summed up in the following hymn:

*Thus spoke the Son, "Hold thou to Me,
From now on that wilt make it.
I gave my life for thee
And for thee I will stake it.
For I am thine and thou art mine,
And where I am our lives entwine,*

The Old Fiend cannot shake it."

Nailing His Revelation to the Church Door

When Luther saw the truth of God's redemptive plan, he came face to face with the greed and hypocrisy governing church affairs. Grieved by the deception and abusive practices taking place, he determined to expose the Church and bring its followers to a clear understanding of God's redemptive work on the Cross. Luther began this daunting task by compiling a list of concerns.

By the time he finished writing down his concerns and objections, there were ninety-five statements. It was his intention that these would provide the basis for open discussion. Not even sure of their scriptural accuracy, he nailed them to the church door with an invitation to explore the topics further during a time of public debate. He had no idea that what he posted would ignite a revolution that ultimately changed the course of history. The main points of Luther's theses were: 1) his objection of indulgence money going to build St. Peter's Basilica; 2) his denial of the Pope's power over purgatory; and 3) his consideration of the welfare of the sinner.

The ninety-five theses as they came to be known had been translated into German and were circulating among the common people as well as the church officials. At the same time that they angered Church leaders they were opening the eyes of the people. Within a matter of weeks, all of Germany knew of the articles and nearly everyone praised Luther's boldness. It wasn't long before Rome was alarmed and a case was established against Luther.

Rome's Reply

The Pope set a trap and invited Luther to a forum in Augsburg to engage in a public debate. It was the fall of 1517 when Luther arrived ready to make his case heard. Soon Luther discovered the Pope's true agenda for the meeting, and that was to intimidate Luther into recanting without any room for discussion under threat of being bound and taken to Rome. Luther boldly declared that he would not and stated that a common man armed with Scripture had more authority than the Pope and all his councils.

Somehow Luther was not bound, nor taken to Rome, but simply thrown out of the building. He made his way back to Wittenburg where he was safe from the arm of the Church due to his popularity among the people there. The Church hierarchy became increasingly frustrated and determined to ensnare Luther.

An order was issued by the Pope declaring his official stand regarding the sale of indulgences—one of the main issues Luther had spoken out against. This put Luther one step closer to being charged with heresy. The papal bull was issued in October of 1520 and Luther was given sixty days to recant. Meanwhile, as a result of the bull, Luther's books were being burned throughout Europe. Luther's response was to issue a statement in which he declared:

"Know that I, with all who worship Christ, consider the Seat of Rome to be occupied by Satan and to be the throne of the Antichrist, and that I will no longer obey nor remain united to him, the chief and deadly enemy of Christ. If you persist in your fury, I condemn you to Satan, together with this Bull and your decretals for the destruction of your flesh, in order that your spirit may be saved with us in the Day of the Lord. In the name of Him whom you persecute, Jesus Christ Our Lord."

When the sixty days passed, Luther posted another invitation—this time he invited the public to witness a grand display of burning not only the papal bull, but also the precious canon law! Like Hus, he asserted that Scripture alone was the final authority not the Pope nor his councils, nor the canon law—and that furthermore, the Pope had no power over purgatory. In fact, there was no biblical basis for any such thing as purgatory in the first place.

New Waves of Reform and Rebuke

Threatened with excommunication, Luther remained undaunted. He pressed on with a renewed fervor in his preaching, teaching, and writing. He published devotional booklets, tracks on prayer, studies on the book of Psalms and a

commentary on Galatians. Four thousand copies of Luther's Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation sold within eighteen days of its printings and a number of reprints went to press. Almost the entire upper class of Germany read it. Next he published *On the Babylonian Captivity of the Church* and shortly after that he wrote *On the Freedom of a Christian*.

In response to these writings, a second attempt was made to silence Luther. It was now 1521 and the annual meeting of a secular court of judges was being held called the Diet of Worms, in the city of Worms. Luther was summoned there to answer for his writings. Again, he was given the opportunity to claim responsibility for the writings and to recant. Again, Luther refused not being able to "act against his conscience." He was condemned and given twenty-one days to return to Wittenburg. The Edict of Worms legally condemned Luther as a heretic which meant anyone could murder him without consequences.

A high-ranking friend arranged for a fake arrest as Luther made his way home and brought him to one of his castles. Luther hid there in a room behind a retractable staircase for ten months. He grew his hair and a beard and was referred to as "Knight George." When he left the castle he was not even recognized by a close friend. It was during his time in hiding that he translated the entire New Testament from Latin to German.

Life back in Wittenberg

A peasant revolt broke out on the heels of Luther's stand for reformation. There were violent clashes between the classes, and the churches were being desecrated. Luther stepped in to keep the peasants from destroying religious artwork and relics; and to keep the nobles from retaliating too harshly against the peasants. He aided in liberating monks and nuns from being held against their wills in monasteries and convents, and began social reforms that included care of the poor, orphans, students at the university, and providing dowries for poor brides.

One of the nuns he helped to liberate, Katherine von Bora, had been placed in the convent against her will by a new stepmother when she was only nine or ten. She was now twenty-six years old and Luther was having a difficult time finding a suitable husband for her. Katherine suggested Luther himself, and despite their age difference—Luther was forty-one—and the two became close friends. On June 13, 1525, they were married. She was an excellent administrator and financial manager. The two complimented each other well, she cared for his ailments and kept his affairs in order. Together they had six children.

Luther continued his pastoral duties—preaching, teaching, writing, and mentoring

students. He wrote a German Mass that was centered on Scripture and two catechisms for both children and adults to study. He wrote hymns and brought music and singing into his services. And most importantly, in 1534, he expanded his translation of the Bible to include the Old Testament. He assembled a team of the best scholars and visited different regions to hear how they spoke so he could make the translation relevant to all. Every German sought to possess Luther's Bible and it remains a popular translation in Germany today. It not only brought the light of Scripture into the homes and hearts of the laity, but also laid the groundwork for the formation of the modern German language.

His Last Days

On January 23, 1546, Luther set out on a journey to settle a dispute between various dukes and their subjects. Although he was weak from illness and had to stop and rest along the way, when he arrived he still managed to preach four times, administer Communion twice, and ordain two ministers. He commented, "If I can but succeed in restoring harmony amongst my dear princes and their subjects, I will cheerfully return home and lay me down to the grave."

By February his illness had grown worse, and on the night of February 17, Luther prayed continuously that the Lord would take him

“The Father of Reform”

Therefore, faithful Christian, seek the truth, hear the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, speak the truth, adhere to the truth, defend the truth to death; for truth will make you free from sin, the devil, the death of the soul, and finally from eternal death.

If it can be said that John Wycliffe was the grandfather of the Reformation, then John Hus would be its father. Wycliffe's ideas and writings found their way to the University of Prague in the late Fourteenth Century—about the same time as John Hus. The University of Prague had risen in recent years to become the most prestigious university in central Europe, and Hus had risen to prominence at the center of it. He was not only her most respected theologian, but among the most compassionate of scholarly priests whose concern for the welfare of common

people would put him in direct opposition to the practices of the Catholic Church. His heart's most ardent desire was to bring Christ to Christians.

Hus loathed the sin and corruption that permeated the Roman Catholic hierarchy. He spoke out boldly from the pulpit of Prague's most notorious church, Bethlehem Chapel, against the self-serving motives of Catholic bishops, cardinals, and priests. He studied after Wycliffe and made alliances with his supporters seeking to restore the Catholic Church to her original glory, much as Wycliffe had hoped to do. He opposed unchecked papal rule, ignoring its dictates, bulls, and indictments. He continued to preach the truth of God's Word undaunted by threats of excommunication, imprisonment, and finally death.

Early Success

Little is known about the childhood of John Hus other than that he was born in 1372, in a village called Husinec in the southern part of Bohemia. Though his parents were poor peasants, his mother had a rich faith in God. She taught John how to pray and trust God, and encouraged him to become a priest. When John was thirteen, she brought him to a school an hour away in the commercial city of Prachatice so that he could begin to secure his future. At the age of fourteen, he left for Prague where he enrolled in a preparatory school and was admitted to the University of Prague at eighteen. This was admirable as few from his area made it to university.

When Hus enrolled in university, he decided to change his name from John of Husinec to simply John Hus. He was a typical struggling student who sang for his supper at nearby churches. Originally he determined to enter the priesthood so he could be financially well off, but as he read the Scriptures he came to a personal knowledge of Christ which further stimulated his hunger for the Word of God.

The Mark of a Reformer

Early in his studies Hus was quoted as saying, "For I know that those things I have learned are but the least in comparison with what I do not know." That shows the humility and teachable spirit he possessed. He was a seeker of the truth at any cost. Because of his diligence he received his Bachelor of Arts degree by the time he was twenty-one. Three years later, in 1396, he passed the rigors of his Masters degree. From 1398 to 1402 he lived in the King Wenceslas College, a small section of the university, teaching and mentoring students.

Over these ten years he became close friends with a fellow student, Stephen of Palec, and an admired instructor, Stanislov of Znojmo. Palec and Stanislov, along

with Hus, formed a tight friendship as they studied and talked together continually. Stanislov taught from Wycliffe's writings and followed all of his beliefs. Hus began copying some of Wycliffe's works for his own use. Interestingly, the Swedish Army took one of these manuscripts with them during the Thirty Years' War and it is now on display in Stockholm.

Hus began lecturing several times a day as well as training students how to use what they had learned and put it into speeches. Two years later, he was chosen to promote students to the degree of bachelor. He loved his role as mentor and friend, and formed many close alliances throughout this time. In 1401, his old friend Jerome of Prague returned from Oxford with chest full of Wycliffe manuscripts that he had copied. He left them with Hus and the other reformist thinkers before leaving on a series of world adventures, not to reappear on the scene until 1412.

Bethlehem Chapel

In 1402, Hus was appointed to pastor the infamous Bethlehem Chapel—the church that was at the center of the Bohemian reform movement. This appointment demonstrated the confidence Hus inspired as a promising reformer. What made Bethlehem Chapel particularly unique was that all its services were conducted in the native Czech language. Hus would be called upon to exhibit the wisdom and character necessary to live on the front line of the reform movement, not only as a priest, but also as a young Czech patriot.

Bethlehem Chapel held three thousand people and the local population crowded into each service. Out of the cities forty-four churches, twenty-seven chapels, sixteen monasteries, and seven convents this was the only place they could hear a sermon in their own language. Hus was creative in his efforts to reach the common folk, even the illiterate. He painted the walls of the chapel with huge paintings portraying the humility and servitude of Christ juxtaposed with paintings depicting the excessive wealth and pride of the Pope. For example, a painting of the modestly attired Lord Jesus bending down to wash his disciples feet was displayed alongside the Pope in his elaborate robes, crown, and jewels extending his hand to be kissed.

Hus was determined to fill the hearts and minds of the people with God's principles of truth. He was an attentive and revolutionary pastor who believed it was his duty to look after the spiritual and eternal welfare of his flock. In a year's time, Hus would preach over two hundred fifty sermons at Bethlehem Chapel alone, in addition to lecturing and mentoring the students at the university. He also

established a home for the poorest students behind the chapel which he personally supervised. He identified with the peasant class and they, along with the educated and well to do of the city, became his loyal followers.

After Hus had been pastoring for four years, he took on the challenge of revising and improving the Czech New Testament. He also revised portions of the Old Testament. Eventually, he would revise the entire Czech Bible in order to make it easier to read. Hus hoped to free all people, including the clergy, from the bondage of sin and death through a personal revelation of Christ.

Champion of Truth

In seeking to bring people to an authentic relationship with God, Hus found the Church to be his greatest obstacle. Foremost on his mind was persuading the priests to live a lifestyle free from lustful greed and immorality. This message alone set the entire Church hierarchy ablaze. Hus fearlessly called for a complete reevaluation of Church doctrine and what it meant to be a priest. He stated that the true authority of the priest was linked to his character, not his office. He went on to say that the love of money had destroyed their morals.

Hus denounced the elite attitudes of the clergy and their excessive wealth. He rebuked priests who used their churches for personal gain and prestige, who indulged in sexual immorality, and then bought and sold pardons to excuse and further prosper themselves. In a very bold statement he declared that no one should attend a Mass conducted by a priest who was involved in providing ministerial duties for financial gain or engaged in sexual indiscretions. He further declared that people should withhold their tithes from such priests.

Friends Turned Foe

By now the Pope taken notice of these Bohemian reformers. In 1408, Hus's old friend and confidante, Stanislov, capitulated under persecution for his Wycliffe teachings and increasingly distanced himself from Hus and the other reformers. Stanislov convinced their mutual friend Palec to do the same and the two became outspoken enemies of Hus. Still, for all their efforts to realign themselves with the papacy, they were summoned to appear before the court in Italy and subsequently thrown in prison.

Amazingly, Hus was not yet formally accused of heresy—only of causing division in the Church because he denounced the sins of the clergy. He had, however, fallen out of favor with the King of Bohemia and the Archbishop of Prague, who at one time had been one of Hus' most ardent supporters. Together they set out to quiet

Hus in an effort to preserve the peace, and more importantly, secure favor with the Pope.

The Battle Lines Are Drawn

As Hus continued to write and preach on the necessity of Church reform, the Pope issued an order prohibiting preaching in any place except a Catholic cathedral or monastery. This was directed at Hus because his chapel was the only place not deemed a cathedral. Hus refused to stop preaching and garnered even more dedicated backing from his followers who loudly pledged their support for the cause.

In outrage and retaliation, on July 16, 1410, the Archbishop of Prague ordered all of Wycliffe's books to be burned in a public ceremony. Hus responded with a public declaration, "Such bonfires never yet removed a single sin from the heart's of men. Fire does not consume truth. It is always the mark of a little mind that it vents its anger on inanimate objects." This remark caused the Czech citizens to openly revolt. They mocked the Archbishop who became outraged and excommunicated Hus. He then fled Prague for his life.

By the fall of that year, Hus was ordered to appear in Italy to explain why he disobeyed papal orders. He ignored the summons, as well as the Archbishop's attempt to excommunicate him, and continued to preach and carry on his duties at the chapel. In February of 1411, Hus was excommunicated yet again by a superior cardinal in Italy for not appearing before the Pope. After a series of battles and hearings in Prague, riots ensued and the King feared for control of the city.

Finally, during the Roman council of 1412-1413, the cardinal declared Hus excommunicated for the last time and ordered that if Hus did not appear before the council in twenty days, the entire city of Prague, or any city that harbored Hus, would be under interdict. This meant that no one would be allowed to interact with Hus in anyway, and that wherever Hus was found, that place would have all church services suspended for three days. Hus again refused to appear before the council, only this time for the welfare of the people he retreated to the surrounding countryside.

Lies and Deception

From October of 1412 until Easter of 1413, it is unknown where he resided. He used this time to write several manuscripts including his most renowned document entitled "On The Church" in which he outlined his beliefs on how the true church should be governed—with Jesus Christ as its head. Meanwhile, kings and councils

were plotting to ensnare Hus for the last time.

When the Pope called for the next council, the King of Hungary and Germany, who had by now been deemed the Holy Roman Emperor by the Pope, designated that the council be held in his jurisdiction. He plotted with his half-brother, the King of Bohemia, to invite Hus to the council under the pretense of allowing him to present his views. Despite the eminent danger, Hus agreed to go having been promised safety under the King's protection.

Two knights came to escort him to the council who firmly believed they were to protect Hus throughout his journey. On October 11, 1414, in the company of the two knights, he set off for Constance, Germany fully prepared to make his presentation before the council. The Pope lifted the interdict and Hus and the knights experienced a peaceful journey and were welcomed upon their arrival. They stayed together in the home of a widow for one month before being summoned by the Pope. Although one of the knights's sensed danger, Hus calmed him down and agreed to go.

After arriving at the Pope's residence, Hus was questioned by a Franciscan theologian. Later that evening, Hus was told he would have to remain but the knights could leave. When they resisted, they were assured that Hus would be taken care of since he had been brought this far in order to state his case before the council. Reluctantly they left him in the hands of his inquisitors and eight days later Hus found himself in a dark dungeon on an island off the shore of Lake Constance. He was held there for three and a half months, never having the opportunity to present his position to anyone.

The Next Six Months

Now it was January 1415, and Hus was being roughly interrogated about whether or not he agreed with all of Wycliffe's forty-five articles. When Hus finally managed to calm his interrogators down, they agreed to allow him to submit his response in writing. Hus wasn't prepared to address every detail of Wycliffe's articles, that's not what he had come to Germany to discuss. Hus did not agree with everything Wycliffe wrote and did not base his doctrine completely on Wycliffe's beliefs. He had his reservations regarding thirty-two of the articles and stated that he could only partially support thirteen of them.

Hus did not hear a word back for another several months. His health was beginning to fail due to his living conditions in the prison. By spring, the King revoked the safe conduct passes that had been issued to anyone still in Constance.

Finally, his former close friend and associate, Palec, was assigned the task of preparing a list of errors from Hus' own writings. Palec compiled a twenty-page thesis outlining Hus' errors, embellishing it with other accusations. When Hus received a copy, he found it full of lies and malice, yet he answered every error listed and accusation made in one night. He humbly requested that he be shown where any of his replies were not consistent with Scripture, and added that if this were so, he would recant.

Hus' supporters in Prague were up in arms over the news of his arrest and almost five hundred noblemen signed a petition demanding his release. Though these nobles were ordered to appear before the council, they refused. The council was preoccupied with deposing Pope John XXIII for immoral crimes including murder and sodomy for which he was sentenced to three years in prison. The changing of the guard only meant a change of prisons for Hus. He was moved from the dungeon to a castle in Gottlieben where he was kept in strict isolation—his feet bound by day and one of his hands chained to the wall by night.

The Trial

The Czech and Polish nobles were finally able to intervene on Hus' behalf stating that only a public trial would prove if Hus was guilty or not. After five months in prison, the council promised to hear Hus at a public meeting on June 5, 1415. When June 5th arrived, the council held the meeting without Hus. When word got to the nobles they demanded that the King intervene. The King ordered the meeting stopped until Hus was summoned. When Hus arrived, weak and filthy, he stood before his accusers. None of his supporters were allowed inside. Every time Hus attempted to give an answer, he was cut off, told to answer only "yes" or "no," and if he did not answer quickly, it was taken as an admission of guilt.

There was such an uproar, that the trial was reconvened for the following Friday when a weary Hus was brought in again to undergo the same battery of questions without truly being given the opportunity to speak. Finally the court ordered that Hus' writings be condemned and Hus knew his fate was sealed. In a letter he wrote: "This is my final intention in the name of Jesus Christ: that I refuse to confess as erroneous the articles which have been truthfully abstracted and, to abjure [renounce] the articles ascribed to me by false witnesses. For God knows that I have never preached those errors which they have concocted."

The Sentence

On the morning of July 6, 1415, Hus stood before the council one final time. He looked nothing like the former preacher and pastor, but was so frail he could hardly stand. Thirty articles were read against him. When he tried to protest he was told to keep silent and that he could speak at the end, but when the end came, he was not allowed to speak. The bishop stood and read the sentence. As an incorrigible heretic, he was to be stripped of his priestly office and turned over to the secular authorities and burned. His writings were also to be publicly burned at the same time. When Hus quietly asked if his writings had ever been read, the angry shouts quickly silenced him. Hus fell to his knees and prayed aloud, "Lord Jesus Christ, I implore Thee, forgive all my enemies for Thy great mercy's sake."

Hus was ordered to mount a platform and put on priestly vestments. He stood holding the communion cup which was ripped from his hands as a curse was spat upon him. Hus loudly answered back, "I trust the Lord, Almighty God . . . that He will not take the cup of His salvation from me. I have the firm hope that I shall today drink of it in His Kingdom." Then, after cutting his hair, they placed a paper crown upon his head depicting three devils fighting for his soul. They mocked and cursed him as they violently stripped his vestments from his body. After they humiliated him to their satisfaction, he was turned over to the soldiers.

A procession of accusers, townspeople, and sympathizers followed as he was escorted out of town past a cemetery where his writings were already being burned. Nearby, stripped of all his clothing except a thin shirt, he fell to his knees one last time to pray. He was pulled up by his executioner and tied to a stake with wet rope, his neck secured to the pole by a rusty chain. Bundles of wood and hay were stacked around him up to his chin.

Before the fire was set, he was asked one last time to recant. Hus lifted his voice over the hush of the crowd and speaking in German said, "God is my witness that . . . the principal intention of my preaching and all of my other acts or writings was solely that I might turn men from sin. And in that truth of the Gospel that I wrote, taught, and preached in accordance with the sayings and expositions of the holy doctors, I am willing gladly to die today."

The executioners were ordered to set the fire and as the flames mounted, Hus was heard singing a hymn before the flames overtook him and his head bowed in prayer. Hus' ashes were loaded in a cart and thrown into the Rhine River.

Revenge of the Husites

News of Hus's execution shook Bohemia and nearly five hundred nobles gathered in Prague to protest his trial and death. They entered into a solemn covenant

pledging to defend Hus's teachings and the Czech reformation against all threats. Four years later, in 1419, the Husites were a force to be reckoned with. They refused to diplomatically resolve their disputes with the Catholic Church since the deception of the Hus trial, and from then on took matters in their own hands. If the Catholic councilmen held reformers in jail and refused to release them, the Husites would throw the councilmen out the window to their deaths.

The Husites became a trained militia called the "Warriors of God." They had fortified settlements, were armed with weapons, and used innovative battle strategies. They created a banner depicting the communion cup that became the symbol of the entire movement. The banner read, "Truth conquers." It was said that the Husites created such fear by their fighting that an army once fled at the sight of their banner. For twenty-one years the Husites remained a force to be dreaded by governments and the Catholic Church.

The legacy that Hus left behind changed the course of history. The next generation of great reformers, such as Martin Luther, John Calvin, and George Fox were influenced by his teachings. Martin Luther once said, "We are all Husites." Through the Moravians (a Husite Branch), Hus' influence reached John Wesley. Hus brought to light truths that are central to the message of Christ and have become the foundation of the modern Church.

Charles H. Spurgeon

"I would go into the deeps a hundred times to cheer a downcast spirit. It is good for me to have been afflicted, that I might know how to speak a word in season to one that is weary."

With a voice that could captivate thousands, Charles Haddon Spurgeon's eloquent and dynamic preaching brought understanding and freshness to the word of God for everyday people in nineteenth century London. Spurgeon's dedication to preaching and ministering to the common masses made him a servant unlike other ministers in his day. While some called his style "vulgar and theatrical," Spurgeon maintained that there was value in speaking to people in language relevant to them. He was aflame with a passion to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and draw everyone into faith. Even as he battled harsh criticism, bad health, and chronic

depression, Spurgeon remained faithful to his calling to become one of the most compelling preachers of his time, and to this day has more material in print than any other Christian author.

Born in 1834 in Kelvedon, Essex, to a family of Independent ministers, Spurgeon grew up listening to sermons, singing hymns, and reading Christian works. Pilgrim's Progress and Foxe's Book of Martyrs were among his favorites and remained an influence on his understanding of spiritual life.

Spurgeon was fifteen in the winter of 1850 when he decided to breach his family's religious tradition and become a Baptist. He'd been traveling when a snowstorm diverted his trip and he found himself in a Primitive Methodist chapel where "God opened his heart to the salvation message." This "accident" helped strengthen Spurgeon's resolve "...that the truth was more likely to be found among the poor and humble than among the overeducated and refined." A year later he preached his first sermon. In 1852 he became the pastor of a small Baptist church in rural Cambridgeshire, where he became known for his preaching, which most considered above average. Spurgeon's reputation soon spread and led him out of Cambridgeshire and into London where he was called to the pastorate at New Park Street Chapel, London's historic Baptist church.

Spurgeon's youth, dramatic style, and paradoxical beliefs blending Calvinism and Arminianism quickly brought criticism from the press and his peers. His dramatic and emotional approach to preaching inspired some critics to compare him to popular circus entertainers, while others dismissed his style as mere sensationalism. And his conviction that infant baptism was unscriptural (developed when he as still a schoolboy) alienated many evangelicals of his time, who practiced it as a form of family initiation. Despite these attacks, God allowed Spurgeon's ministry to flourish, and his congregation multiplied rapidly. In fact, so many thousands of people flocked to hear him that he began preaching in places like London's Exeter Hall and the Royal Surrey Gardens Music Hall which were large enough to accommodate his audiences. His fame and power as a preacher were growing, but the weight of his ministry would only intensify.

Spurgeon was holding his first service in Surrey Hall in October 1856. The building could accommodate twelve thousand people, but an additional ten thousand had gathered in the gardens. While Spurgeon was praying, a prankster shouted, "Fire! The galleries are giving way!" There was widespread panic, and in the rush to evacuate the building and premises, seven people died and twenty-eight were hospitalized. Spurgeon was inconsolable and had to be carried away from the

pulpit. His depression lasted for several days, and he would carry the burden of that night for the rest of his life. A close friend commented about the affair, “I cannot but think, from what I saw, that [Spurgeon’s] comparatively early death might be in some measure due to the furnace of mental suffering he endured on and after that fearful night.”

It wasn’t all darkness, though. That same year, Spurgeon married Susannah Thompson, a member of his congregation. Though she did not describe their relationship as “love at first sight,” Spurgeon was a determined suitor and finally won her heart. Before the year was out, Susannah gave birth to twin sons, Charles and Thomas. God blessed their marriage with steady and abiding love, and in Susannah, Spurgeon found comfort and consolation.

In 1861, Spurgeon’s congregation moved permanently to the newly built Metropolitan Tabernacle. The new building could seat five thousand people and left standing room for an additional thousand. Although this afforded him less travel time from London, he remained busy with the duties of caring for his sizeable flock. The anxiety Spurgeon harbored over his responsibilities probably only aggravated the illness he first saw signs of in 1858, but he refused to slow his pace. Spurgeon felt he was accountable to God for the people in his care, and he would only settle for giving his all. “We are all too much occupied with taking care of ourselves...,” Spurgeon wrote, “A minister of God is bound to spurn the suggestions of ignoble ease, it is his calling to labour; and if he destroys his constitutions, I, for one, only thank God that he permits us the high privilege of so making ourselves living sacrifices.”

The effects of his ministry were taking their toll on his body and mind. In 1869, Spurgeon was severely afflicted with gout and as well as periodic episodes with different illnesses that could incapacitate him for weeks or even months out of the year. With sinking spirits he battled depression, and tried to find God throughout his sufferings. However, Spurgeon’s assurance in God’s being in charge could not keep from letting the question, “why?” fall from his lips. The answer he seemed to receive was not an easy one, but one that he accepted with grace. “The way to stronger faith usually lies along the rough pathway of sorrow,” he said, “...I am afraid that all the grace that I have got out of my comfortable and easy fumes and happy hours, might almost lie on a penny. But the good that I have received from my sorrows, and pains, and griefs, is altogether incalculable.... Affliction is the best bit of furniture in my house. It is the best book in a minister’s library.”

Spurgeon burned to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and bring people into

relationship with God. His originality, energy, and charisma influenced countless lives as he reached into people's hearts and spoke to them in a way that not many ministers were willing to do at the time. His resonant voice was a gift—before electronic amplification, Spurgeon's voice could be heard by thousands who gathered to listen, and yet, he never seemed to be straining. When Spurgeon died in 1892, a funeral parade two miles long followed his hearse to the Upper Norwood, where his burial would take place. Along the way, a hundred thousand people lined the streets, and shops and pubs were closed. Despite his depression and illness, Spurgeon was steadfast and answered the call of God to bring the people into life with Jesus Christ. He was one of the greatest preachers of the Victorian age, and his witness still shines brightly for all to see.