

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### No Longer A Lonely Orphan

My guardian's words kept ringing in my ears on the streetcar ride home. I tried to re-appraise the situation. Step by step I traveled back to the gospel meetings in the school house and on back from there to my beginnings. I stood between two unhappy alternatives: either to displease the Lord or to displease my guardian. Having displeased my guardian, I was overwhelmed with a sense of failure.

It was getting near dinner time when I approached home. I hoped to avoid talking over what my guardian had said but to my surprise, Mrs. H. met me at the door with tears in her eyes. Only once before had I seen her weep and that was when England was in the blitz and her Mother was in the bombed zone. Mrs. H. was also disappointed in me.

Accusingly she said, "You lived in one of the finest homes in Vancouver. I treated you as my own daughter. Now I hear that you spend your spare time with the drunks in the down-and-out section of the city."

I tried to explain that we were not there because we preferred their society but we were there to preach the gospel and help them be better people.

Scornful of my youthful zeal, she said, "Oh, yes, leave it to the teen-agers! You think that you are going to convert them, do you? They could tell you

Then she made her final statement, "You are through! I have done all I am going to do. You can get out and earn your own living at the first opportunity."

With all sincerity I expressed my gratitude for all she had done for me and told her that I was sorry I had not pleased her.

Feeling somewhat like the little orphan girl back in the country I turned and left her office. Step by step I made my way down the great stone stairway, praying fervently and urgently as I went, "Please, God, shall I go back and apologize? Shall I tell my guardian I am sorry and that I will try and be more broad-minded? Maybe I could take the occasional cigarette and the occasional cocktail and go to the good shows once in a while. Please, God, if I am just being stubborn and narrow-minded, let me know. I'll go back and tell her that I am sorry." If ever I needed an answer, I needed it then.

I was down the stairs and on my way to the streetcar stop. God had not given me an answer. I heard no voice and felt no unusual impression. But I remembered a young people's service that I had been in where I had stood with my hand raised, singing, "Take the whole world but give me Jesus. I'll not turn back. I'll not turn back."

I had my answer!

Now my step was more firm. To myself I said, "Alright Gerard, you sang it. Go ahead and prove that you meant it."