

Nazarene Bible Institute
CHARLESTON, West Virginia
1962-1965

I arrived in Charleston after a twenty-two hour bus ride from Lucedale, Mississippi. I was tired, afraid, anxious, and a little lonely. I didn't know what it would be like once I arrived at my destination.

My heart was dancing with anticipation even though I experienced some difficulty leaving home. Mama stood on the ground near the bus with tears streaming down her face. I watched from a window near the back of the bus, fighting back my own tears. Just before the bus pulled away from the makeshift terminal at the Gulf service station, Mama turned and walked back to the car. I could not hold in my tears any longer. I gently laid my head against the window of the bus and the tears began to flow like a fountain down my cheeks.

For the next few hours, my heart was flooded with memories of what I was leaving behind. The thing that bothered me the most was that my dad and mom were home alone. My brother Dyke was already at college and my sister had moved to New York to work. My elderly parents would have to pump the water, feed the cows and chickens, pull the corn, and do all of the getting around on their own. I had been their only help for the past year.

Once I arrived in Laurel, Mississippi, Edward Husband, Charles "Stick" Jones, Eddie Lee Walker and Earl Joe Walker joined me on the bus for the next twenty hours. We rode and rode. Mama made me a big lunch of fried chicken, cake, and cold cuts. The only thing I had to buy was something to drink.

Edward laughed at me eating out of the big brown sack until I started passing out sandwiches. Then it was a different story. I had made enough sandwiches for them too. We ate off and on all the way to West Virginia. I was enjoying the ride until we passed Ashland, KY. It was here that we reached the mountains. The bus was whipping around these mountains, running into the curves, and slamming on the brakes. My heart was racing like a racehorse. That went on until we arrived at the terminal in Charleston, West Virginia.

We arrived in the Charleston bus terminal about 9 o'clock in the morning. One of the guys called the president for a ride. I thought to myself, "WOW! What a great honor to have President R.W. Cunningham pick us up himself in his blue 1961 station wagon."

On the ride from the bus terminal to the college, I asked a few questions about the size of the college and the student body. I was told that the college was small with a modest number of students. When we finally arrived at what I thought was the Institute, I saw large buildings arranged just like a college campus. I began to beam with pride. Just as I parted my lips to ask Edward Husband if this was the college, he explained that we were passing West Virginia State University. After a pause, he said the Nazarene Bible Institute was a little further down the road.

About three minutes later we arrived at the Institute. We all got out of the car and the guys helped me to my room carrying my bigger bags. Coming from a warm climate that was thirty-five miles from the Gulf of Mexico, I had only one over coat for my entire

adolescence. The weather was already cold enough for a light coat. It had snowed only once in while I lived in Lucedale, Miss. and that was in 1963. (I had already been in college for a year.) Nevertheless, Mama insisted that I packed heavy and warm clothes. Mama, being a seamstress, made enough clothes to last me a month without washing. She made sheets, pillowcases, tops, and bottoms. She literally made all I had except my socks and shoes. That's why the guys had to help me my footlocker out of the car. It was full. Once we were inside, Mrs. Anna Bowman, the Matron, met me at the door. She welcomed me and showed me the way to the rooms.

Since I was the first there I had my pick of rooms. I picked the last middle room with the double window and the bed near the window. Later, I learned that I chose the same room as Sybil Ann Holder Fraylin had when she attended the Institute. I referred to her as the queen of the Bible Institute. Sybil was there several years before me. I would still see her from time to time at the church conventions. Sybil was such a beautiful girl. I was an honored to have her old room. The Institute was small and simple. Just as you enter the front door, there was a modest size dining hall with a nice size kitchen attached. The front room doubled as a chapel and activity room and sometimes the dating room. There was a hall that led to the Ladies Dormitory and a large bathroom.

Night soon came and I began to unpack my clothes one piece at a time until I was so tired that I had to turn in for the night. The twenty-two hour bus ride was a little much for even this farm girl.

I woke up early the next morning, got dressed, and headed down to the dining hall for my first West Virginia breakfast. Boy, was I surprised! I sat down at the table, the blessing was given, and then everyone began to eat. First of all, sitting around the table were 6 or 7 boys and me. There were fried apples, small link sausages, toast, and apple butter. There were no grits, biscuits, ham, eggs, or coffee, but they did have milk. I tried to eat it, but I could only eat a little bit. It just wasn't Southern. The guys told me to leave it; they would eat it. After breakfast, I went back to my room to finish unpacking and to wait on the girls. When I finished unpacking it was time for lunch. Lunch was just like breakfast, foods I was not accustomed to. If having to get accustomed to food wasn't disappointing enough, I learned at lunch that none of the girls who applied would be coming to college that fall.

I was so disappointed, lonely, and scared that I just went back to my room, fell across my bed, and cried my eyes out. I wanted to go home. I would tell Mama that I was the only girl living on campus. I thought that might make her make me come home.

School started and I got enrolled for my class. Six boys lived in the dormitory above me. Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Bowman lived in the apartment attached to my dorm and managed the boys' dorm. There were also some students who came from the local community that registered for classes. When everybody finished, there were fifty or sixty students. Seeing the other students helped me get over my loneliness, especially that first day mingling with the other students.

It was Wednesday night. I had been in West Virginia for a whole three days. Rev. R.W. Cunningham, the President of the School, was also Pastor of the Institute Church, which was about a half block from the school. I walked over with a group of students for the Wednesday night prayer meeting. We were met at the door and welcomed in to the prayer service.

At exactly 7:30 p.m. the leader began the services and we began to sing hymns from the Nazarene Hymnal. After the song service, people stood up and started telling things. They called it testimony service. Many of them had compelling testimonies of being saved from sin and living a life of victory. As I listened closely to the people, I began to watch their faces. All of them had a glow. None of the women had on make-up. I especially noticed that the older women were young acting and energetic. You could just tell they had lived good lives.

Leaving the service that night, I had a lot to think about. It was my second encounter with the idea of having a personal experience with Jesus Christ. The first time I heard about this “personal relationship” with Jesus Christ was at Prentiss College, where I met Edward Husband and Charles “Stick” Jones. While I was at Prentiss, I went to hear Husband and Jones speak. They spoke about being saved.

I pondered what I heard back in my dorm room that night. I was trying to figure out the differences between this and my church back home. For a person who attended church most Sundays, was baptized at the age of 12, knew two scriptures and a few church songs, I was what they called a “good girl.” I was very religious. I never drank, smoked, or got involved in “immoral” activities. But I didn’t want to be known as being too religious. I wanted to reserve my right to identify with the world, if I needed to.

So I continued to go to class and ponder what I heard at that first prayer meeting. We also had chapel for the first time at school. We sang simple songs and the students testified to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

As the week went on, I had a lot to think about. Did I know Jesus Christ on a daily basis? Did I want to know him? Were these people for real? Could anyone live like this daily? As the only girl in the dorm, I felt virtually isolated. I could not tell my parents how I was feeling. I wanted them to hear only good things. Mama already felt I should have gone to a secular college.

Sunday morning came and went. It was my first Sunday at the Institute Church. I was anxious about what it might be like. The guys tried to describe it to me, but I wanted to see for myself. I put on one of my new dresses and my patent leather shoes. I pressed and curled my hair. Robert Tate, one of the new students, met me at the front door to walk with me to church. The Superintendent of the Sunday school showed us to our Sunday school class. Sunday school was much like I had been accustomed to at home. The class was small and the teacher taught from a book. I did notice that he seemed to back up the things he said with the Bible.

After Sunday school, I wondered upstairs and found my way to a seat. I sat in the middle so I would have a good view of who was around me. At 11:00 a.m. sharp the choir started to sing, “Just Tell Jesus, Tell Him All.” It was one of the most compelling moments of my life. The service was choreographed in a way that had me spellbound. Everything was done and said to draw one to Christ. By the end of the morning services and after Rev. R.W. Cunningham preached the message, I knew I was a sinner and I needed Jesus Christ to come into my heart. The invitation song was sung over and over and I gripped my seat to keep from going forward. I didn’t go forward. Back in school over the next couple of weeks, I pondered in my heart whether to accept Jesus Christ. Every chapel service, every prayer in class, and every conversation with a fellow student was convicting. I literally felt the weight of sin.

By the end of September 1962, I was so convinced of my sins that I couldn't stand myself. Being the religious person that I was I did not want anyone to know that I needed God. What I didn't know was that the church folk, the students, and the faculty already knew that I needed Christ. If nothing else revealed it, my pride did. However, everybody just played it down and prayed for me.

It was Wednesday night. Missionary Louise R. Chatman began a special service. Earl Joe Walker and Genia Ann sang, "There is Coming a Day." I knew even before the speaker got up that this would be my night. The message from Missionary Chatman sealed the deal. Not only would I become a Christian that night, but I would yield my total life to God to use as He willed.

Back in the dorm, I was so settled, so sure of my decision to confess my sins and to except Christ as my personal savior. I stayed away a long time thinking about God and rehashing the message I had heard that night and all the messages I had heard in the past few weeks.

Fall was setting in and everybody said winter would be coming soon. My loneliness was getting better, classes were getting harder, and the food was getting worse. Because I was in the dorm alone, I kept to myself that first semester. There were no telephones or televisions in our rooms. I had a small transistor radio that I listened to. But for the most part, I read my Bible, studied, and wrote letters home and to my brother Dyke Marshall at Alcorn College in Lorman, Mississippi.

The winter took on meaning at the Institute in West Virginia to me. Coming from Lucedale, I only saw a small amount of snow once. But in West Virginia, it started to snow in the middle of October and it snowed until early April. That took a lot of getting use to. Snow was so pretty and so much fun to walk in.

By mid-November, I had settled into my class routine and I began to enjoy my instructors, Rev. Clarence Bowman, and R.W. Cunningham. Betty taught a class or two here and there, but Cunningham and Bowman were the main instructors. Rev. Bowman and Dr. Cunningham were excellent teachers, counselors, and the people who kept the school going. Before I go on to tell you about the rest of my time at the Nazarene Bible Institute, I want to take a little detour and talk about the two men that shaped the lives of so many of the men and women that made up the Gulf Central District. Let me start with R.W. Cunningham.

You couldn't help but to notice the sacrifices this man was making to keep the Nazarene Bible Institute going. Rev. Cunningham had a vision and the ability to carry out that vision against all odds. Rev. Cunningham was already in his office most mornings by the time the students came from breakfast. He had been through the kitchen checked the stock, checked the campus, and settled in his office. He was the man who bought all the groceries and helped the cook to plan the menu in addition to buying groceries for his own house. He was a father to his boys, a husband to his wife, and a person who loved yard work. One of his prides was his goldfish pond. He knew his neighbors by name and tipped his hat with a quick smile as he passed them on the street. He drove the twelve miles into Charleston to bring the supplies for the dorm. He was a man of integrity and he made sure that his home, church, and school were all accounted for correctly.

In the classroom, he taught with vigor and insisted that his students do careful work. Most of the time, he was working with dated material, but he found a way to give

the information an up-to-date twist. He kept up with current events. He was a man concerned about history and a man that insisted we be prepared for the future. While it seemed as though he was giving to the institute all he had, he still had more to give on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays to his church congregation. Time was a virtue. He understood that there was a time for all things. He had time for his wife, his children, the Institute, the church, and us. He invested in the lives of Roland Chopfield, Charles Johnson, Roy and Sybil Fraylin, Mary Ann Ott, Earl Joe Walker, Dyke S. Marshall, Edward Husband, Mariah Buckley Marshall, Melvin and Jean Miller, me, JoeAnn Ballard, and many others who passed through the Institute.

Dr. Cunningham's greatest strength was his ability to see another people's potential. Most of us at the Institute were raw, broken vessels. The world saw very little in us but this man saw each of us differently. He was a man who understood that it wasn't so much about what you said, but how you said it. He knew that atmosphere was more important than anything else and he choreographed and planned for the education of his students. He brought us into a college as undone people needing to know Christ. He slowly led us to a saving and sanctifying knowledge of the Lord.

The Institute, the family style meals, the small dormitory, and the church not only reminded us of our sins, but it nurtured us into a life style of dress and character that could not be shaken by a world that did not know Christ. Then he opened the door to the world and encouraged us to go and make disciples. Rev. Cunningham was an example to his students. He never asked us to do something that he was not willing to do himself. He led by example.

The three years at the Bible Institute had left me with enough material to work on for a lifetime. Rev. Cunningham's greatest virtue was that he wholly depended on Jesus Christ. He knew the power of prayer. He trusted in God for the resources he used at the Institute. Mrs. Cunningham was a talented, praying woman of God who also helped us through our many situations. Thank God for the Cunninghams.

A thin wall separated the girl's dormitory from the apartment of Rev. and Mrs. Clarence Bowman. The Bowmans lived quietly in their apartment with their two children. Every now and then, you would hear a discussion between Alvin Bowman and his dad about cereal. Brother Bowman, as most of us called him, would take box after box of cold cereal off the shelf to only have Alvin he didn't want that kind. This saga would continue until Alvin would finally choose one. His dad would never raise his voice.

This temperament was indicative of Rev. Bowman then and still is today. Rev. Bowman went quietly and surely about his duties.

He assisted Rev. Cunningham at the college, remaining near to help with whatever was necessary. He spent countless hours working on the property, hauling groceries, handling the accounting for the Institute, praying for the students, and managing the men's dormitory. He did it all without complaining.

Rev. Bowman taught several of the classes at the Institute. He was always thorough. He would go over and over the material until he was sure it was understood. It is no wonder that the Institute produced successful pastors like Charles Johnson, Roland Chopfield, Edward Husband, Melvin Miller and many others. Rev. Bowman taught by example and provided an example of his own history. He often shared great stories of

growing up with many great siblings. Over the years, the student has had many great opportunities to interact with them.

The spiritual side of Rev. Bowman was one to marvel at known as a praying man, we sometimes referred to him as “our Daniel.” His love for his wife and children was evident in all that he did. He always found time to spend with them. I remember the time when he and wife, Sis. Charlotte Bowman, took Alvin to Charleston for a fun afternoon. When they got back from the outing, I was outside getting some fresh air. Alvin ran up to me and showed me his balloon. I started bouncing the balloon on my hand when it suddenly began to rise and quickly rose out of my reach. In a little while it was completely out of sight. By that time, Alvin was sad and I was crying. I had never seen a helium balloon and I didn’t know what to expect. Nevertheless, I ran into the dorm, borrowed the Assistant Matron’s car, drove to Charleston, and picked up another balloon. When I got back and gave it to him I had a friend forever. Rev. Bowman and his wife became a part of our extended family. Because of their love, our lives changed forever.

The snow came and the lessons got harder. Mama tried to help keep me happy by sending a letter each week and a package about once a month. After my conversion, I became more involved in church and attended the Nazarene Young People Society (NYPS) meetings. There I learned more and more about God. NYPS and Sunday School became the groups that under girded our belief. You were encouraged to express your faith at those meetings and to have daily devotion and prayer. While Melvin Miller, Geneva Ann, Marion Lipscomb and other young people at the church worked hard to have interesting and fun programs. Margie Outlaw and other men and women worked at NYPS to help us along and keep us on track.

Church was my favorite place. I loved the choir. I loved the preaching. I opened my heart at each event to receive.

By December 1, 1962, I was ready to make a visit home. I missed Montee and Mama badly. My heart longed to be with them. I also had another thought. It was for my brother, my sister, and my parents. I had found this precious jewel, Jesus, and wanted my family to know Jesus also.

I wrote my brother and, when I had the money, called him. I would always tell him that I was now saved. Those were words he didn’t understand. He was just like I was when I heard that word “saved” or “being born again” for the first time. His first two or three letters were very resistant. But the closer we got to Christmas he began to act like he might come with me to Bible College. Then it was time to go home for Christmas. Rev. Cunningham took me to the bus station. As he left, he told me to come back and to bring my brother. The ride home was longer than ever. I thought the bus would never get there. Finally, we made it; Mama was waiting at the bus station.

It didn’t take but a few days to fall into my home routines. I talked non-stop every waking hour. Mama and I talked about school and West Virginia. I would also slip in little about she and Montee learning more about God. I was such a Radical Christian. My mom and dad found themselves conforming to my every wish. Don’t do this, Don’t do that. They never said much, but they probably wondered whose house it was.

A few days after I got home from school, my brother came home from Alcorn College. We began to talk. I wasn’t as easy on him as I was with my parents. I began to

jump right on him about being saved. I explained the whole plan of salvation to him over and over. In spite of my zeal, we had a great Christmas. Mama cooked all of our favorite foods and bought our favorite presents. We cried when it was time for us to leave. My brother went back to Alcorn and I went back to the Institute empty handed; I could not convince my brother to go.

In January 1963, I was back at school. Things began to brighten up. Two girls Mariah Buckley and Jean Moore, joined me in the girls' dorm. Then the unthinkable happened; Dyke called me on the pay phone in the lobby and said he would be joining me in a few days at school. He did and what a treat it was to have family in school with me. The second semester got off to a normal start. The new students registered and in a few days they were all settled in.

For the most part, it was fun in the dorm. We had one student that would have rather not been there; they got used to it though. In a few weeks, things were running smoothly. It was exciting to have laughter in the girls' dorm. Dyke became a Christian a few weeks after he got to the Institute and he also accepted his calling to preach. He began to grow stronger in the Lord, began learning scriptures, and learning how to be a witness for Christ. In fact, many of the students were in a subject called "Art of Soul Winning." This subject helped in scripture memorization and approach.

Spring came, the flowers began to blossom, and so did the young lovers. Most of the young men and women had found girlfriends and boyfriends at the school or from the church. Dyke was with Mariah; Eddie was with Rita. Charles and Edward had left their girlfriends back home, so they had no one at the college. When all the choosing and pairing up settled down at the end of the first year, I had no one. I had some questions, but God had no answers for me. I left school at the end of the 1963 unattached. Summer passed fast after picking cotton and working in a cleaner's pressing sheets. It was time for me to return to the Institute.

I arrived back in the dorm to find another new girl. Evelyn Husband was the baby sister of Edward Husband. The men also got a couple of new students, Robert Taylor and Paul Otis. Evelyn and Paul wasted no time in accepting Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. They were the emotional ones of the group. They loved the Lord and they showed it. Not to say that the other students didn't love God, but these two were really vocal & emotional about it.

By the middle of the fall in 1963, the girls in the dorm were enjoying each other's company. Jean Moore and Evelyn Husband became my best friends. We spent countless nights sitting up in our beds, holding pillows, and sharing our deepest thoughts. Sometimes it was spiritual, sometimes it was about a boy, and every now and again it was about our lesson. There is no bonding like dorm bonding.

The guys had fun too. The biggest complaint we had about college was the food. It wasn't that it wasn't enough; it was sometimes too much of the same thing. For instance, somebody, (I'm sure it was a donor,) gave the Institute a lot of soup and peaches. It seemed like three or four times a week, we were having soup and peaches for dessert. Everybody was complaining, but nobody wanted to go to Rev. Cunningham and Rev. Bowman to say something. Dyke decided he would do something about our problem. He went to the trashcan and got out the soup and peach cans. He punched a hole in the cans and put string through them and hung them over the kitchen door. When the cook opened the door the can started clinging. He started singing from behind the

wall, "Soup in the morning, soup in the evening, soup at suppertime." Needless to say, he got in big trouble, but we got the menu changed.

Soon after that, Dyke really got serious about the Lord and Paul Otis did too. A big prayer meeting broke out in the male dorm and spread all over campus and also to the church. As a result the guys became serious in the dorm and they all matured a little more.

Several of the guys got jobs at the nearby Carbide Plant. They attended school in the day and worked at night. The girls had a harder time finding work in the Institute. There were very few industries where we were. I did manage to do a little baby-sitting, helped some with a little spending change.

The first and second year students usually only had the money their parents sent. About once a month, we would get a little treat. On Friday nights, the guys would walk over to the West Virginia State University Grill and buy a snack. If we girls had money would send for something. The biggest treat was a hot bologna sandwich. It was simply a thick slice of bologna fried in hot sauce and grease. If you had a little extra, you could get a drink to chase it down.

As the fall 1963 semester ended, we looked forward to going home for Christmas. Our bags were packed early. One of the guys in the group bought an old car. We pooled our money and rode home together. The night we left, it was a cold and icy. I knew the tires weren't good on the old car but my brother said it would be all right. We prayed all the way home and all the way back to school.

The car got us there just fine. Dyke and I were dropped off at home and the rest of the crew headed on to New Hebron, Miss. We were glad to be home. We rested for a day and then my brother and I hopped in Montee's truck and started visiting relatives. We spent some of the holidays helping Mama get the house in order and ready for the Holiday festivities. We did a lot of waiting. Then the next day Rev. Walker, Rev. Husband, and the rest of guys arrived at our home. They were to spend the night and head out the next morning. Mama fixed us a big dinner. We sat around the fire for a while. Then we all went to bed. Mama was up early the next morning and then I heard her say, "Uh, Wee, Look at that snow." That sounded like a joke. Snow in Lucedale that close to the coast. Sure enough there was 16 inches of it. We could not leave that day, so Mama cooked some more and we laughed and had fun all day. The next day things were better and we headed out to West Virginia.

Back in West Virginia for my last semester in school, I begin to venture out a little more. I even met another friend, Amelia Chandler. She would come over to the dorm and spend time with me. She loved me. Some Saturdays she would spend the afternoon with me just talking and having fun. One weekend, I got sick with a bad cold. Amelia skipped church, come to my dorm, and stayed with me until everyone was out of church. Leaving her back in West Virginia was a hard thing to do.

I even walked to West Virginia State University Mountain. The mountain was just adjacent to the West Virginia State University campus. Many students would make the pilgrimage each year, especially the sororities and fraternities. On Sunday afternoons, I walked with my brother Dyke up to Sister Daisy Brown's home.

I will forget the big outing we girls had. My brother had a job at Shoney's Big Boy. His boss allowed him to bring the girls from the dorm to eat one night. We got all dressed up for our big outing. We had so much fun.

Before we knew it, it was the spring of 1965. I was just a few months from graduation. More couples were getting together and becoming engaged. Charles "Stick" Jones became engaged. My brother became engaged to Mariah. I still didn't have anybody.

Things begin to get a little shaky for me. I had just a little more time in class and I would graduate with no husband and not a clear place to go. What would I do? Where in the world would I go? How would I live?

After a few weeks of riding with these questions and praying to God to help me in a decision and with my fears, I realized that there was not really a decision to make. Just like an angel, one morning someone said Warren Rogers, Sr. was on campus. Warren was the District Superintendent of the Gulf Central District. The Gulf District was the district for all of the black churches in Nazarene Church across the United States.

Rev. Rogers was there to recruit pastors for churches. Each year about graduation time, the D.S. would come and try to match pastors with churches. Rev. and Sis. Husband were sent to Winboro, La. Charles "Stick" Jones went to Texas. Eddie Lee and Rita went to Kansas City. Dyke and Mariah went to Rand, West Virginia. Robert Tate went to Fresno, Ca. But no one mentioned where I would be going. Since I wasn't a pastor and I sure wasn't a pastor's wife, I had no where to go. I wasn't invited in the "Upper Room."

On Rev. Rogers' last day at the school, I was standing on the edge of the porch and the school. I had placed myself there on purpose, hoping that he would see me and come over and talk to me. He did see me. He came over and spoke. He asked me if I had pasturing in mind. He asked if I knew what I wanted to do now that I was finishing the Institute. I said no on both counts. This was about late March or early April of my last year. He said for me to pray and said he would be praying too.

When Rev. Rogers walked away, I had tear in my eyes. For the first time, I had to deal with the harsh reality of the possibility of having no place to go. I prayed as he said. I cried and the president's wife, Mrs. Sarah Cunningham prayed with me. She encouraged me not to worry. Sis. Cunningham was leaning post throughout my whole college career. She was the lady I depended on when I was lonely during that first year. She knew my pain. She was a praying lady. The day she passed away, she had prayed herself to death. She was always praying for someone, black or white. She prayed and I prayed. It seemed like nothing was going to happen. It just seemed that there wasn't much out there for me.

I had a few more weeks left of classes. So I decided to relax, have fun, and trust in God for the outcome. Trusting God was easy. Being young, I felt like God would work it out.

One night while I was reading my Bible, I got a confirmation from God. It was in Isaiah 40: 30-31. God gave me a confirmation to wait on what He would work out. I wailed. Three weeks before school was out, Rev. Rogers was back in town. I thought for sure I would get an invitation to the Upper Room, but I didn't. Before Rev. Rogers left, he came to over to the lobby and spoke to me. He asked me I would like to go Memphis? I told him that I would like that. Not knowing anything about Memphis or what he had in mind for me, I said yes out of obedience to the man of God. He told me what we would do in a twiggly sort of voice. He used that voice when he was serious. After he explained to me when we would be leaving, he told me he would need to me a car. I thanked him,

but what he said didn't sink in until I got back in my room and thought it over. Then it hit me. I was going to Memphis and I was getting a car.

I still wasn't sure what I would be doing though. I continued trusting in God and waiting for my final answer. Three days before school ended, I received a long letter from Warren Rogers, Sr. detailing my job description for the assignment he had given me. He told me to get to Memphis and reopen the New Prospect Church of the Nazarene. My job was to build a strong Sunday school. After a year or so he would reassign me and send a pastor to the church. I was very happy to finally have my assignment.

Graduation day came. On June 6, 1965 my classmates and I marched down the aisle of the Institute Church of the Nazarene to accept our diplomas. That was a joyous day. The next day my brother helped me pack my clothes in the car and he drove me to Memphis.