

Testimony Series #5

Almost Home



*Truth is stranger than fiction. The life
story of Ernest Fandler.*

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'And expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.' Acts 18:26.

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"I'll meet you where the Roses never fade."

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1.

Early Life

Many times I have been asked to write my life story, because I have come through so many difficult circumstances. Finally, one day, while flying over the Atlantic, and thinking over my past life, I decided to do so.

I was born in Switzerland into a very poor family, the fourth child of a family of seven boys and three girls. When I was twelve years old, I left home to help support the family. During this time, I remember going to the woods by myself and wondering if this was all there was to life. My heart cried for some kind of hope for a better life- even if it was a million years from now. And I thank God that I discovered a better life and have the opportunity to write about it.

After helping to support my family for many years, I could see that there was no future in this for me. I felt that I must go where I could get the most for my labor. After investigating, I decided that California was the land of promise for me.

My Uncle Eisenhut loaned me the money for the boat and train tickets, and soon I was on my way to California. At the Ellis Island checkpoint for foreigners entering the United States, I was told that because I had arrived sick in body, and also had less than the required money for foreigners coming into the country to live, I would have to return to Switzerland. I was placed with a large group of Black immigrants and was puzzled because they were all crying. When I inquired, I was informed that they had been told that all of us would not be allowed to enter the United States and would have to return to our former homes. The next morning I was requested to stand before the judge with an interpreter.

“What are you going to do in California?” he asked.

“I’m going to work on a farm,” I said.

The judge then asked, “What are you going to do with the money?”

“I want to buy a farm there,” I answered. But in my heart, I intended to buy a farm in Switzerland.

However, I must have said the right thing, for the interpreter told me, “Sie können nach Californien reisen.” I had the judge's permission to go to California.

Landing in California, I got a job milking 30 cows twice a day by hand. I saved every penny that I could so I would be able to go back to Switzerland and buy a farm. I even started making money in the stock market. In a little over two years, I had saved several thousand dollars.

Then came the stock market crash. Many lost all of their money- so did I. Newspapers were filled with reports of suicides. I myself didn’t know just what I should do-I had lost all of my money and my job, too. I couldn’t think right anymore.

I had a little rupture, so I thought I’d have that operated on. To get to the hospital, I

gave them the right to use my body for experimental purposes- thinking that if the operation failed, I had nothing to lose.

I had been sending money home regularly, so I sent my last twenty dollars home, and a little before Christmas of 1929, I signed in at the San Francisco City Hospital. They asked me whom they should notify in case something happened to me. I said, "Nobody."

That night, in the next bed to me, I met a Swiss, one of my countrymen. We started to talk about old times. He had an incurable disease- and no money, like myself. While we were talking, a nurse came into the room with a note, saying that my friend must go to room 335. Soon they came and wheeled him away.

"Well, I am glad to go. I will see you no more." And so it was. My friend knew that when someone was taken to room 335, that meant it was the end. There was no or little hope you would ever come out alive.

The next morning, since I had given myself for experimental purposes, five student doctors tied me down, and wheeled me to an operating room. One student came to give me a spinal shot. The supervising doctor reprimanded him for doing it wrong. Next a second student came and gave me another shot. It probably was too much, because I became completely blind. Then they operated on the rupture and seemed to do a good job.

Afterwards, they continued experimenting, and cut my other side open, too. They suddenly noticed that something was wrong- it might have been my eyes. They said, "Hurry, hurry, sew him up!"

When they were finished sewing me up, they said, "What should we do now?" One of them had a bright idea. He suggested, "Take him to room 335!" Knowing that they couldn't let me leave the hospital blind, they were going to send me to room 335.

Another of the student doctors was not satisfied with this idea. He went and got a man.

The doctor asked, "Do you know this man?"

"Yes," I replied, even though I couldn't even see a light. "That's the man who wheeled me in," I said. Later I wondered what made me say the right words, but now I know after many more strange experiences.

Later my eyesight returned to normal and I was shifted from one place to another until spring. Soon after I left the hospital in May, I asked some friends to go with me to Alaska to dig gold. One of them warned, "If the Indians don't get you, the bears will!"

Soon after this, I narrowly escaped death when a big buck deer attacked me. For about half an hour we both fought for dear life! He slashed me with his sharp hooves and kept trying to rip my stomach open with his horns. All I could do was to hold on to those sharp horns while he pulled me all over the place. We were both exhausted when I finally got away.

I had an old Essex car to sell. With that money I started for Alaska, and got as far as Juneau. I was broke so for a few days, I lived in an old empty house, and slept on the floor. Then, fortunately, I got work for a while. That money took me to Fairbanks. At

Fairbanks, I got to know an old prospector who had seven dogs, a dog sled, and a year's supply of groceries. Towards spring, I went with him and his dog team into the wilderness. After nearly a week's journey, we got to his log cabin.

First, we had to go hunting, to get meat for the dogs and ourselves, as we had to depend mostly on wild meat for food. Then we began to dig for gold. We dug a hole fifty feet deep to bedrock. From there we dug a tunnel out about one hundred feet on each side. We used a windlass, and rope and bucket to pull out the gravel. But before we could do anything, we had to thaw out the gravel first. Prospecting was hard work and dangerous, especially for the inexperienced.

One day, too much frozen gravel had thawed out, and broke loose on top of me. I was buried in the tunnel, fifty feet below ground level. There was no way for my partner to help because we had to let one another down on a rope to get into the tunnel below. Somehow I managed to dig my way out of the cave-in. I thought that this was the end for me.

2.

The Alaskan Wilderness

In the fall, after many days of shovelling and washing gravel and dirt in the sluice boxes for the gold we could find, we figured that we had only made about thirty dollars apiece. We decided to go another two days journey higher into the mountain area to shoot mountain sheep. They were selling for a high price and we needed money for another years supply of groceries. There was a little log cabin there where we stayed, probably built by some prospector during the Gold Rush.

The morning after we got there, I left the cabin, and shot a mountain sheep, put it on my shoulder, and headed back. Soon I found that I was lost. I dropped the sheep and left it there. I evidently had walked for some time in the wrong direction. All around me were snow mountains and they all looked alike to me. It was late fall, three o'clock in the afternoon, and already dark. The temperature was about thirty below zero. I had to get down to the lower elevation where there was woods and the wind wasn't so strong. All afternoon and all night long, I had to keep moving to keep from freezing to death. I knew that any direction I would choose to walk would still be hundreds of miles from civilization – there was no hope- except for that little log cabin, which was almost like finding a needle in a haystack.

It felt nice to just lay down in that deep, soft snow after twenty hours of walking and moving. I was hungry and tired. It would have been so easy to fall asleep and never wake up again, but I kept moving and at five o'clock in the morning, I stumbled into the cabin. My partner was so surprised to see me. He told me that he had shot up all his ammunition so that I would know the direction of the cabin, but I had never heard any shots- I must have been too far away.

The Bible says that while we were yet sinners, God loved us. There must have been some supernatural Hand again that helped to lead me out of the darkness to the cabin. I can see now that my time was not then to die.

The Great Depression was still on, and there was no job in sight when I got to town, so I decided to go back again with the old prospector. It was sixty degrees below zero for quite some time; when it warmed up a little, we took off for the wilderness again. By the end of the summer, I saw that we hadn't made any more money than last year. I told my partner that I couldn't waste my life out here. I said, "I'm going to town." He said, "You'll have to wait for winter until everything freezes up- no one can travel now."

I was determined to go. I took some food along and the gun and left, a cloud of mosquitoes following me. On the journey, I came to a place where all the ground seemed to move. It was quicksand! People said that a man and his horse were supposed to have lost their lives at this place. Well, I got deeper and deeper into the quicksand mire. Finally, I couldn't pull my legs out of the miry stuff anymore. I(t) was lucky for me that I had on boots. While lying on my back, I pulled my legs out of the boots, and rolled back. I was free, soaking wet, and minus my boots. I then walked barefooted over the mountain the rest of the 100 miles.

From then on, things started to change for the better. A farmer offered me a week's work, but then decided to keep me on permanently, so for the next two years I was able to save money again. I was also again able to help my folks in Switzerland.

I was back in Fairbanks. Fairbanks was a frontier town and gambling was wide open. Of course, I couldn't stay away from that, but I soon realised that I was sitting on the wrong side of the table. I went to the bank, borrowed money to buy the gambling joint, and hired the dealers to take in money for me, instead of from me. Later I built an outdoor heated swimming pool, which I operated in summer months. To keep working in the winter, I bought a truck and made several trips every winter to haul meat over the Alcan Highway from Edmonton and also the United States.

I started to feel good! I was on my way to make good money after all. But our plans are not always God's plans. Matthew 16:26 says,
"Though I gain the whole world, and lose my soul, what shall it profit me?"

3.

The Beginning of Miracles

Because of God's mercy and grace a new life began for me. On my next trip to Edmonton, Canada, I saw a big sign out in Grand Prairie, announcing a Meeting, which said, "The Blind See, the Deaf Hear, and the Lame Walk." I was curious but as usual, I didn't want to take time for anything except to make money. However, when I got to Edmonton, I couldn't forget that sign. It seemed that I was compelled to go back right away so I took an airplane and flew back the 400 miles.

I attended the Meeting and saw a totally blind woman get her sight. I also saw some people in wheelchairs get up and walk. Many people were healed of many diseases at that Meeting. What struck me most was how the little humble man who led the Meeting could tell people in the audience their names and addresses and the secrets in their hearts. Of course, the Bible says, that the Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword and is a revealer of men's hearts. At that time, I didn't know this, and was a little suspicious of this man who prayed for the sick. So that night I told two Indians I met to come to the Meeting the following night. I wanted to find out something. I offered to pay the Indians for their trouble. The next night they came and went right up to the platform.

William Branham, the evangelist, greeted them, and then told them what they had on their hearts, and what their diseases were- tuberculosis and heart trouble. Those two fellows were aware that someone was there besides that little man. William Branham said, "You are strangers to me. I don't know you, but there is someone here who does know you." They both started to weep. When they were leaving the platform, he called them back and asked, "Do you know why you are here tonight?" Turning around, he looked right straight at me and said, "That little fellow there shook your hands last night." Then he told them exactly what I had said to them.

That did it! I ran to my motel room, crying bitterly. I asked the Lord to forgive me for my unbelief and all my other sins. I said, "I know now that You are God, and alive today, and knowest every person."

Psalm 139 (s)ays, *"O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and my uprising, Thou understandest my thoughts afar off."*

When I got up from my knees, I knew that my sins were gone. You will know this, too - if you give God a chance. There was such a lovely Presence there. I said to the Lord, "Now I want to ask You a question. They say, "Watch and pray always so you will be ready for the Lord's coming - that's hard for me to do."

I heard an inner voice say, "Take the Bible."

I said, "I don't have any."

The voice said, "Yes, there is one in the drawer. Open it up."

Sure enough, there was a Bible. I opened it up and right where I opened it, it said, *"I am the door. By Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."*

The Lord was trying to show me that once my name was written in His Book of Life, I could be working, sleeping, or praying, when He would come, and because I had entered through Him- the door- I had nothing to worry about.

Then, to show me that this just didn't happen by chance, the voice said, "Don't forget - John," and He showed me two hands with ten fingers, and then two hands with nine fingers extended. I didn't catch on until He spoke to me and showed me the third time. I knew then that these words were found in John's Gospel, chapter ten, verse nine. I was discovering that Jesus Christ was the same yesterday, today, and forever.

I also learned that He watches over us- whether we realize it or not. The next day, while walking to my motel, two big vicious dogs came racing towards me. I was scared to death. They acted like they were going to tear me to pieces. As they came closer, I said to them, "Lay down." Instantly the bigger dog laid down, and looked at me with such a defeated look that I felt sorry for him. The other dog just squealed and ran away as fast as he could. I thought that it was sort of strange the way things were happening. I decided that I might as well go to my motel and wait there until the evening service.

Then it happened again. I just had to say it, and it happened. I was in the upper storey, looking out the window. There I saw a man in the yard, putting a ladder against a signpost. He was getting ready to take the sign down. But he for some reason couldn't do a thing. He stopped, looked up and down so funny, and couldn't go on with his work. Then he started to keep turning around for a long time. Every time he turned to look my way, I ducked so that he wouldn't see me. I was laughing- it seemed so funny. But all at once, while he was facing the opposite direction from me, he turned his head very quickly, and caught me watching him. Then I said- of course, there was no way for him to hear me – "Now you can go ahead, and go to work," and he did. All these things showed, I believe, that Christians are going to have Power to overcome when perilous times and difficult circumstances will come in the future.

It was such a strange week. Since the first day that I received Jesus Christ as my Saviour, what I said just came to pass, and even what I thought came to pass. There was no more doubt in my mind that God was real!

When I was ready to go back to Edmonton to the place where my truck was parked, I took the taxi to the airport. There were three other fellows with the driver; they were having a big time cursing and talking dirty. I was sitting in the corner of the backseat, unnoticed. I thought, "Lord, do I have to listen to this for the next half hour?" Then the fellow who was speaking couldn't finish his sentence, and none of the other men could say another word for about the half an hour that it took us to get to the airport. It was really a strange silence in that taxi.

Now, this really shouldn't seem strange or unusual, because Jesus said, "Before you ask, I will answer you." And the Bible promises, "Greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."

Toward the end of that great revival meeting in Canada with William Branham, I felt strongly impressed that I must get together with him. I thought, "I am just a truck driver, and he is a great evangelist; I don't see why," and just kept disregarding the impression. Finally, I decided to get in touch with this evangelist. I went to a hotel to phone the pastor to get William Branham's address. I stood there next to the phone, still hesitating to call. After standing there a long time, I made up my mind not to call. Suddenly it happened. The phone seemed to come right at me, and was shaking and grinding. It took a nickel to call, and a nickel dropped into the coin return. I looked around to see if

anybody else was around to see this, or was it just me? There was an elderly man sitting on a couch. His eyes and mouth were wide open- he had seen it, too. I was so amazed! The very second that I decided not to call, this had happened. Then a voice spoke loud and clear, "Why do you hesitate; why do you think I gave you that money?"

I said, "Oh, my!"

Then I heard a thud behind me. That old man had fallen unconscious to the floor. Such a strange Presence was there! I tell you, I obeyed then!

I know that this may seem far- fetched, but in the Bible (Matthew 17:27) we see that Jesus must have created a piece of money and put it in the fishes mouth for Peter to get, so that he could pay the taxes with it. Well, the coin He gave me I used for that phone call I was supposed to make, to get William Branham's address. This was all for a purpose. God knew what He was doing.

For a week I felt I was in heavenly places, but I had to come back to earth and go to work. I bought another truck and with another driver made many more trips from the States, and also from Edmonton to Fairbanks. Then I bought land to build a fifteen-unit motel, along with three partners, determined to get rich. The Bible says, "Have no other Gods before Me." It's not money that's bad, but the love of money. I guess I was guilty of loving money. In time, I got into a project that took years of my time, and again I lost my money.

Following this venture, I went to work in a foundry. I still could work hard. At the present time, I am retired and have a little farm in Wisconsin to keep myself busy. I am as contented now as a man can be. The Bible says that our God will supply all of our needs- but not all of our wants: Really, I am one of the richest men in the whole world because my Father in Heaven owns everything and His children are His heirs! He owns the cattle on a thousand hills and everything else belongs to Him, too.

My Spiritual life and experiences all really started when I first met my wife on the West Coast after I had spent my first 13 years in Alaska. Ellen asked me, "What Church do you belong to?"

I replied, "None, I haven't been to a church for over 20 years."

She declared, "I am Pentecostal."

I didn't want to show my ignorance so I asked some friends later what Pentecostal meant. They started to laugh and one of them said, "Oh, those people stand on the street corner and preach, and they don't go to theatres and night clubs."

I thought, "Well, that's good. Then she won't spend my money that way. And as far as church is concerned, I'll have enough time to talk to her out of that."

Every time the church door opened, I was there. I felt that I had to find out what I was going to talk her out of. But those people were friendly and full of joy. I was impressed while listening to them singing and playing such beautiful songs and music. I was there looking for faults, but I couldn't find any.

Well, we were married, and right after the wedding I went back to Fairbanks with my new bride. There I ran into difficulties.

An old buddy I had gambled and drunk with soon found out that I was going to the Pentecostal Church in Fairbanks. Laughing and mocking, he asked, "Are you going to that Holy Roller Church?"

I said, "Oh, not really. I am just taking my wife there." So every time Church was dismissed, I had to watch, to make sure none of my old buddies were around. And every time I walked out of the bar and gambling places, I was in danger of running into Church people.

But I praise God that the Bible proved itself again! In Acts 1:8, it says, "*Ye shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you.*" This meant I would receive power to witness. The Bible says if you hunger and thirst after God He will fill you. Well, the week that I attended the William Branham Meetings, I was baptized in the Holy Ghost and fire. I was not only no longer ashamed of the Gospel- I was proud of it!

The new project I had gotten into caused me to drive all over the United States: this gave me many opportunities to talk to others about Jesus Christ. And I did what most people would probably hesitate to do- I always picked up every hitchhiker I could- Until my car was full.

One night I was driving along a desolate stretch in the Dakotas with a car load of hitchhikers, telling them how real God is and how He is a present help in the time of trouble. No sooner had I said this, when the car started to pull over to the right. A tire was going flat. Here it was after midnight, there was no gas station for miles, and I didn't have a spare tire.

We all piled out of the car. I saw the tire was way down. We could hear the air coming out of the tire. I said in my heart, "Lord, this is a bad time for this to happen. I just told these fellows that the Scripture says in Psalm 46:1, '*God is a very present help in time of trouble.*'"

Then something spoke to me, "Get in the car, and drive off." I thought, "What good will that do- just to go 50 feet farther?" But I obeyed the small voice anyway. I told the boys to get into the car. We drove off. What a surprise we got! God fixed the tire! He put air in the tire and we were on the way again. It wasn't my faith that had brought it about- I didn't have any for that kind of a situation- God was just backing up His Word. His Word is truth and life. When He says, "*He that believeth in Me shall never die, but have everlasting life,*" that's the way it is. I tell you, it was easy to talk to those fellows about the Lord after that experience. They didn't mind me praising the Lord.

4.

God Answers Prayer

On another occasion, all four hitchhikers wanted to get off at Calgary. I travelled 200 miles farther to Edmonton. When Sunday came, I went to Church. Suddenly a man

about 30 years old walked into the Church and continued walking right up to the altar. He told the Minister that he wanted to get saved from his sins and accept Jesus Christ. When he turned around, I saw that it was one of the hitchhikers that I had dropped off the day before at Calgary. He wanted to talk to me again. I said, "How on earth did you know that I was here?" There were several Pentecostal Churches in Edmonton.

He said, "God showed me that you were in this place."

This fellow had a little trouble with his speech. He said that he needed a job. I said, "This is fall, there are no jobs around. Men are being laid off now. There are about 1000 men unemployed now."

Well, we prayed anyway. The next day he came to me with a big smile and said, "I got a job!" God answers prayer.

That reminds me of how God miraculously answered prayer for an old couple. I was travelling from Edmonton to Wisconsin. All at once two big shadows which looked like wings came in front of my car. They were waving and flapping- trying to stop me or flag me down, it seemed. It was about three o'clock in the afternoon. I wanted to make it to a Revival Centre in Minneapolis by eight o'clock so I was in a hurry. But those two big cloud- like wings, or whatever they were, wouldn't give up and I had to stop. I was puzzled. What could that be or mean? Then I saw the map in the car spread open and I saw that I was taking the wrong road. If I had continued, I wouldn't have gotten to Minneapolis until ten or eleven p.m.

Well, at eight o'clock I arrived at the revival centre. Something said to me, "Not here." I thought, "What's wrong with this? They have a good evangelist here." Puzzled, I left and after walking many blocks I arrived at Skid Row. There were many missions in the neighbourhood. I went from one to another, but every time, an inner voice said, "Not here."

When I arrived at a little Pentecostal mission, I felt that this was the place I was to enter, but I didn't like it. There were only about eight people there. At the mission they fed sandwiches and soup to the down and outers, and helped them spiritually, but I felt, "Why should I waste my time here on this night before Christmas?" But I could tell that this was where I was supposed to be so I just sat and waited until the evening service was over.

I noticed an old couple sitting on the side, looking very sad and despondent. I asked a fellow beside me to find out what the old couple was doing here. He said that they were the people who operated the mission. I said, "Take them this," and gave him a twenty dollar bill. When they saw the money, their faces lit up, and they came over to me, and knelt down before me, speaking in a heavenly language, and weeping, they said that they were without any money to get sandwiches for the poor, and they were unable to get anything for Christmas- for themselves or anyone else. They had prayed all night the night before, asking God to send a man in to help them. Then I wept with them. I felt so small! To think that the Great Almighty God, the Creator of Heaven and

Earth, is so concerned about us personally, and is so mindful of us. I gave them another gift then so they would have enough for their needs over Christmas. The Bible says that God does things in strange and wonderful ways, His wonders to perform.

God had already decided in the afternoon to use me so when He saw that I was starting on the wrong highway, He sent those two, big wing- like shadows to flag me down so I would stop. Then somehow He caused the map in the car to be opened in order to get my attention so that I would know why I had been stopped. Finally, He led me all the way to this poor couple to answer their prayer.

Is not this amazing grace? And God is so real! If He was concerned about their physical needs, how much more for our spiritual needs, for which He shed His blood so we can live forever. Praise God, we can say with Job (Job 19:25,26) *"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in my flesh I shall see God,"* showing us that after this body we have now is turned back to dust, we will receive it back again. God's Word never fails! If He can give us this body which we now have, which the Bible says is, *"fearfully and wonderfully made"* (Psalm 139:14), He can surely give it to us again as He promised.

The Bible says that when Abraham and Sarah were very old and stricken with age (Genesis 18:11), they were turned to youth again. Sarah was so beautiful that the king wanted to marry her.

Also, at the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John, saw Moses and Elijah, and they recognized them- after Moses and Elijah had been gone from the earth for over 1000 years.

Yes, the real life will soon be coming for the Christian. Do you know that Jesus had you and me in mind when He went to the cross and paid such a great price for our salvation? Even now in this life, He is concerned about us, and knows where we are right now.

This reminds me of another experience. In Chicago, I was watching a Christian film called, "Black Gold." In the film, I saw how the witchdoctor cut up the skins of some beautiful black children. That night I kept seeing those scared, pretty, big eyes coming before me. I felt sick and couldn't stop crying. The Bible says in Hebrews 4:15, that Jesus Christ is *"touched with the feeling of our infirmities."*

About two A.M., the telephone rang. I was just about to say, "Wrong number," because who would be able to find me in this hotel in Chicago- out of the hundreds of hotels in this big city? Then I heard a voice saying, "This is Brother Branham. God heard your cry. You can go to sleep now." I fell asleep immediately. Now Hebrews 4:15 came alive to me again: *"He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities."*

He will hear your cry if you ask Him right now to be merciful to you a sinner. This will be the greatest decision that you will ever make in this life, if this very moment you invite Him into your life, you will enter from eternal death to eternal life. I want to see you all on the other side- where we can be together while the ages roll on. We'll be able to say to one another, "Praise God, we made it!" It is hard for some to humble themselves and repent. I wish that I could do it for you, but God has given each of us a free will.

When God heard my cry in that hotel room, He no doubt awakened Brother Branham, showed him the telephone number, and told him what to say to me. It was ju(s)t like in the Bible where God told the Prophet Isaiah to go tell King Hezekiah to put his house in order, for he was going to die, and not live (Isaiah 38:1). This Prophet of the Lord, William Branham, is gone, but Jesus Christ is still here. He knows where you are, and who you are- He knows your very thoughts (Psalm 139:2). The Lord wants you to put your house in order before you die. Do not take your sins with you to your grave. I have seen two men do that; it was an awful sight.

One of these two men I saw die was a close friend of mine who lived in Fairbanks, Alaska. He also came from Switzerland like myself. I tried to talk to him many times about the Bible, but he would have nothing to do with it. Then he got very sick. He couldn't sleep or eat and no doctor could help him. Then he allowed me to pray for him. The next day he said, "You know, your prayer helped me. I slept all night and now I feel good."

On Sunday, I was on my way to church and met him on the street. I said, "Why don't you come with me to church to give thanks that Jesus healed you?" Of course, he knew, or thought he knew, what that church was like, and he was not about to go there. He just laughed it off, and said, "No, no!" Two days later we carried him to the hospital. He died that evening. I'll never forget that stare and the fear in his face. Revelation 20:12-15 shows that everyone that is taking his sins along with him to the grave is to be judged according to his works. The scripture says, "*Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow...*" (Isaiah 1:18). WHAT A PROMISE!

I was rejoicing one night on my way home, when all at once I closed my eyes and took my hands off the steering wheel; the car was going about 50 to 60 miles an hour. I praised and thanked Him, with my hands raised toward Heaven, for taking me through the wilderness and so many difficult situations. Then I heard something say, "Look out, the car is going into the ditch."

I said, "Then I praise Him in the ditch!" I guess I felt like the three Hebrews about to go into the fiery furnace or Daniel about to go into the lion's den- I didn't care what happened. After a while, I saw that the car was going along on the right side of the road at the same speed as before. I closed my eyes again, and really started to praise Him, still with my hands up. I guess the Lord must have been pleased to have me praise Him like that. The scripture says that the Lord dwells in the praises of His people; there sure was someone there!

A voice said again, "Look out, this time the car is going in the ditch."

I said, "It came out the first time, it will come out again," and so it did, and it drove along right where it was supposed to go. I don't know how long I went along until that voice said the same thing the third time.

I said, right out loud, "It came out twice, it will come out again." I don't know how

many miles He let me praise Him like that. I didn't think many people would believe this testimony, but I wondered if Brother Branham would, knowing that the Lord shows him even the secrets of men's hearts. So I asked him what he thought about it. He said, "Certainly! It happened three times didn't it? That's a confirmation."

5.

The Lord works in wondrous ways

One day I said to our pastor, "I have a notion to ask William Branham to come to Shawano for some meetings."

He said, "Branham is a worldwide evangelist- thousands and tens of thousands come to his meetings. There would be no chance for him to come to a little town like this."

But when Brother Branham went to Chicago to hold meetings, I decided to ask him anyway. But the first night his campaign manager announced that nobody should bother to ask where Brother Branham stays, or ask for any personal interviews.

"Well," I said, "there goes my plans. I can't see him either." But Jesus came on the scene again, and told Brother Branham that I had come to Chicago to see him- to ask him for some meetings, and that the campaign manager wouldn't let me see him. Brother Branham told the manager to call for me and tell me that he wanted to see me. This was something different!

The next day a call went out over the loud-speaker requesting Ernest Fandler to come to the campaign manager. He told me then the name of the hotel and the room number, where Brother Branham was.

When I arrived at Brother Branham's room, he already knew what I wanted, and said that he would be glad to come for some meetings in Shawano. So if he was willing to come, I was willing to do all I could, and spent hundreds of dollars for advertising that, "The Blind See, the Deaf Hear," and I wasn't afraid anymore either to say it.

Many people got saved and healed at those meetings. The last night someone brought a blind woman to the prayer line. As she stood there, I went over and looked in her eyes. There were no eyeballs. Her eyes were half-closed and there was just a little white there. She was the last one in the prayer line and I was kind of hoping the meeting would close before she got there to be prayed for because I had advertised that the blind would see, but I didn't expect something like this. When we got to Brother Branham, he said, "Here is another blind woman, everyone bow your heads."

Then he prayed, weeping a little, "Jesus, Blind Bartimaeus came to You, and You gave him his sight. You are the same yesterday, today, and forever. This poor woman is totally blind for 40 years. I pray that You will give her her sight."

Then he said, "Now Satan, you are exposed, you cannot hide now. I charge you Blind Spirit, to leave her, in the name of Jesus Christ." Then he said to her, "You are healed now, but don't look yet." A little later, he said, "Touch my nose." When she touched his

nose, she looked around, and started screaming. I saw that she was perfectly normal and told her to go over to the chairs and sit down for a while.

The next day, I asked Branham to have lunch with us. He accepted the invitation, smiled, and told me that God had told him a year ago that he would eat at my house. No wonder it was so strange in the beginning there in Canada, when I hesitated to telephone that day God wanted me to meet Brother Branham.

I had an old tape recorder which I used to listen to tapes of Brother Branham's messages and recordings of miracles that happened in his meetings. While I was in a little meeting, the missionary asked the people to pray for a tape recorder that was needed, so everybody started to pray. Then came that small voice again, saying, "Give yours," but I didn't want to hear that. I was getting low on funds and the tape recorder was the dearest thing I had. Then the scripture came to me where it says if someone asks something of you, and you have it, don't pray for him, give it. When they got through praying, I said, "I've got one, you can have it." Everybody praised and thanked God, except me- I was minus my recorder!

Sometime later, I went to Jeffersonville to visit Brother Branham. The first thing he did was to give me a beautiful tape recorder, worth much more than my old one. The Lord surely must have told him that I no longer had my recorder. He is so wonderful, there are no words to describe His goodness, but I try to please Him, and keep His commandments, and forgive everybody as God forgives us.

If people don't agree with me, it's perfectly all right, just so we don't get disagreeable. While I was working at the foundry, every time I talked to the men there about the Lord, a certain man would come over and break it up. "The Catholic Church is the only church that is right," he always said, and he made me shut up every time he came around. He made me angry many times. Then one day a fellow told me that the ten-year-old son of this Catholic man was in the hospital dying. He told me that one kidney was completely gone and the other one was almost gone. Normally I suppose I would have said, "That's what you get when you try to fight God," but I felt sorry for the man and his son. The next day, I went to the Catholic Hospital to see the boy. He was in bed, looking helpless. I asked his mother if she would mind if I prayed for him.

She said, "Several Priests have prayed for him already. There isn't any hope, but it's all right if you want to pray for him. "

After a short prayer, I said, "He is going to have two new kidneys."

About two weeks later, this man came and confessed to everybody what had happened. He said, "It was Ernie's prayer. My boy got two new kidneys and the doctors don't understand it. Now he is out playing ball with the other boys again." Then he asked if I would pray for him too.

I believe that God honoured my prayer because I forgave this man, in spite of the way he had treated me. In the Lord's prayer, it says, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us." We ought to let nothing get in the way to keep us from forgiveness.

In the big coliseum in Houston, Texas, they had a debate about whether God still heals people today. William Branham was to have a big salvation healing campaign there. Some ministers were against it, and put it in the newspapers that they wanted to challenge William Branham to a debate. They wanted to prove that God does not heal today, but Branham said, "This is not something to argue about, but to believe."

Then his campaign manager took that challenge, and Brother Branham sat back in the audience. But when the ministers who were against healing realized that they were losing the debate, according to God's Word, one of them asked, "Let this healer come up and heal somebody."

Branham's campaign manager said, "He is not a healer because he preaches divine healing, anymore than you are a saviour because you preach salvation."

About that time, the Holy Spirit came over Brother Branham, and he had to go to the platform. Someone had brought a boy to the platform who had never walked- he had had polio. Branham picked him up. The boy's arms and legs just hung limply. While Brother Branham prayed, a photographer took a picture of him, and the boy. Suddenly a supernatural pillar of light appeared above Branham's head, showing that He was with William Branham. When the film was developed, it showed the bright halo above Branham's head which thousands of people have seen with their own eyes. When that photographer, who was also an unbeliever, saw this supernatural phenomenon, he said, "God, be merciful to me!"

At the same time the picture was taken, and this great light appeared, the little boy disappeared from Branham's arms and went walking down the platform. The young lady who was playing the piano, "The Great Physician now is near, the Sympathizing Jesus," saw the little boy walking for the first time, and started to scream. She ran away from the piano, without finishing the song, but the piano finished the song by itself. About 500 people ran to the altar to receive Jesus Christ as their saviour because they had seen the wonderful works of God.

I had invited many people to the meetings. Then when I asked them later why they hadn't come, they usually answered, "We are Catholics," or, "We are Protestants," or whatever church organization they had joined. That is too bad. There is a church you have to belong to in order to have eternal life, but you can't join it, you have to be born into it. It is called the body of Christ, and Christ is the head of it.

Jesus said, "*Ye must be born again!*" I advise everyone to go to a church that knows what it means to be born again. You might be persecuted a little, but you won't mind that 1000 years from now. The scriptures say in 2 Timothy 3:5, "*Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, from such turn away.*" Assemble yourself with those who believe the full Gospel, especially now as you can see the Day of the Lord drawing closer and closer (Hebrews 10:25). We know the end time is near. All the signs show that it can't be many more years. Drought, earthquakes in many places, just as Jesus said would be at the end time, are happening. Perilous times will come, according

to God's Word, and cause men's hearts to fail for fear.

Peter said long ago, before they knew anything about atomic bombs, that the elements would melt with fervent heat. This can happen here now, anytime. The scientists say that in 1982, nine planets will line up and cause such a pull that the earth will literally shake. The Bible says that the earth will rock to and fro. Revelation 16:18 says, *"And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great."* We know that we are near the end because so many things are happening which the Bible said would come to pass before the coming of Jesus Christ to this earth the second time.

The disciples asked Jesus, "When will the end be?" Jesus told them that that generation which would be during the time that the fig tree buds would not pass until all would be fulfilled. Well, it budded in 1948. Israel became a nation after 2500 years, and according to Job, in the last verses, a generation is about 35 years, so 1948 and 35 are 1983. No man knows the day or hour, Jesus said, but He also said that the day of the Lord will not catch us unawares. We will know the season. Come to safety while there is time yet. Jesus said, *"He that cometh to Me, I will in no wise cast out."* He is only a prayer away.

On one occasion, I took a train from Chicago to Los Angeles in regard to some business. William Branham was there, holding meetings. I wanted him to know that I was coming, so I prayed there in the train while I was still in Chicago, 2000 miles away. God showed Brother Branham right then that I was coming. He told Demos Shakarian, Minor Arganbright, and some other Full Gospel Businessmen that they would meet me Saturday morning. At the breakfast meeting, after Brother Branham introduced me to those men, they said they had come here to meet me and that they had known that I was coming. I said, "No one knew that I was coming. I am a total stranger here and I don't know anybody."

They asked, "Didn't you have an appointment with Brother Branham?" Then I remembered my prayer in Chicago. It was answered.

A few months later Brother Branham had meetings in Zurich, Switzerland. His son, Billy Paul, one night called me and said that I should come up to the hotel room. He said, "Dad wants to talk to you." Then Brother Branham told me just the way God had showed him when I had prayed in Chicago. He told me that he had seen me there sitting on the train, Bible in hand, the sun setting in the west, praying that God would let him know that I was coming to Los Angeles. How could I ever doubt again, when God is so real? The Bible says, *"Eyes have not seen, ears have not heard, nor can your heart imagine what your Heavenly Father has prepared for them that love Him."*

I like the song, **It Took a Miracle to Put the Stars in Space. It Took a Miracle to Hang the Moon in Place.** "But when He saved my soul," the song says, "it took the greatest miracle of all."

A fool says that there is no God. It sure took a divine architect to make man. He made

us in His image for a purpose- to fellowship with Him through all eternity, and to love; and He is no respecter of persons.

The Bible says, *"Blessed are those that have not seen and yet believe."* I am sorry to say that I had to see first- before I could believe.

In Chicago, before the service began one night, two fellows were trying to put doubt in my mind about having the Holy Spirit. Feeling a little discouraged, I sat way back in the crowd. When Brother Branham started the prayer line, he said, "I cannot do anything until the Angel of the Lord comes first." Then he said, "He is here now," and as usual, a holy hush went over the audience. Then he said, "The Holy Spirit is over the audience now."

After this, he pointed to several sick people in different parts of the congregation as the Angel of the Lord showed him. He told each of them their sicknesses, and then to raise their faith, he told some of them their names and addresses, and also why and how long they had been sick.

All at once, I felt a strange feeling come over me. Brother Branham said, "Little fellow there, stand on your feet." I was not going to stand because I thought it was only for sick people. But then he said, "You have been seeking the Holy Ghost."

I stood up. "You have got it," he said, and I passed out right there. Now, I had never passed out before, although I had gotten plenty of bad bumps, like the one I had got while working in a coal mine in Alaska. At that time, I had fallen about 20 feet headfirst down into a storage room, after trying to dislodge a big chunk of coal which was plugging up the coal chute. I had hurt my shoulder and was not able to lift my right arm above my head for about two years. Then I had gone to my first William Branham meeting. The first night, Brother Branham said to the people, "You don't have to come to the platform; God can heal you right where you are," and my arm snapped in place, and has been well ever since.

Well, at the Chicago meeting, I had passed out, and somehow, I was transported across the aisle to the other side. It happened so fast that nobody noticed it. Two fellows later told me that it happened so fast – they thought they had seen me come down and fall between the benches on the other side, but it was like a flash.

While I was lying there, Brother Branham said (I heard it on tape later), "That man is from Switzerland, and all he told about me was the truth."

When I came to, I was amazed to see where I had come from, and where I was. When I went back to my seat, the fellow sitting next to me said, stuttering, "You...you...just disappeared."

The Bible says in Romans 8:11, *"The Spirit that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you."* At the rapture of His church, our mortal bodies will be given new life. Praise God, I believe it will happen soon for all those who really love God. I am excited because God's Word never fails!

In Matthew 11:29, Jesus said, *"Learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye*

shall find rest unto your souls." A hitchhiker found that rest. I picked him up somewhere on the north side of Milwaukee, one night after midnight. I asked him several questions, but he wouldn't talk. Then after some time, he pulled a big knife out of his coat pocket, and said, "Do you know why I've got this?" I couldn't talk – I was so scared! I thought then I had finally picked up the wrong one. He kept growling, "I hate the police, I hate the police!" He told me, "I've been in New York jails for years, and the first policeman I run into is going to get it."

After I got my breath back, I said, "That would be too bad for you."

He said, "I don't care what happens to me." He hated God and everyone else and said that he didn't want to live, although he was just a young fellow.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To Appleton, that's my home – but my parents don't want me either. Look at me!"

He was shabby appearing. He felt, "Who would want me, the way I look?" I told him that when I was his age, I had felt the same way. I hadn't cared to live either, but I had discovered that God was not willing that any should perish, and wanted everyone to have eternal life.

By the time we got to Appleton, he wanted to know what church I attended. He wanted to go to the same one I did, he told me.

"Now I can go to my mom and dad," he said, "I am different," he added happily.

"What are you going to do with that knife?" I asked.

"I'll give it to ma for a bread knife," he answered. This man found rest for his troubled soul, through learning of Jesus.

Jesus said if He would be lifted up, He would draw all men unto Himself. He is everything to me – the Lily of the Valley, the Bright and Morning Star, the Great I Am. In Revelation 1:8, it says, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.*"

Colossians 3:17 says, "*Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus.*" Colossians 2:9,10 says, "*For in Him (Jesus) dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*" That's why, I suppose, when Jesus said in Matthew 28:19, to "*Baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,*" Paul and Peter, simply by revelation, did just that (Acts 19:5; Acts 2:38), knowing that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is the fulness of the Godhead in Jesus Christ, and we are complete in Him.

It must have been a pretty good formula – 3,000 souls were added to the church (body of Christ) the day Peter preached this. They continued to baptize this way throughout the New Testament, and until 325 A.D. Church history shows that that is when the Roman Catholic Church started their organization at the Nicean Council. After this they started baptizing babies, using the titles, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, instead of the name of Jesus Christ.

I would tell you a little more about William Branham and why I believe he came on the scene, and how God so strongly drew my attention to contact him. Some people

say that Branham got a little off the track towards the end of his ministry. I believe that if God could reveal to him the secrets of men's hearts, He could also reveal to him His Word. His Word is a discerner of men's hearts.

When William Branham was born, a supernatural light came into the old log cabin, where he was born. His mother and the midwife were frightened by this strange phenomenon. Throughout his childhood, he could foretell things, and also saw many visions which always came to pass. He was born a Prophet. I would like to point you to Malachi, chapters 3 and 4, to see for yourself if he does not have a place there. Malachi three shows that the Spirit of Elijah came in John the Baptist, to be the forerunner of Jesus' first coming. The disciples asked Jesus, "We thought Elijah must first come." Jesus said, "*He has already come* (speaking of John the Baptist) *and they knew him not.*" (Matthew 17:12). But in Matthew 17:11, Jesus said, "*Elijah truly shall first come* (future) *and restore all things,*" meaning, I believe, Malachi 4:5. Jesus told them that this Elijah that you are talking about is John the Baptist.

Malachi 4:5 tells us, "*Behold I will send you Elijah the Prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.*" This prophet spoken of has to come before the tribulation period, that is, the great and dreadful day of the LORD."

According to the Bible, we see that we are in the last Church Age, or the Laodicean Age, and that it also had to have a messenger. Who is it? It had to be a prophet. This Prophet or messenger has to be free of any church denomination because his message would be for all. Who can take the place of Malachi 4:5? He must turn the hearts of the children, meaning us, back to the original fathers at Pentecost. William Branham has proved to do that – worldwide, including myself.

The following verse says, "*and the hearts of the fathers to the children.*" According to Luke 1:17, this was the Spirit of Elijah in John the Baptist, turning the hearts of the fathers to the children, as we read in Luke 1:17, "*And he shall go before Him (Jesus) in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children...*" Peter, Paul, and all the other disciples came after this so this means then that they were the children.

I believe with all my heart that God wants us to know that His Word in Malachi 4:5 has now also been fulfilled, in the person of William Branham, another sign to show how close we are to the end of this present dispensation. He sent him with such great signs and wonders, that we might believe. This I dare not disbelieve.

6.

It Is Later Than We Think

People always talk about what God has done long ago, or what He is going to do, but often miss what He has done right now in our time! It is later than we think!

In closing, I want to mention that I almost did not get to write this little book. Some

time ago, as I came from work to my little apartment that I had rented for a little while, I met an ex-convict. He had been in the state prison for armed robbery. He did not have a place to sleep so I invited him to my apartment. There I made him something to eat and talked to him about salvation through Christ. It was about two o'clock in the morning. All at once, this huge Indian, probably 25 years old, acted very strange, and a weird look came into his eyes. He reached for a big butcher knife that was on the table and came right at me. I grabbed hold of his arm that held the knife and held it up in the air. He was almost a foot taller than I, and of course, I was no match for him, but it was almost funny. He kept struggling with all the strength he had, trying to get the knife down and into me, but I just kept his arm up with only one hand for a long time without any effort at all.

Finally, I thought, "I don't want to hold you like that 'til morning," so I decided to run into the bedroom, then the living room, and then back into the kitchen. When I let go of his arm, he came tearing after me. All at once, I turned around and said, "Put it away!" He was sort of startled, and then he took hold of the sharp end of the knife, and handed me the handle end. Then he held both hands up in the air. He looked scared, and said, "Pray for me."

Evidently my time was not up yet; maybe I had to write this book first. Here again it shows what the Bible means when it says, "*Greater is He that is in you than he that is in the world.*"

So far, I have only been telling you the good things. I am not going to tell you how many times I have failed the Lord, for which I am ashamed, but He has forgiven me over and over again. It is only by His amazing grace! I am totally depending on that grace and now I am happy in Jesus.

If you think this life we have now is "life," I wish you could get a glimpse of eternal life. I saw a little of it once in a vision. The best part of it all is it can be yours right now. Just accept the Lifegiver, Jesus Christ, then you can say with Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:55, "*Oh death, where is thy sting? Oh grave, where is thy victory? But thanks be to God, Who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"

Death will be just a fascinating experience. I believe that. "I am almost home!" If I go first, I will be waiting for you there on the other shore – where the roses never fade.

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Ed.D.

This booklet is a reprint of Ernest Fandler's original manuscript. The only changes are a letter added (in brackets) where it was missing in three words. Words with U.S. spelling have been left as they were. Some of the different topics within the chapters have been separated by a space, to make the narrative easier to follow. The words, sentences, punctuation, and spelling, are otherwise as they were in Ernest Fandler's original. Ed.