

Life Story

[51-0722A, Life Story, Civic Auditorium, Toledo, OH, 116 min]

L-1 Thank you, Brother Baxter. Good evening, friends, or afternoon, rather. Down in the south, this would be evening; and then when it gets a past seven o'clock, it's night. I think this... I never can get that all fixed up. And when they tell me I'm eating my dinner; it's seven o'clock. Mom used to call me in from plowing, why, it was dinner time at twelve o'clock. Different parts of the country they call it breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Then I feel like I got beat out of a meal somewhere, so I... Just, I guess the way we were raised, don't you think so?

Well, I'm--I'm happy to be here this afternoon. It's awfully warm in this auditorium, and I trust that God will meet with us and give us of His blessing. And tonight, the closing night of the service, of--of these services, we're going to go from here to Erie, Pennsylvania. And we, all are cordially invited to come anywhere, any time; we're always happy to see our friends anywhere.

L-2 I just met the ushers a few moments ago. And so I--I always go into the meetings; I don't get to meet no one. And then just about time you get to knowing a few of the brethren or something, then you have to say, "Well, so long; we got to go somewhere else." But this is the last of this.

When I return back, if our Lord is willing, we come back from overseas, from Africa, I never intend to have another itinerary. That's always been the thing that's hurt me. Right when I'd be at a place... Now, like right here, I think if God wants us, stay right here. Now, that's right. But now, there's an itinerary: you got to go somewhere else. And that's always what hurts. I--I never want it that way; I'd rather stay right here till God said, "Now, I'm through with you here; you go somewhere else." See? Then right at the time here, when the interest of the people just getting build up now in five or six nights, till where they really begin to see, they begin to have faith...

L-3 I believe the last two nights in this series of meetings, has been the... some of the... one of the greatest anointings I've ever felt on myself in any meeting at any place. And night before last, I never had anything to surpass that. When He walked to me face to face. I just... I don't know when I left the platform. The first thing I knew I was in a garage out here somewhere. And it's a--it was... I asked the brethren the next morning; I said, "Was there any sick people left?" Huh. It--it looked to me like it just ought to got everybody. And maybe you wasn't exactly looking for it just at that time.

L-4 I seen one time at Vandalia, Illinois, in the first beginning of the ministry, that when it hit like that, and there wasn't one feeble person left nowhere. They just piled up the wheelchairs, and the crutches, and the stretchers, and everything in the corners, and hauled them away. They was just... Everything hit at one time. Oh, I'd like to see that again tonight. I look down here and see many; here's about... Some of them has been healed that was crippled and different ways. And many times looking at the people I can see what's wrong with them, but that isn't it. The thing of it is; the reason that I call the people that--that look like their healthy... That's the phenomenal side, when they look healthy, and then here's something wrong with them.

L-5 But if you'd say to somebody that's something wrong with them, and you see they're crippled, you say, "Well, you're a cripple." Why, sure, anyone can see that with their natural eye. So I might see that they're crippled and maybe something like that. But I very seldom say anything to them unless I see they're healed. Then when I see they're healed, I call them. And God has already done the work for them; they're faith has just--just reached a spot; that's all. I don't think you can hear very good behind this, does it? It's got a terrible voice, but it all goes that way.

L-6 Now, Brother Baxter said this afternoon, that I believe with the--the, talk on my life story this aft... How many here has heard that story, let's see your hand? That... Well, just a very few. You would pardon me then if I... You'd forgive me for just, not using vain repetitions or repeat something, if I would sketch it over again for those who hasn't heard it; you will forgive me for it if you will. Just in order... It's nothing to be proud of, no, it's something to be ashamed of, the way that I have treated my Lord. But I trust that as I go back over a few pages of it, and I won't try to just, the highlights places on account of the heat of the, intense heat here.

But I--I want you to make my--my blunders, stepping stones for you to Christ, that you'll bypass that, and especially the young people that's coming on and got life yet before them, until they become of the age... Now, you just look at my mistakes, and don't try to pattern after them, but you just say, "Now, what Brother Branham did, now I'm going to get past that."

L-7 You can't hear back there, can you? I thought that would be. Wonder if this microphone here's alive? If it was, maybe I could set one back this, well, it wouldn't carry back there, it'd go forward too, if there's no speaker. My, it's too bad. Well, I... All right, if you got... I was going to say, take your chair, so I don't think you could do it. Oh, that's too bad. Some, one of these days I'm going to build me an auditorium, so I can say this is the way I--the way I want it, so they have it around like that. Say, maybe that's right. Thank you.

You know, being that we're speaking like that, I kinda have a little idea that that's what's the Lord's a dealing with me right now, to have a central location somewhere in America so I can be there all the time and let the people come from wherever they wish to, to the place. You see? And then I can stay there day and night. See...?... That may be the will of the Holy Spirit when you see it moving in the people. Now, that was just in my heart to think that. You see?

L-8 And now, I feel like this Christians, now tonight... I come today, I haven't even, nothing but just my, pray two or three times today, haven't thought to be under the anointing, because I knew I'd either preach or--or tell my life story this afternoon, which Brother Baxter asked me to do that. And I feel that it might be a good thing.

And now, while we're talking on that, now when you see that... Somebody say, "Brother Branham hasn't got any more meetings." Well, don't think it's because that--that I've backslidden or anything like that, but I'm seeking after the perfect will of God. There is a permissive will and a perfect will. Isn't that right, brethren? And I feel like for a long time, I kinda been in the permis--(Is that better?) kind of been in the permissive will and not in the perfect will.

L-9 Now, there's a perfect way and a permissive way. And I feel that if God, here on the platform, can show me things that has been, and in my rooms and so forth, He's able to tell me just where He wants me and what He wants me to do. But I feel as long as I've got it all hooked up, or I--I feel like then He won't put His hands on it, as long as I'm doing it. And that's the way it is, anything. As long as you're going to do it... If someone talks about you, and you talk back about them, God can't fight your battle; you're fighting it yourself. See? Just--just let loose and let Him do it. And just commit it to Him. The greatest weapon that I know of of a Christian today, is a committal to God. When you can't do nothing about it, just commit it to Him, and God will take care of it. Don't you believe that? So while I'm away and overseas, if God willing, I'm going to depend on you people to be praying for me. And especially if we get into Jerusalem.

L-10 Now, just think of the hundreds of thousands of Jews that's in there, that didn't even--never knew that Jesus was there on earth. And now, while they sent over millions of Bibles to them, and they read of Him; they say, "Let us see Him do a sign of a prophet, and then we'll accept Him as the Messiah." Oh, my, that's what we want, isn't it?

Now, if God will just move down and bring His Presence of the resurrected Christ down among those Jews, and the Holy Spirit will deal and go out there and tell them things that they've done down in their old countries and so forth like that, then I want them to accept Him then as Messiah, as their--their Redeemer. And that's going to be the thing I believe that'll bring maybe the Jews, them people that's hungering and thirsting...

L-11 You know that's one of the greatest signs we have today of the coming of the Lord, is see those--those Jews returning from across the world. It's a wonderful. I used to sing a little song about nations are breaking, Israel awakening, the signs that the Bible foretold. Something about the fig tree budding and so forth.

My, I was talking with an infidel not long ago; it's been about five, four or five years ago, he said, "Looky here, preacher, I can prove by the Bible and by Jesus Christ's Word, that you call Him, that He told something was wrong."

I said, "Oh, no."

He said, "Yes, He did," said, "I can prove it in the Bible." He said, "He said, over there in Matthew 24, He said, 'All these things,' said, 'when they come to pass, why then, they--that generation would not pass until they had seen all things fulfilled.'"

I said, "That's just what He meant."

He said, "Well, that generation's been dead long ago, long ago."

I said, "No, not that generation, but the generation that sees the fig tree putting forth buds, that's the generation that's not going until... He said, 'When this generation,' the generation He was speaking of, not speaking to, speaking of. And when that generation sees this, will not pass until all things be fulfilled."

L-12 And I believe--I believe I'm talking to people who are looking for the Lord to come. And I believe we're right in the shadows of His coming, right now. Oh, what a glorious time to know that some blessed day He will break through the eastern horizon, come down to receive His Church. I'm so happy today that by grace that He's numbered me with you all. I believe you're going there. And I believe, by His grace, that He will let me go with you. And then we're going to have plenty of time to talk, won't we? For just forever.

Now, I'm going to hurry just as quick as I can. I'm going to lay my watch out, so I won't be too long of speaking, and I'm just a little late to start. I'm always late, because I never want to get in a hurry about anything. You know, that's the trouble of us today, we're in too much of a hurry. And I... When I got married, I was--I was late at my wedding. And someone said, "You'll be late at your funeral."

I said, "I hope I am." Ha-ha-ha.

L-13 There was a fellow trying to tell me, said... He was trying to sell me insurance, and he said... I didn't have any insurance and--and so I... Not as I got anything against it, but I think many of the American people are insurance poor. So, I said, "Oh," I said... He said, "You haven't got bit of insurance."

I said, "Oh, yes."

"Oh," he said, "excuse me, Billy, I didn't know that you had insurance."

I said, "Yeah."

Said, "What kind of insurance you got?"

I said, "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine, oh, what a foretaste..."

And so he stopped and looked a little bit, you know, and he standing among some people. He said, "But Billy, that won't that won't put you in the graveyard up here."

I said, "I know it, but it'll get me out. I'm not worried about getting in there."...?... We're not worried about getting in there; it's getting out, isn't that right? So, the Holy Spirit is God's insurance Agent here this afternoon, giving policies out to whosoever will receive them, you can have one. If you're not saved and know not the grace of our Lord Jesus, accept Him today. "He that heareth My words and believeth on Him that sent Me, has passed from death unto Life, and not come into condemnation." Oh, I think that's marvelous, don't you? [Microphone makes loud noise.--Ed.] That thing's really loud, isn't it?

L-14 All right, now we want to read some of the Scripture, because I do not think that any service is complete without the reading of the Scripture. How many here's away from home, let's see your hands, away from home? Oh, my, looky there. That's... There's no place like it, is there? No place like home, be it ever so humble. And I want to talk about home this afternoon, a home that I had and have, and a home that we're going to. Home was instituted by God in the garden of Eden. And now, for this we're going to read the Scripture out of Hebrews 13, beginning with the 10th verse: We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve... tabernacle.

For the blood--bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp.

Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.

Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

L-15 Can we bow our heads just a moment now? Blessed Saviour, Thou will guide us till we reach that blessed shore, where the Angels wait to join us, in His praise forever more. That's the words of the poet. And we love Thee today, Lord. And we realize that men that ever amounted to anything on earth, were men who trusted You. You thrilled the hearts of the poet, spoke to Your Church, made the weary to be happy, the lost saved, the sick to be well, those without hope are given a hope, and given us such a great a promise that there's a... This is just the negative, the shadow, and

someday that death shall develop the picture from the negative to the positive. And when we go through that terrible acid of death, then we'll know as we're known and see face to face.

And while we're here, Lord, today, preparing ourselves by singing psalms, and testifying, and reading Thy Word, we pray that You'll meet with us. And grant today, that if there be any here who does not know Thee, that they will become Thy servant today. And we pray that You'll just bless us together, and may the Holy Spirit now, just get a hold of every heart.

And dear God, as I fear the moment to go back down through that long, bloody, tear-stained journey that I traveled, and review that over in my heart again, my heart is troubled. But then when I think of it, I think of the song, Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me; I once was lost, but now I'm found; was blind, but now I see. Now, Lord, help us today, and may the Holy Spirit be here and bless us in this gathering. For we ask it in the Name of Thy Beloved Child, Jesus. Amen.

L-16 Now, I want to speak about my, part of my life. Probably Brother Baxter has referred to you many times, and in my book about how the Angel of the Lord came to me and how that He led me through life. But I want to approach it on the other side this afternoon, from the--the side of just a human life.

My father was a very uneducated person, and he probably wouldn't have knowed his name if it was wrote before him, no education, none whatever. We were raised in the mountains of Kentucky. My mother, her father was a school teacher, and she got a fairly good education. But if there's anybody here from down that part of Kentucky, and around in Burkesville, and where I come from, well, down there when the creeks got up, school ended. And the most of the children got their education in the corn field with the gooseneck hoe cutting out freebers and weeds. And we had a very hard time, raised very poor.

L-17 And the little cabin I was borned in had two rooms in it. I taken a picture of it recently to put in my book back there, little log cabin. My father left Kentucky in his early days, at about twenty years old, I suppose; I was about three years old. And he moved to Indiana. We lived up on the Utica pike, just above Jeffersonville, going northeast of Jeffersonville. I had my schooling there on the Utica Pike School, the old ground stands today. The tree's still around, I can't hardly pass the place without breaking down in my heart, to think of the boyhood days. And there's no days like that.

My daddy's gone; he laid on my arm. As his locks dropped over my arms, he looked up at me, and smiled and closed those blue eyes, and went out to meet God, years ago. My mother, as far as I know, today is a living. She's getting aged now; each time when I start to leave, I see the poor old thing; she'll start crying and quivering. She said, "Someday you're going to return, Billy, and mother won't be here."

I said, "But mother, just wait at the gate; it won't be long; I'll be coming along too."

L-18 And she's always kind of worried about me flying on planes; she doesn't like for me to go on planes too much. But let's all of us today, most all of you have a boyhood or--or childhood, rather, experience. Let's all of us just drop back down home a little while. Wouldn't you like to go back to the old days? Oh, my, I would just give anything.

Today, if I had a million dollars, and if I had it, it'd sure go in the Lord's work, right away, just as quick as I could get it. I'd build that Tabernacle and things we was talking about and what all I had, was talking. And put every cent to the Lord's work. But if I had it today, and it was to be mine to enjoy the pleasures of this life, why, if I could lay it down and once more see my old dad come walking down that aisle, and just walk up there and say, "Good evening, son," and disappear, I'd give every penny of it to see him. And I just... You'd do the same thing for some of your parents that's gone on. But those days are gone.

L-19 And young people here, you don't know what a good friend you got in your mother and dad until they're gone. When they're gone, then you really know who they were. And I heard many, the children these days say, "The old man and old woman." Oh, my, don't never do that. You--you don't realize who that is. They know what's best, and you don't. When I seen him when he was laying in his casket, and I seen it begin tinting gray a little around the edge at fifty-two years old, I thought, "Many a worried about me had put those gray hairs there." And how I wish I could brush them back, but it's too late then. So don't do nothing now that you would regret in the future. If you only looked for today,

you'd be a miserable person; look to the end out there, and then live for that, out to the end.

L-20 When we were little children, we lived up on the hill in a place where we had a little old, kind of a huge looking affair, half clapboard and half weatherboard, rather, and half log, the house was. But it was so strong, logs and weatherboard been put over it. I thought that house never would go away from there. Or it'll be there forever. But here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

When I entered Toledo and went down some of your streets here where your lovely homes are, back over this way on... The other day I was riding and stopped my old truck, and it's about half back, or I wouldn't say backslid, it's got a hundred and fifty thousand miles on it. It's just wore out; it's not backslid. So I went down some of those creeks there and how beautiful it looked. And I thought, "The lovely homes and the people just looked like lived in a paradise."

And this is a lovely city, right here near the lake. Would like to live here myself. But friends, there'll be a time when there won't be any more Toledo here. That's right. One of these days an atomic bomb will strike this place; there won't be anything left of it. Now, you know that's right, we're living on up in that age now. And it's later than you think. That's right.

L-21 And here not long ago when I heard that expression, I was thinking of when those people there in Belgium and around, returned back from the war. And it was... They had out there at nighttime, lanterns, little children run along packing the lanterns. And around on the Russian borders they were pulling at the harrows and things, scratching the ground; they couldn't disk it up. And just scratching it enough to get it stirred up to get the grain in before the snow fell. For if they didn't get that grain in before the snow fell, there would be no harvest next year and there would be... Ever--everybody would starve. And they worked day and night, just scratching the ground to get the grain in. And my minister brothers, I wonder if that ain't true in the spiritual sense today; we'd better be going day and night to get this Grain sowed in the heart. It's later than we think. The harvest is coming. Let's be day and night after it.

L-22 And now, all of us, going, as I said, a little trip back home this afternoon... I remember the little old place where we was at; there was a bunch of apple trees stood around outside, and--and we used to come in there. Pop would... We call him papa, and so he--he'd... I thought he never would die because he was such a strong little fellow; he was a logger. He had big strong muscles and used to roll his sleeves up to wash out under the old apple tree. Did you ever have a wash pan set on a little bench under an apple tree? There was an old cracked piece of glass laying there, you know, to wash, and the soap laid up on one of the limbs...?... everybody laughing. You must've had... I'm not the only country boy.

L-23 How many ever slept on a straw tick, let's see your hand? Well, my, I going to take off my coat; I'm at home. A straw tick, why, that's wonderful, my, shuck pillow? My, that's right. Well, that's just as America as hickory smoked ham and sorghum molasses, isn't it? I tell you, marvelous.

Well, we had the old... I never will forget one night when we just filled the ticks up new after thrashing, you know, the thrasher came through, and one of the big old steam roller affairs. And I got scared, there was something in bed with me. Come to find out, mother said the tick had got a grasshopper in there. He jumped on me, and I thought something done had me, a grasshopper in a new straw that we put in the tick. And, but there's no days like them new days, is there?

L-24 And I remember the--dad fixing the table, he put a board, a bench behind, built a bench where all this bunch of little Irish would run over under the table, and get to their place, wash their face, comb their hair just a slick as it could be, you know, your little old face like, slick as a peeled onion. And set up behind this table there. And we'd have pot dinner where'd they cook everything, mulligan stew. How many knows what mulligan stew is? Oh, my, that's when you boil everything, even the dishrag, I believe, and put it together and--and pour it out in the plate, you know, as you go around. Did you ever eat corn bread baked in a pan? Oh, my. Isn't that fine? Just right at home now. You don't mind me saying, "hit and hain't and carry and fetch," and all them country words then, do you? And so just right at home.

And...?... Mom used to cut it in half and--and the pone, you know, and lay it on the--on the plate, and I'd set next to dad, and every fellow broke his own piece as it passed by. And I'd always get the corner, 'cause it had a lot of crust on it, and I liked that with my beans soup. You know, you know, a big bowl of bean soup and a piece of onion about like that, and corn bread, and a big glass of buttermilk out of the spring, wouldn't that be fine this afternoon? Umm um, my. That

would just be fine. We used to go down to the spring down there and get that old cold buttermilk, you know, where the water tumbled over the--the old can. That was wonderful.

L-25 And now I remember when dinner time would come and all of us gathered with our dad at the table, and he... Wonderful to live in those days. I'd like to set down there again this afternoon for awhile. And but as days pass on by, and I...

We used to go to town on Saturday night. Remember when we used to go get our groceries on Saturday night, everybody? We had a old Jersey wagon, and pop would put some straw back in there and all of us kiddies would get back there, and he and Mother would set up front. We drove a little old mule; we'd go about seven miles down to the city. And pop made, I believe it was seventy-five cents a day, and he would buy all the groceries and things to last us through the week. And when he'd pay the grocery bill, Mr. Grower, the grocery man, why, he'd give us a little sack of candy, and, stick candy, old peppermint. And oh, it was good. And so...

L-26 The thing of it was, there's about eight of them little Branhams, and maybe he give about six sticks of it, you know. So there's just about eight pair of little Irish eyes watching that candy to be broke just equally among each one. We'd set out there, you know, it'd be cold weather. We cover up in quilts; we get that candy, and all the boys would go to eating their candy. And I kinda played a little trick on them; now don't you boys try this, 'cause it might not work. So, I'd take my candy and act like I was eating it, and then get a piece of the paper sack off of the--something, you know, and wrap it up, put it in my pocket. I'd wait until Monday. And mother would say, "William."

I'd say, "Yes, ma'am."

Say, "Go to the spring and get a bucket of water."

Big old cedar bucket and a gourd dipper, you know, and I'd have to go down to the spring; that thing was heavy. And I'd say, "Edward," I called him Humpy, was his nickname, brother next to me. I'd say, "Tell you what I'll do; I'll let you lick on this stick of candy till I count ten if you'll go get that bucket of water for me." Ha-ha-ha. Very few chores I had to do on Monday, so as long as that candy lasted. I was a businessman. Ha-ha-ha. Lick on that candy, and I'd, oh, I'd count, I'd say, "One, two, three..."

"Not so fast."

I'd say, "Two, three."

"Now, you're counting too fast."

Start over again, and he'd get a couple of extra licks, you know, and so, then he'd keep that candy there, wrap it back up till I had something else to do, you know. Had it easy then on Monday; I was a man of leisure. My, to go back to those days again. That was good candy. You know, maybe tomorrow I could go out and get a box of Hershey's, but it wouldn't taste just like that did, you know, that was really good.

L-27 Did you ever eat it with salted crackers, them old barrel crackers, big ones, did you ever eat that and peppermint candy? Did you ever eat brown sugar with it? I tell you, the second thing I ever stole in my life, and the only thing that I know of, was a handful of brown sugar from my daddy. They had some brown sugar in a box, and made molasses for breakfast. Did you ever eat brown sugar molasses? Oh, my. So, I'm going home with somebody for dinner after while. I went in, my brother said to me, said, "If you'll go get the sugar, I'll get the cracker."

I said, "All right."

Mother and Dad was hoeing in the garden. And I went in and got a big handful, enough for both of us. I was walking out with that; you can't even look straight when you're telling a lie, you know. So I walking along like that, down along the garden, only way I had to get out. And dad turned around, said, "Where you going, William?"

I said, "Sir?"

He said, "Where you going?"

I said, "I'm--I'm going down at the barn."

And uh, he said, "What you got in your hand?"

And I thought, "Oh, oh." I changed; I said, "Which hand?" You know. Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha.

"Come here." Oh, my, ha-ha-ha. I didn't want no more sugar for a long time. Ha-ha-ha. Sure tasted good though. I'm talking about the sugar yet. Ha-ha-ha. When my father gave us a whipping, he had a razor strap made out of a piece of

belt leather. Oh, my. I'd... He had up over the door, the golden rule, and it had all Ten Commandments on it; it was out of hickory. A limb about that long, you know, with them ten branches out on it. We got our education out in the woodshed, just running around daddy as hard as we could go, like that. [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.] More dad's like that would be better off. Amen. That's right. Instead of pleasing your child and giving him fifty cents to go to the picture show on Sunday afternoon. That's it.

L-28 Come into a place not long ago, was going to pray for a sick person. Little boy come in, and a little Mary, you know, stomping her foot, she said, "I'm not going to eat this." Said, "Well, mother..."

And the little boy said, "I don't know what to do with this orange." And he grabbed it and threw it against the... Said, "All right, son."

Oh, my, ha-ha-ha. He ought to have been the son of Charles Branham. Ha-ha-ha. He wouldn't be able to eat an orange for a week or two. He would've cured him; he'd take ram rod right out of the old musket, as he used to call it, "Beat the devil out of us." So I guess maybe that's what it was. We thought it went out anyhow when... But he was... I love him, he never--he never give me a whipping I didn't deserve, and I love him today. That's right. Wished I could set down and talk to him. I hope to someday. I believe when we get over there we'll know each other, don't you? I believe I'll know you just as you--I know you now, only we'll be immortal, and we'll know each other.

L-29 Why? They knowed Elijah and Moses. And--and Peter, James, and John recognized them. And we recognize Jesus after He returned back to His glorified body. The Bible said, "It does not yet appear what we shall be," but we'll have a body like His, for we shall see Him as He is. So we will have one like that. And He was eating and so forth. Now, I just believe heaven's a real, real place that we're going. Amen.

Now, I remember when I started into school. Not long ago I stood by the old place where the schoolhouse was and looked at it, and oh, I looked like my heart would break. I remember when we used to go down there at school, and--and we didn't hardly have any clothes to wear, poor little old kiddies. Dad was a strictly an Irishman; every penny it didn't take to pay the grocery bill, he drank with the rest of it. We went to school without clothes. I remember all one winter. Now, it's no disgrace to be poor, but I didn't even have a coat to put on--or shirt to put on. And I had a coat that Mrs. Wathen, a rich woman, had give me, had a little eagle on the arm, and I kept it pinned up like this and I went every day to school. And we'd have to borrow a piece of paper, didn't have no books to study out of; no wonder I'm ignorant. And didn't have, or illiterate, rather, so I did... No paper, no books, or nothing. And they didn't have it like you do now, where the--the community furnishes it, or the school. And we were...

L-30 I remember, that year I--I wanted to study, but I--I just didn't have the opportunity: the books and things to study with. I remember it come spring of the year; I'd been all winter without a shirt. And it got kinda warm weather there, and 'fore school let out, and teacher said to me one day, she said, "William, aren't you warm with that coat on?" Said, "Take that coat off."

I couldn't take that coat off; I didn't have any shirt, and it was just the skin. So I was, I said, "No, ma'am, I'm just a little bit chilly."

She said, "You're chilly on a day like this?"

I said, "Yes, ma'am."

Said, "You better come over here and set at the fire."

My, that big old stove, and she fired that thing up, and the perspiration just running off my face. She said, "Are you still cool, are you still chilly?"

I said, "Yes, ma'am."

She said, "You better go home; you're sick." I wasn't sick, but I didn't have any shirt on; and I couldn't take that coat off.

L-31 So I wondered how I was going to get to go back to school; I waited a couple of days. My father's sister that lives across the hill there a piece from us, so we... They used to come over; he had a gi... They had a girl about my age; she'd left her dress there. So I figured out one day that I could get a shirt out of that. So I cut the bottom part of it off here, and I--I took the other part and just stuffed it down in my trousers, and I went to school with it. Its little sleeves up like this, you know, and, so it had all that there... What is it you call that stuff that runs around on it like that? Oh, yes,

rick-rack. I had all that kind of stuff all over it like that, you know. And so I--I, they said, "That's a girl's dress." And I said, "That's my Indian suit." Ha-ha-ha. Indian suit, it was that rick-rack all over her dress, you know. And kids would laugh at me.

L-32 And I remember, that winter at school all the kiddies... It was 1917; there was a big snow in Indiana, I guess you got it over here in Ohio too, any of you can remember back that far. So there was a... Sleeted, and sometimes the drifts would be seventeen, eighteen feet deep. And so, the most of the children had sleds, and they could sleigh ride. And brother and I didn't have any sled. So we got us an old dishpan out of the dump. And we'd get in that dishpan. It was all sleet on top, you know, and I--we'd sit down and wrap our legs around one another and down the hill we'd go, just. Now, we wasn't as much class as the rest of them, but we was sliding just the same. So we... That--that did all right till the bottom come out of the pan. So we had to hunt another sled.

So we got a log, and we chopped it off a little ways. So we had to chop, bring our wood from the river, and out of the woods to burn. Each evening when we get home from school, have to saw wood till plumb dark. Then remember we got the old log, and we were going down along the--a sliding on the ice. And there's a boy went to school there.

L-33 If I'm not mistaken some of the folks from the Tabernacle is in here the afternoon, from my church, I heard they were. It was Lloyd Ford, is who it was, to you that... And I'm sure Brother Ryan knows who Lloyd Ford is; I just seen him here awhile ago, I guess. I was talking to him the other day, and tell him about that.

It was during the time of that First World War, and everything that's big enough to put a uniform on, had a uniform. And oh, I wanted to be a soldier so bad. And when I got old enough then to be in the army, they wouldn't take me. So, after all I got to join the army and put on a uniform. You might not see it. It's not on the outside; it's on the inside, that meant a Christian rank. God give me the Holy Ghost, and I'm in the war today, in the battle against right and wrong, and I--I'm for the right. And I feel my uniform whether you see it or not.

L-34 Now, this boy, I said, "When you..." He had a Boy Scout suit, and he sold this "Pathfinder Magazine." I said, "When you wear that out would you give it to me?"

And he said, "Sure."

Well, I never seen a suit last so long. But after while, after he... Finally I missed him wearing it for a long time; I said, "Lloyd, what about that suit?"

He said, "Why, I'll ask my mother."

And so he said, "No." Said, "She taken the coat and made a pallet out of it, and the trousers, she patched some of dad's trousers with it," and said, "I haven't got a thing left but one legging."

I said, "Bring me that."

So I got this one legging, a little draw string on the side. Well, I wanted to wear that legging to school so bad, and I--I didn't know how I was going to do it. So I put it in my coat one day, and when I was riding on this log going down the hill, I act like I hurt my leg, and I said, "Oh, my." I said, "I hurt my leg so bad." I said, "It just remind me; I got one of my scout leggings in here." I--I pulled that legging up, and oh, I thought I was something then.

L-35 And I remember we went up to the old blackboard. Did you ever go to country school? How many went to country school where they had eight grades...?... And I stood by the blackboard like this, to work the problem, you know. And I had that legging on that side, and I stood like this and worked sideways, like this. See everybody look at that one legging. All the kids got to laughing at me, and I got to crying; teacher made me go home. Ha-ha. Oh, it was a hard struggle back there.

I remember one day around Christmas, Mama popped some corn. That was really a rarity. We couldn't, brother and I couldn't take our lunch like other kiddies; their mothers would bake that old oven bread, and oh, my, it was dandy. But we... They had sandwiches, make sandwiches. Or what we had, we had a little molasses bucket about this high, and on one side would be a little jar full of greens, maybe the other side, a little jar full of beans, a piece of bread, of each sticking between it, and a spoon. We were ashamed to eat before the other children, because they could have sandwiches, and cakes, and cookies, and things. And we'd go over the hill from the school and set down there. And we set these little jars between us. And God bless his heart, he's in glory today. But we would set and eat one with another,

like that.

L-36 And I remember Mama popped some corn to go on a Christmas tree. We'd get an old cedar tree and wrap popcorn around it. She had enough left, till she give us little bucket, little extra bucket full of popcorn. We took it to school that day. And I begin to wonder just how good that would taste about ten o'clock. So I raised up my hand, and the teacher asked me, and I said, "May I be excused?"

She said, "Yes."

And as I went out through the cloak room, I took the lid off and got a great big handful of that corn. I went out and stood back behind the old chimney, and I eat that popcorn, my, it was good. When--when it's dinner time, why, I knew he was going to miss that. So, we got over on the hillside and set down. We want to eat the popcorn first, you know how kids would be. So we opened it up and about half of it was gone, that handful I got. My brother said, "Say, something happened to that, didn't it?"

I said, "Sure did."

L-37 Not long ago when I was coming from Texas in a revival, one of the meetings. I remember, we got away from the house, and some people, and there. As soon as we could get free, we went riding up the road, and I had the baby, my wife. We stopped by the old schoolhouse, and they were picking violets, my wife and baby. And I wanted a drink from that old pump again. I was drinking, and I will tell you, this country may have beautiful scenery from Florida and Arizona, but we've got the water around here, haven't we? Yes sir, there's no better water in the world than what we have right here in central part of America, that limestone quarry. Drinking, I was drinking that water; I leaned against the fence like this, I looked up across where the old schoolhouse used to stand; it was gone.

And I remember in time of the war when all of us kiddies would stand there, and her... What socks we have on, maybe be down, our toes sticking out of our shoes like turtle heads, and our hands on one another, shoulders like that, and the teacher with that big stick, you know, lining us up, you know, tramping like that, going in.

L-38 I begin to come down the line; I thought, "Yes, Ralph Fields, he's in eternity. I called three or four more of the boys, "William Hensel, in eternity." I thought, "Who stood next to him? I did. I thought... Who, say... Who was next to me? Edward, in eternity. I look right behind me, and seen Bill Ault: eternity. Behind that, Howard Higgins, in eternity..."

My, I looked up across the hill where the old home place used to stand, and there was a housing project; the home was gone. The old place wasn't like it used to be; the old spring was stopped up, the fields had become people's lawns, just in a little twenty, something years. There I begin to cry, I thought--I said, "Oh God, here we have no continuing city." When I thought, "Dad, how I used to see him come across the field, his black hair wavy, and coming across the field; he'd meet mother out at the gate and all of us kiddies, and take us up in his arms and walk into the house." But he's past; it's already fallen in. "Here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come, whose Builder and Maker is God."

L-39 I stood there, and I--I got to crying. I thought about the day that I took the handful of popcorn away from my brother down there. I just... First time I was ever... When I got in need I'd even eat a heel; that's the truth. I'm not just saying that, but that's the truth. I'd always... Somebody would buy me a sandwich or something, I wished I could buy it back, and I couldn't do it. And I'd had a few meetings; I'd have an offering or two. And I'd say, "Oh, God, how I wish You could lift me up here and let me take that handful of popcorn up to him today. I'd give anything, Lord, anything, if You'd let me give him that handful of popcorn." He died at nineteen years old, when I was out west working on a cattle ranch, and he died calling for me. And they could hear him from the hospital plumb into the streets, saying, "Let me see my brother Bill once more before I go. Tell him to be a good boy."

There he was gone, and I had that stain on me of taking that handful of popcorn from my brother. I think of his grave, when we buried him, oh, we were real brothers. I remember I got one of Mama's blankets when it come the first snow; I went up there and throwed it over his grave, for I thought he'd be cold. That's before I was a Christian. But now I realize he's not there; he's gone on.

L-40 How I begin--I begin to crying, my wife, little girl heard me, and they come over there and said, "Bill, now I thought you come home to rest." And they got me and put the baby up on my shoulder, and I looked back at the old

place, and I said,
Precious memories, how they linger,
How they ever flood my soul;
In the stillness of the midnight,
Precious, sacred scenes unfold.

I looked there, went around, we got in the car and drove on. When I was a lad I was more or less a bashful. There's many of those things I'll just let go. I was more or less bashful, and you might think this strange, but I really didn't like ladies. I haven't... Didn't like the girls at all.

Because, my father, they'd go down on the river where they drink and everything, and I'd see women come up there, married women, their husbands not with them, and see how untrue they could act. I said, "If that's the way they are, I never want nothing to do with any of them." And I made my mind, that I wasn't going to never be married, never have anything to do with women, I was going to be a trapper. I love hunting and trapping.

L-41 And I guess you wonder how I ever got married. But I remember the first date I ever had, after I got to be about seventeen, eighteen years old. As all boys you know, you meet that first sweetheart, you know, eyes like a dove, and teeth like pearls, neck like a swan, and you know how it is: prettiest thing you ever seen in your life. And I--I met one. So I thought she was so pretty, my. And so the boy that lived pretty close to me, he said, "Tell you what..." He had a girlfriend too, and he said, "We'll get them together." They was in school, you know. Said, "We'll get them together, and I'll get dad's old Ford." And we had to jack the back end of it up, and put a little gasoline and crank it, you remember how you use... So we got enough to buy two gallons of gas. And we could ride a long time on that. So we got our girlfriends and was going to take them a riding.

And I never will forget that night we went out. And I stopped at a little place to get some sandwiches and some Cokes. And so, I remember when I went in and got the sandwiches and we came out, and we drank the Coke and ate the sandwiches. I was taking the bottles back. And that was just when the girls first begin to be smart alecks, start smoking and things. When I come back out, to my surprise, my little queen was setting there smoking a cigarette.

L-42 Well, I've always had my opinion of a cigarette smoking woman, and I never have changed it. It's the lowest thing she can do. That's right. Now, I'm not here to preach the Gospel to you; these men do that. But let me tell you something, sister: That's the worse fifth columnist that America's got. Doctors' statistics prove that eighty percent of the children if they're breast raised children, die when they're eighteen months age with nicotine poison. That's statistics, I get that from the government. And it's the nicotine...?...

And here not long ago, few hours ago when I was eating my breakfast, I set in one of the little luncheon places here, and there set a lady there, fifty years old, with enough manicure on her face to... or ever what you call that stuff that, and all over her face, it would've painted a barn. And she was setting in there, and she had her cigarette in her hand going [Brother Branham illustrates.--Ed.] I--I felt sorry for the woman, so degraded and polluted.

L-43 Well, listen brother, don't you fear about Russia coming over here and whipping us. We're whipping ourselves. That's right. Our own morals are degrading us. It isn't the robin that pecks on the apple that hurts the apple; it's the worm at the core that kills the apple. That's--that's where it's at now. Termites, they're eating our nation's foundation out. Now, don't get up and go out. Listen, I tell you. If you do, women, if you do use those things, for Jesus' sake, don't no more. Let this be the day and cease from right now on. For if the Angel of God, Whose servant I am, if you're not thought any more by doing it, when you get to the gates of heaven than what it's revealed to me by Him, you'll certainly stand on the outside. Now, remember that. You accept me as God's prophet, you keep away from such things as that, if you expect to go into the gates of glory. That's right.

L-44 I know when He met me when I was a little boy, the first thing He said to me, "Don't you never drink, smoke, or defile your body in any way; there'll be a work for you to do when you get older." Now, when the Angel met me in the bush down there, as you know of...

There that little thing was setting there, pretty little lady, smoking that cigarette. And I... She said, "Have a cigarette, Billy."

I said, "No, ma'am, I don't smoke."

And she said, "Now, you said you didn't dance." They want to go to a place to dance.

I said, "No."

Said, "You don't dance; you don't drink; you don't smoke," said, "what do you like to do?"

I said, "I like to hunt and fish..." [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]

L-45 I just got up, and went up over the hill, and set down up there in a field that night, the moon shining down; I said, "I can't have friends; I'm a black sheep among the boys, and Lord, somebody, let--let me die. I don't want to live like this. I'm a--a prisoner and I don't know what to do."

But what I see now, is all in God's great program. I might've lost a lot of friends then, but He's giving it back ten thousand times more today, by doing that what was right, to holding on to Him. And I said, "Oh, I don't know. I just might as well try to end life."

And a little later on, I remember then, I went on, thought, "Well, I'll stick it out." Time passed; many things happened.

L-46 When I got married... I met this girl. I'm so happy, my boy setting present this afternoon to know this about his mother. She was a lady, every ounce of it. She was a Christian girl. And I met her, and she was very nice. And I started going with her. And she neither smoked, drank, danced, or went to places like that. So, only thing we would do, we would go riding at night, and we had to be in at a certain time, nine o'clock. And I'd come back; she's very lady, nice parents.

So I thought how nice she was, but her father was a organizer on the Pennsylvania Railroad, making about five hundred and something dollars a month, during the time of the depression. I made twenty cents an hour digging ditches. What's something to take a girl like that? But she was very lovely. Her grave today has some flowers that I just planted on it. She lies beneath there, her body. Her soul's in glory with my baby. I love her yet today with all my heart. And she's... What a lovely person.

L-47 And she came into my life. And I knew it got to a place where I had to either say, "Now, you must..." I must marry her, or I must let her alone, let her somebody. A girl like that, a lady will certainly find somebody that'll be good to her, and I didn't make enough money to take care of her." So I said, "Well, the only thing I got to do: I've got to tell her good-bye and let some other boy that can take care of her..." I loved her enough, even though I had to sacrifice being with her, let somebody take a hold, take her that would take care of her and make her a good living.

So I tried to make up my mind, and I said, "Well, I... Maybe I can. Maybe I could make a living for her." I said, "It's so hard to do, to ask her that." So finally I thought, "How will I ask her?" And I guess you wonder how I did. I... For about a month I tried to get up enough nerve to do it. I don't know whether you brethren have that much trouble or not, but I--I had an awful time. And I'd look at her, and I thought she was pretty, and she was a good girl. And why do... I thought, "Oh couldn't we be happy together. We might not have very much, but we could be happy." And so I thought, "How will I do it?"

L-48 So I'd try to ask her, you know, and I--I... You know how you feel, that real funny feeling, you know, and I'd just... It'd choke me up, and I couldn't do it. So you know how I--how I asked her to marry me? I wrote her a letter and asked if she'd marry me. And so I...

Now, it wasn't Dear Miss, it was just a little more, what do you call that, mushy, than that, you know? And I asked her if she'd marry me. And I wrote it all out one night, you know, and I put it in a letter; and the next day I was going to work, so I dropped it in the box. And I know I was going to take her to church Sunday night, or Wednesday night.

L-49 And so, when Wednesday night begin to come I begin to get nervous, because I forgot and put it in the box and thought, "What if her mother got a hold of it?" Now, her mother's a fine woman, and she may be here this afternoon. And I'm not saying this for any harm, but her dad was just a real good; he's a real German, Brumbach. And her--her mother was Scot, and so I could get along with Charlie all right, her dad. But her mother and I just--we didn't see things the way we ought to. She was kindly, you know, kinda little classical, and I was just one of these here plow boys. So I thought, "Well now, maybe what if her mother got a hold of that, oh, my. I'll get something when I go up there."

So come Wednesday I was so nervous I couldn't hardly go up. I had an old backslidden Ford, and it really was

backslidden, that one was. And I could almost make forty miles an hour in it. That was twenty miles this way and twenty miles up-and-down this way, you know.

L-50 So--so I remember, it was that Ford that I visit Brother John Ryan for the first time in Dowagiac, Michigan; you remember this story, Brother Ryan. So I remember, I thought, "Oh, my." I believe this is the first time Brother Ryan ever set present when I was telling my life story, far as I know of. This is going to include him in a few moments. And then I remember at the... I thought, "Well now, what will I do if her mother got a hold of that; there's going to be some trouble."

So when it come Wednesday night I drove up out front; I knowed better than to blow the horn, for I think this boys, if the girl is worth going with, is worth going in and get her (that's right.), not set out front and blow the horn.

So I went up to the door and I knocked on the door, and she come to the door, and she opened the door; she said, "Why, good evening, Billy," she said, "come in."

I thought, "Oh, oh, going to get me in there now, and shut the door, and then I would be in an awful fix, getting me in the house." I thought... I said, "Thank you, Hope," I said, "may I set out here on the porch?"

Said, "Oh, no, come on in."

I thought, "Oh, me." So I walked in, and held my hat in my hand, I said, "You about ready to go to church?"

She said, "Just in a few moments." She said, "Mother, would you talk," oh, "to Bill while I finish in there?"

Oh, my, she come, Mrs. Brumbach, come in and set down. And oh, talk about perspiring. I said, "Sure fine weather."

"Yes, it is, Billy."

Set there a little bit; I thought that girl never would get ready. And so, after while she come out; she said, "It's such a lovely evening, let's walk down to the church."

I thought, "Oh, oh. There's goes the time." I thought, "I'd better look real good, because this is the last time I get to be with you. So, I know that. I done had it... You know how Satan will lie to you. He will have you believing anything." I thought "This is all; she's going to tell me the finish."

So I went down and I never did hear what that preacher said that night. I was setting looking at her; I just thinking about how pretty she was, and how nice she was, and how I hoped she would get somebody would be good to her. And I--I looked at her, and I thought, "My." And Brother Davis is up preaching, you know, and I never heard what he said. He dismissed, and went outside; I thought, "Now's when I get it."

L-51 We started walking home, moonlight night, you know, we'd walk under those shades of the trees, you know, when you come out she come out she had real dark brown eyes, when she'd look around, I could just... You know how you feel, that funny feeling. Now, you all did the same thing...?... that's right. I just admit mine. Ha-ha-ha. Now, isn't that right? Sure, raise up your hand. Now, that's better. Yes, sir.

That feeling you know, and I thought, "Oh, my," why, I thought after we got close to home, I thought maybe she forgot it, never got the letter, you know. And I thought it got stuck in the mailbox. I got pretty game then; I was talking pretty lively going down the street. And I just talk about next Sunday night again, you know, come walking down the street. Why, I was feeling fine. And just about the time we got about a city block from the home, she said, "Billy."

And I said, "Yes?"

She said, "I got your letter."

Oh, my, There it went again. I said, "Uh, uh, You did?"

She said, "Uh-huh."

L-52 Well, I kept on walking; nobody said nothing. And I thought, "Woman, say something." You know how a woman can keep you in suspense like that, you know. Well, I thought, "Surely, a man ought to say amen then." Be a brave man. Ha-ha-ha. So then she said... just... I thought, "What will I do?" And she wouldn't say a word. And I thought, "Well, I've got to say something, 'cause we're just a few doors--doors from her house." And I said, "Did you read it?"

She said, "Uh-huh." That's all she said.

I thought, "Oh, say something, and tell me; I--I can't come back or run me away, or do something, 'cause I'm--I'm under a big strain here." I said, "Did you read all of it?"

She said, "Uh-huh."

I said, "What'd you think of it?"

She said, "It was all right," and we got married." Ha-ha-ha. That's the way it happened. Married over here at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

L-53 And so we got married. And I--I never will forget when she told me then I had to ask her parents for her, said that was just... Oh, my, here it all... I thought I got by good there, but here that was before me. And I said, "Look, Hope," I--I said, "You know I believe we're supposed to be fifty-fifty." See? I said, "I'm supposed to be... We're going fifty-fifty on these things," I said, "let's just start it right now, what do you say?"

She said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "You being the girl, I believe it'd be best for you to ask your mother, and me being the boy, I'd ask your dad."

She said, "Very well."

I said, "Yeah. Well, you let me ask your dad first, will you?" If I get his promise, you know, first...

She said, "Well, you ask him tonight."

L-54 Well, I just couldn't do it that night after going through all that. So then I waited, next time I went up we were, went back. I set back there on the porch with her awhile, and we come in, her daddy was setting typing. And we walked in the house, and she said, "You'd better ask dad tonight 'cause we got to make ready."

And I said, "Yes, that's--that's right."

So, I went in, and he was setting there typing, and I talked to her mother a little bit, you know, and looked around. I started out, and she looked at me; and I said... I motioned to her; I hadn't forgot it. So I said, "Mr. Brumbach?"

Said, "Yes, Bill."

I said, "Could--could I talk to you a little bit?"

He said, "Yes, go ahead." And he turned around.

I said, "I--I mean out on the porch. I seen him look around to Mrs. Brumbach. I thought, "Oh, oh, here it is." So I walked out to the porch, and he walked out there. I said... I just couldn't say it; I just couldn't get them wor--I'd just get real weak every time I go try to say something, you know. I said, "Sure is a pretty night, isn't it Charlie?"

He said, "Yes, it is, Bill." Set there a little while.

I said, "Been awful warm."

He said, "Yes," said, "you can have her, Bill." Ha-ha-ha. Why, I love him today.

I said, "You mean it?"

He said, "Yeah, I do."

Oh, my, I wanted to hug him right then. Said, "You can have her."

L-55 I said, "Look, Charlie," I said, "I know you give her a good home." I said, "You can get her anything she wants; I can't." I said, "I'm only making a small wage." But I said, "Charlie, she couldn't find anybody that thinks any more of her." And I said, "I'll work as long as there's breath in my body to work, and make her a living. And I'll do everything that I can to make her a living."

I never will forget; he's gone on too now. But he laid his hand over on my shoulder, and he said, "Bill, I'd rather you'd have her, and I know you love her, and I know she loves you. I rather you'd have her, then somebody maybe had plenty and wouldn't be good to her." Said, "After all, life doesn't consist of how much the world's goods you own, but how contented you are with the portion that's 'lotted to you." That's right, too...?...

I said, "Thank you, Charlie. I'll do all that I can."

L-56 Well, we got married; we moved into a little--a little two room place that we rented. I never will forget what we went housekeeping on. Many of you remember the depression, don't you? Oh, my. [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.] About two dollars, is what the stove cost me. I went down to Sears and Roebucks and got a breakfast set that hadn't been painted, and I painted it. And I put big shamrocks all over it. I was...?... She's German and me Irish, you know, so I said, "We'll make that, paint it red with big green shamrocks on it, just... we just... We were so happy. We didn't have much of the world's goods, but we were happy. It was home.

I remember the first time that I went then... We were real happy, she was working at a shirt factory, and we were trying

to get enough money together to get us some furniture. And we'd been married, oh, several months. After about a year, little Billy Paul come on the scene. Oh, she almost died. And how I walked up-and-down the floors when the little fellow was being borned. And just as soon as he was born, I heard him cry, and I screamed; I said, "Thank You, Lord, it's a boy, and his name shall be called Billy Paul." [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]

L-57 Doctor came out in a few minutes, said, "Well, reverend, I'll charge you for this linoleum you wore out all up-and-down here," he said, "but you got a boy."

I said, "Yes, his name's Billy Paul."

And I become acquainted with Brother Ryan during that time; I met him at a service one day, and heard him testify in Louisville. So, he invited me, and that's when he come to my house, and he set there one day. Now, Pentecost was a strange thing to me, and how many times he tried to tell me about it. And he was--he was setting there, and he just raised up; he threw up his hand and begin to speak with an unknown tongue. And he stopped, looked at me right straight, walked to me, laid his hand over on my shoulder, and said, "Brother Billy, you're just a lad now; there's a lot of youth to you yet. But someday that's going settle down, and Almighty God is going to use you to stir the nations." He walked out.

L-58 There's the man setting there now that did it. I love the old fellow. And he went away, went to his home, and I'd visit his home. I remember we saved our money; I never will forget how much money I had; it's six or seven dollars to make the trip, that we saved. I was tired; I'd been, as a minister and was preaching, had the little Tabernacle there. I went on a vacation; I went to see Brother Ryan, went to Dowagiac. And he, we went fishing out on the lake. On the road back I was coming home and I come down through Mishawaka. And that was my first time to ever get acquainted with the denominational Pentecostal people.

And I passed by, at I believe Mishawaka, I guess, and there was a big tabernacle there, and the people was all crowded out on the streets and everywhere, they was... I thought, "What is this?" And I seen they had "Jesus Saves" and everything on the back of their cars. So I pulled my old Ford up and stopped, and thought, "What is this?"

L-59 And I went in and seen what it was, and it was a religious service. But oh, did I ever see people that didn't have manners. They were screaming, and shouting, and jumping, and that was awful for a Baptist. So I seen them people how they act; I thought, "Isn't that awful? Well, they haven't got any church manners at all."

So, but there was something got a hold of me. And so I... That night I wanted to stay all night, and I didn't... I counted my money, and I had enough money to get enough gasoline to get home. And I went down and bought me some stale rolls. And I knowed I could stay a couple days on that. So I didn't have any room, no money for a room, so I went out in a corn field to sleep that night.

But however, they asked all the preachers come to the platform, and they was having a conference. And then, that night he said, "All the preachers here, we haven't got time for you to preach, but we want you to just raise up and say your name and where you're from. When it come mine I said, "Billy Branham, evangelist, Jeffersonville, Indiana," Set down.

L-60 So then there been many of the young ministers preaching that day, but when they brought the minister out that night to preach, a colored brother, and he was real old, and he had just a little rim of white hair around the back of his head, and a great big old long preachers coat on, big velvet collar to it. Poor old fellow come out walking like this. And he got there, and first time I'd ever seen a microphone. And he was preaching, just started to speaking; he took his text over there: Job, I believe, 7 or 8, somewhere there, "Where was you when I laid the foundations of the world? Morning stars sing together, and sons of God shouted for joy..."

And the old fellow, I felt so sorry for him; I wanted to go up and hold his arms to keep him from falling while he was preaching, and he was so old. And I thought, "Why didn't they put some of them young fellows up here?" They'd been preaching all day, you know, about what Jesus done.

L-61 But he went back yonder from about, and brought Him back across the skies like this, and down the horizontal rainbow in the second coming. And about the time he got down there, that old man hollered, "Whoopie," jumped up and clicked his heels together, went tipping off the platform, said, "You ain't got enough room up here for me to preach."

I looked at that, I thought, "Brother, if that Holy Ghost will make an old man act like that, what would it do for me? That's what I want; that's just exactly; that's what I want."

And I walked off the platform, you know, saying, "My." Said, "You ain't got room for me to preach." I thought, "Woo, my, he's been to a fountain of youth somewhere." I thought, "I want that."

L-62 And that night out in the cornfield, I wanted to press my trousers, and I laid them between the two seats, you know, like that, seersuckers, and I put them down there, and I prayed. I said, "God, that's the most wonderful people; give me favor before them. Let me find some kind of grace like that; they got what I'm wanting."

So I remember, the next morning I washed up and come in; it was about ten o'clock. I could've eat with them, but I couldn't put in nothing in their offering. So I didn't want to eat with them. I had my--my buns, or rolls. And I come on in, you know, and got me a good drink at a hydrant, drove my old Ford up and stopped, and went in. And they were singing that little song they sing and clapping their hands, singing, "I Know It Was The Blood; I know it was the Blood." And oh, every one of them just a screaming and a running. I thought, "Well, what do you know about this?"

L-63 And I set down by a colored brother. And I set down there; they had the conference up in the North. So they couldn't have it in the South on account of the--the mixing of the colored and the white. And so, I set down by a colored brother there. I had on a little T-shirt, you know. Nobody knowed me, so and a pair of seersucker trousers. I was setting there listening, and a man, I believe, from Cincinnati by the name of Kirks, and he came out. Now, he belongs to one of those Pentecostal organizations, don't know which one it was, but best I remember, the man's tabernacle is named Raugh, R-a-u-g-h, a German, Raugh, Raugh, or something like that. And it was a... I got set down there, you know, and I thought, "I'm going to enjoy this well today."

So this minister walked out; he said, "Last night on the platform there was a young preacher here, I believe the youngest we had in the audience; his name is Branham. Billy Branham," said, "If he's in the audience? Well, we want him to bring the message this morning."

L-64 My, I hunkered down real low so, seersucker trousers and T-shirt you know; so I got down real low, you know. And he announced again, said, "Anybody outside know anywhere of Billy Branham is, from Indiana, down at Jeffersonville." Said, "Tell him to come to the platform."

Oh, I wasn't going up there 'fore all them preachers like that. And I... Why, I couldn't preach, my old sassafras, slow, Baptist ways couldn't think of it that fast, so, way them fellows was preaching. I just set real still like this. And so, got down low in my seat. This colored brother looked over, said, "Say, you know who that guy is?"

Oh, I was on a spot. I said, I--I had to say something then. I said, "Look fellow, look; I'm he, you see," but I said, "don't tell them people." I said, "Look, I got on these seersucker trousers here, and this T-shirt."

He said, "Them people don't care what you dress like; get on up there."

And I said, "No, I can't go up; you keep still."

He said, "Anybody know what... and the where, Reverend Branham?"

That colored brother said, "Here he is!" Whew. "Here he is." Seersucker trousers, T-shirt.

Said, "Come on up, Mr. Branham."

Oh, my, I looked back at that brother, and he's just laughing, you know.

L-65 I started, and I thought, "Lord, I prayed, now what am I going to say when I get up there?" I started sneaking up the platform, my ears real red, you know. And I thought, "What am I going to do?" And I was afraid of that microphone hanging down there, you know. They had a hanging on a wire hanging down. And I got the Bible, and I was trembling so I couldn't hardly take a hold of it. I remember I got my text from, "The Rich Man Lifted Up His Eyes In Hell And Then He Cried," and then he cried, and then I cried. Ha-ha-ha. Something got a hold of me. I didn't know nothing for about a half hour; they had me outside. And all the screaming I ever heard in my life.

Here come a fellow up from Texas, had on a cowboy boots and a great big hat, you know, said, "Say, I'm--I'm--I'm preacher so..." Well, I thought, "Them seersucker trousers' not so bad after all, then. I looked at him; he said, "I heard you was a evangelist; I want you to come hold me a revival in Texas."

And another fellow walked up, had on these little old golf pants, you know, that you, knickerbocker pants. He said,

"I'm from Florida; I have a big bunch--a church down there with so many people in it, will you come?"

Well, I thought, "Well, my T-shirt's not so bad, these are just home folks." So I--I believe...

L-66 And a lady come up, she was teaching the Indians somewhere. And the first thing you know. I begin to put down invitations like that, and I had a whole line of them on the back of piece of paper. And I jumped in my old Ford, and down the road I went, my, oh, my. And I run home... When I got in... She's always was lovely, Brother Ryan, you know that. You... She--she would come always... She had long black hair, and she'd come running out the door to meet me, and she said, "You look so happy."

I said, "Honey, I found the greatest church in the world." I said, "A bunch of people that's not ashamed of their religion, they scream and shout and everything else."

She said, "Where you been?"

And I said, "Let's see, up around Mishawaka up there." I said, "Oh, you talk about a church," I said, "you never seen such. And believe it or not, let me show you something." I pulled out, I said, "I got an invitation to come to churches enough to keep me the whole year going."

She said, "You, honey?"

And I said, "Yep, me."

And she said, "Well..."

I said, "Would you go with me?"

She said, "I promised to go with you anywhere until death should separate us." That's a real wife. God rest her gallant soul today. Then said, "I'll go with you anywhere."

I said, "All right," I said, "Now, we'll go tell our parents."

L-67 I went and told... She was to tell her mother. I told mama, and mama said, "Well," said, "Okay, Billy." Said, "I remember them kind of people down in Kentucky when I was a little girl," said, "they used to have the Old Lone Star meeting house up there." Said, "People get down at the altar, and they would pray and scream and run," that's old Missionary Baptist, and said, "They've got away from that today in these churches out here in Indiana, and around."

And that's a shame that we do it too. That's right. I tell you, this here kind of Baptist we have now that you shake hands and put your name on a paper; that's not the way I got it, brother. We got down at the altar and beat one another on the back, till we come through; we got something when we come out of there. Yes sir, it wasn't shaking hands with the preacher; we got saved.

L-68 And--and then I remember, then when we started off, her mother said, "Well, Hope," she said, "You can go, of course, that's said, but I'm telling you," said, "if you do your mother will fill a grave with a broken heart."

Oh, my. There it was. And here's where I made my mistake, friends. I listened to my mother-in-law in the stead of listening to God. And if I would've went ahead then, this great thing would have been manifested before this, and the Church had been farther along. But listen to my mistakes; here's where sorrow started.

Hope said, "I'll go anyhow."

I didn't want to hurt her mother's feelings, and her mother said, "Why don't you go up there at--at the church until you get it paid for, and then get a parsonage, and act like somebody's got some sense, in the stead of...?... You think I could let my daughter be drug around across the country, and today she eats, and tomorrow she doesn't eat? And--and never have a change of clothes on her back," and said, "and drug around with that bunch of trash."

And I found out, and I don't say this, but nothing but to tell the truth. What she called the trash, I find to be the cream of the crop. That's exactly the truth. That's right.

Said, "My daughter be drug around such as that..."

Brother, by my mistakes we had to bury her a little after that.

L-69 Now, I never forget; trouble started when... My father took sick, died on my arm just a little bit after that. My brother was riding on the side of a car, fifteen years old. The man that he was hitch hiking and picked him up, was drinking, hit his head up side of a post, broke his neck, turned his liver over, and he died in my other brothers arms. And I was standing in the platform preaching when it happened. They come and told me. There, I tell you, the way of a

transgressor's hard. Don't you pay any attention to what anybody in the world tells you; you do what God says do, no matter what it... I don't care if it's...

One person come to me not long ago and said, "Brother Branham, I have THUS SAITH THE LORD; I know the Lord wants you to quit doing this and quit doing that."

I said, "Now, my brother, I love you with all my heart, but don't come to me with that." I said, "Because that's not Scriptural."

She said, "But I'm a prophet also."

I said, "If God... I'm on speaking terms with Him, if He wants me to know anything He will tell me." That's right. I said, "Well, there was one time there was two--two prophets. One of them went down, and he was young prophet, and he prophesied against the alt... I believe it's I Kings 13, and he prophesied against the altar and healed the king's arm after he'd been paralyzed. And another prophet said, "The Lord said for you to come by my way," after the Lord told him to do something else. And two prophets, you remember that? No matter who it's a prophet, or who it is, when God tells you do anything, you do what God says do. Let everything else go (See?); you just mind God.

L-70 And there was sympathy and feeling; I said, "Well, I tell you honey, we'll just let the thing go, and then we'll go ahead and..." She said, "Bill, I'll go with you; I'll do anything that you want to do."

I said, "Well, we'll just let it go, and we'll--we'll--we'll finish paying for our church, and maybe after while we--we'll be able to go." And sorrow set in, one thing after another; trouble set in, everything.

Now remember, then immediately that 1937 flood came up. I remember poor old Brother Ryan was in the city at that time, how the flood coming up, and the workers on the wall... I had an old boat there, and used to go out there. And you'd get in that boat, and stand in that boat, and float down the river, and preach to them people on the flood walls. Then over back up the river, and then come back down the river preaching to the people on the flood wall. I remember the last time I seen you, Brother Ryan, there. I thought you were gone and in eternity here a few weeks, a few months ago. I never knowed what become of him.

L-71 And little old Brother George, the night come, I remember it was just day before Christmas; wife went over the river to get the kiddies Christmas presents. During that time, been another year, and a little over a year, about a year--year and eleven months it was, between... It was eleven months between the--the two children; a little girl was born. I called her Sharon Rose, after the Bible, the Rose of Sharon. Sweetest little thing, she just got big enough till she could just goo, and she was so sweet. And I just love little kiddies.

L-72 And then, I remember the flood came along, and--and she went over the river to get some things for the kiddies for Christmas, and I was working. And I come home, and there she'd fainted on the street and they'd brought her in. And I rushed in, looked at her, and I... Little friend of mine, Doctor Sam Adair at Jeffersonville, I think one of the best doctors in the world. We were schooled together, and buddied together, fish together, and you know. We did run around together. Live neighbors right now. And he... I called him; I'd just taken him down one of those--a lamp for Christmas, for a Christmas present; it was night, day before Christmas. And I called him, I said, "Sam, Hope's fainted." And I said...

He--he said, "I'll be right up, Bill."

He come up, and said, "Oh, my, she got a fever of a hundred and five; she's got pneumonia." And said, "You'll have to stay up all night, Bill, and give her fluids to drink."

Well, I did. And that night I knelt down and begin to pray, and pray for God to help her. And when I did, I was in prayer; I seen a black sheet come down before me. I seen the 1937 flood rise and twenty-two feet come over Spring Street, begin to prophesy. People said, "You're crazy; you're off at your head." Down at Falls City Transfer Company when I gave that, down there to them, they said, "Oh, Billy, go on home."

But less than six weeks from then, twenty-two feet of water measured over Spring Street, just exactly the way it said.

L-73 And there, I seen this sheet fall, and I went to my church; I said, "I believe that my disobedience has brought sorrow to my heart. My wife was going to go."

And they said, "Oh," said, "that's just your feeling for your wife."

She got worse. The flood came in, broke through that night, that terrible night, Brother Ryan. You remember when the people were walking the streets and crying and everything. And I had a little old patrol wagon there, that I was working with, trying to get people out of the flood. And I went down, and there was a... My wife had been moved out to the temporary hospital at the government depot; everything else was all under flood. And I went out there to see her; and I was looking around. And I run into Brother George DeArk; he's in glory today. And he said, "I..." he said, "I just seen you down there by the United Brethren church."

I said, "Have you seen Brother Ryan?"

He said, "Down by the United Brethren Church."

And Brother George put his arms around me, said, "Brother Billy, if I never see you no more; I'll see you in the morning."

And that's our next meeting time; he left during time of the flood; in glory today. When he was dying he looked, when he said, "Oh, if I could only see Brother Bill one more time. Oh, if he could only be here." He said, "Oh, where are you at?" He looked at the window, said, "Oh, Jesus, I knew You would come." Threw his arms out and went to meet God.

L-74 Then I went on down, this--this flood was about ready to break through the dike up above there, at Chestnut Street. And some of them called me up, said, "Hurry down there right quick." I was raised on the river, and thought I was a pretty good boatman. I got my boat down there real quick. They said, "A woman's trapped out there." And I looked out there and heard a woman screaming, standing out on top of a porch with a baby in her arms screaming, "Have mercy, have mercy," the house shaking like that, and the flood coming down, sweeping through, eighty mile stretch of water through there.

And I got my boat and started up through the alleys of the... Like this, and got it so I could get down and fall in behind the place in the current. And I landed against the place; and the woman had fainted; I picked her up and got her in the boat (About eleven o'clock that night.), two or three little girls. I got back away and got to the bank. When she come to herself, she kept hollering, "My baby, my baby, oh, don't leave my baby." And I thought she had a little bitty baby over there. The baby she had was about two years old. And I took back to try to see if we'd left a little baby laying on a bed or something, because she fainted on the porch when I picked her up.

L-75 And when I got there and tied my boat, and I--I went in and looked all through the house. But the baby she was talking about was a two year old baby. And just about that time the house washed from the foundation. And I ran out real quick and jumped in the boat, threw my hands down in the water and pulled the slip knot, ice, sleeting, cold, the wind blowing, blizzarding. And I got into the boat; I tried to pull the string on the starter. I couldn't get it started, and the current caught me this way, got me out onto Market Street, swept me out into the river. There's the Ohio Falls crushing just below there, the waves high as this building here, romping like that with such a current. And me standing in that boat pulling that string trying to get that motor to start, and it wouldn't start. Seemed like I could hear somebody say, "Now, where's that bunch of trash at?"

L-76 I tell you, brother, the way of a transgressor's hard. Don't you let no one call you trash, no. I pulled that string, and it wouldn't start, and I said, "Oh, God, I did that which is wrong. Please, I don't want to die out here in this river, my baby and wife laying out there very sick. Please God, don't let me die."

And I was pulling that string and it wouldn't start, and I turned around, and the boat was half full of water almost then, going on towards the falls. I know just ten minutes longer it'd be too much. I pulled again; I thought, "Oh, God, forgive me for my sins." And I pulled again; and when I pulled that time, the motor spluttered; I pulled again and it started.

I whirled around like that in the boat, got back, come out way down around by Cane Run Creek, down towards New Albany. I got back up to Jeffersonville again, walked back up. I said, "I'll go out and see my wife."

Said, "Your wife" said, "where's she at?"

I said, "The government hospital, out there."

Said, "That whole thing's washed away."

L-77 Oh, my, then I jumped in my boat and ra--or my car, and run it as quick as I could, the little patrol truck I was in, and went out to the government out there. I met Major Weekly, a friend of mine, I said, "Major, is the hospital washed

away?"

He said, "Yes, it's all under water down there, reverend," he said, "but I think all the patients got out."

I said, "Do you know where my wife did or not?"

Said, "I don't know."

And went and seen someone else who said, "Yes, your wife and all the rest of them got in a cattle car, and they've gone towards Charlestown."

L-78 Well, I run the car out towards Charlestown, the Lancassange Creek had backed up, four miles of the swiftest water. I went, got my boat. I couldn't pierce that stream to save me; it would fly back. I met some of them there, said, "You know, when they crossed that trestle over there, the train washed off the track," between Charlestown and Jeffersonville. And there me trying to get there, and got marooned out there by myself. And I had several days to set out there and think it all over.

Then when I could cross and get over again, I got to Charlestown; they said at there, "We hadn't heard nothing of my wife." I met an old friend of mine, we went walking down the street together; he said, "We will ask that dispatcher."

Dispatcher said, "Why, yes, I put off a sick mother and two children at Columbus, Indiana."

L-79 And when a friend picked me up and took me to Columbus, then when I run into the Baptist church there, the gymnasium room being used for--a auditorium there for sick--where they put their sick. I went in there and the people crying and walking over each other, and--and the little old cots setting around. And I begin to scream; I got frantic. And I begin to scream, "Oh, Hope, where are you sweetheart? Where are you?" And I was running through there, "Where are you?"

And way back over in a corner, I'll never forget it; I seen a bony hand raise up like that [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]... my darling dying. I went over there to her real quick. I looked down at her, those dark eyes was sunk way back in her head, and her beautiful smooth face had drawn in. And she looked at me. And oh, I couldn't stand it. I--I just sunk down the side of the bed, and I said, "Oh, God, have mercy."

And she said, "I look horrible, don't I?"

And I said, "No, you're all right, honey." I said, "Where's Billy Paul and the baby?"

Said, "They're in... Somebody's got them down here in a room."

I said, "Are they alive and all right?"

Said, "Yes."

And just then I felt somebody tap me on the shoulder, and it was the doctor, he said, "Reverend Branham?"

And I said, "Yes."

Said, "Aren't you a friend of Doctor Sam Adair?"

And I said, "Yes."

Said, "Come over here just a minute." I walked over, and he said, "Now, Reverend Branham, I want to give you the shock so you'll know," so you can get over it, said, "your wife has developed galloping tuberculosis; she can't live but just a little bit." Said, "She's dying now."

I said, "Doctor, that can't be so."

He said, "It is so." Said, "Now, don't you let her know it, but you just go on, 'cause Doctor Adair knows about it, and told me to tell you, he didn't want to tell you."

And I said, "All right."

L-80 And I went back over there knowing she was going, and oh my... And I--I asked the doctor, after it dried up and I could take her home? We come down home; we done everything that laid in human power to try to save her life. But we couldn't do it. I give her pneumothorax treatments, went and got a pneumothorax machine. They didn't even have one in town. When she'd hold my hand, I'd have to pry her fingers loose from my hands. They bore a hole in her side and collapsed them lungs. If it was to go over again, I wouldn't do it. And there, how she was, suffered and suffered.

Finally a great doctor from Louisville come over, by the name of Miller. He called me off to one side, said, "Reverend Branham, she can't live but just a little while longer; she's going on." Said, "She can't live."

L-81 Now, I remember, I had to the patrol, I went on... That's when I became into the conservation, working as a--a game warden. And I had to work; I was in debt everywhere. She was laying at the hospital waiting for the last of it. And I remember being up one day, and I heard it on radio, calling me to come in. I'll never forget that day as long as I live. I stopped, took off the belt, laid down the gun, and the hat. I bowed my head before God, looked like my church had gone. Everything was gone, I just--just--I was just all out. Life didn't mean nothing to me. And I said, "Heavenly Father, please don't let her die till I can see her one more time." I was about twenty miles away from home. I said, "Please don't let her die, that I can see her once more."

I turned the lights on, siren, down the road, stopped in front of the--the hospital, went running up the steps just as hard as I could. And I looked, coming down through the aisle, come poor little old Doctor Adair. I love the man; there's just something about him that I love. He's been a buddy to me. We been buddies ever since we were kids. He come walking down with his head down, he looked up and seen me and the tears just rolled down his cheek, and he turned sideways and started running to the side, and I said, "Just a minute, Sam." I walked over; I said, "Is she gone?"

Said, "I think she is, Bill."

I said, "Come, go with me, buddy."

He said, "Oh, Bill, don't ask me to go; don't ask me to go." Said, "I--I can't go in there," said, "Hope's baked a many pie for me, and we've eat together." And said, "That's like my sister, Bill; I--I done all I can do." said, "God knows I done all I could do." Said, "I done the best I could for you, boy, but" said, "she's gone."

I said, "Doc, can't you go with me?"

Said, "I just can't stand it any longer, Bill."

I said, "I'm going."

He said, "Don't... Wait, take the nurse." And the nurse come around; she had a little old medicine there; she said, "Take this medicine just a minute," said, "it'll quieten you nerves."

I said, "No, I don't want it."

L-82 I walked into the room by myself, and she said, "I'll go with you."

I said, "No, I want to go alone." I pulled the door in behind me, like that, and walked over there; they had a sheet over her face. I pulled that sheet back. When I looked laying there, there laid my darling. I looked at her, and she was drawed up like this. I put my hand on her head, and it was sticky. I couldn't see any breath, or...?... And I shook her, I said, "Hope, sweetheart, please speak once to me." I said, "I love you with all my heart, I've always did, and I always will. Please speak once more to me." And I shook her like that. I screamed at her, "Hope." And then she--her eyes come open, those great eyes staring with death in them, just like a angel's eyes. She looked at me, and she started to smile; she motioned for me to get down, and she said, "Oh, why did you call me?"

I said, "Call you?" I said, "Why, honey, I... She's... Have I done wrong?"

She said, "No, you haven't done wrong," she said.

Just then the nurse come running in; she said, "Reverend Branham, you'll have to come out."

And she said, "Come here, Hilda," it was a friend of hers. And here's what made me feel. She said, "I hope when you get married you have a husband like mine. He's been so good to me, so understanding." You know how it make you feel.

I said, "No, honey, I--I--I hadn't been able to do for you like I want to, and we'd have to figure out maybe to buy her a calico dress once every three or four months." I said, "I--you worked and help me to make a living for the kiddies." And the girl started crying, went out of the room, the nurse. I said, "Why did you tell me I done wrong by calling you back?"

She said, "Oh, Bill," said, "You've preached about it, honey, and you've talked about it, but" said, "you don't realize what it is." Said, "I was being taken home by a group of white Angels." Said, "It was a-like a oriental thing with big birds flying from tree to tree, so peaceful."

I believe with all of my heart; her eyes come open to see the vision; she was going into paradise. I don't know whether you believe this or not, but I stood by the bedside and seen saints going, hear them talk to their loved ones that's gone on years ago. You've done that. I just wonder this, friend; now, this is not a doctrine; it's just a thought. I wonder if that

morning when death is so hard anyhow.

L-83 I was standing by the side of a man here a few years ago; I just... He'd been a Christian for a long time, and he said, talked to me, he said, "Billy..."

I said, "Is everything all right, Mr. Bledsoe?" He was about eighty years old.

Said, "Oh, everything's okay, Billy." Said, "I want to see my Lord so bad. My life is all worn and gone." Said, "I want to see Him." He standing there talking to me, his wife there. He said, "Mother, why," he said, "I haven't seen you for years." He said--said, "Billy, do you see her?"

I said, "No."

He said, "Do you know, mother? Mother, this is..."

Oh, Miss Bledsoe said, "Honey, you're..."

Said, "I'm not beside myself." Said, "Sis," she been gone for years. And I just wonder, if that great hour when we're going down, God knows that this soul's coming from the body like a tooth being abstracted from the mouth. I wonder if God don't say to mother, "Go down and stand by Jordan; son's coming over this morning."

And our eyes, when it's breaking from the natural world into the spiritual world, then it becomes a visualize there, and we actually see them standing.

L-84 I thought she was entering paradise; I said, "What did it look like, honey?"

Said, "Oh, it was so beautiful." She said, [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]

"What is that, honey?"

She said, "I must hurry back." She said, "I guess you know why I'm going?" Oh, that's what hurt me.

I said, "Yes."

She said, "You shouldn't have never listened to mother."

I said, "I know it." I said, "I know I shouldn't have listened to your mother." I said, "Honey, someday I will make up for it, so help me."

She said, "Bill, if you'd have went ahead and done what God told you do, it might've been different today."

I said, "That's right," but said, "Sweetheart, you couldn't help it, you were trying to be good hearted." I said, "I know that, honey."

L-85 And so, she said, "Will you promise me something?"

I said, "What is it?"

I don't want to be a baby folks, but oh, when I think of what I done to Christ, the wrong that I've done. And I said...

She said, "Promise me something."

I said, "What is it?"

She said, "Promise me that you will preach that same Holy Ghost Gospel until death shall set you free."

I said, "I promise."

And she said, "I want you to promise something else, that you'll not live single."

"Oh," I said, "I can't promise that, honey; I can't promise that."

Said, "I've got two children," and said, "I don't want them drug from pillar to post. You find some good girl that's got the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and you marry her so you can make a home for the kiddies."

And I said, "I can't promise that, sweetheart; I love you too well."

She said, "There'll be somebody come along, Bill." Said, "Promise me that, will you?"

And I said, "Well, I can't promise that."

She said, "Don't let me go without promising."

L-86 She said, "Another thing," said, "you remember that time when you was in Louisville, and you wanted to buy that little rifle to go hunting with?" I just love guns and fish and things, and I was going away, and she said, "You know that little rifle you wanted to buy, and it cost three dollars down."

And I said, "Yes." Think it cost about seventeen dollars.

And said, "You didn't have money to make the first payment."

I said, "I remember that."

She said, "Bill, I wanted to get that rifle for you so bad." She said, "The allowance that you give me," she said, "I never bought anything, but I've been saving it." Said, "After I'm gone, when you go home, look under that old folding bed up there, at the top on that paper," and said, "you'll find it laying up there."

When I went home found that, about two dollars and eighty cents laying there, where she'd saved to pay that payment on the rifle. You don't know how that made me feel. She was a real girl.

L-87 And she said, "Another thing, I want to apologize to you." Said, "I did something wrong."

And I said, "What's that?"

She said, "I kept something from you."

And I said, "What's that, honey?"

Said, "You remember that time you bought me them stockings?"

And I said, "I don't know."

Said, "We was going to Fort Wayne."

I said, "Yes."

She said, "Them was the wrong kind of stockings."

L-88 What it was; she was taking her--her bath, and we were going to go up to Fort Wayne. Her dad lived at Fort Wayne at that time, and we was going up there. And I was at the, you know where the Rediger Tabernacle is, I just had service. Bert Williams was preaching there then. And we was going to go up there for that night. And she said, "Go down and get me a pair of stockings."

And I never designed clothes for women, and I... She give me about sixty or seventy cents, what it cost to buy a pair of stockings. And I went... She... There's two or three different kinds, one kind called, what is it, chiffon? Is that right? And the next is called, something another like that, rayon, right? Raylon, yeah. Which is the best? Chiffon, isn't it, that Chiffon? And I was... That's kind she wanted.

L-89 I was going down the street. See, if I remembered, I said, "Chiffon, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon."

Somebody said, "Hello, Billy."

I said, "Hello, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon, chiffon."

And I passed Orville Spawn, he said, "Billy," said, "over on the pier out there, perch is biting that long," said, "oh, you," said, "you ought to see it."

And I said, "Sure enough, Orville?"

And I got talking to him, and I forgot what it was. And so I went down; I knowed they had socks at the ten cent store.

So I knowed the girl that worked there, and I went down there and I said, Thelma come up and I said, "Hi, Thelma."

And she said, "Hi, Brother Bill." Said, "What do you want?"

And I said, "Hope wants a pair of socks."

And she said, "Why, Hope don't want socks."

And I said, "Yes, she does, she wants a pair."

Said, "She won't wear socks."

I said, "She does; she wants them full style. That thing, you know, that's got that little thing in the back of it, you know.

And then," I said, "she wants it full style."

And she said...

L-90 Well, that's wrong; that ain't full... What is that? Fashion, Yeah, right. I don't know much about them things, so, and I--I said, "She wants that kind."

And she said, "Well, them's stockings."

And I said, "Oh, all right."

Said, "What kind you want?"

And after I done been so ignorant, I--I hated to show more of it, so I--I said, "Well, what kind you got?"

She said, "We got anywhere from rayon."

I said, "That's what she wants." I never heard the two different kinds; they all sound the same to me. And so I said, "That's the kind I want."

She said, "Hope want rayon stoc..."

I said, "Yes, ma'am."

And they only cost about twenty cents a pair, something like that. She got it; I said, "Give me two pair if that's all they are." So she give me two pair of them. And so I went home. You know how you have to crow to your wife when you got a bargain, you know. And I said, "Oh, I thought I'd tell you, it's--just--just--just..." I said, "I'm Abraham's son," you know, going on to her. I said, "You women go and ribbon shop all day for bargains, and I go downtown, buy two pair of socks, have enough left over to buy a third pair if I wanted to. Had money left over, just two pair. You all shop in Louisville." I said, "Just, you know, you have to be Yiddish, like me, you know." Just going on like that.

And she said, "Did you get rayon?"

And I said, "Yes, ma'am!" They all sound just the same to me.

L-91 So I thought it was something funny when she got to Fort Wayne, she had to get another pair of stockings. But she told me; she said, there in her dying hour; she said, "Bill, them was for an older woman; I give them to your mother." She said, "That," she said, "I kept that from you, 'cause I didn't want to hurt your feelings, that you got."

Oh, my, you don't know how that made me feel then. And I said, "Bless your heart, honey."

And she said, "Now, promise me will you, that you'll not..."

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

She looked up, she said, "I'm going, Bill."

And I said, "Are you, honey?"

She said, "Yes."

I said, "Sweetheart, when you go..."

L-92 Now, we don't believe... Whatever... You believe anything you want to. I don't believe a Christian dies; there's no Scripture for it in the Bible. No, sir. "He that heareth My Words and believeth on Him that sent Me, has passed from death to Life, he... I am the resurrection and life," says God, "he that believeth on Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." That's right.

I said, "Now, honey, I'll take your body out here, and I'll bury it up there in Walnut Ridge. And if Jesus tarries, I'll be in the battlefield somewhere, if not, I'll be buried by your side." I said, "That morning when the sun refuses to shine, the moon turns black like blood," I said, "the world's all cold and waiting." I said, "You go to the city gates if you go before me," I said, "You go over to the city gates on the east side, and you stand there, when you see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, them, coming in," I said, "go to screaming 'Bill' just as loud as you can." And I said, "I'll get the kiddies together, and I'll meet you there at the gate."

And she raised up them bony hands and embraced around it. I kissed her good-bye. She closed her eyes and went out to meet God. That was my last date with my wife. And by the grace of God, I'm trying my best to make double time; that's the reason I try so hard to preach day and night in one campaign after another; I'm trying to make up for what I lost back there.

L-93 Oh, it was hard when I went home. I went home, tried to go to bed. Mother wanted me to come over home; I couldn't. And then I remember, I went over to our little old place. There wasn't nothing there, and we didn't have nothing. I guess, ten dollars would've bought everything we had in the house. But it was ours. She kept it clean; and it was ours; and there was no place like home. I don't care how humble it is, there's no place like home. Mother's place doesn't seem right, nowhere else.

And I went over there, and laid down, tried to go to sleep that night. I never forget it. And I know, a little old mouse had got down in the--a grate where we had some papers up there, and I heard. And it--she used to lay there and she'd have her some candy. And I sound like hands... And I got crying. And I shut the door together, and hanging on the back of the door was her kimono, hanging on the back of the door. And oh, my, there it was all over again. And while I was laying there crying, someone knocked at the door, it was Mr. Broy. He come, and he said, "Brother Billy."

Said, "Yes, sir."

He said, "I got some bad news for you."

I said, "Brother Frank, I just took her to the morgue."

He said, "That's not all of it; your baby's dying also, Sharon Rose."

I said, "Surely, not."

Said, "Doctor Adair's taking her to the hospital now." Said, "He thinks she's dying."

L-94 And I couldn't hold it no longer. I got up, and I tried to walk; I couldn't do it. My strength was all gone. They'd held me by the arms. He set me in the old truck, and he took me out there at the hospital. And I walked in, and here was Sam standing at the door; he said, "Billy, don't go to her." Said, "She's dying, sonny boy." Said, "She's contracted from her mother this tubercular meningitis, and it's went to the spine." And said, "She'd dying." Said, "You can't go in to see her," said, "on account of Billy Paul."

I said, "Doc, I got to see my baby." And I said, "Let me see her, won't you, Doc?"

He said, "Bill, I can't do it on account of Billy Paul," said, "It's meningitis, son," said, "if you carry in you clothes somewhere else..."

I said, "Doc, let me go down there or give me chloroform and let me die with her." I said, "Life, what is it to me now? Everything I've got's gone." And he started crying. I... And the nurse stood there and said, "Now, I can't let you go in there, Brother Branham."

L-95 When she turned her back I slipped around anyhow and went down into the basement, the isolated place, a very cheap like hospital. And there, down there they had a little cheesecloth laying over her face to keep the flies off. And her little spasms she was having with that meningitis had...?... And the flies was in her little baby eyes, and I shoed the flies off of her eyes like that, and looked down at her, said, "Sharon Rose, honey, you're not going to leave daddy are you?" And I looked at her little old fat legs, her little cripple hand, like this...?... on like that as she was drawing, quivering. And she was looking at me, little old lips quivering, I said, "Sharon, are you going to leave daddy?"

And looked like she was--she was quivering so like that, and I had... She looked up at me; she was suffering so hard till one of those little baby eyes... Her little eyes was crossed like that. Looked at her suffering so, and she was, looked like she was trying to reach her little hands to me. Oh, it just tore my heart out of me. Oh, and I thought, "Oh, God." From that day... That's the reason, cross-eyed children, oh, I just can't stand to look at them. You know, God does those things; sometimes He has to crush something to get the good out of it, isn't that right?

L-96 I seen that little thing; I knelt down on the floor, and I said, "Oh, dear God, I'm sorry that I did what I did." I said, "You took my wife, my darling away from me, now You're taking my baby. Oh God, please don't take my little girl; I love her with all my heart." I said, "I'll serve You; I've done all I know to do except go when You told me to down there." And I said, "Please don't take my baby." I said, "I love her. Oh, no, please tell me God." I said, "Take me instead of her."

As I raised my eyes, looked like a black sheet coming unfolded. I knowed she was going then. I raised up and looked at her; I said, "God bless you, honey." I said, "You're daddy's darling." I laid my hand over on her head, and I said, "Oh, God," I said, "I don't know why You're tearing me up like this." But I said, Still that doesn't change my faith in You." And I said, "As Job of old, though You slay me, yet I believe You with all my heart." I said, "I trust You, Lord." I said, "Sharon Rose...?... God be with you, honey. In a few minutes the Angels will come pack your little soul to Mother. And I'll pick you up from here and lay you in Mother's arms and bury you tomorrow." I said, "Lord, I've done all I can; it's not my will now, let Thy will be done."

I laid my hand on her little head like that; I couldn't hold myself no more. I felt myself slinking and went down to the floor. The Angels of God come picked her, and took her little soul away. Her little mouth quit quivering, and her little legs straightened out. God taken her away, and I stood there, my heart mashed to pieces. But I thought, "O God, oh, mercy," I said, "Lord, why don't You just take me, Lord. Just--just let me..." I said, "When I was a kid everybody laughed at me, called me sissy, and I went hungry, and went without and everything else," I said, "here it comes out to a place You give me a little home, and I tried to live right. Then You give me a little home; don't take it away from me. God, let me go with them." I said, "Don't let me stay here any longer; I don't want to stay."

I cried and...?... I said, "But God, in my heart there's something, that I love You, no matter what You've done, I love

You." I lift my hands to Him.

L-97 The nurse come in, looked at the baby and crossed its little hands. She come picked me up, went out. Few days later we took her up there on the hill, Brother Smith, the Methodist preacher standing there preaching the funeral. When they went to lower her down with her Mother, I looked at her. He got some clods of dirt in his hand, walked around, looked over at me, and turned his head; he just... Oh, I just couldn't stand it. Had little Billy Paul leaning on my arm here, eighteen months old. I said, "Billy, honey, someday you and I will go see Mommy and sissy." I heard him throw that clods on top of that casket, saying, "Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust, earth to earth." Oh, my, it seemed like coming down through the little maple trees, the breeze started blowing, saying, "There's a land beyond the river, that they call the sweet forever; we only reach that shore by faith decree; one by one we gain the portal, there to dwell with the Immortal; someday they'll ring those golden bells for you and me." I turned from the grave.

I thought, "Oh, poor little old Billy, setting over my arm, didn't know what it was all about. I'd get his bottles, and put them in my pocket, and pack him like this, and walk the streets. Back and down to the... One night it'd like to kill me. I'd walk him in my arms like this; he's crying for his mother; didn't have any mother to go to. And I was walking back to the yard like this, he said, "Daddy, where is my mama?"

I said, "She went to see Jesus."

He said, "When she coming back, I want her?"

I said, "Well, honey, I don't know. She'll come back."

I started walking like this, I turned the tree where my old folks used to set. I had a little hunting dog out there; I was going to go pet it. He looked at me, said, "Daddy, I thought I seen mother up there inside that cloud."

Oh, I almost fell with the little fellow; I was staggering around, fell on then. Oh, I just couldn't get up. Hour passed, poor little fellow, setting there crying for his mama. I thought, "God... Oh, I know I've I done wrong, but I... Someday it'll be different, surely.

L-98 I went on, tried to go to work. And I remember one morning, I went to work, Public Service Company, working on lines. I climbed up a pole one morning, and I was singing real early. I was singing,

On the hill far away stood an old rugged cross,

The emblem of suffering and shame.

While I was there I happened to look up, and the sun was coming this way, and my, the sun shining against me and on them cross irons of that pole, there it was, like a body moving, the shadow on the side of the hill of the cross. I thought, "Yes, that's right, my sins put Him there. Oh," I said, "God." I just couldn't stand it; I could understand my wife going, but my baby. I couldn't get that baby, why did God take it?

I looked down; I got real nervous; I pulled off my rubber glove, twenty-three hundred running right here by me. I said, "God, I hate to be a coward, but Sharon, daddy's coming home to see you in a few minutes." I pulled the glove off, intending to put my hand on that wire. It'd broke every bone in your body. I'd just got beyond myself; I was going crazy. I couldn't settle myself. And how I ever got off of that pole, I know not yet. But when I come to myself, I was setting down by the pole all hunkered down like this, a crying. And great drops of sticky perspiration was all over me. I believe if God hadn't foreordained, I believe in foreordination. [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]...?... I'd have died right there.

L-99 And I went home. I quit that morning. I went on. I just couldn't stand it. Went over to mother's, and that evening, I was going home. And I reached around side of the door there, and picked up some mail, and when I went inside, the first letter I got said, "Miss Sharon Rose Branham," her little Christmas savings, eighty cents. There it was all over again. I knelt down by that old army cot that I was sleeping on out there in the kitchen. It had gotten cold weather, frost was up over the floor; I knelt down and I said, "God, please let me go, or something; ease my heart; I can't stand it like this."

And while I was praying and crying, I went to sleep. I dreamed that I was out west somewhere. I had on one of those big western hats; and I was going down across the prairie, whistling, "The wheel on the wagon is broken." And I happened to look, and there was an old prairie schooner there, and one of the wheels was broke, hanging down. And standing there was a beautiful young lady in her teens, had blond hair, blowing, her blue eyes, beautiful. I passed by, and I--I took off my hat, and said, "Good morning, ma'am." Started walking on, whistling the, "The wheel of the wagon

is broken."

She said, "Good morning, dad."

I looked around, I said, "What'd you say?"

She said, "I said, Good morning, dad."

I said, "Well, lady, you call me your daddy; you're old as I am."

She said, "Dad, you don't know where you are."

And I said, "I don't understand."

She said, "On earth I was your little Sharon."

I said, "Sharon?"

She said, "Yes, there's no little babies up here, daddy," said, "we're all the same age; we're immortal."

And I thought, "Oh," I said, "where's--where's mother?"

And--and she said, "She's waiting for you."

And she said, "Where's Billy Paul?"

And I said, "Well, I just left him awhile ago." I said, "I don't understand this."

L-100 She said, "Mother's waiting for you up at your new home."

And I said, "New home?" I said, "Oh, honey, there's something wrong here." I said, "Branhams are vagabonds; we never have homes," I said, "We're just poor."

And she said, "But dad, you got one up here."

I turned to look, and there was a great palace, the glory of God coming from around it, she said, "That's your home, dad." Said, "Mama's waiting for you there." And I turned, started up the walk going like this, going towards the home, singing, "My Home, Sweet Home." There she come out to meet me again. Heaven's a real place. She stretched forth, her lovely being, her arms as she always did, that black hair glistening, those eyes, once again in perfect health. She stretched her arms, and she said, "Bill."

I went up to her, and I fell down like this. Many times when I come in from meetings and be so tired, she'd put her arms around me and always pat me. She said, "Oh, honey, you've tried so hard; I'm afraid you're going to break your health down while you're young," and patting me like that, on the back. And I fell down at her knees; and she put her arm around me; she said, "Bill."

And I--I said, "Honey, I don't understand it?" I said, "I met Sharon down there."

She said, "Yes, she said she's going down to wait for you."

I said, "Didn't our girl make a beautiful young lady?"

She said, "Yes."

I said, "She's waiting for Billy Paul, she said."

Said, "Yes, won't you come in?"

And I said, "Honey," I raised up, and I said, "I'm so tired, I can't hardly stand it." I said, "I've just been praying for this sick, and praying for this sick." And I hadn't had these meetings then, remember.

And she said, "I know all about it, Bill."

L-101 Praying for the sick, that's the reason I believe that sometime my going will be from the platform. See? And I had... I said, "I just been praying for the sick; I'm so wore out I can't hardly stand it."

She said, "I know." She said, "Won't you set down?"

And I looked around; there was a great big Morris chair setting there. And I looked over at her, and she looked at me and smiled. She knowed what we was talking about.

L-102 I went one time... I... We just had old hickory bottom chairs; I don't know what you know what they are or not, laced across with across with hickory; we had two. And there was one of them there, and I bought me a Morris chair, paid fifteen dollars for it. I paid a dollar down and a dollar a week to pay for it. And I paid about five or six dollars. I just couldn't make the payments. You know how things get hard, and you can't make ends meet; you know what I mean. And I just couldn't make the payments, and they sent me a dun; they was going to come get it.

And one day I come in, and she had me a cherry pie baked, bless her heart. And she met me at the door, and she said,

"Oh," want me to go fishing or something that night. And she had this cherry pie baked for me; she said--she said, "Oh, I got your the best cherry pie." She knew I loved cherry pie. And I--I thought there was something wrong. And so after supper she said, "Now, I had the kiddies to dig some fishing worms," said, "We're going down the river to fish."

And I seen she was all excited. And after supper I said, "Let's walk in the front room a little while."

She said, "No, no, let's go out..."

And I put my arm around her, I said, "Oh, honey, you're a lovely wife."

And we walked through the door, and she put her head on my shoulder and started crying; she said, "Bill, I tried hard to keep it for you."

I said, "I know, honey, but we couldn't help it." I come in sometimes so tired I couldn't hardly stand it, set down in that little old Morris chair, that little footstool. I set there reading my Bible till I'd go to sleep. And it was gone then; we didn't have it. I couldn't pay for it. And I would be wore out. And she looked around, said, now when I see her in this vision, she said, "You remember that chair?"

I said, "Yes."

Said, "The finance company come got?"

I said, "Yeah, I remember, honey."

She said, "But Bill, they'll never come get this one; this one's already paid for. It's yours, set down, rest a little while."

L-103 Oh, Christian people, one of these days, I know beyond the reach of mortal kin, someday, God only knows just where and when, the wheels of mortal life will all stand still; then I'm going to make a trip to Zion's hill. There I'll see her there again, and I'll see Jesus. I'll see my baby; I'll see my loved ones.

There waits for me a glad tomorrow,
Where gates of pearl swing open wide,
When I've crossed this vale of sorrow,
I will rest upon the other side.

Hallelujah! I love Him today with all my heart. I don't want to be a baby. Oh, God, have mercy. And this old...?... has crossed the streets, the tears and heartaches and troubles. Oh, Father, and I've served the Lord all of my life... Why did I...?... before. And I've tried with all my heart, dear Jesus, to live for You, to do the thing, no matter what this cross is, or how scornful it seems to be. I love You, dear Jesus, you've broken my heart over and over, but I love You for it. And I pray now, dear God, that You'll help me to fulfill the commission that You have given, that I might finish my course with joy. And someday when life's ended, and the treads that I'm walking on now with the...?... My life is more than half gone...?... Someday my soul's got to turn back yonder. Stand by me O Morning Star at that time.

Crossing the country and meeting lovely friends and ministers of the Gospel [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]... praying and the sick and afflicted, see them little bed ridden mothers, oh, how I hate that demon of TB, how that broke my family to pieces. O God, help me. Help me to be faithful to the calling, Lord. And someday when it's all over, grant that this little group here this afternoon, oh I...?... the multiplied thousands of others. When the last battle is fought, the last sermon's preached, may we stand in Your Presence, Lord, rejoicing, crowned with immortality to meet our loved ones.

L-104 And many here today seen the sad streets of life; their loved ones, their mothers and dads, children, has gone on; they know what it is to go home, if it be home. Many men here knows what it is to go home and no mother for his kiddies. Many know what it is to see their little infant playing in their mother's arms put beneath the sod. And God, we're looking forward to the day when Jesus shall come, and the graves will be opened, and those loved ones will be presented again in immortal bodies. Oh, how we love You, Lord, keep our faith solid.

If there be some here today, Our heavenly Father, who does not know Thee in the forgiveness of their sins, has never accepted Thy beloved Son, the only Mediator between God and man, may they today sweetly and humbly slip up their hands and their hearts to You, and say, "Dear Jesus, here I am. Receive me just as I am, that I might give my life and serve Thee. And by Brother Branham's mistakes, I'll never do those things that You have to pull me through the gutters like that. But I'll bypass it by Your grace by touching You now. Grant it, dear heavenly Father. Bless this waiting audience.

L-105 Now, while we have our heads bowed, just a moment. I don't mean to be a baby, while Christians are praying, oh, to live those horrible hours over again. [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.]

Oh Lord...?... here that would come forward now to give their life to Christ? Is there someone here? If you believe that God is in our midst... [Blank.spot.on.tape--Ed.] is there some that'll just raise up their hand, and say, "Brother Branham, I haven't as yet been saved." Will you raise your hand and say, "Pray for me. I--I want you to ask God to have mercy on me"?

Isn't there one in the building? God bless you, brother. One sinner who... God bless you, brother. God bless you; I see your hand. Someone else? Say, "Pray for me, Brother Branham, I want you to remember me in prayer."

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