

My Life's Experiences

Sermon #0782
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Study Given by W. D. Frazee—June 3,

Tonight it is my privilege to share with you some personal experiences. We are told in the Scriptures:

"Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me" Psalms 50:23.

"By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually" Hebrews 13:15.

My mind has been led to what I am going to present to you by something that is going to happen Tuesday night. Helen and I have been married for fifty years. Naturally, I have been thinking about what to share with you as my little part on the program. But there is so much it just buckled and boiled all over, and I thought we have enough for a whole meeting tonight and some for the meeting Tuesday night. So what I am going to give you is prelude to Tuesday night.

We thank the Lord very much for the influence of the Spirit of Prophecy in my life and in Helen's life. You are familiar with Scriptural background of our faith in the prophetic gift. You are familiar with the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist church that was started in the 1844 movement owes its vitality to the leadership of Jesus through this gift. We think of the words of Christ to His disciples that He is the Shepherd, and His sheep follow Him because they hear His voice (John 10). And John heard the angel say that the testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy.

"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me,
See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy
brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God:
for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy"
Revelation 19:10.

So when we hear the Spirit of Prophecy we are hearing whose testimony? The voice of Jesus. I think that is wonderful. The Bible itself has called for this gift in the last church. And the remnant church, according to Revelation 12:17, not only keep the commandments of God, but has the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy.

We have been told that there is no method more successful than witnessing for Jesus in the testimony of our own experience. We need to speak of the precious chapters in our experience far more than we do. (*Christ's Object Lessons*, page 299). As I have been meditation on the providence of God in the fifty years of our married life in God's work, my mind has been led back to the foundation, the roots of our experience. We have so much to thank the Lord for.

I have gone back into my shelves and pulled out some of the old original books that have encouraged my life. For instance, here is a little book called *The Great Second Advent Movement*. This was written by Elder John Loughborough who was one of the pioneers of this movement. This is the book that along with *Daniel and Revelation*, by Uriah Smith, so impressed my father and mother that about the time they were married they were baptized into this message. Father had never been in a church. His parents were not religious. Mother had been a Methodist.

My father came face to face with the prophecies of the Bible as foretold in Daniel and Revelation and fulfilled in history. He came face to face with the fact that in harmony with the Bible there was a prophet who had been given visions as Bible prophets were given. This impressed my parents very much and they accepted this message and were baptized.

I appreciate that. It meant that I was born into this message. I need the saving grace of Jesus. We all need it. But it was a privilege to grow up in this movement. I wish everyone who has that privilege understands it.

As a result of accepting this message, my father lost his job, which was a good government job. We grew up in a poor home. In fact, we were so poor that the only books we had of the *Testimonies* were volumes seven and nine.

While I was a little fellow we moved from Phoenix, Arizona to San Diego, California through a series of providence. Sometimes people call them tragedies, but the providence of God is leading. In 1915 we found ourselves in San Diego, California and met Doctor Henry Tindall, an older brother to Elder John Tindall. He was the chairman of the school board and first elder of the church. He was an ardent student of the *Testimonies*. And we who were somewhat boiled in these principles became more and more boiled in them under his influence. In fact, not long after we got there, my parents were so impressed with the necessity of having all the *Testimonies* that they got all the rest of the nine volumes, even though we were very poor. And we began to get other books of the Spirit of Prophecy.

When I was just a little fellow my father began to have me memorize the Bible. He knew from what Sister White had written that the Bible has an influence on the memory. He wanted his boys to have good memories. He had my younger brother memorize the entire book of Matthew. He had me memorize all the prophetic chapters of Daniel and all the book of Revelation. My brother and I had to hear each other. That was our father's method of recitation. I had to listen to my brother say Matthew, and he had to listen to me say Daniel and Revelation. That way I got to where I couldn't help but learn many of the chapters in Matthew. So we got a double benefit out of that.

My father and mother had no idea that my brother and I would ever grow up, because they expected Jesus to come. I don't look at that as a calamity. I am glad that I grew up expecting Jesus to come soon. I am still expecting Him to come soon. I would hate to lose the sense of the imminence of the coming of Jesus. He has

been at the door all these years, and I am so glad that I know the joy and peace that comes with the hope of the soon coming of Jesus.

I thank the Lord for my parent's influence on me, and in memorizing the Bible. Another thing my father and mother had learned from the Spirit of Prophecy was the importance of work for children. From the time that Jesus was old enough to handle tools He was busy helping to make the family living. I had that privilege too in gardening. My father and mother took in washing so we could have something to eat, and I helped in that. Later in Colporteur work I learned the joy of work.

I was thinking that there is something about doing something tangible that you can see accomplished that brings a great deal of satisfaction. When I have been meeting in committees or interview with people I get hungry for something, but no amount of food can satisfy. I want to do something where I can see something accomplished, like splitting or sawing wood, or even sweeping the porch. It does something for me. People who don't know that crowd around the TV, hoping to get some satisfaction. But it isn't in there. It is in work. And that concept of life came out of these books.

Someone says, We ought to know that without the books.

Of course, the books didn't make any of these truths. They merely revealed what is in God's plan.

Another thing we learned in our association with Doctor Tindall was the influence in the Spirit of Prophecy leading to country living. We eventually moved out of San Diego onto a ranch where we helped to develop ourselves and others in these principles. So for several years we were living in the country in Southern and Central California.

I want to mention another book called *Outline Studies from the Testimonies*. This book came out in 1918. My father got it, and started me studying this book when I was about twelve years old. This has a hundred fifty lessons from the *Testimonies* in it. Each one has a memory gem from the Spirit of Prophecy. So I had a hundred fifth memory gems to commit to memory. I am thankful for them. One was from the book, *Education*. It says:

"With such an army of workers as our youth, rightly trained, might furnish, how soon the message of a soon-coming Saviour would be carried to the whole world! How soon might the end come—the end of suffering and sorrow and sin! How soon, in place of a possession here, with its blight of sin and pain, our children might receive their inheritance where 'the righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever;' where 'the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick' and 'the voice of weeping shall be no more heard.'" *Education*, page 271

Oh, I am thankful that the call came to my young heart to be part of the army of young people to help finish the work. It is true that I am not young anymore, but I am still a part of that army.

It wasn't all things that I took to like a duck to water or like a boy to a watermelon in this book, *Outline Studies from the Testimonies*. I found a statement in here that I didn't really understand. I was just a boy twelve or thirteen when I read it.

"God ordained that the beings He created should work. Upon this their happiness depends. Healthy young men and women have no need of cricket, ball playing, or any kind of amusement just for the gratification to pass away the time. There are useful things to be done by everyone of God's created intelligences" *Life Sketches*, page 87.

I didn't understand that. I spent most of my time in working, but I didn't understand what it said about some of those organized athletic games with a competitive motive. But several years later, when I was taking New Testament history, I studied the life of Jesus in that wonderful book, *The Desire of Ages*. Then I came face to face with the fact that there are only two great motives in this life. One is the motive of love, and the other is the motive of selfishness. Love is manifest in seeking to help others. Selfishness is manifest in wanting to beat others. Winning in God's plan means helping everybody else to win. Winning in the world's plan is to make other people lose so you can win.

In my young life that was a real test. I have come face to face with this conclusion in my own life and the experience of others. I have had the experience of evangelism across this nation, and have seen thousands of people face the decision of keeping the Sabbath or other tests, and I have come to the conclusion that conversion usually takes place on the point of test. It is a different test with different people. It is to some people keeping the Sabbath. To some people it is a matter of adornment and dress. With some people it is a matter of amusement and recreation. With some people it is a matter of their stomachs and appetites. With some people it is a matter of reading. With some people it is a matter of giving up irritations and grudges. But whatever the test is, when we are brought face to face with it, if we will seek the Lord with all our hearts, He will so change and convert us as we look to Calvary that we can find a new experience of joy and satisfaction of being delivered from the very things we thought were necessary.

When I was about fourteen we attended an Oakland Camp meetings, and I heard Elder Meade MacGuire. I was sitting on the bench taking notes with my feet in the sawdust. The Lord spoke to my heart. Although I had given my heart to the Lord before, there came a call to a new dedication. I responded. I am so glad I did, but it meant taking hold of some definite things that I had been wrestling with in the Spirit of Prophecy. It meant also taking hold of the work of soul winning.

"I saw that Satan is a vigilant foe intent upon his purpose of leading the youth to a course of action entirely contrary to that which God would approve. He well knows that

there is no other class that can do as much good as young men and young women who are consecrated to God. The youth, if right, could sway a mighty influence. Preachers or laymen advanced in years, cannot have one half the influence upon the young that the youth, devoted to God, can have upon their associates" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 1, page 511.

Jesus was sending to me the message that there was no other class that can do as much good as young men and women. There are young people listening to me tonight just as I was listening back there years ago. There is no other class that can do as much good as you can, especially in reaching young people of your own age. I know. Take the advantage that you have while you have it. You have the glorious opportunity of being mighty soul winners for God now.

In the providence of God, the two volumes I started to study in 1920 when I was having a new awakening was volume one and volume five. There is a statement written to a young man that impressed me very much.

"One person with pure motives, intent on becoming intelligent that he may make a right use of his abilities, will be a power for good in the school. He will have a molding influence" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, page 112.

As I was praying one morning I was impressed to go down the road before school and meet a young man named Robert, and talk to him about this particular reference.

I said, "Robert, here is a wonderful statement that one student can have a molding influence in the school if he will just give himself to the Lord and let God use him. Will you meet with me in a little prayer band?"

Robert said he would, so we started meeting in prayer, praying for other boys.

"Why do not two or three meet together and plead with God for the salvation of some special one, and then for still another? In our churches let companies be formed for service. Let different ones unite in labor as fishers of men. Let them seek to gather souls from the corruption of the world into the saving purity of Christ's love" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 7, page 21.

What is the mathematics here? Two or three. There is a Bible verse about that.

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For

where two or three are gathered together in My name,
there am I in the midst of them" Matthew 18:19-20.

This urged us to get together in these little groups. Pretty soon we had three boys, and we added another one that we had been praying for, and yet another one. That made five. We split into two bands. That went on until we had over a half of a big school in prayer bands. The faculty never told us to do that. We read it in the books. Thank God, His Spirit moved on our hearts.

I am so glad for the power in these books. It will do it for anyone who will read them and follow them. There is power and life in them. It doesn't make any difference how young you are. If you can read, it is for you. It doesn't make any difference how old you are there is a message for everybody.

When I was seventeen, in the providence of God I was led down to Loma Linda to take the medical missionary course and get ready for soul winning work. I didn't know I would ever be a minister. I hadn't any idea of it when I went to Loma Linda. I was planning to get ready to go down to Central America and have a self-supporting dispensary for the Indians down there. But God had other plans for me.

At Loma Linda I was under the influence of men like Elder R. S. Owen, Elder John Burden, Elder G. B. Starr, and others who had testimonies from Ellen G. White, and had been greatly influenced by the Spirit of Prophecy. Those men believed the Spirit of Prophecy word by word, page by page. Anything that Jesus had said to this people through the Spirit of Prophecy they believed. There wasn't any of this theological hair-splitting and doubts. Nothing of that kind. And I was so glad I was at Loma Linda under men of that type. I want Wildwood to always be like that.

I want to show some providential statements that came to me at the right time. Here is a reference Elder Tindall read to me and my parents when he asked me as a young man to come with him and help in the work in San Francisco:

"Many young men who have had the right kind of education at home are to be trained for service and encouraged to lift the standard of truth in new places by well-planned and faithful work. By associating with our ministers and experienced workers in city work, they will gain the best kind of training" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 9, page 119.

So as a young man I had the privilege of going and carrying Elder Tindall's briefcase. God greatly used us in the great cities of America, winning hundreds upon hundreds of souls through a well-planned medical evangelistic program. I had the privilege of a number of years in training with him there in San Francisco and Oakland, and the Bay area, and God blessed.

But the Lord used these books to impress me with something before I had any idea of going with Elder Tindall, and Elder Tindall had any idea of my going with him. One day I was in the laboratory, and one of the doctors was talking with me about

taking the medical course. This doctor was encouraging me to take the medical course, and I said I couldn't. I read this statement to him:

"Workers—gospel medical missionaries are needed now. You cannot afford to spend years in preparation. Soon doors now open to the truth will be forever closed. Carry the message now. Do not wait, allowing the enemy to take possession of the fields now open before you. Let little companies go forth to do the work to which Christ appointed His disciples" *Ibid*, page 172.

I don't know whether the doctor I read that to was impressed, but Elder Tindall happened to be standing by and listening. God used that experience to impress him to ask me a number of months later to go with him to San Francisco.

I believe in people taking the medical course. I am so glad we have doctors who have had their training and have become legally qualified. But God didn't call me to that particular thing. God called me to be a medical evangelist without any of that recognition. He called me to be a health educator and a soul winner. I have had the joy of working with doctors and nurses and Bible workers for over fifty years in the great cities of America. I praise God for it.

While there in San Francisco working with Elder Tindall God was getting me ready, unknown to my wife, and He was getting her ready unknown to me. I want her to tell you some experiences in her life.

[Helen Frazee shares]

As I was thinking of the impact of the Spirit of Prophecy in our lives today, I had to go back quite a few years. My mother was baptized when I was two years old. Her mother had been a Seventh-day Adventist, but somehow in our country the Spirit of Prophecy was not read. I am not sure we knew very much about it. We did not eat pork, and that was about the extent of our knowledge of health reform. The Lord knew what He was getting us ready for.

When my grandmother passed away my mother went to join her brother at Saint Helena. Her brother was taking a nursing course there, and my mother had the privilege of learning about the Spirit of Prophecy. She learned to love the Spirit of Prophecy and the principles that were taught along the lines of health reform. This was a great blessing to us. It meant that my sister and I didn't have the struggles to overcome many things in our diet that my mother had to struggle with, because we started eating properly early in our lives. This was a great blessing.

The Lord had several things in our minds to teach us as we went along the way. The first impact of health reform and health related things took several years to work in our lives. When I was about fifteen the Lord led us to a camp meeting. Several things happened at this camp meeting that were the turning point in our experience. There was a young minister at this camp meeting by the name of Frazee who presented some subjects. That was fifty-four years ago. I often remember the texts he preached on, and I asked my husband today if one of the

references he gave wasn't in volume five. That was the reference he led our minds to. He told us to go home after the meeting and read this reference and put it into practice:

"Those who will put on the whole armor of God and devote some time every day to meditation and prayer and to the study of the Scriptures will be connected with heaven and will have a saving, transforming influence upon those around them" *Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. 5, page 112.

My mother and I needed very much to get this kind of a foundation in our experience. Neither of us had formed the habit of praying every day and having a devotional period. But after that camp meeting we began doing it. It was a great blessing to us. We learned many things through the years that would have been difficult to take hold of if we hadn't met the Lord every day.

At this same camp meeting there was a second time I heard Elder Frazee speak. And there was another very prominent person at this meeting who was to have a great influence on our lives, Sister G. B. Starr. She had lived many years with Sister White, and traveled with her. She had meetings for the ladies. She spoke on things that we were interested in, and gave in such a beautiful way the principles of Christian dressing that my mother was eager to get home and make the changes that were necessary in order to get her clothes to please the Lord. It was a great blessing to have learned it from someone who we knew was telling it straight.

Sister White died a year before I was born, so I never had the privilege of seeing her, but I count it a great privilege to have known some of these people who lived with her and knew what the things we read really mean to us today.

After we went home from the camp meeting the Lord arranged another providence. A woman about my mother's age lived at Saint Helena where we were living at that time who had been for several years with the evangelistic work that Elder Frazee and Elder Tindall were doing in San Francisco. This woman was brought into our lives in a very providential way. She and my mother began having prayer bands together. My mother was the hydrotherapy supervisor at the sanitarium at that time. We became very well acquainted with this dear sister, and little by little she brought to us many principles that were to guide in our lives from the Spirit of Prophecy.

I was thinking about the experience we had in learning health reform and learning to deny our appetites in certain areas. Some people think that isn't necessary, but young people need to learn it. It is very important, and important that young people learn it when they are very young. The first thing the Lord would like for young people to meet up with is to overcome appetite, and that seems like a big battle.

I can remember in my teens that if I could overcome eating between meals I would be ready for heaven. I had many tests on eating between meals. During the summer we teen age girls would help at the sanitarium by taking care of the children

of people who came to visit their relatives. They would give us money and tell us to go to the store and buy little John and Mary an ice cream cone, and of course get one for ourselves. That was a temptation, and I thank the Lord what He had helped me by that time to learn Him well enough that I could buy the ice cream cone for Mary and not eat one myself.

When this woman who was helping us learned God's way better she, she presented to us the principles of association with young people. I realized the victories I had gained in overcoming appetite were the same kind of victories that I needed to gain in overcoming improper association. The thing that helped me the most at that particular time were the things she studied with me on the association of young women. This was a great guiding principle. This was the next step that the Lord had me, as a young person, to take.

I am so thankful for the *Testimonies* on many points. When I think of all the things that the Spirit of Prophecy has said, what I appreciate mostly is controlling not only our feelings, but controlling who we shall marry. It is because of these instructions that both my husband and I were saved from something that would have not have been the best plans for our lives, and the Lord led us to each other, which was the best way.

[W. D. Frazee resumes]

If Helen and I had no other reason for thanking the Lord for the Spirit of Prophecy than this, we would have a lot to be thankful for. It takes fifty years to get a golden wedding. There is no other way. It is worth it.

The book, *Ministry of Healing*, has had a tremendous influence on my life. I have this book that I used at Loma Linda. It is old and has a third binding. I want to read out of it tonight the instruction that guided my life as I drew near the time of God's plan for me to have a companion.

"Let a young man seek one to stand by his side who is fitted to bear her share of life's burdens, one whose influence will ennoble and refine him, and who will make him happy in her love.

"A prudent wife is from the Lord.' 'The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her. . . . She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.' 'She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her,' saying, 'Many daughters had done virtuously, but thou excellest them all.' He who gains such a wife 'findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favor of the Lord.'" *Ministry of Healing*, page 359.

As I have said on other subjects at other times, there are many things I believe and enjoy that I can't comprehend at all. I can't comprehend the fact that God can give me the best wife in all the world, and do it for other men too. I don't propose to be so lacking in faith in God's instructions that I settle for anything less than that ideal. I recommend it to every young man who is not married. Don't settle for anything less than the best woman in all this world.

And to you who are married, no matter how disappointing life may have become to you, God wants you to make the best of it. And God's best is hard to beat. You can have not merely a golden wedding, but all the golden years on the way. God's plans are wonderful. God's ideals are beautiful.

Back to what I have just read. You may call me simple and foolish. You can call me anything you want to. But I believe that the Holy Spirit had me in mind when that page was written. I believe that. Why? I go not back merely to what Sister White wrote on page 359 of *Ministry of Healing*, I go back to Proverbs 31 and read there the description of a husband who has that attitude toward his wife, and who knows that his wife is the one for him. And I know that is me.

You say, Well, it ought to be true for others.

Certainly. God's plan for each individual is so unique that there are no two alike. And when I contemplate the fact that God would have sent His Son to die for just one, then I know He loves me so much that if I were the only one who needed Him, He would have come for me.

Both my wife and I, before we were married, were not thinking in terms of marriage. We were expecting Jesus to come soon. I thank God that He had us in the soul winning work thinking of that. There are some things you can see not by looking straight at them, but by looking at something else. So if you want to be real happy in marriage, I advise you do not think of it as the great goal of life. It isn't. The great goal in life is soul winning. Marriage is a part of that.

But the greatest goal is union with Jesus Christ. Instead of making marriage less important, that makes it far more important. Instead of making it less successful, it makes it more successful.

I thank God with all my heart for Jesus. The glory is all His. I could have spent the whole evening and more telling about all my faults and mistakes and failures both before and after I was married. I am a poor human just like everybody else.

But the thing I want to talk about is not how bad we are, but how good Jesus is. The thing I like to talk about is not our failures. It is His successes. Whether that success is in making up your deficiencies, or in keeping people from making mistakes, either way it is His righteousness, now ours. Anything the human being accomplishes that is right and good, it is God's Spirit who ought to get the credit, not human beings. So we are not to hear congratulations from friends, but praise and thanksgiving to God.

I commend to you this wonderful Bible, the anchor of faith and hope. I commend to you these wonderful volumes of the Spirit of Prophecy which was foretold in the Bible to come in the last days to magnify the Word of God, and fit a people ready for the coming of Jesus.

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