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Full Gospel Business Men's

VOICE

TURNING POINT!

TOM MANION'S
STORY—PAGE 2

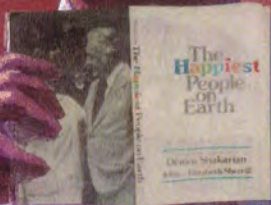


TURNING

A man with short hair, wearing a light-colored shirt and a patterned tie, is sitting in a wooden chair. He is holding a book titled "The Happiest People on Earth" by Oliver Stokerson. A lamp with a white shade is positioned to the left, casting a soft light on the scene. The background is a dark, textured wall.

Tom Manion
Paradise, California

My eyes wandered to a small book lying on the coffee table—*The Happiest People on Earth*. I opened it—and entered into the most significant turning point of my life.



POINT!

The house was empty. Alone and dejected, I sat in my living room pondering the words of Thoreau: “The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.”

Surely, that described my own condition. But was there nothing better to be hoped for? And if not, why go on living?

My eyes wandered to a small book lying on the coffee table. A stranger had given it to me three weeks earlier. But somehow its title had never registered in my mind until that moment. Now it exploded off the dust jacket—*The Happiest People on Earth*—and drew me like a magnet from my chair.

The spine of the book crackled as I opened it—and entered into the most significant turning point of my life.



Every life, I think, is marked by turning points. Crisis moments. Decisive events that alter forever the course of one's existence. They may, at the time, appear insignificant. But looking back from the vantage point of years passed, one can often recognize the gentle hand of a loving God drawing one to Himself.

The first such turning point came for me at the age of 14. Lying on our family-room floor in Royal Oak, Michigan, I watched a television dramatization of Francis Thompson's classic poem, “The Hound of Heaven.” In it, Thompson describes his own long and fruitless flight from God.

As a child he had learned of God, but only as an austere and demanding judge. So, in his young manhood, he fled from Him, thinking that to serve Him would be to cast away all hope of joy and personal fulfillment in life.

In his quest for happiness, Thompson gave himself in turn to personal achievement, human friendships, carnal pleasures, and the sensual delights of nature. Each, for a time, would satisfy. But eventually, each would turn to ashes in his mouth. And with each bitter disappointment would come the insistent rhythm of footsteps following after him. The footsteps of God: “The Hound of Heaven.”

“And a voice beat more instant than the feet:

‘Lo, naught contents thee, who content'st not Me.’”

I remember even now how absorbed I became in that television dramatiza-

tion. Only many years later would I realize that in it God had shown me a preview of the next 27 years of my own life.

Like Thompson, I was raised by godly parents. Born in the middle of the Great Depression, I don't remember a time when they didn't struggle to "make ends meet". And yet, through personal sacrifice I'll probably never fully comprehend, they financed both my brother and me through 12 years of parochial school education.

So I learned about God. But whether through faulty presentation or my own failure to comprehend, the God of whom I learned was demanding beyond my ability to perform. Little by little I lost all hope of ever being worthy of His approval. And so, as a young man, like Thompson, "I fled Him, down the nights and down the days...and in the mist of tears I hid from Him."

The constant financial strain endured by my parents was probably the most potent factor in the development of my attitude toward life. By my late teens I had come firmly to the conclusion that happiness was the product of financial security. That was "success", and I would achieve it. My family would never want for money as my parents had.

The next "turning point" came at the age of 17. It was summer vacation and I was at a friend's cottage in Alpena, the small Northeastern-Michigan town from which all of our family had sprung. He suggested a double-date for the evening, but the only girls I knew in Alpena were my relatives. So he handed me his high school year-book and said, "Pick a girl. I'll get you a date with her."

I leafed through the pages, eventually locating the most attractive girl in the book. But when he called, she wasn't at home, and I was so completely taken with her that I couldn't make a second choice. So we didn't go out that evening.

The next day my cousin drove me to a drugstore to buy a postage stamp for a letter I'd written to my girlfriend back home in Royal Oak. The young lady behind the counter smiled and said, "Can I help you?" I was dumbfounded! It was the girl from the year-book. I asked for a stamp and said nothing more. But when I returned to my cousin's car, my first words to him were, "I just met the girl I'm going to marry."

As a fairly normal 17-year-old-boy, the last thing on my mind prior to that moment was marriage. But God knew His plan for my life. And He knew it

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“Each year I’d set goals for myself, and each year I’d exceed them.... But I was empty...and couldn’t figure out why.”

would require a very special woman at my side. One who would follow and support and encourage me no matter what. There she was. And somehow I knew it. I was so sure, in fact, that I never mailed the letter to my girlfriend. I still have the stamp I bought from the girl in the high school yearbook. Two years later—37 years ago—Nadine and I were married.

Another “turning point” came in February 1957. Nadine and I, and the first of our five sons, Jim, were living in a small upstairs flat in Alpena and I was working in a cement plant. I hated the place. The air was filled with cement dust. The noise was almost deafening. But the pay was good and I had to start building my fortune somewhere.

One day in the lunchroom, an old-timer sat surrounded by his fellow workers, describing his just-ended vacation in California. I remember only one thing he said: “There’s so much money there that the waitresses drive Cadillac-

lacs.” I knew immediately that California was the place where my dream would come true. Two months later I was on my way, and another seven months found us, with our second son, Mike, in our first home in La Puente.

Pondering my route to success, I concluded that the world’s “movers and shakers” seemed to be found in business, finance and politics. I determined to learn all I could about all three.

Over the next decade I was employed by the U.D. Chamber of Commerce and some of the world’s largest insurance companies; worked in several political campaigns; ran for the California Assembly; traveled the state organizing political action groups; advanced my education in economics and finance; and finally relocated in Paradise where I established my own financial planning practice.

By my early 30s, the “financial security” that had been my dream was elevated to the status of a god. Each year I’d set goals for myself, and each year I’d exceed them. We had a lovely home and three more sons, Grady, Matthew and Joshua. I was making a very good living, working hard and playing hard. But I was empty and hurting grievously inside, and couldn’t figure out why.

I’d long ago given up on religion. To me it was just empty ritual. But Nadine, never badgering me about it, clung tenaciously to her Catholic upbringing, took the boys to church regularly, and prayed constantly that God would somehow bring me back.

In 1970 I was invited to Washington,

D.C. to be inducted into an organization composed of the top two-percent of those in my profession worldwide. There could hardly have been a higher level of personal achievement. I should have been the happiest man alive. But instead, I was planning to take my life while I was in Washington. I had reached the summit in my profession, and I was as empty as ever.

As I packed to leave, my two oldest sons, Jim and Mike, brought me a going-away gift—a recording entitled “If.” As they played it for me, one line touched something deep inside: “If a man could be two places at one time I’d be with you. Tomorrow and today. Beside you all the way.”

Another “turning point”. God used that line to save me from myself. How could I betray their confidence in me, I thought, and leave them alone in the world?

In 1973 I decided that perhaps the cause of all my emptiness was that I’d cut myself off from my roots. So I closed my business, sold our home, and we returned to Michigan.

In our four years back in Alpena we prospered beyond our wildest expectations. The “Hound of Heaven” was pursuing—by proving to me that no matter how many things I obtained, they’d never fill the emptiness that so tormented me.

And they didn’t. I was, in fact, unhappier than ever. All the emptiness remained, and now I had to live with it through the freezing winters and humid summers of Northern Michigan. So it was back to California—and the

greatest turning point of all.

In Paradise again we bought a new home and hired a contractor to build an office on the same property. I’d have to reestablish my business, though my heart wasn’t in it. I was 41 years old now and it was the only way

“Every life...is marked by turning points. Crisis moments. Decisive events that alter forever the course of one’s existence.”

—Tom Manion

I knew how to make a living.

One of my first calls was to a former client, a Chico egg rancher named Jim Canfield. “Jim,” I said, “we need to get together on your pension plan.”

“Sure,” he responded, “meet me tomorrow noon at the Elks Club. They put out a great buffet. We can talk over lunch.”

Walking together into the Elks Club, Jim paid a fellow in the lobby and we entered a large room filled with men seated eight to a table. “What’s this?” I asked, only to learn that I was Jim’s guest at a Full Gospel Business Men’s weekly lunch.

It sounded religious to me. But I was stuck! Jim, after all, was my client and he’d already paid for my lunch. So I got my food and sat down with Jim

and six other men. They were mostly business and professional men—the kind with whom I'd associated for years. But the conversation wasn't at all familiar. Not one dirty joke. It was all about Jesus.

The chairman, a local attorney,



called the meeting to order and asked members to introduce their guests. All over the room men stood up—dozens of them. Obviously a lot of other guys had got hooked into this thing.

After the introductions I pushed back my chair, lit up a cigarette, and waited for the sermon. But instead, the chairman invited members to share brief testimonies. “Testimony,” I thought. “What is this, some kind of a trial?”

But I soon found out differently. One after another, members walked to the podium and spoke for two or three minutes about what Jesus had been doing in their lives. It seemed as though Jesus had been involved somehow in almost every life.

I didn't know what to make of it! I'd

heard about Jesus all my life. I knew about Him the way I knew about Charlemagne or George Washington. But these men didn't just know about Him. They knew *Him*—like they'd grown up together! He was real to them! He was alive—and vitally involved in their lives!

Then suddenly I heard my name called. It was the chairman. “Tom,” he asked, “do you have anything to say for the Lord?” I was stunned! But I wasn't going to let these guys know it. After all, I had twelve years of parochial schooling behind me. I could fake my way through this thing without even breathing hard.

I stood to my feet, crushed out my cigarette in my lunch plate (there were no ash trays, and probably no other men smoking, but I was too self-absorbed to recognize that), stepped to the podium and said something nice about God.

As I returned to my place I passed a big, jovial contractor named Abner Andersen. We'd never met, but as I walked by he held out a small book and said, “Here. You need to read this.”

For the next week I couldn't get that meeting off my mind. Come Wednesday I was back. I had to learn what this thing was all about.

Everything went pretty much the same, except I wasn't introduced as a guest this time. But there were a lot of new guests. Then another series of testimonies. And again, the chairman looked over at me and said, “How about you, Tom? Got anything to say

for the Lord?"

"Why is he doing this?" I wondered. He wasn't calling on other visitors. Only members. Why me?

Again I went to the podium and managed a few nice words about God. But as I returned to my place I couldn't help feeling that what I was saying was awfully hollow compared to what I was hearing. These men had something I didn't have—knew something I didn't know—and I was determined to find out what it was.

As the meeting ended I found myself in conversation with Bill Blackwood, a quiet, gentle, caring fellow who listened politely as I told him what a brilliant and successful man I was. When I finally ran down, Bill spoke: "Tom, can I ask you a question?"

"Sure Bill," I replied, expecting him to ask for an investment tip. But Bill had bigger things on his mind. "Tom," he asked, "who's the Lord of your life?"

It took me several seconds to recover my composure. Nobody had ever asked me that kind of question. "Bill," I said, "I don't know how to answer that."

"Well," he asked, "who makes the decisions in your life?" I didn't have to think hard on that one. "I do!" I answered. Then came the knockout punch. "Oh! (long pause) *That's your problem!*"

That was all he said. And all the pompousness went out of me like air from a party balloon. I had just spent several minutes telling him what a great success I was, and all the while

he knew I had a problem. And my problem, according to him, was that I was making the decisions for my life. Who in the world should be making them, I wondered.

Bill's words were a burr under my saddle for the next week. And then, there I was at the FGBMFI lunch—and the same routine, including my having to give a "Testimony". But this time I couldn't fake it any more. I simply had nothing to say.

That night I went to a local church where I'd heard a visiting evangelist was preaching. I'd made up my mind that when the altar call was given (I'd seen a few on television) I would respond. I didn't yet have the answers about what I'd been hearing and seeing, but somehow I knew that this was the only way I'd ever find them.

But the altar call never came. The evangelist finished his sermon, dismissed the service, and everyone began filing out. But I was pushing upstream. I was determined to get saved!

I encountered the evangelist and told him straight out, "I want to get saved!" He sat me down, opened his Bible and began taking me to scriptures dealing with a pet doctrine of his having nothing to do with salvation. "You don't understand," I pleaded, "I want to get *saved!*" But he wasn't hearing me. Finally I got up, walked out, got into my car and drove home, the most depressed, dejected, brokenhearted man under the sun.

I'd read very little scripture in my life, but somewhere I'd heard, "Him who cometh unto Me, I will in no wise



Tom and Nadine Manion attend Faith Bible College's graduation brunch.

cast out." I'm the first one, I thought. I came and He wouldn't have me.

When I arrived home I didn't even speak to Nadine—just threw myself into bed and hoped that sleep would come quickly. The next morning I couldn't face the world. I slept until early afternoon. When I finally got up I turned on Nadine over some imagined offense and she left the house crying.

And there I was, alone in the house, wondering how I could go on living in "quiet desperation"—when the book that Abner Andersen had given me at that first FGBMFI lunch caught my eye: *The Happiest People on Earth*.

I cracked it open. And the ultimate "turning point" lay dead ahead!

I read the book from cover to cover, and all the answers began falling into place.

Here was the story of a man, Demos Shakarian, who had found meaning and purpose and fulfillment in life—by giving his life away—by surrendering himself completely to the God who had created him, and the purpose for which he had been created.

He hadn't gone off to a desert or a monastery or a seminary. He was a businessman—a dairyman. But in every aspect of his life, he sought God's direction—and found it.

God cared about him. And He cared for him. Cared for every detail of his



Tom Manion, Faith Bible College dean, at alumni/student banquet.

life, no matter how seemingly insignificant. When he was involved in a major financial crisis, God was there to give him direction, and favor with those with whom he was dealing. When his cows were threatened with disease, God was there to heal them.

But one passage said it all for me. I drew brackets around it as I read, and came back to think it through when I'd finished.

"I believe God has a particular gift for each of His servants, some special ability we're to use for His Kingdom. I believe if we find that gift—and use it—we'll be the happiest people on earth. And if we miss it, no matter how many excellent things we do, we'll be utterly miserable."

There was my answer. All the "excellent things" I'd done had left me "utterly miserable". Because I wasn't doing what I was created to do. I had devised my own plan and my own path for my life. But if there was a God who had created me (and I'd never doubted that there was), He had a plan, a purpose, and a path. I had to find His way—not my own. Only His plan could bring me the happiness and fulfillment I had sought. Moments later I was on my knees beside my bed.

"God," I prayed, "I've been hearing that You have a plan for my life. All I know for sure is that I've tried everything, and all I've been able to do is mess it up. So You take it, and do whatever You want with it."

Some religious folks may say that's no salvation prayer. But I'm convinced that when the Father heard it, He turned to Jesus and said, "Son, I don't know about You, but that sounds like Romans 10:9 and 10 to Me."

When I got up from my knees, I knew I was a different person. For one thing, all I could think of was getting my hands on a Bible. I found one, long forgotten in my library, and opened it to the Gospel of John. I read it through from beginning to end, and for the first time in my life, I understood it. Every word was alive. Every verse was revelation. And I knew that day—May 12, 1977—was the beginning of a new and wonderful life for me.

For the next five months, I couldn't get enough of the Bible. I read it at every possible opportunity. And then came another "turning point". God re-

vealed to my heart that my gift—the purpose for which He had created me—was to teach His Word.

In October 1977 I closed my business forever. For the next three years I spent every day, from early morning until late at night, locked up in my office with my Bible and a *Strong's Concordance* studying the revelation God had given me of Himself. And God provided miraculously for me and my family the whole time.

In the years since, He's led me from teacher to pastor, to dean of a Bible college. And now, through the ministry of The Sower, the Holy Ghost and I are teaching pastors in Eastern Europe who have been without God's Word for nearly a half century.

I never cease to be amazed when I consider how much God has been able to do with a life that was going nowhere. And how much happiness and

fulfillment He's brought to that life in the process.

But He didn't do it alone.

It took a man—Demos Shakarian—faithful to the vision God gave him for Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship.

And it took a man—Jim Canfield—to invite me to an FGBMFI lunch.

And it took a man—Abner Andersen—to hand me a book.

And it took a man—Bill Blackwood—to ask me a simple question about the Lord of my life.

And it took a lot of men—FGBMFI members—who weren't ashamed to stand before unsaved men and tell of the goodness and love of God. ■

Tom Manion is founder of "The Sower", a ministry dedicated to reaching the world through teaching the Word. He can be reached at: The Sower, P.O. Box 1611, Paradise, CA 95967, or phone (916) 873-1934.

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WHO WE ARE Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship International was founded in 1952 by Demos Shakarian to reach men for Jesus. One year later, God gave him a vision of the people of every continent, revealing that the ministry of the Fellowship would result in people everywhere being brought to Jesus and linked in loving community. That vision is becoming a reality through the Fellowship's ministries, now touching 106 nations and transcending denominational, racial and cultural barriers. Men interested in participating in this exciting end-time ministry are invited to write: Chapter Department / FGBMFI / P.O. Box 5050 / Costa Mesa, CA 92628.



Praying in The Spirit

Gary Grayban
Moss Point, Mississippi

I was saved in 1968 and baptized in the Holy Spirit about six months later. I became aware of the importance of praying in tongues (praying in the Spirit). Maybe this was because my wife, Dotty, and I did not have a firm foundation in the Word and knew we needed supernatural help in praying for our needs and our daily walk (more like stumbling) in the Lord Jesus.

In those early days, we desperately needed the Lord's help, not just for ourselves, but for others also. So we leaned heavily upon Him. One such incident comes to mind when a friend was having terrible personal and marital problems.

Every Friday night I would visit and minister to him. It took about 45 minutes to get to his home and I used this

time to acknowledge that I did not have the answers to his dilemma. As I prayed in tongues His peace would envelope me. At times, words of knowledge flooded my mind. Other times it only flowed after I started to minister. However, it always produced a fruitful evening of ministry.

One evening my friend confided that if I had not been faithful to the Lord, these many months, he would have given up and returned to his old life. This had a profound effect on my life to just know that our actions may be the key to someone's deliverance from demonic attacks.

As it was, they experienced one final terrible attack from the enemy which should have completely destroyed their marriage. However, as I sought the Lord and prayed in the Spirit, He gave me the anointing, the wisdom and the knowledge to be His hand extended.

Even after all the ministry that had taken place, it looked like the devil would win in one last onslaught. However, the tables were turned and in a demonstration of the Lord's supernatural power, their marriage was restored and healed in a short 24 hours.

Praying in the Spirit for yourself can be the difference between life and death. A dramatic example of this was when the Lord delivered me from certain death or great injury. I was driving down Sherman Way in the San Fernando Valley, California. I felt an urgent need to pray in tongues. By this stage of my growth in Jesus, I knew I should obey and follow my feelings.

The prayer was very intense, com-

manding, forceful and loud. As I approached an intersection, for which I had the green light, an automobile traveling at high speed ran the red light passing only a few feet in front of me. It happened so quickly that there was no time to react. It was so sudden, that no fear or anxiety surfaced. But, the Lord spoke to me in my spirit and said that if I had not interceded for myself, the accident would have become a reality. The devil had designs on my life and I was reminded that "he has come to kill, steal and destroy."

Spontaneous intercession in tongues for your family may be critical to their safety. An incident which demonstrates this involved the potential destruction of my four small children. We were visiting Dotty's father in the mountains of Northern California. It is a country community near the American River. The homes are isolated and the atmosphere is laid back and peaceful.

One day, Dotty and I were sharing some of the things the Lord Jesus was doing in our lives in the hopes of being able to lead her family to Jesus. We were on the porch on the east side of the house—the side opposite the driveway.

The natural quietness of the country, with birds singing, was suddenly broken by the roar of an automobile. It sounded like something you might hear at a racetrack. The car was coming down the driveway, accelerator to the floor and spewing rocks from spinning tires.

In a moment, without being able to see the other side of the house or the

car, I realized my children were in danger. I believe it was a word of knowledge dropped into my understanding. With urgency that fit the circumstance, I started to run around the side of the house first shouting in tongues in a commanding tone and then rebuking the car in the name of Jesus. It was spiritual warfare.

The auto immediately “stood up” on the two left tires and settled down, catching the undercarriage on a three foot high stone wall. It came to an abrupt halt, but the engine was still roaring and the tires spinning.

I ran over to the car, reached around the driver who appeared to be in a trance, and shut off the engine. I looked in the direction the automobile was traveling and saw my four children standing frozen along the side of the house, about 30 feet away.

We pulled the driver out and ministered to her and in a moment the demon influence in her raised up and glared at us, expressing an undeniable hate. Because I was “instant in season” as was required by the severity of the attack, we were delivered and my children saved from certain death or great bodily injury.

Praying in the Spirit always produces an anointing which is greater than the power of the enemy. This was demonstrated in another incident. I was coming home late one evening from a prayer meeting when I noticed a man sitting on the curb, with his thumb up in the classic hitchhiker position. I had been trained to witness out on the streets, highways and byways to all



The Gary Grayban family

kinds of people from professionals to drug addicts and alcoholics. Therefore, I had no concern or fear of the situation. However, as the man climbed into my car, I knew this would not be an ordinary rider and I momentarily regretted picking him up.

I was correct. He smelled badly of alcohol and he was huge. His head touched the headliner of my 1966 Pontiac Tempest and his knees touched the dash. He started to talk of his escapades. He was on the run from the police and from the Hell's Angels. He had killed a fellow biker in a fight and had broken a rule of conduct which put him on their hit list.

At the end of his story he turned to me and under an evil influence said that when someone picked him up at 3:00 in the morning, under these conditions, he would at a minimum beat them up and take their money or kill them.

He had all of my attention and I knew I needed divine help. I took off in tongues underneath my breath, like a machine gun. In just a few moments the Lord's supernatural power filled me and I knew, that I knew, all was OK.

I turned to him under this anointing and said, "You can physically do it but you're not going to." He said, "Why not?" and I said, "Because Jesus is in my car."

He sighed a large sigh and settled down deep into the seat. It looked as though he deflated. He was no longer a threat. He was no longer under the influence of demon power.

I spoke of the wonderful salvation of the Lord Jesus. He soaked it in and then reflected back to his childhood when his grandmother sat him on her knee and told him stories about Jesus. We prayed and he left the car a different man. Potential destruction was turned into victory.

The unseen world of demon powers is real. We see the results of their activity in destructive events. Our best measuring stick as to who is doing what, is the words of Jesus. "The devil has come to steal, kill and destroy, but I have come to give life and life more abundantly."

Sometimes the attacks can come by a direct visitation from the enemy. One such time occurred when one evening I

woke up from a sound sleep and became aware of an evil presence standing alongside my bed.

The fear was so great that I could not directly look at it, but I could see out of the corner of my eye. A grey/white form was evident in the total darkness of the room. I'm not prone to this type of paralyzing fear nor do I imagine things of this nature.

I tried to invoke the name of Jesus, but nothing would come out. My mind raced to figure a way out. It was obviously a supernatural confrontation and I needed supernatural help.

I started to pray in the Spirit in my mind. It grew and I became more bold and started to pray in the Spirit out loud. I could feel faith arise and in one giant leap of faith, I bounded out of the bed rebuking it in the name of Jesus. I felt like a giant and the demonic force disappeared before me.

I walked through the house pleading the blood of Jesus for protection for myself and my family. Peace came and I went back to bed assured of God's protection. Glory!

Many other incidents have occurred over the years to make me know that this wonderful gift Jesus has for His body of believers is practical. It is not an option. It is a must if we dare to walk into the supernatural warfare He has called us into. ■

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GLORY

STAND IN

Richard Farrell
Lowell, Massachusetts

In May of 1985, I died in a lonely hotel room on the shores of Chesapeake Bay. I was 27 years old. Dr. Levine said I would die. He said my brain would seize. He was right!

On December 4, 1984, five months earlier, I found my Dad face down on the floor and I should have left him that way. The moment I turned him over my nightmare began. He was green, yellow, and bluish-black. His skin was like shiny new leather and ice cold. The whites of his eyes were completely bloodshot. A white-line from a dried tear marked his cheek. I cradled his head in my arms. His life was over.

On the ground floor of St. John's Hospital a doctor pronounced Dad dead. My mother was on the fifth floor recovering from surgery. I just couldn't face her sober. That was the night I punched my ticket to hell.

I'll never forget that night. A friend of mine had been an addict for twenty years. I called him from the hospital. He met me in the bathroom on the first floor and shot a bag of heroin into my shoulder. The heroin was the

answer. I could face Mum.

I couldn't sleep. The moment I'd shut my eyes, boom, I'd see him dead on the floor. Instant replay. Nothing but heroin stopped the movie being played on the inside of my eyelids.

I was successful back then. The real estate industry in New England was out of control. Everyone I knew had a pickup truck and called himself a developer. My wife, Debbie, and I had two small children and owned several houses. If you drove by our house you'd think we were millionaires. We lived in the best section of town and a brand new Mercedes and Lincoln sat in our driveway.

But you couldn't see Debbie in the dark, crying herself to sleep. You couldn't see me sitting in the Lazy-Boy chair at two in the morning with a needle in my arm. You couldn't see the fear I had just to shut my eyes.

Over the next several months, heroin seized control of my soul. I was ravenous, bent on self-destruction. It was as though I was possessed. I did awful things, spent hundreds of dollars a day

on heroin, closed every bar in town, and never went home.

My day always began with an anxiety attack. I remember sitting in a fetal position, the impending doom like a giant that came alive and put a bear hug on me. My heart ached, a sharp pain ran down my left arm, the tips of my fingers went numb. I tried to breathe, but I never got enough air. I couldn't swallow. The lump in my throat felt like someone pinching my windpipe.

I couldn't stop. No hospitals, no doctors, no priest could penetrate my love for Lady Heroin. I was chained to the gates of hell. My father's death had killed me.

I don't know why, but the drugs didn't completely destroy my will. Everyday I'd see my wife and children floundering like beached baby whales that had been tricked by the cruelty of Mother Nature. I wanted to be free.

On May 10, my son, Ricky, turned

one. We threw a big cookout; all my family and friends were there. I owned a farm in Pelham, New Hampshire with ten acres and two ponds. Right smack in the middle of the party, I hopped into my pickup truck, drove to the far end of the large pond, and blasted a bag of heroin.

The next day I packed Debbie and the kids into the Mercedes, filled my Valium prescription, and headed south. The only way I could kick my habit was to drive away from my connections.

I don't know what hell is like, but if it is anything like being "dope sick," I'm not going. Take the worst flu you've ever had and amplify it 500 times. Every muscle in your body shrinks into a knot and then spasms. You lose control of your bowels. Your nose runs like an open faucet. And if you're lucky, your brain will seize before you lose your mind.

We reached Virginia Beach the

The Farrells



second day of our journey. The weather was perfect. I found this great hotel right on the shores of Chesapeake Bay. We had an ocean view room on the fourth floor. My kids were excited. Debbie took them right to the beach. They couldn't wait to build sandcastles with their new pails and shovels.

I went straight to the bar and bought two cocktails. Back in my darkened room, I sat on the edge of the bed with my booze and my Valium planning my strategy to survive the night.

I'll never forget the night I died. I had so much alcohol and Valium in my bloodstream that I couldn't walk. I literally bounced off the walls and the floor. My back and legs were black and blue, and my head was full of bumps. Every fifteen minutes, I'd roll out of bed onto the floor and crawl to the shower. I sat in darkness, crying. The water wasn't hot enough to ease the cramps in my legs, and the shame in my heart was too heavy to carry.

Then it happened: a tiny point of bright white light exploded the darkness. The funnel of light held me. I felt warm and safe. All my pain ceased. I wanted to let go and float into the security of that light. Something held me. I struggled but couldn't get free.

I awoke lying on a cold table. The doctor leaned over me. Her steel-blue eyes shown with compassion. Two hours later, I was back in my hotel room. The next morning we left Virginia Beach in total defeat.



"Ladies and gentlemen, we want to take this time to thank you for flying U.S. Air, and we hope you have a pleasant stay here in Virginia Beach."

Six years later, on September 2, 1991, I was back. The moment I stepped into the terminal the intercom blasted, "Richard Farrell, please report to the information booth." This big guy, Steve, picked me up in a Mark III limo and drove me to the Founders Hotel. He carried my bag to the front desk.

"This is Mr. Farrell," he said. "He is a live guest of the 700 Club."



Richard Farrell, with host Sheila Walsh, on the set of CBN's Heart to Heart.

Chris Mitchell, a producer at CBN, picked me up for supper. During the cookout at his house I told him about my last experience in Virginia Beach. Later that evening, we set out to find that hotel.

As he drove down Atlantic Avenue, my surroundings were foreign, then all of a sudden I experienced *deja vu*. But there were a lot of new high-rise condominiums. When I lost that familiar

feeling, I suspected the hotel had been torn down by a developer. Chris was determined. He turned the car around and headed back. This time we found it.

The Ocean Island Hotel sat 100 yards off the main road in darkness. The place was up for sale. Chains with "No Trespassing" signs blocked the driveway. A security guard with a flashlight stood on the fourth floor and told us not to enter. Chris and I walked to the next set of condos and found the beach. He stopped and I walked alone.

I stood in the sand where my wife and children had built sandcastles. I looked up and saw the room where I had died. I saw three shadows on the beach, but when I moved my right arm only two of them moved. I fell to my knees and cried.

The next morning, I sat in the "Green Room" at CBN Center. My thoughts recalled days far gone. In one hour, I would be live on national television. For thirty minutes, Sheila Walsh, the host of *Heart to Heart*, would ask me to describe how I became an award winning writer/producer. Chris came by to visit. We talked about the previous night. He said, "Only God can restore the years the locust have eaten" (Joel 2:25). The door opened, it was time to go.

"Thirty seconds!" Pat Robertson waded through the bright lights. "Twenty seconds!" Sheila Walsh ran onto the set. "Ten seconds!" The butterflies in my stomach were in battle formation. "You're live!"

I'd been redeemed! ■

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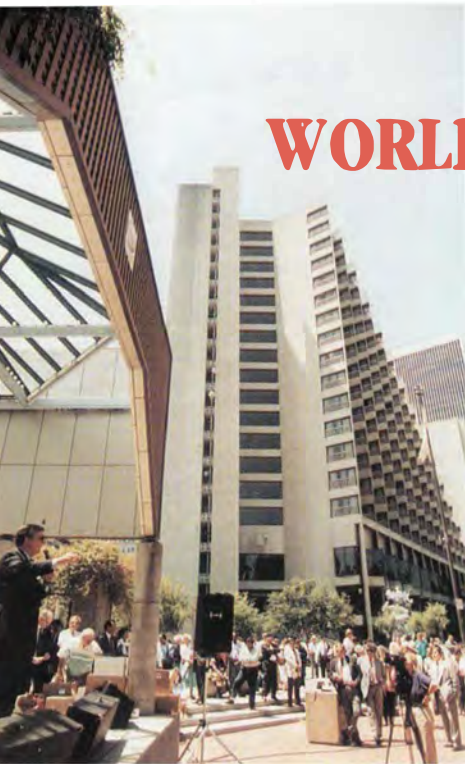
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39TH ANNUAL FGBMFI WORLD CONVENTION REPORT!



San Francisco's streets were not "safe" for non-Christians during the week of June 30-July 4, 1992 when FGBMFI celebrated its 39th annual World Convention.

Taking to heart the theme of the convention—"...to heal the brokenhearted" (Luke 4:19), many men literally "took to the streets" to reach out to the many suffering homeless.

Over 300 street people were treated to a banquet at the San Francisco Hilton, with 80 responding to the Gospel. Businessmen also touched the lives of other businessmen at the Embarcadero Rally spearheaded by Gene M. Ellerbee who told FGBMFI to "hit the streets!"

Over 4,000 convention delegates from 56 nations sensed that this year's World Convention was not "just another" convention. There was a



(Left, top) Gene M. Ellerbee challenges businessmen at San Francisco's Embarcadero during lunch. (Left) Gen. G.L. Butler and Col. Hank Lackey. (Below) Hundreds respond for prayer. (Right) Benny Hinn points out another miraculous healing.

Photos and Story: Bob Armstrong



(Right, top) Demos Shakarian and speaker John Hagee confer before service. (Right, middle) Dr. Kenneth Hagin shares on faith.

deeper sense of purpose as hundreds attended various teaching seminars during the convention. Most were moved to put their faith "into action" in these endtimes.

"I like the company I run with, like Full Gospel Business Men! God uses men!" Kenneth Hagin appealed to the crowd. The "faith statesman" urged, "Thank God for the Holy Ghost. The prayer of faith shall save the sick."

Numerous miracles took place, not only in the banquet rooms, but on the streets, too.

Many received the call from God as they responded to Ulf Ekman's prophecy to "...take the Full Gospel from city to city...from nation to nation."

Already, that prophetic appeal had answers, as many leaders from various Eastern European countries reported for the first time of what God was doing in their land. Their newfound freedom has opened the doors to the Gospel.



*(Above) Bob Weiner "tells it like it is."
(Left) Ulf Ekman challenges those who came for prayer.*

(Near right) Mark Anderson ministers at Union Square. He also directed convention youth activities. (Far right) Rafik Grigorian shares with Demos about the many open doors in Armenia.



FGBMFI has begun many chapters there; but also a specific offering was taken to place FGBMFI materials in those suffering, but free, nations.

An outstanding platform of world-known speakers was amassed: Kenneth Hagin, Bob Weiner, Ulf Ekman, John Hagee, Demos Shakarian, among many others.

"Let's welcome the Holy Spirit and His power here. The Holy Spirit only trusts dead people—dead to self," Benny Hinn spoke as many received their healings, even in the overflow room.



(Above) Richard Shkarian prays with Mr. and Mrs. Ilia Zaslavskii. He is chairman of the Democratic Russian Movement (the political party that protected Boris Yeltsin).



(Left) Dr. Vinson Synan presents the first copy of Under His Banner to FGBMFI founder Demos Shakarian, while Voice Editor Jerry Jensen looks on. This exciting book gives the history of the Fellowship's first 40 years.

San Francisco's homeless were treated to a banquet. Over 300 street people attended with more than 80 responding to the Gospel invitation.



African dress was presented to the convention, along with mighty reports of what God and the Fellowship are doing throughout Africa. Fifty-six nations were represented.

John Hagee urged the convention to "turn on the light." Aggressive Bob Weiner encouraged the men that it was possible to win the world for Christ. Sweden's Ulk Ekman stressed that "every knee will bow to Jesus at the end of the age!"

FGBMFI founder Demos Shakarian commanded the men to "lift up and exalt Jesus." He relayed what the Holy Spirit had told him earlier, "Tell the

men to exalt Jesus and I will pour out My Holy Spirit in a way you have never seen!"

As the torch was lit in the hearts of all at the San Francisco World Convention, the urgency of the hour was felt to "take the Gospel to their streets...and their nations."

Len Mink's final worship song best summed up the historic convention—"Celebrate, Jesus, Celebrate!" ■



(Above) Len Mink ministers in music. (Left) Rose Shakarian and Diana Hagee addressed the Ladies' Luncheon.



Tired of Playing Church

Duane Parrish
Salem, Oregon

I couldn't talk. I couldn't read. I couldn't write. And I was a pastor of a church for the Assemblies of God. The doctors had given up, they didn't think that I could ever mount the pulpit again. But you see they didn't know my doctor—Dr. Jesus.

My dad taught me that "all things work together for good to those that love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." "For whom God foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to His likeness, that He might be the first born of many brethren." I knew that in my mind, but the day came that it was to be learned experientially.

I was pastoring in the Portland, Oregon area. We had a growing church and things were going well.

One day sitting in my office, having devotions, I said, "God, I'm sick and tired of playing church. I don't want to play church anymore. There are so many hurting people. So many things that medical science, psychology, the arts and the sciences can't erase. But God, surely You can. I want to know You in a more complete way."

I was reading A.W. Tozer's book, *The Pursuit of God*. He closed the first chapter with a prayer. I was raised to believe that you're not supposed to write your prayers out. That takes away from the anointing. But when I read that prayer it got hold of me. It said, "Oh God, I have tasted of Your goodness. It has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more. Oh God, I long to be filled with longings." Right then I did some examining in my own heart and I

realized that the longings I had were all self-motivated. I longed to have the biggest church in Oregon. I longed to give the most money for missions. I longed to shoot a 72 in golf. And I longed to get a seven point bull elk and mount the head and put it in my office and have all the preachers come in and eat their hearts out.

All of these things were to make me look good. I said, "God, I don't have any substantial longing for You. Create that in my heart. I want to long for You." I thought God was going to come down and immediately give me the longings of my heart, now that I was longing for Him. But He didn't work that way. He allowed some things to happen to me that took me through the fire.

I was playing my saxophone on Easter Sunday morning. The church was packed out. All of a sudden my soft pallet collapsed and I couldn't play. I was so embarrassed. Earlier that day my wife came into the office and asked, "Why are you scowling so?" I replied, "How do you spell Jesus? I can't spell Jesus. Something is going wrong in my head."

I limped through my sermon that Sunday. Then my board came to me and said I should have a complete medical examination. I did. The doctors took 21 tests and I passed on all of them. When I asked the doctor what was wrong with me, he said, "In the line of work you're in I think you're suffering from stress. Take some time off. Go to the mountains or coast, come back and we'll re-evaluate you."

It was during that time off that I was

standing in front of my fireplace rubbing my right ear when it dawned on me that I was becoming paralyzed on my right side. They took me to the hospital. Two leading brain surgeons examined me. They thought that I had a tumor on my brain. They told me it was serious. Surgery was necessary in 48 hours just to save my life.

It was one of those situations where you pinch yourself and say, this is not happening to me. But the more I pinched the more I found out it was reality.

I was known in the Oregon district as the golden-tongued boy. I had a natural ability to speak, and was involved in speaking, music and singing. That night when my wife left and I was alone in my room, I felt in my spirit that it was all over. I knew I was going to die. So I grabbed a chair and pulled it out in the middle of the room and I said, "God, come now and let us reason together. This isn't wise what You're allowing to happen to me."

I was acting as my own lawyer, presenting my case to the most high judge. I knew that God was listening, but nothing was responding in my spirit. I began to get nervous and I said, "Okay God, this is my last reason, You remember when I took this church, only 20 people were involved. Now we're into two services. What are these people going to do without me?" That was when I received my first response from heaven. I heard some laughter. God gave me a revelation that day. He said to me, "Son, I don't need you, but you sure do need Me."

What an impact that had on my life. I got up from that altar and walked to the window. I was on the 6th floor, looking out over those big, gorgeous Oregon fir trees. I just held my hands out in the form of a cup and said, "God, these represent Your hands. I put myself in Your hands. If You want to take me home, that's okay. If You want to leave me here for the work



"I thought God was going to... immediately give me the longings of my heart, now that I was longing for Him. But He didn't work that way."

that You have destined for me, that's okay too. I want You to know that I'm Yours." I gave up to the Lord. When I did, I knew that I was going to live.

They took me down to surgery the next day. They shaved all my hair off. (I found out what I am going to look like when I am 80 years old.) They drilled three holes about a half inch deep in the left side of my head. I thought they were going to make a bowling ball out of me, but they assured my wife that those holes were to get the saw down so they could remove the left side of my cranium. They found a blood clot the size of a man's fist resting on my speech center. They took that off and cleaned up the intu-

sions. They thought I had a tumor below my speech center, so they cut down three or four times into my speech center looking for it.

That night my head began to swell. The left side of my head was so swollen that it was resting on the outside of my left shoulder. They rushed me back into surgery again and they inserted a device to monitor the pressure on the brain. So many points and they said there is no hope, mine got to within two points between life and death.

Five days later when I woke from the surgery I knew who I was and where I was, I knew who the people were in the room, what they did, and where my church was. But when I wanted to ask the questions that were running around my mind, I found out that I couldn't talk. I could only say two words, "Oh God."

I'm so thankful that God left me the two most important words in any language—His name. I became known as the patient who walked around the halls of the hospital, whistling the old hymns of the church, and singing them in my mind. And when I would come to the end of "Great Is Thy Faithfulness" they could hear me say, "Oh God, Oh God, Oh God."

The doctors tried to get me to write my name, but I couldn't even do that simple task. I was trying to be as positive as I could be. I said to myself, "Okay Duane, just rest, and think about it. You can't talk, just think how many people that's going to make happy. You can't write so you'll never have

to worry about writing letters again. At least I can read and get consoled by the Word of God." So I picked up the Bible and opened it up, only to find that I couldn't read either. It was then that a spirit of depression settled over me, and I didn't want to live. I looked up to heaven and I cried, "God, I don't understand. I wasn't asking for the biggest church. All I wanted was more of You. I just don't understand."

I went home battling a deep, deep depression. Now before this thing happened to me I was not very patient with people that came to my office...I couldn't understand how anybody could be depressed. There is so much to live for. And now I found myself deeply depressed.

My associate pastor and one of my dearest friends came by with tickets to the Joni Erickson film, put out by the Billy Graham Association. He told me it was going to be okay. But he didn't know what I was going through. I tried to communicate with him. I was trying to say, "I curse the day that I was born." He said, "Pastor, I didn't understand that, could you say it again." So I said it again, and again, and again. By now he's praying for the gift of interpretation. Finally he said, "I think you're saying this: 'I don't like to be born.'" That was close enough.

We went into the theater that day and before the film started the Lord spoke to me. I didn't hear any audible voices, but I knew that He was responding to my spirit. We have no words in our English language to communicate about how the Lord speaks

to us—He just spoke to me. I didn't hear any weird voices. We went in and before the film started the Lord asked me, what two messages had I preached that meant the most to me? I thought long and hard. And I said, "Praise and worship is one, and the sovereignty of God is another."

I had gone through a long series of lessons on praise and worship. We began to find out that God loved to have us worship Him in spirit and truth. I made some bold statements that you have to praise God for who He is, not for what He can do for you. And I meant that. Now I found myself reflecting on those messages and how much importance they had in my life. God brought me to a point in my life before my surgery that I realized He was sovereign, that He does everything for our good, not for our demise.

The film started and Joni dove off into the water. An ambulance was there in the next scene, taking her body to the hospital. Then God stopped that film in my mind and said to me, "What if I don't heal you at this present stage, will you still praise Me?" I said, "No."

When I went home. My wife knew that something was bothering my spirit. I went into the office in my home and when I couldn't shake her I went to the closet where I have my 300 magnum gun. I was looking for a shell to inject into the chamber. I wanted to commit suicide. My wife came unglued. She begged, she pleaded, she screamed. When she saw she was having no effect she went into the living room and I

heard her fall on her knees and begin to intercede. I heard her cry, "Oh God, if ever we needed You, we need You now. I can't stop Duane from what he's going to do, only You can."

You know what? The Holy Spirit came into that office that day and He brought to memory the words of my godly father. When he sensed the call of God on my life to preach the gospel he took me aside and said, "Duane, with all your learning never forget this one thing: that God, the Son, the Holy Spirit, the Trinity are all gentlemen. They will not cross the threshold of your will." Then the Lord showed me in my Spirit two opposing wills of the universe, the will of Satan and the will of God. And He showed me the characteristics of each of these wills. He showed me that the will of Satan is always death, defilement and destruction. It always has been and always will be. I don't care how much the enemy comes to you and says, "Hey, you're missing the best in life, you only go around once." If you align your will with the will of Satan you can expect death, defilement and destruction. On the other hand, the will of God is always life, liberty and laughter. It always has been, and always will be. He came to give us life and life more abundantly. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life" (Romans 5:8).

I heard two different voices speaking to me that day. The voice of Satan was laughing and he said, "Where is your God? This God that you preached about so many years has left you. There is no God. It is all a figment of

your imagination. Go ahead. Pull the trigger. Then you will be at peace.” And then the Lord gently spoke to me, “Son, have I ever let you down? Can’t you trust Me?” I had the gun to my head. I threw it down and lifted up my hands. The moment I got my hands up the Lord showed me what He saw in my heart. He showed me the pride, the inflated ego, all of those things. I said,



Duane and Violet Parrish

“God, I’m sorry, I’m so sorry, forgive me. God, in answer to Your earlier question, if You in Your sovereign wisdom see that I can’t handle my voice then don’t return it to me, but don’t take away Your Spirit from me.”

And that day I willingly crawled up on the potter’s wheel and said, “God, if You have to start over with me, make me a vessel that You can use.”

I walked out into the living room and my wife was still interceding in prayer. Looking down at her I saw the

pain that I was causing her. I couldn’t talk but my eyes did; I was saying, “I’m sorry, but it’s going to be all right now because Jesus is alive.”

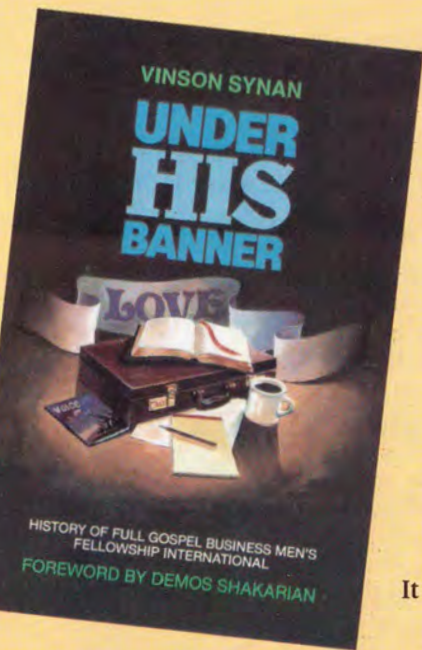
You may ask did your healing come that day? No. That week? No. That next month? No. It started that day, but I was a year and a half out of the pulpit. I resigned to my board but they wouldn’t take my resignation. They gave me a year and a half off with a raise in pay. They loved me.

The second time I resigned they took my resignation with smiles on their faces. They said, “God spoke to us last night and He is releasing you from this ministry.” They gave me \$5,000 to begin a new ministry, “Destined to Overcome.”

I talk with a “limp”—I’m not sure of myself, I have to think before I speak. That would do everyone of us good, but I sure do love Jesus. He means the most to me. My relationship with Jesus is so intact. I can’t believe how He speaks on the freeways. How He speaks in the morning. How He wants to relate to us. God has opened up doors around the world for this ministry. I love to pray with people, just to look into their eyes and say, “Don’t give up.”

I’m sure that we don’t know the half of what God wants to do in our lives. That’s why Paul said, “What shall we say in response to this. If God is for us, who can be against us.” ■

Duane is currently active in speaking and music ministry. He may be reached by writing him at Destined To Overcome Ministries, 6580 Fairway Ave. S.E., Salem, OR 97306, or phone (503) 585-3592.



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From December 1975



GOD NEVER MAKES A MISTAKE

Kenneth DeZwaan
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

An article on the front page of the *Morning Advocate* read, "Four Baton Rouge youths, three of them from one family, were killed Sunday evening when their car collided head-on with a pickup truck."

In one fleeting moment, Marge and I lost our three precious children: Gary, 16; Callie, 15; and Diane, 11—all obedient young people who honored their parents and loved God.

My wife and I were reared in disciplined Christian homes and as young people both had a born again experience with Jesus Christ. We attended Sunday school and church services twice each Sunday and mid-week prayer service, and were also active in the church youth group.

The day we were married we left our home town of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and I began a career in the buying field with a department store in Peoria, Illinois. This new job took me frequently on business trips to New York, to California, and to European markets. As I became associated with larger compa-

nies, I was gone from home a great deal of the time.

Our first child, Gary, was born in 1954. What a thrill it was to have a son! Then, just 21 months later, God blessed us with Callie and in 1960 with another daughter, Diane. As they grew older we knew it was important that we attend church and bring the children up attending Sunday school on a regular basis. Spiritually, however, we were lacking. It seemed to us that there had to be more to Christianity than what we had already experienced, especially since we found it difficult to live a victorious life for the Lord. But our new church had only one service a week and its emphasis was primarily on the social gospel of the day.

My energies at the time were centered around my job. I had a tremendous drive to succeed, to accumulate material things and to be socially accepted. My job was first, my family second, and Christ held third place in my life. During these frustrating four years, I suffered from ulcers and was truly miserable. Although materially blessed, I did not turn to God for help because I felt more than capable of handling most things myself.

One Sunday night I became too ill to attend a special service at church, so Marge and Gary went to hear the guest speaker. He shared his testimony with the congregation, relating how his life had been drastically changed after receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Following the service Marge requested prayer to receive the Baptism. That night she didn't speak in tongues, the

evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit; nevertheless, after prayer she had a sensation of feeling exceptionally clean within. A few nights later, in the middle of the night she awoke and felt impelled to kneel in prayer. As she did so, the room seemed to become drenched with love and she began to speak in a heavenly language.

At first Marge didn't fully realize what had happened to her and even hesitated returning to bed for fear of losing what she had just experienced. During that week, however, she acquired a book published by Full Gospel Business Men's Fellowship, *The Acts of the Holy Spirit Among the Presbyterians Today*, and also, *They Speak with Other Tongues*, by John Sherrill. In addition she listened to some tapes on the subject of the Baptism and finally comprehended the full meaning of her experience. When she shared all this with me, I did not approve of what had happened, thinking my wife had become what some referred to as a "holy roller".

Although I was certain that this new experience of Marge's would have an adverse affect on our marriage, the wonderful change in her took me by surprise. Now our home was more pleasant, she was more loving, and she found it easy to read her Bible and do all the things Christians should do. In fact, Marge now read the Bible as if she were reading a best-selling novel. Needless to say, the next five years were searching ones for me, as I knew she had something good that I was missing.

In 1968 at church Gary received the baptism in Holy Spirit. The following year Callie, while attending a Full Gospel youth camp, received the Baptism, and the same year at a special youth service at church Diane received this blessed experience.

Now there was no way for me to deny such an experience. I really be-

“I had a tremendous drive to succeed.... Although materially blessed, I did not turn to God for help because I felt more than capable of handling most things myself.”

gan to feel like a second-rate Christian. But the more I understood the infilling of the Holy Spirit, the more I desired to experience it, and the more I began to take inventory. My money, my job, my family—everything had to be put in its proper perspective, with Jesus at the top of the list. Also, I needed to be willing to receive the Baptism the *Lord's* way. Being a bit reserved, my pride had allowed me to put limitations on anything that had the possibility of being emotional or loud, and this was robbing me of my blessing. However, when I submitted to the will of God, to

receive the Baptism any way the Lord desired to give it to me, He baptized me in the quietness of my home. Since that time, life with Him has been glorious. What a revelation it is to know “Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8)! What a thrill it is to know that He cares about everything in our lives and that He makes no mistakes. We can be thankful in everything, because “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God (Romans 8:28).

After fifteen years of department store buying and frequent business trips away from home, I received a promotion as manager for one of our new stores and have been in store management ever since. My traveling virtually stopped and I have been able to be with the family on a daily basis. This was a welcome change.

Marge and I eventually fell in love with a pretty lake we would occasionally visit just 50 miles from the city of Baton Rouge, and thought it would be nice to have a cottage there. After discussing the matter as a family, we decided to sell our home and buy an apartment in town and a cottage at the lake. By moving into an apartment we would be free from the maintenance of a large house and be able to spend our free time at the cottage. Before long we did sell our home, moved into an apartment, and purchased a two-bedroom cottage that was rather small but seemed to be the place God had for us. We had previously planned to buy a four-bedroom cottage, but just before

moving day the seller backed out of his agreement.

For three months we had wonderful fellowship as a family. Since the apartment was smaller than our former home, we were all brought closer together. We spent much time praying with each other, and Marge and I answered many questions the children asked about themselves, about my job, about spiritual things—and about death, heaven and the second coming of Jesus Christ in particular. God answered many prayers that we lifted up to Him in behalf of our teenagers and the trials they were often going through.

One beautiful Sunday, October 24, 1971, after attending a meaningful morning worship service, we drove to the lake for a little recreation. Following lunch Gary, Diane and Lydia, her friend who joined us for the weekend, and I went to the other side of the lake to find some wood for a fire. Returning with the wood, Gary and I got the ski boat rigged while Diane and Lydia went out in the fishing boat to observe the activities. Callie studied while Marge picked up around the cottage and relaxed. The day went by extremely fast and before we knew it, it was nearly 6:00 p.m., the time we promised Lydia's mother to have her home. We decided it best for Gary to take the girls and the dog home while Marge and I would get ready to go to the evening church service on the way into the city. It was a little before six when the children left and some 20 minutes later when we followed.

About 15 miles up the road we came to a roadblock and a re-routing of traffic due to an accident on the highway. The state trooper directing traffic said that four people had just been killed in a head-on collision with a pickup truck that had apparently run off the side of the road, and then swerved back on. Inwardly we felt we should check the accident out before continuing on our way. When people leaving the scene confirmed to us that a car of a certain make and color had been involved, we began to run. The next thing we remember is seeing our three children and Lydia motionless in a wrecked vehicle. Marge screamed and I began shouting for a doctor and asking why someone wasn't doing something—trying desperately to change the truth of the circumstances.

As we both began to pray and repeat the name of Jesus, immediately we could feel His loving arms wrap themselves around us. We were taken to a nearby home to place an emergency call to our pastor who had already started the Sunday evening service. We told him what had happened and asked if he would make what seemed an impossible phone call to Lydia's mother. Many of the congregation remained after the service to uplift us in prayer and other of our dear friends, notified of our great loss, offered their sympathy and aid.

Marge and I felt a desperate desire to be alone to pray. In our bedroom we thanked the Lord for the preparation all five of us had received through the experience of the baptism in the

Holy Spirit. Alone we could not face the realization of what had just happened; more than ever before, we needed Him. We reminded ourselves of God's many promises and His assurance through the Word in I Corinthians 10—13 that He would not allow us to go through anything that we could not bear.



Then, in answer to our prayers, our pastor and friend Bill made necessary arrangements for the funeral and identified the bodies of our three precious children, thereby sparing us from seeing their damaged faces and injured bodies. At the funeral the pastor gave a message of hope for the living and said the heavens were rejoicing at the homecoming of our children.

A triple loss has great impact, but in our suffering there was rejoicing. We continued daily to hear that souls were being saved and the lives of others were being changed because of our

loss. Many other people began to more fully appreciate and thank God for their blessings.

God has made it possible for us to rise above our circumstances. He has removed that indescribable ache that comes from losing loved ones and has given us strength to face each day, one at a time.

Even though this tragic accident happened only a short time before Thanksgiving, a day set aside for us to count the many blessings the Lord has given us, we found that on that first Thanksgiving Day without our children, we still had much to be thankful for. And on each succeeding day since then...

We thank God for replacing the emptiness within us with His love.

We appreciate the presence of the Holy Spirit as He comforts us and directs us.

We have found it possible to thank the Lord in the midst of tragedy.

We have learned to be evermore thankful for what we have.

We thank God for letting us share our love with our children while they were here.

We also thank Him for our new little blessing. Just two years after the accident, we received with joy the news that Marge would be giving birth to a baby, and eventually with the greatest of welcome, Scott Allen came into our lives.

Yes, there is strength in Jesus. There is power in the Holy Spirit. There is love in God the Father who takes care of us, His children. ■

CONVENTIONS

8TH GHANA NATIONAL CONV.

Sept. 3-5, 1992

University of Ghana, Accra-North
Contact: Akwasi Amoakohene
P.O. Box 10849
Accra-North, Ghana, West Africa
011-233-21-77-79-05

ASILOMAR MARRIED COUPLE'S CONF.

Sept. 11-13, 1992

Pacific Grove, CA
Contact: Ed Faulkner
5046 Oakbrook Circle
Fairfield, CA 94585
(510) 834-5035

TEXAS MEN'S ADVANCE

Sept. 11-13, 1992

Methodist Church Camp, Palestine, TX
Contact: Si Rickman
1912 Central Drive #AQ
Bedford, TX 76021
(817) 481-3241

JAPAN 3RD NATIONAL CONV.

Sept. 13-15, 1992

Nagoya, Japan
Contact: Ken Tsukamoto
2-52-6, Seiwada Kita-ku
Kobe, 651-11, Japan
78-591-8572, Fax 78-592-7964

SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL CONV.

Sept. 15-20, 1992

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea
Contact: South Pacific Reg. Office
c/o Bernie Gray, P.O. Box 67
Stones Corner, Brisbane
Queensland 4120, Australia
(61) 7-397-3557, (61) 7-394-1049 Fax

NIGERIA NORTHERN REGIONAL CONV.

Sept. 17-29, 1992

Bauchi City, Bauchi State, Nigeria
Contact: Chris Iheme
Ernig Engr. Ltd. Box 625
Kaduna, Kaduna State, Nigeria

1992 MEN'S SPIRITUAL ADVANCE

Sept. 18-20, 1992

Turner, OR
Contact: Art Evanson
P.O. Box 244
Vancouver, WA 98666
(206) 694-9502

NIAGARA FALLS REGIONAL CONV.

Oct. 1-3, 1992

Park Hotel, Niagara Falls, Ontario
Contact: Ron Smith
1348 Thorman Drive
Cambridge, Ontario, Canada
(519) 653-3392

SCOTLAND MEN'S CAMP

Oct. 2-4, 9-11, 1992

Aberfoyle, Scotland
Contact: Drew Greenwood
44-0360-60380

COLUMBIA GORGE CONVENTION

Oct. 8-10, 1992

Shilo Inn, The Dalles, OR
Contact: John Fagler
P.O. Box 471
Dufur, OR 97021
(503) 467-2518

BRITISH COLUMBIA REGIONAL CONV.

Oct. 15-17, 1992

Harrison Hot Springs, B.C.
Contact: Art Dick
3519 McKinley Ct.
Abbotsford, BC V3G 1B4 Canada
(604) 859-1088

NIGERIA UYO REGIONAL CONV.

Oct. 15-17, 1992

Uyo City, Akwa Ibom State
Contact: Prof. Ekong Ekong
80 Barracks Rd. Uyo
Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

KINSHASA REGIONAL CONV.

Oct. 26-31, 1992

Kinshasa, Zaire
Contact: Kayembe-wa-Dikonda
P.O. Box 5363
Kinshasa 10 Zaire
(243) 25462, Fax (12) 20640/20641

TENNESSEE CENTRAL SO. REG. CONV.

Oct. 29-31, 1992

Quality Inn, Nashville
Contact: Eugene Matkins
P.O. Box 25051
Nashville, TN 37202
(615) 455-0386

NORTHWEST OHIO COUPLE'S ADV.

Oct. 30-31, 1992

Travelodge, Rossford, OH
Contact: Lee Brandenburg
635 N. Water St.
Ulrichsville, OH 44683
(614) 922-3515

CONVENTIONS PUBLISHED IN THIS ISSUE WERE APPROVED ON OR BEFORE JULY 7, 1992.

CHAPTER OUTREACH

Requests come in daily to start new chapters. If you have this burden laid on your heart and see the vision for your community, write for complete information to: Chapter Department / FGBMFI / P.O. Box 5050 / Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

As this issue was being prepared for publication, the following chapters were submitted. The president's name and telephone number are included for your information. Write for date and location details of a chapter meeting in your area.

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SIX STEPS TO SALVATION

Men still cry, "What must I do to be saved?" The Bible provides a clear answer.

1. Acknowledge "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13).

2. Repent "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

3. Confess "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (Romans 10:9).

4. Forsake "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord...for he will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

5. Believe "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16).

6. Receive "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John 1:11, 12).

Why not make your eternal decision now:
"Lord Jesus, I believe You died for my sins and I ask Your forgiveness. I receive You now as my personal Saviour and invite You to manage my life from this day forward. Amen."

Write us to tell of your decision. We'll send you a booklet, "Now That You've Received Christ." Our mailing address:
FGBMFI/Box 5050/Costa Mesa, CA 92628.

YES! I have made my eternal decision. I have read the Six Steps to Salvation and have asked Jesus to be my personal Saviour.

Signature _____

Please send me the booklet *Now That You've Received Christ*.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Clip and mail to: FGBMFI, P.O. Box 5050, Costa Mesa, CA 92628

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TURNING POINT!

Henry David Thoreau said, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." And surely that described Tom Manion's condition. But was there nothing better to be hoped for? And if not, why go on living?

2



WORLD CONVENTION REPORT!

Christians from around the world took to the streets of San Francisco, California—"to heal the brokenhearted"—as FGBMFI celebrated its 39th Annual World Convention. In this special pictorial report you'll read and see what happened!

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From: **FGBMFI**
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