who are left behind. My heart and soul is in this church. Nearly all of my working years have been spent here. The congregation in general has been very gracious and loyal, even though my particular ministry has led me into many far away places to play a part in the battle against apostasy which threatens all our churches. Some have felt that the Lord has led them to other pastures of service for Him. I shed many tears over the sheep that I have lost. However, at this time of my departure, I hold no bitterness or ill regard. I expect to meet them in Heaven and I expect, as we have spoken humorously of our childhood pranks, that we will look back upon our disagreements quite humorously. On the other hand, those who have been loyal, have loved and labored, have been faithful in my presence and my absence, have held me up in prayer in my trials, and who have shed tears for me and with me in my sorrows and trials, to you I invoke a special, special blessing of God that will stay with you until we meet in eternity. When the Rev. and Mrs. Barth, Ken and Mona, sing for you from time to time the song entitled, "Beyond the Blue," I want you to know that I will be listening too and the words are meant for the dearest folk on God's earth.

I am now laying down my armor to go Home and receive my reward. It is a wonderful experience. This does not mean that I am not concerned about the future of the church. I did not spend all my life building this organization for just a living. I had a purpose in mind and that purpose for this church was that there might be a true and distinct testimony in the dark hours of apostasy, that people floundering in confusion might be able to find a church which was clear-cut in its thinking and not groping in the dusky shadows of apostasy and compromise, whose blackness and darkness are threatening all our churches today. The only way that this gross darkness can be dispelled is to hold up the Truth. This Truth must not be just a mediocre gospel, this Truth must not be just one segment of the Scriptures, but it must be Truth as revealed in every chapter of the Bible, not just John 3:16, which truly is a precious verse. People must know the Truth about salvation which is one Truth, but they must also know the Truth about the enemy and apostasy and its insidious ways and infiltrating which covers another segment of the same inspired Word.

The Canton Gospel Center stands unchallenged in its testimony. It is unflinching in the fight, it is not exceeded in its teaching program and unequalled in its uncompromising stand. Whenever I have been asked of what church I was pastor, I would proudly say, "The Canton Gospel Center, an independent, fundamental church." Therefore, my love and my desire for the church is just as great for its future as it has been for its past. However, I do not want to assume the position of attempting to run the church from the grave. We have a congregational government where the congregation may decide, but the final analysis is up to the people. My opinion as a member of the church would be that we should turn my responsibilities over to the Rev. Kenneth Barth. I have never doubted for a moment the fact that the Rev. Mr. Barth is a gift sent from God. There have been those in the past who felt that I was forcing him on the congregation because he was my son-in-law. This is a mistaken idea, and a little better than a year of service has confirmed that fact beyond any shadow of a doubt. As one opinion among many, I would like to suggest that he be given the opportunity to take my place. This is a very difficult thing to do because if he makes good he is only doing what is expected of him, and if he is not able to hold the loyalty of the people, which has been centered around another individual, then, of course, he is considered a failure. If you decide to confirm his position as pastor, he will need all the loyalty, love, and prayers that you have given me. Mr. Barth holds the same position that I hold in the battle against apostasy. This is important. He is versatile and capable in every respect. It has been my desire, after seeing many churches go through the transition period of trying to choose a pastor, that God would spare us that experience. Many churches that I now personally know have been torn to shreds through strife without a pastor. I would like to pass on, feeling that this transition could be made without a ripple.

If I were given the fullest desire of my heart, I would wish that the Lord would lead in such a way that my son also could profit from my efforts of twenty-five years of ministry. I am not asking the people of the Gospel Center to confirm this request. God knows that all through my life you have granted me all of my desires. I would be pleased to go Home and be with the Lord with the knowledge that John would have the opportunity to share in my ministry and follow in my footsteps. If the church would permit John in some way to be a co-pastor or a youth pastor, it would fulfill my fondest dreams as I lay down my earthly armor. However, what you have done is so great that I do not consider my last request on earth compulsory.

May God richly bless you. I love you, I love you, I love you, I love you, and good-by.

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