

Marie Burgess Brown

CHOSEN BY GOD

It was a son the Burgesses had been earnestly praying for—a son who would become a minister of the gospel. But in spite of their prayers a fifth daughter, Marie, was given to them on a blustery October day in 1880.

At age 10, Marie moved with her family to the city of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where she was stricken with tuberculosis. Once when she was near death the Lord gave her a vision of a bottomless pit and told her she was going there.

Marie desperately cried out, “Lord, if you will save me from the bottomless pit, I will tell men and women everywhere about it.” The Lord then stood at the foot of her bed. With a pleading look He asked her, “Will you give up all and follow Me?”

“Lord,” she replied, “I will gladly give up all and follow You.” Then the Lord took her hand and lifted her up.

Marie got down on her knees and surrendered all to Jesus. But after her glorious conversion, her illness grew steadily worse until a minister laid hands on her and she was miraculously healed.

Marie was hungry for the things of God, and on her 26th birthday, while attending a prayer meeting, she received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That profound experience and a pivotal connection with a forerunner in the Pentecostal movement, Charles F. Parham, ushered Marie into a new season of life and challenging new responsibilities.

With Parham’s encouragement, Marie went into full-time ministry. She and a friend responded to an opportunity in New York City, where Marie began preaching on the baptism of the

Holy Spirit at a Holiness mission. She subsequently started a mission of her own, naming it Glad Tidings Hall.

It was at this mission that Marie met her husband, Robert Brown, an evangelist from Ireland. They were married in 1909.

The mission prospered and became a strong church, which was affiliated with the Assemblies of God in 1914 and later renamed Glad Tidings Tabernacle. Many well-known ministers preached there, including Smith Wigglesworth, Aimee Semple McPherson and Kathryn Kuhlman. When her husband passed away in 1948, Marie took over the leadership of the church and continued to pastor it until her death in 1971.

Although Marie traveled overseas only a few times, the church sent out dozens of missionaries. Her mother may never have had a son in the ministry, but she had a daughter who ended up touching the world with the power of the gospel.

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