

★ After Twelve Years Came Joy ★

## FROM CATHOLICISM TO CHRISTIANITY

## Special in the Chronicle

CLAWSON, Mich. — On Saturday night, September 19, 1964, at the last service in Clawson's fall series of gospel meetings with Guy N. Woods, four young men came forward and were baptized. They were two sets of Smith brothers, though the two families are not related.

Johnny and Jimmy Smith were reared under the influence of the church of Christ in Clawson, and their father, John Ray, now serves as one of the newly appointed elders of the congregation. However, Clement and Gordon Smith came from an entirely different background; for they had been reared under the influence of Roman Catholicism.

The decision rendered by Clement and Gordon had not been made either quickly or easily; rather, their coming forward that night climaxed a series of events that had been taking place over a period of twelve years.

## Studied an Example

For twelve years Gordon had been observing the life, listening to the conversations, and studying the com-

ments of a member of the church of Christ with whom he works. Slowly and quietly the leaven of Christianity was working. Gordon began to study for himself.

However, when he first decided to study, it was not for the purpose of finding out if he might be wrong; rather, he commenced to study to prove both to himself and to the Christian with whom he works that the Roman Catholic Church is right. However, his studies did not reveal what he thought he would find.

Instead, he became uncertain, confused, and then afraid — afraid of what would happen to him should he die as he was then living.

## Perpetual Catholics??

From the beginning Gordon had talked with his mother, Mrs. Irene Herta, and his brother, Clement. Their earlier reactions were that Gordon should leave this man with whom he works alone. They were Catholics, they had always been Catholics, their families were Catholics before them, and they wanted to remain Catholics.

However, as the truth became clear

er they knew there was but one thing to do. It was Clem who led the way, on the last night of the Clawson meeting, with Gordon immediately following. Two weeks later their mother was baptized. Five weeks after that Gordon's wife, Jeanette, was baptized. And on the Sunday morning that Gordon spoke to the church in Clawson, his sister-in-law, Margaret, Clem's wife, came forward and was baptized also.

It was some seven or eight weeks after his conversion that Gordon was asked to speak at a men's training class in Clawson. Thinking he might know this subject better than any other, he was asked to speak on why he had been baptized. His lesson covered the last 12 years of his life.

## His Testimony

It so moved the men who were present that night that they suggested that he deliver his lesson to the whole church. So, on Sunday morning, November 22, he spoke to the general assembly on "Why I Was Baptized." It was one of the largest audiences to assemble at Clawson during the

past three years.

The fact that this was his first time to stand before such an assembly did not prevent his lesson from moving the audience to tears as they felt the stresses and strains through which his soul was made to pass in its search for truth.

Since speaking at Clawson he has also visited and told the story of his conversion to the church in Trenton, at which time one person came forward and was restored.

Since then he has expressed his willingness to go anywhere, if good can be done, and relate to others the story of his conversion to Christ and His church. Congregations interested in hearing him may contact him through the church of Christ, 456 E. 14 Mile Road, Clawson, Michigan, phone: 588-5061 or 588-7361.

R. C. Oliver, the local minister, said: "I hope many will avail themselves of this opportunity to hear him, for he is a man who has a great message to tell. Those of us who have heard him have been truly blessed in the hearing."