

Brotherly love extended

I had worked for my brother on his farm in Iowa when I was a boy of sixteen. He had a temper, and so did I back then. One day, we had gotten into trouble. I told him I wouldn't work for him any longer, and he said he wouldn't pay me what he owed me. I left. Later we did get on speaking terms, but there was always a strain between us. The day when I prayed in the woods, the first thing that came before me was the trouble with my brother. The Lord asked, "What are you going to do about it?" I answered, "I will ask him to forgive me."

I sent a letter to my brother, but he never answered. Weeks went by, and it bothered me so much that I wrote again. I said, "Won't you please forgive me?" I still did not receive an answer, but I felt clear before the Lord. After that, I wrote to him as one brother writes to another. Later, he was killed instantly by a train. As I stood by his grave, deep in my heart I knew I had done what I could to make things right.

Standing on God's promises

I experienced the joy of God at different places of employment through the years. For a time I worked in a factory in front of hot furnaces. I thank God for the strength He gave me. Amid the rattle of machinery and the

roar of blowers, tears of joy streamed down my face. Thanksgiving rose from my heart for salvation that saves from sin, sets a man free, and makes him happy.

One day I was suddenly stricken in body. As I lay on my bed, sick and unable to walk, I prayed. And God answered! I heard something down inside say, "Get up. You can walk now!" If I had not obeyed, I believe I would still be afflicted. But I threw back the covers, stepped out on the promises of God, and He restored me to health.

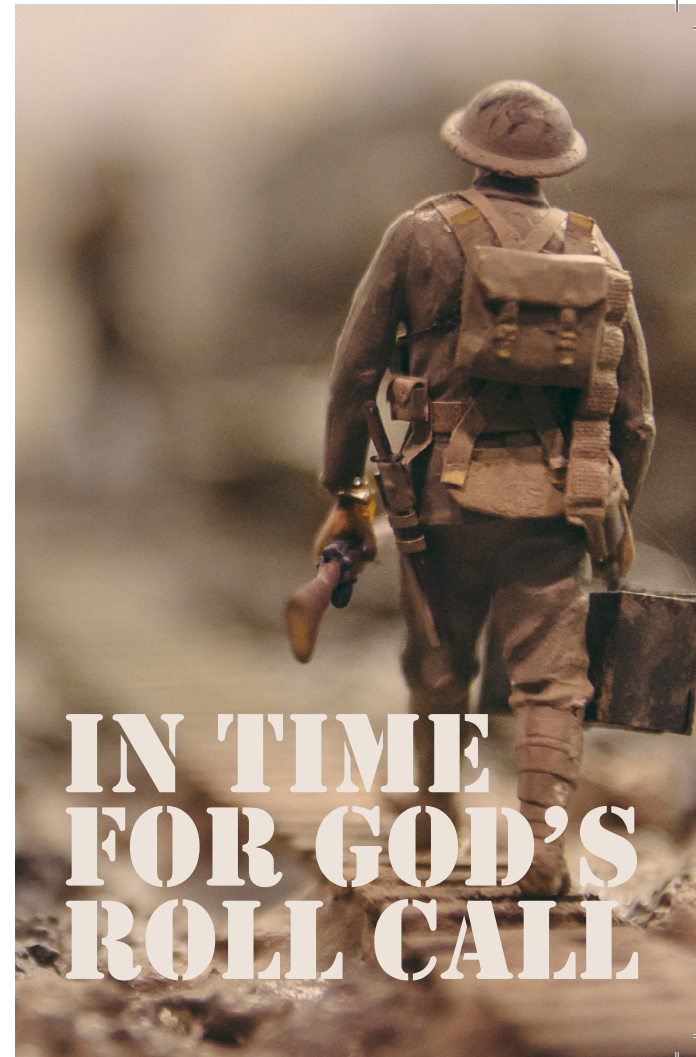
I thank God for the health and strength He has given me in my last years, and for the joy unspeakable I have in my soul. And best of all, I know I am ready for God's roll call over yonder!

Allen Crabtree was an Apostolic Faith minister and pastor for many years. On October 25, 1977, he answered God's roll call for Heaven.

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Years ago, while I was a soldier at Fort Worden, Washington, God called me to repentance. I had a ruined character, blasted hopes, and an appetite for alcohol. My heart demanded sin.

Early in life God had spoken to me and caused me to pray. My father was a Christian, but my mother was not. During my childhood, there was much discord in our home because of this. One day it seemed that our home was about to be broken up. There were eight of us children, and I wondered what was going to happen to us. That morning I went to the barn and knelt in the straw. I told God that if He would keep us together, I would give Him my heart when I became twenty-one years of age. God heard my prayer and spared our home from that awful tragedy.

Troubled youth

I never got away from the promise I made God, though my life became one of debauchery. My name was not good in the hills of Ohio where we lived. My father took me out of school because of the trouble I caused there. I knew how it felt to have steel handcuffs around my wrists, and to be escorted by the police because of what I had done. But under my rough exterior was a hunger for God, and a fear of going out into eternity unprepared to meet

Him. Outwardly I could laugh with the boys, but inside I trembled at the thought of facing an angry God.

While in the army, I reached the age of twenty-one. I knew it was time for me to keep the vow I had made to God. One Sunday I went into a mission hall in Port Townsend, Washington. There I picked up a Bible. As I opened it, something spoke to my soul, “Go out by yourself and pray.” So I went into the woods, looking for a place to be alone with God.

I stepped off the trail, and knelt beside an old stump. That stump was my altar, and God was there! I meant business as I prayed that day. I turned my back on sin, and made some deep consecrations. I told God, “I will not leave these woods until I get the witness in my heart that I am saved.” The thought came: *What if I am not back at the army post in time to stand retreat?* But the Lord whispered, “I will take care of that.” Then I thought: *What if I have to pray all night in the woods before I know I am saved?* But I knew that would be better than spending eternity in Hell.

Victory was mine!

Within minutes, I prayed through to victory. Across the threshold of my life stepped Jesus. He made a change in my heart I can never forget. A sweet, holy peace came

over my entire being. I stood up and looked around. Everything seemed to have gone to rest. The fir trees didn’t even stir. A holy calmness had settled over my soul because I had made my peace with God. The desire for sin vanished from my life. No preacher, priest, or rabbi was there to tell me what had happened, and I didn’t need anyone. In a moment God had made me a new creature—and I was back at the army post in time for evening roll call.

When I sent the news of my salvation back home, Dad began to rejoice and Mother began to cry. Later, when I came home, we went to the little church my father attended. After I tried to preach a simple sermon, I saw my grey-haired mother, bent in form, coming down the aisle. After all those years, she was coming home! She looked at me and cried, “Al, pray for me!” What a night that was!

My father and mother worshiped the Lord together from that day on. The best years of their lives were their last ones. Shortly before my father died, he left word for me that he was ready to step over any time the Lord called him. Not long afterward, he walked in from the porch, sat down, and his soul went out to meet his God. Just before Mother left this world, she said to those gathered around, “Tell Al that I’ll tell Dad he’s coming.”