

## *Father Leads the Way 2*

Paul McMillan

My Dad became a strong leader in the little country church where I first took my stand for Jesus. He took his Sunday School class responsibility seriously. I can still see him seated at his little desk, that was almost filled by the typewriter, studying his Bible while preparing to teach his class. As he studied the scriptures that say that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost he recognized the need to lay aside those habits that were polluting his body. The class members supported him and remained loyal to him. I imagine that it was a notable occasion when he announced his decision to stop drinking and smoking. However a crisis was soon to arise.

In order to encourage young people to be more active in church, Church leaders decided to ordain junior deacons. Dad strenuously objected. He cited 1 Timothy 3:8-10. "Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain." He said deacons are to be adults ready to bear responsibility. They were to be proved before serving as deacons. In spite of his objections the church proceeded with their plan. Consequently he and his class decided to move out and start their own church.

One of the class members was a contractor and he offered his home as a place to meet. Each Sunday they would meet to worship, study and plan. Someone offered a piece of property where they might build. The contractor engaged an architect who soon had drawings of the elevations of the proposed church. I can still see in my minds eye when those drawings were unrolled in front of the group. It was to be a stone church; a substantial building. But God had other plans.

I was 8 or 9 years old and for sometime had been afflicted with repeated bouts of tonsillitis. When my parents approached our family physician about this, he declined to do surgery but referred them to another physician who had a small hospital and operating room only 3 or 4 miles farther out in the country from where we lived. So it was that in the Spring of 1939 I was given ether. When I woke up with a dreadfully sore throat my Dad was seated on one side of the bed and a nurse was on the other side. They were talking about the Bible. This began a series of weekly Bible studies with Mother and Dad while us children roamed the woods and pasture lands.

The physician and staff were Seventh-day Adventists. Dad soon learned that the book that he had been using to help him teach his Sunday School class, *Bible Footlights*, was published by the Adventists. So before long Dad's plans to build a church were dropped. We began attending Sabbath School and Worship services in the Doctor's waiting room. Dad had a difficult time accepting the teaching that the seventh-day Sabbath was not only for the Jews but also for Christians. But Galatians 3:29 convinced him that if we are Christ's we are also children of Abraham. So it was, to acknowledged our expanded understanding of God's will and way, our entire family was baptized again, one year before Pearl Harbor, on December 7, 1940, when I was 10 years of age.

My walk with Jesus has not always been from a total commitment. But God is good and today I recognize that He continues his work of transformation in my life. I long to see others know Him as Savior and Lord and join us in looking for the great day of His appearing.