

DR HENRY H. NESS

Forward

"Men are God's method," so wrote E. M. Bounds in his famous booklet on the Divine channel of spiritual power, adding his famous line, "Men are seeking better methods." "God is looking for better men" He does not anoint plans but men, men of prayer." Herein lies the secret of the advancement of the of the Gospel in the world. In this context such men were raised up such as Henry H. Ness.

God uses men to reach men. Such is the story of Dr. Ness, founding president of what is known as Northwest College of the Assemblies of God.

Behind this episode of the history of the modern Pentecostal Revivals that swept the world in the 20th century following the great revival in Wales that marked the introduction is this , the most unique century of history is the story of God-called, and God-anointed men , On the West Coast the story is well-known through what happened at the famous Azusa Street Mission and later in the ministries of individuals such as Aimee Semple McPherson and Florence Crawford. But the person whom God used in a significant way in the Pacific Northwest Washington, Oregon, and British Columbia was Dr. Charles Price. Originating in England he came to Spokane Washington where he entered the Methodist ministry and later became a well-known pastor of the Lodi First Congregational Church in Lodi, California when he experienced a dynamic baptism with the Holy that would not only change his life and ministry but would contribute an impact of Pentecostal revival power that would bear significantly on the founding of the Assemblies of God and in turn, upon the founding of Northwest Bible Institute by the first third of this 20th century.

Hence Northwest College was born in the wake of a Pentecostal outpouring that still continues to sweep the world. In the Pacific Northwest Assemblies of God churches sprung up everywhere, and soon the cooperative fellowship known as the Northwest District of the Assemblies of God was organized. The Pentecostal Revival brought with it an intrinsic spirit of evangelism and missionary outreach that prompted a desire for a training school to train young people for Christian service. The presbytery of the Northwest District actively pursued ways to start a Bible School, but in the will and purposes of God this was to be wrought through the vision and work of Dr. Henry Ness when he came to the District to pastor Hollywood Temple (Calvary Temple) itself the product of an outpouring of Pentecostal power at Elim Baptist Church in Seattle

Often when God purposes to do something special He lays in on the heart of certain ones to give themselves to prayer in behalf of His revealed purpose. Thus it was with the founding of Northwest Bible Institute. Not only did the Presbytery of the Northwest District receive witness of

God's will in the matter, but there were those outside of the movement who received the same witness.

Such was the testimony of a retired Presbyterian minister who lived in the Hollywood-Green Lake district of Seattle. A graduate of the Moody Bible Institute, He testified to having been led to pray that someone or some group "would start a Bible school in the Green Lake district of God." He thought perhaps his prayer would be answered by the Free Methodists or some other denominational organization, He accepts Northwest Bible Institute as the answer to his prayers, reminiscent of how God used elderly saints of Israel, Anna and Simeon, who waited and prayed for the "Consolation of Israel . Hence the Northwest Bible College was in the mind of God as it was in the prayers of many of His servants before it came into being on October 1, 1934.

How God foreknew and chose to be the founding president of the College deserves attention, because it illustrates the giftings and the calling of God on chosen men for the advancement of the work of the Kingdom of God. The story starts across the seas in the land where the Pentecostal Revival had made an arrival through the ministry of Methodist pastor, T.B. Barrett. In the shadow of this place of holy remembrance and in shadow of the royal palace of the first family Norway is where the life of Dr. Henry Ness commenced, and from there it moved to America/

Dr.Ness was born on August 6, 1894 in Oslo, Norway. His parents were deeply religious who believed that their eldest son should be given to the Lord for His service and to this purpose they dedicated him. At age 16 he left the security of his home and made his way to the land of opportunity, settling in Chicago where he lived with his uncles, Jens Wilsberg for almost seven years he studied pharmacy and became a druggist.

During World War I he enlisted in the U.S. Army and served until the end of the war. After the war he moved to Minneapolis where he and his partner purchased the Economy Drug Company, an enterprise which proved to be profitable and successful. Being dissatisfied with its lack of challenge, he sold out and took a position with the Standard Oil Co. In a short time he became a district manager, but his greatest challenge was about to begin.

It was in Minneapolis that he married Miss Anna Molgaard, who became his life-long companion, devoted wife and coworker.

It was also in Minneapolis in the quietness and seclusion of his own home that he was led to the Lord, accepting Christ as his personal Savior. The dynamic of this experience was to change the direction of his life forever. With his consecration to the Christ and the infilling of the Holy Spirit there was to be no turning around. His course was fixed not unlike that of Charles G. Finney and others whom God called from successful professional and business careers to the Gospel

ministry. He had one overpowering passion known Christ and to make Him known.

In 1924 Dr. Ness and his family moved to Brainerd, , Minnesota they took their first pastorate in a small, unpretentious church building. Left his beautiful home and lucrative salary to live in the church basement and to receive a pastor's salary of \$10 per week/.

In 1925 he was ordained a minister in the Assemblies of God.

In 1926 he received an invitation from a small group in Fargo, North Dakota .

to come to that city to pioneer a church. He responded to the call, and a revival ensued. A great number of people were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. Brother Ness and his young people went out to many neighboring communities to present the Gospel with the result that a number of churches were established. Out of this young people's group 35 entered the ministry.

Brother Ness was also active in the work of the local district of the Assemblies of God. serving as Assistant District Superintendent and secretary along with his pastoral duties. He was instrumental in the founding of the Lake Geneva Camp and the North Central Bible College in Minneapolis.

In 1933 he received a call to become the pastor of Hollywood Temple (now Calvary Temple) in Seattle, Washington. During the 15 years of his leadership here the congregation grew from 75 members to become the largest Assemblies of God congregation in the Northwest District.

After he had been in Seattle for a few months God gave him a vision of a Bible school where young people could be trained for Christian service in a district where revival fires burned brightly . The school was opened on October 1, 1934. From the first day there was a mantle of blessing upon the school. It was bathed in a spirit of prayer . Sometimes the spirit of prayer would rest over the school like the cloud of glory did in Israel's wilderness journey. In retrospect many students testify that it was during those special times of Divine visitation that they received a call to the ministry, Literally hundreds were called to the ministry and today graduates are serving the Lord around the world.

In 1946 Dr. Ness made his trip abroad when he ministered to many ranging from kings to peasants. He was directly responsible for the formation of the Assemblies of God in Italy.

In 1950 Dr. Ness appointed to be the chairman of the Washington State Board of Prison Terms and Paroles in which position he served for six years. He also had served as Chaplain of the King County Jail. It was also during this time that he was among those who organized the Mayor's Breakfast Group, the Christian Business Men's Committee, and Youth for Christ in Seattle.

In 1950 Brother suffered a stroke and underwent a very serious brain surgery. It was a time when physicians despaired for his life. But in answer to prayer and his strong determination within six weeks he was back on the job .

During the passing of the years he experienced much physical pain which was temporarily

believed by medications. But in spite of physical suffering Dr. Ness continued to preach the Gospel wherever there was an opportunity.

In 1956 Dr. Ness moved to Oakland, California where he served as the pastor of the First Assembly of God Church. When he could no longer continue in active pulpit ministry he gave himself to writing. He has written a volume of booklets and articles which have been a great blessing to many people. His last book prior to his decease in 1970 was Dunamis and the Church published in ±968.

In recognition of his accomplishments, Dr. Ness received three honorary degrees: the Doctor of Divinity, Doctor of Sacred Theology, the Doctor of Letters from such distinguished institutions as the Los Angeles Baptist Theological Seminary and Bob Jones University. His name has appeared in WHO'S WHO IN THE WEST since 1953.

Perhaps the greatest measure of Dr. Ness' influence and accomplishment for the kingdom of God is the great number of those who have come under his influence and have given their lives to Christ and who are still living consistent and productive lives for the Kingdom of God.

Brother Ness moved from the realm of the mortal to the immortal in the Presence of God Who touched His life and used him in such a remarkable, but the legacy of his life and works touched and energized by the Holy Spirit in such a remarkable way continue to follow Him.

At his memorial service held in Calvary Temple on February 2, 1970 the calling and the gifting of God upon life were in grand review: "as a pastor and teacher..as college president he set a great example. "He was a lover of Israel, and rejoiced to see the rapid fulfillment of prophecy, which was the subject to his last message. He inspired students to go out and start pioneer works, something he had done in his Christian life. It was a memorable day in May, 1948, when the State of Israel was born. Dr. Ness walked out on to the platform of the College chapel, , announcing the news that had just come over the radio and adding these words with a great deal of feeling and conviction,..., "students...prophecy has been fulfilled this day!"

As an administrator, he was unusual." "He was a man of faith like those in the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11." He left behind an example and a legacy that continues to this day.

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