



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

The Sanctification of Lida Brandyberry

WESLEYAN HERITAGE Library

Autobiography

THE FORKS OF THE ROAD

By Mrs. Lida (Lisle) Brandyberry

THE FORKS OF THE ROAD

Pages From the Life Experience of the Author;
How the Divine Call Came to the Girl of Seventeen;
Making the Decision;
God's Call to a Life in the Ministry;
the Harvest of Blessings;
Other Practical and Helpful Lessons
From the Pages of a Consecrated Life.

-BY-MRS. LIDA (LISLE) BRANDYBERRY 1942

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THE FORKS OF THE ROAD

By Mrs. Lida (Lisle) Brandyberry

THE RIGHT CHOICE

At "The Forks of the Road" leads to a life of service and happiness here and Heaven's joys in the life eternal.

THE WRONG DECISION

At "The Forks of the Road" means a life lived against Christ in this world, and the irreparable loss

of an immortal soul beyond the veil.

YOUR CHOICE

Is the Most Important Decision in Life.

THE FORKS OF THE ROAD

By Mrs. Lida (Lisle) Brandyberry

CONTENTS

(Complete in 16 pages)

FOREWORD

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 HOW CONVICTION CAME TO ME

Chapter 2 THE TWO CRISES

Chapter 3 MY CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Chapter 4 MY FIRST REVIVAL MEETING

Chapter 5 THE OPEN DOOR

Chapter 6 ATTENDING CHRISTIAN WORKERS TRAINING SCHOOL

Chapter 7 HOW I CAME TO GO TO COLLEGE

Chapter 8 THE PROVIDENTIAL ACQUAINTANCE

Chapter 9 THE FORKS OF THE ROAD

THE WAYSIDE CROSS

FOREWORD

My only reason for releasing this bit of human experience for publication, is that it may prove a blessing and inspiration to those who may chance to read it.

Gladly would I have taken my place behind the scenes of home life, but for the definite call God gave me, and the encouragement my companion has given me to continue in the work of the ministry, ever remembering, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

To my husband, whose life of sincere devotion to Christ, to the Church, and to his family, has ever been an inspiration to me, this book is lovingly dedicated.

The Author

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more interesting and helpful than personal experiences, modestly and well told.

In the Book of Acts, Paul relates his experience at three different times, and the writer of this early history of the Christian Church felt compelled to record these experiences as told by the apostle. In these days, when personal experiences are kept somewhat in the background, even in our religious services, it will be well for every one to read the following pages in which Sister Brandyberry relates her Christian experience.

She writes modestly, and yet very clearly, telling of her conviction and conversion, and how she was led to give herself in full consecration for the enjoyment of the fullness of the blessing of sanctification. We hold that God calls women as well as men into His ministry of the Word, and with reservation she tells how the hand of God was placed upon her for this work.

Many will read these lines with deep interest, and I am sure that our younger class of Christians will receive great help and inspiration from these pages. To make the story more interesting, this little booklet is nicely divided into fitting chapters with appropriate headings. This will be found helpful and assist the reader in retaining the various stages of her experience. Through the reading of this interesting booklet, may others be inspired to obtain a personal experience of grace, and give witness that others may know the power of the Gospel.

J. W. Goodwin,

General Superintendent Emeritus

Pasadena, California.

Chapter 1

HOW CONVICTION CAME TO ME

A beautiful Christian woman, living in our community, whose name was Retta Thompson, said to her friends one day, "We're going to have a revival meeting in our neighborhood, if I have to pay all the bills."

She wrote to Evangelist J. T. Molloy, of Albion, Iowa, to see if he would consider coming to their place to conduct a tent meeting. Mrs. Thompson had read of the wonderful success of this evangelist, and how he had been disowned by his parents when he left the Catholic church, and she felt sure if he would come they would have a revival meeting.

Several days passed, and finally Mrs. Thompson received a favorable reply from the evangelist, who told her he would come at the appointed time.

Plans for the entertaining of the evangelist and the erection of the large tent were soon under way.

My father assisted in every way possible. Benches without backs were made to sit on. Plenty of straw covered the bare ground. Gasoline torches were lighted, singers were seated on the platform, and after a short prelude on the organ all began to sing:

"There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains."

After completion of the song service, the evangelist arose and speaking in a deep, clear tone of voice, which could be heard far in the distance, he read distinctly the following Scripture:

“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

“And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Rev. 20:11-15.

Each evening for one week this same Scripture was read and a soul-stirring message delivered.

While I was only a young girl of seventeen, nevertheless, I attended the services regularly, as they seemed to have such an appeal and attraction for me.

The evangelist each night spoke to me about my soul. This didn't please me and a feeling of resentment came into my heart against him. He warned me faithfully that if I did not repent of my sins, my soul would be eternally lost in a lake of fire. He must have been able to read the expression on my face, as I was deeply convicted of my sins. At that time I did not know what was wrong with me.

Both the attendance and interest in the tent meeting increased, and people came from far and near to hear the old-time rugged Gospel preached fearlessly by a converted Catholic.

One evening after the evangelist finished his message, he made a strong appeal to members of his congregation to come forward, kneel at an altar of prayer, confess and forsake their sins and they would find mercy and forgiveness.

Such a sense of spiritual need came over me, that my decision was made right then and there to become a Christian. Other young people had gone forward and I started to rise, when something seemed to pull me back to my seat. Looking around, no one was sitting near me or back of me. It was a phenomenal experience and one that I never understood until years later. The strange power that had hold of me that night was none other than the power of Satan. There are those who do not believe in a personal Devil; there are others who have made an effort to get out of his clutches who certainly are convinced of his power and cunning craftiness.

One evening after returning from the service. I went upstairs to retire. Such a feeling of heaviness came over me and such a consciousness of guilt, that all sleep was gone from my eyes.

Mother had never given me permission to learn to dance, and many times I laid awake at night crying until my pillow was moistened with tears. It seemed to me that mother was severe and did not want me to enjoy life. The young people told me at school what a wonderful time they had enjoyed at the dance the night before, which only increased my disappointment. Years later when I discovered how many girls had lost their way and disgraced their parents; months and years of suffering and regret brought on themselves through means of the ballroom, I have thanked God again and again for a dear Christian mother who was not only interested in my physical and mental training, but was also vitally concerned in my spiritual welfare.

This never-to-be-forgotten night, when I felt so badly, I was thinking of the good times I had missed; of the ill feeling in my heart against my mother; of the cross words which I had spoken to her, my best earthly friend: all my wrongdoings came before me until my sins rose as high as a mountain. I had been carefully raised by Christian parents, and around a family altar of prayer, and, much to their credit and not mine, never indulged in any gross sin. Why should I feel so miserable and so undone? It seemed I was going to hell.

No longer could I stay in bed. Thorns apparently were pricking my conscience. I arose and fell on my knees before God and with a penitent heart began to pray. I realized that I had been guilty of the greatest of all sins, and that was rejecting Jesus. I thought I was dying, so I asked God if He would only spare my life, and not let me go to that awful lake of fire that the evangelist had been preaching about, I would go to the altar the next day. The burden was lifted, and I retired and was soon in peaceful slumber.

Chapter 2

THE TWO CRISES

Coming down the stairs next morning father said, “Lida, you and I are going to do the family washing today, as mother has stayed for the all-day meeting.” He had started the fire and had the boiler filled with water for washing and the machine oiled and ready for use.

Looking at my father, I said, “Please let us postpone the washing for today. Let us go to the tent meeting,” and then I began to cry. My father touched my shoulder and said, “Alright, Lida, after breakfast you and I will go to the meeting.” Soon the breakfast dishes were done and we were on our way. Upon arriving, we heard the people singing joyfully:

“Jesus knows all about our struggles,
He will guide ‘till the day is done;
There’s not a friend like the lowly Jesus,
No, not one, no, not one.”

We have no recollection what the evangelist preached about that morning, but at the conclusion of his message, when he presented the altar call, he had one seeker to pray for. I knelt in the straw, at an old-fashioned mourner’s bench and mourned over my sins. I felt much better, but still did not have the assurance that my sins were forgiven. Going to my room again that night, I knelt by the side of my bed and promised the Lord I would serve Him the rest of my life. Like a flash of lightning from a clear sky, God for Christ’s sake lifted my burden of sin, and joy unspeakable and full of glory filled my soul. My heart was as light as a feather, and everything in the room looked bright. I began singing,

“Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away;
He taught me how to watch and pray
And live rejoicing every day;
Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away.”

The next evening all of our family went to the meeting. After a lively song service, the evangelist named me out in the big crowd and asked me to testify. He said, “You look like a different girl. I want you to come forward and testify to this congregation what God has done for you.” Going forward, that feeling of lightness and joy came over me again. I don’t remember what I said, but people were praising God, and weeping, and some were shouting, among them my father and mother and Grandmother House. She had worn out several Bibles studying and trying to find out if there was such an experience of holiness as the converted Catholic and others had been preaching about.

In this same tent meeting my dear grandmother was sanctified and shouted until her little old black bonnet fell off in the straw. She was a true Methodist and helped financially to build the little Story Chapel M. E. church near Bonaparte, Iowa, where I used to go before and after my conversion.

She lived a very consistent life and at the age of 87 years went to live with Jesus.

Older Christians spoke to me and urged me to go to the altar again to be sanctified, but I was so happy with my new found joy that I did not see any need of another experience. And then sanctification was such a long and difficult word for me to analyze, until the evangelist told me that it meant the cleansing of my heart from inherited sin, or that something within my nature which wouldn’t always behave itself.

I was reminded that on one occasion a few years before my conversion, my mother reproved me for some

misdemeanor and it made me very angry. Running toward the cistern, I threatened to jump in. She hurried to my rescue and reprimanded me in a way that I have never forgotten. She told me if I did not get rid of that ugly something in my nature it would surely ruin me.

The old man of sin, as the Apostle Paul calls it, has ruined many a life and broken up many a home. An unsaved father or mother, and sometimes a professing Christian father and mother (no doubt in my mind) have been the means of sending their own children to hell because of an evil disposition.

Educated people say that through self-restraint, discipline, and self-culture, they have been able to suppress these feelings of anger, hate and revenge. That is good, but I have found something better than the suppression of these feelings. We can have the cause removed and eradicated.

Three weeks after my conversion, I knelt at the altar again and made a complete consecration of my all to God. I placed on the altar what I knew and what I did not know, and God's sanctifying grace removed that ugly thing out of my nature and sweetened my disposition.

“Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate.” Heb. 13:12

“And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.” St John 17:19.

It was not an accident that I was so gloriously converted and three weeks later obtained the “second blessing,” properly so-called by John Wesley. It was through the consistent Christian living and earnest and sincere praying of my father and mother, that I obtained this rich heritage.

Chapter 3

MY CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Shortly after my conversion it was my privilege to attend a meeting conducted by the Tri-County Holiness Association in Farmington, Iowa, and as the congregation was singing the song,

“I’ll go where you want me to go, dear Lord,
Over mountain, or plain, or sea;
I’ll say what you want me to say, dear
Lord, I’ll be what you want me to be,”

a deep burden came upon my soul, and an inner voice seemed to say, “Will you go where I want you to go?” With tears flowing down my cheeks, I said, “Yes, Lord, anywhere.” Little did I know, then, what that decision would mean to me in the future.

A few weeks later, coming home from a little country school, a vision appeared to me in broad daylight. In every direction around me, apparently, was water and in it the uplifted hands of people, who seemed to say, “Come, help me, I’m perishing!” This incident has never been erased from my memory, and it left a profound impression upon my young heart. Continuing my school activities, with the one ambition of my life to be a school teacher, I tried to forget the vision.

My conversion was so definite and real that my associates realized something different had taken place in my life. There was no difficulty in giving up my worldly friends. They dropped me, but for all I lost, God gave me other fine Christian young people with whom to associate.

Returning from school one evening, our telephone rang, and upon answering it, a lady whom I knew by the name of Vickers said, "We have heard of your wonderful conversion. Will you come down in our community and conduct a revival meeting?" Not having much time to consider it, the answer was given in the affirmative.

It was then Satan appeared and said, "What can you do? How can you conduct a revival meeting?" He seemed to grin at me, but in my heart there was a determination to do what God wanted me to do and go where He wanted me to go.

My father was called to preach when he was a young man, but thought he could not do it because he was the only support of his widowed mother. He was greatly perplexed over the call, but after his marriage he told God he would give his first-born child to the work of the ministry. They were expecting a boy; instead a girl came to bless their home.

This has been a satisfactory answer to my own heart as to why God called me into the ministry.

"It has not been mine to question the reason why, But it has been mine to dare to do or die."

Chapter 4

MY FIRST REVIVAL MEETING

At the close of the second semester of school, with a few clothes in a suitcase, my father took me to the place where my first meeting was to be conducted. Blanche Vickers, who had a guitar, played and sang well, and sometimes together we would sing specials during the meeting.

Mrs. Vickers had charge of all the preliminaries and announced the speaker. The little crude church building, which had been built mostly by women, was filled to capacity the first night. With knees shaking almost like one who had the ague and voice quivering I read some Scripture, told of my conversion and made an altar call. Several people responded.

The attendance increased until there was not room for all the people. Some sat in the windows, others stood along the side of the room. Night after night we read portions of the Bible, made a few comments, exalted Jesus as the best and dearest friend of all, presented the altar call, and people young and old came until thirty-five persons had been definitely blessed.

On the last night of the meeting the lady in charge took up an offering. The people were poor, but out of their penury they gave us \$8.00, which was equally divided between Blanche and me.

Immediately, we began to plan to attend the National Holiness camp meeting which was to be held in June in the Chautauqua park in Des Moines, Iowa. Returning home, my parents were informed of my plans. They were pleased, and soon mother was off to town to buy material, so she could make me a couple of dresses, which I greatly needed.

One day my father's little old-fashioned trunk was brought down stairs. As I was folding and packing my clothes, mother came into the room and said, "Lida, I think it is wonderful that you are going to get to attend the camp meeting." Looking up into her smiling face I said, "Yes, mother, but I'm not coming back home." She looked astonished and nonplused.

The day soon arrived for me to make the trip. Father put the trunk into the spring wagon, and with a fond good-bye to mother, grandmother, sister and brothers, we were soon on our way to the depot in Bonaparte, Iowa. Blanche was at the station waiting for me; our tickets were purchased, baggage checked. The train pulled into the station, the conductor said "All aboard," and we were on our way to the city. As the train slowly pulled out of the station, we waved a good-bye to father, and then I began to cry. Blanche said, "What are you crying about, Lida? Just think of the nice trip and good time we are going to have." "But, Blanche," I said, "I'm not coming back home."

She did not understand my remark. Soon the tears were brushed away, and we were looking at the beautiful corn fields and cattle grazing in the pastures. What a trip for two girls who had never been out of our county and had never ridden on a train or a street car.

Soon we were in the large city of Des Moines. Friends met us at the depot and took us out to the camp ground.

Two hundred white tents, located among the green trees, presented a beautiful picture to us.

People from all over Iowa and other states were present to enjoy this spiritual feast. The meeting was in charge of Dr. J. C. Fowler, Dr. H. C. Morrison and Uncle Bud Robinson. The singing was in charge of J. M. and M. J. Harris, the sweet singers of national reputation.

Some way the secretary of the association had heard about the revival we girls had conducted, so we were given a tent, furnished, without cost to us. It was a good thing, as we had very little money in our possession.

The first service we attended in the big tabernacle seemed like Heaven to us. Such wonderful preaching! Such inspiring and beautiful singing that blessed our hearts.

One day during the camp, Blanche was playing her guitar and she and I were singing. Suddenly a rap was heard on the tent pole; we opened the curtains and there stood a tall lady with smiling face.

She greeted us, and then said, "Girls, before leaving Denver, Colorado, while engaged in prayer it was revealed to me that if I would attend this camp meeting I would find two girls who would go back with me and be my assistants in city missionary work. I heard you singing and thought perhaps you were the girls." "Where are you going from here?" I asked. "To Council Bluffs, Iowa," she replied, "to open a city mission."

It came like a flash to me that it was just the thing God wanted me to do. Blanche soon gave her decision to go with us.

Chapter 5

THE OPEN DOOR

At the close of the camp meeting, we accompanied Miss Emma Baller, a talented and useful evangelist, to Council Bluffs, Iowa. Soon she had a building equipped with a reading room during the day, and a place to conduct evangelistic meetings at night. She also rented a beautiful home which was known as the Iowa Holiness Association Home. Many were the tests, trials and victories won in prayer in this home.

One day Miss Baller informed me that I was to go and solicit funds from business men and women in the city to help defray expenses. This was the hardest task ever given me to do. More than once I climbed long flights of stairs, only to return to my room without any money, because I had lost my courage.

However, Miss Baller did not fail to send me out again and again, until I began to have more confidence in my ability to collect money, and when some business man would write me out a check for \$5.00 or \$10.00, it stimulated my faith and courage to go out the next day.

The rent of the hall and of the home was not small and all of the utility bills had to be paid. God in a miraculous way supplied the need of our food and clothing. We girls walked miles in house to house visitation; also visited the sick in the hospitals, and spoke and sang to those in jail. We assisted Miss Baller in street meetings, and distributed tracts and holiness literature.

After receiving a letter from home, I became homesick. Mother said, "We miss you at the table; no one is here to play the organ; we miss you around the family altar, and we miss you everywhere; but if God has called you into His service, may His blessings abide with you."

One day Miss Baller came to my room and found me crying. She said, "Lida, are you going to be a baby or a soldier? If you want to go home, here is money for your car fare, but if you want to be a soldier for Christ, you had

better stay.”

A little while later, while alone in prayer, there seemed to be a Divine hand that reached into my inner self and removed all the homesickness. I told Miss Baller that by God’s grace I would be a soldier for Christ. This splendid Christian woman encouraged and helped me so much while yet in my teens; but from the day I left the city mission until now, I have never had the privilege of meeting her again, but fully expect to live with her in Heaven.

Night after night we assisted in the evangelistic services held in the mission hall. Many were converted. Drunkards, and down-and-out people, who did not seem to have a friend in the world, were reached. One night an old white-haired gentleman was converted and became a faithful attendant to all the services.

Another young lady, a school teacher, Miss Amy Huffman, joined our family circle in the mission home. She later became the wife of Rev. Dorsey Dobson, who has been district superintendent, evangelist and pastor in the Church of the Nazarene. She too is an elder in our church, and has ably assisted her husband in all his work.

Chapter 6

ATTENDING CHRISTIAN WORKERS TRAINING SCHOOL

After spending one year in city missionary work, I wrote to Dr. E. P. Ellyson, who was conducting a Christian Workers Training School in Marshalltown, Iowa, and asked him if he had any place in the school for a pupil without money, but who was willing to work. Dr. Ellyson replied to my letter and told me to come on – he would find something for me to do. Again packing my clothes in the little trunk, I informed Miss Baller of my plans to go to school. She asked, “How can you go to school without money?” “God will provide,” I replied.

A farewell service was held in the mission and friends came to bid me good-bye. The old gentleman who had recently been converted came by weeping. He shook my hand and left three silver dollars in it. They were the biggest dollars I had ever seen. Never before had I shouted, but this night I walked the aisles, praising God from whom all blessings flow:

Having received a clergy permit for doing city missionary work, the next morning my ticket for Marshalltown, Iowa, was purchased, and five cents was left to pay my street car fare out to the school.

Dr. and Mrs. Ellyson received me with such a warm welcome I immediately felt at home. They found out my qualifications for work and assigned me my job. I was to assist in the kitchen and be responsible for making the bread. Mother had taught me on the farm to make bread, for which I was thankful.

I cannot say too much in words of praise regarding Dr. and Mrs. E. P. Ellyson who were my first teachers in theology, Christian doctrine, church history and other similar subjects. Their lives of devotion to Christ were such an inspiration and blessing to my young life.

In connection with the school, Dr. and Mrs. Ellyson had charge of a city mission. This gave the students practical experience in conducting religious services. On Saturday evening the school conducted street meetings. Gospel tracts were distributed and an invitation given to these passing by to attend the Friends Church, known at that time as the church for the common people.

Chapter 7

HOW I CAME TO GO TO COLLEGE

On leaving the training school, it became my happy privilege to travel one year in evangelistic work with Mrs. A. C. Davis, an evangelist of the United Evangelical Church. Mrs. Davis was an interesting speaker and it was a joy to be associated with this devoted and talented woman. Many were our experiences together which were both pathetic and humorous.

Out of the offerings which we received, aside from our traveling expenses, and money expended for clothes, I had \$100.00 saved to my account with which to start to college.

Returning to my country home again, mother assisted me in getting some clothes made.

With a happy heart, I was soon on the train going toward the college I had never seen. On my journey, I read the story of Sammy Morris, who had been enrolled as a student in Taylor University.

This book was more interesting to me than any novel I had ever read. Sammy had come all the way from Africa to New York City to have Stephen Merritt tell him more about the Holy Spirit.

The train could scarcely go fast enough, so eager was I to reach my destination and see the college that was named after so distinguished a character as Bishop Taylor of the Methodist Church, and to meet the teachers, some of whom had taught the untutored but prayerful student, Sammy Morris.

Some friends met the train and it was not long until I felt quite at ease among the students. Every one was so cheerful and happy. The college building, Gleaner's home and dining hall all looked good to me. The campus with its large trees, shrubbery and velvety green grass, with flowers sprinkled here and there, was appealing to a country girl.

My only disappointment was the room which had been assigned to me. It looked so bare and dismal; not a closet in the room, except a corner shelf, where I could hang my clothes. There were no curtains at the windows, and the wall was grimy-looking.

I cried awhile, and then thought how silly it was to shed tears over the looks of a room. I should meet a disappointment with more grace. After lying down for a little rest, I returned to Upland and bought some pretty tie-back curtains and some dark-figured material to be used for a curtain around the shelf, so the dust would not accumulate on my clothes. A small piece of white oil-cloth was purchased for a covering over a little table that was to be used for my writing desk. A few bright-colored pictures bought at a dime store were soon hung upon the walls. With the new curtains at the windows, the pretty bed spread upon the bed and a bright rag rug upon the floor, my room began to take on the appearance of "Home, Sweet Home." (Taylor University now has a beautiful woman's dormitory and many other fine buildings.)

Being a member of the Friends Church, it was my privilege to attend a Yearly Meeting at Marion, Indiana. After testifying in a young people's group meeting, a gentleman stepped up and asked me if I would consider going to Milo to pastor a little Friends Church. Many of the older members had died and only a few active ones were left; nevertheless, I accepted the challenge to do my best to build the congregation both numerically and spiritually.

Each Friday night after school, I went to Milo, and on Saturday all day was earnestly employed in visiting the people. There were numbers living in this oil field who were without Christ.

Chapter 8

THE PROVIDENTIAL ACQUAINTANCE

Near Christmas our little flock decided to have a revival during the holidays, and asked me to secure an evangelist or

a student preacher to assist me in this undertaking.

Dr. Archibald, my homiletical teacher, was consulted concerning the needs of our church and he recommended to me a young man whom he said was called to preach, and was also a very good singer.

Upon my first acquaintance with this young man, he impressed me favorably, as he was dressed in overalls and shirt and had a broom in one hand and a sprinkler in the other. At least he impressed me as being industrious. He swept and dusted the college building for his board. After special inquiry, the church was informed that he had consented to be the evangelist for this campaign.

Homes were visited, prayer meetings held, and the expectation of the people was high for an old-fashioned revival. God did not disappoint us. Many were converted. Hard drinking men who were heads of families were converted. They threw away their cards and their whiskey bottles. Old wrongs were made right; letters were written to enemies asking forgiveness for grievances which had been existing over a period of years. The church received into its fellowship new members, and new interest was manifested in all the services.

In Taylor University we had a dean whose name was B. W. Ayers. He was one of my favorite teachers, even though he had a stern, almost severe look which a student never forgets. He has been an outstanding figure in the college curriculum and a member of the college faculty for many years.

Love is both blind and deaf, apparently, and sometimes forgets college rules. Dates were permitted for only one night each week. For any other social privileges it was necessary to consult the dean and get his permission.

One evening I had been asked to take care of a couple of children for my college friends, and while entertaining them a rap on the front door was heard. Opening the door, much to my surprise there stood my gentleman friend. He was given a friendly reception and was soon comfortably seated in a rocking chair. Presently, we were engaged in pleasant conversation. The children became sleepy and were put to bed.

Leafing through a song book, we found a song much to our liking. We were both seated on the piano bench and after playing softly a short prelude, we began singing together,

When our ships have crossed the ocean,
Have been all around the world,
When they safely reach the harbor
And their flags again unfurl,
O what singing, O what shouting
When our ships come sailing home,
They have sailed the mighty tempest,
They have crossed the ocean's foam --

Suddenly, a rather strange but hard knock on the door was heard, which caused a pause in our music. The delightful time we were having in each other's presence came to a sudden end. When the door was opened, there stood Dean Ayers. He was given a courteous invitation to come in – but, oh, that rebuke and those penetrating eyes have never been forgotten. Love had forgotten the rules.

After returning to college, one day while practicing my piano lesson, I heard some one coming up the stairway about two steps at a time. It was Oliver Mark Moody, one of the finest young men who ever graduated from Taylor University, and who later went to Africa as a missionary, was there only a few months and died; but his life still lives on in the hearts of those who knew him. He said, “Miss Lisle, I have a very personal question to ask you. Are you engaged? My roommate wants to know.” With cheeks blushing, I said “No.”

Joyfully Mr. Moody went to disclose the information to Millard Brandyberry, his friend and room-mate. Soon after this, he asked me for a date to attend a literary program at the college.

A romance, the pure white flower of affection, began that evening, which climaxed in our marriage a few months later. It was on the 12th of October, a beautiful fall day, when Rev. Isaiah Reid, an old-time Methodist preacher of Des Moines, Iowa, read the wedding ceremony, in the presence of a number of relatives and friends, that made us one. The marriage has held good up to the present moment, proving the lasting quality of true love.

Chapter 9

THE FORKS OF THE ROAD

More than twenty-five years have slipped by rapidly since we had our first pastorate. Dr. Bresee, founder of the Church of the Nazarene, received us as members of the First District Assembly we ever attended, in Canton, Ills. He said to us in those pioneer days, “Are you willing to go out under the stars and hew out for yourselves a kingdom?” We answered in the affirmative.

During our itinerary we have lived in various kinds of parsonage homes, some small and a few large, but each one has had an appeal for me. Some of them have needed painting, the floors repaired, the walls papered. If the congregation was unable to do the work, my husband and I did it.

The romance of fixing up another home, meeting new people challenging new opportunities, reaching the unsaved with the Gospel, has taken away some of the hardship entailed in moving; for each time we have moved has, with few exceptions, been like getting married all over again.

Of course our hearts have been made sad by leaving our friends, yet we were thrilled with the thought of making new ones. Yes, there have been hardships in the ministry, but the blessings received and the opportunity given us of associating with some of the best people on earth, our faithful laymen and fellow ministers and their families, have more than compensated for any disappointing and unpleasant experience through which we have gone.

The lay members of the various churches my husband and I have served have been very good to us. They have provided for us and our family the necessities of life, and in some instances (considering the way some people live in foreign countries) the luxuries. Our children, Paul and Ruth, have been educated in our Nazarene Colleges.

Taking a retrospective view of the past, I have never regretted becoming a minister’s wife and a co-laborer with him in the Master’s vineyard.

So far the journey of life, to me, seems very much like traveling the public highway. Sometimes the road is smooth, and we travel miles without a hill or a curve.

Other days we travel through heavy grades, sharp curves, tortuous detours – then we come to the FORKS OF THE ROAD. We often become perplexed, debate, and wonder which way to go. We pause in uncertainty – then suddenly a welcome sight greets our eyes, a sign which says, “THIS WAY TO NO. 66.”

Presently we are back on the main highway, but again the road turns suddenly and there appear mountains steep and forbidding in the distance. Tortuous, twisting grades confront us, and breath-taking precipices endanger our passage. Up and up, around and around the mountains we go.

Looking back with a sigh of relief, we discover that we have climbed our last mountain on this journey and soon we are in the desert.

The wind is blowing and the sand is hot. We become weary and thirsty. Not an animal or bird do we see. Are there no beauties in the desert? Yes, there are for those who admire the different species of cactus. Some of these plants are crooked and thorny, yet from the center projects a most beautiful flower that the average traveler admires. Some of the cactus plants grow very tall and present a delicate white flower, and we wonder how such beauty can come from such an ugly looking plant.

How many of us have climbed the mountains of difficulty, gone through the burning hot sands, and around the sharp, dangerous curves, religiously speaking. Sometimes we have gotten on a detour, but we found it would never lead us to Heaven, so we got back on the main highway of holiness.

The tunnel may sometimes be long and very dark, the storms may beat against our frail bark, but let us remember

that Jesus spoke to Peter in the storm and said, “It is I, be not afraid;” and He will speak to us.

Each person in life comes to “THE FORKS OF THE ROAD,” and whether he travels the broad way which leads to Hell or the narrow way which leads to Heaven, all depends upon his individual choice and decision. Jesus says:

“Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

“Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life: and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7: 13-14.

How thankful I am that at the age of seventeen, coming to “THE FORKS OF THE ROAD,” a definite decision was made to live the Christian life. From every point of view this choice has many times compensated me beyond any words to describe.

THE WAYSIDE CROSS

“Which way shall I take?” shouts a voice in the night;
“I’m a pilgrim awearied and spent is my light;
And I seek for the palace that rests on the hill
But between us a stream lieth, sullen and still.
“Which way shall I take for the bright golden span
That bridges the water so safely for man?
To the right? To the left? Ah, me, if I knew!
The night is so dark and the passers are few.

CHORUS

“Near, near thee, my son, is the old Wayside Cross,
Like a gray friar cowled, in lichens and moss;
And its cross-beam will point to the bright golden span
That bridges the waters so safely for man.”

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