

A EULOGY FOR RODNEY ALLEN SPAULDING

Going home, going home,

I'm just going home.

Quiet-like, slip away?

I'll be going home.

It's not far, just close by;

Jesus is the Door;

Work all done, laid aside,

Fear and grief no more.

Friends are there, waiting now.

He is waiting, too.

See His smile! See His hand!

He will lead me through.

Morning Star lights the way;

Restless dream all done;

Shadows gone, break of day,

Life has just begun,

Every tear wiped away,

Pain and sickness gone;

Wide awake there with Him!

Peace goes on and on!

Going home, going home,

I'll be going home.

See the Light! See the Sun!

I'm just going home. Words by William Arms Fisher and Ken Bible

And indeed, our dear Rodney has gone home. How marvelous now, to see face to face his precious Savior, the one he served throughout his life. And I suspect there was a shout on the banks of the river from Forrest Wells, James Hance, Roscoe Grant, Alfred Holeman and scores of others with whom he has served the Lord.

I first met Rodney when I was preaching in a gospel meeting at Hamlin, Texas. He was the song leader and I was the preacher and little did we know that would be repeated many times. We hit it off from the beginning. I had already begun the church planting program known as Exodus/Bay Shore. I asked him if he would join us as the minister of personal evangelism. A recent graduate of ACU, he agreed to join us.

This began a close relationship that was to last 10 plus years. A goal had been set to recruit 60 families to join us in this church plant. Walter Burch and Larry Cardwell, in the alumni department at ACU, designed and prepared the promotional material we would need to promote what we would call "Advancing a Bold Idea in Evangelism." On July 1, 1962, Rodney began full-time work with me. The charts Larry prepared were too large to haul in an automobile. So, we built trailers to haul them. Then began the task of setting up presentations with elders of churches from Nashville, Tennessee to Los Angeles, California. Rodney went one direction, I went the other. The response was beyond belief! We were asking folks to quit their jobs, sell their homes and move across the nation to a city most had never seen. Walter and Larry had prepared cards where people could indicate their interest in going with us. To our astonishment, more than 1500 families signed cards. There was little follow up.

Before long, there were 17 committed families. At the end of our second retreat in Glen Rose, Texas, in August, the number has risen to 50. Another retreat was held at Glen Rose in November and still another at Bedford Ranch near Fort Worth the latter part of December. There were now 64 families committed to the project. Richard Salmon came aboard as our educational director and Alfred Holeman as full-time elder.

By this time, Rod and I knew we had "outside help." At this time, not many of our churches believed in the "indwelling of the Holy Spirit." We became fervent believers. With the help of Ralph and Sue Evans an employment conference was scheduled for February 2 and 3 of 1963 at the Baker Hotel in Dallas, Texas. 150 were interviewed. Not many got job offers but with Abrahamic faith (he went out not knowing where he was to go) they came. By this time 86 families had made the commitment, many of them because Rod had spoken in their churches.

As all these families, arrived, there was mass confusion. North Richland Hills sent a bus load of teenagers to help us with door to door canvas. Rodney trained them and sent them out. They arranged more than 100 home Bible classes going door to door. Then Rod had to train our members how to teach those classes. Soon 70 home classes were in session each week. In the first 18 months 150 were baptized. No doubt many of them greeted Rod when he arrived on the banks of the river.

Rodney performed above and beyond all that could have been asked. I have lost a dear brother and friend. I am looking forward to our reunion on the banks of the "river of the water of life."