

THE MAKING OF A MAN GOD CHOOSES AND USES

By Pastor Paul Smith

The attempt to tell the story of how God's sovereign purposes begin in a man's life cover much more than one can understand and express in words. It can only be of worth as we attempt to connect the grace of God extended into the hearts of men born in the likeness of sinful Adam.

I will try to begin my account as I would learn later in life as I try to put together things my older sister Virginia has gathered through her years of research. My account begins in Ventura California in 1929, where we made periodic trips to Santa Barbara to visit the families of my father and mother. My 'big grandma' was from Charleston South Carolina where I heard stories about their plantation and Civil War experiences. My Grandfather was from Philadelphia, where his father was a Federal Court Judge and lived comfortably in their homes in Philadelphia and on the Boardwalk in New Jersey. My father and three brothers attended military academy and were all Chief Petty Officers in the Navy during WW 1, stationed in San Francisco.

My Grandfather was hired as Vice-President of the Southern Pacific Railroad located at 1 Market Street in San Francisco. He was Vice President in charge of land. The railroads were given every other section of land to help finance their cost of construction. It was his job to bring wealthy families from the East to beautiful Southern California and Santa Barbara was the place to live and enjoy winter months. My Grandfather founded the Santa Barbara yacht club and provided the land for the Ojai country club. The museum on State Street in Santa Barbara was a gift of the family to the city. My cousin Shelly has continued a relationship.

My mother's family moved to Santa Barbara from Fresno California. My mother was French – Irish; while my father was English-Scotch. My mother became queen of the Santa Barbara fiesta. My father fell in love and married the queen. When my sister Virginia was born, 'big grandma' would not visit the

newest member of the family because my mother was from a lower class. To settle the trouble mom and dad moved South thirty miles to Ventura. This is where Chuck, and my younger brother Bill and I were born.

My father was in charge of sales at the Southern Counties Gas Company on California Street as you go up the hill to the Court House. He belonged to service clubs in town and was also a volunteer sheriff.

In the evenings my mother would take our sister in her baby buggy walks. One evening a large tent was set up in the downtown city park. Mom went in to see what had come to town. There was music and then a speaker on the platform preached a Gospel sermon. My mother heard a gospel message for the first time and went forward with others who wanted to accept Christ as Lord. When she went home she excitedly told my father she had fallen in love with Jesus. In an angry response my father asked: "Who is He?" Mom responded "He is the Son of God, and paid the penalty for our sins, that brings love and joy within the heart."

In anger, my father told mom he wanted to know who these people were and that her love for Jesus was "alienation of affection". The next evening dad carried his loaded 38 revolver to the meeting and listened to a gospel message. When the speaker asked if any wanted to receive Jesus Christ and be forgiven of their sins, my father went forward and accepted Christ as his Lord and Savior.

Their lives were miraculously changed. Dad and mom became active in a newly established church pastored 'Bert Teaford', a former banker and later became Dean of Life Bible College in Los Angeles. Dad became the Sunday school superintendent at the Ventura Church around 1924 and mom taught a young girls class. The church became the largest in Ventura. Dad would also minister each Sunday afternoon at the county jail. It was not unusual to have newly released prisoners sharing meals in our home.

During the depression years Chuck and I would set up cots in our three car garage for Civilian Conservation Corp, C.C.C. The C.C.C. young men worked on Federal land building parks and National vacation spots. After attending church

on Sunday mornings my mother prepared a delicious chicken dinner for all to enjoy.

At the beginning of WW2 we moved to Santa Ana. Our father became involved in the Christian Business Committee, Gideon's, Christian Service Organization (C.S.O.), Wycliffe Bible Translators. My father and Dewey Lockman, a rancher, established a foundation that sponsored Christian projects and other Christian groups in Santa Ana. Dad shared his love for Jesus with everyone he met.

I remember my dad came by to visit me when I worked at the Y.M.C.A. in Santa Ana. He shared Christ with, Arch Raitt, my boss. Arch Raitt was the father of the baritone singer John Raitt. John sang and acted in the Broadway musical Oklahoma. John's daughter was the popular singer Bonnie Raitt.

Arch Raitt was the "Boy's Work Secretary" at the Santa Ana Y.M.C.A. I worked in the Boy's department. I also worked as life guard, in the weight room, and gym. My friend Rolf Engen and I helped Arch Raitt at 'Camp Osceola', in the Barton Flats area of the San Bernardino Mountain's. We helped Arch prepare Camp Osceola for the summer camping season.

'Camp Radford' was owned by the City of Los Angeles and was rented out for summer camps. Camp Radford was near the Barton Flats area of the San Bernardino Mountains. Dr. Harold Chalfant, director of the International Foursquare Youth and missions programs, was the director of the Christian Summer Camp at Camp Radford.

A person in our church had offered a scholarship to any young person who wanted to go to a Christian Summer Camp. Free anything was hard to pass up. When Chuck was about 17 years of age he decided to go to Camp Radford. Little did Chuck know that in the divine providence of God, Jesus was waiting at this camp to reveal Himself as the Lord of Chuck's life. This camp experience would change the destiny of his life.

Chuck took a bus from Santa Ana to Redlands where met Dr. Harold Chalfant at the Carnation Malt Shop. Then Chuck had the ride of his life as he sat

in the back seat of Dr. Chalfant's 1938 Ford. Tires were squealing around the mountain curves as they sped up the hill to Camp. Chuck was immediately taken by Harold.

At that time Chuck's plan was to become a neurosurgeon. His study courses were heavy in science. He had seriously begun to doubt the Bible story of creation, as he was being exposed to the evolutionary theory, heavily promoted in the secular educational system. Our parents were very committed Christians and Chuck was at a turning point in his life.

One evening Harold led worship at a fire side 'Victory Circle'. As Chuck listened something beautiful was happening. On that unforgettable night God began a wondrous work in his life. Unknown to Chuck, the Lord had brought him to camp that He might become more than his Savior. Jesus wanted to become the Lord of his life. Harold inspired Chuck to completely commit his life to Jesus Christ. No other person had done that before. Harold said, "We have only one life, and it will soon be past; and only what is done for Christ will last." That made sense to Chuck!

The Lord began dealing with Chuck's heart. He sensed the Holy Spirit saying, "If you give your life to medicine, you will be able to help people, but at best the help will be temporary. There is a deadly malady that is plaguing all mankind called sin. If you give your life to healing man from this plague of sin, the results will be eternal. Do you want to devote your life to things which are temporal or to things which are eternal?"

The next morning as Chuck sat in Harold's Science and the Bible class. Chuck began to get answers to the questions that had brought doubt and confusion to his mind. As he listened to Harold he thought, this guy knows more about science than any of my science teachers at Santa Ana High School and what Harold was saying really made sense. The class brought him into a tremendous appreciation of how great God really is. He was animated with a clearer understanding of the person of Jesus Christ! At that point Chuck became a committed Christian.

That was the beginning of a wonderful relationship with a man whom God used in Chuck's life to inspire him to become a "fool for Christ." As Harold Chalfant often said, "You are a fool for someone; you might as well become a fool for Christ." The last night during Victory Circle, Chuck threw his "pine cone" into the fire as a token of his commitment to Christ. As he stood by the fire pit he was forever changed by the marvelous power of the Holy Spirit who used a man named Harold Chalfant to challenge him to totally commit his life to Christ. He stood at the invitation for all of those who were willing to respond to God's call to go to Bible College in preparation for the ministry.

It was the next year my brother Chuck encouraged me to go to Camp Radford. We organized a pick-up softball team and won the trophy. I remember the last night after Harold challenged us to commit our life to Christ and find a quiet place to pray and seek God's will in how to invest our lives. I headed up some broad stone steps that led to an upstairs assembly room. In the dark noticed someone sitting on the steps next to the rock wall. As I passed I heard him speaking what sounded like Chinese. As I passed I remember thinking: I believe that's Chuck! I backed up quietly and confirmed it was him speaking in some oriental language.

When I was pastoring in Victorville a number of years ago I was asked to teach from the Book of Acts, chapters one and two, to a gathering of men. I decided to call Chuck and ask him about summer camp. "Did I hear you speaking in Chinese on the steps going up to the assembly room at Camp Radford?" He said: "Yes, that was me."

In the Calvary Chapel Distinctives Chuck has written two chapters related to the Holy Spirit. Chuck clearly and faithfully taught and wrote in the 'Calvary Distinctives', chapter three titled: "Empowered By the Spirit" with this verse from Acts 1:8 *"But ye shall receive power, **after** that the **Holy Ghost** is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."*

One of the unique positions of Calvary Chapel is a clear teaching about the empowering of believers with the Holy Spirit. Being filled is distinct and separate

from the indwelling of the Spirit that takes place at conversion. It is important that you carefully read all the supporting scriptures that follow. In John 14:16-17, Jesus told His disciples,

“I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; (17) Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.”

“With you” speaks of the ‘para’ relationship, or ‘coming along side’. The ‘en’ in the phrase “in you” is equivalent to our English preposition ‘in’ that refers to: “He is going to dwell in you.” We believe that the Holy Spirit is dwelling **with** a person prior to conversion. He is the One convicting a person of their sin, convincing them that Jesus Christ is the only answer. The Holy Spirit is constantly testifying of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment to come.

We also believe that the moment a person receives the witness of the Holy Spirit, Jesus takes away their sin. When anyone invites Jesus to come into their heart and take over and rule and control their life, He will.

We read in 1 Cor. 6:19-20 *“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in (en) you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”* and also Eph. 5:18 *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit.”*

We believe that every born again believing child of God **has the Holy Spirit** dwelling in them. He is under God’s direction to yield his body to the control of the Holy Spirit and be constantly filled with the Holy Spirit.

We also believe that the Holy Spirit provides power in the life of the believer to give him victory over sin, the flesh, and the Devil and to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ. See reference in 2 Cor. 3:18 *“But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord”*.

We believe that there is a **third** relationship that the believer can have that is separate and distinct from the first two. In Acts 1:8 we read: *“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.”* This third relationship is when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. This word *“upon”* (‘epi’) in the Greek, means ‘upon’ or ‘over’. Some prefer the word ‘overflow’ because this experience allows the Holy Spirit to ‘overflow’ in our lives. We are not just ‘vessels’ containing the Spirit, but we become channels by which the Spirit ‘flows forth’ to minister a ‘living Christ’ to the world around us. So whatever name you call it isn’t important. The main question we must ask concerning this most important and empowering experience for our ministry is simply: **HAVE YOU BEEN FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?**

I cannot and must not finish the most wonderful part of this Camp Radford story without sharing about a young beautiful girl wearing ‘peddle pushers’ sitting on a sloping bank next to the ball field. Chuck and I were sharing the positions of pitching and catching. It was the final championship game of the summer camp baseball teams. The Lord enabled me to hit three home runs for the beautiful girl from El Monte who was sitting on the bank wearing ‘peddle pushers’. Her name was Ruth Lee Franklin. She was the only girl I ever dated. It took me one year to get up the courage to hold her hand and another year before kissing her, with encouragement from my brother Chuck and his wife Kay. Later, Ruth and I were married. A relationship sealed in Christ.