

5/27/90 It is time to begin. I have vacillated too long. It has been a long time since I felt the urge to write something to leave with the family which would reveal something of what we have thought and something of what we have been these years as our family came to us and we sought to rear our children and do our work as a mother of the household and as the pastor of a congregation. It has been the life work for each of us.

As we write we will ~~need to~~ often speak of our Christian faith and our commitment to the Scriptures as our spiritual guide. Being both born into so-called Christian homes, we were early influenced toward things spiritual. So we never inwardly felt the need to revolt and rebel.

My youthful years were not happy years. The city, the schools, the Church gave me little to rejoice in. My home life can be added to the list tho I shall forever be thankful for my parents and my only sister, Esther. Poverty, drabness,



Love, making music together  
a stern and pessimistic outlook  
made life less than joyful, an  
inherited nature, fostered the childhood  
creator, shifted the air, made me  
a loner, with a bent toward the  
more serious attitude toward life.  
Adolescent years were most  
lonely, I felt myself to be without  
friends. Being religiously inclined I  
knew early what it meant to feel a  
heavy burden of guilt - guilt not so  
much because of evil deeds done, but  
of inadequacy, low self-esteem, low  
accomplishment.

One bright spot in which made  
those days a bit more bearable was  
music. ~~at~~ at fifteen years of age -  
Christmas time, Mother bought a violin  
from a neighbour for \$10.00. It was, I  
think, my most acceptable Christmas  
gift I had ever received till then.  
I have always loved that violin. I  
learned to play somewhat and  
when my sister Esther learned to  
play the piano, we spent many happy

hours, making music together. We

played hymns, some pieces we liked -  
always, music has been a great  
benediction to me.

Though my life has been spent in the service  
of the church, it has not been as perfect as  
Hannah's life. Her regrets are all your personal  
shortcomings. My work for the church was  
less sacred than ministered with integrity.  
It never seemed good enough. But it was  
all done with a deep desire to do my  
best. Numerous dedications, visits made  
meetings conducted were all done  
with a single eye towards God's  
approval. It was in my own inner  
quietness that I failed.

It was mostly in the area of  
relationships. In my parental home we  
did not have a closely knit family. There  
were no hugs or kisses. I remember  
sitting on father's lap in my childhood. I  
have no remembrance of being close to my  
mother - no embraces, many false complimentary  
words - none in the adolescent years and  
later. Mother plagued with the  
remembrance of poverty and believes  
in her youth, never seemed able to find  
the restful, serene peace the Bible assures



6/4/70 The latter years of life seem to be  
doomed to be years of "redness" and to  
some degree of regret. It is so with me.  
Though my life has been spent in the service  
of the church, it has not been as perfect or  
blameless life. The regrets are all for personal  
shortcomings. My work for the churches we  
have served was rendered with integrity.  
It never seemed good enough. But it was  
all done with a deep desire to do my  
best. Sermons dictated, visits made,  
meetings conducted were all done  
with a single eye towards God's  
approval. It was in my own inner  
spiritual life I failed.

It was mostly in the area of  
relationships. In my parental home we  
did not have a closely knit family. There  
were no hugs or kisses. I remember  
sitting on father's lap in my childhood. I  
have no remembrance of being close to my  
mother - no embraces, very few complimentary  
words - none in the adolescent years and  
later. Mother - plagued with the  
remembrance of poverty and loneliness  
in her youth, never seemed able to find  
the restful, secure peace the Bible assures



us is available to a child of God. Suspicion —  
I felt I lived under its shadow all my  
youth — never felt trusted or even loved.  
I still remembered being sent to the  
corner grocery store to secure an item  
or two. Mother would require me to  
bring home a receipt for the purchase,  
making sure I had not pilfered a few  
cents. My father worked so hard in the  
factory there was little time or energy  
left in which to enjoy his family in any  
tender and loving way, so I believe he  
loved Esther and I most deeply.

Our Christian commitments at home  
were quite of the negative type — little  
joy, no appreciation of the finer things  
in life, an attitude of chronic criticism  
toward other Christians. There was a total  
commitment to the church. Attendance  
at church and Sunday observance  
were of the strictest order. There was  
no humor expressed in any way —  
only a sense of melancholy over the  
labors and burdens of life, and poverty.  
There was no money for any thing but  
the necessities of life. Apart from Sunday



# ROOTS

attendance at church and Sunday  
observance, there were no other  
evidences of Christian life at home - no  
family devotions - no family prayer -  
no family sharing of our mutual cares  
and concerns. Father would sing at  
times, Mother never, tho I think she  
appreciated music.

I was born in 1907 - January 27th. My  
earliest recollection is of being brought as a  
little child by my parents to the Methodist  
camp meeting held in Das Plains - as the other  
camps were given after the sermon  
and before that, I remember my  
Mother & Dad going forward to have their  
names in a commitment of their lives  
to God. It is recalled the most  
important and the most basic  
in their lives. They never went back  
on that commitment. They have  
remained to God for the rest of their  
lives.

They to this commitment was  
undermined by various things. One was  
a commitment to a gay life style. They  
accepted the moral code of the bible.



# ROOTS

Mother & Dad both came to America from Sweden in their adolescent years. Without knowing English, and with no social resources, they grew to adulthood with hearts committed to making it in the new land.

It was in Chicago they met - in "Roseland on the South Side". They were married in 1905 - 1906 in La Grange, Ill. where they had rented a flat which was to be their home. I was born in 1907 - January 29<sup>th</sup>. My earliest recollection is of being brought as a little child by my parents to a Methodist Camp meeting held in Des Plaines. As the altar call was given at the after the sermon had been delivered, I remember my Mother & Dad going forward to kneel with others in a commitment of their lives to God. It symbolized the most important and the most basic statement in their lives. They never went back on that commitment. They were committed to God for the rest of their lives.

Key to this commitment was evidenced by certain things. One was a commitment to a godly life style. They accepted the moral code of the Bible.



1500-2

the absolute authority of the 10  
commandments, the teachings of the  
Gospels & the N.T. Epistles, the concept  
of the Christian as being a new creation  
"in Christ", not of this world.

His love for the church, both the  
building and the people was always in  
evidence. Lords Day observance was  
a prime commitment & always when we  
were in church on Sundays, and the day was  
religiously observed as a day of rest -  
not recreation. Things did not always  
go smoothly in the life of the church but  
I never heard my father even speak an  
ill word of the church, the congregation or  
the pastor. In a sketch he served as a  
deacon, but he was leader by natural  
talent and usually stayed in the  
background.

Life in my parental home was lived  
on the Biblical principle of the "separated  
life", as were so many other Christian  
homes of that day. This life style is not  
appreciated today in the church today.  
It is true that much of the joyfulness  
that should characterize the Christian  
life was not much in evidence. But



our fathers saw more clearly than we do that the world is an enemy to grace, that friendship with the world is enmity with God. Their intuition was correct tho their methods of application were not as wise as they could have been.

To every man there openeth  
A high way and a low,  
And every man decideth  
The way his soul shall go.  
Mothers & fathers made their decision  
and served God all their lives, days

Grace at table -



our parents.

Commitment to God became very early in our lives to be our commitment as well. Both Esther & I grew up to accept the doctrine & the lifestyle of our Christian faith as we were taught it and saw it practised in our home. Such commitment is basic <sup>(to an understanding)</sup> as we try to understand ourselves and what is happening to us. There has never been an urge to rebel and surrender to the inner drives for pleasure and the so-called things of the world. God lives, the things of the spirit are real, there is a heaven to be gained and a hell to be shunned. My parents were truly committed to God. We wanted to be the same. We want to live & die in faith as they did. And so we shall by God's grace.

~~These are the spiritual roots~~

This is the spiritual soil into which my roots are sunk. From my spiritual life in God and the daily experiences of grace & strength provided my life is nourished. For both Rachel & I, our homegoing is approaching. God, who has led us will be with us at the end.