

Jean Darnall

HEAVEN HERE I COME

Discover the joy of living life in the pursuit of God's highest purposes. This is a story of a real life, filled with real struggles and real triumph. But more than Jean's story, it is God's story and will equip you to live a life faithful to Him.



Heaven, Here I Come
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CONTENTS

<i>Foreword</i>	v
Chapter One	
The Text on the Wall	9
Chapter Two	
We Deceive Ourselves	23
Chapter Three	
The Spirit...Is upon Me	31
Chapter Four	
Raise the Dead	43
Chapter Five	
Good News to the Poor	55
Chapter Six	
He Has Sent Me	63
Chapter Seven	
Whoever Does Not Doubt	73

Chapter Eight	
Because He Has Anointed Me	85
Chapter Nine	
Release to the Captives	99
Chapter Ten	
Recovery of Sight.	107
Chapter Eleven	
The Acceptable Year	111
Chapter Twelve	
No Longer Strangers	121
Chapter Thirteen	
Let There Be Light.	135
Chapter Fourteen	
When You Come Together	143
Chapter Fifteen	
In The Last Days	155

FOREWORD

If it's necessary, permit me to introduce Jean Darnall to you. (But there are few places this is needed, because this book is written by one of the most traveled, most loved, and most respected women in the twentieth-century Church.)

It was with great delight I learned that *Heaven, Here I Come* was about to be reprinted for new and even broader distribution. Then, an added delight: I was asked to write a few words of introduction—a foreword, with my own privilege of remarking on this remarkable person.

There are so many ways to approach describing Jean Darnall and her ministry; each of which provide a distinct and beautiful facet of this lady whose life has touched millions and altered the destiny of at least tens of thousands.

- She is a gracious, yet dynamic, evangelist, who communicates the gospel of Jesus Christ both with fervor as well as with winsome gentleness.
- She is a capable teacher of systematic, biblical truth; for years ministering beside her beloved husband, Elmer, as a professor at London's Christian Life Bible College, as well as in pastorates they have served in the United States, England, and Australia.

- She is a clear thinking and interesting writer, with books to her credit, as well as innumerable articles and published sermons.
- She is a devoted wife (she and Elmer have been married fifty-five years), a loving mother (both of whose children are involved in vital Christian ministry), and a doting grandmother (the most fulfilling of her many vocations!).

All these things are verifiably true and could be illustrated with factual incidents. But I want to tell my favorite “Jean” story; one that might be titled by the words, “I Had Been Miraculously Healed, and I Didn’t Even Know Who Had Prayed for Me!”

It was over forty years ago, and Jean Darnall was already well established as a trusted, well-recognized evangelist, with an especially sensitive graciousness in the ministry of healing.

She had come to Angelus Temple, the church adjacent to LIFE Bible College, where I was studying for the ministry. Only days before, I had been seriously injured while involved in athletic competition—now, only able to move with great pain, and generally confined to my dormitory. Without detailing the story, its essence is in what happened after I was virtually carried into the service where Jean was praying for the sick—right at the end of the meeting while she was ministering to the last person in the line of those coming for prayer.

I had not been in the service, but many of my dormitory friends had, and seeing the manifestly miraculous work of God in progress, they had rushed to my room to find me. As they assisted me from my room, to the church, and then to the platform, I didn’t know anything about the service of

the evening, the message that had been preached, or even the name of the woman about to pray for me. But I immediately knew one thing: The instant she laid hands on me, along with the elders of the church, I was healed! And as I walked off the platform—aglow with joy and relieved of the intense pain in my body—I knew I needed to keep walking briskly, in the supernatural strength my body had received. So I walked directly up the aisle of the church and out the front door.

Try and picture it, please: I had been almost carried in—just in time for prayer; and immediately strode out into the night! It would have been ingracious, except the crowd was so large, no one noticed. But the memory is still almost as hilarious as it certainly is precious. “Walk in for instant healing, walk out touched by God” might have been a slogan for the event, at least as I experienced it! Still, as I remember it—even with the hint of humor in my sudden appearance and departure—there is nothing to be taken lightly about the reality of that miracle moment, nor of the righteous and anointed way that healing ministry was administrated that night.

Peculiarly, I forgot about the *person* God used (though I was later told Jean’s name that evening). This is probably because what Jean seems to always most impress people with is not herself, but Jesus! So it was not until several years later that Anna and I met her and I recalled that pivotal moment in my own experience, years before, and actually came to know the person the Holy Spirit used so mightily to touch my life with the power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Today, Jean Darnall is not only a dear friend of our family but a beloved, frequent guest minister to our congregation at The Church On The Way. We regard her as a “mother in Israel,” so to speak: a spiritual forebear, whose life and

witness have not only contributed greatly in shaping our own lives, but whose influence had done much to shape the course of the Church in different parts of the world over the past half-century.

So, please, meet Jean Darnall . . . and please read on. As you do, I think you'll sense you are once again in touch with a Book-of-Acts-type person, whose almost matchless uniqueness in ministry is always matched with a very godly and gracious humility.

JACK W. HAYFORD, PASTOR Founder of
The Church On The Way
Van Nuys, California
October, 1997

CHAPTER ONE

THE TEXT ON THE WALL

‘We’ll have to get her into the hospital for surgery,’ Dr. Brady, our family physician, told my mother. ‘Maybe if we remove one kidney, Mrs. Murphy, the other one will rally. I can’t promise anything, but we can try.’

My fever began to climb on Monday. Infection spread through my body. My ears abscessed. The signals were all flaring for a major attack of kidney poisoning. Pain gripped my back. On Tuesday my temperature bounced from 102° to 104°F.

All day Wednesday words that the woman evangelist had said on the previous Sunday night throbbed through my feverish mind again and again. ‘On Wednesday night there will be prayer for the sick. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.’ She had pointed to a text painted on the wall behind the pulpit— ‘Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever.’ I could see the text now, wobbly and wavy like water flowing through my burning brain. The words rang high and clear. ‘On Wednesday night there will be prayer for the sick. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today,



and forever.'

Mother came into the bedroom to relieve the nurse. 'Mother, if you take me to the "angel lady",' for the blonde lady preacher seemed that to me, 'I believe she can do something for me,' I whispered. 'Let's try,' I pleaded.

Tears glistened in my mother's eyes. 'I believe she can, too,' she said.

My mother never went to church. She was much too busy. She owned and managed a restaurant in Toledo, Ohio where her southern fried chicken and home-made pies attracted a good trade. A hard-working Irish woman, she had a heart as generous and good as her meals. Everyone trusted and admired Mrs. Murphy. It came as a surprise when she began to ask her customers and employees, 'Can you tell me where I can find a church like the old-fashioned Methodist one, a church where I can get saved?'

'Saved, Mrs. Murphy? Why you're twice as good as most people who go to church. Why do you want to get religious?'

A death in her family had started it all. Her eldest brother, a coal miner in West Virginia, had frozen to death as he was working on the tippie of the mine. He had been a mean, cruel man and my mother had suffered horribly because of him. It was with little grief, except for the family, that my mother attended the funeral in the mountains of West Virginia and stood by the grave in a bleak blizzard. 'If there is a hell,' my mother thought, 'John has gone to it.'

Suddenly, closer than the cold wind that blew through the mountain pines, she heard a voice say, 'There is a hell and you're going there, too!' She glanced quickly around at the others who stood shivering in the

swirling snow. None of them had spoken to her. Who was it? It seemed she had heard that voice before.

She began to recall a childhood incident. She remembered the excitement around the family farm when word came through others who lived in the West Virginia hills that a Methodist woman preacher was on her way with a team of horses and a wagon. She needed a field to pitch her tent for some special services. My grandfather's cow pasture was the chosen site. This preacher was like a one-woman church. She played the pump organ with two feet and one hand, leading songs with the other. Then she'd take an offering and preach. When she called penitents to the 'mourners' bench,' my mother was among the miners and farmers who knelt there. She was only nine years old, but she never forgot how the sunshine coming through the canvas warmed her back and head as she prayed.

'It seemed like God was smiling on me,' she told me later. 'I've never felt so close to him as I did then. Maybe if I could find a church like that here in Toledo, I'd feel peace in my soul again,' she reasoned.

My mother was a troubled woman, in spite of her good business and reputation. Money could not buy the thing our family needed the most—health. My father, disabled from the first World War, was in and out of government hospitals getting treatment for his lungs which had been damaged by chlorine gas. My kidneys were fast deteriorating from the effects of ptomaine poisoning I'd had when an infant. The doctors had already told my mother that one kidney was no longer functioning and the other was not likely to hold out much longer. Mother's cheerfulness and courage could not ward off the growing concern she had for both of us. 'I've taught you how to live, but not how to die,' she



once said to me.

So she had started to shop for a church. Every Saturday she selected one from the newspaper's church directory. She would attend one in the morning and another in the evening. I'd ask her when she returned, 'Did that one suit you?'

'No,' she'd say with disappointment. 'They looked at my hat rather than my heart. Why they didn't even say "hello", much less ask about my soul'.

'What are you looking for?' I asked.

'I'm looking for a church where I'll hear the gospel preached like that Methodist woman preached it. I want to go to a mourners' bench and feel close to God again.'

'Look, Mother, you're out of date. There aren't any churches like that any more'. I informed her. I felt like I was a bit of an expert on church. Although Mother had been too busy to go to church and Dad was always too sick, they had both insisted that I should go. So they sent me to the one nearest at hand. It had to be in walking distance. The first one was the Methodist Church. I had a Sunday school teacher there who had a missionary heart. No matter what the lesson was, Mrs. Keyes would end up with a missionary story. I became acquainted with David Livingstone, Jonathan Goforth, Hudson Taylor, and other missionary heroes. A desire to please the Lord began to grow in my heart. A question came that insisted upon an answer: 'How may I please God?'

When I asked Mrs. Keyes, she exclaimed, 'Oh that is a very important question! You must go to the pastor and ask him, Jean,

So I put my query to the pastor. It didn't seem difficult for him to answer. 'Oh, that's simple,' he said. 'To please God one should become a Methodist!'



After brief instruction, I was baptised and became a Methodist.

The next church I went to, when we moved to another neighborhood was the Baptist church. Something inside me was not satisfied with the simple answer I had received in the Methodist church. So I asked my question again. The youth leader listened and sent me to the pastor.

‘What has been your religious experience, Jean?’ the Baptist pastor asked.

‘I’m a baptised member of the Methodist church.’ He opened his ‘Baptist Bible’ and showed me that I ought to be baptised by immersion. ‘That will please God,’ he assured me.

I seemed to have missed the significance of it all, for I found I went down a dry sinner and came up a wet sinner! I felt somehow that what I had done had hardly made any difference to God.

We moved again and I started to attend the Lutheran church. This time I went directly to the pastor with my question, ‘How may I please God?’ I explained my two baptisms.

‘Well, Jean, I don’t believe you need to be baptised again,’ he said with a twinkle in his eye. ‘You’re at the age now when I think it would be good for your to be confirmed.’

I studied my catechism fervently and with a great deal of solemnity I received my confirmation. My natural inclinations towards religion had put me in good standing with the church.

Later I began to go to the Presbyterian church. My reasons were purely social. By that time I had decided that no one could really please God. Besides, it seemed that it didn’t particularly matter to him whether we tried



or not. My Presbyterian pastor knew a great deal about Sigmund Freud and much of what he had to say from the pulpit agreed with my atheistic science teachers. Also, I liked the boys that went to this church and I loved to dance. Those who attended Sunday morning services were entitled to dancing lessons at half price in the church basement each Wednesday afternoon.

So, by the age of fifteen, I had become quite an expert on churches, and it was with the voice of experience that I told my mother, 'Churches don't have mourners' benches any more. People are not likely to go up front and kneel to say they're sorry for their sins nowadays—not in this modern age.'

Mother wasn't easily discouraged. The Voice wouldn't let her forget that there was a hell and she was going there. She couldn't shake off the chill of death.

The one who came to show my mother the way to find God didn't look at all like a messenger sent by heaven. She was a tottering old lady who came to the backdoor of our restaurant seeking a dishwashing job. As the frail little figure struggled with the stacks of dishes in the hot kitchen, she almost fainted. Seeing her swaying, Mother caught her and promptly decided to take her home with her. 'Come home with me and be our grandma,' she invited. She soon became a welcome member of our family, and we always knew where she was because she was so unsteady and was always dropping things. There was a clatter and a bang all day long, so I nicknamed her 'Bumbang'.

It was not long before she got involved with Mrs. Murphy's search for a place to get saved. One day she came toddling out of her bedroom with a magazine in her hand. 'You know, Mrs. Murphy, I think I've found the church you're looking for.' She held up a rather



shabby, aged magazine. On the front was the face of a smiling, auburn-haired woman who was holding a white Bible. Above her head the banner read 'Foursquare Bridal Call'. The date on the magazine was 1922—it was fifteen years old.

'Looks like they've got a woman preacher connected with this somehow,' Bumbang said.

'Where did you find this?' Mother asked, taking the magazine.

'My brother who lived in Boston, Massachusetts, died recently.' Mother looked up, quickly remembering her own brother's recent death.

'He's been writing to me for years about salvation,' Bumbang continued. 'I've never paid much attention to his letters—they were just pages of the Bible verses. Anyway, he died. Since I'm his only relative, friends of his sent all his personal belonging to me in a big trunk. I found this magazine at the bottom of it.'

Mother sat down on the edge of my bed where I lay propped up with pillows. My legs were aching and swollen with rheumatism. Leafing through the magazine, she read, 'What is the Foursquare Gospel?' I looked over the pages with her and read the paragraph headings, 'Jesus Christ the Saviour', 'Jesus Christ the Healer', 'Jesus Christ the Baptiser with the Holy Ghost', and 'Jesus Christ the Coming King'. I leaned back, thinking about those words, 'Jesus Christ the Healer'. When Mother had finished reading, she looked up and said, 'This comes from Los Angeles, California. I wonder if there is a church like that here?'

'It's Saturday, look in the paper,' I said.

Opening the *Toledo Blade* to the religious news page, she scanned the list of churches. 'Nothing here by that name,' she said. 'Wait, look at this!' A display



advertisement stood boldly in the middle of the page. 'Announcing the opening of the Foursquare Gospel Church in Toledo. Old-fashioned revival services every night.' There was the address of the place, the times the services began, and a friendly 'Everyone welcome!' In each lower corner, not to waste any space, were the words 'Jesus Saves' and 'Jesus Heals'.

'Well, that's just about as corny as it can be!' I exclaimed. 'Imagine "old-fashioned revival services!" What kind of people do they expect to attract with copy like that?'

'We're going!' was Mother's reply.

Mother told some of the employees at the restaurant about the advertisement and several wanted to come, so we had a full taxi the Sunday evening we started out to the new Foursquare Church in Toledo, Ohio. Even I, in spite of my legs hurting, was bundled into a taxi. Dad, grumbling all the way, came along, too. He had hoped that, since our car was in for repairs, he'd be able to talk us out of it, but Mother was on her way to the 'mourners bench'.

The taxi pulled up in front of the church. 'Is that it?' my mother asked incredulously.

'Lady, that's it.' The taxi driver switched his cigar from one corner of his mouth to the other.

We all stared. I giggled. The front windows of the small store building had been decorated to look like stained glass windows. 'It looks like a fortune-telling place,' I said. 'Look at the lighthouse up on the corner of the building!' A small toy-like lighthouse valiantly flashed light to a dark world.

'I don't know,' my mother wavered.

'Good, let's go home.' Dad seemed to know what to do.



'Wait, Mrs. Murphy,' said Marie, the waitress who came along. 'You really should go in. I've seen churches like this before. We have them down south in Georgia. They're holy roller churches. They're really a ball! You don't want to miss it!'

My mother stiffened. 'No siree, we don't laugh at anybody's religion. I was always taught that. They might be right and we might be wrong. If we go in there, none of us will laugh, hear me?' She glanced my way, for I was already showing interest in the prospects of a giggling good time.

The taxi driver spoke up. 'Lady, are you going in or ain't cha?' The ticking meter seemed to sound louder.

'All right, we're going in, but no laughing.'

We all piled out towards the doors of the new church. They swung open as if they operated on a seeing eye. No doubt several eyes had been peeking through the cracks in the decorated glass door.

'Good evening, we're glad to see you.' Our hands were shaken as though we were long lost cousins. Down the only aisle we were ushered with pleasure and pride. Songbooks were thrust into our hands and suddenly the little room was full of joyous noise as people clapped and sang 'Whosoever will, may come'.

'This is great,' I thought. I settled down to enjoy myself, looking forward to the swinging on the chandeliers and the dancing down the aisles that Marie had predicted.

Suddenly, I sensed Mother's disapproval. It sizzled down the whole row of us who were crowded into the brown-painted pew.

'What's wrong?' Dad asked. Mother was staring straight ahead at five Negro singers who were in the front row.





'I never sat in church with niggers before,' she said with stiff lips. 'I don't intend to sit with them now!' For all her generosity, Mother was a southerner full of deep racial prejudice. She carried it with her when they moved from the south to the north and it still throbbed in her heart. My Dad, who was usually the first to agree with my mother, displayed a strong, stubborn resistance that I had never seen before. Putting his feet across the end of the row between the pews, he muttered firmly out of the side of his mouth, 'You drug us in here and you're not draggin' us out!' Mother looked at him quickly, saw the set of his chin and settled down. She really wanted to stay.

'We are pleased to have with us this evening the Flying Cloud Quartet from Detroit, Michigan,' a man announced from the platform. The Blacks sang as only Blacks can. Their rich voices harmonized to tell the story of their Savior. Mother began to melt under the charm of their smiles and their obvious sincerity.

Then the blonde evangelist stood, dressed in a long white gown, and began her sermon. 'My subject tonight is "Who's Who in Hell".'

'Wow!' I thought. 'That's a pretty direct approach and right on the bullseye for my mother with all her worries about hell, and all that.'

It seemed as though the whole thing had been especially planned for Mother. I even spied a long bench across the front of the platform that must have been a 'mourners' bench'. I thought, 'Here's a church like the one my mother's been looking for, after all.'

The evangelist's voice was soft. The call was being given for those needing prayer to raise their hands. 'Thank you. God bless you,' she said as hands were raised all over the congregation.

‘Mother will surely put her hand up,’ I thought. ‘This is it!’

‘Anyone else?’ The evangelist waited. Out of the corner of my eye I saw Mother’s hand go up. As if we had been waiting for the signal, up went our hands—mine, Dad’s, and all the rest who had come with us.

‘Now, will you stand right where you are. In a moment we are going to meet at this altar,’ (they didn’t call it a ‘mourner’s bench’!) ‘and we are going to accept the Lord, ask for forgiveness of our sins and allow him to change our lives.’ Others moved forward but Mother kept her seat. We all sat waiting to see what would happen next. To our shock the evangelist left the platform and came towards us! Someone led a hymn as she came directly to my mother. ‘I saw your raised hand,’ she said smiling. Her voice was gentle. ‘I’m sure you want to accept the Lord, don’t you?’ Holding back the tears, Mother nodded her head. ‘Won’t you come forward, then? I should like to pray for you.’ Mother couldn’t speak, but definitely shook her head ‘no’.

‘What’s wrong with her?’ I was annoyed. ‘If she had said “yes”, I’d have gone right up with her.’ The evangelist looked quickly at the rest of us. Every head shook negative!

‘I understand,’ the evangelist said kindly. ‘I’m sure you want to think over such an important step. Is this the first time you’ve been in a service like this?’

‘Yes,’ Mother managed to say.

The evangelist squeezed my mother’s hand. ‘I’m sure you won’t mind if I promise to pray for you and invite you to return, will you?’ Mother couldn’t say a word, but her tearful smile said ‘yes’ for all of us.

Later at home, as we drank coffee and rehearsed all that happened that night, Mother said, ‘There’s one thing





sure. I know that woman cares about my soul.'

Over the next few days my mind wouldn't let go of the evangelist's words, 'On Wednesday night there will be prayer for the sick. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever.' By that Wednesday evening we had decided to return. We didn't tell Dr. Brady what we planned to do, but I was carefully wrapped up, lifted into the taxi and, along with another taxi full of friends from the restaurant, we went across the city of Toledo, Ohio, back to that strange little church with its blinking lighthouse. It looked beautiful!

A concerned usher looked into my swollen face. I could scarcely see out of my puffed-up eyes. 'Could the evangelist see my daughter now and help her?' my mother asked. He hurried away and returned with the message that the evangelist thought it best that we hear the sermon first. We were told that faith came by hearing the Word of God. I couldn't concentrate on anything that was said. The moment came when all those who were sick were invited to come forward for prayer. The place was packed. Many other sick people had come, crowding the tiny church.

'I'll never make it,' I thought. Then I stood. It seemed as though hands were under my elbows lifting me. I was moving towards the front where the evangelist waited. I tried to see where my dad was. He was still sitting in the pew.

'Do you expect me to heal you?' the evangelist asked when I reached her.

'Yes,' I replied, feeling that this was the time for the right answers.

'I'm sorry, but I can't heal you.'

'What a fake!' I thought. Anger exploded in my head. 'I've read about this sort of thing. Here I am because

she invited the sick to come, but when there's someone really ill like me, it's all off!

Her voice continued. 'You see, I'm like a waitress. Do you know what a waitress is?'

A waitress! I'd served tables for my mother in her restaurant since I'd been tall enough to reach the counter. Did this woman know this? There was no way for her to know. We lived on the other side of the city and we had not filled out a visitor's card. She didn't even know our names!

She continued. 'A customer comes into a restaurant and selects a meal from the menu. Then the waitress takes the order to the chef and he prepares it. When it's ready, the waitress serves it to the hungry customer. Do you understand this?' she asked.

'Yes.' I understood everything that far. Why was she doing this?

'Well, I'm a servant of the Lord. Your need, or order, is for the healing of your kidneys. I'm going to take your need to the Lord in prayer. He will send his healing power. All I'll do is serve to you what the Lord Jesus has given. Do you see? I can't heal you but he can and he will. Can you believe this?'

'Yes, I can believe that.' She had directed my attention from herself to the Great Physician. She prayed a simple prayer, laying hands on my head as she prayed. I'd expected a much longer prayer. I stood waiting. Suddenly I felt something like a slight shock go through me. The pain stopped. I knew I was healed. 'Praise the Lord!' she said.

By the time I returned home that night, my temperature was normal. The next day I dressed and went to see my doctor, instead of his coming to see me. All the swelling had gone. The infection had disappeared.



'What are you doing out of bed?' he demanded.

'I'm healed!' I answered. While he sat staring in disbelief, I told him what had happened.

'You'll go into the hospital and we'll find out if you're healed or not,' he said impatiently. 'You know how kidney trouble is—one day up and the next day down.' After two days of extensive tests in the hospital every x-ray and examination showed that I was not only healed of the infection, but that the kidney that had been smaller and non-functioning was now the same size as the other one and both were functioning normally!

As they said at the hospital, it looked like I had a miracle!

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