

# **THE STORY OF MY SPIRITUAL ADVENTURE**

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<b>Chapter I</b>	
Grace Abounding.....	3
<b>Chapter II</b>	
A Sheep Gone Astray .....	5
<b>Chapter III</b>	
Sanitorium As Seminary.....	7
<b>Chapter IV</b>	
"Are You Saved?" .....	10
<b>Chapter V</b>	
Up and Down .....	13
<b>CHAPTER VI</b>	
"O Wretched Man That I Am! " .....	15
<b>Chapter VII</b>	
Entire Cleansing .....	17
<b>Chapter VIII</b>	
The Way to Victory .....	19
<b>Chapter IX</b>	
The Will of God an Object Lesson .....	21
<b>Chapter X</b>	
Knowing Not Wither to Go .....	23
<b>Chapter XI</b>	
The Trial of Faith.....	25
<b>Chapter XII</b>	
The Power from On High.....	27
<b>Chapter XIII</b>	
Gifts or The Giver .....	30
<b>Chapter XIV</b>	
God Will Find You Out .....	33
<b>Chapter XV</b>	
The Pillar of Cloud .....	35
<b>Chapter XVI</b>	
"Westward Ho".....	37
<b>Chapter XVII</b>	
A Defender of the Faith .....	40
<b>Chapter XVIII</b>	
Passion for Souls .....	42
<b>Chapter XIX</b>	
Love, The Greatest of All Gifts .....	44
<b>Chapter XX</b>	
My Visions.....	46

## Chapter I

### Grace Abounding

The most heartbreakng experience and the most important crisis in my life was the death of my mother. This is my earliest remembrance. My father was an official in the government, but because he was the victim of opium, our family had always been struggling in hardship and poverty. I remember my mother as a very dutiful and loving wife. She was the one who kept our home together. Her death caused the scattering of our family. And because of this, I was brought into Christian circles.

The night when my mother passed away I was sleeping in the same bed with her. We children were awakened and sat around her. She looked at us with inexpressible sorrow and love. She pointed to me and said to my sister; "Take care of your brother after I die." Then she said to me, "Be a good man when you grow." This broke us all down. Then she breathed her last.

Thus began my hard life. We children were sent here and there to friends and relatives until my sister and I went to the Southern Presbyterian Mission School in Yencheng, Kiangsu. My mother's last words, "Be a good man" has been a life principle to me until this day.

My young heart was hungry for love. How often my sister and I wept secretly in our rooms. We were boarding in a Christian home. Many times during the night we were awakened by noises and we found the lady who took care of us and her children eating some special food while we had had only plain food for our supper. When I saw them I turned my head to the wall and pretended that I did not see them. But my heart was sore. Once when my father came to see us, she made some good dishes for us and gave us such big portions just as if she had been doing this all the time. But I was afraid to tell my father about her because I thought she might treat us worse than before after he left.

Though only a young boy I longed for the love and company. When I saw my schoolmates with new clothes, which their mothers had made for them, I wished that my mother were still living. Sometimes the students had nice things to eat which were sent from their homes. How I wished that I had some too. I dreaded vacations. When my schoolmates were preparing to go home and were so happy, I wished that some student would take me with him to his home; but none ever did. I appreciated every little kindness that was shown to me. I remember that one evening we children were sitting with the teachers. One of the lady teachers took me in her arms and patted me on the head saying how pitiful it was to be motherless. She said, "I will love you and take care of you." This made me cry. Up to this day when I ever think of this my heart is moved.

I do not even know how I got through from primary school to college. I had no money but it seemed that my every need was provided at the right time. It seemed to me that God had predestined me to live a life of faith trusting Him to supply all my material needs. So far as I remember the first answer I had to prayer in this regard was when I was in the fifth grade. The

school was going to have an athletic meeting. Every student was required to make a new uniform, but where could I get the money for this? I felt so ashamed when the boys began to drill in their new black uniforms while I had to stand aside in my poor plain clothes. I went back to the dormitory and prayed, and to my surprise a new suit was given to me the next day by one of the older schoolmates. This gave me such confidence in God that up to this day I believe in prayer.

I was very poor in the very strict sense of the word. I had only thirty coppers (approximately ten cents) each month for pocket money. I used part of the money to take baths and to cut my hair and was still able to save a little to buy some English books to study besides my regular lessons. For that reason I had sometimes to go without decent clothes. When I had holes in my stockings, being too young to mend them, I pulled the stockings down so that the holes would be in the middle of the feet, and then folded the ends under the toes. Thus I settled the problems of worn-out socks.

I have always been and still am grateful to those missionary friends who were instrumental in helping me through school. Some people are bitter about having given financial help to students in China because they became disappointed when their trust was betrayed. But this good principle to help students is proven by my case. As a boy I was brought close to Jesus Christ because of my loneliness and poverty. I do not know when I was saved, but I did believe and trust in the Savior. When eleven years of age, I was received into the Presbyterian Church. When in Middle School I was considered as knowing my Bible better than most preachers of the day. When I was eighteen I was elected to be one of the deacons of the church.

But I am far from saying that I was a saint during my boyhood. I think I was saved then because I really believed on the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. Yet I was a cake that was not turned, burnt on one side and doughy on the other. Sometimes I behaved just like a beaten child. I did not want to forgive. I was the youngest in the class, so one of the big boys enjoyed bullying me. I was helpless in fighting him and this made me hate him all the more. I drew an ugly picture of him and nailed it to the wall and then hit the picture with my fist until it hurt and then I scratched the picture with a knife.

I enjoyed reading the Bible but I must confess that sometimes I did it just to please my teachers. On Sundays we were not supposed to study secular subjects in the classrooms, so I took the New Testament with me and would go for a walk in the yard. As soon as I heard footsteps I would open the Bible and read it as if I had been reading it all the time. These little incidents show that although I was saved I was living a decidedly defeated life.

Then I lived my college days.

## Chapter II

### A Sheep Gone Astray

Modernism was at the highest tide when I went to college. It was up-to-date to deny the fundamentals of the old faith. The young people did not have the real life of Christ, so they tried to grasp on something to stand on, though it was a foundation of sand.

While I was in middle school I was warned against the danger of unbelief. Our principal was James Graham, a strong fundamentalist and a faithful defender of the faith once delivered to the saints. But somehow the atmosphere in the college overwhelmed me and in one year's time I became an out-and-out skeptic. I began to doubt all the fundamentals of the faith and looked down on the Bible believers as out of fashion.

I was told that Jesus is/was a man just like myself, except that he had a larger spiritual conception. He did not know so much as I did about science and philosophy. I had only to follow his example and be a good man. That was all that Christianity was. I was also taught that the Bible was the book of the religious experiences of the Tribe of Judah. It contains some truth but not all, for it had errors, especially scientific ones, just like other old classics. We of the modern age should use our brains to choose what we are to believe, and I swallowed it all.

I remember once I wrote the paper in my Bible class about the first three chapters of Genesis. I asked ten questions concerning its authenticity. I don't remember all that I wrote but here are some of the questions: If God created heaven and earth, who created God? The first day God made light and on the fourth He made sun, moon and stars. How could light come without the sun, moon and stars? If there be a God at all, why should He permit Satan to tempt man? If God is omniscient and knew that Adam and Eve were going to fall, why should He put them in Paradise and leave them alone to face the temptation? Why was it that God allowed Adam and Eve to sin and then sent Jesus to save them? I handed in the paper to the professor with the thought that I would be scolded, but several days after, to my surprise, I received the paper back with the mark "A" on it and in addition he gave me a comment in red, "Very thoughtful questions."

As my theology; so was my behavior. I gave up prayers and Bible reading and church going. I worshipped the modernistic speakers for their knowledge and fluency. I liked to read their books and respected them for what I called "their revolutionary attitude against the old tradition of the church." So I hated to hear the gospel preachers. Once a famous Chinese evangelist was asked to preach in our college. That was only time, so far I as I remember, that a sound evangelist had a chance to preach in the college chapel. I was attracted by the notice and went to hear him; but as soon as he preached about the cross and atoning death, my head began to ache and I could hardly wait for the dismissal and benediction. I felt it was a shame for us college students with modern education, to listen to a man like that. Strange to say, this man Mr. Wang Ming Tao afterwards became of my most intimate friends.

As I took no interest in spiritual things, my college days were with pleasure seeking, dissipation and worldly love. I was a fairly good athlete. I played quarterback on the first Chinese team of American football in middle school, under the coaching of Mr. James Graham. In college I was elected as the captain of the basketball team for three terms. It was true nearly everywhere that athletes were easy-going and careless. I learned to smoke cigarettes and drink wine. It did not take much time for me to become a screen fan. It was not uncommon for me to go to three theaters in one Saturday afternoon and evening. I had the pictures of all the well-known stars of Hollywood and China. I could repeat all the anecdotes concerning them. If I myself had not the money, I would borrow from others so as to enjoy life as I thought then.

My spiritual life nearly came to bankruptcy. In one of the fellowship meetings I was asked to tell my conception of God. I had nothing to say but that I doubted His existence. I did not see the difference between the Christians who believed in God and the Buddhists who believed in idols. It seemed that it was all superstition to me. My religion was to be a good man by following Jesus' example—the Jesus of Nazareth. But in fact my life was far from perfect. One instance will show this. I called people names. We Chinese have a saying that where one points his finger at a bald-headed man, he is really directing his insults at a Buddhist monk (A Buddhist monk keeps his head shaven all the time). When I was a freshman, our cook looked down on me. I gave him just as much money as the seniors did, but the food he prepared for me was not half as good. I dared not to say anything because I was new. The first term of sophomore, I tried to take my revenge on him. I caught two flies and put them in the food and I called for the cook to come. He did not pay much attention to what I said, so I threw the bowl on the floor. This made him mad. He wanted me to pay for the bowl, which was broken. Then I broke another one and showed him the dead flies. He began to realize that I was not somebody that he could look down upon. He took the dish with the dead flies away and prepared some better food. From that time on he gave me just as good food as he gave to the seniors. My theology then was to follow Christ, but behavior like this did not hurt my conscience at all.

Thanks be to God that another crisis in my life came and I was found ill with tuberculosis (TB) and had to go to the hospital for rest.

## Chapter III

### Sanatorium As Seminary

From the time I had to take an enforced rest to the time I resumed an active life was a period of two and a half years. The reason why I was taken ill with consumption was a very natural one. From my childhood, I was under-nourished. Also I played too hard at athletics. But as I look back, I see that it was the chastening of the Lord to bring me back as I had gone astray. If it were not for that Hand that was laid upon my heart, I do not know how deep I would have sunk into the pit of sin and corruption.

The first six months, spent in the sanatorium by the West Lake, Hangchow, were the blackest days of my life. I had no money, and day by the day I felt worse. My father could not support me, and my sister who was studying in college could only send me a little money from time to time. I hated loneliness and dreaded death. I did not want to read and hear the word, "death." I would omit any news in the daily paper that told about the death of anybody, but patients in the same sanatorium died one after another. The deepest impression I had was the death of a patient who had been sick with TB of the bone. He groaned in the room next to me for three days before he died. As he was dying, his long and slow breathing just pricked my heart, and the thought terrified me that I might die just the same way. The nurse hurried to my room, her countenance pale, saying that the dying man had held her hand tight, looking at her with an appeal in his eyes for help to save him from dying. I saw how the corpse was taken down the hill and put into a coffin. I noticed also how the wife cried for her husband and how pitiful she was as she looked at the man in the coffin for the last time before it was nailed down. Then I heard the coffin being taken away to the cemetery and I heard the sound of the flutes playing a mourning tune. Then I pictured in my mind the coffin being laid in the tomb and how it was covered with the earth and how the weeping wife, her heart broken, being persuaded to leave the graveside. I could not help saying to myself that after some time that man would be forgotten, the wife remarried and no one would come to repair the tomb, and perhaps some day the coffin would be broken and white bones would be played and chewed with by some dogs. So is the end of the life of every human being—that was the fate I was going to.

These thoughts kept me awake for nights in succession. I couldn't eat, my temperature went up and I lost weight. I took an x-ray and the doctor said my lungs were in a worse condition than at the time I entered the hospital. He gave me sleeping tablets. The conflict came: Should I take a little of the drug and go to sleep, or should I take enough to end my life? I was tired of living, and of human relationships. I felt that I was going to die sooner or later. Why not die right there and then, instead of dragging along in pains and groans; but on the other hand I was afraid to die. Pseudo-science told me that there was nothing after life; my heart dreaded the pitch darkness after death. If there were an after-life, where would I go after I had committed suicide? I could not decide what to do.

The next morning, the superintendent of the sanatorium came to see me and asked me the reason why I was gloomy.

She said to me, "Are you a Christian?" I said, "I was." She asked, "Why are you not one now?" I said, "The Christian faith is too much of a superstition for a modern student." I wanted to believe but I just couldn't accept anything unscientific. She told me to point out the scientific errors of the Bible so that she could help me. I asked her how could it be that the light came into existence before the sun, moon and stars as it is stated in the first chapter of Genesis. She was not prepared to answer me and I felt all the more strongly that the Bible was out-of-date. But she said, "How much does your scientific religion help you when you're sick? Why are you so gloomy? I cannot explain your question to satisfy you but I have a peace and joy in my heart." And that silenced my argument.

The Lord knew I was at my wits' end; my money was all gone. So He opened up the way for me to go to a Mission Hospital in Tsin Kiang Pu, North Kiangsu. There I spent ten dollars a month and was provided with all the nourishing food I needed, such as milk, cod liver oil, eggs and good food. Through the kindness of a missionary friend there, I had a very comfortable time for two years. I had six eggs a day for two years, altogether 4,380 eggs. Isn't God gracious even in little things like this?

God raised Mrs. James Graham, Sr. to be a special instrument to help me in my intellectual difficulties and to bring me back to the Lord. She knew the Bible as Priscilla did. She was brave as Deborah in her attitude towards fallacies, and she loved like Dorcas. Though she was over sixty-five, she would climb up the stairs to the third floor to see me nearly every day. I remember how breathless she was when she came to my room and it often took her five minutes to rest before she could talk to me. She had so much of the Lord's love in her that her presence was always sunshine to me, cheering me up and comforting me. It is God's providence that all the members of the Graham family became the greatest and most intimate friends in my life. Every one of them was just as she was. There was no barrier between her and the Chinese. She was like this right from the beginning. She has won so many to Christ through her thoughtful and loving relationship with the people around her. And I was one of them. My hard heart was first broken down by her love and I felt that if my mother were still living she could not have been more loving than this missionary. The Christ she believed in must be a living God.

The Lord was really gracious in raising Mrs. Graham, Sr. for me at that time. She not only could love. But she knew her Bible so well and was so intellectual that she could help me out of my intellectual difficulties. When she came to see me, we talked about every subject concerning faith. She also lent me a lot of books to read of the apologetical nature. I think I read at least one hundred volumes during the two years I was confined to bed. Of these, the late Dr. Robert Dick Wilson helped me a great deal, also Dr. Torrey's concerning The Bible and its Christ. I took interest in the booklets concerning the Bible and Science written by Dr. Harry Rimmer, so much that I translated them into Chinese later on. When my intellectual difficulties

were thus solved, I came back without any effort to the old faith of my boyhood. I held even tighter than ever the truth once delivered to the saints.

Strange to say, as I returned to the Lord whom I loved dearly, my health improved. When I cast off the poisonous teachings of unbelief, and reclaimed the precious blood of the Lamb slain, I was entirely healed and recovered from my illness. As I say, the sanatorium was my seminary and the degree that I got was not AB or Th.D. but "TB". As I think over my life, how grateful I am to the gracious Lord who chastened me with His loving hand. How often when I felt dull in my spiritual life I have wished that something like this would happen to me again to cleanse and revive me.

Now, Mrs. Graham, Sr. has been a friend and a mother to me ever since. I have not the space to tell much about her, but I should like to say that I am what I am today, spiritually, because the Lord used her as an instrument to bring me back to Himself. I remember, as if it were yesterday, how her smiling countenance shone in my sick room, and how her tender love comforted me and made me understand the greater love of our dear Savior on the Cross. The last time I saw her was in the summer of 1939 in Shanghai (eight years after my recovery). She had suffered a third stroke. She could not move herself and her mouth was twisted, but to me she was the most beautiful person in the world. When I was about to leave, she said she was sorry that she could not work for the Lord anymore, but that she would pray for me. How my heart was moved and I could say nothing but tell her that if after so many years of hard toil in China she had done nothing else but lead me to Christ, she would receive her reward on that day before His throne. I suggested that I should write a book on her life. She looked at me and with tears in her eyes she said, "Calvin, do not let me steal any of the glory that is due to Christ. Promise me that you would not do it." I left her with broken heart and I could not help but weep as I went back home on the bus.

## Chapter IV

### "Are You Saved?"

My health required that I take a rest in Kuling, during the summer of 1931. Kuling was the well-known summer resort where many missionaries took refuge from the Central China heat. It was so refreshing to leave the hot Yangtze Valley and spend the summer there where the cool breezes blew, and in the midst of the picturesque surroundings. Not only so, but it became to me as Gilgal was to Joshua. I attended the Stuart Fund Conference that was held there for seven years in succession. First, I just attended, then I helped in the business side of it, and at last I preached during three summers. Every time I went there, I was greatly blessed in seeing the Lord face to face, and I came down with both a spiritual and physical refreshing from the Lord.

Long before this, when I was only sixteen years of age, I had gone up there. I had heard Dr. Robert Dick Wilson speak about the authenticity of the Bible. I can remember, even now, how he with such confidence challenged the scholars of the world to point out error in the Bible. His personality strongly impressed me. That was why his books helped me such a lot afterwards in the hospital.

In 1931, I went up there again. There was no doubt that I was truly saved at that time, but I did not have the assurance even though I had accepted Christ as my Savior and I did trust Him to forgive sins. But I had not come to the point where I had the full assurance that I was saved and born again.

That summer a lady missionary was staying close by to where I lived. She was famous for her insistence in asking people whether they were saved. She had no discrimination between foreign missionary or Chinese Christians. Her abrupt question caused many to be offended. But the Lord blessed many through her and I was one of those.

I knew she liked to ask this question, and since I was not sure how to answer, if questioned, I tried to avoid her. Whenever I saw her, I would suddenly turn the other way. Sometimes I would pretend I did not see her if she was too near for me to turn and go the other way. Once I was invited to tea; but I was late. As I walked into the parlor, I found it was full of guests. To my embarrassment, I found there was only one empty seat, and it was right next to the "terrible" missionary. But there was nothing left for me to do but to pluck up courage and take that seat. After I had exchanged a few remarks with her about the weather, I found to my real delight that a guest opposite me left his seat, so I lost no time, apologized to her and left her.

A few days later when returning home from a friend's place, I was walking along deeply engrossed in thought. Before I knew it, she was standing in the middle of the road calling me. I was startled to see her there, but it was too late to turn and run. So, I stopped and talked to her. My heart was beating more rapidly than usual.

"Mr. Chao, I have long been waiting for a chance to talk to you," she said.

I did not know how to answer her.

"I would like to ask you a question," she said.

"What is it?" I asked, though I knew what was coming.

"Are you saved?"

"I think I am" was my answer.

"But are you born again?" she asked.

I did not know how to answer this question. To me at that time, to be saved and be born again were two different things. One can never be born again unless he lives a sinless life. I groped for an answer, but could not find one, so I said, "No, I am not."

She replied, "How can you be saved and not be born again?"

"I am sorry. I have not the time to talk to you now. I must get to an engagement." I left her rather unpleasantly.

But the following days were ones when the question, "Are you saved?" was constantly in my mind. I did not like the question but I could not forget it. The Holy Spirit worked in me through that question until my heart was very stirred up and I felt very uneasy. How could I be a Christian without knowing whether I was saved or born again? If I were not born again, what was the use of being a Christian? Why is it that some people can testify so strongly that they are? If I were to die that very day, where would my soul go? Heaven or hell? Finally I decided to settle the question.

After few minutes later, I found myself sitting on the porch of that missionary whom I thought was so terrible.

"I knew you were coming, Mr. Chao."

"How did you know?"

"I prayed for you and God promised me that you would come."

"What is the difference between being saved and born again?"

"To be saved means to be cleansed from your sins, and to be born again means to have the new life of Christ in you,"

"How do I know that I am saved and born again?"

"Did you accept Christ as your Savior and pray to Him to forgive your sins?"

"Yes, I did."

"Does He really forgive you after you pray to Him?"

"Yes, He does."

"Have you any more sins after He has forgiven you?"

“No, I have no sin.”

“Then are you saved?”

I smiled and understood.

“When you accidentally sin, do you feel your conscience pricking you?”

“Very much so,” I said.

“That is the working of the Holy Spirit working in the new life which is within you. The moment you are saved you are born again.”

She and I read some portions of the Bible together and thanked the Lord. I have had the assurance of salvation ever since then. Sometime afterwards, Satan tempted me after telling me that it was foolish to say that one was saved. I yielded to the temptation several times and put my hand on my breast to feel if there was something growing out of my heart. I thought there was nothing added to my heart and that I was just the same. How foolish I was to think I was born again. But as soon as I turned to the Bible and read the precious promises of the Lord, I felt comforted. The Word of God says so, who am I to doubt and deny it? Thus I found out that my salvation depends on the Crucified Lord, but the assurance of salvation is based on the Word of God.

## Chapter V

### Up and Down

During my convalescence I felt the call to devote the rest of my life to preach the gospel. It was against my will because from my childhood I had despised the poor preachers who had begged money from the foreigners to maintain their lives. I had the idea that I would rather have taken any of the other thirty-six professions as the Chinese express it. I would rather have taken a stick and beaten a gong and have to sell candy on the street rather than be a preacher. I fought against it but finally reluctantly yielded.

I was tempted by a plan to work for a while and save some money before I became a preacher. When I had money, I thought I would be independent of any mission so that I would not have to be a pauper-like preacher who begged money all the time. The idea itself was all right but I forgot God's will was best and that I should surrender without any condition.

Against the advice of many friends, I went to Manchuria to teach in a Government School for a salary six times bigger than I would get as a preacher. I went there with dreams that I would save a lot of money and put it in the bank; then I would work for the Lord. It was a big school with nearly two thousand students. I located some Christians and began to do a little personal work among them, but I had to make friends with the non-Christian teachers who lived sinful lives. Some of them smoked opium, gambled and committed adultery, and I had to be friendly with them just to keep my job.

One of the teachers who recommended me to teach in that school went home. Several of us teachers went to see him off at the railway station. We were several hours before the time of departure. I found them whispering together and one of them said to me that he would take me to the home of one of his relatives. I was led to a big house. As I entered, the servant at the gate shouted out as northerners always do. The house looked to me more like a hotel than a home. They went into one of these rooms in the hotel and woke up the girl that was sleeping there. The rest of the story is not fitting to tell. I found out it was the home of singing girls. The spirit told me that I should leave. I hesitated because I did not want to offend my friends. I stayed though my face blushing and my conscience stricken. That was one of the prices I paid for walking with the world.

The Mukden Incident broke out on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September that year in 1931. The Japanese troops occupied all Manchuria. The school closed down and I had to come back. I worked in the school for only one month and a half and all I got was two months' salary. I paid all the traveling expenses and lost everything except a few clothes. I went there poor and came back poorer. I felt as poor Jonah did when he came up out of the belly of the fish. I went to see my friend Dr. James Graham, Junior, who had been my Middle School Principal, a friend and brother to me. It was the providence of God that he was instrumental to help and encourage me in the early stage of my ministry. He told me frankly that I ought to start preaching right away and it was the Lord's

hand that I could not work anymore in Manchuria. But I yielded to God's will again and went to Shanghai to visit my home folks there. In one day's time I got a job and a very good one as the assistant depot-master of the Relief Commission. It was my duty to take care of tons of wheat for thousands of starving people. I went to work forgetting all about my promise to God. The old idea revived that I needed money before I could become a preacher.

It would be a mistake to think that I gave myself all up to sin. I still kept myself from worldly ways. My conscience was at rest as far as that was concerned, but I ran away from God's best and took the send best. So deep at the bottom of my heart there was a constant unspeakable misery. Just like Abraham who told lies to get prosperity in Egypt I had to compromise with the world concerning some of the Christian principles. During these months, I lived a very irregular life without any time for daily devotions. I was very dry in my heart, while outwardly, I was prosperous and popular in the world. I had several bodyguards and everywhere I went, they followed me as escorts. Policemen on the street always saluted me; the magistrates always entertained me. As I travelled, there were always special launches and boats arranged for me. Right along with the outward prosperity there was a king of unhappiness in my heart and I felt I was not at home at all with that kind of people.

Relief work was kind of philanthropy, but to the heathen sinners it was great opportunity to make money. I found everywhere I went there were indications of dishonesty. Once I sent out twelve loads of wheat. On each bag of wheat I marked the weight of catties. I went to the destination to receive the wheat and found out each bag was overweight two or three catties. At first I was glad that I had more wheat, but I found out that in the center of the bag the wheat had already sprouted. The reason was that the boatman had stolen the wheat. With a hollow bamboo pole, which had a sharp point, they stuck a hole through the bag and then put water into the pipe that carried the water in the center of the bag. This made the bag heavier and made up for the wheat that had been stolen. The boat had been delayed on the way so the wheat had sprouted. I protested against this but my boss did nothing to the boatman. I could not work any longer at this job, even though for some it was considered a moneymaking occupation. I went to see my friend, Dr. James Graham in Kingkiang, Kiangsu.

## CHAPTER VI

"O Wretched Man That I Am! "

I went to work with Dr. James R. Graham with a refreshed decision that I would devote the rest of my life to the work of God. I did a lot of literary work, writing and translating along the line of the Bible and Science, designed to help the young people under the influence of poisoning modernistic teachers.

Dr. Graham had a strong personality and was on fire for the Lord. He had such a mastery of the Chinese language that few Chinese preachers could compete with him. He had the special trait of the Graham family in that he had no racial prejudice in mind or action. His home was always full of Chinese young people and he received them with such hospitality as he did any of his own race. He was a very great inspiration to me during those days.

I helped him in leading singing and doing personal work as he conducted revival meetings in different cities. His passion for souls and courage to stand for Bible truth influenced me deeply and up to this day still influences me.

It was great prestige to work among the educated and wealthy people. Sometimes I went into debt for my clothes. When I saw young people walking out in clothes of new fashion, I would say to myself that I to I was going through the experience of Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans, struggling for the betterment of my life in my own strength. I worked for souls. The failure of mine was that I was not contented with poverty. My flesh was tempted with the love of money. I did not mean that I wanted to be a millionaire, but I thought I should have the necessities of life as I preached. If I were contented to live without what I called the necessities, I would have been a different person in those days, but I failed on that point.

I was not contented with the clothes that I had. I saved all the money I could to make myself some suits of stylish foreign cut. I rationalized that I needed fine clothes to give me the o would get a suit like that one day. There is such a thing that one lives in contradiction to what one preaches.

In those days I had a love of movies. I was easily tempted. Down in my heart I had a dislike for going to theatres but I could not get the victory when I passed by a theatre or was invited to go by a friend. I remember I went to Shanghai once making the decision that I could be victorious. I lived with one of my relatives who work. They were regular theatregoers. The first few evenings I stayed at home alone, but my relative tried to persuade me, just for hospitality's sake. She asked me why I didn't want to go. I said, "Most of the pictures tend to immorality." She argued, "The comedies are innocent." She said I must not be too stubborn. The taxi was at the door waiting. Several of them begged and pulled me and I yielded, though I knew I had made the decision not to go. That evening, Laurel and Hardy gave us a very good time. The next night my relative did not have to work so hard to persuade me, and the third night I went out of my

own accord and the fourth night I phoned for the taxi and invited them to go, but I was not really happy.

My flesh enjoyed the pictures but my real self was having a terrible time. There was a short of resentment in my heart to that kind of environment. I wanted to leave the theatre but I stayed. I made up my mind not to go again but I went. It was really no fun at all to go again but I went.

Though I tried to keep my conscience at peace by saying that to see a comedy was not sin, I did not like to let people know what I was doing. I would look around me to see if there was anyone who recognized me as I went in and out. One evening I was so embarrassed to see a missionary I knew going into the theatre as I came out. Whether he was going in to see the picture or whether he was doing something else I do not know, but I felt so ashamed to be seen.

As I struggled to improve myself, I thought of Benjamin Franklin's method of self-discipline. I made a chart showing the resolutions that I had come to make: get up early for an hour of prayer and an hour for Bible reading; talk to one man each day about his soul; help some stranger; be patient and quiet, and to think of nothing impure. I checked the chart every evening before I went to bed and marked each item with a plus or minus according to success or failure. Then I wrote a few lines of comment on my actions during the day. The first few days I marked quite a few plus signs, but two weeks later there were quite a number of minus signs. I encouraged myself over and over, but I found it became worse. Finally I had to give it up. I started this kind of self-improvement several times during the year but it was all in vain.

Here is one instance of failure. I liked to sleep late in the morning especially in the winter when the bed was nice and warm in contrast to morning chilliness. I was convicted that if I wanted to have a good time for devotion I ought to get up early in the morning. When I went to bed I would make up my mind to get up as soon as I woke up; but when morning came I would not get up. One night I borrowed an alarm clock but the next morning when it rang I turned it off and went to sleep again. The third evening I told my roommate to urge me to get up, but it was all in vain. After I was awakened and told to get up, I would still go on sleeping. This does not mean that I only had these little sins to overcome, but I had other greater sins of which I will not tell here.

I was under law trying to fulfill the demands of God with my own strength. The more I tried the more I failed. If there was anything particular that I wanted to obey the Lord in, I would fail in that very thing, and it would be a tragic failure after I had made any decision. I fully sympathized with Paul who said, "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." My life was full of decisions and failures, stirrings and discouragements, up's and down's. I was certainly miserable. "O wretched man that I am."

## Chapter VII

### Entire Cleansing

In the fall of 1993 I was led to teach in the Mission Boy's School in Kiangyin, Kiangsu. I taught two years there, and it became the Desert of Arabia to me as it was to Paul. There I experienced another crisis in my spiritual life.

Not long after the school opened, we had a series of revival meetings led by Miss Faith Chang. Her main message was about entire cleansing. It did not interest me much during the first few days because it was nothing new to me and I thought I could preach as well as she did and maybe better. But towards the end of the meetings I felt my heart was pricked, and the Holy Spirit grasped me tightly and I passed through that experience of classing which I so much needed at that time

Among the many sins I confessed to God and made right with man was a sin that the Holy Spirit specially convicted me of. I had worked the summer before in a Summer Conference looking after the accounts. One evening to my surprise and embarrassment, the account was short fifty dollars. I had not squeezed any monies and there was not any mistake in the accounts and there was no sign of anybody having stolen the money. I went over the accounts over and over again and searched the desk and my pockets. Still I could not find out where the money had gone. I thought of telling the man in charge, but even if I told I wouldn't have the money to pay him back. Finally, I yielded to temptation, and sinned. I got up at midnight, closed the door and windows, put the account book on the desk and made changes so that the accounts would balance. While I was doing this, I knew that it was wrong. My hands shook and my heart beat fast. I was afraid that somebody might see me, but I do not understand, even now, the reason why I did not feel that God was watching me from heaven and neither the wall nor the roof could hide me from Him.

The next day the man in charge looked over the accounts, said nothing and signed. It may be because he looked upon me as honest. He had not suspected anything. I was happy because this sin was covered. Nobody in the world knew anything about it except me. At the same time I was miserable because my conscience was not at ease. I tried my best to forget it, but I could not. It hurt, just like a particle of dust hurts when it gets into your eye. I did not want to think about it, but it came back to me very often just like a snake that keeps coming out all the time from its hole. As the evangelist, Miss Chang, preached her sermons against sin, my heart was directed toward that particular sin and other sins. I could stand her preaching the first few days, but the more I heard the more I was convicted. I began to dislike her and said to myself she had not much to preach about. I decided not to go and listen to her the next day, but I went anyhow. Every time she mentioned the word "sin" the Spirit would bring before me the "fifty dollars". I wanted to revolt against the working of the Holy Spirit, but I could not get away. When I read the Bible, I could see no characters but "fifty dollars," and I could not pray without thinking all

the time about the money. When I went to have my meals, the Chinese bowl and pair of chopsticks looked to me like a dollar mark. Something must be done or I could not live.

I tried the way of compromise. I confessed my sins to God all but this one. I wrote letters to my friends asking them to forgive me about other things, in the hope that my conscience might be silenced. I felt a little bit at ease at first, but in the long run it did not help at all because the Holy Spirit kept on working in my heart and I had to do something to make right this particular sin. The Lord was good not to leave me alone in this sin. He wanted me to be cleansed entirely. That night I couldn't sleep. Suddenly the Spirit reminded where the mistake was. There was a lady delegate at the conference that wanted to cash a check. Usually I gave the cash and kept the check but I had given the check to the man in charge and I had given her the money without entering it into my account. Then I had forgotten all about it. So far there was no sin, but the sin was that I had made alterations in the accounts. So, I got up straight away and wrote a letter asking the man in charge to forgive me for my wrong. I first confessed my sin to God. At the time every known sin had been confessed to God and made right with man. I could not believe how happy I was. There was such rest and feeling of liberty. All the burden and misery were taken away and God was very near and dear to me. A few days later I got a very kind letter from the man in charge. Among the things that he wrote, one phrase impressed me deeply. He said, "Since God has forgiven you, I will certainly forgive you." From then on, the sting of sin was taken away from my conscience.

I had confessed my sins to God and I had helped others to confess their sins, but it was more or less superficial. Never before had I confessed all the sins known to me at one time. By entire cleansing, I do not mean I was absolutely cleansed from all the sins I had committed in the past, but I do mean to confess all the sins the Spirit pointed out and made known to me at that time. So I did. Neither did I confess my sins with such a heart-broken feeling before. I knew it was sin before, but I felt it more deeply in my heart this time. Then there came such an inner change in my life. It seemed that my conscience was quickened, and I became very sensitive to sin, and my mind was renewed and I had a better understanding of the deep things of God. The leaders at the school used me to help the students, and a deep revival came to my school. Many of the students confessed their sins and made things right with each other. They started to work among the other students. We had such good prayer meetings every evening in my room.

This evangelist through whom I was blessed at this time became my wife eight months later.

## Chapter VIII

### The Way to Victory

I thought that from that time on I would live a victorious life but time proved that I was mistaken. I lived a much better life than I used to, but fits of defeat often came to me. I had often to confess my sins to God and make things right with man. I wished that I knew a way whereby I could live a victorious life all the time. Instead of an up and down experience, I wished for an unceasing overcoming experience. Outwardly, I was a better man and I knew it but it cost me effort to do good. It was not an outflow of the inner life. It seemed to me that the victorious life was not only keeping from sinning, but to live out the fruits of the Spirit in a positive way in the daily life; but wherein lay the way?

I tried to find the way to victory from the talks and sermons given by the great preachers of the day. I had heard most of the all-known preachers of the day and most of the well-known Chinese evangelists. For a certain period of time I was white hot for attending meetings. But I did not find out the way to victory. I do not mean that they could not help me; but that I did not seek from the right source. After I started teaching in Kiangyin I could not attend special meetings so I used to borrow as many books as I could to read. At first I didn't know what kind of books I would benefit by reading so I just read every book that came along. I spent several months in studying the textbooks used in seminaries, such as Systematic Theology, Bible Theology, Commentaries and so forth. I must admit these books helped me a lot, but they did not point out to me the way to victory that I needed. Then I tried to have prayer with the students, study the Bible with them, preaching in the country in the hope that by working earnestly I might come to the experience that I so much wanted. It seemed all in vain.

Then God put into my hands, by providence, some books written by Andrew Murray and Mrs. Penn-Lewis. As I read these books I went gradually into the deeper things of God. I found out that I had been dealing with the sins and that I did not know anything about the importance of sin itself. The blood of Christ cleansed me from my past sins and kept me from the accusations of the enemy, but I had to come to the cross once again to realize that I could be released from the bondage of sin, by accepting the fact of my dying with Christ.

I had known about the truth before and to some extent I could preach it but somehow it did not take hold of my heart until the day I came to read Colossians 3:3,4. The English translation is a little different from the Chinese. In English it reads: "When Christ who is our life shall appear then shall ye appear with Him in glory." But in Chinese it is rendered: "Christ is our life." The Holy Spirit shed light in my heart and these few words became the means by which God brought me into victory. It dawned on me that Christ is my life and my life is Christ's. Christ died on the cross to sin, and so did I. He was raised from the dead, so was I. because I had his life within me and because I was identified with that very life. I didn't have to struggle with my own strength and flesh. If I just let Christ live out His life I had the victory.

As to sin, I was dead just as Christ was because He was my life. Every morning when I got up I said to myself, "Thank God I am dead to sin. It has no power over me." In the morning when I prayed I made it a special prayer to the Holy Spirit to remind me all the day that I was dead. Later in the day I often praised the Lord in my heart. Sin had nothing to do with me because I was dead. Formerly I could not stand any misunderstanding or criticism. I liked to explain and criticize the other person in return. I tried to get the victory outwardly so I stayed silent. People thought I was victorious but within my heart I was not. In my heart I still complained and disliked the person who criticized me. But since I entered into God's victory, it became a natural thing that my heart did not have any impulse to cast any reflection on others.

Since Christ was my life I had in me all what Christ had. When Christ lived as a man He was loving, patient, kind, and forgiving. Before this I thought I had to gain these fruits. They were something I had to work for. But now I understand they were all in me because Christ was my life. I did not pray to God to make me loving but I only prayed that Christ's life and love might be manifested through me from within. I often found it hard to love those who were not lovable, but from then on it was no more a struggle but a natural outflow from the heart. I became a different man after that.

I used to be like the Israelites who had crossed the Red Sea but who longed for the leeks and garlic of Egypt. I often tried to run away from the way of the cross and make some money for myself, but from that time on till this day, I have had no desire to make money and no matter how hard life has been the world has had no attraction from me. I used to like fine clothes, but now I do not care for them. After I became a preacher, I still wore some of my foreign suits. Once in Hankow in the midst of a meeting I got a note asking me how much my suit cost. It was written in a very sarcastic way so I gave up wearing western suits and began to wear Chinese gowns until 1948 when we as a family were evacuated to Hong Kong where Chinese gown became an old relic. I used to like the movies, but they have lost their appeal. The movie advertisement, however big, has no attraction for me.

## Chapter IX

### The Will of God an Object Lesson

As a young boy I had heard a lot about doing the will of God, but to me it was an excuse of the Christians for doing something when they did not want people to know their true motive. When a preacher wanted an increase in salary he would say that he felt led to go and work in some other place but it was really the increase that he wanted. If he got the increase, he would suddenly say he felt led to stay. So when people talked about doing the will of God, this was the impression I get.

When I was brought back to the Lord, all I knew was that the Lord had been very gracious in saving me and that I must do my best to be a good man and glorify him. Little did I know that I was saved in order that I might do His will for the rest of my life, and that He would lead and guide in the very details of my daily life. That summer in Kuling when I decided to go to Manchuria to teach, among the many who tried to persuade me to refuse the offer was Miss Sophie Graham. She made a lasting impression on me. She was a member of that outstanding missionary family and was greatly used of the Lord. She took me to her little hut for a quiet talk. She asked me if I was clear about the Lord's leading. I remember that I said I was not but had decided to go because I felt I ought to make some money. She said that except for the tiny trifles of the daily life she dared not take any step unless she found out the will of the Lord. I knew she was sincere and would never make a false statement. Though I did not take her advice not to go to Manchuria, I came to know later that it was a reality to do the will of God.

After I got back from Manchuria, I realized I had failed because I did not walk in His will. One of the principles of my life has been "everything or nothing." I would rather be a heathen than a half-and-half Christian. So I began to long for a life fully under the control of the Holy Spirit. But how to know the will of God was a puzzle to me. To my practical mind, the testimonies and advice given to me by many friends were a mystery to me. It remained a puzzling problem to me until God made my marriage an object lesson.

Right from the beginning I realized the importance of marrying a Christian. If I would be an out-and-out Christian, I could not afford to marry one who was not of the same mind as myself. The surest way to get married to the right person was to find out the will of God. The old Chinese way was to leave the matter in the hands of the parents or middle men. The modern way was to marry the one that you loved. I argued to myself that the parent's judgment might be mistaken and love might be blind but the will of God was always best, and He never erred. So I said I would never marry a girl outside the will of God. When I made this decision, I was not yet clear how to find out heavenly guidance.

I first met my wife in a Summer Conference in Kuling. The first minute I saw her I felt she was the one that God meant for me to marry. People would call it love at first sight, but it was the Lord who spoke to my heart. Formerly whenever I felt inclined to any girl, there was

such an unrest deep down in my heart and after I had given up the thought my heart was at ease. I found out, this time, on the contrary such a peace in my heart, and also a persistent voice saying that this was the one whom God had prepared for me. For the first time, very definitely, I experienced God's voice speaking to me.

Several times before this I wastempted to marry an unsaved girl but I found out that this was contrary to the teaching of the Bible and I gave it up. When I was considering marrying my wife, I found that there was nothing contrary to the Word of God. Besides Mother Graham used to say, "Don't marry an unspiritual girl in the hope that she might improve afterwards." Since my wife was quite a mature Christian and a gifted worker, I knew it was in accord with the Bible.

I discussed the matter with Mother Graham because I needed the advice of a more mature and spiritually minded person than myself. Though she had frankly expressed her opposition to my former involvements, this time she gave me her wholehearted approval. My other friends, such as Mr. and Mrs. Allison, also showed the same sympathetic attitude toward us. Not only so, they went out of their way to help us in every way possible to get married. I learned at that time that the Lord had ways of indicating His will to me by speaking through other servants of the Lord. In this way I could check up the leading of the Lord.

Still I wasn't sure of the Lord's will, so I tried as Gideon did to ask the Lord for evidence. I did not believe in dreams much and even now I don't believe that it is the usual way by which God speaks to men, but I have no doubt that sometimes He does speak in this way. One night I asked to be guided to know the will of God through a dream. Surely, He gave me two dreams that I can remember to this day. I understood that it was God's will to marry her who is now my wife.

I paid a few visits to the city in which her family lived. Her parents were so kind to me that I felt encouraged to go ahead. Thus I also learned that God speaks through providence.

One of my best friends was the late Mr. Cheng Chi Kwei, the well-known Bible preacher who ran the Scofield Correspondence School in China. I wrote a letter to ask his advice also asking him to be the nominal middleman according to our Chinese customs. He gave me a motto of his to help me. It said, "If it be the Lord's will it will never be able to run away from you, and if it be not His will what is the good to have it?" During the time when I was waiting for an answer to my proposal this motto proved a great blessing to me. So, I also learned to wait upon the Lord.

By the time of my marriage, I had learned a lot as to how to know the Lord's will and to do it. God was certainly good in revealing to me His will in this my life's greatest event. I am thanking Him still that I learned to seek His will and there is no doubt that I owe my spiritual growth, in a large measure, to my marriage. I have found out by experience that it pays to seek the will of God and follow it.

## Chapter X

### Knowing Not Wither to Go

I went to Kiangyin to teach, now the purpose of making money as when I went to Manchuria, but with the definite purpose of waiting upon the Lord for the deepening of my own spiritual life. I felt that a servant of the Lord must be called and sent. By this I mean that although I knew I was called to enter the ministry, it did not necessarily mean that I had to work straight away. I felt I ought to wait for the time God saw fit to send me out to work. As I look back, I am really thankful for these two years in Kiangyin. All the misunderstanding, also the sympathy, that I received from people were both great blessings from the Lord just as Paul received blessings from God while he was in the desert of Arabia.

The time came when I must step into the flooding river of Jordan. By that time I had surrendered myself to the will of God without any reserve. I was willing to do anything, to go anywhere and to be anything for Christ's sake. But I had decided not to leave my post in the school unless I actually heard the command from God to "go".

One evening the command came to me. The students in the school held a meeting every Saturday evening in my home. It so happened that I was sick in bed and my wife was downstairs with the students. With a fever something like 101 degrees, I sat up in bed to read my Bible, I was reading the 12<sup>th</sup> chapter of Luke. When I came to the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31st verses, the Holy Spirit laid hold on me. These two verses seemed to be in bigger print than the others and also seemed much brighter. In the Chinese version the character "bi", which means "must" occurred twice, and it meant what I surely needed God would surely add to me. It threw light on the verse and it was a direct promise to me from God, and I knelt down in bed to thank God and knew it was time now for me to go and preach. I went to the principal and told him that I was going to teach no longer and that I would be leaving at the end of the term. Thus, God took me through another crisis of my life.

Before the word came to me with much force, I was all ready to yield to God except that I was still a little worried about my financial condition afterwards. Suppose I could not get enough to feed my family. Suppose no Elijah's crow attended to our needs. I could go ahead hungry without murmuring but what about my seven-months-old child? If I could not stand and had to run away, would it not be a disgrace to God and man? By providence Mother Graham sent me a copy of "The Spiritual Secrets of Hudson Taylor." As I read it my heart was warmed. Then the verse in Luke 12 came to me, and I felt the command had come to me to "go".

As the news was heard among my limited circle of friends, one offer after another came to me to take a definite work in a definite place, but I could not accept any of them, because I had it laid upon my heart to be an independent worker helping everyone but not officially connected with any particular work. When the summer vacation came, I had not yet decided where to go. Some people began to wonder if the Lord had really called me seeing I had no

definite job. Many times people asks me where I was going to work, and I answered that I did not know. I could see the expression of surprise and doubt written on their faces. But Abraham, the father of faith, left home not knowing whither he was going. It was always a comfort to meditate on that inspired story about him.

But it did not mean that I did not seek to know God's will. On the contrary, I prayed very hard that He would reveal His will to me. It was not very clear so I had to wait upon Him further. My wife and I went to Kuling to lead the Summer Conference there, laying the problem aside for the time being. Among the ones who invited us to go and work with them was Miss Lajus of the China Inland Mission, Yangchow. She made us a special offer. We were invited to live at her place as independent workers and she asked us to help with the church during that time I was not traveling and holding meetings. My wife and I laughed at the invitation when we first heard of it and did not think much about it. Humanly speaking, we had many more attractive offers than this one.

As the end of August drew near, we were still unsure as to what we would do after we left the mountain. We had to decide the matter during the last ten days that we had left to stay at the Conference grounds. So we decided to pray each separately, for one week, without discussing with each other how we felt. During the week I first prayed for myself, that every prejudice that I had in my mind might first be removed. As the pros and cons were taken away I heard the still small voice of God speaking within my heart over and over again. It was "Yangchow." I prayed again, but it was still "Yangchow." That was the only place I heard. I argued with God that that was the place other people thought unworthy as it was a small out-of-the-way city. In spite of all these arguments God's will became clearer and clearer to me, and the sun made itself clear as the mists gradually disappeared.

At the end of the week I asked my wife if she had found out the will of God. She wanted me to tell first the leading I had had, so I did. She told me the same story that I told her. She had had exactly the same experience that I had. Was there any doubt where we should go? No. So we packed up and moved to Yangchow against our own desires and the advice of many friends.

There we worked and rested, shed tears and rejoiced in the Lord, made friends and made enemies, went through trial and received blessings, but we knew it was the Lord's will and there we stayed till the war moved us away two years later.

## Chapter XI

### The Trial of Faith

God put us in Yangchow according to His unsearchable wisdom that we should live through the trial of faith right from the beginning. It was a hard lesson to learn, but after we had learned it we thanked God. As I look back now, I can see that God had a special purpose in trying me right from the start because I had to learn to look to Him for financial support.

Before I left the school my heart was secretly relying upon the three months' salary due to me at the end of the term. I thought I could live for a few months without difficulty; but some family matter turned up so I spent it all. Then my heart turned to rely on the translation work I was doing for some bookstore. I expected to get quite a little pay after I had finished the work. It was a book on prophecy. Then the brother in the bookstore raised up the question whether I interpreted the rapture to be wholly or partial. I returned the book to him because we differed on this question. Here the hope for getting the translation money was gone.

But still I said to myself, secretly, that I had a number of good friends who loved us and took interest in us. When they heard that we had come out as preachers, they would certainly support us by sending in gifts. But on the contrary none of them sent us any gift for the first few months. The Lord wanted us to rely on nobody but Himself. A tract happened to come to my hand entitled, "God hangeth the earth upon nothing." I received a great lesson after I had read it and felt that I ought to trust in Him and in Him alone. Any secret reliance on man was not pleasing in His sight.

After we had settled down in Yangchow during the two months, nothing turned up. No gifts and no invitations to me to hold conferences. The little money we had was all gone. It was not easy for us who had just stepped out on a life of faith to work for God. The very thing that we were afraid of, we had to face right from the beginning.

One day a lady friend came to see us. According to Chinese custom the ladies often give a small gift of a few dollars to their friend's baby when they see the child for the first time. This lady did so. She wrapped the two silver dollars in a piece of red paper and left the money in the cradle for the baby. We thanked God and took it. At that time a dollar was worth three hundred coppers. We put the coppers in the drawer and used them very carefully. I knew the trial was coming. I must very carefully use this money. For two weeks we had nothing but rice gruel twice a day, with dried turnips, for breakfast and supper, and nothing but rice and cabbage for lunch. During these two weeks we learned, to save. We used cheap powder instead of paste and found out that it was just as good. We thought our baby needed extra cow's milk but found out that plain rice gruel with prayer was just as good as cow's milk. Usually after eating gruel one gets hung easily but I found out that God was able to strengthen me to work from morning till evening without feeling hungry.

The only thing that we could do then was to pray and commit everything to God. Once in a while I was tempted to use human methods. Sometimes I had the idea of going to good friends to borrow some money, but the Holy Spirit told me that that was not faith. Then I thought I would visit a friend, hint our difficulties, and he would give us a gift, but my conscience taught me that that was not faith, and I felt guilty of not counting God faithful. I cannot tell even now how precious these lessons were to me afterwards as I walked the life of faith. I may have made a number of mistakes and have come short of the glory of God, but one thing is that I am thankful God kept me innocent from the love of money all during my ten years of ministry.

When we prayed hard, our voices became louder. I thought, suppose someone passing heard us, so praying, they would spread the news and that would not be faith in the strictest meaning of the word. So we closed the windows and prayed in the inner room so that nobody would hear us. As we came to the last day of the two weeks, we had only twenty three coppers left in the drawer, so my wife and I took the baby in our arms and cried out to God with groans and tears. We argued with God. We said that if God failed us, we would not suffer so much but it would be the name of God that would suffer. Just as I prayed I heard a knocking at the gate. I went down and found out it was a postman with a registered letter for me. How thrilled my heart was. I knew it was His answer to our prayers. I ran upstairs and shouted to my wife and handed her the letter while I put my chop on the registered letter slip. When I went back upstairs we found a postal check for twenty dollars. How joyful, how trembling our hearts were.

Two months after that I saw the man who had sent me the check. I asked him how it was that he sent the check just at that time. He told me that while he was out working in another city, the Spirit laid it upon his heart to send me some money. But he had none on hand to send me so he wrote to his wife to send me some. The wife answered that the Spirit had also worked in her heart and she had already sent the gift to us before his letter arrived. If she had waited for his letter she would have waited and not sent the gift, and we would have been few days without money. God was certainly wonderful.

This was the first instance of our trials. For the last ten years we have even trusting God and there have been numerous cases when God has faithfully provided for all our needs. During the first two years I did not buy one pair of stockings for my wife, nor one pair of new shoes. She wore what she had before she got married. I had to wear mended stockings. I could not point to one piece of furniture and call it mine. We did not have a bed of our own to sleep on. The best lesson we learned during these years was to do without. So many things that we thought to be daily necessities became luxuries. Some things we thought that we could not do without, we found could be spared. How precious these two verses in the 12th chapter of Luke became to me. The things that I needed God will surely provide. What God did not provide was what I did not need. It was such a sweet peace that I had in my heart that I could work solely for God without worrying about temporal needs. In spite of these "givings-up" God was faithful in attending to a very real need of our daily lives.

## Chapter XII

### The Power from On High

I am not a born public speaker. When I heard Dr. James Graham speaking in his conferences, I thought I could never be able to preach at all. The first sermon I ever preached was about Mary's Alabaster Box of Ointment. I spent a whole week to prepare it. I wrote all the points down on paper. I thought it was enough for me to preach for thirty minutes but as soon as I got on the platform I got so nervous that I began to perspire. My glasses became steamed and I couldn't see my points so I said something I knew not what, and came down from the pulpit so down hearted that I made up my mind not to preach again in my life. But through the encouragement and comfort given by Dr. Graham, I got along and improved greatly. But I knew nothing about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit nor did I know when I had the first experience of being filled with the Holy Spirit. Unlike some who can tell exactly when they were saved and when they were filled, I cannot tell when I had both of these experiences; but I thank God that I have had them.

Away back in the time when I was still in the hospital in Ching Kiang, Mr. Andre Ghi had a week of special meetings there. I went to listen to him, but he did not give much of an impression. All I knew was that he preached very earnestly. I had a strong dislike for his method of altar call. I thought it was not suitable for decent men to kneel down before an audience. During the first few days my heart was not touched, but toward the end I was moved and was convicted of my sin but I made up my mind that I would not go out to the altar. In the last meeting, after his sermon, he gave the call as usual. In the statement he made, it seemed that the Holy Spirit used him to say things that just fitted me. He said, "I see a young man in the back of the church who hasn't yielded to God yet." He added, "Don't be proud before God. Don't think you are a college student. You are a sinner before God just the same." When he said these things, my heart was pricked and unconsciously I lifted up my hand and followed the crowd to the altar. My crying was louder than anyone else's. During that short time my spirit was uplifted but due to my lack of Bible knowledge and lack of the right kind of shepherding, I lost the blessing and for a long time it did not come back to me.

When I first began to preach, I had some spiritual power. I thought I did not have the gift to lead evangelistic meetings for heathens, but God gave me the gift. Every time I preached, I saw the glory of God manifested and scores of converts kneeling at the altar to accept Christ. When I led revival meetings, the Lord was good in using me to be the instrument to bring conviction to sinning Christians. In every testimony meeting, I found that people witnessed that they had received blessing through my preaching. But I knew all the time that I had not the full power of the Holy Spirit although God did use me to a certain extent. I knew I lacked what I called the "breaking down power from on high."

I came to a crisis one year after I entered the ministry. I was invited to lead a month's meetings in a distant Presbyterian field. It took me at least twelve dollars for traveling expenses,

but on the day before my time of leaving we only had forty cents. If I did not get the money before the next morning it would be too late. My wife and I prayed hard hoping that some miracle would be performed. It was during our first financial trial. We prayed and prayed until evening. The postman came twice with the letters, but there was no money. My wife and I prayed long at supper during which time I felt the Holy Spirit speaking to me. He said that if we did not give up all our valuable belongings He would not greatly use me. We had nothing valuable at that time except our wedding ring. I struggled against this. I knew it would be very hard for my wife to give up this token of our loving tie. I spoke to my wife with reluctance. I told her that I felt that God wanted us to surrender this last valuable belonging. Unexpectedly she agreed without any hesitation because she said she had had the same leading. She went straight away to the trunk and took the ring out and wrapped it in paper. Then we prayed together. I don't remember exactly what we said, but it was something like this. "Our Heavenly Father, thou didst so love us that thou didst not spare thy only begotten Son. We love thee with all our hearts and we are willing to give up everything for Thy sake. Though this ring is a token of our love, we love Thee more than anything else. Accept this ring, the last valuable belonging we have as a token of our united love to Thee who first loved us." Both of us finished our prayers with wet eyes. She wanted to go alone to the street to sell it and I wanted to do the same, so we decided to go together. Up to that time neither of us had ever been to a pawnshop, nor did we know where they were. We walked up and down and could not find one. It was getting late. Suddenly the idea came to me that I could find out the location by looking in the telephone book. We chose the nearest one. It was way back in a lane. There was no streetlight and the only light we could go by was a little light from the shop that sold hot water. We asked the lady in the shop where the pawnshop was. She looked at us with curiosity wondering why people like us were asking for a pawnshop. When we at last reached there, the shop was closed. Both of us were tired out and we had to get back to the children who were asleep at home. I told my wife to take a rickshaw. She wouldn't. She said, "If we can enjoy God's blessings together why can't we go through hardships hand in hand?" So we walked back together on that memorable night.

Early next morning I went alone to the pawnshop. As I got nearer to the shop my heart was moved more and more. I plucked up courage and entered and found out that the counter was higher than myself. I handed the man the ring. While I waited for the money I stood alone behind the crowd and observed that most of the customers were poor people and I was one of them. But did I mind? Certainly not. With tears in my eyes I prayed silently to God, "Father I am willing to give up all. If there is anything amongst my belongings which you see fit to take from me I am willing to lay it on the altar. Even if you want my life I am willing to give it to you."

The afternoon in the train I felt my spirit was lifted up so that I felt I was lifted up into the third heaven as Paul was. I sang quietly. I read my Bible and prayed. The tears just flowed from my eyes as I rejoiced so that the people around me thought that I must be a lunatic. That evening I wrote a hymn in Chinese, to mark that great spiritual crisis of my life.

From the time on, there was such a great difference in my preaching. God had given me power from on high that could down all those in the audience. Once when I preached in a little country town in Kwangsung, the people were all broken down in the first meetings. I thought that some just followed the crowd and I stopped them from coming, telling them that they must not come to the altar unless they were really convicted. I did this three times. Not one of them was found left in their seats. They were all down on their knees weeping and crying and groaning for their sins. Nothing like this had happened in my work before this endowment of power.

I have never spoken in tongues and nothing supernatural has ever happened in my experiences, but I am thankful that after I gave up my last valuable possession to God I was blessed with the blessed experience of being filled with the Spirit and have had this experience over and over. I lived a life fully under the control of the Spirit and dared not take one step without first seeking the Lord's guidance and there was not one corner in my heart which I kept for myself. But some times more than others I would have a conscious feeling of being filled with the Spirit. I had an unusual burning love for God and a thorough surrender to Christ. My heart was warm, my eyes would be filled with tears and my fingers would feel as though they were filled with power. If I prayed, the prayers would have such power. If I preached, the messages would have unusual power. I found that it was easy to live a victorious life. I understood the meaning of Dr. Torrey's words that a man who preached with power was like a hound all stirred and ready to go for the prey at the command of his master.

Moreover if I did not have such an experience of breaking down prayers once in two weeks or a month, I found that I lacked power to preach and also to live a victorious life.

The Lord gave me the experience in different ways at different times. Sometimes I prayed definitely for it and sometimes I did not. Sometimes when I was reading my Bible alone or when singing, God would bless me with this experience. Sometimes when I took part in the communion, my heart would be so taken into the presence of God that I had another outpouring. Some call this the baptism of the Holy Spirit; some call it perfect love. I don't care what people call it, I thank God I have had this experience and was greatly blessed.

## Chapter XIII

### Gifts or The Giver

So far I had been living a life with myself as the center. In plain words, I was selfish even when seeking for the deeper experiences of Christ. As I look at salvation, it was purely for me that Christ died. I was the main character in the scene and Christ took a less important role. When I concentrated myself it was because I wanted to show my gratitude to Him who had sacrificed His life to save me. I sought the filling of the Holy Spirit because I coveted to be greatly used of Him. I worked for the Lord, but down at the bottom of my heart I secretly cherished the intention of wanting to be a great man like Moody, Wesley or Finney. When I met men of God I wished I could have their experiences, too. I do not mean that it was wrong to have ideals like these, but I knew that I had selfish motives in seeking the things of God.

In the beginning my heart yearned after the grace of God. I was willing to be nobody for the sake of God. I had no other than ambition but to please God in my heart and in my daily life. But as I entered the ministry and saw the need of the work, I was led to covet gifts rather than grace, to emphasize the work of God more than to please the heart of God. How easy it is for a Christian worker to seek the immediate results, to get the praises of man rather than seek to be a man after God's own heart.

When my wife and I were in Haichow taking a series of meetings, our eldest boy, then our only child was suddenly attacked with double pneumonia. He was only eleven month old. I was called back from the outstation and my wife and I took turns to care for him. Every parent knows the first baby is treasured. Our hearts day by day grew heavier as we saw him becoming worse and worse. One evening we saw that he was dying. The doctor told us to be ready at any minute to get up from our beds. His trembling voice betrayed to us his helplessness. We knelt down together crying from our hearts and pleading with tears. Suddenly the Spirit reminded me of the promise that I had made to God when the child was born a year before, and how I had sinned in not keeping this promise.

After the birth of the baby, my wife was taken back to her room in the hospital. I knelt down at her bedside. The baby was in the cradle not far from us. I told God that this boy belonged to Him and that we were like Moses' mother who nursed the baby for the princess. We prayed that the boy would grow up into a man after God's own heart, but if not, that the Lord would take him away from us. We made the prayer, but gradually forgot it and felt that the baby belonged to us. We were not willing to let him go from our hands. When my wife and I were praying in the hospital for our sick baby, the Spirit convicted me of treasuring the baby more than I treasured the will of God. If it pleased God to take away our baby, should I not be obedient and say, "Amen"? Should not I be as willing and happy to give back the gifts that God had given as to receive them? When God gives us gifts, is it for His enjoyment or for our own glorification? As the Spirit dealt with me a light shone into my heart and I became obedient to

His will, regardless of what the result would be. Thanks be to God as soon as we obeyed, the child pulled through the crisis and recovered.

This set me thinking over my attitude toward God. Was I self-centered or Christ-centered? Was I seeking spiritual blessings for my own enjoyment or for the glory of God? Was I trying to have spiritual experiences so that I could be proud of myself or was I preparing myself to live and work for Christ? Suppose I had to live a life of poverty like a beggar? Suppose I became dumb and blind? Suppose I became friendless? Would I love God just the same?

As I yielded, the tests came one after another. My father was opposed to my being a preacher because he thought with another profession I could make money to support the family. I don't blame him because he was not a Christian and did not know what it meant to live for God. Not long after our return from Hiachow he visited us in our home with the determination to persuade me to do some other business. He said that a preacher is like a beggar before the foreigners. He did not oppose me because I was a Christian but he said I should not be too narrow. He pleaded with me putting the needs before me. He warned me that most preachers could not take care of their own children. I told him that I was grateful to him for his love but that I had to listen to the Father in Heaven and that I felt it was His will that I should become a Christian minister. He never gave up but tried in every way possible to convince me. As I refused to yield to him he became more and more angry. He shouted at me, thumped on the table and danced on the floor with rage, after which he ran for a knife and threatened to kill me. This continued for three days and nights. Oh, how our little baby only one year and a half old screamed with fear, even in his dreams at night. I shut myself up and prayed for strength to be given us. With a broken heart I prayed to God promising Him that I would be true no matter what the outcome. Let poverty come, let people persecute me and even let death's shadow come o'er me yet I would still love God whose love never fails. From that time I had a great regard for the life of the beggar, Lazarus. He had no money, no food, no clothes, no friends, none of the comforts of this world whatsoever, yet he loved God unto death. Would I love God if I did not have any gifts whether material or spiritual? I got back to my first love when I sought the grace of God instead of His gifts and when I loved God without any condition and when I looked unto the Giver instead of the gifts.

What a change the Spirit wrought in me after my attitude was changed. I was contented whether I was needed in the field or whether nobody invited me for meetings and I was neglected at home. I even yielded to such an extent that I was not worried when God did not use me. I only took heed that I should be in His will and that I was a man after His own heart. At that time I found out that even spiritual ambition is not pleasing to God and is carnality dressed up. But the fact is that the more you yield to God in this way the more blessing God will give you, but your motive should not be just to get blessings for yourself when you serve Him. This is one of the great lessons I learned during the first two years of my ministry.

I should not leave the impression that my father continued to oppose my being a preacher all his days. One year or so after that, he came to see us again and was glad to see us working

heartily for what we believed to be true. After the war broke out with Japan we left home and took refuge in Hong Kong. He was taken ill shortly after and died. Not one of his children was with him. But my heart was comforted when I got a letter from a friend, Miss Lucy Fletcher, who buried him for us. She wrote that before my father died he confessed faith in Christ as his Saviour. I was so thankful, that through my obedience he came to know Christ as his Saviour.

## Chapter XIV

### God Will Find You Out

The war with Japan broke out in the summer of 1937. We were in the middle of a Conference in Kuling, the Central China Summer resort. I rushed home with the intention of taking my family to a safer place. But I stayed in the city of Yangchow until the Japanese came. I do not quite understand yet why God did not lead us to leave the city earlier. Many times I decided on my own impulse to leave for Hankow, but every time I made the decision my heart was not at peace. When the Japanese were only fifty miles away and we could hear the booming of the big guns and all of our friends were fleeing up the river, we decided to go. But after I had put my baggage on the steamer the Spirit spoke to me that this was not God's will, so I took it off again yielding my will to God. I came back to Yangchow and took my family to the country not far distant from the city.

The first place that we took refuge in was a farmer's mill. It was a mud house. The floor was covered with cow's dung. We swept it and lived there with the family. But it was too near the city, so we moved to a little town by a lake. The room we had was very dark, and we had light only from ten in the morning to four in the afternoon. With a white board, which I put in the yard, I reflected the light of the sun into the room so that my wife could work. We had to save our money, and after we had used the matches we would keep the burnt sticks so as to light the fire without using another match. We saved, too, on vegetables; and after we had had four bowls of rice we did not feel satisfied because rice without fat is not satisfying. My wife did not have any milk for the baby girl and we could not afford to buy any so we fed her with Chinese cakes. When she was only six months old she was very thin, her stomach was swollen and she was too weak to stand. But we could do nothing more for her.

We heard lots of rumors of what the Japanese were doing to the city of Yangchow. We were afraid that some of them might come to the village at any time. We were also afraid of bandits and the rascals in the town. We were walking in pitch darkness for two months. We had to dress poorly. I did not shave so that we would not look any different from the country people. All we could see was the big lake surging with big waves caused by the bitter north wind, which was blowing on it. It seemed as if we were out in the ocean not knowing our destiny.

The heart-breaking part of it was the attitude that some of our fellow-refugees had toward us. Before the war they were friendly, but now they seemed to try and avoid us. I did not suspect anything until I overheard some of them talking. One said, "What will the Chao's do after they use up the little money that they have? Shall we have to take care of them while we do not have enough for ourselves?" If it were not for the grace of God, I would have become a lunatic. It hurt my self-respect because ever since I had become a preacher I was independent. It was not only that they misunderstood me, but an insult to my character. I nearly lost my temper but thanks be to God His grace was sufficient so I kept silent.

One of the ladies came the next day with the intention of asking my wife questions, although outwardly it did not appear that she came for that purpose. She asked my wife how much she had. Then she said, "You were supported by gifts from these people who asked you to lead meetings. Now nobody will do that. Nobody knows where you are so they will not be able to invite you. Why don't you send out circulars informing people of your whereabouts so that they can send you money or invitations?" I happened to join the conversation at this time. I told her that I refused to do this because I thought we should pray to God instead of asking help from friends. But she said, "How can people know where you are?" I answered, "God will find us out."

People may think that we were foolish but God did find us out. I got a letter from a missionary friend of the Southern Presbyterian Mission in Tsingchiangpu, Kiangsu, enclosing a check for our traveling expenses and an invitation for us to work in his station. We were the first ones to leave that village for a safer place. After we left, the place became so disorderly that everybody had to move. Then people said that God was really with His servants.

I still do not understand why God did not permit us to leave for the interior of China at that time instead of wanting us to stay in Yangchow. But during my days of inactivity in the village, God proved to me that He will provide His children with their necessities because they are His children, not because they work for Him. He proved to me that a man who lives by faith does not necessarily have to be in active work, but if he trusts God, God will provide for him. I remember that I once read a tract entitled, "God hangeth the Earth upon Nothing." Though it seems that there is no way out, God has a way and is able. If He could hang the earth upon nothing, surely He can provide His children with their needs in circumstances that seem impossible if we trust Him.

## Chapter XV

### The Pillar of Cloud

When one commits himself to the Lord, there comes to his heart such a joy and peace just like a baby who is contented in his mother's bosom. In this state of mind, I worked for a couple of months in the Tsingchiangpu field of Kiangsu. Every day the newspaper gave very discouraging reports and many rumors upset the hearts of the people. Nobody knew what was going to happen on the morrow. But the Lord quieted and comforted my heart in the midst of darkness. We had no plans whatsoever for the future but found it so sweet to trust in the Lord and to be working for Him in His will.

One day a letter came to my hand bringing unexpected news. I had a number of friends in Changsha at that time. God laid it up on their hearts to pray for me, but they did not know where I was. A refugee from Yangchow, where my family lived, told them that we had moved to the country so they wrote a letter to a missionary friend in Shanghai. He sent the letter to Yangchow by another missionary friend who had a special permission from the Japanese authorities to go to that place. The letter was mailed from Yangchow to the first village we had lived in and then mailed onto the second village and then re-forwarded to Tsingchiangpu. If it were not for God's providence, this letter could never have reached me in such a chaotic time as this. The letter extended an invitation to me to go to Changsha to preach. Of course this was a good opportunity for me to leave this district which might at any time fall into the hands of Japanese, but it didn't seem possible, firstly because the way to Shanghai was shut off, secondly, we had no funds for traveling, thirdly, we had to go through forbidden territory and we needed someone to take us through. I prayed that if it were His will for us to go that He would open up the way before us.

To my surprise the Lord opened up the way within the next few days. A missionary came from Shanghai saying that there was a new way open, and he also brought a letter enclosing enough money for our traveling expenses. Then we heard that there was a missionary planning to go to Shanghai who could keep us company so I took it to be His will and we left, though with a heart full of regret to leave the friends there who had been so kind to us.

The missionary, who was our fellow traveler, hired a small boat. There were ten of us in all. As we sailed through the forbidden territory, we sighted a motorboat with a Japanese flag coming straight toward us from the fortress nearby. We knew that it was coming for us. I prayed hard while I hid my wife and children under the boards. We were stopped. The soldiers jumped into our boat and we were tied alongside their boat. Then they carefully examined every suitcase and demanded to see our passports. While they were examining us, our little baby girl made a little noise. One of the soldiers took away the boards and found my wife and two children there. He looked at my wife and then at the two children, looked at the other soldier, laughed, but did not say anything. None of us had passports for we did not know beforehand they were needed. The officer then ordered that all the Chinese be arrested and be taken to the battleship anchoring in the river nearby and the two Americans, including the missionary were to be allowed to go on

a passenger steamer to Shanghai. The missionary did his best to plead that my family might be allowed to go with them, but it was in vain. Then I asked the missionary to go again and plead that my wife and children might be released. I myself was willing to face whatever was to come. Strangely enough the officer consented to let us all go. By that time, when we were ready to go to the steamer, we discovered that the battleship had moved toward us and had signaled that all passengers be taken aboard. A few minutes later we had tied up to the battleship. A soldier bearing a gun came down. The missionary and the other Americans went to interview the commander on the steamer to Shanghai. During their absence the soldier was quite fierce but his heart was softened because our little boy played and laughed with him. The motorboat carried us to the steamer. We watched our own boat being taken away with the remaining passengers in it. We could do nothing for them and we have never heard what happened to them. Truly the Lord was good to us.

When I arrived in Hong Kong I found that Changsha was a dangerous place to be in and many of my friends advised me not to go there but to stay in Hong Kong until I received further guidance from the Lord. Gradually, I felt that the Lord wanted me to go to the interior alone, leaving my family in Hong Kong. But we had very few friends in Hong Kong and did not understand one word of the Cantonese dialect which was the dialect spoken there, and which sounded like a foreign language to me. I think I would be better understood in New York than in Hong Kong. To live in Hong Kong without friends or support seemed impossible. At that time I had a letter from a friend in the interior advising me to take the family to Kweiling, Kwangsi, for he said it would be easy to find a job there. Though his invitation was written out of good will I felt it was an underestimation of my spirituality if not an insult. Was I a sort of a man who would go to a place just for a job? Could I leave a place just because I had no financial support? Was the love of money the motive of life? Since God willed that my family should stay in Hong Kong I decided to obey even if I had to starve right there. I had then only about a hundred and twenty dollars or so but we went and rented a flat and borrowed a few pieces of furniture and settled down. Was it impossible for us and live by faith in a strange place unknown to people? Was God able to provide for all our needs? This challenged me to a deeper faith in God. Since He had guided me to stay He would surely be responsible for all my daily needs.

I was taken ill with typhoid. It was not child's play for me to have to lie still on a sick bed for six weeks in a strange place like Hong Kong. We had no money to buy medicine nor any money to call a doctor but God was wonderful in all His ways. One day, a Christian doctor knocked at our door introducing himself. He came every day after that and also gave us gifts. During the period of my illness God widely raised up friends for me. One does not have to hold big conferences, nor does one have to attend big social parties to have friends, for even when lying in bed God can raise us friends for one. I proved this. My family stayed in Hong Kong for more than two years and truly God was good.

## Chapter XVI

### "Westward Ho"

During the two years that my family stayed in Hong Kong, I went to the interior holding special conferences in different cities and in distant outposts. After my long trip in the southwestern part of China, I found the life too tough for me in contrast to the comfortable and easy life in Hong Kong. Also there were opportunities for conferences work and it was a very fertile field for independent workers. I began to like the place and the comforts of life there that I had no desire to come to the interior again. I felt somewhat like the Israelites felt when they were in the wilderness when they longed for the leeks and garlic of Egypt, for I longed for the bread and butter, ice-cream and fruits of Hong Kong. It seemed that God knew that the way to the interior would be soon cut off so He gave me the vision to move my family from Hong Kong to the interior, but I refused to consider the matter.

I found it true that when in poverty and difficulty it is easier to cling close to the will of God, but when one has a comfortable environment and feels satisfied he is not apt to listen to the will of God. From the time I had entered the ministry I found it easy to obey God. But this was the first time I refused to go forward at His command. How happily and bravely I had obeyed God in settling down in Hong Kong, but how reluctant I was to leave the place in obedience to His will.

Then I had a series of meetings in Macao. One day I went to visit the famous ruin of a catholic church that had a cross outlined against the sky. This once gave inspiration to a Christian to write the hymn, "In the Cross of Christ I Glory." As I stood and gazed at the cross I unconsciously began to sing that hymn. My heart was melted as I meditated on the fact that everything would pass away but the cross would live forever. Then I went on to visit the tomb of Robert Morrison, the first Protestant missionary to China. There lay the great man of God who left home and friends to come to a strange land to win souls for Christ. Very vividly his life story came to my mind. In the first thirteen years in China he wrote nearly two hundred letters but only received one reply. Was there anything greater? Was there any man greater? To think that I being a Chinese had made up my mind to enjoy the comforts of life in Hong Kong and had refused to live the hard life of the interior in preaching the Gospel to the unsaved of my own country. I was convicted of my disobedience and my self-love. I don't know why but I began to sing the hymn, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross." When I came to the verse that says, "See from His head, His hands and feet, sorrow and love flow mingled down," I could sing no longer. I broke down in prayer. I promised the Lord that I would go right away to the interior and leave Hong Kong, which was my spiritual Sodom and Gomorrah.

Thus I came in to the South West to stay and work but I left my family in Hong Kong because I wanted to get a place ready for them. I worked in Kunming for seven months and then went back in the summer for my wife and children. But my wife was not yet clear about the Lord's guidance. I tried to persuade her but she was not convinced. I told her to get everything

but she made excuses. But one morning when she was having her morning watch the heavenly light suddenly shone on her and laid hold of her. She became sure of the Lord's will and got up from her knees happy and willing to give up the home she loved so much. She told me of her decision and we packed up and left Hong Kong for Kunming traveling through French-Indo China. It was one whole month before we got to our destination. On arrival there we heard that the way we had come was now cut off, for the Japanese took Haiphong and Hanoi. We were thankful that we had come into the interior.

After we came into the interior there was much fruit that we had to thank God for. We enjoyed our work and had many good friends and the opportunities were fine. But the life was not easy and if it were not for the assurance that we were in the will of God, I don't know how we could have lived through it. I will tell of two experiences.

Kunming is a beautiful city and a delightful place to live in but when the planes came daily to bomb it was no longer a nice place to be in. We would get up early in the morning, rush through our breakfast and take a few things with us and go out of the city to wait for the air-raid alarm. When we heard that terrifying sound we would walk to the hills, nearby and find a place to hide ourselves in. There, under a tree or by a tomb we could wait until the late afternoon, and then we would go home and prepare our supper. Day after day and week after week we lived like this. One morning I got up about six and went to see a friend before breakfast. When I was about half way there the air-raid alarm sounded, so I ran back to the house for my co-worker, Mrs. Cox. At the time my wife and family were living in the country. Just as we got to the city wall the enemy planes were flying just about our heads. They were machine-gunning a Chinese passenger plane. We hid ourselves amidst the winter grass. How the bullets hissed. There were hundreds of people like ourselves hiding in the fields, because the alarm sounded only five minutes before the plane came. We were just helpless. The planes made circles over our heads and the bullets were shooting into the air. I could do nothing but pray. When the planes went away we would rush to a place a little farther and when they came back we would hide ourselves again. Thus we played hide-and-seek for half an hour. But God was good to us. He protected us. Not one of our friends was hurt or killed, neither were our homes bombed.

The question was should we stay in Kunming and go on working under the constant air raids. After prayer we felt we should move further to Kweiyang. In March 1941 I left Kunming with my family and a few Bible School students by truck. Our truck broke down every few miles and it took us five days to go three hundred miles. One the sixth day we were all rejoicing because we were not far from our destination. We enjoyed our lunch at a little town called Hechang. My wife was seated in the cab with the driver and I was in the back truck with the other two children by my side. It was a beautiful day. We were tired of traveling and thought how nice it would be to get to Pichiah, which was our destination. It was a very even road, but suddenly we saw two trucks standing in the middle of the road. Our truck tried to pass by them on the outside but we were too near the edge of the road. The earth collapsed beneath us. I felt a strange sensation. Before I knew it, the truck had turned over and I was thrown out, landing on

the side of the hill. The trunks all fell out like rain drops and one landed right on top of me; then I knew nothing more until I came to consciousness and found myself lying down in the valley with my wife by my side. I had a bad cut on my face, and my backbone had been hurt by the weight of the trunk. I found not sit up. My children were standing nearby crying, "Daddy is dead, Daddy is dead." My hand unconsciously was placed on the gash on my face. I tried to move myself a little and found that although I could not sit up, I could still move my backbone so I knew I was not fatally injured. My wife did not know how it was that she was not unhurt. She had been thrown out too, and pregnant with a baby already four months. None of the children were hurt. The others said that the little girl was thrown out and rolled down the slope and when the truck turned over she was just between the four wheels. How grateful I was that the Lord had brought us safely through the shadow of death. But when I turned my head I saw a heart-breaking sight. There were about a dozen men and women who were groaning because of their injuries. Within my reach was one of my students. He was having convulsions and I know that he must be dying. I reached out my hand and took him by the arm and prayed with him. His last prayer moved my hurt. He said, "Oh, Lord, if it be Thy will let me live to glorify Thy name, stop the pain and heal my wounds. If it is Thy will to take me from this world receive my soul." Then he said no more.

We were in a No-Man's Land, a deserted place. The sun was setting. How would we spend the night? Where should we send the injured? Who would bury the dead? One truck after another passed us and rushed on. The driver and passengers would put their head out and look at us; but drove on having no sympathy to stop and help us. I cried for help, "Save my life, save my life," which is a Chinese expressions when one needs assistance. But all our cries were in vain. But in God's providence He raised up some repairmen of the road who came just in time to help us. Their two trucks stopped and took us back to the little town that we had lunch in. My wife was the only one in the group that was not hurt. She had to take care of the injured, pack up the broken trunks, and look out for the other trucks to take us to Pichieh. We tried hard to get medical help but there was no doctor, nor even a nurse in that place. There in the darkness we groaned and moaned with our pains. I have never been through a longer night than that. The next day we got other trucks and went our way. On the journey we nearly met with another accident but God kept us safe. We stayed on until I recovered from my injuries at Pichieh. Even now I have a deep scar on one side of my face. I first thought that it spoiled my looks, but now I like it because it has become a constant reminder to me of my obedience to God in coming west to do His work. One day I have that glorified body and see the Lord face to face I will not have this scar, but I hope to have a smile of approval from the Saviour I love.

"Westward Ho." How I thank God that in His good will I came to the west, to a place that is a virgin field, and to parts which are unevangelized. But when I think of those pioneer missionaries who came here fifty years ago and of the hardships they endured, the little that I had suffered is not worthy to be mentioned. But I pray that my will will always be as much surrendered to the will of God as theirs.

## Chapter XVII

### A Defender of the Faith

I am a fundamentalist but I do not believe in fighting against modernism all the time. That makes one disliked everywhere one goes and makes it harder to lead back those who have gone astray. As many do, I believe in preaching the positive truths of the Gospel and I also believe in defending the truth once delivered for the saints when necessity arises. Paul who wrote the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians also wrote the Book of Galatians. Christ who preached the Sermon on the Mount also pronounced the seven curses upon the Pharisees. If Martin Luther had not protested there would have been no Protestantism.

I am a victim of modernism. It robbed me of all the joy and peace I had in Christ. I nearly died as an atheist. As the Lord led me back to the old faith of the fathers, I was deeply convinced of the poisonousness of this theology. As I observed so many young people being poisoned by it, my heart just ached for them. When I had opportunity and when I felt led of the Spirit, I would say a few brave words in defense of the truth.

Just before I entered the ministry, I had the opportunity of showing the churches in China the misleading teachings of a world-famous preacher who was invited to China to hold a nationwide campaign. His books were scattered all over the country. He did not believe in the verbal inspirations of the Bible, saying that there were mistakes in the language, and he did not believe in the personal and premillennial return of the Lord. He believed that regeneration was a means of building up a man-made Kingdom of Heaven. I read every one of his books that I could get and had a personal interview with him and I felt I could not refrain from warning the churches against his seemingly Scriptural but false doctrines. I wrote a booklet and sent copies out to the place where this world leader was preaching. Many were helped through it; but others were opposed to me.

Letters began to reach me. Those who were for him accused me of being very narrow-minded. Some told me that it was wrong to depreciate a “prophet” like him. Even my friends among the missionaries divided into two groups for and against me, and hot debates went on for a long time. One or two of my friends advised me not to do anything like this again because it interfered with my popularity with so many who would have been my friends and supporters. Popularity, how could I seek it for myself if I had to sacrifice the truth of Christ? If to believe that the Bible is the Word of God, and to accept Christ as my personal Saviour is old-fashioned, then I prefer to be out-of-date and I wish I could be more so. Whenever there is a compromise, it is the truth that suffers.

From then on when I felt led, I would take a stand for the truth, no matter what cost. I remember another time when a certain false movement was at its highest tide in China. This movement led many people to confess their sins in public or to one another. They also kept the morning watch. It seemed to do some good, but I read through their books I found that there was

a vital lack of the most important Christian doctrines. It taught that when a sinner consecrated himself to God he was born again nor was it necessary to believe in the atoning death of Christ. In their meetings they did not pay any attention to the fundamentals of the faith, all sorts of people could share experiences with one another. In one of their meetings I asked a few questions and pointed out a few errors. This caused quite a stir in the neighborhood. I was accused of being ignorant and was accused of robbing the “rice bowl” of the pastor. Even some who were with me in spiritual things were not willing to support my position. But there were others among my Chinese and missionary friends who stood by me. There was an elderly lady who showed her sympathy toward me by sending me a kind of precious flower. I put it on my porch. It blossomed in the winter while most other flowers were dead. I prayed that I might be like that flower and stand for God and His precious Word during a time of apostasy.

I do not want to write too much or too plainly about a delicate subject like this. I believe in love and unity, but I do not believe in a love and unity that has to make some compromise. We can agree to have minor difficulties and differences, but we cannot see the basic doctrines be trampled on. So it was not an uncommon experience for me to believe and practice what I feel to the Scriptural, in spite of misunderstanding and opposition. Those who do not quite understand me think that I am too narrow, but if I do not accept the light of the Holy Spirit His Holy Light will not come to me. I like to be supported by my friends and I do not like to be disliked, but when it comes to a matter of conscience I must listen and obey God rather than man. I pray that God may ever keep me true to Himself and to His will.

## Chapter XVIII

### Passion for Souls

As I walked among the throngs of people the Lord put in my heart a compassion for them as I saw their lost condition. To me every soul was a challenge. If I saw a funeral I would think, here is another soul that is lost forever. I would ask myself what I had done to help win them. When I first entered the ministry I had such a burden for those who were dying without knowledge of the Gospel, the four hundred and fifty million of Chinese. I wanted to preach Christ with my whole being.

I once went to visit a friend on a China Inland Mission compound. On the wall of the parlor there hung a map marked with the stations and outstations of the mission in that province. I was challenged. Hudson Taylor was an Englishman but he loved the Chinese so much that through his faith alone, this great work of CIM was begun to win lost souls in China. I asked myself, "What faith have I?" If I had such faith would not God use me to win my own people for Christ?

Once I went to stay with a missionary friend. His little daughter asked me if I had the choice what would I prefer to be, an American or Chinese. She said I was half an American anyway. I told her that I thanked God that I was a Chinese. By this I mean that it was the good will of God to have me to live in China at a time like this with such open doors for the preaching of the Gospel and with such a wide field for Christian work, and being a Chinese I had greater opportunities to serve God, so why should I not thank God for being a Chinese.

Very often the Spirit reminded me of God's love to me since childhood. Through God's grace I had obtained an education, which is impossible to millions of Chinese young people. If it were not for His love I do not know what kind of man I would have become. He loved me, saved me and prepared me until this day. Has He not any purpose for me in His eternal plan for the present-day China? Sometimes these thoughts would fill my eyes with tears and my heart with fire. How I wish I were ten or twenty years younger so that I could have more time to work for Him.

The passion for souls is the power for the ministry. I could never have preached well if I had no love for souls. I am not a gifted or fluent speaker. I do not plead for these things but I do pray for this passion for souls when I preach. At a certain conference, which we were holding, the atmosphere was so hard that we felt we were throwing eggs against rocks. My friend and I decided to pray two or three hours. We wept and pled. We shouted and cried until the love for souls filled our hearts, so much so that I felt desperate like Moses pleading for the Israelites who prayed, " Yet now if Thou wilt forgive their sins; and if not blot me, I pray Thee out of thy book which Thou hast written." This prayer became my prayer. Then I felt the Lord had answered my prayer and with that assurance I went to the meeting. Before I finished my talk the whole crowd

were down on their knees broken down because of their sins. I felt that If I did not love the people I would preach without effect.

As I have worked as a pastor, I have proved this to be true, If a shepherd does not love His sheep, how can he make his work a success? This love did not come by force; it came naturally. I loved the brethren and the brethren loved me. I knew them all by name. If a single one failed to come on Sunday I would notice it and follow him up. They shared their confidences with me. I entered into their inner life and I often said that I had a pair of pastoral legs. I have to walk to visit the Christians. This gave me an opportunity to practice walking. After the day of heavy walking was over I laid myself down on the bed. How I enjoyed that bed although it was only made of hard wooded boards. I liked to sing that hymn, "The Day is Finished for Jesus." It was sweet to commit myself to Christ after a day's hard toil. But the passion for souls is a dynamic that we need.

I have a big family of seven children\* with limited means and no modern conveniences in our home. Life is a struggle. My wife is very busy from morning till night, and even during the night she has to get up a few times to attend to the children. I thank God that He thinks us worthy to have so many children. I do not complain at all, but it is not an easy job to do pastoral work with a big family like this. I am not a domesticated man but I often have to feed the baby etc. I have to preach practically every day, attend to business, and do the visitation. I often have to prepare my sermons when walking the baby to sleep, and often have snatched a little time to read when feeding the baby. It is a very rare thing for me to find time to have an hour of leisure for myself. But I was happy to be busy for God and this soul-saving work. Once my wife and I offered to care for a baby whose mother was ill. We were busier than ever. But the parents belong to the Lord, how glad we were that we did it for Christ's sake. I feel that every bitterness is made sweet if we do it for His and love's sake.

Ever since I had the accident the thought has been with me that the Lord may take me to Himself any time. I do not know how long I will live and I want to bear more fruit for Him. I feel conscience-stricken if a day passes without dealing with a soul.

Before the accident I felt that I had a long time to live but ever since then I have felt that the time is short. One of my friends told me that I should not have that kind of attitude. But the Lord may come at any time, so I want to be prepared so that I will not have to meet Him with empty hand.

\*Seven children at the time I wrote this chapter in 1943 but one year later the Lord blessed us with eight.

## Chapter XIX

### Love, The Greatest of All Gifts

Love is the greatest of all gifts, and to me it is the last that I have made efforts to seek after. When I worked as an evangelist my whole family attention was centered on the immediate results of my work; but when I settled down as a pastor I began to realize the mighty power of the life that we live day by day. The abundant life manifests itself in love, and genuine love speaks more fluently than anything else.

It seems that in my spiritual life relating to the growth of love, there have been three stages. In the first stage I appreciated and enjoyed the love that God's people showed toward me. My conversation was due more to the love of my friends, especially of Mother and Father Graham, more than the arguments that they put forth. Their love won me from the pit of sin as some put it. In the second stage I paid little attention to love. All my efforts were to seek after the power to work and for spiritual gifts. I grew in faith, and the Lord blessed me, but I was not yet mature enough to seek after the greatest of all gifts, love. In the third stage, which began when I became a pastor, I found out that I lacked love perfected in me, which is the pearl in the crown.

The Lord blessed me in my preaching and teaching. Many were converted and helped. I am far from being a first-class speaker; but God used me to some extent. I liked to study the Bible and thank God that though I have not studied in any Seminary, God taught me in His own way. I lived by faith for many years and can testify to God's answering prayer. I have not the gift of healing but sometimes God answers my prayers and heals the people prayed for. Once a little baby was dying and the mother pleaded with me to pray for it. Two friends and I went to pray but while we prayed the baby was called away to heaven. We three kept on praying for two or three hours after the baby was dead. We had the courage and faith to cry out, "In the name of Christ we command thee to rise up." God did not answer our prayers that time, but it showed how eager I was to grow in faith. As I look back I can see that even if I could be a great preacher, a great man of faith, and yet if I lived without love it would not count much in the eyes of God. I see now that I made the mistake in treasuring the gifts for work and neglecting the greatest of all gifts, the gift of love. If I did not have God's perfect love shed abroad in my life and heart, through the Spirit, I would be too far away from the divine standard of the spiritual Christian.

I must confess that I loved the Lord with all the little capacity I had and that I also had a love for the lost, often weeping for them in my prayers. But I found that my love for my fellowmen was not as well developed as my love for God and lost souls. I do not mean that I did not have sympathy for the sick and the poor nor do I mean that I did not give gifts to the poor, but I was lacking that burning and overflowing love that I should have had. I was convicted of this lack. The Spirit reminded me of the friends whose love was so great an instrument in my conversion. I began to pray for the gift, and the more I prayed the more I was convicted of my need. I read through the Gospels and found how the Saviour loved people and I confessed my sins before God of not having the love I ought to have. Then I asked the Holy Spirit to fill my

heart with His heavenly love. Then by faith I realized that Christ who loved people was living in me. And I should love them as He did. As I yielded, and looked unto His glorified image of love through prayer and meditation and Bible study, the Spirit began to work a work of grace in my heart, especially in the respect of love for men.

Once when we were out of money and our prayers were not answered, I was tested. I had three co-workers to provide for, beside my own big family. I decided to sell the best suit of clothes that I had. After I sold it I decided to divide the money among myself and the co-workers. Due to misunderstanding I was slandered and there was some amount of ill feeling among us. But it was sweet to remember that although I was misunderstood, yet the Lord understood that I loved Him, and that I did it for His sake. Later, we were again in need of money. My wife gave me her watch to sell. I asked one of my best friends to try and sell it for me for I didn't want any one to know that I was doing this. He came back the next day with both the money and the watch saying that a brother in the Lord had given the money as a gift to me and had returned the watch. It was he, himself, who had done this. I insisted on his taking the watch but he begged me to keep it, the tears running down his cheeks. How I broke down because of the Christ-like tender love. With this addition sum of money we passed through the trial.

Recently in my prayer and meditation, the Lord has been pricking my heart with a question. He asked me if I were willing to give up all my belongings and give them to others if He thinks fit. I do not have many valuable things, after these seven years of war, but I have two cotton-padded gowns. I often wondered if the Lord were leading me to give one of them away. As a time like this when everything is so expensive it is impossible that I will be able to afford to make another one until the war is over. But, strangely enough, a Buddhist monk came to see me and told me frankly that he wanted one of my gowns. He has taken interest in the Gospel lately and is convicted of the wrong track he is already in. He is willing to change his Buddhist gown and wear ordinary clothes. How surprised I was to find that he asked for the very thing that the Holy Spirit had been asking me. With gladness I yielded, and I know that this is the beginning and I am sure the Lord is going to test me and see how much love I really do have for the people around me.

Love to man does not consist only in giving, because giving may be done without love and we can love without giving, too. I learned this lesson of love from some of my friends , whose hearts were filled with His love. When you sat in their presence you could feel as if you were encircled with spring sunshine. Their expressions, their words, and their thoughtfulness made one feel the Presence of Christ. How I wish I could have reached a climax such as that.

## Chapter XX

### My Visions

A vision is not an ambition. An ambition is one's own selfish desire to glorify one's self. A vision is God's revelation, and is given that God's name be glorified. When I gave up my ambitions God revealed to me His visions.

The churches in China have come to a stage where Chinese leadership is urgently needed. In the past thirty years many men of God have been raised up among the Chinese Christians. And their success indicates that native workers can be very efficient in many phases of the work. It is my desire that I should more and more prepare myself to open a Bible School where students can have the best training in spiritual and academic lines, having a thorough knowledge of His Word, and abundant life in Christ, fire and power. This type of school is greatly needed in China.

Out of the 450 millions in China there are only 400,000 professing Christians. A great part of the interior of China is still unevangelized and there are thousands of people, yea millions, who have not heard the name of Jesus. Our missionary friends have done their part. And now we Chinese should take up our responsibility and do something to evangelize our own land. When I was called to the ministry I was also called to be a missionary, to build up a work none other had started, not on another's foundation. Like the apostle Paul, I want to do pioneering work. But during the years my work had been mainly along other lines. China is yet to see a great missionary among children.

The Chinese churches need a deepening of spiritual life, so that they will be able to stand on their own feet. We need men like Spurgeon, Moody, John Wesley, and Charles Finney who could preach with power to their own people. We need such men who could meet the need of the Chinese in the same way, a Chinese Spurgeon, Moody, John Wesley, and Charles Finney. The day will come when there will be a revival in China, when the Gospel seed will take root, grow and bear fruit, as the result of the Chinese laborers preaching the Gospel. We need Bible teachers, theologians, and expositors of the Word who are spiritual giants. But so far who has made the effort to train such men?

Good literature is needed to feed the souls and minds of Christian workers and laymen. We have so few books and what we have has been translated from English to Chinese. We also need to have the classical works translated to reach the libraries of the ordinary man. This can be done by printing cheap editions. The Chinese should also be encouraged to write and edit their own books. Christian literature should be popularized so that every Christian home can have some helpful magazine. Our literature should be standardized. Some of our writers may one day be classified with the world famous religious authors such as Bunyan and others. We also should be able to express our spiritual ideas through Chinese art, even as they have been portrayed through medieval art. All this would take time, but we should pave the way for that day.

My idea of a theological seminary is one that is run on the same lines as a secular college. The present seminaries and Bible Schools aim to train one kind of worker only. They forget that we are differently gifted, and training cannot enable us to do the work for which we have no gifts. The idea that I have in mind is a Seminary with four different courses, pastoral, evangelistic, literary and music. The students may select which course they wish to take.

Ever since I came into the interior, the Lord laid these things on my heart. I do not know why I have thought about these things so much. Sometimes I have been ashamed about it because I seemed to be talking about that which seemed impossible. Then I began to make it a definite matter of prayer. On one occasion some friends, my wife and myself prayed for a great length of time out in the open field under a pine tree. We pleaded with tears, for God to see the need of China, and that God might do something for the Chinese churches of the present age. I had the vision, but how little I could do. I was bound to a little church in Kweiyang and could not even leave the city for an evangelistic trip. But I could pray.

Finally, in July 1943, when the church was practically well-established, after many bitter trials, I was wondering where the Lord was going to lead me next. To my surprise I received a letter from the China Native Evangelistic Crusade, a newly organized mission, asking me to start the work for them in China. Its visions were exactly like mine. How it astonished me. It seemed too good to be true. When I read the letter I could hardly believe my eyes. I felt somewhat like young Spurgeon felt when he received the invitation for the big church in London, when he was only a country preacher. While I prayed for guidance, God's word to Gideon, Judges 6:15, 16, came to me with new power. Gideon said, "O, my Lord wherewith shall I save Israel? My family is poor and I am the least in my father's house." And the Lord said unto me, "Surely I will be with thee and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man." With this promise I yielded to God's call.

I was then in the midst of another and bigger adventure.