

*Life, Preaching and Labors
of John D. Kauffman*

A short sketch of the life, preaching and labors of
John D. Kauffman.

By PIUS HOSTETLER



Published by
PIUS HOSTETLER
Shelbyville, Ill.

LIFE, PREACHING AND LABORS OF

JOHN D. KAUFFMAN

The subject of this sketch (who was often called the sleeping preacher) was born in Logan Co., Ohio, July 7, 1847. While yet young he came with his parents to Elkhart Co., Ind., where he lived nearly all of his life. He died at his home near Shelbyville, Ill., Oct. 22, 1913; aged 66 years, 3 months, and 15 days. He received a very limited common school education, was a farmer, by which he accumulated plenty to provide for his material wants, and to amply support his bereft widow, whose maiden name was Sarah Stutsman.

Early in life he joined the Amish Mennonite Church, in which faith and practice he remained true and faithful to the end. In his younger years he passed through the lot for a minister of the Gospel, being considered a fit subject for that place. By nature he was sociable and inclined to love sport and to make humorous expressions. All men have weaknesses and imperfections, and such were also noticeable in the life of this man. Perhaps some are weaker than others, and he may have been one of the weaker ones; for the Bible says, "God hath chosen the weak things and things that are nought, that he might confound the mighty." With all his manifest weakness, some were inclined to make too much of the man, and in his preaching he often warned the people against making a god out of him. To those nearest to him he also manifested a deep spiritual nature and a strong will and desire to obey God in all his ordinances and commands. He well knew that God was using him for doing a special and important work, but because of his humility he did not want to be any better or different from others, and I think he would often try to hide the good or better part of his being, and expose

his weaker and human side, for which reason many never found out how much spirituality was in him.

He was accused of being false, wicked, and of doing bad deeds, and also of being a drinker. True, he did use strong drink, but many did not know that he used this by the advice of his doctor, for his health's sake. Soon after he began to preach he had a stroke of paralysis affecting the left side of his face so that it became dry and numb, almost as if dead, hindering the sight of that eye, and that side of his mouth was so dry and hard as to greatly hinder his speech. Then the doctor advised him to use alcohol as a stimulant and he found it a great help. It softened his face that he could talk much easier and plainer. But he soon learned that the alcohol was too strong for his system, so the doctor told him to use beer instead of the alcohol and this he found to help his face the same and agreed with his system. But to get best results he needed to use enough of the stimulant to affect his mind and body more or less, and for this reason some accused him so much of drinking too much, while at the same time he no doubt would gladly have done with less or none, if he thought he could. I believe he used this drink in good faith, for his health's sake; and if at times he used more than needful or than he ought, he tried to be temperate, and God would be satisfied with him in this, the same as He is satisfied with us if we are intemperate in our eating or working unawares.

He was also accused of being a tobacco user, but his smoking he also did by the advice of a doctor for his health and in his last days when he thought he got no benefit from it, he quit using it, and he also advised the young people not to begin the use of it. But suppose he had even used this for taste only, what about us eating or drinking some things that are not for nourishment alone. What does Jesus say it is that does not defile a man and what does defile him? Remember that the greatest men for God were the most hated and persecuted; and this man, like the Apostle Paul, had the warmest

of friends as well as such bitter enemies. The Lord's ways are not our ways and He no doubt so ordered these things. No wonder that Kauffman said in his preaching: "Ye shall be tried through this body, and the body can not help it," and "If God is satisfied with this body why should man not be."

Bishop John F. Funk of Elkhart, Ind., paid a visit to the home of this man in March, 1882, and writes of it in his paper (German Herald), saying of his character that he is a man generally well spoken of, and especially esteemed as a man of sincerity and conscientiousness, and highly esteemed as a man and as a church member.

Some Significant Facts

We read that Christ came into this world in the FULLNESS of time. We read quite often of the number 7 (SEVEN) in the Bible and this number is said to denote a complete or full number. This man was born for a certain work that was to be done at a certain time. He came in the fullness of time, being born the 7th day of the 7th month of the 47th year. He was born on Wednesday, preached regularly every Wednesday till quite near his end and then died on Wednesday. As Christ came to His own, and was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so it seems this man (while he preached for all who wanted to hear), was sent to preach mainly to his class of people, and it seems his place of birth and residence was nearly central to that class, going westward as time went on.

His life was one of much suffering, as he was greatly persecuted for his preaching, then during the last year of his life, he suffered very much in his bodily affliction. His last disease was **gangrene**, starting with a sore toe that had been hurt, and finally the toe was taken off but the wound would not heal and the other toes turned black and finally come off so that only a stub of a foot remained. Then he also got bed sores that were very painful, and for quite a long time, per-

haps several months, he could not lie down because of getting cramps in his limbs. Sometimes for weeks he would not sleep as long as 5 minutes the whole night, then again he would rest better and his wounds would seem to be healing, and some hopes would be had for his recovery, and he also would think perhaps the Lord would heal him. Then with the constant little pain (as he called it) he also quite often had very great pains, causing him to sometimes scream for pain. Many prayers were offered for his help and healing, and the church held fasting for his benefit, and after a time these great pains left him, so that one day as I was there in attendance, he would keep saying, over and over, "I thank my dear heavenly Father for taking away my great pains."

I think most all of the brethren here could say with me that such a great suffering we never saw, nor such patience in suffering. One time I heard him say that if it were not for his church and his wife he would have prayed to God long ago to be taken away. At another time I heard him say that if he knew of any sin he had done, or was doing, that was the cause of his suffering, he would ask the whole church to pray for his forgiveness and help. Why he had to suffer so much may be in part a mystery, but I remember hearing him say in his preaching that he had to suffer for the church, and it is easy to guess that his suffering would draw the brotherhood closer together in sympathy and love, and was a lesson that was helpful to spiritual growth. Besides this his patience in suffering was a clear proof to all who hear of it, that his faith and Christianity were genuine, for any one in a false position would have had to give up. As we think of his suffering from time to time it gives us more boldness to stand up for his work for God.

In Heb. 5 we read, "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect he became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him." Likewise we say, that this brother could

learn obedience and be made more perfect, through suffering, and become a helper to the salvation of those who obey his teachings.

His Preaching

By this we mean his Spirit preaching, in an unconscious state. He began this preaching in June, 1880, or 120 years before the close of the last 2000-year dispensation. We know that in the close of that first time or dispensation, God told man He would give them 120 years time, but we are not sure that God waited the full time. When He saw that no one took heed to Noah's preaching, as we read that Noah was 500 (or more) years old when He told him to build the ark, and then when the flood came he was just 600 years old. Likewise if God had intended to have this time the full 2000 years, He may see fit to shorten it, for we read of the days being shortened in Matthew 24.

He began his first sermon with the text, "A sower went forth to sow." He preached every Wednesday evening for several years, then on Sunday evenings also until he was ordained as bishop of the church in the spring of 1911, and then he preached on Sundays in daytime and was released from his preaching on Sunday evenings. He also preached each evening when away from home, preaching in many of the Mennonite churches from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean, and also in Canada. He also preached every evening at his home for about a half a year at one time. He was in our community in Cass Co., Mo., to preach four different times: in 1882, 1892, 1896, and 1910. When the last few Wednesday evenings of his life he did not need to preach he seemingly feared he was to blame, and asked some brethren what they thought of it, and they told him that they thought it was the Lord's will so, and then he said we did not know what a load was off of him and how light he felt. No doubt we never realized how trying it would be to get up and tell people their sins and true conditions, not knowing what you are saying nor who is before you.

For the benefit of such as never heard him, I will first give an account of his preaching as it is given by J. F. Funk in his Herald of Truth (German) in March 15th issue of the year 1882, translating it from the German as follows: "When I came to Kauffman's house he was already overtaken with those cramps (as they may be called). He was lying on the floor and had his hands tightly clinched, and at times struck on the floor that it sounded like a heavy hammer coming down. Then after being there about 15 minutes a hymn was announced and as the singing began his clinched hands were lifted straight up, and in a little while the hands were separated, and each hand with outstretched fingers, was held high and quite still, for about $\frac{3}{4}$ hour while three hymns were being sung.

It seems most impossible that a strong and well man, in his natural state, could lift his hands and arms so high and quiet (except for a few rather strong jerkings) for so long a time. Then he turned his face toward the floor and spoke in a low tone and not very distinct voice, a short prayer, closing with the Lord's prayer. Soon he tried to rise and his waiters helped him to his feet, and he began to speak rather fast in the German, his first words being, 'Peace be unto you.' Then he spoke of the great love and mercy of God. Said he came before the people in great weakness and confessed he was a great sinner and that he did not know how long he would have to stand before them, but if it were until the rising of the sun it would be only because of the mercy of God. Then he admonished his hearers to prove themselves and see if they were living near to God. If they were not living for God and would be called away they would have no promise. They should prove themselves whether they were not too cold and careless. Then he spoke of the creation, the beautiful garden of Eden, and the command given to Adam, which he should have kept, and that we also have a command which we shall keep. Then spoke of the love of God, that He gave His Son to die for us on the cross. Said how God stooped

down and took a lump of earth and made man, and gave him a living soul, and this soul we shall bring back to Him pure and good, and we could easy die in the twinkling of an eye, but God did not want one soul to be lost. He prepared a beautiful place for us in heaven. Jesus was willing to go and prepare those mansions for us, but it was not needful for Him to go as the Lord had already prepared them all for us. He spoke of the angels in heaven where Satan exalted himself and was cast out and is now going about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He was cast out because of exaltation and now that which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God. Admonished us to prepare ourselves for those glorious mansions and if we did not love Him, we would be cast into hell, yet his mercy was for all. Here he suddenly stopped speaking and stood with outstretched arms and hands, and offered a short prayer. In one or two minutes he began speaking in the English language.

"While speaking he has his eyes closed, but walks around in the room, his arms and hands moving continually. Man must keep him away from the hot stove, and the lamps are kept out of his way. Sometimes while speaking we noticed him shaking and one time we noticed he shook so violently, that the floor trembled.

"In his English speaking he repeated largely what he had already said in German, saying, When we assemble in Jesus' name He will be with us and bless us, but if we are not assembled in His name we must be assembled in the devil's name. Then he mentioned that a body had been buried that day, but we are yet spared. Said also that he did not know how many are before him, but that there was a preacher before him, God had written it before him; he can teach you. Here he stopped, said a few words we could not understand, and his attendants gave him water, and he soon began to admonish us that a living soul can never go to nothing, that God had prepared beautiful mansions for us, and that we can choose between the good and the bad place, and must remain

true to the end. Here he mentioned again about the fall of man and how that the devil had deceived them, and the result of this fall. He spoke also of the woman who was brought to Jesus with an evil report, and how Jesus said unto her, 'Go and sin no more.' And so must we continue in the work of the Lord and sin no more. Jesus parted His hands on the cross for us. Are there not too many who, like the Jews, would like to have the transgressors stoned to death. If we don't want to go to Jesus, hell must be our home; yet the Lord desires that not one soul should be lost. He spoke of Moses at the burning bush, and that he should take off his shoes, and so must we put off our shoes of sin. He sent Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, but Moses did not want to go, because they would not believe him, and so now the people do not want to hear and believe. He gave signs that he should show before the children of Israel, and through these signs he brought them to believe. He also gave us a sign, why don't we believe? It is the loving Heavenly Father's will that this body is before you (here he spoke of himself). Why don't the people believe? Jesus is at the right hand of the Father and intercedes for us, and prays for me and for you. Here he spoke again of Jesus and His suffering and death on the cross, to take away all our sins. 'Why are the people so selfish and self-righteous?' The best he could tell us was to go and sin no more and to pray for the forgiveness of our past sins.

"Do we keep the Holy Supper? Let us think whether we are in the heavenly Father's Church. If not we must be in the devil's church. He has the largest church because so many are on the broad road. I entreat you to come to Jesus and keep all his commands. Here he stopped again and was given water and then proceeded.) Let us always go forward on the right way. The Lord gave 120 years time in the days of Noah but they would not come. The narrow way is a beautiful way if we are only willing to walk thereon. If we are branches of the true vine we shall bear fruit. Let us

think whether we are willing to come down to the Savior and be baptized and keep all his commands. In the name of Jesus I entreat you to be baptized and prepare yourselves. The devil and sinners work against you. The devil works himself into the churches. Look at the fussing and quarreling found there. Then he mentioned the cause of so many standing outside of the Church. So many are baptized, but do not keep all the commands, fall back, take their own course and follow their will. If we enter not in by the door we are thieves and robbers. He admonished earnestly that the people should come out from the hands of Satan, and give themselves into the hands of Jesus. He talked of the accusations that are brought against him, and said many say that this body is a false body, and that this body is a spiritualist. All that think this are doing the devil's work. If his body were a spiritualist then the Lord would not be with him but the devil would be with him. Here he spoke in the German again and made mention of the conversation of Christ and the apostles where the Lord told them, 'Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' Then he said the doctors could not overpower this body. Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years, when they could have gone through in 40 days if they had obeyed. When we have done all, we shall yet say we are unworthy servants. If the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and sinner appear? And then spoke of the punishment of the wicked, and made mention of the many false doctrines that are taught and accepted by Gospel preachers. Some want to reject the apostles teachings, some are self-righteous, and do not believe, and some want to accept only a part of the Gospel teachings, and doing this is not from God. He spoke of a young soul that had been called away that day to inherit the beautiful mansions in heaven, and if we had died in our infancy we would not be in the danger we are in now. He spoke of the blessedness of the redeemed and that the children were joint.

Hireling ministers are worth nothing to God. Some think they can't sin any more, and such God can't use. The people leave the Word of God, and go about to establish their own righteousness, and are building at Babel to make themselves a name, instead of building the Temple. There is only one Church, and we must all belong to that Church, to be saved in the judgment day. Some pray to be seen of men, but we shall go into our closet, and kneel far down in humility, and pray in Spirit and truth. We shall make the inside of ourselves clean first, then the outside will become clean. Some say the apostles were weak and fallible men, and so they were of themselves; but God was with them, giving them power to do the work required of them. Some claim to be so wise and strong, yet even Paul said, "When I would do good, evil is present with me." Many join church, not out of love to Christ, but only of love to men, or the will of men, so are not born again.

He preached something against the immersion mode of baptism and then said, "John baptized only unto repentance, but after Christ's death the people were baptized unto the forgiveness of sins, or conversion." The members are leading the bishop too much, instead of the bishop leading the church. When the members lead the bishop he is worth nothing to the church. When the ministers preach the Word, we shall obey them. Some ministers don't want to preach about hell any more.

I must teach you about the avoidance yet before I leave you here. Some are doing wrong and if they will not better themselves, God will smite them down to the mother earth. If people will not better themselves there will be a fall here, too pitiful to mention, and I hope the members will come closer together before I leave. We must all come nearer to God before I can tell you the condition of the church, else you can not receive it. All shall examine themselves, and come down like as a child, and give up all else, we can not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Then he thanked us for the good order, and invited us back to the next meeting and closed with prayer.

Saturday evening, Sept. 12: He talked in all about two and a half hours, mostly in the German language, and some of the talk as I could catch and remember it was as follows: We shall all sweep before our own doors and not see so far from home. Some claim they can't sin any more and that is foolishness because the Word said over 1800 years ago, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We are sinful beings and the Lord keeps cleansing and purging us as long as we are here. We need not go here or there to pray, but we have houses where we can go in and pray in secret, and the Lord will reward us openly. Daniel prayed three times a day, and if it was needful for him, why not for us? The ministers try too much to please the people, preaching their own opinions instead of the Word, and seeking the human peace, instead of the Godly peace. They try to get the people to join the Church for the name of it. Sometimes they get up to preach and soon get empty and done, because the people don't stand by them and pray enough for them. That which is highly esteemed among men is an abomination to God; and if the church keeps on getting more dressy they are on the way to hell, and unless they do better there will be such a fall that God will forsake the church. We are to rejoice in persecutions, the people spoke all manner of evil against Jesus. If the people will not come down He will have to say "WOE! WOE!" unto them.

Before the destruction of Jerusalem a lad went there, and cried "Woe! Woe!" to Jerusalem; the people tried to stop him, and beat him, but he kept on walking the walls, and crying "Woe! Woe!" for 7 years, then he cried woe to himself, and was shot falling dead off from the wall. He preached and explained very plainly the subject of the Avoidance, and said some claim they can't understand it, and it was because they don't want to, and he would make it so plain that they will be without excuse. If our hand is cut off it is still our hand, and

belongs to us, and God can heal it on again, if we take His way for it, but some think they have a better way. Many ministers preach only of love and heaven, not wanting to preach about hell.

Some are building so at Babel, and if they will not do better, God will smite them down to their grave. He preached hard against having our photographs. Said some souls here have dark streaks, some lighter, and some have bright streaks. People here belong to different denominations and there are so many churches; people would have that rock divided into over 600 pieces, but it is not divided, and we must all belong to the Church of Jesus Christ if we would be saved. Said we should not talk one against another, and then closed with prayer.

Sunday eve, Sept. 13: He preached again a very powerful and pleading sermon, beginning at 7:05 P. M. and closing at 10:45. I had a record of notes of this sermon, but the paper got torn, and most of it lost, so I can give only this: He warned us against the danger of sinning against the Holy Ghost; told the ministers to preach the pure Word of God without fear or favor of man; said we should read the Bible more and not so much the books and papers that were leading us off. A friend and sister who attended these meetings told some of us afterwards that one evening as he was preaching she saw where she was wrong and made up her mind she would give up, and as soon as she had said in her heart she would yield, the preacher said in his sermon, now he feels lighter.

At another time (later) this man was with us and preached and I wrote out the following about it and will give it here. The (so-called sleeping preacher) Kauffman was with us last week, and preached several very earnest sermons. The second evening four of the ministers were present, and all four testified that we had been taught the Word of God. One of them said he preached still the same as he had for about 30 years when he had first heard him.

Here are some things that stand out very prominently in his preaching and prayers:

1. His honest hearers, both friends and enemies, admit that never man spake as this man speaks.

2. He says more of the love, mercy and goodness of God to usward, than any man we ever heard.

3. He emphasized the truth, of man being saved by grace, through faith and not by works, more than I ever heard.

4. He teaches more forcibly the need of entire consecration and the giving of our whole heart and will under the will of God.

5. His invitations and pleadings for souls to come to Jesus and accept His will are so tender and yet so powerful, showing great love for lost souls.

6. His descriptions of the happy and blessed state of the saved, and the awful condition of the lost, in the future world, have not been equalled by the preaching of any man I ever heard.

7. He uses great simplicity of language, like unto a man in his natural or conscious condition, and in an uneducated way, making mistakes in quotations and pronunciations, etc., reminding me of Paul's writings in I Cor. 1:17 and 2:1, also Jas. 3:1, 2. This also reminds me that while Jesus was wholly, or perfectly, the Son of God, yet He also was a perfect man. So this man, while perfectly overpowered and entirely unconscious, yet was used as a man in his natural state.

8. His prayers are noted for their great simplicity of language, earnest pleadings, and great importunity, a continual overflow of thankfulness, a presenting of all petitions in the name of Jesus, and praying for all classes, and yet in a very personal way for each class and individuals.

9. The regularity and order of his preaching for the past 30 years agrees with the Bible that says, our "God is a God of order." This is all of that former writing.

In regard to his prayers I want to add that they were cer-

tainly such as man never heard from man in his natural state.

One of the first times this man came to Missouri he preached at old Bishop J. C. Kenagy's house and Kenagy told father that such a prayer he had never heard. and that he would give \$5 if he had it written down. At one time when this good bishop gave testimony to this Spirit preaching, he said, "Let no one dare to say a word against it."

I want to add another testimony to this preaching which was given by our neighbor and brother, Levi E. Yoder, who was considered by many to be one of the best church builders we had, especially so the last years of his life. Just shortly before this man died, Kauffman had been to Missouri and this Yoder heard him preach one evening, and I saw him the next day and asked him about the sermon. He said he liked it so well he could have listened all night, and that he would not have missed it for \$25. Another testimony: Uncle John L. Miller was a bishop in the old order Amish Church and lived near to this Kauffman in Indiana and went to hear him preach at times. When he came to his death-bed, they wrote us that he said if he had his life to live over, he would go oftener to hear this preaching, and that the people shall go and hear, and heed it. I have never heard of one soul that on his death-bed, told people not to hear or heed this preaching.

Now I know when we talk of this preaching, some say, "Beware of false prophets and deceiving spirits," etc. Now just think: If this were a false or deceiving teacher why would he have preached the same doctrine as our forefathers, the martyrs, and Menno Simons taught. Were all these deceived or in the dark, and the higher or more popular churches more in the right? Suppose we would claim he were a deceiving spirit. What would he have accomplished for Satan in his 33 years of preaching? Did you ever see any one that continued to hear and obey his preaching, that stands aloof from the Church and cares nothing about serving God? Is it not a fact that those who try to obey his teaching, keep all the Bible

ordinances as taught by our 18 articles of confession of faith, and are holding as firmly to these and other teachings of the forefathers, as any of our people who never heard him. Some say, "Why did he come to preach, and why in the way he did?" If God saw fit to send him, what is man that he questions why? Should not man be afraid of God, to thus question his workings?

Some said he should be ordained to preach thus. But what folly to think that when God overpowers a man, and makes him preach, he ought to have man-given authority first. Shall we dictate to God what He shall do or not do? How would that compare with the man of sin we read of, who sits in the temple and says he is God. This Spirit preaching often told the people that it was only the mercy of God, that he has to stand before them, and that ought to settle it, that God's mercy caused him to thus loudly call and warn the people to prepare themselves for the near judgment day. The Spirit has also said in his preaching that in the end of the first dispensation, Noah was here to warn the people of the coming flood, that near the end of the second, came John the Baptist to prepare a people for His coming, and now Noah (meaning Noah Troyer, who preached a number of years the same as Kauffman—some of his sermons can be had of J. F. Funk, Elkhart, Ind.) has been here, and at present, John is here, and next Christ will come. So we may know that there will not another like this come to warn us, but we should think Christ's coming is at hand, even at the door.

In the early part of his preaching I heard him say if the ministers would preach with more power, the Lord would release him from this work. He also said more than once that man could not stop his preaching, if they would bind him with chains and put him in prison. The Word says it shall be in the end of time, as it was in the days of Noah. Now if God had destroyed all his erring children in the end without a special warning, would it have been as in the days of Noah?

Again, if a great many would have believed and accepted this warning, while scarcely any one believed the preaching of Noah, would it have been as in the days of Noah? In the time of the destruction of Sodom, God warned His people. He warned the people of Nineveh. He warned the people before the destruction of Jerusalem through a lad. Even in our time there was a warning sent to the people of the coming flood at Johnstown. God's Word says that His ways are not our ways, and that they are past finding out. If we could understand everything that God says and does, would God be much greater than man. Just as we do not understand all the Scriptures, so likewise we do not claim to understand all about this man and his wonderful preaching.

Satan would be much pleased if we would say no more about this preaching and work, and would forget it all; but as it was God's mercy, love, and will to send it, it must be His will, that we remember, make known and obey it, as long as we live. So we will give still more of his teaching and preaching.

No doubt hundreds of ministers who heard him preach testified that he preached the Word. He never was in a community to preach, but one or more of the ministers would testify to his preaching being in harmony with the truth. One time he preached where 18 ministers were present and all of them testified to the sermon being in accord with the Word. I have seen where even those who were against him, and denounced his work, did testify before the people that he had preached the Word. Do you know that we read in Jno. 3:34, "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God?" We know that some preach the Word, not rightly dividing it, or at times twisting it to suit themselves, or the people, so we will explain or say still more of what he preached. He preaches nonresistance, nonconformity to the world, non-swearing of oaths, feet washing and in fact the need of observing all the ordinances just as our forefathers, the martyrs, and Menno Simons had taught. I heard him preach at his

home several times about the year 1889 and some things that impressed me I can well remember and want to give here for the benefit of those who may chance to see this, and have ears to hear. He said quite often: "Soon, soon Jesus will come." He made the statement several times that Jesus came in the flesh to redeem the sinful world. He taught that photographs, insurance, and musical instruments were not right, mentioning the second command as a scripture against the pictures; and we see that we have some people who had never heard him, and most of our people longer ago had the same opinion or faith on those subjects. If you do not believe such things are wrong, do you think that teaching will keep any one out of heaven? He taught and explained the avoidance very plainly and said the devil is trying to get it out of the way, but can't unless the people help him.

He preached that the sisters should wear their head covering every day. Some may think this was not in harmony with the Word. If not, why do you think there are so many of our churches who wear it every day?

Do you think they would have began such a practice if the Word had not taught it? Does Paul say that woman shall put on a covering when she wants to pray or does he say she does wrong when she prays uncovered? Notice, he says she shall have "power" (a sign of her submission) on her head, because of the angels. Do the angels see us always? A leading bishop said at a Bible conference a few years ago, "Our mothers wore their covering every day, we wear it to go to church and to the table, and the next generation will not wear it at all."

He also taught that every church needs to have a bishop. One time he preached at a church where they had no bishop and he told them they should ordain one, else their church would not stand. They did not take heed to this, and that church went to nothing or all moved away.

But if I could give you many of his sermons word for word, if you never heard him, you still would not know just

how he preached, for there is so much in the tones and delivery. A few years ago E. J. Berkey had a lengthy article in the "Gospel Herald," explaining that there is so much in the voice or tones in preaching, and here is one thing wherein no man ever spake as this man did in his preaching. You can also notice, from our notes of sermons, that he did not preach in the way of the educated ministers but in simplicity of form and words. He often said, "I much teach you with simple words." When he at times gave scripture passages in little different words from those written in the Word, so that some would call it a mistake, the meaning would not only be the same, but his way would make it plainer. Then at times he would reveal things that are not written in the Word, saying the Lord had revealed this to him; such as some of the sayings and doings of the people in the time of the flood, some of the thoughts and doings of Sarah when Abraham went to slay his son Isaac, etc. One thing I remember well, and consider quite valuable, was that in his preaching about baptism, he said the Lord showed him that where Jesus was baptized of John in Jordan, the water was only hand breadth deep. He often said that the Lord had written things before him in letters of gold; often said he could not teach as it pleases the ears of man, but must teach what the Lord gives.

He not only taught the truth (not keeping back some to suit the people) but the whole truth, and the truth most needed.

In a general way, we may say, that in the first years of his ministry, he taught the nearness of the coming of Christ, the need of repentance, the ministers should preach the pure and sharp Word, and the members should be obedient to them, and put away their idols and evils, and keep the avoidance as taught by our forefathers. In the last years of his preaching, when many of the ministers and churches had utterly disregarded his teachings and refused to hear and believe, he taught that we should read II Cor. 6:14 to end of chapter, and reread it till we understand it, and by so doing,

we were led to see that when church leaders and churches depart from the faith, and accept unbelief and live in disobedience and idolatry, we are not to be in church fellowship with them, else we be partakers with them. He also preached much of the need of us being perfect, keeping all the commands and giving up our whole heart and will to do God's will only. Do you know that when we willingly neglect to keep one command, or ordinance, we have not given God our whole heart, or will? He often said God will not accept a half heart. He said Satan can come into the flesh but can not come into the Spirit. He often said something about our churches being bound together, and called the tie "Das band der menschheit wille," or a man made tie. The unity of churches is no doubt right as long as they remain on the right way, but when some depart from the faith they draw the others away too, when they are bound together.

He also mentioned in my hearing that the Conference was leading people on the downward road. And this is not hard to understand, when we consider that so many leaders have not the faith of our forefathers, which faith we acknowledge and accept as being the true way. We heard him say, "Take care of your young people, else before you know it, the world will have them, and next the devil will get them." He said also: Abraham had to move twice to get away from the unrighteous people, and we had better move from one ocean to the other than to be in unrighteousness. Some say we can be righteous no matter where or with what kind of people we are.

Don't you know that we are not only known by the company we keep, but that we also become more and more like those with whom we are? The Israelites were to be a separate people, and we are also commanded to be separate.

He preached much and often of the Old Testament characters and incidents, drawing deep spiritual and valuable lessons from them. There is scarcely a subject from Genesis to the end of Revelation that he did not preach more or less

about some time. To think of these things makes a person long to be under the sound of that preaching again.

Some have wondered why he did not preach against drinking strong drink or using tobacco. Well, suppose he had said that to use these were a sin. How would that have harmonized with the Bible? The people would have said, "Jesus made and drank wine, and was called a wine bibber, and Paul told Timothy to use wine." Some say this wine was not intoxicating. If not, why does Paul write, "Be not drunk with wine?" and why did the people at Pentecost say the apostles were full of new wine when they thought they acted strange? Solomon in saying how we are to use and enjoy the good things in this world says, "Drink thy wine with a merry heart." Does not Jesus condemn the Pharisees for being too strict in such matters and says whatsoever goeth into the mouth does not defile a man? Paul in his letter to the Colossians condemns those teachers of a fleshly mind, who command the people to touch not, taste not, handle not.

The Spirit often preached against drunkenness and gluttony. Some found fault with his calling himself a sinner, but we can read in Menno Simons' writings where he also confessed he was only a poor sinner, and this also harmonizes with the teachings of our forefathers, and some of the leading ministers in our time teach that the best of us are still sinners in a sense. Some say, "Why did he not get any souls converted?" I was well acquainted with a young man that claimed it was this preaching that caused him to come to Christ and join the Church, and there may have been hundreds like that of which we know nothing. Again, I know of some whose feet had well nigh slipped, who were rescued by this preaching and I doubt not there were many such.

The Lord only knows how many real converts a man can claim as his. Suppose we could prove he had no converts, did God blame Noah or his preaching for not getting any one but his family to come into the ark?

The Spirit has said that Noah preached piercing and powerful, that some believed and then were influenced by others and fell away. Did God blame Moses for not bringing the children of Israel over into the promised land? When Christ was here, "He came to His own and they received Him not." Even his brethren did not believe in Him. If we want to look at numbers, how does our church compare with some of the most popular churches? Some also say, "Why did he not preach the need of missions and mission work?" We say he did, and just in harmony with the Bible. We often heard him say, "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," and if you read "The Sermons by Noah Troyer" you can see that he preached that. But he also preached, Woe to such as compass sea and land to make proselytes, and then make them children of hell, more than they themselves are. He also preached that we shall not give that which is holy unto the dogs, nor cast our pearls before swine. We have also heard him say, "Teach them to observe all those ordinances," instead of saying, "all THINGS" (as it is written) and this makes it plain that the word THINGS in that passage, refers to the ordinances, and does not mean that all should be taught to do just the same work the apostles were to do; and reason as well as Scriptures will tell us that all can not be apostles nor do their work. I remember hearing him say one time, something like this: "Now I have told you these things, divide it out among others." And this is one reason that we are writing these lines. An old brother wrote an article for a certain paper, explaining and revealing some of these things, of God's will, and the Spirit mentioned it in his sermon, saying, it was a good work, that takes the writer 7 steps farther toward the glory land. Others here tell me that he had preached quite much about the account of how Joshua was to take up 12 stones, out of the river Jordan, for a sign and memorial to their children of the mighty works of God, and by this preaching they understood that it would be God's will, that we preserve an account or

record of this great work in our time, for our children.

He also preached mission work by saying each of us had a work to do for God. He often said each one shall stay in his place. He has said, "The deacons want to take the ministers' place, and the ministers take the bishops' place." Have we considered the following questions? Why did Jesus say of a certain class, "Let them alone, for if the blind lead the blind they shall both fall into the ditch?" Why did He not do many miracles at a certain place because of their unbelief? Why do we not find any instructions about sending out missionaries, in the epistles of Paul, John, Peter and James?

In his preaching he often said we should strive to enter in at the strait gate, because the way is narrow and so few shall find it; often said we need that bread from heaven to feed our souls that we may be kept to life eternal. He often spoke of the ten virgins, and at one time said if we obey the church only because we must, and not because we want to, we will lack oil as the five foolish virgins did. He often spoke of Zaccheaeus, and what he said he would do, and how he was so glad to see Jesus. Don't you think we too, would be very glad to see Jesus if we were so little attached to our earthly possessions, so willing to help the poor and to make wrongs right? He very often said, "The Lord wants to help all those who love His appearing," and while the Word does not say these exact words, it is yet quite in harmony with the Bible; for the Word says, "God resisteth the proud," and again, "His face is against them that do evil."

I must also mention that in the first years of his preaching and in the last years I heard him say that it is right that we should have family prayers in our homes. Others heard him say we should read at least one chapter in the Bible every day. I also heard him say that it is right that we should ask God's blessing on the food we eat before eating, and again thank Him after eating. He often preached on the

great need of much praying and fasting, and the need of secret prayers.

His form of preaching generally was this: A short prayer before rising, then a short talk, then kneeling in prayer with the congregation, then a sermon, and then kneeling in a closing prayer. His first words uttered, usually were, "I heard thy voice, I heard thy voice." His first words to the congregation were sometimes, "Peace be unto you," and at times they were, "FRIENDS, I wish you the grace of God." After living here in Illinois, where they had no resident minister, he would pronounce a benediction after the singing of a closing hymn.

One Wednesday in September, 1913, when I was there helping to attend to him, about 5 P. M., we thought he was dying; but he revived again, and a little later ate a few bites of supper, then became unconscious as usual but began his service quite different from his usual custom, as he first sang two verses of a hymn. Then in his preaching he said that we had thought he had fainted, but that he had not, as his spirit had left him. He also told us that evening that we should stand by our minister and help him to build the church, and twice over said, "I say farewell to you all." By this we understood that he would not remain with us and he only preached a few times after this and not so long at a time.

Some think that he just preached the things that he believed and suited him; but in this they are mistaken, as he often preached things he knew nothing about and some things that were contrary to his own opinion of the subject. Of course, when he was awake he would want to know what he had taught, and he believed it was from God and tried to live up to it. At one place where he preached he warned the parents to take care of their children, and not to leave their mother tongue (for three nights in succession) saying, If they do not watch the world will get them and next the devil will have them.

We have called this Spirit preaching, and some may ques-

tion why. John writes, "Believe not every spirit, but try (prove) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out in the world." He also tells us what **every spirit** that is from God will confess. (To say confess here means the same as to state or to teach.) When he tells us what every spirit from God will say, he no doubt means that **every spirit** not from God, will not teach or say this. John writes very briefly, and here he takes for granted that we know the difference between **spirits** and **human beings**. When he says believe not **every spirit**, we can know that these spirits say or teach something than can be believed or rejected. Notice he does not say, Pay no attention to **any** spirits or their preaching. Notice also that he does **not** say, Every spirit from God will preach God's Word in accordance to your opinion or understanding of it. He tells us very plainly how to know the spirit from God and expect us as believers to suit ourselves to such spirit's preaching, and not try to make such fit to us.

Now we know that this was a **spirit** talking, because we know of the nature and possibilities of **humans** and **spirits**. Hundreds of times this spirit said things that are far beyond the range of human possibilities, such as preaching many of the Bible incidents that he had never learned, or remembered, as he was no great Bible student and uneducated, preached even things that are not written, named people in adjoining rooms into which he could not have seen, some times answering some one's question, that he had in his mind, or revealing their thoughts even as Christ did at times. Sometimes he prophesied of things to come for years ahead, and they came to pass, and of course some of his prophecies did not come as they were expected, just as some of the prophecies of the Scriptures were not fulfilled as the people had expected, and we can see now that some of the prophecies of the Word have been fulfilled according to the understanding of some, and not fulfilled as others understand it. One time he preached in Illinois. Grandfather Kennell was present, being 85 years old, and he said his days should yet be as his

years had been, and when he died they thought of this and counted it up and found he had lived just 85 days after this.

After my brother Eli died here, Nov., 1914, some remembered quite well that he had said something that had meant he (Kauffman) would pass away first and Eli would go next, and so it came to pass. This was not only a spirit work but was even beyond the range of the evil spirits, as our life is in the hand of God and He alone can say when it shall end. This spirit often told us that God gave us our first breath, and He will take the last one. Now let us read I Jno. 4:6 and prove ourselves to see what kind of a spirit is in us. In this verse he speaks of the spirits in all men, while in the 1st verse he speaks of the spirits that have gone out into the world to work for the good and the evil.

HIS LABORS

One time in his preaching at his home in Indiana, I heard him say, "Soon he would have to stand up alone." I did not know what it meant and thought, surely not all men would forsake him. But later on we see that his bishop, who had stood by him so well, for many years, forsook him. Then the Spirit began to preach that they should move away. At first, when they told him about this, he thought it could hardly be, and thought they could hardly leave there, but by the fall of 1907 he with several other families moved to Shelby Co., Ill., where it seemed the Lord had directed them, after considerable investigation. Since living here 2 years, I think I can see some reasons why they were led here; some advantages being, a central place for those who came later, land lower in price, a chance to get located very near together, a chance to buy small tracts of land, a fair chance to rent a number of farms, and last but not least a place where people will **not** go, when **making money** takes the first place.

Now they were here without a bishop or resident min-

ister for quite a while. An invitation was given to a bishop to come and serve them but he would not, and they were awhile without help, perhaps to prove them, and perhaps to prove the bishops, giving them plenty of time to decide what they would do. But the Spirit always comforted them by telling them they would get help. The ministers, S. E. Yoder of Delafield, Ill., and P. Zimmerman of Roanoke, Ill., sided with them here and preached here and would like to have made their home here if circumstances would have allowed. Finally an invitation was sent to Bishop John R. Zook of Lawrence Co., Pa. One evening after the preaching, while Kauffman was still in his trance, the brethren were talking of sending for Zook but did not know his middle letter. Then the spirit said right out, "John R. Zook, he is the man, and I am the angel Gabriel that is telling you." This spirit had told them before this that he was the angel Gabriel that speaks to them, and therefore some think this spirit preaching was done by Gabriel. The Word says of the angels, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister, for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" Then Zook came and held communion and baptismal services for them. Later on he was asked again to come and serve them, and though he was warned by other ministers not to come, he came and held communion and baptismal services and by the request of the members he ordained a bishop; viz., Peter Zimmerman. The voice of the church was unanimous, and it is a significant fact that from that time forward, till after the death of Kauffman (over 4 years) every time the church was counseled, the voice was **all agreed**. Then as time went on, and the bishop still lived so far away, and the need was, a bishop who lives here, Zimmerman was called and by the voice and consent of the entire church John D. Kauffman was ordained as bishop of this church. Some may think it was not scriptural to take an unordained man and ordain him as bishop; but look it up in your Bible and see where you can find that only ministers can be taken for bishops. Bishop Mahlon Lapp of India was also

taken as a laymember and ordained as minister and bishop at once. I will now give a short writing by Brother Adam Schrock in which he explains more of this ordination.

"To whom it may concern:—As there may be much talk about John Kauffman, who is now our bishop, as to how he can take this stand, and that now he has the office he a long time wanted, that is a mistake that he longed for this office. Those who are as well acquainted with Brother Kauffman as I am, and have seen this take place, will at once say with me, No! he did not want this office, but being fully given up to God he said, 'God's will be done.' This did not take us on such a surprise—who have been hearing him preach regularly for years. The spirit told us more or less of this for twenty years, saying that the time would come when he would hold communion for us. But it was a question with us how this would take place, whether at night in his trance; or in day time with his eyes open. But a few weeks before he was ordained, the Spirit told us that God had now given him power to speak to us in day time, with eyes open, with the same power as at night, and to stop the mouth of unbelievers, we (the church) had a work to do, and should not delay, as God could take this power from him again. So after having several talks with Brother Kauffman, he being much broken down with the thought of having to take this office, with many tears, and a broken heart, he said, 'God's will be done!' Then Zimmerman was called and the work done and since then he preaches to us, every two weeks in day time (with eyes open) with the same power that he does after night, having no respect of persons, but cuts right through with the Sword of the Spirit. So much from one who has attended his sermons for over 25 years and has lived neighbor to him part of this time."

This work was done in the spring of 1911. My brother Eli was also living here at that time, and he told me that any one here could easily see that Kauffman did not want that

office, but only took it because he thought it to be God's will. As a bishop he was much concerned for the good of the church, and more than once said he had to give an account for all of us members, but that all of us together need not give an account for him.

The Spirit then told us that we had a good shepherd, thus testifying from heaven that we had a good bishop. The Spirit also then said that he had to ordain a minister and deacon yet to finish the church, and so in the fall of 1912 a minister was chosen, the lot falling on Joseph Reber, who was ordained as bishop in the spring of 1914. When preaching about the needed qualifications for ministers, he taught two things that are not generally taught that way. And this the Spirit did not teach to other churches, that I know of; but in starting a church here, perhaps he must go back to take up anything that had been lost sight of in the course of time. These were that he would not take any one into the lot who was less than thirty years old, nor any one that had ever been expelled from the Church.

The Word says—a man shall be blameless and have a good report from them that are without, and since the Spirit said he must be one that was not expelled and the Word and Spirit always agree, we see that the word "blameless," means just the same as what the Spirit taught. And when a man is expelled he is not blameless, and his reputation is hurt more or less. We also have the example of King David who was so penitent and a man after God's own heart, yet was not allowed to build God's house because of his past sins. In regard to age, the Word only says "Not a novice," and people have all kinds of ideas of what this means; but since the Spirit taught that he must be 30, and since the priests had to be 30 before serving in their office, and Jesus was 30 when He entered His ministry, we can easily see that God had long ago drawn the line for the ministry at 30 years, and a novice is not that old. If the Government will not accept a man for President of this U. S. less than 35 why should a man be mature enough for the ministry at less than 30. Again if

Jesus could afford to wait till He was 30, who could not afford to wait? Noah not only preached, but also built a house, and so this man had to preach and build, and as Noah must build as God directs or perish, so this man would need to build just as the Lord gives the pattern and instructions, so as to get a house that will not burn, when the great fire comes, and we know not how soon it will be here.

Some think this church is just like all others because we have some difficulties, and troubles, and members to correct and to expel, and they do not realize and think that Satan will try the hardest to upset or destroy the church that is the nearest right. All men are imperfect and all churches must needs be imperfect too. Neither do we say this church is alone right, for we know not how many churches there may be in the world that God can own as His. The Spirit often said we don't want to be better than other people, but only good as other good people. But as far as morals alone are concerned, the churches far off in their belief, may still be morally good, and live in peace.

When I first visited here in the summer of 1912, several things impressed me considerably, and I did not wonder that some talked of this church being different. These were, the love manifested among the brotherhood, as we saw that every time they met in meeting they would greet each other; and when asked if the Spirit had taught that they should do this, they told us he had not preached or commanded it. Another thing was the unity of mind among the members. Another was the respect for and the obedience to the bishop. It seemed the members believed that the Lord was with him and was directing him and to follow his leadership was safe. When he told them what they should do, they did not say in their heart, "There is nothing in that." The Spirit often preached about our God being a God of order, and that He always had an order for His people, and wanted order in His Church. The rules of the church here are in harmony with the teachings of the Word, and the preaching of the Spirit. That which

is just for fashion or worldly conformity, is forbidden and things that are for comfort or use are allowed. The Spirit preached hard and much against conformity to the world. One time he said, some think we have no scripture ground for our rules, but that we have in that which says we shall not be conformed to the world and shall condescend to men of low estate.

This church is here as a fruit or result of this Spirit preaching and if the church is a church of God this preaching must have been from God. Like the Savior said one time, so the Spirit said more than once, "If you don't believe me for my words sake, believe me for my works sake."

And now, let us look at the work he did for God, and let us not do as did the unbelieving Jews who said, "Jesus cast out devils by the prince of devils." But let us do as a line of a German hymn says, "Therefore believe and cry for faith." Our Lord said one time to those who heard Him, and believed, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The Spirit also said these words quite often, and some have learned by experience that by continuing to hear him preach, in faith, they were led to see, and know the things that they could not understand at first.

He often preached how we shall help the poor, and that the trouble was we all claimed to be of the needy ones. One or more times he told us to read the 8th chapter of II Corinthians and said, "Why can't we have a church like the church at Corinth? We can, if we want to." One brother who was here on a visit told me we had a nice church and order here, but we could not keep it. We thought that is just what the devil is trying to make us all believe, and if he could persuade us that there is no use trying, it would suit him the best. The Word says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," and the Spirit has told us that if we do not work harder for our salvation than Satan works

to get us away, Satan will get us. Jesus said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer: I have overcome the world." John writes that faith is the victory that overcomes the world, and by this we know that as long as we keep the faith we can overcome and be acceptable to God; but at soon as we depart from the faith, the world will overcome us. The Spirit often told us if it were not for that lake of fire and brimstone that lasts forever, he would not be before us, and so we can say, if I did not fear some of us might become so faithless, or careless as to get into that fire, in which there is no getting out any more, I would not have attempted to write these lines, and cause some to hate and persecute me the more.

The Christian professors are of two classes—the saved and the unsaved: and these are also the persecuted and the persecutors. To which class do we belong? When you hear reports from this church, remember that Christ said, "if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, what will they call his household? We can begin reading in John, and find one passage after another that was spoken of Christ and the people, that fits well to this preaching and the people who heard it. See Jno. 4:36, 6:60, 66; 7:5, 7, 17, 27, 46, 48, 49; 8:43, 45, 47.

We use the German language, as our bishop saw that it would be to the best interest of the church; not that we think it is a better language, or more acceptable to God, but to forsake our mother tongue is a dishonor to our parents, and the command says we shall honor them, and we think it also helps to keep our young people more out of and separate from the world. We have no Sunday school, not saying though that Sunday schools are wrong, if properly conducted, but as we find no Scripture ground for having it, and we also find no writings of our forefathers of long ago, directing us to this kind of meeting, we prefer to have none. We also think we find no better way of instructing our young people than for the parents to instruct them in their homes (and this is a scripturally enjoined duty) and the ordained ministers to in-

struct them in the public meeting. And as we usually have about 2 chapters read and fairly well explained and taught, the meeting lasting about 2 hours, we think we have about all of the best features of the Sunday school, with none of the objectionable features. Our singing is quite simple, compared to some, but the question is not, what suits our ears or taste best, but what is the most pleasing and acceptable to God. The Spirit often told us in his closing remarks how that David charged his son Solomon to keep the charge of the Lord and to keep all the commands as it is written in the law of Moses, and so we should keep what is written in the New Testament. The writer to the Hebrews says that "God, in times past spoke to our fathers by the prophets, and in the last days to us by his Son," and now in our time yet by His Spirit. John the revelator says, "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

In conclusion I would say as the Spirit so often said at the close of his sermons. "If I have taught you one word that leads you away from the right, do not touch it with one finger, and prove all things, holding fast to that which is good." I would also yet say, if you heard this preaching and think it does not all harmonize with the Bible or with itself, remember that the letter of the Bible, and the different translations do not all harmonize, but when we take the meaning that was intended, there is perfect harmony.

May our God, who alone is all-wise, and who reveals unto babes the truths that are hidden from the wise and prudent, so teach, strengthen, and comfort us by His Holy Spirit that we may remain steadfast in the truth to the end.

Praise and thanks be unto God our Father through our Lord Jesus. Amen.

Written in love and defence of the truth, February, 1915.

P. Hostetler.