
*CRUCIFIED
WITH
CHRIST*

*The Life and Ministry
of
William Marvin
Greathouse*



William J. Strickland
and H. Ray Dunning

We owe a debt of gratitude to William J. Strickland and H. Ray Dunning for capturing the spirit and story of a giant in the holiness movement. These men were younger contemporaries of Dr. Greathouse and obviously love the man they have written about. We all do. Greathouse is the most humble, self-effacing man I have known. We have admired his unique blend of courage and humility. He courageously dealt with difficult, divisive issues, seeking all the while to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. You will read stories of that courage in this book—building a church gym, leading a college and a seminary to academic integrity, defending the writing of a friend under attack, and empowering women in ministry. The fingerprints of Dr. William Greathouse will be found for years to come on sermons, worship, sacraments, institutions, and theologies in the holiness movement. Dr. Greathouse, in you we have come to know more clearly what Jesus is like. Your life has exegeted Galatians 2:20. On behalf of a grateful church, we say, “Thanks be to God.”

Dan Boone
President
Trevecca Nazarene University

Janice M. Greathouse



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William M. Greathouse, 1998, in the School of Religion offices

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*This volume is gratefully dedicated to
William and Jean Graves.*

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FOREWORD

IF ANY PERSON WE HAVE PERSONALLY KNOWN demonstrates the quality of life embodied in St. Paul's confession of being "crucified with Christ," it is William Marvin Greathouse. He is fully human, yet he never veered from his commitment to follow the upward call to be conformed to the image of Christ; he is gifted with intellectual abilities well above the average, but he never lost the common touch; he has been elevated to positions of authority in the church, but he never allowed those positions to affect his relation with persons of other stations in life. As many have said of him, he is always the same. He has had numerous opportunities to manifest negative attitudes toward others who opposed and criticized him (usually unfairly) but always put the best possible interpretation on their behavior and always sought to maintain open communication with such persons.

As his former students, we count it a privilege to have had the opportunity to share intimately with Dr. Greathouse as he has shared the memories of his life and ministry and trust we have appropriately interpreted these for others. We freely admit a bias since his commitment to the Christian faith, his understanding and comprehension of the Wesleyan tradition, and the spirit of Christ he has manifested in every situation has positively influenced our thinking and desire to be consistently Christian.

One of the issues we faced was how to refer to the subject of this book. We decided to attempt to refer to him in a way appropriate to the period of his life being discussed and/or the context being described. As a child and teenage young man, he was called Billy. Close family members still address him in that way.

Some long-time acquaintances continued to use that name while peers in the academic and professional realms addressed him as “Bill,” as did his wife. In the context of academia and the church, he was respectfully referred to as Dr. Greathouse. Many of his former students and others respectfully and affectionately called him Dr. G., as did the authors of this work.

The biggest obstacle we faced was in eliciting from Dr. G. the relevant information needed to develop this book. He has been so concerned that he not be exalted but that Christ should be glorified that he was reluctant to be open with us. We had to assure him consistently that our concern was the same as his. Near the end, he gave us a motto he wanted us to place at the end as a final word from him. But it seems more appropriate to preface this work with those words from the subject of this book so that the reader will be able to sense the attitude of William Greathouse throughout the entire work: “I am an unworthy servant, I have only done my duty” (See Luke 17:10).

—William J. Strickland
and
H. Ray Dunning

PREFACE

I WAS PRIVILEGED TO BE A PART OF THE GENERATION shaped by the “Trevecca Connection” that included Greathouse, Dunning, Wynkoop, and Strickland. I was one of their students. Their teaching and example saved me from an upbringing in narrow, legalistic religious fundamentalism and exposed me to authentic Wesleyan theology.

My life has been intertwined with Dr. Greathouse in gracious and interesting ways. One of my first exposures was when I was a sophomore at Trevecca Nazarene College attending the 1972 General Assembly in Miami. I remember the gossip between voting sessions accusing Dr. Greathouse of being soft on tongues, too liberal, and a dangerous leader. You will read the story of this chapter in his life in the pages that follow and see both how unfair these accusations were and how the hand of God directed his life in those circumstances.

I was privileged to serve as a reader for Dr. Greathouse during his presidency and professorship at Nazarene Theological Seminary. He would remove his shoes, sit on the floor, scatter the papers between us, and we would grade the class work on Romans and Wesley. If a student had done poorly, he always wanted to know if there were extenuating circumstances—heavy work schedule, family responsibilities, or financial pressure. The student mattered to him. But the rigor of study also mattered.

I recall one grading session prior to the General Assembly in Dallas, Texas. We were talking about his love for the work of the Seminary, and he commented on his fear that he might be elected general superintendent. It was a sad day for many of us

when his fear became reality and he went from the Seminary classroom to leadership in the global church.

For those of us who were seminarians under his presidency, his life was a constant lesson. We learned to lead worship by watching Dr. Greathouse sing—not as the official song leader behind the pulpit, but as the obvious worship leader sitting on the platform, head reared back, heart engaged, and voice booming in song. His worship of God was contagious.

Dr. Greathouse was not “sinless.” I personally caught him in a “lie.” He was preaching a revival in Raleigh, North Carolina, on the Sunday the congregation was considering me for their pastor. He told them that I was a better preacher than he and that they should vote for me. How does a congregation respond to such pressure from a general superintendent? I still believe that vote could be classified a “shotgun ballot.” He was an ardent supporter of those he mentored.

He ordained me in Greensboro, North Carolina. When he placed his hands on my head, I felt the weight of the ancient church and simultaneously the empowering lift of the Holy Spirit. Dr. Greathouse gave me wisdom during two pivotal pastoral moves. Once he counseled me to pray for one week toward going to a new assignment and then to pray the next week toward remaining where I was and to go where peace was found. When elected as president of Trevecca, I called two people: Ray Dunning and William Greathouse. I was wrestling with the same issue you will read about in this book—am I a pastor, a writer, a teacher, or a church administrator? My specific question was “Can one do the college presidency from a theological vantage point?” Dr. Greathouse replied, “Well, why else do you think they would elect you?”

Please forgive the intensely personal element in this brief reflection on Dr. Greathouse, but it is the only way I know him, which is another way of saying that holiness is highly relational. He is the most humble, self-effacing man I have known. We have admired his unique (irenical) blend of courage and humility. As a movement, we have seen our share of sweet, sugary niceness that masquerades as holiness while never addressing the hard

essentials. Dr. Greathouse took a different path. He courageously dealt with difficult, divisive issues, seeking all the while to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. You will read the stories of that courage in this book—building a church gym, leading a college and a seminary to academic integrity, defending the writing of a friend under attack, empowering women in ministry. He had enemies along the way, but he would never have called them that, and they would not remain his enemies very long. His Christian love, like R. T. Kendall's definition of grace, was irresistible. His courage has served the church by delivering us from bad theology and sloppy thinking. The fingerprints of Dr. William Greathouse will be found for years to come on sermons, worship, sacraments, institutions, and theologies in the holiness movement.

We owe a debt of gratitude to William J. Strickland and H. Ray Dunning for capturing the spirit and story of a giant in the holiness movement. These men were younger contemporaries of Dr. Greathouse and obviously love the man they have written about. We all do.

It is good to publish this book while Dr. Greathouse is still living among us. These words of appreciation will be welcomed by those who have sat under his preaching and teaching, who have read his writings, and who have served under his administration. Dr. Greathouse, in you we have come to know more clearly what Jesus is like. Your life has exegeted Galatians 2:20. On behalf of a grateful church, we say, "Thanks be to God!"

Dan Boone, President
Trevecca Nazarene University

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A Life in Preparation

WILLIAM MARVIN GREATHOUSE WAS BORN ON April 29, 1919, at 5:15 AM in a two-story house at the corner of 13th and Cherry, in Van Buren, Arkansas. He was the first child of James Marvin and Mary Juliet Kierolf Greathouse, native Tennesseans who had moved to Van Buren from Jackson, Tennessee, shortly after their marriage in order for James to take a job with the Missouri-Pacific Railroad. Van Buren, situated on the banks of the Arkansas River, was a small town located on the western edge of Arkansas near the Oklahoma border and nestled in the foothills of the Ozark Mountains. Greathouse remembered the town's steep main street as "similar to the terrain in Gatlinburg, Tennessee." Van Buren's main claim to fame seemed to be the fact that it was the birthplace of Bob Burns, the famous comedian who has been characterized as the "Will Rogers of Arkansas."

Both sides of his family had been active members of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in Tennessee. His maternal grandfather, a lay preacher, wanted Greathouse's middle name to be Marvin, in honor of Southern Methodist Bishop Marvin, whom he admired, and conveniently that name also honored Greathouse's father, James Marvin. One of Mary Greathouse's uncles was a founding member of Highland Avenue Methodist Church in Jackson, Tennessee, and another had been actively involved in the founding of Lane College, an African Methodist Episcopal college in Jackson, of which Alex Haley, the author of *Roots*, was a graduate. With such strong family ties to the Methodist Church, James and Mary continued their ties to that denomination by uniting with the Van Buren Methodist Church.

In 1923 when a nationwide railroad strike occurred, the small family returned to Jackson, Tennessee. After several months of moving from place to place attempting to get resettled, James Greathouse became a shop foreman with the Gulf, Mobile, and Ohio Railroad, and the family settled at 331 North Cumberland in 1930, where much of Greathouse's childhood was lived out until he completed high school.

The years in which Greathouse was growing up were during the heart of the Great Depression and resources were limited, but he described happy years in which much of the family life revolved around the church. Father Greathouse was Sunday school superintendent and song leader, and all the family was involved. It appears that little discipline was needed, but Mother Greathouse exercised close supervision of the life of her children, giving guidance where needed. Family activities were limited largely to drives during summer evenings and occasional visits to sights in the Jackson area.

The Greathouse home was located near the railroad tracks, which made it subject to frequent visits by hobos. Mother Greathouse with her compassionate spirit always provided a meal for them to eat outside in the yard. She would send the food out with Billy, accompanied by instructions for him to be sure and testify to them. But, as Dr. G. said, he did not have anything to testify about at that time.

Greathouse had two siblings. Mary Catherine was born in 1929, ten years after Billy's appearance, and then two years later, a second son, Charles, was born. Mary Catherine married Claude Richardson, who became a Baptist pastor after completing his studies at Union University. They are at this writing retired in Columbus, Georgia. After earning a PhD in math theory, Charles had a distinguished teaching career: first at Vanderbilt University; later Samford University, where he taught for nineteen years; and finally at Lambuth University in Jackson, Tennessee, the family hometown. During his retirement years, he learned the Spanish language and at his own expense visited Central American countries regularly, gaining permission to speak in high school classes and doing personal work resulting in the conversion of thousands to Christ.

Two major events during Billy's formative years gave direction to the rest of his life and became pivotal to his own self-understanding. The first was his conversion at the age of sixteen, an event that effected a major transformation in his inner life (see chapter 2), and the second was a call to ministry to which he responded about a year later. Shortly after his conversion and becoming, along with his family, a member of the new Church of the Nazarene in Jackson, Tennessee, his pastor, C. O. Miller invited him to go to a camp meeting in California where he encountered preaching that enhanced his commitment to Christ and furthered his pursuit of entire sanctification.

When Billy returned to Tennessee from his trip to California with Pastor Miller, he put actions to his strengthened commitment to follow Christ by accepting active leadership roles within his local church. One of those new responsibilities was his service as the president of the congregation's Nazarene Young Peoples Society.

At that time the Jackson Church of the Nazarene was a small congregation, which worshiped in an abandoned former Presbyterian church building on North Royal Street. Eventually, the congregation relocated to Highland Avenue in what was once a grocery store. It was in this humble setting that he began to sense a call to preach, and he said, "As the young peoples' president, I would sometimes become inspired to turn the lesson into a brief sermon."

Prior to that time, he had never felt "an inclination toward preaching." He explained, "If you should pin me down with the question of *when* I was called to preach, I could not tell you. I simply *knew* in the depths of my being that I was to be a minister of Christ. Every instinct in my being underscored that conviction. I knew that God had laid his hand on me—to preach and teach his Word. It was then, and still is, the deepest knowledge of my heart."

One dramatic moment, however, made God's call a public fact. In a Sunday evening service during the winter of 1936, his pastor, C. O. Miller, called on Billy to offer the evening prayer. He described that moment in this way: "As I was praying, I suddenly heard myself crying out in ecstasy, 'Yes, Lord, I will preach!'"

From that moment my face was set in one direction to prepare, as adequately as possible, to preach and teach God's word."

Preparation for Ministry

Billy's early education had prepared him for the path that his subsequent career took. His high school had three tracks: the classical, the vocational, and the scientific. During his first two years of high school, he had taken the classical courses, but between his sophomore and junior years he was considering changing to the vocational track. It was in August of that summer when he was converted. Of that period of his life, Greathouse said,

My conversion not only brought me to Christ; it really refocused my whole educational outlook. As a result, I decided to remain in the classical track in which I was taught Latin for four years and other courses that were pre-college level. It was shortly thereafter that I felt the call to preach. My intellectual life was stimulated. I had never read much before then, but following my conversion, I began to read the Bible avidly and other books as well.

Billy graduated from Jackson High School in May 1937 with a classical diploma and a grade-point average of 92.6%. That fall he enrolled in Bethany-Peniel College in Bethany, Oklahoma, upon the encouragement of H. P Jett, his pastor at that time. Jett had attended Eastern Nazarene College and graduated from Gordon-Conwell College. Greathouse refers to his one year at Bethany as "one of the great years of my life." He describes Bethany's impact:

I took Bible and holiness classes from Charles McConnell, who drilled into me the great holiness texts. His teaching was very influential in my future thinking. He was the first to implant

in my mind the idea that holiness begins with unresisted conviction. I developed some kind of understanding of the process of sanctification as well as the critical cleansing moment of entire sanctification. A. K. Bracken was president, and he had a profound influence on my thinking and later became my colleague at Trevecca. Mendell Taylor was my history professor.

Greathouse says that he was “distracted” during his year at Bethany. His friendship with Ruth Nesbitt had become more serious, and by the summer of 1937, they were talking about marriage. With Ruth in Tennessee and him in Oklahoma, they concluded that he should transfer to Lambuth College in Jackson for his second year of college. His mother had attended Lambuth when it was known as Memphis Conference Female Institute.

As a double major in religion and English literature at Lambuth, Greathouse encountered professors who introduced him to thinkers who would prove to be profound influences on his life. Professor J. W. Walker gave him his first set of Wesley sermons and taught him Greek. He began to read E. Stanley Jones who would through his writings guide the young man spiritually through those years.

When he returned to Jackson after his first year at Bethany, he discovered that the Jackson church, of which he was a charter member, was in a weakened condition. Worshipping on the upstairs floor of the Jackson YMCA, the congregation had lost members who left with the pastor to start the Jackson Gospel Church, which soon folded. Greathouse was soon asked to become the supply pastor.

During this time he was exposed to the sermons of biblical expositor, J. Glen Gould, professor of theology at Eastern Nazarene College who had received the MA degree from Boston University under the tutelage of George Croft Cell. Gould was the first Wesley scholar Greathouse knew in the Church of the Nazarene, and Gould’s sermons were so rich that Greathouse began to draw from them extensively in his own preaching.

He continued his classes at Lambuth, accepted the appointment as supply pastor and subsequently married Ruth in December 1938. Their married life together extended through five pastorates and various roles in the life of the Church of the Nazarene.

A Personal Story of Grace

There are two ways of telling a life story: one is from the inside and the other is from the outside. Each has its own unique perspective. While the facts are the same, the interpretations may vary. The Confessions of St. Augustine (354–430 AD) is the classic example of the first and was in fact the earliest Christian instance of someone exposing his or her inner life in such an open way. Augustine’s method was of such revolutionary significance that historian of philosophy Wilhelm Windelband referred to this approach to “truth” as the “metaphysics of inner experience.” One of the unique features of The Confessions is that it is not a diary, recording contemporary accounts of day-to-day experiences, but it is the interpretation of a life journey from the perspective of later understanding. Augustine was a mature bishop, well versed in theological analysis, and it was from this point of view that he interpreted the course of his life. The end result was as much a theological treatise as a spiritual autobiography.

William M. Greathouse has shared with us his “confessions.” Like Augustine, it is a confession of the grace of God at work in a human life that sought to be completely yielded to God and interpreted in the light of Greathouse’s mature understanding of a Wesleyan view of the gracious activity of God in his redemptive work. Like that of St. Augustine, it often becomes an exercise in theology and biblical interpretation with even some evangelistic overtones. But knowing Dr. Greathouse, it could not have been different. The following is an edited account synthesized from three different written narratives and an oral history done in 1991.

My Spiritual Autobiography

By

William Marvin Greathouse

MY LIFE IN CHRIST REALLY BEGAN WITH MY mother's conversion. She and Dad grew up in the Lambuth Memorial Methodist Church in Jackson. They were nominal but active Methodists. She had joined the choir at the Van Buren church where, on the last Sunday of a revival conducted by a visiting evangelist, she was transformed from a nominal church member to a vital Christian. During the evangelist's corporate prayer for the seekers kneeling at the chancel, Mother was radically transformed.

Returning home, she informed Dad that their lives were going to be different: they were going to live for Christ as a family. At that time she began praying for a son, like Hannah of old, with the promise to consecrate him to God and his service if he would answer her prayer. Within the next year I was born. Faithful to her promise, she and Dad presented me for Christian baptism. I understand my baptism to have been my baptism into Christ's body, where the Spirit began early to work in my heart (1 Cor. 12:12-13). Therein convinced, I have never been re-baptized. Faithful to her vows, with Dad's cooperation, she brought me up "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4, NRSV). Although an answer to prayer, I may not have been exactly what mother expected. She once told me, "You were the ugliest little baby I had ever seen!"

From my earliest years, I was taken to Sunday school and kept for church, an uncommon practice for children at that time. Among my early memories was going down with my parents to receive communion. It was during those years that I learned the Apostle's Creed. At the age of twelve, I learned the catechism and joined the church on an Easter Sunday. This Methodist heritage has profoundly influenced my thinking and perspective about the Christian faith for which I am thankful. It is of interest that I am the last general superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene to have been nurtured in the Methodist Church.

My Conversion

The years following my mother's conversion to a vital relationship with Christ were years in which God was preparing me for my own experience of transforming grace. I would say that through my mother's guidance and instruction I was the recipient of prevenient grace. Much like Suzanna, John Wesley's mother, my mother exercised careful and strict supervision of my deportment. I remember her first religious instruction. "Billy," she said to me one day, "when the old devil tempts you to do something wrong, just say to him, 'Get thee behind me, Satan!'" He often did—and gave me a little push which was hard to resist. However, Mother also prepared me for God's forgiveness when I failed: "You must try *not* to sin; but if you *do* sin, confess and return to God immediately—and he will forgive you." She was pointing me to 1 John 2:1–6—a passage that has had a steadying effect for me and which I later found to be one of John Wesley's important emphases. On another occasion she took me to a children's meeting with the instruction, "Don't look around just sit and keep your eyes on the teacher!" I literally obeyed and developed a crick in my neck for my trouble.

In the summer of 1933 a significant development took place in my spiritual life. W. A. Swift, a retired Methodist minister who belonged to Jackson First Methodist, evidently had become hungry for a revival. Out of his own pocket and on his limited income, he rented a tent which he located at the corner of Cumberland and Ingleside (our neighborhood ball field) and brought in a Methodist evangelist and quartet from Asbury College. Out of mere curiosity I visited the services one night with my parents. The events of that night are still fresh in my memory. At the close of his message the evangelist said, "If you know in your heart you are ready to meet the Lord this moment, raise your hand." Having been brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, I began to raise my hand—but I was inwardly checked. For the first time in my life, I *knew* I was *not* prepared to die. I went directly home to

begin a prayer I offered nightly until my conversion: “Lord, I have failed today, but I promise, tomorrow will be different.” Nevertheless, the next day it was the same round of sinning and repenting. I was *bound* by the power of sin and *could not* obey. I was the “wretched man” of Romans 7: With my *mind* I was a slave to the law of God, but with my *flesh* I was a slave to the law of sin (Rom 7:23). That revival prepared the way for my conversion two years later in a Nazarene home mission campaign on the same corner.

In the summer of 1935, the Tennessee District Nazarene Young People’s Society, along with Nashville First Nazarene Church, sponsored a home mission campaign in Jackson. Earle and Elizabeth Vennum were the evangelists, with a male quartet from Nashville First providing great music. Several members of the quartet became lifelong friends—and were leaders in First Church when I later became their pastor in 1958.

The Nazarene tent was raised on the same lot where the 1933 Methodist tent revival had been held. The year previous to the Nazarene campaign, the Four Square Gospel Church had conducted a month-long revival on the same lot. Since people had little to do on summer nights during the Great Depression, the Pentecostals attracted a significant number of attendees, including me—but not my parents. They had no time for “holy rollers.” So, when the Nazarene tent was raised at Cumberland and Ingleside Drive, Dad commented, “Well, another bunch of ‘holy rollers’ have come to town.” So my parents stayed home from the Nazarene services.

Two major life-transforming things happened during this meeting. First, I met for the first time Ruth Nesbitt from Paris who was a member of a singing group from the Paris Church of the Nazarene. She also had painted the sign for the campaign that read, “Nazarene Home Mission Campaign: Rugged Gospel Preaching!” That was before the days of “positive thinking,” but the words revealed the depth of Ruth’s convictions from which she never swerved—God bless her memory! Ultimately, she became my wife.

The other pivotal event was my conversion. Earle and Elizabeth were not only effective evangelists; they were also wise soul winners who began to advertise “children’s services,” which caught the attention of my young sister, Mary Catherine. Mother soon yielded to Catherine’s pleading and gave her approval to attend these special services. Catherine’s reports then led to mother’s attending a Sunday evening service—a life-changing event for the Greathouse family. Her statements that night were unforgettable. Upon returning from hearing Elizabeth Vennum’s sermon that night, she exclaimed to me, “Billy, there *is* something to holiness!” And as the cliché goes, “The rest is history.”

I decided to attend the meeting myself on Monday night, August 5, 1935. I slipped in under the flap of the tent and found a seat on the bench—at the end, “in case of an emergency.” I entered into the congregational singing. But it was the message of the evangelist that triggered the response. I cannot remember whether it was Earle or Elizabeth who preached because I was under deep conviction. The Spirit was speaking to my heart, drawing me to Christ. At the conclusion of the sermon, I literally *ran* to the altar. Suddenly, the Spirit *flooded* my being with “joy unspeakable and full of glory!” At an altar worker’s suggestion, I began to pray. God’s miracle, however, had already occurred! *The Spirit had brought to an end the reign of sin, inaugurating in its stead the reign of grace in my heart and life—by my simple, obedient turning to Christ!* As Jesus himself said, “If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed” (John 8:36 NRSV).

The next evening I could not restrain myself from witnessing to the miracle that had transformed me the previous night. I spontaneously broke out in singing my testimony, in the words of a song I had learned at First Methodist, written by B. H. McDaniel:

My heart glows with rapture, my cup runneth o’er.
Such joy, so transporting, I n’er knew before,
It flows through my soul from God’s heavenly store,
For I have been born again.

Chorus

I'll sing it and tell it wherever I go,
I want all to hear it, I want all to know
The joy of salvation that makes the heart glow,
For I have been born again.

I had been lifted out of Romans 7 and into Romans 8 by the grace of God. This chapter became my spiritual home, and its riches continue to unfold before me as I obey Paul's admonition at the heart of the chapter: "Brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live" (Romans 8:13 NRSV).

At the conclusion of the home mission campaign, Mother and I, along with a number of others, became charter members of the new church. Later, Dad joined and became a Sunday school teacher and song leader, giving the remainder of his life in liberal support of Jackson First Church of the Nazarene.

My Pursuit of Sanctification

For almost two years—from August 5, 1935, to the first Sunday of May 1937—I remember my life as one of perpetual victory in Christ. However, I soon began to hear preaching on entire sanctification and came to believe that God *willed* that I be *entirely* sanctified. And thereafter I began to seek the "experience." I later came to understand that seeking the "experience" was a mistake and that I needed to open my being to God in such a way as to allow the Holy Spirit to invade and purify my inner being. This searching was quite a transition in our family. Earlier my mother had warned me about the holiness people and said that she didn't believe those who claimed you could be freed from sin. In fact, some of those in my family history had been among the Methodists in the 1880s who had rejected holiness teaching. I think that W. B. Godbey had been through that part of the country and probably had preached in

the Campbell Street Church. My family, it would appear, must have been negatively impressed by the holiness message. But in the revival of 1935, my mother went forward to be sanctified wholly. Later she said to me, "Billy, there is such a thing as sanctification." That statement was quite a contrast to what she had told me earlier: "Don't believe anyone who says that he's sanctified because sanctified people say you can't sin."

Wanting me to see the Church of the Nazarene at its best, my pastor, C. O. Miller, took me along with him in his new Graham-Paige sedan to visit the Southern California camp meeting in Pasadena, California. En route we spent a night at a tourist court in Big Springs, Texas. In my devotions that evening I read First Thessalonians in its entirety from the KJV New Testament Brother Miller had given me. As I read, I grasped the instructive doctrinal story line of the first four chapters. When I came to the climax of the letter, Paul's closing prayer for his converts struck me: "And the very God of Peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it" (5:23-24).

Surely it was God himself who prompted me first to read this epistle, and then to enlighten me to understand *entire sanctification* as the will and promise of God for all Christian believers. There is a significant difference, however, between *understanding* and *experiencing* entire sanctification. As I reflect on the incident that took place one night during the Pasadena camp meeting, I see that difference. That night I was seated directly in front of the pulpit—and when the altar call was given, I went forward to be entirely sanctified. C. W. Ruth, assistant general superintendent under Phineas F. Bresee, came down to pray with me. Nothing happened. I was seeking "the experience" rather than the person of God himself. My mistake!

Since I was greatly enjoying and profiting from the ministry of the camp evangelists—B. F. Neely and H. V. Miller¹—I was not unsettled by the above failure. Despite my profit from the preaching of these spiritual giants, and the warm spiritual atmosphere of the camp, I returned home without attaining my secret

goal to become *truly* sanctified. My search continued for the next seven months. But it was a misguided quest as I have come to see: *I was seeking an “experience” rather than God himself.*

As time passed, my search became desperate. One Sunday in May of 1937, I locked myself in the bedroom after Sunday dinner and prayed earnestly seeking God. I prayed, “Lord, I’m staying here until you do something I know about!” I heard a voice say, “Would you be willing to go back to the Ozarks and the world never know you lived?” I said, “Lord, I couldn’t care less if the world ever knew me.” The Lord was dealing with my lurking pride. Then I heard the voice say, “Would you be willing to go to China?” I replied, “Lord, if you’ll let me take Ruth, I’ll go!”² I heard nothing, no response until finally, the voice said, “Would you be willing to go alone?” After a prolonged struggle, I finally said, “If that’s your will, I will go alone!”³ I did not know at the time that my church then would not commission a single male missionary.

Instantly I jumped to my feet in ecstasy, my heart flooded with the Spirit and joy unspeakable. My quest was satisfied. Christ *had me—totally!* That Sunday afternoon I had prayed with John Wesley:

Is there a thing beneath the sun?
That strives with Thee my heart to share.
Ah, tear it thence, and *reign alone*
The Lord of *every motion* there!

In subsequent years the guy lines of my life have been severely strained, more than once. But Christ has kept me hedged in at the very point where he met my deepest need, at the point of abandonment to his will—and trust in his power to keep me only to himself. At times my grip on him has seemed tenuous, but his hold on me has never weakened, “to the praise of the glory of his grace” (Eph. 1:6, KJV).

To be truly sanctified is more than an experience; at heart it calls for a death to *pride* and *idolatry*. Diane LeClerc argues that for the male, it means death to *pride*; for the female, death

to *idolatry*.⁴ For reasons of his own, God demanded of me a death to both pride and idolatry. In a word, I was “crucified with Christ.”

However, Galatians 2:20 calls for careful exegesis, lest I presume the sin problem is thereby settled forever for me. Entire sanctification is not a *state*; it is a *conditional relationship*. The text begins with the declaration “I have been crucified with Christ.” The perfect tense in the Greek here means “I have been, *and now am*, crucified with Christ,” justifying the KJV rendering, “I *am* crucified with Christ.” It also supports J. O. McClurkan’s doctrine of an *ever-deepening* death to self.⁵

Nevertheless, to get a full picture of Galatians 2:20, we must take into account both parts of the text, as rendered by the KJV: “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; *and* the life I now live in the flesh, [“Not according to the flesh,” Luther] I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Oswald Chambers is helpful here. The first half of v. 20 he views as our *worship* in the *inner shrine* of our person, God’s temple; he views the second half as our *service* in its *outer court*, our public life. In 2:20a Paul calls for living out the implications of my total, ongoing identification with Christ’s death and resurrection—in my secret worship of *the Son of God*; in 2:20b he calls for my appropriating the proffered grace of God (see 2:21) for a life of daily victory in Jesus: “the life that I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (KJV).

“The faith *of* the Son of God” (KJV) is the Greek *objective* gender—like the faith *of* Abraham in Genesis 15:6. In this reading of Paul’s testimony here we find comfort in comparing 2:20b with 2 Timothy 2:13: “*If we are faithless, he remains faithful—for he cannot deny himself*” (NRSV). God does not leave us to our own imperfect struggles, as we purpose to be holy as he is holy. No, what he requires, he provides by the gift of the indwelling Holy Spirit!

Most modern versions, however, render Galatians 2:20b “by faith *in* the Son of God.” A scholar-friend, with whom I spoke

about the Greek here, explained that the dilemma may be resolved by viewing 2:20b as a *subjective-objective* gender. If this be so, Paul is declaring that we are sustained by “*our faith in the faithfulness of the Son of God,*” an interpretation consistent with what Paul asks, and then Paul answers, in Romans 8: “Who will bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us” (vv. 33–34 NRSV; now read Romans 8:35–39). Thank God, we may here and now live in confident hope of glory, if we “walk in the light as he is in the light” (see 1 John 1:6–2:1).

Oswald Chambers puts his final point in these words:

Once you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, you will never be moved again. This is the meaning of sanctification. God disapproves our human efforts to cling to the concept that sanctification is merely an experience, forgetting that even *our sanctification must also be sanctified* (see John 17:19, emphasis added). I must deliberately give my sanctified life to God for His service, so that He can use me as His hands and His feet.⁶

THE CAREER OF WILLIAM M. GREATHOUSE PASSED through various phases of ministry, but initially he perceived his call as simply a call to preach. Like most young people, he envisioned this call to be to the pastoral ministry, and to that end he pursued his education. Only later, as his special gifts came to be recognized, did other forms of ministry emerge. Therefore, it was as a pastor that his ministry began. That beginning was somewhat unexpected and, from his perspective, somewhat premature. He was only nineteen years old at the time. However, he tackled the task with relish while continuing his educational preparation.

Jackson, Tennessee (1938–1941)

Upon returning to his hometown in 1938 after a year at Bethany-Peniel College, Greathouse found the church of which he had been a charter member in a demoralized state. (Those circumstances were described in chapter one, page five.) This small congregation of about twenty-five to thirty Nazarenes was in need of a pastor. Under these circumstances, in December 1938, District Superintendent J. D. Saxon appointed young Billy Greathouse as “supply pastor.”

This appointment became the occasion for Greathouse to bring to fruition his cherished desire to make Ruth Nesbitt his wife. They were married on December 20, 1938. She quit a job in Paris, Tennessee, as a legal secretary to become the “first lady” of the Jackson parsonage, which was located in the family

home. They later moved to an apartment in a home formerly occupied by the Greathouse family.

Within a year the church purchased an abandoned house at 720 E. Chester and transformed it into a church building under the leadership of the pastor and wife with help from other church members. Together the pastoral couple used a blowtorch to remove the old paint from the exterior weatherboards. On one occasion a nest of hornets which the pastor had disturbed took after him, almost causing him to fall off the ladder. He remembers Ruth laughing mercilessly at his discomfort.

They removed walls from inside the house in order to create Sunday school rooms along with a nice chapel, with a pulpit and an altar. The new chapel would seat about seventy-five or eighty. Here the new pastor was soon preaching on Sundays and Wednesday nights, drawing on the sermons of J. Glenn Gould of Eastern Nazarene College, whose full-length sermons were published in the *Preacher's Magazine*.

Greathouse began to implement one of his lifelong concerns in this early pastorate. He introduced his people to the great hymns of the church, and under the influence of Andrew Blackwood's *The Fine Art of Public Worship*, he sought to cultivate a meaningful worship experience marked by depth and seriousness.

The United States was becoming involved in the war in Europe at this time, and the small Jackson congregation benefited from an influx of Nazarenes from other places who had come to work in the new munitions plant in Milan, Tennessee, (north of Jackson).⁷ By 1940 attendance increased from about thirty-five to seventy.

An event that was a highlight of this first pastorate was the visit to Jackson by evangelist Bud Robinson, who was touring the Tennessee district. Since his building was so small, Greathouse secured the First Methodist Church for the service. A large crowd gathered to hear Robinson, who was widely known in those days. He reportedly had invested in the education of at least 115 young ministers, both Nazarenes and Methodists. He preached on "Seven Reasons Why I Believe in

Second Blessing Holiness.” While seated on the platform, Greathouse counted thirty-nine hands raised for prayer at the close of the message. Next morning at breakfast, “Uncle Bud” told the famous story of the lady who asked him, “Uncle Bud, how can a sanctified man drink coffee?” His answer was, “Little sister, let me show you,” and he proceeded to lift the cup to his mouth and drink a cup of coffee to show her.

During the Jackson pastorate, H. H. Wise, pastor of Nashville First Nazarene Church, and the people of that church sent a \$10.00 weekly donation to help with expenses. Greathouse’s first convert was a young man named Clarence Simpson, who paid Jackson church manufacturer Budde and Wise to build an impressive pulpit that Greathouse used while in Jackson. On the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of Jackson First Church, which had been organized by District Superintendent L. B. Matthews in 1935, the Tennessee district assembly met at Lambuth College in Jackson with general superintendent William M. Greathouse presiding, and his former pulpit was presented to him. It is now located in the Tennessee district office in Nashville.

While serving as pastor of the church in Jackson, Greathouse continued his education at Lambuth College. Being without an automobile, he walked across town five days a week to attend classes. During the thirty-minute walk he redeemed the time by preparing himself for the day. He graduated from Lambuth in 1941 with an AB degree in literature and religion. Lambuth later honored him as an outstanding graduate of the College. Although not an accredited institution at the time, Lambuth provided Greathouse with an excellent educational background. However, its curriculum did not provide all the courses he needed in order to meet the ordination requirements of the Church of the Nazarene. Thus, the young pastor recognized that he must move on and desired to relocate to a church where he could continue his educational preparation for ordination. District Superintendent Saxon recognized the promise of this budding pastor and his desire to move and appointed him as pastor of the Franklin, Tennessee, Church of the Nazarene

near Nashville. Greathouse's plan was to enroll at Trevecca Nazarene College.

Franklin, Tennessee (1941-1945)

The town of Franklin had a rich history. It was named for Benjamin Franklin, a close friend of Hugh Williamson, M.D., a member of the Continental Congress, for whom the county was named. In 1941 the town was still in the process of recovering from the devastation resulting from the Civil War. Before the war it had been one of the wealthiest counties in Tennessee, best described as "a tranquil, small county seat."⁸ One of the war's bloodiest battles had been fought on the site, resulting in more than 8,000 casualties and turning every home and building in town into a hospital. In 1941 it was still surrounded by giant plantations and populated with magnificent Antebellum and Victorian homes. The town had a sense of history that fostered a somewhat aristocratic attitude that was shared by the congregation of the Church of the Nazarene, which was well respected in the community. Several of the members were from old-line families of Franklin and Williamson County.

The move to Franklin by the Greathouses was not necessarily a smooth transition. The previous pastor had died from a heart attack, and the church board had given his widow the privilege of continuing to live in the parsonage, which Superintendent Saxon had described to the Greathouses as "the second nicest on the district, next to the Chattanooga First Church parsonage." It was a beautiful stone structure located at the corner of Fourth and Margin, surrounded by beautiful, mostly two-storied homes. But the living arrangement created some tensions that were relieved when board members reversed their decision regarding the former pastor's wife's permission to continue living in the parsonage. Ultimately, all persons involved experienced a happy outcome.

The Church of the Nazarene was recognized as one of the five main churches in town along with the Episcopal, Methodist,

Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches. The other pastors of Franklin warmly received Greathouse, hospitality which opened the door for him to take part in community services. The editor of the Franklin newspaper interviewed him not long after his arrival, an event that reflected his acceptance by the community. He spoke regularly in the high school chapel and one year preached the high school baccalaureate sermon.

While at Franklin, Greathouse enrolled at Trevecca, graduating with a bachelor of theology degree (ThB) in May 1943. During the winter of 1942 he had a Doctrine of Holiness class under Professor M. E. Redford that met at 7 AM three days a week. At his Trevecca graduation, he proudly took his wife, Ruth, and their newborn daughter, Rebecca Ruth, with him. His mother and dad also came from Jackson to be a part of his graduation. With his ordination requirements met, he was ordained an elder in the Church of the Nazarene, by General Superintendent J. B. Chapman on September 17, 1943, at the annual assembly of the Tennessee District Church of the Nazarene, held at Nashville First Church, and then dedicated his first child, Rebecca Ruth Greathouse. William Greathouse was now a father and a full-fledged minister of the gospel.

However, he was not finished with his education. While in Franklin, Greathouse became a friend of Kenneth Pfeiffer, the pastor of First Presbyterian Church, who had gone to Vanderbilt to pursue MA studies in theology and who encouraged Greathouse to go to Vanderbilt. With this encouragement, in the fall of 1944 he matriculated at Vanderbilt University School of Religion, choosing the master of arts in theological studies, rather than the master of divinity, having had several practical theology classes already. The decision to attend Vanderbilt proved to be one of the most important in his life. His theological studies at Vanderbilt greatly enriched his preaching and ministry (and later his teaching).

His professor of theology at Vanderbilt was Edward Ramsdell, who introduced him to classical Christian theology in Augustine, Luther, Calvin, and Wesley, as well as contemporary neo-orthodox theologians such as Emil Brunner, Karl Barth,

and Reinhold Neibuhr. Ramsdell's course *The Theology of John Wesley* gave Greathouse a solid understanding of Wesley which helped him throughout his teaching and preaching career.

Roy Battenhouse was his professor of church history and patristics. Under his tutelage, Greathouse developed his understanding of the early church councils and particularly the importance of the Incarnation and the Christus Victor motif of the Atonement. He came to see the relation between the Christus Victor understanding of the atonement and Christian holiness, recognizing that the death and resurrection of Christ was the defeat of sin and death and the ultimate crushing of Satan. His master's thesis was entitled "A Study of Wesley's Doctrines of Sin and Perfection as treated by George Croft Cell, Umphrey Lee, and William Ragsdale Cannon." In that paper he made the case for Wesley's view of sanctification, drawing in part on E. Stanley Jones's emphasis on crisis. He graduated in 1948 with a master's degree in theological studies.

One winter the Ministerial Association of Franklin sponsored a series of Sunday evening services with each pastor having one night to cast the vision of his denomination. Greathouse was asked to talk about the Church of the Nazarene. After he told about Phineas Bresee's vision of holiness and the mission of Christianizing Christianity, the rector of the Episcopal Church, Roy Battenhouse, who was also one of his professors at Vanderbilt, suggested that if the Church of the Nazarene had been born in medieval times it would have been a holy order in the Catholic Church. This insight helped Greathouse shape his vision for the Church of the Nazarene in the context of universal Christianity. He saw that because it has received the gift of the Spirit it exists to give itself away to the larger church and to the world.

His first service as pastor of the Franklin church was the fourth Sunday of October 1941, preaching to a congregation of about fifty. His Sunday school superintendent was James Elmer Graves, the father of Harold B. Graves, a teenager at the time who settled his relationship to Christ under Greathouse's ministry. Harold was destined to become a leading Nazarene

pastor, evangelist, and district superintendent.⁹ Among other young people in the Franklin church was Thomas Jackson, who later served for many years as engineer for "Showers of Blessing," the Nazarene radio broadcast, and Grace Caldwell, a Vanderbilt Latin major who later taught at William Carey College in Mississippi.

There were a number of true saints in the Franklin church, including Mrs. W. S. Moss, who had been sanctified during a revival with Sam Jones.¹⁰ Another was Brother Will Coleman, who at first said the idea of a young twenty-three year old becoming pastor bothered him, but he confessed that Greathouse's sermons "spoke to his heart."

The Franklin pastorate involved years of financial challenge. The church had suffered during the Depression, so the board insisted on keeping a balance of \$500.00 in the bank. The pastor's salary was \$17.00 per week, plus 50 cents for cutting the grass, clipping the hedge, cleaning the church, and firing the furnace for services in the winter. On that amount he bought \$500 in furniture at Sears for the empty parsonage. He acquired his first car, a 1935 Chrysler sedan, which he purchased with the gift of his mother's diamond ring.

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, while having dinner at the home of his Sunday school superintendent, they heard the radio announcement of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, and for the remainder of his Franklin pastorate, World War II was always in the shadows. On D-Day, a special service was held at First Methodist Church.

Nashville Immanuel (1945-1949)

In the spring of 1945, J. D. Saxon appointed Greathouse as pastor of Nashville Immanuel Church. He was discouraged from accepting the appointment by H. H. Wise, pastor of Nashville First Church of the Nazarene, who had come to know Greathouse both as one of his students at Trevecca and as a fellow pastor. Knowing both the Franklin and Immanuel

communities, Wise doubted that Greathouse would fit in the latter, which was located in a working-class neighborhood at 3315 Charlotte Avenue. In addition, Greathouse had received a long-distance call from friends in the congregation who, although they liked him personally, warned him about a strong woman schoolteacher who had been a thorn in the flesh of the two preceding pastors. After praying and seeking the mind of the Lord, Greathouse accepted the appointment. On Pentecost Sunday in 1945, he preached his first sermon from the broken text, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began . . ." (Acts 2:4). Incidentally, the congregation that day numbered approximately 120, the number of the disciples gathered on the original day of Pentecost in Jerusalem. That day was the beginning of a different but rewarding ministry.

In addition to the persons from the neighborhood, the congregation included Trevecca students and Nazarenes throughout the city. The woman about whom he had been warned turned out to be one of his staunchest supporters and became a lifelong friend. She had simply been concerned that things be done "properly and in order."

In August 1948, H. H. Wise died of a heart attack, after a quarter century ministry at Nashville First Church. The loss of their beloved pastor resulted in several people from First Church beginning to attend Immanuel. In time other Nazarenes over the city began attending, including Claude and Pauline Jackson, who had moved to Nashville after he had been transferred to Nashville from the Franklin Kroger store. Other Franklin parishioners would appear from time to time, including Harold Graves, who by that time had enrolled as a Trevecca student.

Whereas, Greathouse's ministry in Franklin had been most effective in bringing young persons and couples into a relationship with Christ, with only minimal success in revivals and evangelistic services, at Immanuel there were sweeping revivals and visible success in Sunday evening services. It was a different culture at Immanuel. Attendance averaged about 135 to 140.

In April 1946, A. B. Mackey, president of Trevecca, invited Greathouse to join the Trevecca faculty part time, instructing him to “teach enough heresy to inoculate students against error!” The opportunity to teach opened up a new relationship with the college community, one that resulted in a number of students becoming affiliated with Immanuel Church. Accepting Mackey’s offer meant that, while Greathouse was the pastor of Immanuel Church, he was also teaching a class load of twelve hours at Trevecca and taking eight hours of graduate work at Vanderbilt. At the same time, he intended to make one thousand pastoral calls a year. To say the least, he was extremely busy but happy. His wife, Ruth, played the piano in most of the services and fully supported him in the work. On December 4, 1946, he and Ruth welcomed their second child, a son named William Mark. Greathouse was blessed with great energy in those happy days at Immanuel, and he thanked God on every remembrance of those busy years.

Clarksville First Church (1949–1955)

At the close of the Tennessee district assembly at Nashville Grace Church in 1949, General Superintendent G. B. Williamson appointed Greathouse as pastor of Clarksville First Church. The former pastor of that church had been elected superintendent of the East Tennessee district, a change that resulted in a deeply divided congregation. Williamson optimistically assured Greathouse that the division could be “healed in at least ninety days” through a positive presentation of the gospel to these good people. Greathouse did his best to follow the advice of his general superintendent, announcing on occasion that he was pastor of every member of the congregation. He found, however, that if he tilted slightly toward a more “radical” view of holiness a chorus of “amens” would erupt spontaneously from his right, and if he sounded a more “moderate” view, they would be heard (more softly) from his left. Meanwhile, the middle majority remained silent, as the “amens” flew back and forth over their heads.

For most of its history, Clarksville First had been a strong church of 350 members, a solid middle-of-the-road congregation. A few years before Greathouse arrived, his predecessor had taken a solemn vow before God with a visiting evangelist to take a "radical" position on behavioral issues such as television, jewelry, women's dress, etc. A charismatic personality, he won many new converts who followed his view on these behavioral matters. The congregation and the church board had become so deeply divided that neither side could muster the necessary number of votes to call a new pastor. This stalemate had occasioned Greathouse's appointment by the general superintendent.

At Trevecca, Greathouse had already addressed the so-called "radicalism" in a chapel sermon on "Radical Holiness," using as his text John the Baptist's announcement, "Now is the axe laid at the root of the tree" (Matt. 3:10). In that sermon he proceeded to point out that what some fiery young preachers recently returned from World War II called "radical holiness" was very different from true radicalism, which addresses the root problem of a sinful heart rather than surface issues that they called "radical." At Clarksville he was more diplomatic about the matter, while doing his best to address the radicality of sin as "sIn." At the heart of sin, he preached, is an overweening ego, and God honored the message.

One Sunday each month the morning worship service was aired on the local radio station, and in these services, his predecessor had freely preached his version of radical holiness, to the embarrassment of many in the church and to the detriment of that church's witness in the community. Fortunately, Greathouse's relationship with pastors of other denominations helped the church change its image in Clarksville while it provided him with a larger spiritual "community" to nourish him. Bill Hadden, pastor of First Christian Church, who had been Greathouse's friend at Vanderbilt, paved the way for him, assuring his fellow pastors in the community that Greathouse did not share the views of his predecessor. Hadden's endorsement opened the door for Greathouse to be received with open

arms by the ministerial association and gave him the privilege of preaching in community services. Rector Joe Tucker of Trinity Episcopal became a close friend and in appreciation for his sermons gave Greathouse a 1945 *Book of Common Prayer*, which John Wesley believed was "nearer to the Bible" than any other in his library. The pastor of First Presbyterian also became a close friend and gave Greathouse a year's subscription to the scholarly journal of Bible and theology called *Interpretation*. It was this sacred fellowship that helped Greathouse during his stormy years at Clarksville First, plus the confidence that "one man and God are a majority in any situation," as he had learned from J. B. Chapman.

Although his first four years at Clarksville were indeed stormy and difficult, they also were nevertheless blessed of the Lord as Greathouse steered a middle course in his preaching and teaching, loved the people, was faithful in pastoral visitation, preached under the anointing of God, and witnessed beautiful visitations of the Spirit. Little by little, he witnessed the opposition gradually melting, and by the time he left all the people loved and appreciated the pastor and his wife.

During his years at Clarksville, a third child was born, Mary Elizabeth, in 1953, and Greathouse saw his two older children, Becky and Mark, come to Christ, and both were baptized by their father. He found his feelings expressed by 2 John 4: "No greater joy can I have than this, to know my children follow the truth."

The Clarksville auditorium was inadequate for the congregation. It was filled to capacity in all services, including the midweek prayer service. Recognizing that future growth would be stymied, the board and congregation followed the pastor's recommendation to remodel and enlarge the facilities. Edgar Powers, Sunday school superintendent and a talented architect, redesigned the church edifice along Colonial lines and enlarged the building to include new Sunday school rooms and church offices. It was the beginning of a new day for Clarksville First Church, and the Tennessee district assembly, with Hardy C. Powers, presiding general superintendent, was one of the first major events held in the new edifice.

About the fourth year, a red-letter spiritual event in the new church occurred in a Sunday evening service when a real healing took place between the two groups. At the close of the sermon, given by Koy Phillips, a Trevecca teacher, the “bell sheep” of the two church factions came forward, crawling on their knees to the altar and began to pray. They then embraced one another before the pulpit and experienced beautiful reconciliation. Greathouse described it as follows:

It was a heavenly scene as one member after another stood confessing and asking forgiveness of fellow pilgrims. One woman made a memorable confession. “Although I felt I had been right,” she said, “I now see I have been wrong—and I beg your forgiveness.” New life had come to Clarksville First Church. From that time, I felt the united support of my people.¹¹

At Clarksville, Greathouse continued to teach twice weekly at Trevecca. Also, it was during the Clarksville pastorate that he began to write for the denomination. His first two little books, *Acts* and *Romans*, were part of the Nazarene Publishing House Bible Study Course, *Search the Scriptures*. W. T. Purkiser used the *Romans* book as a reading book in his course on *Romans* at Nazarene Theological Seminary (NTS). This little book became the basis of Greathouse’s 1968 *Beacon Bible Commentary on Romans*, written later while he was president of Trevecca.¹²

Another writing project which was initiated during his Clarksville pastorate involved writing a weekly column in the Nazarene *Adult Bible Quarterly* for teachers. In 1954, Albert Harper invited Greathouse to Kansas City and asked him to write the weekly column to succeed the popular “Truth for Today” column that had been written by Bertha Munro of Eastern Nazarene College. Thus began his twenty years of writing “Toward Christian Living,” a commitment that required serious, prayerful Bible study and the process of going through the entire Bible every four years. When the Sunday school ministries department of the denomination launched a new curriculum, called the Word Action Curriculum, Dr. Greathouse was asked to

write a series of studies in Christian doctrines as the first quarter's study. These lessons were later enlarged and published as a book under the title *An Introduction to Wesleyan Theology* by William M. Greathouse and H. Ray Dunning. This book has been used as a resource in college classes for several years and has been translated into a number of foreign languages.

Greathouse successfully combined his teaching and writing with his preaching and pastoral responsibilities at Clarksville and continued to pursue his goal to make a minimum of one thousand pastoral calls annually. He maintained time each week for his family, usually Mondays, during which they took short auto trips or had outings. His wife, Ruth, was patient and supportive as his partner in ministry.

Overall, his six years at Clarksville were challenging and growing years of ministry. He began with a study of First Corinthians on Wednesday nights and preached Christ and him crucified and the love of God on Sundays. The result was that a gradual healing took place under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. His ministry at Clarksville was interrupted in the summer of 1955 with his election as dean of religion by the Trevecca Board of Trustees, which involved teaching full-time in the department of religion and serving as chair of the chapel committee and as chair of the religion department. His election to this new job meant that the family would need to move to Nashville, and he and Ruth transferred their church membership to Nashville First Church.

Nashville First Church (1958–1963)

During his tenure as dean of religion at Trevecca, Greathouse was an active member of First Church, and when Cecil Ewell resigned as pastor, he was serving as a member of the official board. District Superintendent C. E. Shumake was attempting to get the board to accept one of his nominees when Walt Moore, a leading member of the congregation, asked Shumake, "What if the man we want is sitting right here?" He

was referring to William Greathouse. This question took both Shumake and Greathouse by surprise, and Greathouse was courteously excused for the board's discussion of his name. After about an hour, Shumake returned and reported the nomination of Greathouse. After weighing all the issues—whether God was calling him to be a teacher or pastor—Greathouse felt the Lord calling him to the church and allowed his name to be presented for a vote by the congregation. This church was, interestingly, the only one to which he was actually called by the congregation. All the others had been by appointment, a situation which doubtless explains why he could say that First Church was the only normal church for which he had been the pastor.

He was officially installed as pastor of this “mother church of the South” on Sunday, January 26, in a deeply moving service, of which James A. Pate Sr., was in charge. Keenly aware that he was following two truly great pastors—J. O. McClurkan and H. H. Wise—Greathouse responded to Pate's charge in these words: “I know I am following, among others, J. O. McClurkan and H. H. Wise, whose shoes I know I can never fill, but then, all God's chilluns got shoes.” The ice was broken, and thus began five years of happy ministry at his “home church.” Although Greathouse had never preached to such a large congregation before (700 to 800), God used him in a wonderful way at Nashville First Church.

The Lord guided Greathouse to make the midweek service a Bible study, as Brother Wise had done. After a brief period, he announced that he would be beginning a study of the Book of Acts and urged the people to bring their Bibles. Midweek services that had formerly attracted sixty-five to seventy-five jumped the first Wednesday night to 200, thus becoming the “powerhouse” of his ministry. The service was informal and edifying, interspersed with hymns and gospel songs. Sometimes there would be mimeographed Bible study notes for distribution, but the meetings were always free and open to the Spirit.

With an efficient staff to assist in his ministry, the board gave consent for Greathouse to continue to act as dean of religion at Trevecca and to teach an eight o'clock class every

morning. One year the Monday-Wednesday-Friday class was Systematic Theology, and the next year it was Biblical Theology; the Tuesday-Thursday class one year was Old Testament, and New Testament the next. He would hurry from Trevecca to be in his study at the church by nine. His teaching proved to be fertile ground for sermon preparation.

Even with his multifaceted responsibilities, including taking off one week every month for writing "Toward Christian Living," Greathouse's priorities were his parishioners and his family. During the first year at Nashville First Church, he made two thousand pastoral calls and then dropped back to one thousand a year. Being in the homes of his people was extremely important to him. He learned from Brother Wise to limit his calls to fifteen minutes if possible. L. B. Mathews, his minister of visitation, cared for the many shut-ins who needed extended visits. During these years, he made occasional trips to the denominational headquarters in Kansas City for General Board sessions and Book Committee meetings.

The First Church community enfolded his family into their fellowship and nurtured the spiritual development of family members. Frances Gunn gave Ruth a primary Sunday school class, and later Ruth became supervisor of the department. For Becky, it was Myrtle Slonecker, Amanda Jarrett, Opal and Garrett Brundige, and Louise Allsbrooks who nourished and supported her in the Lord. For Mark, it was John T. Benson Jr., J. B. Elizer, Howard Spruill, Will O'Ferrell, and Maurice Griggs Jr., who gave counsel and guidance during his teens. Herb and Mattie Brown took Beth into their hearts. Beth was saved in children's camp, after which she was baptized by her pastor-father, Dr. Greathouse, who said,

The older I grow, the more deeply I understand the importance of the church in the salvation of families. Although personal faith is essential, that faith comes to us in the arms of the church. As Cyprian rightly said, "He who would have God as his father must have the church as his mother." "I had not known Christ," I confess with the great Augustine, "except the church had taught me."¹³

When Greathouse assumed the First Church pastorate, he found plans on his desk for a gymnasium that his predecessor, Cecil Ewell, had hoped to propose, but because of opposition on the part of certain older members, hesitated to propose for implementation. Several of the most spiritual young men in the congregation, such as Henry Hill, brothers Jim and Tom Pate, and Howard Spruill, urged Greathouse to consider the proposal as an evangelistic outreach in the community. Their urgency found a response in the pastor's heart, and the proposal was submitted to the church board and approved. Even A. B. Mackey, president of Trevecca and a faithful attender of First Church, who loved and supported his pastor, warned, "They will begin playing basketball in the gym, but in time they will be dancing on its floor." This attitude was typical among the older members, and some fifty or more members began to talk about withdrawing and starting a new church in East Nashville, going so far as to propose his associate as their pastor. There were rumors within the denomination that Greathouse's "conservative" image was suffering for his taking the step to build a gymnasium. The people at First Church were not aware that J. O. McClurkan had a gymnasium in the Pentecostal Mission building on Fourth Avenue in downtown Nashville in the early 1900s.

The gymnasium was constructed and dedicated as "The Greathouse Youth Building." Joe Adkisson, who became youth director, set up a neighborhood basketball program of nineteen teams, and Henry Hill enlisted young men with whom he would sit in the balcony Sunday evenings (a requirement). A sizable group of young men came to Christ and later became some of the First Church leaders. Most of the dissident oldsters fell into place, forgot their opposition, and became close friends of the pastor. Building the youth building proved to be a right decision under the leadership of the Lord, and today the youth center is full of ministry activities.

Another major decision by Greathouse at First Church was to purchase robes for the choir. John T. Benson had a most informal manner of conducting worship, shoes often untied, with the choir behind him composed of gentlemen in suits and ties and women attired in dresses and blouses of all colors. It was a remarkable

sight and quite distracting. When Greathouse shared with John T. his concern and proposal, Benson kindly and quietly offered his resignation, and Greathouse proceeded to invite Professor Ramon Unruh, head of Trevecca's music department, to become his minister of music. The loving relationship between Greathouse and Benson remained intact. One Sunday John T. turned to Leslie Parrott, who was seated beside him on the first pew, and whispered to Parrott, referring to Greathouse, "An Israelite in whom there is no guile."

At another time when African-Americans began presenting themselves at church services and the "touchy" issue came up in the board meeting, John T. spoke up and said, "Brother Greathouse, when Blacks appear, have the ushers bring them down to my pew." That comment settled the issue, and when these folk began to come, they were seated quietly with no problems.

During his First Church pastorate, about five hundred new members were received, and the church had an exciting growth. Attendance at Sunday evening services doubled. Greathouse was an excellent preacher of the Word. He was teaching Bible and theology each morning at Trevecca, and sermons were being constantly "born" from the Word. One Sunday, James A. Pate, commented, "Doctor Greathouse, every sermon you preach is theology—but the people love it." Greathouse was providing material for the adult quarterly in his "Toward Christian Living" column, and Brother Pate was an adult Sunday school teacher who would say to Greathouse, "As I read your material, I can hear you." The Sunday morning and evening sermons appeared in digest form in the popular First Church paper called *The Nazarene Weekly*, and numerous pastors used some of the sermons in their own preaching, including William J. Strickland.

Another outreach ministry at First Church during Greathouse's pastorate was a Sunday morning thirty-minute radio program consisting of gospel singing and a short message by Pastor Greathouse. This ministry was well received by the Nashville community and attracted a number of new people.

In their remembrances of Greathouse, members of First Church during the Greathouse pastorate Maurice Griggs Jr. (Sunday school superintendent), Joe Adkisson (youth director),

Howard Spruill (Nazarene Young Peoples Society [NYPS] president), and Mary Lee Fielder (daughter of district superintendent J. D. Saxon) provided a profile of Greathouse and his strengths:

His character and integrity was consistent with his preaching. He was the kindest and most compassionate person I ever knew.

His preaching was outstanding. He took criticism well.

Sunday morning services were the best.

In his preaching and teaching, he emphasized sanctification and Spirit-filled living.

The building of the gym was a great evangelistic arm of the Church.

He always had an encouraging word for you. He was never harsh in board meetings.

He was a great pastor-teacher.

He was close to our family.

In his account of the church's four-year recall of Pastor Greathouse in March 1962, editor Walt Moore wrote in *The Nazarene Weekly*:

This vote of overwhelming confidence in the leadership of Dr. Greathouse speaks for itself. His leadership has been one of great spiritual progress. He walks with God and it shows. It shows in his ministry. It shows in his leadership. It shows in his everyday living. He is a scholar and a teacher as well as a minister. He has the congregation at heart . . . and the congregation again, today, said to you, Dr. Greathouse, our pastor, you are very dear to our hearts.¹⁴

In the spring of 1963, Greathouse was elected as the seventh president of Trevecca Nazarene College to succeed A. B. Mackey who had been president for twenty-seven years. The story continues in chapter 5, "Administrator."

GREATHOUSE OFTEN SAID THAT HE HAD DIFFICULTY resolving the question of whether he was a teacher or a preacher. This conflict was, no doubt, because, as he put it, when he preached he taught and when he taught he preached. His students will verify the truth of the latter, and his congregations will affirm the first. From his earliest days, it was apparent that he was suited for the academic life. His early education and inquiring mind well prepared him for the classroom. A gifted intellect coupled with a thirst for an ever-greater understanding of the Christian faith drove him to pursue his education in a variety of contexts in college and graduate school. His ambivalence concerning whether he was a preacher or a teacher seemed to take a decisive turn toward the pulpit when he was called to be pastor of Nashville First Nazarene. He was at that time engaged in PhD studies, but his acceptance of this ministry assignment resulted in the discontinuance of this process. His alma mater, Trevecca Nazarene College, awarded him the honorary doctor of divinity degree in 1956. He reluctantly accepted the honor but occasionally bemoaned the fact that he had not completed the PhD. None of his colleagues ever thought he was limited by that fact.

Formal classroom instruction came rather early in his career. He was pastor of the Immanuel Church of the Nazarene in Nashville, Tennessee, and a graduate student at Vanderbilt University Divinity School when he was invited to serve as an instructor at Trevecca Nazarene College beginning in the fall of 1946.¹⁵ This invitation was the beginning of an influence that would eventually transform Trevecca into an intellectually

respectable educational institution. A. B. Mackey, Trevecca's president, had been instrumental in salvaging the school from the junk heap and placing it on a reasonably sound financial basis, although it was a long way from being acceptable to accreditation committees.¹⁶ President Mackey evidently made quite a leap of faith along with a vision for the future when he hired this young pastor who was also a graduate student at Vanderbilt University to join the faculty. This latter fact almost immediately placed him under suspicion because of the mentality of the Church and College at that time. But Mackey was shrewd when he said to his new professor, as noted earlier in this text, "Teach them enough heresy to inoculate them against it."

This writer (HRD) had the privilege of being a student in one of those first classes, and as with several others, the experience became a defining moment in my intellectual development. I still recall the setting. Class was held in a section of risers behind the balcony in the old McClurkan Memorial Building chapel. The course was a study of the prophets. Some of us had already had a course by that name, but the prospects of studying them with Professor Greathouse led us to work with him to name the course Old Testament Hermeneutics so that we could take it again. The course we had earlier taken was basically a study in dispensationalism, with the Scofield Study Bible notes as an authority. Dr. G. had by that time been sufficiently exposed to sound biblical interpretation to have abandoned this interpretation of biblical prophecy. In his class we were exposed for the first time to a method of biblical study that we later learned to call grammatico-historical exegesis. Men like Amos, Hosea, and Micah came alive as we were exposed to them in their historical context.

One occurrence on the first day of class still stands out in my mind. Those were the days when the Revised Standard Version of the Bible was making its appearance, and fundamentalists were making all sorts of accusations concerning it and insisting on the use of the King James Version. Professor Greathouse had asked us to purchase for classroom use the Smith-Goodspeed

translation, also known as the American Translation, which he had used in his studies at Vanderbilt. On that first day, one of the older students stood up and put the question to the teacher, "Is this the termite version of the Bible?" Unflustered, the young professor explained carefully the significance of this translation and that it was *not* the "termite" version.

That incident highlights one of the major contributions Dr. Greathouse made to the educational work of the Church. Unfortunately, the holiness movement in those days included a lot of obscurantism; at least it did in the geographical area where he was teaching. Although he took a lot of criticism, this young professor stood firm for truth and intelligent learning, and gradually the context in which he was working moved out of the Middle Ages into the modern era as his influence increased.

His attitude is reflected in his inaugural address as president of Nazarene Theological Seminary. After affirming the positions of both A. M. Hills and H. Orton Wiley on "inerrancy" as limited to salvation truth, he declares, "This I understand is the Lutheran-Wesleyan-Nazarene doctrine of the Word of God. It is dynamic, as opposed to an idolatrous biblicism. It is indeed a conservative position, but not fundamentalist . . . The enlightened Nazarene position seems to be that of open-minded conservatism."¹⁷

Not everyone shared this perspective when Dr. G. first began teaching. And the few Nazarene students who were enrolled in the School of Religion at Vanderbilt were objects of concern by the custodians of the folk holiness culture. Along with the other pastors who were Vandy students, Brother Greathouse was called to a meeting with the Tennessee district superintendent who sternly warned them against being contaminated by the "liberal" teachers at the University, especially an internationally recognized scholar, Nels F. S. Ferré.

While Ferré was a controversial figure in Nashville, especially among the fundamentalists, he was a very spiritual person and had a special love for the Nazarenes. He had attended the Church of the Nazarene while a professor at

Andover-Newton Seminary in New England, prayed with seekers at the altar, and professed to have entered the experience of perfect love. On at least one occasion, he publicly announced that he counted himself a member of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement. This stance made him less than fully popular with his colleagues on the Divinity School faculty.

When the course of events seemed to indicate that Dr. G.'s career was going to be in full-time academia, he enrolled in the PhD program to study under Ferré and began classes with him in systematic theology, using Ferré's book, *Faith and Reason*. Out of that study, Dr. G. learned to harmonize faith and science, coming to see that when each functioned within its own appropriate methodology, there could be no conflict. As a result, he said, "I've never had a problem with theistic evolution." This understanding was important for the integrity of the Church in face of attempts to influence it by the teaching of so-called "creation science" that did not have this balanced understanding of the nature of either faith or science.

During his early days of teaching, he was under constant scrutiny from his colleagues on the faculty who were reporting his teaching to the dean and president in an attempt to discredit him. He also encountered some opposition on the educational zone and, in particular, from certain religion teachers in some of the other Nazarene colleges. Some accused him of being neo-orthodox, a charge that was based on ignorance of both neo-orthodoxy and Professor Greathouse's teaching. He described his true view: "I understood the dynamic character of Scripture and emphasized that God speaks to us directly in the Word, but I also recognized the second moment of inspiration, which was for Barth, just a dead human area—the word jumped from the event to the reader—so I wasn't neo-orthodox, but I got that."

This suspicion and "witch-hunting" was somewhat understandable in the light of the situation in the holiness movement during the first half of the twentieth century. Wesley Tracy, former editor of the official denominational paper, gave an incisive analysis of the "intellectual" atmosphere in the Church at that time. After describing the multiple paradigm shifts that

had taken place in the academic world during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that appeared to undermine what the holiness people had been teaching since the post-Civil War revivals, he says:

They had, predictably, a natural built-in resistance to intellectuals. After all, it was the intellectuals—the scientists, theologians, philosophers, and scholars who could read Greek and Hebrew Bibles—who had destroyed the world they had inherited from their parents.

In an almost instinctive survival move they, more or less, cut themselves off from the biblical scholarship, the theological reflection, and the philosophical hypothesizing then taking place. Avoiding such things it is not surprising that the good people of this movement came early to rely heavily on testimony and religious experience. They developed a way of being that was long on personal experience and short on in-depth understanding of the Scriptures and open-minded theological reflection. Such an imbalance was almost bound to appear.¹⁸

Professor Greathouse was using modern methods of biblical interpretation, including source criticism, exploring the synoptic problem, and basic biblical criticism to bring the message of scripture to light. That practice, along with an open-minded approach to theology that was willing to listen to what scholars outside the holiness movement were saying, and a willingness to take seriously their criticisms and insights were bound to result in opposition by those who were fearful to do so because of their academic insecurities. Even after he came back as dean of religion, there were several on the faculty who were not able to accept what they saw as a too-open-minded approach.

Fortunately, President A. B. Mackey trusted and supported the young professor, and the dean of the College, L. P. Gresham, who had earned a PhD in history at Vanderbilt, understood what was at stake, and they fully stood by him during this early period. The result was the eventual elevation of Trevecca to the

level of a viable liberal arts institution from the image of a somewhat backward Bible school with poor academic standing, an image which it had both encouraged and deserved

This image was reflected in an incident of later years after Dr. G. had become president of the College. In an effort to bring quality instructors to the campus, in particular to the religion department, he invited Mildred Bangs Wynkoop to come to Trevecca. Wynkoop had been scheduled to begin teaching at a school in the Northwest, but before she could assume her position, the school failed and closed. The dean of this institution proposed to help the stranded professor to find a position if she would give him a list of schools in which she might be interested. Her list included all Nazarene colleges except one. Her image of Trevecca eliminated it from contention because of its perceived lack of academic quality. After a brief conversation with President Greathouse, she signed on and often said to her colleagues how surprised and happy she was to have found such a congenial academic environment to pursue her pioneering work in seeking to bring the holiness movement back into accord with pristine Wesleyan theology.

It was precisely this approach to the academic life that attracted young people who were both intellectually curious and concerned about the inadequate theological concepts to which they had been exposed. One student, who later became a professor at Nazarene Theological Seminary and served the church in several academic contexts, described his experience as a student of Professor Greathouse:

I think it is correct to say that Dr. Greathouse kept me in the Church of the Nazarene. Although I was raised in the Church, I could not reconcile my "experience" of entire sanctification with the official model. Although I tried my best to "fit in," honesty would not comply.

So, while at TNC, I quietly decided to leave the Church. I had no idea what the options were. Shortly afterwards, I began Dr. G's course in systematic theology. The topic and the systematic

quality of his lectures captured me. His demonstration that one could “think” about the doctrine of entire sanctification was good news. He placed substance over form and that suited my religious history just fine.

I remember thinking, “If this man can be a Nazarene, maybe I can be also.” Dr. Greathouse was a liberator for many others. He cut through the fog of stereotypical experience and helped us place the doctrine of sanctification in larger biblical, theological, and historical contexts. Dr. G. modeled catholic and holistic Christianity. I became a convert.

Another student, who likewise became a respected Wesleyan scholar and professor in Nazarene institutions, reported the way Professor Greathouse influenced his life in the first course he took from him. The course was titled Introduction to Christian Theology. The student reported,

As I look back on it, I marvel that the [textbook] excited me so! But excite me it did. I was enthralled and captivated, not only by the content of the text itself but also, and even more so, by the enthusiasm of the teacher and his love for the subject—this tall, young professor named William Greathouse.

I found that the subject of theology literally set me on fire. We were not more than three weeks into that course when I knew, as clearly as I ever knew anything, that no other academic subject I could ever study would interest me the way theology did. It was the most thrilling discovery I had yet experienced in a classroom. During the ensuing three years, I took every course Dr. G offered. It was he who first suggested to me that I might consider making the teaching of theology my life’s vocation, which I eventually did, after seminary, doctoral study, and a few years in the pastoral ministry.

Another student, who went on to graduate study and became a teacher and administrator at Trevecca and who majored in religion under him, noted that Greathouse was

[A]n outstanding teacher. He opened my mind to the world of theology in systematic theology, especially to the theology of John Wesley. He also introduced me to biblical scholarship and critical analysis in a course on The Life and Epistles of Paul. In homiletics he introduced me to some of the great preachers of our century and taught me the basics of putting together a sermon so as to “speak the truth in love.” He was my spiritual and intellectual mentor.

But it was not only the especially gifted who were impacted by this teacher. Many others who did not pursue graduate work, who did not make a career of the academic life, but who pursued pastoral and other forms of ministry were similarly influenced and continue to be grateful for the way they were shaped by their exposure to Dr. G.

The scholarship and literary expertise of Dr. G. eventually caught the attention of the people in the General Church who were responsible for publishing the educational materials for the denomination. He began by contributing to a series of lay commentaries on the Bible and then was asked to write extensively in the Sunday school literature, a task he continued to perform until the heavy responsibilities of being general superintendent forced him to discontinue this work. It was in the context of this writing for the entire Church that he came to the attention of the denomination. It gave him the opportunity to extend his influence in bringing the Church out of a somewhat obscurantist stance toward contemporary movements in theology and also brought him under further criticism. In his writings he was quoting such universally known theologians as Gustav Aulen, Emil Brunner, and Reinhold Niebuhr. The latter especially was looked upon with suspicion since he called attention to the problem of sin with which the holiness movement only gradually, and with much pain, began to come to terms.¹⁹ Mentioning these names “identified” him as neo-orthodox, the theology that became the scapegoat for the fundamentalists during its heyday. But in hindsight it is apparent that truth prevailed, and the Church recognized her true son who became her prophet.

The tension between teaching and preaching trailed Greathouse throughout his career. At several points he was forced to choose between them, and in some cases he managed to combine them. Elected as executive secretary of the General Nazarene Young People's Society, an administrative post, he chose to continue teaching. While pastor of a local congregation in Clarksville, Tennessee, he combined the two by commuting to Nashville two days a week, but when called upon to become a full-time academic, he chose to leave the pastorate. Later he faced the same decision when called from the College to become pastor of the mother church of the South, First Church of the Nazarene in Nashville. He became a preacher again but combined that role with regular, though limited, teaching at Trevecca. His call to the presidency of Nazarene Theological Seminary brought him once again face to face with a decision that he made by combining administration with teaching.

Perhaps his hardest decision came when the General Assembly elected him as a general superintendent. He questioned, how could he leave the happy life of the Seminary for administration again? Two British friends helped him resolve the issue by suggesting that he simply make the entire Church his classroom and use this opportunity to give significant theological leadership to the denomination. Following his retirement from that office, he returned to the classroom at Trevecca Nazarene College, where he taught both the upper-division holiness course and general education religion classes. He eventually gave up the freshman courses and concentrated on teaching the Doctrine of Holiness, a task that resulted in the writing of his classic book, *Wholeness in Christ*. This activity lasted for ten years. Although he said he never really resolved the question of whether he was a teacher or a preacher, it became evident that teaching was his "first love."

5

Administrator

IN HIS FORMATIVE YEARS WILLIAM GREATHOUSE manifested significant giftedness in the areas of anointed preaching, insightful scholarship, and effective teaching. He worked diligently at cultivating and honing these gifts. His autobiographical comments about these years do not really reflect any interest in administrative work except that which was necessary while serving as pastor of a local church. But the gifts he manifested, intensified by his vision for excellence in both ministerial and academic functions, eventually thrust him into that role, which was rather minimal at first but eventually became a full-time activity for a time.

His first administrative assignment came at the initiative of the Board of Trustees of Trevecca Nazarene College. His teaching had caught the attention of influential members of the governing board who longed for the College to move more to the center from the position by which it was viewed throughout the Church and who wanted a different and more creative emphasis in the classroom. They thought that he could make a greater contribution to the preparation of ministers if he were there on a full-time basis.

Although this action was not the way additions to the faculty were normally made, President Mackey went along with this action and the Board elected Pastor Greathouse as dean of religion in 1955, a position which he technically held until he was elected president in 1963. This period included the five years that he was pastor of Nashville First Nazarene, although his administrative activity at the College was significantly limited during those years.

President of Trevecca Nazarene College (1963–1968)

When A. B. Mackey decided to retire after twenty-seven years as president, he obviously was concerned for his successor. At least three candidates were possible, and Mackey had alerted Greathouse that he might be one of several possible candidates to be the next president of Trevecca. However, Greathouse was very happy as pastor of Nashville First Church and personally preferred to stay there. At the same time, he had been a part of the faculty since 1946 and believed that Trevecca needed to become a more viable liberal arts college with a forward look and remain thoroughly Nazarene at the same time. On April 24, 1963, the Board of Trustees elected William M. Greathouse president of Trevecca Nazarene College, a decision which marked a significant turning point in his ministry. His wife was very happy in her role as pastor's wife and urged her husband not to leave the pastorate. She had strong negative feelings about the spirit of legalism that was characteristic of the school at that time, and Greathouse admitted that he had, in fact, taught there with a conscious purpose of counteracting such narrowness and had helped more than one student find a middle-of-the-road position on holiness issues. For years he had yearned to see Trevecca change and come to a moderate position. As president, he would be in a position to exert an influence to bring this dream to fruition. Although Greathouse loved his wife deeply and respected her feelings, he believed that God was nudging him to accept the new challenge, and thus he accepted the presidency. Eventually Ruth saw the rightness of his decision and accepted her role—and fulfilled it beautifully—as the first lady of the campus. Greathouse continued to preach on Sundays at First Church through August but also traveled with Mackey to the thirteen district assemblies of the Southeast, where Mackey introduced “the new Trevecca president” to the people.

The first major challenge to face the new president was the issue of accreditation. Much effort had been exerted to achieve regional accreditation during the Mackey administra-

tion, but the goal was never reached.²⁰ When Greathouse assumed the presidency, he learned that an “unofficial committee” of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) was scheduled to arrive on campus in October to evaluate Trevecca based on eight standards: (1) Purpose, (2) Organization and Administration, (3) Educational Program, (4) Financial Resources, (5) Faculty, (6) Library, (7) Student Personnel, and (8) Physical Plant. The new president believed that the school was not ready for this visit, and he was correct. The net result was that the committee did not think Trevecca measured up in any of the eight areas. In a closing private meeting with the committee, President Greathouse asked for an honest appraisal of the situation. When the committee members realized he was serious in this request they told him that in “rebuilding on a new, firm foundation . . . all concerned must realize that such an undertaking cannot be approached in a piece-meal fashion because all features of an institution must be coordinated and in harmony.”²¹ The committee’s comprehensive judgment was stated quite plainly: “The inner tube has been patched long enough. You need a new inner tube.”

Here was a new mandate for President Greathouse to bring the College up to an acceptable standard. Extensive changes would have to be made. This mandate involved replacing several top administrators, tightening admission requirements, reformulating the goals and objectives of the College, evaluating the academic structure, initiating a curriculum study to strengthen all disciplinary areas (particularly religion and the liberal arts), hiring more faculty with doctorates in needed areas, and improving campus facilities and financial resources. Accomplishing these improvements, he knew, would require that a major institutional self-study be undertaken. In 1964 L. Paul Gresham, on a one-year leave of absence as academic dean of Pasadena College, came to head this project. Gresham had previously served on the faculty at Trevecca (1937–1955) and as academic dean (1946–1954). This self-study involved the faculty, the trustees, the students, and alumni, and it resulted

in a five-hundred-page volume, entitled "The Council for Institutional Research and Planning Report."

Trevecca was making a new start in its bid for accreditation. President Greathouse had said in his report to the Board of Trustees,

Academic recognition is no longer a luxury, but an absolute necessity. . . . Accreditation is the badge of academic legitimacy. Without it Trevecca is doomed to perpetual mediocrity. . . . If Trevecca students are denied prized scholarships and loans, Trevecca will remain the inferior step-child of Nazarene colleges. . . . Grant giving foundations will not consider such an institution.²²

As Trevecca moved to implement many of the items in the self-study, several Progress Reports were submitted to SACS, which commended the College for its improvements. In the meantime, three new dormitories were approved, financed, and completed by 1966—Georgia Hall and Tennessee Hall for women and Wise Hall for men. The basement of Johnson Hall was completed. The Physical Education Center and the Science Building were in process of construction in 1967. The top floor of the Administration Building was remodeled with offices for the Department of Religion (affectionately dubbed "the monastery"). A second story was added to the Bud Robinson Building that housed the cafeteria; that new space was used as a dormitory, and the basement of the Mackey Library was finished and used as faculty offices. A new entranceway over Alumni Drive from Murfreesboro Road was also completed. In addition, new faculty members with doctorates were added in education, psychology, business, and religion.

One of the president's special concerns was to have a strong religion department and a trained ministry that was totally committed to the Wesleyan message of holiness composed of ministers who will preach it with fervor under the anointing of the Spirit. Along with Greathouse, John A. Knight and William J. Strickland were members of the religion faculty. Greathouse

brought in H. Ray Dunning in 1964 as professor of philosophy. Dunning completed his PhD in 1969. Further additions included Mildred Bangs Wynkoop and Paul M. Bassett.

Finally, in 1967, the Southern Association accepted the 1965 Self-Study as an official application for membership and sent an evaluation team to the campus in April 1968. Stanton Parry had by that time succeeded Charles Childers as dean of the College, and, while remaining as head of Trevecca's Department of Business Administration, Dr. Parry played a significant role in the preparation for accreditation. To prepare for the official visit by SACS, President Greathouse invited Willis Snowbarger, general secretary of the Nazarene Department of Education, to come to the campus in February as critic and guide for a "dry-run committee visit," attempting to see Trevecca through the eyes of the SACS Visiting Committee. Dr. Snowbarger left a detailed list of suggestions which proved helpful when the official SACS committee came on campus, April 7-10, 1968. The decision of the Visiting Committee was that while great progress had been made, there were still weaknesses that needed to be resolved; those weaknesses were rectified in the next year under the new president, Mark R. Moore. Trevecca received SACS accreditation on December 3, 1969.

While Greathouse did not see the goal of accreditation reached during his presidency, nevertheless, he laid the foundation for it with significant accomplishments, which included the following:

- Enrollment during his five years increased from 333 to 800 in his last year.
- A new Department of Business Administration was established, supported by the "99ers" Club that provided financial resources for the department.
- A new Scholastic Enrichment Program was begun to provide academic assistance to students not fully prepared for college work.
- A new President's Advisory Board, made up of community business and professional leaders was formed to give expertise and support to the College.

- The first black student enrolled in 1964, Winston Best from Barbados, West Indies, who graduated in 1966 with an AB degree in educational psychology. This development opened the door for racial integration, which had been resisted up to that time.
- A campus radio station was begun in 1966.
- The first summer teacher workshops for professional teachers were begun in 1966 under the leadership of G. Lewis Pennington. These workshops enabled teachers to upgrade their certifications.
- In January 1968, the Board of Trustees approved the wearing of standard athletic attire for physical education classes and intramural competition.
- The Board also authorized the initiation of intercollegiate sports with a men's basketball team scheduled to begin playing in the 1968–1969 school year.
- President Greathouse approved the solicitation of federal funds for financing new buildings and student assistance, something the previous administrations had not been willing to do.
- The Student Council began a “Festival of Ideas” program as an exchange of political, academic, social, and cultural thought through lectures, forums, interviews, exhibits, and concerts.
- Special guests were brought to campus during the Greathouse years, including the vice-mayor of Nashville, executive vice-president of the Nashville Chamber of Commerce, the state commissioner of education, three area college presidents, Congressman Richard Fulton, Senator Strom Thurmond, Reform Jewish Rabbi Randall Falk, Catholic sisters, representatives from the major church communions in Nashville, and a number of military personnel from various armed services.²³

In summary, most of the goals set in the first period of the Greathouse years had been largely reached. Trevecca underwent a transformation, including bringing it into the orbit of



Billy Grathouse, age 8 months



Billy Grathouse, a school photo



*James Marvin and Mary Juliet Kierolf
Greathouse*



*Bill and Ruth Greathouse, during his Franklin,
Tennessee, pastorate*



Bill, Ruth, Becky, and Mark, c.a. 1948



from all of us... to all of you... Christmas Greetings

Family Christmas card, 1954

RADIO CARDS AVAILABLE



Accept this invitation
TO LISTEN TO
DR. W. M. GREATHOUSE
and the Radio Choir
OVER
W.L.A.C., 8:00 A:M!
EVERY SUNDAY

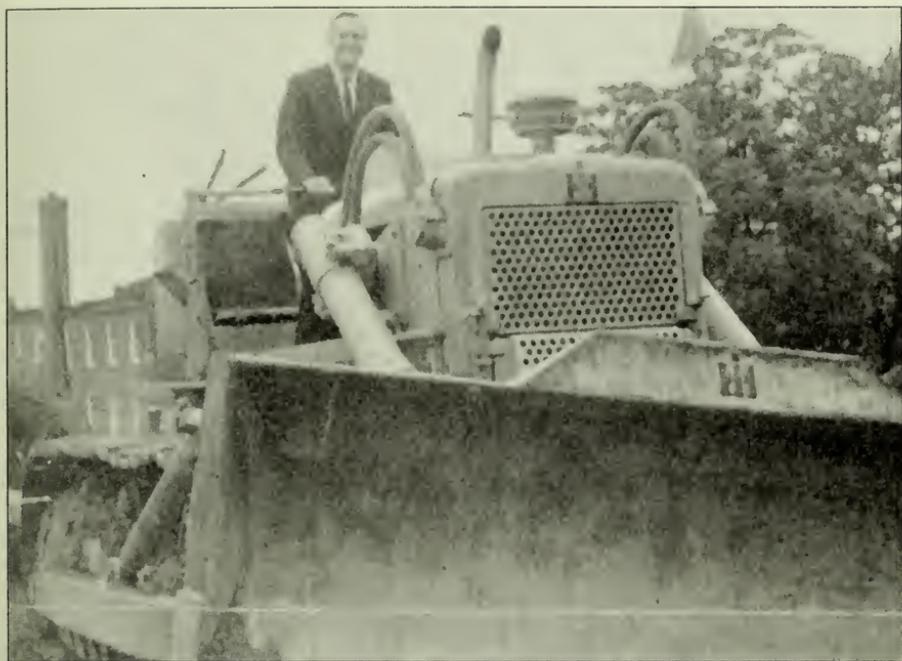
Dr. W. M. Greathouse, Pastor

FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE- 510 WOODLAND ST.

A card advertising the broadcasting of the services of First Church of the Nazarene in Nashville, Tennessee



Dr. Greathouse's 40th birthday party at First Church of the Nazarene, 1959



Dr. Greathouse helps prepare the land for the construction of the youth building at First Church of the Nazarene.



William M. Greathouse, 1964



President Greathouse studies a document during a meeting at Trevecca.



Photo of Trevecca's "first family," 1964 Darda



President Greathouse receives the College's first comprehensive self study from L. Paul Gresham, chair of the self-study committee. That self study was instrumental in helping Trevecca earn accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Universities (SACS).



W. M. and Ruth



W. M. and Judy

liberal arts education and the birth of a true Wesleyanism, in which the wholeness of truth penetrated every discipline and every area of life and opened dialogue with a wider Christian world. In a faculty retreat setting early in his presidency, President Greathouse addressed the faculty on the topic “What Makes a College Christian?” He said the following:

A Christian college begins with administrators and teachers who are committed Christians. It offers person-centered education, not impersonal processes. All teaching is done from the fullest Christian perspective. There is no such thing as Christian mathematics or science. But Christ is the clue to all reality—not only the most high but the most real. There will be reverence and humility, teachableness in the pursuit of knowledge. Evangelism is suffused into the endeavor to bring human personality into the encounter with the fullness of life and truth.²⁴

Virtually every faculty retreat at the beginning of each school year during his tenure focused on vigorous discussion and study of the issue of the relation between faith and learning with the president leading the way.

Was all of this effort easy? By no means! Some of the changes that were instituted created a lot of concern in the Southeast. The president had an offer from a strong layman in the Southeast to give Trevecca a \$200,000 grant (equivalent today of a million dollars) if he would not build the gymnasium. In addition, people visited him to warn him that if he went in the direction of intercollegiate athletics, Trevecca would become like all other colleges, using the analogy of Israel becoming like other nations of the world at that time. They saw the addition of intercollegiate sports as a move toward worldliness. Greathouse described his five years as president of Trevecca as being five years in Vietnam. One time in a Board of Trustee meeting, he quoted a person in *Tobacco Road*: “O Lord, you know everything down here is busting loose.” The decade of the '60s was a period of student unrest throughout the nation. Although never badly

disruptive, this influence was felt on Trevecca's campus. But looking back, Dr. Greathouse said, "I sometimes think that perhaps the most significant contribution I may have made to the Church, to the denomination, was the transformation of Trevecca."²⁵

During his presidency Greathouse was also busy writing lay-level commentaries on Zechariah and Malachi and his major work on Romans in the *Beacon Bible Commentary* series, which was published in 1968. He served as a member of the General Board, 1964–68.

In June 1968, the Board of Trustees of Nazarene Theological Seminary (NTS) elected William Greathouse as their new president. Dr. Greathouse thought that he could not abandon Trevecca without consulting with SACS. Therefore, he called the secretary of the Southern Association to ask his advice about leaving Trevecca. The secretary believed that things were secure enough and encouraged him to take the Seminary presidency.

President of Nazarene Theological Seminary (1968–1976)

Dr. Greathouse felt clear in accepting the presidency of Nazarene Theological Seminary. He had said publicly and privately that if he were given the choice of any assignment in the Church, he would prefer the presidency of the Seminary. The eight years there, he said, "were the happiest and most peaceful years of my life."²⁶ He also said, "[T]hese were the most productive years of my ministry. I was in my element: theology."²⁷

On January 6, 1969, Dr. Greathouse gave his inaugural address at NTS, described by Harold Raser, in his history of Nazarene Theological Seminary, as an "effort to locate Nazarene theology within the broad theological heritage of the Christian Church and to bring it into dialogue with trends in modern culture. It was so highly regarded that it was later published in booklet form."²⁸ The subject of his inaugural address was "Nazarene Theology in Perspective." He spoke first of the general Nazarene *theological stance* as threefold: (1) it is

catholic, not sectarian, meaning it stands in the classic tradition of Christian thought and extends the right hand of fellowship to all those who are in Christ; (2) it is *conservative, not fundamentalist*, espousing the Lutheran-Wesleyan dynamic and soteriological view of Scripture and Christ; and (3) it is *evangelical, not Pelagian*, emphasizing universal prevenient grace in seeking to preserve the scriptural paradox of divine grace and human freedom.

The second point Greathouse spoke to was the Church's *distinguishing tenet*, Christian perfection. Here he identified Nazarene theology with Methodism and the teaching of John Wesley to "spread scriptural holiness over these lands." His third point addressed *our present theological task* in which the Seminary is to assist the Church in understanding its mission and purpose in the world and preparing ministers to fulfill their God-called ministry.²⁹

Greathouse was well received by the faculty of NTS with his background of teaching theology, pastoral ministry, and administrative experience.³⁰ Of his relationship with the NTS faculty, Greathouse said,

I had a great faculty, all of whom had taught on the undergraduate level. These men freely expressed their positions on points of difference but always in the spirit of open-minded love and respect. It was a great time for me to raise questions and pick their brains. There is no way to express fully how much I learned from these discussions . . . One day early on I apologized that I had no earned doctorate. I was reassured by Willard Taylor's comment that he considered my *Commentary on Romans* in the BBC to be a doctoral dissertation. These great men loved me, and I loved them.³¹

The top priority for President Greathouse early on was to secure accreditation by the American Association of Theological Schools (AATS). Even though the general superintendents, including Samuel Young, seemed fearful that accreditation would lead to theological compromise, Greathouse went ahead

with strong faculty support. He knew that some of the graduates of NTS had been denied admission to prestigious graduate schools for doctoral studies because the Seminary was not accredited. He also knew that the AATS was not concerned about the doctrinal stance of the Seminary, only that the objectives be clearly understood with adequate faculty and financial resources to accomplish them. After a visit to AATS headquarters and after talking to the president, Greathouse was encouraged to proceed in the path he had followed at Trevecca with SACS.

Mendell Taylor, who had been dean of the faculty since 1953, thought that it would be too taxing on him to be involved in the accreditation process and resigned as dean. Greathouse replaced him with Willard Taylor, professor of biblical theology, who had the gifts and commitment needed for proceeding with the president's vision. Greathouse explained how the two worked together: "Willard and I were on the same 'wave length' regarding the needed upgrading of the school. He and I would meet frequently to 'imagineer' the future of NTS."³² The president made the new dean second in charge to give direction to the academic programs and general oversight to the faculty. This arrangement was in accordance with seminary *By-Laws* but had not been implemented under previous presidents.³³

Greathouse proceeded with a proposal for a self-study under the aegis of a "Council for Institutional Research and Development," which was approved by the Board of Trustees. This action involved trustees, Seminary faculty, alumni, students, and two lay members of the denomination. It included a revised statement of institutional purpose, clarification regarding tenure, faculty compensation, *By-Law* revisions of the section concerning the faculty, and a change in degree nomenclature (MDiv instead of BD). All the recommendations resulting from the self-study received trustee approval except one, a faculty request for alumni representation on the Board of Trustees. After consulting with the general superintendents and being reminded that as president he was responsible for the well-being and effectiveness of the Seminary as well as accountable to the denomination and with the backing of the faculty

and trustees, Greathouse proceeded to make formal application to the American Association of Theological Schools for full accreditation, which was approved in January 1971.³⁴ Harold Raser explains the significance of this achievement: “[W]ith this, the school reached a major milestone in its endeavor to be a ‘real seminary’ that could offer students and the church the very best there is in seminary training.”³⁵

Another major project of Greathouse as Seminary president was to set up a doctor of ministry degree to meet the growing demand of seminary-trained pastors for help with ongoing professional development. The DMin Program was designed to enhance competency in practical ministry rather than to teach research skills as in a traditional PhD. Dean Willard Taylor took the leadership in this area and with support of the president, the faculty, and trustees, the first DMin students enrolled in the program in the summer of 1976. In addition, a new MA degree in missions was approved and offered in 1975.³⁶

During the Greathouse years at NTS, the faculty was significantly reshaped with the addition of ten new faculty members. Part of the reason for this increase in the size of the faculty was the tremendous increase in student enrollment from 260 in 1968 to nearly 500 in 1976. In addition, Greathouse wanted to strengthen the Seminary’s program by adding outstanding teacher/scholars in key areas of need, especially in the field of theology. New faculty included Paul M. Bassett in church history, Rob L. Staples in theology, Mildred Bangs Wynkoop in theology, Charles “Chic” Shaver in evangelism, Oscar F. Reed in philosophy and Christian ethics (to replace retiring Delbert Gish), Donald Owens in missions, Jerrold Ketner in religious education (replaced by E. Dee Freeborn in 1974), Morris Weigelt in New Testament, and Charles D. Isbell in Old Testament, and Albert Harper moved from part-time to full-time in 1974.³⁷

Dr. Greathouse was not satisfied simply to be the president. His passion was to be a fellow faculty member. Willard Taylor was in full agreement and suggested that Greathouse teach a major course each semester in Romans and Wesley. Greathouse had recently completed his commentary on Romans and had

taught Wesley at Trevecca for several years. His teaching was also preaching, the atmosphere being more like a worship service than a mere learning experience—to God’s glory. Since “baby boomers” were arriving in sizable numbers each year, his class continued to grow to about a hundred the last year and had to be moved to the chapel. In addition to his classes in Romans and Wesley, Greathouse taught a semester class in The Corinthian Correspondence for Willard Taylor when Taylor was on sabbatical and a year-long class for J. Kenneth Grider in Constructive Theology when Grider was on sabbatical. He arose at five almost every morning of that year to pray and refresh himself on the topics of the day. His teaching of the Pauline epistles and Systematic Theology at Trevecca gave him a good foundation for teaching the courses for professors who were on sabbatical leave. Greathouse adds that his fondest memories of Seminary life were preaching in chapel, singing the great hymns of the church—and worship—where he was able most fully and deeply to pour out his heart to the seminary family.³⁸

The partnership of Greathouse and Willard Taylor at NTS was a dynamic one, as Harold Raser explains,

Together they promoted an agenda for the school that included encouraging faculty input into administrative decision-making, careful long-range planning, expansion of degree programs, and active participation by faculty members in the scholarly community through attendance at meetings of professional societies and writing for publication.³⁹

One other area that is relevant for discussion during the Seminary years of President Greathouse is what happened at the 1972 General Assembly in Miami. President Greathouse was under consideration for the general superintendency, but he had inadvertently become the center of a controversy over the tongues issue. Some accused Greathouse of being soft on tongues because as a biblical scholar he recognized that there was a gift of ecstatic speech in First Corinthians, chapters 12–14, and that Paul was doing everything possible to relegate

it to the bottom position, but that it was there. Others such as Willard Taylor, Albert Harper, Norman Oke, Albert Lown, W. T. Purkiser, and the writer of the Beacon Bible Commentary on First Corinthians, Donald Metz, had taken the same position. Although Greathouse had never countenanced tongues speaking in the Church of the Nazarene, he was accused of being "soft on tongues." Prior to the 1972 Assembly, V. H. Lewis, general superintendent and Greathouse's advisor, had been to Brazil where the tongues issue had surfaced with some of the Church's missionaries, who said that they were taught this interpretation in Nazarene Seminary and that it was the position supported by the Beacon Bible Commentary. Greathouse told Lewis that his view was the same as that of the missionaries. During this period the Full Gospel Businessmen's Association, a Pentecostal organization, was trying to infiltrate the Church of the Nazarene, and that organization's position was also supported by a former official at Nazarene Publishing House.

The same issue of tongues came up at a preachers' meeting where Greathouse was speaking. He was baited and taped, and then the tapes were sent to the Board of General Superintendents (BOGS). Greathouse was called before the BOGS in the spring of 1972 and spent an hour explaining his position to them. When Greathouse arrived in Miami on Saturday night before the General Assembly opened on Sunday, he was astounded to see in the lead article in the newspaper that while the BOGS had taken a strong stand against tongues, there was a "moderate party in the church, headed by President William Greathouse, of NTS." The same paper included a statement that Greathouse was the leading contender for the general superintendency.

Greathouse had both supporters and detractors. Another ugly and baseless rumor was that Greathouse did not believe in the virgin birth, and he confronted his former student who was spreading this rumor. Greathouse told him, "You don't have to believe in the virgin birth to receive Christ as Savior; you believe in Christ, and Christ supports the virgin birth rather than the

other way around.” But these baseless rumors polarized the situation and clearly affected the outcome of the election.

The assembly had reached the point of casting a ballot on Tuesday morning, and the delegates wanted to do so, but the general superintendents said no. They said, “We will take the ballot in the afternoon session.” During that hour-and-a-half break for lunch, delegates engaged in a lot of politicking, and that afternoon the votes for Greathouse dropped. Eventually, Charles H. Strickland was elected as general superintendent.

Dr. Greathouse was not seeking the general superintendency. He knew that his not being elected was a providential thing. With those events behind him, he could devote his time to teaching at the Seminary and being president. The Board of Trustees of Nazarene Theological Seminary unanimously reelected him as president for another four years before the General Assembly adjourned. He returned to Kansas City, rejoicing that the Lord was sovereign and that the Seminary family members had their arms open and were happy with a strong community support.⁴⁰

FEW PEOPLE HAVE EXERCISED A GREATER FORMATIVE influence on the theology of the Church of the Nazarene than William M. Greathouse. As a college and seminary president and professor, general superintendent, author, and pastor, he has influenced the theological vision of hundreds of young persons who have shaped those *they* have taught and served as pastor, so that like leaven, his vision has permeated the Church throughout the world.

This influence is clearly reflected in the words of Stephen Green, pastor and university professor: "No one has shaped my understanding of Christian holiness more than William Greathouse. As a teacher, preacher, and writer, he has helped me understand the transforming dynamic of God's grace."⁴¹

The uniqueness of his influence is that there is really no such entity as a "Greathouse theology" in the same sense as there is a Thomistic theology, a Barthian theology, or a Tillichian theology. His influence is more an approach to truth than a specific set of conceptualities or paradigms, an approach that is ecumenical, open-minded, irenic, and intentionally informed by a sound exegetical use of scripture. It is true that his basic approach to theological truth can be characterized as Wesleyan, but this tradition is not a phenomenon of his own creation but involves a recognition of a vision that captures the best of the Christian faith and emphasizes a unique balance of emphases infrequently found in the history of Christian thought.

It was these characteristics, and particularly his commitment to the teachings of John Wesley in the face of an inadequate folk theology, that resulted in the reference to Dr. Greathouse and a few teachers influenced by and connected

with him during his tenure at Trevecca Nazarene College as the “Trevecca Connection.” It was intended as a derogatory designation, but like the term “Christian” applied to the early followers of “the Way,” it became a term to be embraced as the way forward in holiness theology. This claim is reflected in Mark Quanstrom’s introduction to his book that surveys the transformations that have taken place in the theology of the holiness movement, and the Church of the Nazarene in particular:

As the [20th] century wore on, the very optimistic expectations of entire sanctification became less and less credible in the light of the apparently intractable nature of sin. By mid-century, the extravagant promises of the grace of entire sanctification began to be tempered. Theologians in the denomination began to define the sin that could be eradicated more narrowly and the infirmities that were an inescapable consequence of fallen humanity more expansively. This led to an increasing dissatisfaction with traditional formulations of the doctrine.

As a result, the doctrine as formulated by John Wesley in the 18th century was reexamined. A study of his writings, which were divergent from the 19th century formulations at important points, resulted in a radical reformulation of the doctrine.⁴²

It would be too much to say that Dr. Greathouse was the only holiness theologian conversant with and immersed in the theology of Wesley, but because of his positions as teacher and denominational leader, he clearly was widely influential in moving the understanding of sanctification beyond the credibility gap created by the early claims of nineteenth-century teachers to a more Wesleyan mode of thought.⁴³

Unlike some theologians, Dr. G. has maintained an inseparable balance between the intellect and the heart, not ever succumbing to obscurantism in the name of piety or allowing the pursuit of abstract intellectual truth to become an obsession

that dulls spiritual vitality. This balance is reflected in his career-long preoccupation with the Holy Spirit both doctrinally and experientially.

If one were to identify a theological theme that has occupied the attention of Dr. G. throughout his long career, it would obviously be the doctrine and experience of Christian holiness. And, as noted above, the shape of his understanding was likewise quite clearly formed by a lifelong concentration on two sources, John Wesley and the Apostle Paul.⁴⁴ His love affair with Paul focused on the Epistle to the Romans to the extent that he became recognized as an authority on both Wesley and Romans, and his writings have been thoroughly informed by both these sources. Paul Bassett, faculty member at Nazarene Theological Seminary, suggested in his typical humor that for Greathouse they were one and the same. His seminary teaching was primarily focused on these two subjects.

The theme of Christian holiness was the one thread that united Dr. G.'s literary and pulpit work from the invocation to the benediction. In an article written upon his retirement from the general superintendency, he affirmed this fact: "The message of holiness remains for me the essence of the gospel—God's pure love reigning in the heart and excluding sin. This experience is both the command of the law and the promise of the gospel. To the proclamation and exposition of this message I have dedicated my life."⁴⁵

A subsidiary emphasis has surfaced throughout his theological work. It appeared early in his career. It was a concern that the message of Christian holiness not be seen as a sectarian teaching. In 1958 he declared, "In common with historic Protestantism we believe that sanctification in its broadest and most comprehensive sense is a process of moral and spiritual renewal beginning with regeneration and continuing to glorification." In his inaugural address as president of Nazarene Theological Seminary, this idea was one of his major emphases. It indicated his intention to keep the education of Nazarene ministers in the mainstream of the Christian tradition, and he sought to guide the Seminary in this broad river. (See chapter five, "Administrator.")

Of a piece with this commitment to the mainstream Christian tradition, Dr. Greathouse attempted to influence the Church to take the sacraments seriously. In a movement that placed such heavy emphasis on experience, it was natural that those who were not theologically informed would minimize the significance of the sacraments. He warned against the encroachments of the ancient heresy of Gnosticism that disparaged the physical in favor of a "spirituality" achieved apart from the sacraments. He insisted that there were no "unbaptized Christians" in the early church, which also observed the Eucharist every Lord's Day, celebrating "Christ's atoning sacrifice by eating His body and drinking His blood in the simple faith that He was present with them at the table."⁴⁶ In pamphlets specifically directed to these issues, Dr. G. emphasized the importance (even necessity) of baptism, both adult and child baptism, while keeping true to the latitude granted by the Nazarene articles of faith.⁴⁷ The number of his students whose pastoral service has been marked by faithful administration of both baptism and Eucharist may indicate his success in this concern.

By the time he was thirty-nine years of age, when his first book was published, the basic contours of his theology of salvation (soteriology) had been fully developed. In this book, *The Fullness of the Spirit*, which was written as a Christian Service Training text and thus addressed to both lay and clergy, we see a writer who had already been shaped by the teachings of John Wesley and who had a mastery of the contents of scripture interpreted by sound exegesis.

But this does not mean that what was seen and said at the earliest period of his career was simply repeated *ad infinitum* throughout his life. Rather what one sees is a continual broadening of the foundation for the truth of holiness both in more intense biblical exegesis and a deeper penetration into the classic teachings of the church fathers and by a maintained awareness of the developments in contemporary theology. His voracious appetite for truth never diminished even though it had to be satisfied in the context of a busy,

almost all-consuming, administrative activity. Upon his retirement from the highest office in the Church of the Nazarene, he moved back to his geographical roots in Nashville, Tennessee. And even before he secured housing, UPS drivers began bringing large boxes of books, such as a complete set of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, to the religion department office of Trevecca Nazarene University, addressed to him. There was to be no slowing down of his insatiable search for a deeper understanding of the truth of Christian holiness.

The outcome of this continued study is reflected in the increasing sophistication of Dr. Greathouse's writings on sanctification and was perceptively noted by Dennis Kinlaw in the Foreword to Dr. G.'s *magnum opus*, *Wholeness in Christ*:

As a scholar, he has lived with the biblical texts. He has missed none of any significance. He has explored the treatment of this subject through the history of the church. There is no modern parochialism here. He has read the literature on the question and digested the insights of theologians, biblical and systematic, as they have tackled his biblical theme. The results are all here in a remarkably brief but thorough compass.⁴⁸

This lifelong preoccupation has not been a one-stringed monotony. His teaching, preaching, and interests have covered the whole gamut of theological issues, and he managed to develop a significant level of expertise across the spectrum of systematic theology (as well as in the history of philosophy), which probably is most clearly expressed in the influence he has had upon those younger theologians who have sought his counsel and appropriated his insights and wisdom.

Early in his career Dr. Greathouse identified the issues that were the critical theological matters in holiness theology. In a paper presented to the first Nazarene theology conference of Nazarene scholars, teachers and administrators (1958), he highlighted five critical areas that should challenge holiness scholars to find adequate responses:

1. "Do the scriptures teach a second epoch in Christian experience which actually effects cleansing from original sin?"
In a word, the matter of sin.
2. What is the nature of perfect love?
3. How is entire sanctification related to the Atonement?
4. Are we correct in identifying entire sanctification with Spirit baptism?
5. Would we do well not to de-emphasize the second crisis, but to lay heavier stress on the lifelong process of sanctification, the gradual work of God in our souls by which we are renewed in the image of God?

From the vantage point of the present day, one can see that this was a prophetic pronouncement of great magnitude. All of these points have been issues of continuing discussion and debate within the holiness movement with a gradual shift of emphasis on virtually every one of them taking place over the intervening years.⁴⁹

Our approach will be to trace the way Dr. Greathouse sought to interact with these issues throughout his career and in particular to look at his mature way of resolving them as expressed in his *Wholeness in Christ*. Along the way we will observe a phenomenon that is a rare quality but one that is characteristic of the spirit of William Greathouse, a quality that is expressed in one of his favorite words, *irenic*.⁵⁰ In the context of a denomination fiercely committed to maintaining as vital the reason for its origin, each of these issues could and did generate considerable friction as strong minds collided over the way they should be addressed. The result was the loss of some promising scholars to the Church, but some were preserved through the irenic spirit and mediation of Dr. G.

The Question of Sin. This issue was always the "Achilles heel" of the claim that "entire sanctification [dealt] a death blow to original sin, or depravity." While this claim had been challenged from the beginning of the Wesleyan era, by the mid-twentieth century it had some significant detractors.⁵¹ Methodist theologian W. E. Sangster had, with some

diffidence, questioned the possibility of “perfection,”⁵² and theological giants, like Reinhold Niebuhr in his classic *Nature and Destiny of Man*, had struck a strong blow against the claim. Unlike many in the holiness movement at the time who simply dismissed these attacks out of hand, Dr. G. sought to address them head on. Sangster had introduced a caveat that has continued to snowball into a veritable avalanche, namely the possibility of self-deception. The emergence of studies in human nature, such as those of Sigmund Freud that highlighted the often unrecognized depths of human consciousness, has resulted in such judgments as that of Methodist theologian Henry H. Knight: “[O]ur present appreciation of the role of unconscious motives in our lives makes Wesley’s talk of Christian perfection seem hopelessly naïve, if not dangerously presumptive.”⁵³

In his early response, Dr. G. admits the difficulty of this matter, pointing out that it “gives him pause” and needs “careful consideration” but insists that “we need not concede Sangster’s main point.” His enduring argument, however, arises out of the recognition that the crucial issue has to do with the nature of sin. On this point he appeals to Wesley’s distinction between “objective sin” and “subjective sin.” *Objective* sin refers to “all deviation from perfect holiness.” On this definition even the most saintly fall short and therefore “sin.” If sin is so defined without exception, the claim for full salvation is invalidated. The open and honest recognition of this limitation brought Dr. G. (and others of the so-called “Trevecca Connection”) under considerable criticism by some who wanted to hold uncompromisingly to the possibility of “sinless perfection.” But true to the integrity of truth and reality, he held tenaciously to this Wesleyan position throughout his career, insisting that “[t]he holiest of men still need Christ as their . . . Priest, to make atonement for their holy things. They need to pray, ‘Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.’ They still need the Blood to atone for their ‘coming short of the full mind that was in Christ, and walking less accurately than they might have done after their Divine pattern.’”⁵⁴

His positive response is an appeal to Wesley's emphasis on "subjective sin," which he claimed could be dealt with decisively by the grace of God. This stipulation essentially reduces "perfection" to "purity of intention," and Dr. G. eventually found support for this Wesleyan apologetic in the classic words of Søren Kierkegaard, "Purity of Heart is to Will one thing."⁵⁵

At a more apologetic level, there emerged in the thinking of holiness theologians a concept shared by Dr. G., namely, that both sin and holiness should be interpreted relationally. Much popular thinking, inevitably, had viewed sin substantially, i.e., as a "thing" that was extracted like a rotten tooth from the heart in a moment. This way of thinking led to much confusion and led to questions that were basically unanswerable in that context. Dr. G. recognized this difficulty: "certain unscriptural ideas have developed in the 'folk theology' of the church, such as the tendency to think of sin as a 'thing' that, once eradicated, is gone forever. Rather, in Scripture, sin is a disease; holiness is moral and spiritual health restored."⁵⁶

An important advance in holiness theology generally was his recognition of the classic understanding of sin as egocentricity. In *From the Apostles to Wesley*, he pointed out the devastating consequences of adopting the Augustinian view of original sin as concupiscence. Much holiness preaching had emphasized the belief that "desire" could be eliminated in entire sanctification, but this teaching shipwrecked on the realities of human experience. On the consequence of the Fall, he noted that "[t]his *hubris* is humanity's 'original' sin, the root of all moral evil; it is, as Millard Reed puts it, 'the delusion of self-sovereignty'."⁵⁷ Repeatedly in his preaching and teaching he would say that the proper spelling of sin was sIn.

At an early stage, he appealed to an apologetic that had been introduced into holiness debate by nineteenth-century Methodist scholar Daniel Steele. Steele argued that the aorist tense in the Greek language was "God's lightning tense" and referred to an instantaneous and completed action. The use of this tense, it was claimed, validated the claim for a moment of complete and perfect cleansing from inward sin by the Baptism

with the Holy Spirit. In the years intervening between the '50s and the publication of *Wholeness in Christ*, Steele's interpretation of the aorist tense had been decisively invalidated. His claim was a provincialism shared by no competent Greek scholars either contemporary with him or subsequently. The aorist tense now could be seen as referring to a completed process that might be the climax of a long process, such as, for example the building of the temple.⁵⁸ Though used minimally in *Wholeness in Christ*, this interpretation is how he refers to it. In referencing Romans 6:12–19, Dr. G. wrote: "Paul employs the aorist tense here (*hagiasai*), a usage that lends itself to the view that sanctification comes to completion (as the purification of our hearts and their perfection in love) within a process that, as we have seen, begins at conversion and, as this passage shows, is consummated at the return of Christ."⁵⁹ It was this openness to truth and willingness to come to terms with new discoveries rather than be an obscurantist that characterized the spirit of William Greathouse throughout his career.

His most powerful argument, however, for the Wesleyan "optimism of grace" is experiential, his own experience, and to this he returns repeatedly, always with great power and persuasiveness. His own testimony best tells it:

As I look back I can trace various stages of development in my Christian experience, but I recall in particular the painful awakening that came to me as a result of the faithful witness of some students who had found a relationship with God that was foreign to me. At first I resented their testimony and argued against it. I dubbed it mysticism. I defended my own spiritual mediocrity and rationalized obvious deviations from the inner law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Gradually, however, a hunger began to gnaw at my heart.

Then came the day when I admitted to myself that I had never entered into the rest of faith. While reading the fourteenth chapter of John's Gospel, I was suddenly given a faith to believe. In an utterly unique moment, the Comforter came to

indwell my heart. Instantly I recognized His presence and began quietly to affirm, "He has come! The Comforter has come!" At this instant, a work of God was wrought in my soul fully as supernatural, fully as transforming, as that evening several years previous when at a Nazarene home-mission campaign I became a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Since that day when the Holy Spirit came to indwell the temple of my heart, I have known a new intimacy in my relationship with God. At times the emotional tide has ebbed away, but from that hour, my life has moved on a permanently deeper level. Before then I had operated more under my own power, than the power of the Spirit; since then God has enabled me to live in the comfort of the indwelling Spirit. About many things I may be uncertain; of one thing I am sure—the Holy Spirit has come to my life in His abiding, sanctifying fullness. Out of this newfound certainty flowed a new power in my preaching and teaching. As far as I am concerned, my credentials to teach this precious doctrine are primarily my personal knowledge and experience of the indwelling Holy Ghost.⁶⁰

The Nature of Perfect Love. As always, Dr. G. develops this theme by way of an exposition of John Wesley's apologetic. In his struggles with attempting to habilitate the concept of perfection, Wesley insisted that it was not a perfection of performance (see above) but rather a perfection of love. The central text used to justify this position was the great commandment as identified by Jesus: "Thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength, and your neighbor as yourself." And this love is described operationally by St. Paul in First Corinthians 13. Like Wesley, Dr. G. argues that every command of God is a "covered promise," which is God's guarantee that what he calls for in his people he will accomplish in their lives.

Influenced by the work of Swedish theologian Anders Nygren in his exposition of *Agape and Eros*, Dr. G. made much of the distinction between these two Greek terms. Although *eros*

is not found in the New Testament, it reflects an attitude of reaching out for fulfillment of one's self. *Agape* was the term the New Testament writers chose to refer to God's kind of love, a self-giving love that was to be reciprocated by the same form of love by human beings and expressed toward others. His views are summarized in a collage of quotations from John Wesley: "This love that fulfills the law is the essence of Christian Perfection." It is blamelessness rather than faultlessness. "Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life—this is the whole of scriptural perfection." Wesley, however, makes an important qualification. "But even that love increases more and more, till we 'grow up in all things into Him that is our Head;' till we attain 'the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.'"⁶¹

Sanctification and the Atonement. The classic Protestant interpretation of the Atonement normally takes some form of a Satisfaction Theory and is usually associated with a belief in unconditional election. This combination of interpretations logically has no essential place for the holy life. Consequently, if a theologian is to interpret the Atonement in such a way as to provide an essential place for sanctification, it must take some other form.

Dr. G. finds this alternate understanding in the early Eastern Fathers, especially as Swedish theologian Gustav Aulen articulates their views in what he calls the *Christus Victor* motif. His appropriation of the insights of this view is presented in a couple of papers published in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* and several lectures to which he makes reference. As early as 1972, Dr. G. was propagating this understanding of the atonement as providing support for the message of full salvation.⁶²

This theme reflects what many consider to be the central perspective of New Testament theology as expressed in the idiom of much rabbinical theology of the so-called intertestamental period. According to this theology, history is divided into two ages, the Present Age and the Age to Come, with the Present Age under the dominion of demonic powers with Satan as the "prince of the powers of the air." The New

Testament writers appropriated this idiom and adapted it to their belief that the future had broken into the present in the form of the Kingdom of God. With his Incarnation and Crucifixion, Jesus encountered these powers and defeated them, thus becoming Christ the Victor with the result that while the Present Age had not come to an end, as the rabbis had hoped, the Age to Come had become a present reality in the context of the Present Age through the Person and Work of Jesus, thus introducing a period of history that the New Testament refers to as "the last days."

Appropriating the Wesleyan theme of participation in Christ, Dr. G. goes beyond Aulen by extending the benefits of the Atonement not only to the guilt of personal sin but further, to the elimination of inward sin as well by interpreting the victory motif in terms of the indwelling Holy Spirit. He expresses it summarily in this brief paragraph: "Christ's victory *for* us becomes his victory *in* us by the indwelling Spirit (Romans 8:1-11). Christ's victory is reproduced in us. In the Holy Spirit, Christ for us becomes Christ in us, recapitulating in our history his triumph over sin. This is the meaning of Christus Victor for sanctification."⁶³

This view was significant because the prominent evangelical interpretation of the work of Christ provided for justification but did not have a viable provision for sanctification or the holy life. By viewing the death of Christ as a punishment that was rightfully due the sinner, but which Jesus suffered in the sinner's place, this theory led logically both to a limited atonement (Christ died only for the elect) and to a neglect of the essential nature of the holy life. This is not to say that the teachers of this interpretation were antinomians (rejecting the importance of the law), but their view limited the *explicit* provisions of the atonement to justification.

Entire Sanctification and Spirit Baptism. From the earliest days of the nineteenth-century holiness revivals in the United States, the standard teaching of textbooks and popular writings identified entire sanctification with the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. This view had a two-pronged value. It seemed both to

demonstrate the consequences for the entirely sanctified believer as reflected in the power of the primitive New Testament church and to provide a paradigm to prove that sanctification was subsequent to justification when the disciples were understood as being already "Christians" prior to the day of Pentecost.

As holiness scholars were more and more exposed to the teachings of John Wesley, who had always been seen as the father of the modern holiness emphasis, they came to recognize that this interpretation was in tension with Wesley. The result was a significant struggle between those who wished to hold to the traditional view as taught by the American Holiness Movement and those who felt that Wesley's view was more exegetically correct in identifying Pentecost with the regeneration of the disciples. In general, the scholarship of the holiness movement had more and more moved away from the nineteenth-century version, finding in the work of John Wesley a way forward in face of the difficulty of defending this position with good biblical exegesis.

The issue reached explosive proportions in the 1980s after it became the subject of presentations at the Wesleyan Theological Society (WTS) meetings in 1979 and following.⁶⁴ Both theologians and biblical scholars were involved in the debate with Nazarene scholars of both disciplines being participants. Since the WTS was a scholarly society, the debate generated a lot of heat, but there was no basis for excommunication. However, in the denominational setting it took on different contours. Thus one professor at the Nazarene Theological Seminary, who was up for tenure, was placed in danger of losing his position as certain trustees believed that the issue had overtones of orthodoxy versus heterodoxy. At this point, Dr. Greathouse, by then a general superintendent, demonstrated his irenic spirit and interceded, seeking to find a way to mediate between the two positions and salvage one of the Seminary's finest professors. His efforts were successful, and once more he became instrumental in steering the Church away from an obscurantist mentality.⁶⁵

In subsequent years it became obvious that resulting from the

re-discovery of John Wesley there were two traditions present in the Church of the Nazarene. That fact is even explicitly taught in the course on holiness designed by the denomination for the education of clergy. Where was Dr. Greathouse in the midst of these developments? In his own writings, one can clearly detect a subtle shift in his emphasis from the earliest book (*The Fullness of the Spirit*) to his *magnum opus*, *Wholeness in Christ*. In the early book, the influence of the American Holiness tradition can be detected by the repeated emphasis on the Baptism with the Holy Spirit. However, it was a soundly balanced presentation, which did not actually use the standard apologetic of Spirit baptism to prove a second work of grace or the faulty argument that suggested one did not receive the Spirit until the second blessing of entire sanctification, which would have been the logical conclusion of the nineteenth-century exegesis.

The discussion of the experience of the Holy Spirit took on a significantly different flavor in *Wholeness in Christ*. While the issue is not specifically addressed, it is clear that the position presented reflects the dominant view among New Testament scholars that the significant meaning of Pentecost is historical, in that it ushers in the Age of the Spirit. Out of this exegesis, as well as earlier treatments, one can virtually say that Dr. G.'s doctrine of sanctification is a doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

Crisis or Process? The holiness revivals of the nineteenth century had focused on the concept of entire sanctification as an instantaneous second work of grace that eradicated the carnal nature or original sin. Much of it forged in the highly charged atmosphere of frontier revivalism, a premium was placed upon the high—usually emotional—moment when all this “spiritual operation” took place. In fact, in the context of Methodism as the bosom of holiness theology, the issue of crisis versus process became the watershed on which Methodism broke apart. In this polemical situation, the “second blessing” teachers tended to “put all their eggs in one basket,” and the idea of progressive sanctification was, for them, an oxymoron. Growth in grace was a phenomenon restricted to the post-entirely sanctified person.

There was one notable exception to this mentality: J. O. McClurkan, the founder of the Pentecostal Mission in the South and its educational child that became Trevecca Nazarene College. McClurkan, a Cumberland Presbyterian with Calvinistic leanings, did not hold with the extreme views (as he saw them) that left little room for continued sanctification. This belief placed him in some tension with the leaders of other branches of the holiness movement. His position on this issue meant that McClurkan had a balanced view of the crisis/process issue.⁶⁶

It is definitely not an *ad hominem* to suggest that Dr. G. was temperamentally and theologically suited to become pastor of the church McClurkan founded and president of the institution he birthed. Dr. G. often referred to McClurkan's understanding of the nature of the sanctified life. In a sermon to his congregation in 1962 he declared,

Unfortunately, we can express the grace of God only through our frail and imperfect human personalities, with all our idiosyncrasies and prejudices and blindness. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels," and usually they are a bit cracked!

For this reason J. O. McClurkan, I believe following Paul, taught that the sanctified Christian must experience "a deeper death to self." The **sinful** self—self in rebellion against God's will—dies in the presence of Christ as we walk in the light . . . but the "ego" or creature life still exists and the displacement of the natural self by the incoming of the Christ life is the work accomplished in these deeper crucifixions.⁶⁷

In his later years, Dr. G. became profoundly interested in the contemporary spiritual theology of both the Eastern Orthodox and Catholic traditions. Wesleyan scholars had become aware that John Wesley's understanding of Christian holiness was deeply influenced by Eastern thought, particular the concept of "Divination." With the recognition that earlier criticisms of this teaching were mistaken and that what this view really referred to was sanctification by participation,

specifically renewing human persons in the image of God, the work of the fathers became a fruitful source for the history of holiness theology.

With the discovery by patristic scholars and others that both eastern *and* western theologians had laid strong emphasis upon this great spiritual truth, Dr. G's vision of holiness of heart and life as a truly ecumenical truth became ever more established. In a late paper he referred to his discoveries in the Catholic tradition:

One further word may be added, however, to bring to date where I now find myself in the Spirit: as I write, I joyously resonate with Raniero Cantalamessa's *Contemplating the Trinity: The Path to the Abundant Christian Life*. It defines for me what a life of holiness should be (and is) through our participation in the love of the Triune God.⁶⁸

7 | *General Superintendent*

THE MOST FULFILLING PERIOD OF DR. GREATHOUSE'S life was interrupted in 1976 by his election to the highest office of the Church of the Nazarene. He had happily "dodged a bullet" in 1972 when his near election was aborted by unfortunate political shenanigans (see chapter 5). But the tide of his Church-wide popularity expressed itself in the General Assembly that convened in Dallas, Texas, in 1976 when he was elected general superintendent.⁶⁹ He was the third of the first four presidents of Nazarene Theological Seminary to be chosen to this position.⁷⁰ His election created a difficult decision for him because he believed he was in his most meaningful role as Seminary president. He was convinced that one of the greatest contributions he could make to the Church was to facilitate the theological education of its ministry. The decision was complicated by the fact that he had earlier requested the Seminary Board of Trustees to grant him a year's sabbatical leave to study at Oxford University in England in order to do further research on Wesley. The night before the General Assembly opened, George Coulter, his general superintendent advisor, told him that the Board of General Superintendents had approved his sabbatical.⁷¹

In the midst of this struggle, two British friends, Albert Lown and Alex Deasley, came to him and said, "Why don't you make the Church your seminary?" This suggestion registered with Greathouse. He also believed that the Board of General Superintendents should have someone with strong theological concerns in a decision-making role. General Superintendent Samuel Young came to him and said, "Brother Greathouse,

those people know what they're doing out there. I have only one word for you. I'll tell you what Dr. Chapman once said to me. 'If you walk away, you will walk into the dark.'⁷² After asking for time to pray and consider, Greathouse gave his acceptance speech the next morning and became the twenty-third general superintendent.

Dr. G.'s understanding of his strengths and theological commitments gave shape to his philosophy of his role as a general superintendent. He conceived his function to be a pastor and teacher of the people called Nazarenes. His brethren on the board respected him as a theologian and gave him opportunity to express himself.

One of the most public functions of a general superintendent was to preside at the annual assemblies of the various districts throughout the Church. Consistent with his commitment, he attempted to present a vision of holiness to the people and encourage the pastors in these meetings. Thus he would preach a holiness message and call for the singing of a Wesley hymn, something new to many Nazarenes.

As an expression of his desire that the ministry of the Church be informed by Wesleyan theology, he quickly shaped the ordination services he conducted to reflect the Wesleyan tradition. He researched the ordination writings of John Wesley and formulated several questions that drew from the questions Wesley had used in ordaining Methodist clergy. He asked the ordinands such questions as the following: (1) Will you live a life of *prayer* that would exemplify a holy life? (2) Will you undertake by God's grace to bring up your *family* in the nurture and admonition of the Lord? (3) Will you faithfully proclaim the message of *holiness* and endeavor to bring your people into the experience?

Just before he was to go to his first district assembly, which was to be held in Upstate New York, feeling the need for God's promise of enablement, he did something quite uncharacteristic. He let his Bible fall open and asked the Lord to give him a word of direction. His eyes fell on Jeremiah 1:7—". . . to all to whom I send you you shall go, and whatever I command you you shall speak. Be not afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, says the Lord."

Greathouse comments on his response to this promise:

Praise the Lord. All fear had instantly fled me—as the Spirit filled my being with ecstasy and confidence. The next Tuesday I flew to New York, and when I stood up to preach and preside, I knew the Spirit of the Lord was upon me, empowering me for my new assignment.⁷³

His three terms of service as general superintendent included supervision of the work of the Church both at home and on the foreign field. Amid the multiplicity of details and responsibilities, we shall only mention some highlights and/or issues with which he had to deal in each area. We will look at the domestic scene first.

Domestic Experiences

One of the major theological controversies in which Dr. G. exercised an important influence concerned the question of the use of the language of Spirit baptism in defining the meaning of entire sanctification. This issue had emerged as holiness scholars had become more immersed in the study of the theology of John Wesley and discovered that his views were in tension with the general teaching of the nineteenth-century holiness movement out of which the Church of the Nazarene had emerged. This controversy became an issue in 1979 for the Church of the Nazarene in connection with the granting of tenure to a Nazarene Seminary faculty member, a matter already discussed in chapter six. Some on the Seminary Board of Trustees felt that no faculty member should be granted tenure who did not unequivocally affirm the equation of entire sanctification and the Baptism with the Holy Spirit, and this faculty member leaned toward John Wesley's interpretation. In the heart of this controversy, Greathouse wrote a paper on "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit" in which he argued that the baptism of the Holy Spirit is both the induction of the Christian

into the Body of Christ and the experience that finally issues in entire sanctification. He had come to believe that the Nazarene Article on "entire sanctification" was a confluence of both Wesleyan and nineteenth-century holiness traditions and thus offered a mediating position. His influence resulted in the Seminary professor's being granted tenure and, in addition, helped the Church clarify its interpretation.⁷⁴

A second problem area that involved Dr. Greathouse during his general superintendency surrounded the publication of H. Ray Dunning's book entitled *Grace, Faith, and Holiness: A Wesleyan Systematic Theology* (1988). Dunning was chairman of the Department of Religion and Philosophy at Trevecca and had been asked by the Board of General Superintendents "to produce a systematic theology in the Wesleyan tradition that is true to the doctrinal standards of the Church of the Nazarene and at the same time is aware of, and dialogues with, contemporary thought theologically, philosophically, psychologically, and culturally."⁷⁵ In addition, the Board of General Superintendents recommended that an editorial board be appointed to work with Dunning to provide limited "oversight" of the project. This committee included John A. Knight, W. T. Purkiser, A. Elwood Sanner, and Richard S. Taylor.

The controversy that arose concerned the latter part of the commission pertaining to dialoging with "contemporary thought theologically, philosophically, psychologically, and culturally." Two members of the committee rather vigorously objected to actually engaging in this dialogue. After reading the manuscript and seeing the implication, they attempted to sabotage the project, insisting that the new theology must simply reflect the traditional formulations of theology rather than contemporary modes of thought. One other teacher in the Church saw his special calling to attack the work and communicated widely to influential people in the denomination seeking to discredit it.⁷⁶

Dr. Greathouse energetically responded to these attacks and insisted that the only way a theology could be "contemporary" was the way it was being approached. In February of 1980, he wrote a letter to M. A. (Bud) Lunn, manager of the Nazarene

Publishing House, acknowledging that Dunning would have to deal with some sensitive theological issues: He wrote:

Naturally, there are sensitive areas where Ray Dunning will need to enter into deep consultation with the committee. It is becoming increasingly evident that the modern holiness movement, which developed in the nineteenth century, incorporated within its theological position a number of non-Wesleyan elements. Among these is Phoebe Palmer's "altar theology" as well as a new view of the baptism of the Holy Spirit developed by New School Presbyterian Charles G. Finney. The latter issue is especially sensitive, as you well know. Ray is sensitized at these points as well as others. I believe he has the intellectual and spiritual maturity to produce a work that will be irenic. I predict, however, that there will be some interesting discussions along the way since there are varying points of view on the advisory committee.

Greathouse concluded his letter by saying:

Perhaps I feel more strongly than some others that John Wesley was a true reformer whose insights and understandings are more truly scriptural than some of the later advocates of holiness. At the same time, I am absolutely sure that the Articles of Faith of the Church of the Nazarene were intentionally framed with enough breadth to bind all holiness advocates and witnesses together even though their private views at minor points may happen to differ.⁷⁷

Dunning's book *Grace, Faith and Holiness* was eventually approved by the Board of General Superintendents and the Book Committee of the Nazarene Publishing House as biblically and doctrinally sound and consistent with the Wesleyan tradition, and their preface commended it to informed readers.⁷⁸ Dunning wrote in his Acknowledgements:

I am deeply indebted to Dr. W. M. Greathouse, who has been my theological dialogue partner for many years as well as mentor

and friend. He has provided invaluable assistance in working through sensitive issues and helping me see where I have not adequately covered the bases. His ability to couple the hectic life of a general superintendent with the constant study requisite to theological integrity continues to amaze me.⁷⁹

A third problem area with which Greathouse was involved as general superintendent dealt with the new ministerial order of deacon, an equal order for those called to ministry but not called to the preaching ministry. The issue was hotly debated at the 1985 General Assembly in Anaheim because of the traditional Nazarene view of only one order of elder. Greathouse was the general superintendent advisor to the commission charged with studying this issue, a commission which Walter Hubbard chaired. Both Greathouse and Hubbard strongly supported the new order of deacon, and after much debate, it was officially approved by the 1985 General Assembly.⁸⁰

A fourth problem area that involved General Superintendent Greathouse occurred following the retirement of Bud Lunn as manager of the Nazarene Publishing House and the creation of a new Communications Division. Up to that time Lunn had functioned as both publisher and director of communications. The separation of these roles resulted in a conflict concerning the publishing philosophy of the Publishing House. The new manager of the publishing house insisted that he was to be the publisher, not just the manager of a printing press, and that, in the light of the existing economic situation, market should be the major determining factor. The new head of the communications division understood himself to be the publisher and the coordinator of all the books to be published and that the books should foster the mission of the Church. Greathouse, who was the responsible general superintendent for both of these areas, described himself as "between an irresistible force and an immovable object."⁸¹ He sympathized with the mission idea, but the whole matter became divisive within the Board of General Superintendents. The matter was finally resolved during the next quadrennium (1985–89) with new personnel in both areas.

One other area where Greathouse was involved as a general superintendent was in the promotion of women in Nazarene ministry. Early holiness people had been pioneers in opening the ministry to women, but through the years fundamentalist influence had led to a much more negative attitude. Dr. G. argued in this situation that “a woman who is filled with the Spirit and otherwise prepared to preach is fully entitled to a Christian pulpit.” He appealed for young women graduates from Nazarene colleges to find places to serve the Lord in the church. He said, “If Nazarenes in the beginning were revolutionaries who made all clergy and lay offices open to women, by the end of the century this pathway required pioneering all over again.”⁸²

Overseas Supervision

Each general superintendent was assigned a certain world area to oversee during his term of office. This assignment included travel to these areas to preside at the assemblies, giving guidance to the missionaries and native clergy and in general maintaining a relation of faithfulness to the Church’s theology and practice among the churches in the area. Sometimes his wife, Ruth, traveled with him; other times he traveled alone. It was during the years of Dr. G.’s tenure as general superintendent that the denomination was seriously pursuing becoming an international church, and the implications of this change created a number of problems in areas where cultural practices sometimes collided with those of the “home church” and made for some interesting encounters. We will highlight some of these experiences.

First Term (1976–1980)

During Greathouse’s first term he was given oversight of Mexico and the Spanish-speaking countries of South America (Ecuador, Venezuela, Columbia, Peru, Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Bolivia, Guyana), plus Cuba, and Belize. This

assignment was a particularly propitious one because he had the ability to read his Spanish Bible and understand it in preparation for his sermons. This knowledge enabled him to correct his interpreter, which he did on several occasions. His general knowledge of Spanish enabled him to maintain a speaking relationship with pastors, superintendents, and lay persons.

Honorato Reza and Sergio Franco accompanied him during these years. As native Mexicans, they understood the Nazarene culture in Latin America. His visits were generally four weeks in duration, giving him time to get acquainted with district superintendents and strong pastors. One humorous incident occurred in Mexico while Dr. G. waited for Reza. Without warning, a monkey (with whom Dr. G. was engaged in a theological discussion about the origin of species) grabbed his glasses, put them on, and climbed up into his cage out of reach. The monkey would take the glasses off and put them back on to see better, as he gleefully ran about the cage. When Reza arrived and saw this predicament, he asked the manager to help retrieve the glasses. After a visit to an optometrist, Greathouse and Reza arrived late for the district assembly. Wherever he went, the missionaries opened their homes and hearts to the traveling party.

During his visit to communist Cuba, where District Superintendent Morejone, had been imprisoned twelve times during the past few years and where an older Nazarene woman had been put in jail for taking a small child to Sunday school, Greathouse walked toward the terminal through a line of armed Russian soldiers. Before Greathouse entered the car to go the hotel, Morejone advised him that the car was probably bugged and that his hotel room would also be bugged. That evening Greathouse joined a congregation of about one hundred and fifty for worship in the only Nazarene church building in Cuba. The remaining congregations worshipped in house churches scattered over the island. Nazarenes had a small seminary on the outskirts of Havana, where later that week Greathouse and Reza were to have dinner with the president and his family.

Reza remained in Cuba to complete Church and official business while Dr. Greathouse returned to the States. While he waited at the terminal to check out, two armed guards spent about fifteen minutes going over his venue. He was relieved to see them give him the nod to proceed to his waiting American Airlines flight back to Kansas City. Upon his return he worked on devising ways to secretly send biblical and theological books for faculty and students at the Cuban seminary.

Second Term (1980–1985)

During his second term in office, he was assigned to the rim of the Pacific and India. This five-year term was instituted in order for General Assemblies to avoid conflict with the national political conventions. He had some interesting experiences in this area as he encountered several difficult cultural situations. These customs, as well as the languages, required him to be open minded in order to adapt to the Church in the region. “It was the most challenging and yet, in other ways, the most satisfying years of my general superintendency,” he said:

It called on me not only to remember the guidelines of the *Manual* as I sometimes faced customs foreign to me, but also to depend on the Holy Spirit to empower and guide me through trying situations. It was a great privilege to spend lengthy periods with our Nazarene family in this diverse region, speaking at times at conventions where I could spell out the basic elements of our Wesleyan understanding of holiness, always having the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with the people, pastors, and superintendents in their native environment.⁸³

Experiences in Japan. The district superintendent of the Japan district was Shin Kitagawa, grandson of Hiroshi Kitagawa, the pioneer of the Nazarene work in Japan. The younger Kitagawa had done his undergraduate work at

Pasadena College and graduate work in Europe, where he studied under Jürgen Moltmann and then translated Moltmann's major works into Japanese.

Prior to Greathouse's first visit, Kitagawa had misunderstood something World Mission secretary Jerald D. Johnson had said to him. He thought that Johnson had assured him that upon attaining full self-support, Japan would be free from denominational control. When Greathouse met Kitagawa at the district assembly, Kitagawa asked pointedly, "What are *you* doing here?" Not knowing the background of the question, Greathouse explained, "I am the general superintendent here to conduct your district assembly." Kitagawa then responded, "We want a *Japanese* general superintendent." Regional director Don Owens proceeded to explain matters to Kitagawa, and after about two hours of meeting with the advisory board, Katagawa agreed for Greathouse to preside and call the assembly to order but to preach only when asked to do so. When he was finally asked to preach, Greathouse announced his text on the Great Commandment: Matthew 22:34-40. After reading the passage, he began with his introduction: "The scribes of Jesus' day had counted the commandments of the Law and found that they numbered 613: 365 were positive, one for each day of the year, and 248 were negative, one for each bone of the body." His interpreter had difficulty with the English, and it took fifteen minutes to finish this introductory declaration, so Greathouse had prayer and dismissed the assembly.

Two years later Greathouse returned to Japan for the district assembly, and with the election of a new district superintendent there was a transformation of the atmosphere of the Japanese church. Since 1989, the Church of the Nazarene in Japan has experienced a spiritual renaissance, as evidenced by its growing financial commitment to the global mission of the denomination. The election of a Japanese president of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary in Manila, Hitoshi (Paul) Fuque, also contributed to a changed attitude on the district. A Shinto converted to Christ at Northwest Nazarene University, Fuque graduated in 1970 as "preacher of the year"

and then went on to Nazarene Seminary, where he studied under Greathouse and graduated in 1973 and was again named “preacher of the year.” He returned to his hometown in Japan and led his family and neighbors to Christ, forming a strong Nazarene congregation. He served until 1981, and after returning to the USA to earn a PhD at Boston University in 1994, he returned to Japan, where he served as a pastor for two years before joining the faculty of Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary. In 2003 he was elected as that institution’s first non-Western president. He later retired and returned to pastor his home church and translated Greathouse’s book *Wholeness in Christ: Toward a Biblical Theology of Holiness* into Japanese.⁸⁴

To finish this section on Japan, we should note that in 1993 the Church of the Nazarene in Japan issued an apology for its not having done more toward peace during World War II. The “confession” stated that the Church regretted and repented that it did not resist the aggression, but rather cooperated with it. General Superintendent Donald Owens accepted the apology on behalf of the entire Asia-Pacific Region and the denomination.⁸⁵

Experiences in Korea. The Church of Jesus Christ in Korea had its birth in the nineteenth century, under the ministry of dedicated Presbyterian missionaries, who left their stamp on the faith and practice of Korean Christians of all denominations, as will be noted below. There was a widespread practice of gathering at four AM each morning for an hour of intercessory prayer for the Church and the nation. To know a true Christian of any Korean denomination was to know a *praying* believer. Korean Christians also brought with them to church both a Bible and a hymnbook for worship, which in a large church was led by a robed choir. Worship was in the DNA of Korean Nazarenes.

The Korean Nazarene Church owes its existence to Don Owens. After a hiatus during the Korean War, Owens resumed his relation to the Korean church and has been its guiding light since. When Greathouse opened his first Korean assembly, the way had been prepared for his arrival, and he found it easy to preach with an enthusiastic, anointed interpreter. One feature

of public worship, however, became a serious problem, the Presbyterian order of *lay* deacon. A proper service of worship included four *lay deacons* seated in the midst of the congregation to see that everything was done “decently and in order.” Charles Strickland, Greathouse’s predecessor in Korea, had not been troubled by this practice, which he apparently viewed as comparable to stewards in a local church in the U.S., and had promised the Korean Nazarenes that the next *Manual* would incorporate a provision for this practice. When the new manuals arrived the day before the assembly, they did not have any reference to lay elders. This omission created a crisis in the assembly, and Greathouse appointed a committee to study the problem. The committee reported back with a unanimous position: *any congregations choosing to ordain lay elders should have that privilege*. When Greathouse reported the situation to the Board of General Superintendents, they voted to add a new *Manual* paragraph that made allowance for “cultural practices” not inconsistent with Christian holiness.⁸⁶

During this term of foreign supervision, Greathouse flew to Korea to dedicate Korea Nazarene College in the city of Chenon where hundreds had gathered for the occasion. In his sermon, he spelled out what he viewed as the purpose of Nazarene higher education: to inculcate in students the truth that brought our Church into existence—Christian holiness as taught by Wesley and his tradition. God blessed his ministry in Korea.

Experiences in India. The work of the Church of the Nazarene in India during the jurisdiction of General Superintendent Greathouse was divided into two main areas: North India and South India. The English-speaking work in North India was centered in the state of Maharashtra where Nazarenes maintained the Reynolds Memorial Hospital, founded by Orpha Speicher, M.D., in 1936. Nazarene Bible College, which trained Nazarene preachers, was also located in this district. It had been founded in Washim about the same time as the hospital.

Nazarene work in South India was beginning to grow significantly by the 1980s under the leadership of veteran

missionaries Bronell and Paula Greer. When Greathouse visited this district, the Greers took him on a grand tour of the district in their van. This tour included a visit to the South India Biblical Seminary (SIBS) located about a two-hour drive from the city of Bangalore. Here Greathouse found a theological library that was well stocked with Nazarene volumes, including his own books to that date, and a chapel with Nazarene hymnals.

South India Biblical Seminary had been established seventy years earlier and was sponsored by the World Gospel Mission. About a third of its students had been Nazarenes through the years. It offered a four-year bachelor of theology (ThB) degree, and its leaders hoped to offer soon a master's of divinity (MDiv). With the approval of the president, Frank Dewey, Dr. Greathouse engaged the faculty in theological conversation on John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection. Assured that SIBS was a strong advocate of Wesleyan holiness, Greathouse made a proposal to the president and his cabinet to which they agreed: the Church of the Nazarene would furnish one-third of SIBS's finances, one-third of its student body, and one-third of its trustees, contingent upon agreement by the Board of General Superintendents (a proposal which was later approved). Consequently, the Association of Theological Schools of Asia accredited SIBS. Since the Nazarene agreement with SIBS, more than one hundred current pastors in India are alumni of this school.

One other significant development in India involved the appointment of Vijai Singh as superintendent of the New Delhi district by Greathouse. Singh had heard Greathouse lecture on John Wesley's idea of Christian holiness and had come into the experience of entire sanctification. He graduated from an Oriental Missionary Society Seminary in Seoul, Korea, and then matriculated at San Francisco Seminary, where he earned his PhD in biblical studies and theology. The Southern Baptists had offered him the position of supervisor of the entire nation of India, but he declined, saying, "I am not a Calvinist." He had also been offered a university professorship in India, but he

declined because he was “not a liberal.” Greathouse felt a spiritual kinship, and they developed a long-term friendship.

God enabled Singh to plant more than seven hundred churches in India during his tenure as district superintendent. The New Delhi district, which began with about thirty churches, at this writing had 355 congregations planted in five states of India. A number of district assistants, whom he calls his “Timothy(s),” assist him in the oversight of these churches. These young ministers are being trained to follow in his steps. Desiring to help him give these men ministerial instruction, Dr. Greathouse selected several hundred books from his personal library and mailed them to Singh.⁸⁷

Experiences in Burma. The Nazarene work in Burma (now Myanmar) was a gift from Robin Seia, who had planted fifteen Christian churches in Burma and was in search of an American denomination with which he might affiliate. He came to California to study at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, and through the influence of Earl Lee, pastor of First Church of the Nazarene in Pasadena, decided to become a Nazarene. Greathouse and then-regional director Don Owens visited Burma and met with Seia and some of his church members for prayer and fellowship. The next day Seia took the visiting party on a walking tour of some of his churches. The Burmese government did not allow missionaries, but Seia was able to register the Nazarene Church. The district was organized in 1985, and by 2000 had grown to fourteen hundred members in fifteen churches. Seia continued to give faithful witness to holiness during the turmoil of the country as it was emerging from Russian domination.⁸⁸

Experiences in the Philippines. Nazarene work in the Philippines goes back to 1948 following WWII. At the celebration of its 25th anniversary in 1973, the Church of the Nazarene there had eighty-two churches and preaching points on five different islands with almost two thousand members and thirty-one ordained pastors.⁸⁹ Greathouse found the Nazarene work in the Philippines both exciting and unique—exciting because it was continuing to spread and grow throughout the islands, and

unique because of the large number of *female* pastors reporting at the district assembly. There were two Bible colleges in the Philippines with a combined enrollment of about 520, one of which had a woman as its president.

The Communists constantly threatened Christians in the Philippines as Greathouse discovered on a visit to an area where a revival had broken out in order to organize a new Nazarene church. As he and his missionary friend were approaching the place where they were to leave the main road to go into the forest, the missionary remarked, "When I was passing here yesterday, the body of a slain man was lying right there"—pointing to the spot. Greathouse and the missionary continued their trip through the forest and found about forty new Christians waiting to be organized into a new Nazarene church. Greathouse described the situation as follows:

To depict what occurred that day is impossible. Although I can usually preach a fair sermon, and teach a class about John Wesley's theology, but to form a group of new believers as an organized church, *through an interpreter*, to become a proper Nazarene church, was *humanly* impossible for me. But with God's merciful assistance, we did it—not successfully, but somehow. We formed a band of new Philippine believers, with no knowledge of church affairs, into an official Church of the Nazarene.⁹⁰

Third Term (1985–1989)

The final term of General Superintendent Greathouse involved jurisdiction in the Caribbean islands. This period of ministry was a more relaxed and less stressful one. His first assignment was to visit the five churches of Martinique, an overseas department of France, before conducting the district assembly. Brushing up on his college French, he forgot to check out the proper French way to respond to someone's formal greeting—and he kissed the lovely greeter at the front door *on*

the mouth. However, the lady treated him graciously, and he preached and presided at the assembly with freedom.

After Martinique, where French was spoken, Greathouse held three assemblies in islands where British English was spoken. Here he encountered two problems: (1) the *rapidity* with which it was spoken, and (2) the subtle differences in the English spoken on different islands. On occasion when there was debate on the assembly floor, with rapid fire back and forth, Greathouse would graciously say: "Brethren, please slow down and explain quietly what it is you are trying to say, so that I may understand how to guide the business." Such a statement from the chair was always kindly received—and business would then move ahead. The other problem was the differences in pronunciation at British-speaking assemblies, where the same words were pronounced with varying intonations, and it was sometimes difficult to understand what was being said in the business session. Another country under the jurisdiction of Greathouse was Belize, in Central America, also an English-speaking nation. Here the district superintendent called the hotel where Greathouse was staying and asked to speak to Dr. Greathouse. When Dr. Greathouse answered the phone it was not Dr. *William* Greathouse, but Dr. *Charles* Greathouse, his brother who was in Belize with Children's Ministries, witnessing on the streets at the same time that Dr. William was conducting the district assembly in the city. For two days the Greathouse brothers enjoyed wonderful fellowship.

Besides the Belize assembly, Greathouse conducted other assemblies in the Caribbean in Haiti, Jamaica, Santa Domingo, the Bahamas, the Virgin Islands, the Windward Islands, and Cuba. In Haiti, where Nazarenes numbered about 100,000, Greathouse gave a series of lectures on Christian holiness at the college and ordained a multitude of elders. He also visited Caribbean Nazarene College where his former student, Ruth Saxon, was president. There he gave holiness lectures and witnessed a Nazarene culture quite different from that of Haiti.

In his final year as general superintendent, Dr. Greathouse visited Cuba for a second time, seeing the construction of an

auditorium on the Seminary campus where the Church gathered for its annual assembly. Finally, Greathouse conducted the assembly of Hong Kong churches on the twenty-second floor of a modern skyscraper. Here regional director Don Owens accompanied Greathouse and his wife, Ruth, on an excursion to mainland China, where Greathouse ate a large bowl of rice mixed with what he thought was cashew nuts, only to find out it was rice and *roasted silkworm cocoons*, which he found quite tasty.

At the 1989 General Assembly in Indianapolis, Dr. Greathouse was elected as general superintendent emeritus. He preached the communion message on Sunday morning and was honored the next day for his thirteen years of service as general superintendent. Shortly thereafter he wrote “a sort of general superintendent’s valedictory” address for the *Herald of Holiness* in which he expressed deep appreciation to the Church for its spiritual impact on him and his family. He said, “The message of holiness I received through the Church of the Nazarene remains, for me, the essence of the gospel—God’s pure love reigning in the heart and excluding sin. This experience is both the command of the law and the promise of the gospel. To the proclamation and exposition of this message, I have dedicated my life.” He went on in this article to express two concerns for the Church of the Nazarene: (1) that the people called Nazarenes will not exist only as a dead sect, having a form of religion without the power (and this, undoubtedly, will be the case unless they hold fast the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out); and (2) that the Church may not succumb to institutionalism and become another establishment instead of a movement of the Spirit.⁹¹

WE HAVE ALREADY SEEN SEVERAL CLUES AS TO THE nature of the family into which Dr. Greathouse was born.⁹² The years in which he was growing up were the heart of the Great Depression, so resources were limited, but they were happy years in which much of the family life revolved around the church. Father Greathouse was Sunday school superintendent and song leader and all the family was involved. It appears that little discipline was needed, but Mother Greathouse exercised close supervision of the life of her children, giving guidance where needed. Family activities were limited largely to drives during summer evenings and occasional visits to sights in the Jackson area.

Bill Greathouse's own family really began when he first met Ruth Nesbitt at a revival in her home church in Paris, Tennessee. He was part of a delegation from nearby Jackson that had driven to Paris to visit the revival campaign in which C. E. Hardy was the evangelist. Billy was impressed by Hardy's sermon, but more so by the young lady playing the piano (Ruth). She was not only an excellent pianist but also attractive to him. He made it a point to meet and shake hands with her—a handshake that, he says, he felt during the sixty-five miles back to Jackson.

The next spring Greathouse became personally acquainted with Ruth at an NYPS zone rally in 1936 held at Trinity Methodist Church in Jackson. The pastor was an Asbury graduate who had supported the Nazarene home mission campaign in which Greathouse was converted. Ruth was a delegate to the rally, and he remembered her as the Paris pianist

who had impressed him. It did not take long for him to find a seat beside her, and he stayed with her all day. When the rally was over and Ruth was gone, his heart felt empty. He had fallen in love with Ruth Nesbitt.

During the next spring on Easter weekend, he visited Paris to get better acquainted with Ruth and her family. The two of them took a leisurely walk on Saturday afternoon in the woods across from her home following the path she took to Grove High School, where she had just graduated as valedictorian. Returning to her home, he enjoyed conversation with her family, and by the time the weekend was over, he knew Ruth was to become the love of his life.

The Nesbitt family was descended from an Amish background and had moved to Paris from Humphreys County, Tennessee. It was there they united with the Church of the Nazarene, and all the family became involved. Ruth was the eldest of four children; Freda, George, and Anna Margaret were the other siblings.

Both Bill and Ruth were anticipating “going off to college”—she to Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, where she had been granted a full-ride scholarship, and he was going to Bethany-Peniel College in Oklahoma to begin his preparation for ministry in the Church of the Nazarene. However, because of health problems, Ruth’s doctor advised against her accepting the four-year scholarship, and she enrolled in and graduated from a local Paris business college and became a lawyer’s secretary. The appointment of Greathouse as pastor of the Jackson church became the occasion for his proposal of marriage.⁹³ They were married in the parsonage at Paris by Ruth’s pastor, Raymond V. Bridges, on December 20, 1938.

Ruth was Dr. Greathouse’s partner in ministry for the next fifty years until his retirement in 1989. She was a faithful and helpful first lady in their pastorates and during his presidency of Trevecca Nazarene College and later Nazarene Theological Seminary. During the thirteen years that her husband was general superintendent, she spoke frequently to ministers’ wives groups, always receiving warm compliments from the

women. She accompanied him on many of his travels around the world, except where lurking danger directed otherwise.

Five years after their marriage, Bill and Ruth welcomed their first child, Rebecca Ruth. She was born on May 11, 1943, during their Franklin pastorate. Their second child was William Mark, born December 4, 1946, during their Nashville Immanuel pastorate. Their third child, Mary Elizabeth (Beth), was born on December 9, 1953, during their Clarksville First Church pastorate. Beth's delivery by caesarean section resulted in her mother's life hanging in the balance, and the people of the Clarksville church prayed for her recovery around the altar during a Wednesday night service. Their prayers were answered, and Ruth began to recover. Dr. Greathouse said, "Words can never express the agony through which I passed that evening, nor the gratitude I feel to this day for the miracle of my Ruth's recovery."

Looking back on his experience as a father, Dr. G. said, "As a parent, I was 'flying by the seat of my pants.' I had no training for being a good parent. I married young and immediately jumped into ministry, and then the children came along. I had never been a parent before, and I was ill prepared to be a parent." However, he had evidently learned much from his own upbringing, judging by his children's evaluation of their early life. Dr. G. and Ruth did not ascribe to the philosophy of parenting that included extensive lists of "dos" and "don'ts." Instead, say their children, they operated by the belief that "life involves choices"—choices of ways to spend time, money, and other resources. Consequently, said one of the children, "We did not grow up feeling any deprivation." Later, when they were adolescents, the children said that they did not feel the need to push against rules or restrictions.

All three children reported that this parenting style was helpful to them. Mark remembered,

My father had a wonderful way of steering me without laying down some hard and fast law that would have been challenging for me to resist. Dad often said to me, "I am counting

on you to do the right thing. You won't let me down." Those words made me want to please him; they enabled me to take charge of my actions and respond to his loving parenting. He placed a trust in me that made me want to please him. I learned later in life that he was treating me with grace; not simply unmerited favor, it was his hand of love in my back that enabled me to walk straighter.

The daughters agreed that their parents' way of parenting taught them spiritual lessons. Beth said, "The influence of unconditional love, acceptance, and protection expressed to me by my earthly father and mother led me to an understanding of my Heavenly Father. I did not want to disappoint my parents; I did not want to disappoint God." Becky added, "They had high expectations for me, yet they trusted me and gave me the freedom to be myself. There was no reason for me to rebel against them or the church."

Growing up in a family in which the automobile played a role in family entertainment, Dr. G. continued the practice of family outings by automobile. Recalling that the family did not have a television until they were older children, Becky and Mark reported that evening entertainment often involved listening to the radio or playing a game. Sometimes, however, when Dr. G. heard the sound of a fire engine, he would load everyone in the car to go see what was burning. "Frequently, the fire was a house fire, and we would be traumatized by the sight and come home and dream about the experience, wake up smelling imaginary smoke, and call for Dad to come and soothe our fears. We have frequently laughed about Dad's idea of 'entertainment,'" said Mark. Of course, those excursions took place in the days before citizens were warned to stay away from such events.

In Clarksville on summer Sunday nights after evening services at church, Dr. G. took the family to a local drive-in restaurant for ice cream (probably unbeknown to his rigid parishioners). While the family sat in the car, eating their ice cream, Becky and Mark surreptitiously enjoyed watching the

movie that was showing next door at the drive-in theater. Movies were anathema for Nazarenes in those days.

Life in the parsonage was fun and educational, said Becky. Her parents provided activities that off set “all of the necessary church going and church-related activities. Daddy built us a swing set and soapbox racer and made a sandbox and stilts.”

The children reported that many vacations were arranged around camp meetings where Dr. G. was a speaker. The family visited national parks in connection with trips to a General Assembly of the Church of the Nazarene. A favorite vacation spot in Tennessee was the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. During the twenty years when Dr. G. wrote the “Toward Christian Living” column in the Sunday school lessons, he often took his typewriter and worked at a picnic table during a family picnic in the mountains. It was after one of those picnics, when Dr. G. was engrossed in his typing, that a friendly—and evidently hungry—black bear climbed up on the table and ran off Dr. G. Becky remembered a trip when her father typed in the motel bathroom so that the other family members could go to sleep.

When Dr. G. retired from the general superintendency and returned to Tennessee, he and Ruth lived in Mt. Juliet, Tennessee, close to Becky and then close to Mark, after he and his wife moved to Nashville from Kentucky. On Sundays after church, all of the family would gather for lunch at the home of Dr. G. and Ruth. Those dinners, planned and executed by Becky and Mark’s wife, were wonderful times for the extended family that, by that time, included grandchildren who were enrolled in Trevecca.

Often the group included friends of the cousins or family members’ relatives who were in town. As the grandchildren married, they shared in the meal preparation, and the group grew as great-grandchildren were born. Dr. G. sat at the end of the table with Ruth to his right. Around that table and at smaller tables set up nearby, the family participated in a tradition that is recalled fondly by members. Many times the group numbered twenty or more, and family members report that conversation was animated—sometimes even loud and boisterous—and always interesting.

Ruth had especially loved those times and looked forward to the gathering of the clan. Her death and resultant empty seat at the table certainly had an impact on these Sunday dinners, which continued until Dr. G. moved into a smaller house, and then the Sunday dinners were discontinued. By then many of the grandchildren had graduated from Trevecca and moved away, and the Sunday-dinner group was much smaller.

Two years after Ruth's death, Dr. G. married Judy Meadows, who had become a friend to him and Ruth during his last term as general superintendent. Employed as a booth-manager of the neighborhood Food Barn, she helped Ruth during Dr. G.'s long absences from home—keeping her supplied with groceries and taking her out to eat in one of the neighborhood restaurants. Bill and Ruth had been included in dinner at Judy's home with two of her children, who were at that time students at Mid-America Nazarene College. As the daughter of two ordained pastors and evangelists in the Church of the Nazarene, Judy spent her teenage years as pianist and singer in evangelistic services while her parents ministered in Canada, Mexico, Cuba, and the lower forty-eight states.

Dr. G. and Judy were married in the wedding chapel of Northwest Nazarene University in Nampa, Idaho, on June 1, 2004, in a ceremony performed by Kent Conrad, Judy's pastor and one of Dr. Greathouse's former students at Nazarene Theological Seminary, who credited Greathouse with "opening Wesley" to him. Their subsequent life together has been a happy experience for both of them.

9 | *An Enduring Friendship: Recollections of Two Friends*

The relation of W. M. Greathouse and R. T. Kendall⁹⁴ is reminiscent of the relation between John Wesley and George Whitefield. Like these two historical figures, their theological understanding of the Divine-human relation is quite different, but at the personal level they have maintained a respect and love that embodies the Wesleyan teaching of perfect love. In the following section, Kendall recounts the events that brought him to be convinced of the Calvinistic interpretation of salvation, and Dr. Greathouse, in his typical irenic spirit, has persistently attempted to reclaim him to the Wesleyan fold theologically as well as experientially, as the closing comments by Dr. Greathouse on Dr. Kendall clearly reflect. Their intention is to call a convocation with John Wesley, John Calvin, and the Apostle Paul in order to settle the question when they are all together in the more excellent glory.

R. T. Kendall on William M. Greathouse

I WAS THRILLED, NOT TO MENTION HONORED, WHEN asked to provide a contribution for this timely book. I have been invited to describe my relationship with W. M. Greathouse, one of the great educators and churchmen of our generation. But I have also been asked to write in a manner that will necessarily require my saying more about myself than I sometimes feel comfortable doing. And yet there are those who have been curious about our special relationship, especially since it is known that we are not always on the same page theologically.

When various people were invited to be a part of Dr. Greathouse's eightieth birthday celebration, I felt a bit left out. This situation could not be helped, however; Louise and I were living in London at the time although I playfully chided "Dr. G" for not including me. It was therefore such a delight to be present for his ninetieth birthday party more recently. One of the fringe benefits of our move to the Nashville area has been our being close to Dr. Greathouse and Judy. We eat out together when we can, and we are on the phone with each other almost daily.

Our relationship began in 1955, two years after I first entered Trevecca Nazarene College (now University) as a student. In my third year Dr. Greathouse was dean of religion, and he invited me to be his assistant—a huge privilege for any student. I was also the pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Palmer, Tennessee. I drove to Palmer after finishing class each Friday afternoon and normally drove the two-hour journey back to Trevecca on Sunday nights. However, on one unforgettable occasion I drove back to Trevecca on a Monday morning. It was October 31, 1955. I tell this not only because Dr. Greathouse would be disappointed if I didn't, but also because it is the absolute key to our relationship.

I can take you near the exact spot on old U. S. 41, at the bottom of the mountain near Monteagle, Tennessee. Normally I would play the radio all the way back to Trevecca. But on this occasion I turned the radio off at 6.30 AM, owing to the considerable anxiety I had been experiencing for days, and decided to spend the remainder of the journey in prayer.

God seemed to be a million miles away. "What is going on?" I asked the Lord. "Am I not sanctified? Am I not even saved?" Yearning with all my heart to understand what was happening in my life, I began to think about two verses which came to my mind: "My yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matt.11:30) and "Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you" (1 Pet.5:7). I pleaded that God would give me grace to cast all my care upon him so that I *could* say that my yoke is easy and my burden light.

All of a sudden—out of the blue—there was Jesus interceding for me at the right hand of God. He was literally more

real to me than the Tennessee landscape around me or the road ahead of me. (I have often wondered how I was able to drive.) Jesus my intercessor was pleading with the Father with a love and passion which I can only call incalculable. I never felt so loved in all my life. It was incredible. I burst into tears, realizing that he cares more about me than I care for myself. I was now a passive spectator, watching the proceedings as I drove. I could hear the Lord Jesus speaking to the Father although I could not tell what he was saying. What amazed me, however, was that Jesus seemed to be putting his own relationship with the Father on the line, as if he were saying, "*You come to his rescue or I resign.*" The encounter was that strong.

The next thing I remember was about an hour later, and I was driving through Smyrna. I clearly heard Jesus say to the Father, "He wants it." I heard the reply: "He can have it." Simultaneously with the words "He can have it," I entered a rest of soul; there came a warm peace that entered my heart. When I say "warm," it is because it was *warm*. I immediately recalled John Wesley's testimony regarding what happened to him on May 24, 1738, at Aldersgate Street in London: "I felt my heart strangely warmed." I have often speculated that what happened to him may have been what happened to me. All I know is that I entered a perfect rest. I did not know such a peace was possible on this earth. Although I knew it was spiritual, I felt it as if it were physical. Utter rest. No anxiety. No churning in my stomach. None. For a few moments, I would say less than a minute, I saw the face of Jesus—looking straight at me with tenderness and languid eyes. That is not all; I had full assurance of my salvation. I did not doubt it then; I have not doubted it since. It changed my whole theological perspective in a matter of hours. I was never to be the same again.

I arrived on the Trevecca campus in time for my eight o'clock class. Before the day was over two of my closest friends—Ralph Lee, my roommate, and Wilmer (Bill) Kerns—asked, "What has happened to you?" (I had not planned to talk about my experience.)

"I don't know," I honestly said, "but something *has* happened to me."

“You just got sanctified,” Ralph said.

I replied, “I only know that I am saved.”

In those early days, I tried to categorize my experience theologically, but I could not since I already felt that I was saved and sanctified. Word of my story began to leak out to various students, and it caused a little stir. This word eventually reached Dr. Greathouse.

I told him all as I have just described. Far from dismissing my experience as fanaticism, Dr. Greathouse was eager to know all he could about it, and I tried to explain it to him as carefully as I knew how. I admit now that I also secretly hoped it would happen to him as well, but expressing this desire openly was not the sort of thing a twenty-year-old student would say to his professor. I quietly prayed for him.

I vividly remember a particular afternoon when I was grading papers for Dr. Greathouse. He sat at his desk a few feet away. I think he was silently praying. Looking for the right moment, I slipped him a little booklet (opened to a page I had chosen) by T. M. Anderson, but I said nothing at all. I continued to grade papers. In a few moments I could hear him audibly sighing and groaning. The noise continued on and on. Then suddenly he began to praise God, exclaiming, “He has come! He has come!” If you ask how does this experience fit theologically, that is what I ask too!

This story, which I believe Dr. Greathouse has told everywhere, is the way I myself remember it. His experience (and mine) is what bonded our hearts in those days so that we became—to quote him—“like Jonathan and David.”

There was one dissimilarity that I should probably mention (when one compares what happened to him to what happened to me). My theology changed; his apparently did not. He was not a little disappointed that my future would not be in my old denomination. When I would interpret certain passages to him, he was startled: “R. T., you are going off into Calvinism.” I have wondered many times why I was persuaded of certain things that did not convince him. I became a Calvinist (although I thought at first that I had discovered something new); he

remained an ardent Wesleyan-Arminian. But he still quotes John Wesley to me: "R. T., we are within a 'hair's breadth of Calvinism.'" To put it another way, I would be George Whitefield, the Calvinist; he would be John Wesley, the Arminian. Students of church history will know that Wesley and Whitefield, part of the original "holy club" at Oxford that led to Methodism, did not always agree theologically. Dr. Greathouse and I have talked many times—in humor and in seriousness—about how we will find out together in heaven who got it right!

What is most amazing is that we remained friends—close friends—and today we are closer than ever. What might have ended other friendships only intensified ours. This outcome possibly says more about the heart of William M. Greathouse than anything else.

I come now to talk about my friend and teacher. Dr. Greathouse is possibly the sweetest, most harmonious, unwarlike person I have ever met. I am not sure that this characteristic should be attributed entirely to his sanctification but rather to his natural temperament. Indeed, I have said to him, "You are the only person I ever met who didn't need to be sanctified!" And yet I have no doubt that his being filled with the Spirit has brought out this self-effacing and humble spirit, one that no human being acquires naturally. God is the explanation for such a humility.

Virtually parallel with my relationship with Dr. Greathouse was that of another esteemed preacher, John Sutherland Logan from Scotland. Dr. Logan had a ministry to the staff at Buckingham Palace in London during World War II and apparently was greatly appreciated by the Queen Mother. Dr. Logan preached at Trevecca in the fall of 1954, and his preaching and personal influence on me changed my life. It was through Dr. Logan's counsel that I settled my own call to preach in November 1954. Dr. Logan was brought up to be a strong Calvinist, but he had become a Wesleyan-Arminian many years before I met him. However, I will always be convinced that there was still enough emphasis on the sovereignty of God in Dr. Logan's preaching that he unwittingly planted a seed in my

heart and mind that later grew and developed in a way he never intended.

I mention Dr. Logan for two reasons: (1) I have heard Dr. Greathouse say more than once that John Logan influenced him more than any other preacher; and (2) the three of us became sort of a "trio," beginning in 1956. I was so much younger, and I was honored to be included in their conversations and times of prayer. Both Dr. Greathouse and I have been greatly influenced by John Logan. I seldom meet with Dr. Greathouse without talking about Dr. Logan, who is now in heaven. The three of us have often remarked, with some amusement, that Dr. Logan and I both changed theologically: each assumed the other's position.

My first memory of William Greathouse is our walking up the stairs at the same time in the old McClurkan Building at Trevecca. I reminded him that the Bible warns against those who are "highminded" in Romans 11:20, First Timothy 6:17, and Second Timothy 3:4 (KJV). Referring to Dr. Greathouse's physical height (6'4"), I was hoping he would laugh. He did. It is easy to make him laugh. I then told him that I had met Elijah the previous summer in Washington, D.C. I explained that I spent time with a man who claimed to be one of the two witnesses in Revelation 11, supposedly Moses and Elijah. I put to Dr. Greathouse some of Elijah's views, to which he jokingly but kindly said, "Maybe Elijah is right!" I sensed a man who was not insecure in his position and who did not want to attack a view that was obviously silly.

Dr. Greathouse taught my first homiletics class at Trevecca. He introduced us to some of the great preachers and pulpiteers of our century, one of whom was John Henry Jowett, who (as it would turn out) would be one of my predecessors at Westminster Chapel in London. I could not have known at that time to think beyond my old denominational structures. I could only think in a provincial manner. I had been brought up in First Church of the Nazarene in Ashland, Kentucky. The first preacher I remember hearing and under whose pastorate I was converted was Gene Phillips, who could put the fear of God in you like nobody could. He would preach on hell so that you could smell

the brimstone. You knew you were headed straight for hell if you got off the straight and narrow the slightest bit at any moment. Preachers like Gene Phillips, Harold Daniels, and Lawrence B. Hicks had largely shaped my preaching style *up to the time* I came to Trevecca. John Logan and William Greathouse became my new mentors.

Having been immersed in a highly charged atmosphere in Ashland, I fear—and I blush to admit it—that I felt a cut above the students around me in those days, even feeling a notch or two above Dr. Greathouse himself. He seemed so sedate, laid back, sophisticated, and erudite compared to the kind of preachers who influenced me up to that time: men like C. B. Fugett, Bona Fleming, and Glen Griffith. These men influenced me profoundly. Indeed, the visiting evangelists who usually came to my Nazarene church in Ashland, with the exception of someone like T. M. Anderson, were largely rugged, loud, and fearsome and not highly educated. But I am deeply indebted to them. The setting at my church in Ashland, I do suspect, was probably the tail end of the momentum begun by the Cane Ridge Revival in Kentucky early in the nineteenth century. The feeling that partly emerged from Cane Ridge was that a preacher did not need to study, that he or she could simply stand up and preach and let the Holy Ghost do it all. Although my pastors, such as Phillips and Hicks, were not necessarily of that ilk, there was still what I would call an old-fashioned revival atmosphere in my old church. We were called “Noisyrenes” by the neighbors.

Therefore, sitting under the teaching of William Greathouse was almost an abrupt change from what I was used to. Consequently, I often listened to Dr. Greathouse with a measure of suspicion and distrust. It took time for me to appreciate him.

I never dreamed in those days how much I would need to draw on the things that Dr. Greathouse taught me, especially when I began preaching in Westminster. Two things stand out that he brought home to me: First, wrestle with the “big texts,” he would say. In other words, do not seek out obscure, hidden texts to show how clever you are; choose the well-known verses,

like John 3:16, for example. I thought of this advice a lot. The most challenging verses in the Bible are those that are well known—not the ones that nobody has heard of. Second, “You do your best preaching,” Dr. Greathouse would say, “when you preach to your own congregation week by week.” What he meant was that ministers do not do their best preaching when they prepare a sermon for a special occasion but when they preach regularly to their own people. I found this advice to be so true. My best preaching was always done week after week, not when I would prepare a special sermon for an important occasion.

My family and I moved to England in 1973 so that I could pursue a doctorate at Oxford. A year or two after I began classes at Oxford, Dr. Greathouse came to see Louise, my wife, and me at our home in Headington, Oxford. I showed Dr. Greathouse all over Oxford. We went to Christ Church where John Wesley was a student. We went to Lincoln College, where John Wesley was a Fellow and where John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield formed the Holy Club. We climbed up the Bell Tower at the University Church in Oxford, where Wesley preached. I introduced him to B. R. White, my supervisor at Regent’s Park College, Oxford. After our family moved to Oxford, I was called to be the pastor of a little church near the U. S. Air Force Base in Upper Heyford. Later, after I had become pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Lower Heyford, Oxfordshire, one of the very wonderful moments was having Dr. Greathouse preach for me at my little church. Tell it not in Gath! Yes, Dr. Greathouse preached in a Baptist Church!

At that time, however, I never dreamed we would move to London. While waiting for my *viva* (oral exam) at Oxford, I was asked to preach at Westminster Chapel. The congregation eventually invited me to be the minister there. One of my wishes was that one day Dr. Greathouse would preach for me there. The day came. I almost never gave up my pulpit during my twenty-five years there, unless I was on holiday. Even when John Logan came to Westminster Chapel, I only introduced him and asked him to greet the congregation. If I was present, I did the preaching. But I made extremely rare exceptions; for example,

when I asked Billy Graham to preach for me on a Sunday evening and when I asked Dr. Greathouse to preach at Westminster Chapel on a Sunday morning. It was a thrill for me to have him there. I proudly introduced him as a former president of Trevecca and then a general superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene. He preached that morning on the Law of God as it relates to Galatians 2:20. What is more, the people *loved* him.

Before he got into his sermon, Dr. Greathouse told the congregation a story they were fascinated to hear. They all knew I had been a student at Trevecca, and they also knew about the Trevecca College in Wales, but they did not know (nor did I know) what Dr. Greathouse shared that day. He revealed that G. Campbell Morgan, a former minister of Westminster Chapel, had preached in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1910. It was there that Morgan met J. O. McClurkan, a Cumberland Presbyterian who had founded a college in Nashville. McClurkan did not know what to call the new college. When Campbell Morgan learned more about what Cumberland Presbyterians believed, he suggested the name *Trevecca* to McClurkan. The original Trevecca College in Wales had been founded by Lady Huntingdon, a benefactor of George Whitefield and a "Calvinistic Methodist." Trevecca in Wales had been formed as a place where both Calvinists and Arminians could work alongside each other with respect and appreciation. J. O. McClurkan himself was apparently known to be a Calvinist in those days but had also been articulating sanctification as many Methodists were interpreting it. He was also very open to the immediate and direct witness of the Holy Spirit, a feature that came out of the Cane Ridge Revival. The point is that Trevecca got its name from G. Campbell Morgan, a former minister of Westminster Chapel, and Dr. Greathouse had the privilege of telling the story.

But there is another issue that will bear our pondering, namely, one's view of entire sanctification. Dr. Greathouse is totally convinced that I would never have strayed from my old denomination and theology had I been brought up on John

Wesley's own teaching, not that which was popular in many Nazarene churches in those days, especially in my old church in Ashland. Students of Nazarene church history will know that there are two dominant streams in the Church of the Nazarene: (1) the one that reflected the teaching of Phoebe Palmer and (2) the one that was true to the actual teaching of John Wesley.

I did not know it then, but almost certainly my old pastors were influenced by what many scholars would now regard as Phoebe Palmer's interpretation of sanctification, not John Wesley's. The hard stress on "two works of grace"—being saved and sanctified wholly—largely stemmed from the idea that the second work of grace (entire sanctification) came from laying your "all on the altar." That the altar "sanctifieth the gift" (Matt. 23:19 κJV). I can recall many times hearing in Ashland about putting the "unknown bundle" on the altar; that is, if you didn't know what was prohibiting you from the blessing of sanctification, put that "unknown bundle on the altar," for the altar sanctifies the gift. That language is not Wesleyan, but it is what I was taught.

I won't enter into a long discussion as to whether the famous Nazarene Uncle Buddy Robinson's theology was a spin-off from Phoebe Palmer-type thinking, but he certainly popularized the two "distinct" works of grace all over the Nazarene denomination. My parents had as their first guest in their home after they were married none other than Uncle Buddy. So I grew up hallowing every quotation that was attributed to him. Not only that, but I was influenced by the teaching of S. S. White, once the editor of the *Herald of Holiness*. He clearly taught that entire sanctification meant "eradication" from sin. Indeed, Uncle Buddy said that when you are saved it is like "cutting the tree down," but when you are sanctified, "the root is pulled out."

This kind of thinking was alien to the mind of John Wesley, and Dr. Greathouse knew that it was. He struggled to bring John Wesley's teaching into Trevecca and into the Church of the Nazarene. He is, no doubt, still misunderstood in some places.

There is no way to know whether I myself would still be a Nazarene today had I been immersed in Wesley's understanding

of sanctification. But as I said before, Dr. Greathouse will believe to his death how lamentable it was that I did not have a true exposure to the pure views of the patriarchal giant that founded Methodism, which led eventually to the Church of the Nazarene.

If you truly know the heartbeat of W. M. Greathouse, you will already know of his devotion to Galatians 2:20. If you did not know that this verse is the one that excites him more than any other, you show you hardly know him. In case you don't know the verse, here it is: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Dr. Greathouse sees basically two things in this passage: (1) what he calls the "inner sanctum" ("I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live: yet not I, but Christ liveth in me") and (2) the "outer court" ("the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God").

The funny thing is that when I hear Dr. Greathouse expound this verse I find myself agreeing with him to the hilt. It is his doctrine of sanctification in a nutshell. It is mine too. When I first began writing this chapter, Dr. Greathouse and I were scheduled to conduct a Sunday-over-Wednesday meeting at Grace Church of the Nazarene in Nashville, beginning on Sunday morning November 15, 2009. Pastor Ken Dove conceived the vision to have us preach together. It would not have been the first time that Dr. Greathouse and I would work with each other publicly; we actually held a meeting together at the Church of the Nazarene in Columbia, Tennessee, more than fifty-three years before in the spring of 1956. I did the singing; he did the preaching. It was during that time that Dr. Greathouse made the decision to have me as his student assistant at Trevecca. It was a great honor then and now a greater honor—to think that I would work with Dr. Greathouse again, this time speaking alongside him. Pastor Ken Dove had so wanted to host this meeting. Dr. Greathouse and I had planned to share each service, each of us speaking for about twenty minutes, dealing with Galatians 2:20. He would have focused on

the first part of that verse: “I am crucified with Christ”; I would have dealt with “I live by the faith of the Son of God.”

But as we edged closer to the date, Dr. Greathouse became increasingly weaker. He needed a walker, and one could sense that our plans might have to change. This outcome was in spite of our entering into a thirty-day covenant together, praying every day whether to continue with this plan. We both felt at peace to continue. However, his cardiologist would not allow him to carry out this responsibility. We were so disappointed. He did attend the first service and heard me preach. I decided to speak on “Total Forgiveness,” a message that God has used in my ministry, possibly more than any other. I was honored to have Dr. Greathouse and Judy in the service. He was, however, too exhausted even to have lunch with us. Louise and I went to see him and Judy afterwards at their home. After praying for both of them, I put my hand on his chest and prayed for his renewed strength, even for his healing. Dan Boone, president of Trevecca, took Dr. Greathouse’s place in the evening service and brought a remarkable message from the book of Revelation.

In November 2007 Dan Boone phoned me to say that the Board of Trustees of Trevecca had unanimously voted to award me the doctor of divinity degree. It was one of the happiest days of my life. I would be the first non-Nazarene to receive the DD. But I knew who was behind it—Dr. Greathouse.

Neither Dr. Boone nor Dr. Greathouse had any idea that Louise and I had already planned to move to Hendersonville, Tennessee (a suburb of Nashville). So when the day came, April 3, 2008, we merely drove about a half hour for that momentous occasion. When I arrived just before the service, I said to Dr. Boone and some of the faculty members, “I may be the first graduate of Trevecca since J. O. McClurkan founded it to believe like J. O. McClurkan himself.” But I said this partly in jest; I am sure there were things McClurkan believed that I might not embrace. But I do look forward to meeting him in heaven.

The day had been billed as the occasion I would receive my DD, followed by an address by me and then a public “debate” between Dr. Greathouse and myself. The debate may have

disappointed some, especially if they were expecting us to go at each other and play “Gotcha!” on theological points. The debate was more like a love session. Dr. Greathouse read what John Wesley had to say about the Greek word *plerophia*, “full assurance,” noting from Wesley that God gives this assurance to some, namely, clear knowledge that they are eternally saved. Dr. Greathouse thus claimed Wesleyan support for what happened to me on October 31, 1955. I had no desire to defend my Calvinistic views on that occasion of receiving my DD; I was too grateful to Trevecca, my old *alma mater*, to say anything but praise for my Nazarene background. Indeed, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, who followed G. Campbell Morgan at Westminster Chapel and who also put me there, used to say to me again and again, “Don’t forget your Nazarene background; it is what has saved you.” I could not agree more. By “saved,” he meant being spared of becoming a cold, arid, orthodox preacher like so many were in those days.

I dread the day when we will hear that Dr. William Greathouse has passed from this life to his eternal reward. I do wish God will give him many more years—but only as long as he has the strength to cope. But the day will come when we shall all hear that this great man indeed is now with the Lord. I can only imagine how sad I will feel. What a privilege to have had these times together with “Dr. G” and Judy now that we live in the same area.

When John Wesley received the news that his old friend George Whitefield died, someone said to Wesley, “Do you expect to see George Whitefield in heaven?” and “No,” was the reply. “Well, that is what I thought you would say,” the person allegedly retorted. “Oh, no,” said Wesley, “he will be so close to the throne and I so far away that I will not be able to see him.” That is how I regard Dr. William Greathouse. He will be so near the throne that I might have to wait a while before I get close to him and see him again.

Smile with me when I fanaticize that Dr. G. and I will go to John Wesley in heaven, then to John Calvin, and then to the Apostle Paul. The four of us will learn the truth from Paul

himself as to who got it right. But the wonderful thing is that *we will be there*—both of us. Not because of our theological accuracy but because of the sheer grace of God, having been *crucified with Christ*.

W. M. Greathouse on R. T. Kendall

R. T. Kendall graduated from Trevecca in 1970 and has written more than fifty books in the past few years. I consider the best of these books to be his *Total Forgiveness*, which has sold more than 200,000 copies. After reading this volume, I said to him, “R. T., this book is evidence to me that you have experienced what Wesley spoke of as ‘the full assurance of hope,’ given rarely during times of mighty outpourings of the Holy Spirit such as we experienced at Trevecca in 1956.”

R. T.’s experience and subsequent position is fully consistent with Wesley’s understanding of “full assurance,” as Wesley’s April 10, 1781, letter to Hester Ann Roe indicates:

Many of our brethren and sisters in London, during that great outpouring of the Spirit, spoke of several new blessings, which they had obtained. But after all, they could find nothing higher than *pure love*, on which the full assurance of hope generally attends. This the inspired writings always represent as the highest point; only there are innumerable *degrees* of it. The plerophory (or full assurance) of faith is such a clear conviction that *I am now* in the favour of God as excludes all doubt and fear concerning it. The full assurance of hope is such clear confidence that *I shall enjoy* the glory of God as excludes all doubt and fear concerning this. And this confidence is totally different from an opinion that “no saint shall fall from grace.” It has no relation to it. Bold, presumptuous men often substitute this base counter in the room of that precious confidence. But it is observable the *opinion* remains just as strong while men are sinning and serving the devil as while they are serving God. Holiness or unholiness does not

affect it in the least degree. Whereas, the giving way to anything unholy, either in life or heart, clouds the full assurance of hope; which cannot subsist any longer than the heart cleaves steadfastly to God.⁹⁵

When I read the above passage to R. T., he said, "I never heard that; send me this quote." Subsequently, I sense that the differences between R. T. and me on this matter are melting away. I am convinced that the "unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" is beginning more and more to prevail in the "one, holy, apostolic, catholic church."

APPENDIX 1

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- Sermons in *The Nazarene Weekly* while pastor of Nashville First Church (1958–1963).
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What is the Church of the Nazarene?

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 Interviews with William M. Greathouse by H. Ray Dunning, 1991 and 1996.

- “A Study of Wesley’s Doctrines of Sin and Perfection as treated by George Croft Cell, Umphrey Lee, and William Ragsdale Cannon.” Master’s thesis. Vanderbilt University, 1948.
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- “The Christus Victor Motif of the Atonement.” Paper presented to Nazarene Theological Conference in Africa, 2003.
- Interview with William M. Greathouse by Ron Benefiel, October 26, 2007.
- “The Fullness of the Spirit,” n.d.

APPENDIX 2

Greathouse Honors

Trevecca Alumni “T” Award, 1961—given to a distinguished alumnus in recognition of success in one’s chosen field, alumni citizenship and loyalty, and service to the ideals of the college.

Distinguished Professor at Trevecca Nazarene College (now University), 1990.

Expositor of the Year Award, given by the Christian Holiness Association, 1994.

Lifetime Service to the Wesleyan Holiness Tradition, an award given by the Wesleyan Theological Society, 1997.

The Greathouse Chair of Wesleyan–Holiness Theology established at Nazarene Theological Seminary, 2006.

Centennial Heritage Award by the Church of the Nazarene, 2009.

NOTES

1. Neely was a powerful evangelist, with a bachelor of oratory degree from Bethany-Peniel College. Miller was elected general superintendent at the 1940 General Assembly. He held a degree from Colgate University and became my favorite general superintendent—only to die of a heart attack at the beginning of his third term in office. It was a tragic loss to the denomination. Miller’s wife, Rhea F. Miller (1894–1966), had in 1922 composed “I’d Rather Have Jesus” that was later popularized but doctrinally corrupted by George Beverly Shea who changed the words of the chorus from “Than to be a king of a vast domain, **and** be held in sin’s dread sway” to “**or** be held in sin’s dread sway.” This change makes nonsense of Mrs. Miller’s point. As theological editor of the denomination’s 1993 Nazarene hymnal *Sing to the Lord*, I insisted that we restore Rhea Miller’s original wording.

2. I had my eye on Ruth at the time although we were not yet engaged to be married.

3. But as the Lord led, I eventually invited Ruth to be my wife, and on December 20, 1938, we were married. (See chapter eight, “Family Man.”)

4. *Singleness of Heart: Gender, Sin and Holiness in Historical Perspective* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2001), 1–2.

5. See chapter six, “Theologian.”

6. *My Utmost for His Highest*, ed, James Reimann (Grand Rapids: Discovery House, 1992), December 3.

7. One of the groups that eventually formed the Church of the Nazarene had originated in Milan, but by this time there was no holiness group located there.

8. “City of Franklin—History of Franklin, TN.” Web. 2 February 2010.

9. Harold’s brother Bill, now a retired insurance executive in Birmingham, Alabama, made the first million-dollar donation to Trevecca. David, one of Harold’s sons, was installed in 2006 as

pastor of Olathe College Church after retiring as director of Sunday school ministries. He was elected general superintendent at the 2009 Nazarene General Assembly in Orlando, Florida. Another of Harold's sons, Harold Jr., became president of Nazarene Bible College in 2006, after successful pastorates and service as a district superintendent.

10. This revival was evidently later than one that occurred in the 1890s when Jones had been in Franklin at which time a tabernacle had been built. The Nazarene church building was partially constructed from material from that tabernacle: the floor joists, beams, and floors.

11. William M. Greathouse. Unpublished autobiography, n.d.

12. Dr. Greathouse, with George Lyons, also wrote the commentary on Romans (2 vols.) in the *New Beacon Bible Commentary* published in 2008, by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City.

13. Unpublished autobiography.

14. *The Nazarene Weekly*, March 11, 1962.

15. Much of the following information is taken from both the writer's (HRD) memory and an oral history he and Dr. Greathouse compiled in 1991.

16. See chapter five, "Administrator."

17. William M. Greathouse. *Nazarene Theology in Perspective* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1970), 12.

18. "Foreword," to H. Ray Dunning, *A Layman's Guide to Sanctification* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991), 10.

19. See Mark Quanstrom, *A Century of Holiness Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2004).

20. See Homer J. Adams, *Reminiscences of Dr. A. B. Mackey*, (Nashville, TN: Trevecca Press, 1997), chapter four.

21. Mildred Bangs Wynkoop, *The Trevecca Story*, (Nashville, TN: Trevecca Press, 1976), 218.

22. *Ibid.*, 219.

23. *Ibid.*, 220–31.

24. *Ibid.*, 226.

25. Interview with H. Ray Dunning, July 24, 1991.

26. *Ibid.*

27. Unpublished autobiography.

28. Harold E. Raser, *More Preachers and Better Preachers: The First Fifty Years of Nazarene Theological Seminary*. (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1995), 105.

29. Greathouse, *Nazarene Theology in Perspective*.

30. William Charles Miller, *The Governance of Theological Education: A Case Study of Nazarene Theological Seminary*

1945–1976, doctoral dissertation at Kent State University, May 1983, 192–93.

31. Unpublished autobiography.

32. Ibid.

33. Miller, 198.

34. Ibid., 200–203.

35. Raser, 108.

36. Ibid., 112–113.

37. Staples, Wynkoop, and Isbell were to begin in the fall 1976 and did not join the Seminary faculty until after Greathouse had been elected to the general superintendency.

38. Unpublished autobiography.

39. Raser, 109.

40. Interview with Dunning.

41. Comment on cover of *Wholeness in Christ* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1998).

42. Quanstrom, 11.

43. “Credibility gap” is a term popularized by Mildred Bangs Wynkoop in *A Theology of Love*, whereby she pointed to the discrepancies between the “extravagant claims” of many holiness teachers in the nineteenth century and the realities of human experience.

44. See “Holiness: Why All the Confusion?” *Herald of Holiness*, March 1996, 14.

45. Quoted from the “Foreword,” by Wesley Tracy, to *Love Made Perfect* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1997).

46. “Foreword,” Rob L. Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991), 11–12.

47. He had been baptized as an infant and maintained its validity throughout his life.

48. *Wholeness in Christ*, (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1998), 5.

49. See Mark R. Quanstrom, *A Century of Holiness Theology*. This work will be used extensively as a resource for tracing the transitions that have taken place in holiness theology during the past fifty years. While based on extensive research as a doctoral dissertation, the results of which are both illuminating and accurate, the interpretations are uncharacteristically biased for a dissertation.

50. Meaning “conciliatory, promoting or conducive to peace,” *Webster’s New College Dictionary*.

51. When his history of the first twenty-five years of the Church of the Nazarene was published in 1962, Timothy Smith noted that it was up to the reader to evaluate, among other things, “the relevance of Wesleyan perfectionism to a generation awed by its rediscovery of the deep sinfulness of man.” *Called Unto Holiness* (Kansas City:

Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1962), 351. Quoted in Quanstrom, *A Century*, 118 with the comment: "Smith was calling the church . . . to a reassessment of holiness theology, one that would provide a more theologically realistic account of the 'deep sinfulness of man.'"

52. W. E. Sangster. *The Path to Perfection* (N.Y.: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943).

53. Henry H. Knight III. *The Presence of God in the Christian Life* (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1992), 1. Quanstrom has demonstrated that, in response to this issue, holiness theologians have continued to diminish their claims as to the extent of cleansing of human nature from sin, moving areas that were once considered purified by grace into the realm of human nature and therefore subject to growth in grace rather than instantaneous rectification. He concludes, "The doctrine in the middle decades of the twentieth century, in the unavoidable light of the pervasive fallenness of the world, was being modified to account for that fallenness." *A Century of Holiness Theology*, 98.

54. "Holiness: Why All the Confusion?" *Herald of Holiness*, March 1996, 14.

55. "Sin: A Wesleyan Definition," *Illustrated Bible Life*, June-August 1998. "Holiness: Why All the Confusion?" *Herald of Holiness*, March 1996, 13-14. John Wesley himself identified entire sanctification with "purity of intention" in his summary treatise, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*.

56. "Holiness: Why All the Confusion?," 14. This distinction is the profound significance of the title of his latest book, *Wholeness in Christ*.

57. *Wholeness in Christ*, 17.

58. Randy Maddux. "The Use of the Aorist Tense in Holiness Theology." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 16, no. 2 (Fall 1998): 106-118.

59. *Wholeness in Christ*, 136.

60. "On Entire Sanctification," paper presented to the Theology Workshop of the Church of the Nazarene, July 1-4, 1958.

61. "Holiness: Why All the Confusion," 13-14.

62. "Sanctification and the Christus Victor Motif in Wesleyan Theology." *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 1972): 47-59. This same essay with minor modifications was republished in the *WTS Journal* 38, no. 2 (Fall 2003): 217-229. He first encountered this theme in his studies at Vanderbilt University under the teaching of Roy Battenhouse, patristic scholar.

63. "Sanctification," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38, no. 2 (Fall 2003), 223. Aulen does not give primary emphasis to the work of the Spirit since the primary focus of Reformed theologians is on the

objective nature of religion. Interestingly, Aulen's systematic theology, *The Faith of the Christian Church*, has no major section on the Holy Spirit, thus reflecting this evaluation.

64. See articles in the *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 14, no. 1 (Spring 1979).

65. This incident, along with the whole denominational debate, is examined in detail in Quanstrom, *A Century of Holiness Theology*, 150–157.

66. See the chapter on McClurkan's theology in *J. O. McClurkan*, by William J. Strickland and H. Ray Dunning published by the Trevecca Press, 1998.

67. *The Nazarene Weekly*, Vol. 33, No. 1, December 2, 1962.

68. "The Fullness of the Spirit," unpublished paper, n.d.

69. The material in this chapter is taken from Dr. Greathouse's recorded memories of his years as a general superintendent.

70. Hugh C. Benner and Eugene Stowe were the other two. Harold Raser, *More Preachers and Better Preachers: The first fifty years of Nazarene Theological Seminary* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1988), 118.

71. Unpublished autobiography.

72. Ibid.

73. Ibid.

74. W. M. Greathouse. "The Baptism with the Holy Spirit," unpublished paper presented to the Board of General Superintendents and others. For more detail see chapter six, "Theologian." See also Mark R. Quanstrom, *A Century of Holiness Theology*, chapter seven.

75. Foreword to *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 7.

76. Documentation for this controversy including letters from all parties is located in the Nazarene Archives in the Global Ministry Center in Lenexa, Kansas.

77. Cited by Quanstrom, 154.

78. Foreword to *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, 7–8

79. H. Ray Dunning. *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1988), 18.

80. Interview with Dunning.

81. Ibid.

82. William Greathouse, "Women in Ministry," *Herald of Holiness*, June 15, 1982.

83. Unpublished autobiography.

84. Ibid.

85. Floyd Cunningham (ed.) *Our Watchword and Song: the Centennial History of the Church of the Nazarene* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2009), 564–565. For a history of

Nazarene missions in Japan, see J. Fred Parker, *Into All the World: The Story of Nazarene Missions Through 1980* (Kansas City: Nazarene Publishing House, 1993), 165–178.

86. Unpublished autobiography. See also Cunningham, 595, and Parker, 183–194.

87. Unpublished autobiography.

88. *Ibid.*

89. Parker, 209.

90. Unpublished autobiography.

91. *Herald of Holiness*, July 1989.

92. Most of the material in this chapter was taken from the unpublished autobiography of Dr. Greathouse and from information from his three children—Becky, Mark, and Beth.

93. See chapter three, “Pastor.”

94. R. T. Kendall was the pastor of Westminster Chapel in London, England, for twenty-five years. In addition to his bachelor’s degree and honorary doctorate from Trevecca, he also earned an MDiv from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1972), an MA from the University of Louisville (1973), and a DPhil from Oxford University (1977).

95. John Wesley. *The Letters of John Wesley*, ed. John Telford, 8 vols. (London: The Epworth Press, n.d.), 7:57–58. Note Wesley’s italics.



William J. Strickland

has devoted his life to Christian higher education—in a variety of academic positions: as academic dean; professor of religion, history, and philosophy; and chair of the depart-

ment of religion and philosophy. He also served as a pastor and a chaplain in the Naval Reserve, retiring with the rank of captain. Dr. Strickland earned degrees at Trevecca Nazarene College, Nazarene Theological Seminary, and Vanderbilt University. He is the author of *J. O.*

McClurkan: His Life, His Theology, and Selections from His Writings with H. Ray Dunning and *History of the Ministerial Training Program of Trevecca Nazarene University*.



H. Ray Dunning,

a graduate of Trevecca Nazarene College, Nazarene Theological Seminary, and Vanderbilt University, entered the education field following fourteen years in the pastorate.

During his thirty-one years on the faculty at Trevecca Nazarene University, Dr. Dunning distinguishing himself as a speaker, writer, and holiness scholar. In addition to his numerous articles in journals, and his volumes in commentary series, he is the author of many books, including *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*, viewed by many as the standard text on Wesleyan theology. His most recent books are *Partakers in Christ* and *Becoming Christlike Disciples*.

“I knew Dr. Greathouse as pastor, professor, college president, and long-term family friend. I admired him as a leader and a theologian. I have come to know him as a confidant and counselor as I serve in a role he filled so ably for thirteen years. There is only one William Greathouse, and the Church and the world would have been impoverished in unimaginable ways had he not been here. His is a life worth reading about and one worth following as an example of holiness embodied in humility.”

Jesse C Middendorf
General Superintendent
Church of the Nazarene

“All of us who have been part of the Church of the Nazarene during the past fifty years have been influenced either directly or indirectly by the life, testimony, and theological insight of William Greathouse. His story is a wonderful one of grace, love, Christian character, courageous leadership, and Wesleyan holiness theology—a story that needs to be heard, cherished, and remembered by those of us who are part of this great tradition.”

Ron Benefiel
President
Nazarene Theological Seminary

