
Going Through Home Again

A Memoir

Lonnie Gable Jr.

Acknowledgments

I would like to gratefully dedicate this book to Pastor J.C. Thompson, and the congregation of the Tarrant City Church of God, in Alabama. There are so many individuals to name that were instrumental in my coming to know Jesus as Lord. First, I Going Through Home Again: A Memoir would like to recognize Rex Taylor, the first person to invite me to attend a revival at Tarrant City. I also thank Wayne Chambers, Caroline Oliver, Tom and Gladys Walton, Katherine Walton, Patsy Crain, Herman (Hank) Thompson, Earl Thompson, and the evangelist Billy

Franklin. This is a beginning list of precious people that were instrumental in my salvation experience and I am eternally grateful.

I grew up in a home without a knowledge, or understanding of God. Alcohol and physical abuse was the norm, making me unaware that there was any other way of the world. My mother was a professing Methodist, but she was sick most of the time I was growing up, and passed away when I was eight. The only time I remember being in church with her was at her funeral. When I first walked into the Tarrant City church, it was as if I had entered another reality. There were people shouting, falling out, and speaking in other tongues. I did not understand what was happening at the time, and I was really frightened. However, I returned the second night of service and God took a hold of my heart.

I would like to also dedicate this book to my wife, Patricia Gable. She has been the source of strength and encouragement throughout my life. She has always truly lived a Christian lifestyle. She has been a blessing, as the mother of our three children, Teresa, Gary, and Michael. All of our children have been very supportive of my ministry throughout my entire life. I would like to give a special thanks to the Church of God that has allowed me to serve in many wonderful churches, with some wonderful people. Above all, I dedicate this book to the Going Through Home Again: A Memoir Lord Jesus Christ, who loved Going Through Home Again: A Memoir me so much, that He died on a cruel cross, so that I could live.

Going through home again is neither a geographical journey, nor is it a mental sojourn. It is a painful, spiritual experience, to come to terms with our past. If we go through home again, some of us will have to Going Through Home Again: A Memoir forgive, and perhaps put our arms around another, to ask for forgiveness. We may need to sing the doxology, over the undeserving. This work intends to teach the next generation to embrace, bless, and forgive, those who have hurt them.

Editor's Note Names in this work have been changed to protect the privacy of the individuals, and their families.

Foreword

I remember the first time I met Lonnie Gable at the parsonage of Broadmoor Church of God. I was a local life insurance man in the area and Brother Gable's policy had been transferred to my agency. I introduced myself, and began to size him up in my mind.

I thought he had been to a major university; definitely a theological seminary graduate, with advanced degrees; no doubt. As I got to know Lonnie, I realized his experience and demeanor came from a very prestigious institution. It is known as the *School of Hard Knocks!* This book is a saga outlining a man's rise from meager beginnings to achieve success in a life beyond his imagination. I was privileged to travel with Lonnie to his hometown, and see the area where he lived as a boy. Get ready to laugh, cry, be amazed, be entertained, and above all, be uplifted as you read this story.

God chose Lonnie Gable to live a life of encouragement to others. He has been that encouragement many times, for over twenty-eight years to myself, and my wife, Ginny. He first was Going Through Home Again: A Memoir our pastor; as we became friends, he became someone Going Through Home Again: A Memoir the two of us consider family. We know you will be blessed by reading Going Through Home Again: A Memoir how God found, Going Through Home Again: A Memoir directed, and led Lonnie Gable from Bug Tussle, Alabama, to the pulpit of some of the largest Church of God congregations.

Mike and Ginny Mason

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FAMILY HISTORY

Periodically we need to learn to go through home again.^[1] This quote is attributed to Carlyle Marney, and expressed perfectly why I began this project. It took me a long time to understand the significance of that statement, but when it finally sank in, I saw the beauty of it. And that is why I have chosen to borrow those words as the title of this Going Through Home Again: A Memoir work. Henri Nouwen, a Jesuit Priest, and former Yale professor once said, *There is no hope for the future as long as the past remains unreceived, unconfessed, and unforgiven.*^[2] Perhaps that is what motivated me to write this story.

While writing this work, I prayed that God would put His approval upon it, making it a blessing, and a source of encouragement to all who read it. Going through home again has always been recognized as an essential and necessary task. Our nation recognizes that fact. That is why we celebrate Independence Day and Thanksgiving. It is just a way that we all get together as Americans, go through home again, and rediscover the rock from which we were hewn. Institutions, such as the church, go through home again. Every time we celebrate Christmas, the empty tomb; every time we gather around the Lord's Table, and take the Sacrament in hand, we are going through home again, and remembering how we got hold of our faith. Families go through home again, when we gather together, and that special little someone blows out the candles, while others applaud and cheer. We reflect upon how it was when we brought that little bundle of joy home from the hospital in that old beat up Ford, or Going Through Home Again: A Memoir Chevy car. The neighbors, friends, and relatives gathered in to see the newest Going Through Home Again: A Memoir addition to Going Through Home Again: A Memoir the Going Through Home Again: A Memoir family. There were a lot of comments about how much hair she had, or how fat his little cheeks were. One of the little siblings once said, perhaps with a tinge of

jealousy, *Well I think she is ugly.* We are just going through Going Through Home Again: A Memoir home again, remembering what it was that shaped our lives.

As I have grown older, I have more pressingly felt the desire to go through home again myself, and my daughter Teresa has pushed me for several years to write my story. I will begin with a little bit of my family Going Through Home Again: A Memoir background, including my ancestry. The Gabel family came to America in 1738 when Johann Henry Gabel, and his wife Lodusca Oswalt arrived in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Johann was an immigrant from Germany, possibly accompanied by his two brothers named Abraham and Anthony. Anthony was said to have also brought his two sons. Johann worked for some time after arriving in America as an indentured servant to Captain Brotherick at Going Through Home Again: A Memoir Port Royal, in order to repay his family's cost of sea passage. After fulfilling the terms of this contract, he moved to South Carolina in 1747. Family records show that in 1760 he moved to Georgia, but returned to South Carolina in 1776, where Going Through Home Again: A Memoir he died in 1812. Johann had a son named Hamon, who had a son named Jakob. Jakob moved to Carroll County, Georgia, where he is buried at the Union Grove church, near a stream called Sweetwater Creek. Jakob's son, William, appears to be the first Gabel to move to Alabama, possibly in the late 1840's, where a census worker changed the spelling of *Gabel* to *Gable*. William is the common link between our family, and the Gable family from Duck River Baptist Church, near Cullman. William's wife is buried at Duck River Going Through Home Again: A Memoir Cemetery, next to her son Jacob, who was commonly referred to as

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