

FAITH IS ACTION

October 2008 • USPS 184720 • Volume 47 • Number 10

Commemorating
55 YEARS
of Ministry

R. G. HARDY WAY

PUGET ST.

In This Issue:

Peck—A Dramatization

Peck

A Dramatization of R.G. Hardy's Early Years

by Sharon Hardy Knotts

A Violent Childhood

Of the four children born to William and Mary Hardy, their son, *Robert George*, was the least likely to grow up to be a preacher. Actually, he was the least likely to succeed in life at all. From an early age, he began his career as the *black sheep* of the family. It was because of his orneriness that he was given the nickname “Peck”—after a popular cartoon character who was always in trouble.

But the trouble that Peck got into was not the frustrating, but cute “*Dennis the Menace*” kind. No—His antics were much more serious, and even demonically influenced. Their home was a spiritual battleground. Mary Hardy had become born again and Spirit-filled, and her once “benign” religious life, that her atheist husband had tolerated, was radically changed by the revelation of the truth, and charged with

the power of the Holy Ghost.

This living contest of light against darkness created an atmosphere of supernatural oppression that vied for the soul of Peck Hardy. At age 6, he charged his father with a kitchen knife, because he was assaulting his mother. By age 10, he was so out-of-control that he went before the courts as a juvenile delinquent and was sent to the Maryland Training School for juvenile delinquents.

Peck continued his insurrection into his teens, eventually spending time in jail. (He was still on probation when he married Doranne. He was

21 and she was 18, and her parents strongly objected, to no avail.)

During these turbulent years, his mother continually sought to sow the seed of God’s Word into her son’s heart, and prayed fervently for his deliverance. No matter how messed up his life was, she always told him, “*You are going to be a*



Peck Age 21

man of God, and God is going to make you a preacher.”

Every time Peck got himself into a new mess, he would call on God, remembering his mother’s words in prayer, “*Lord, you said, that whosoever comes to you, you will in no wise cast out.*” But as soon as he was delivered from that jam, he would revert to his same lifestyle of sin and rebellion.

But all that was to change when he became incapacitated by a crippling back injury at the young age of 22. Ultimately, this was to be the catalyst to change Peck Hardy from the black sheep of the Hardy family to the faithful Shepherd of Faith Tabernacle Church.

On a snowy, windswept Sunday afternoon, *January 29, 1958*, Peck & Doranne Hardy, Mother Hardy, and six-year old Sharon made their way to downtown Baltimore, to the storefront mission on 112 N. Greene St. that was the birthplace of **Faith Tabernacle Church**. (Today it is part of the University of MD Hospital.) Located two doors down from the raucous *Moe’s Lounge*, more than a few times, the drunks and patrons of *Moe’s* would stumble out and into the mission, where the handful of saints were loudly singing and praising God, accompanied by one out-of-tune piano, two or three out-of-tune singers, and a tambourine played by Brother Hardy. Later these were joined by a used ukulele retrieved from the *Salvation Army Thrift Store* by Sister Hardy who taught herself to play. We took literally the command “*Make a joyful noise unto the Lord*”!

But our story today begins six years earlier, when an unsaved, crippled Peck Hardy first encountered the power of the living God in a small apartment in Baltimore that he shared with his teenage wife Doranne and their baby girl Sharon.

ACT ONE Healed in the Kitchen

In great agony, Peck drug his shortened leg, twisted from the tremendous pain radiating from his lower back, as he made his way across the kitchen to the small table where he sat down in a hunched position. Doranne was anxiously pacing with baby Sharon in arms. Finally, her fretfulness spilled over:

“Peck, I don’t know what we are going to do if you’re not able to go back to work! We can’t pay the bills—We don’t even have money to buy milk for Sharon. It all seems so unfair! *Life is so unfair to us! Why did this happen to us?* You’re



Mary Hardy, Doranne, Sharon and Bill Hardy

only 22—I'm only 19—Our whole lives are ahead of us!"

Peck responded with a helpless tone to his voice, "I know, Doranne, but the doctors have not been able to help me. Huh! They can't even relieve my pain!"

He winced in pain as he bitterly added, "And I feel like a free loader! Sometimes I just feel like checking out."

Truth be known, Peck had thought of suicide more than once. When the doctors at *Johns Hopkins Hospital* had not been able to help him beyond fitting him with a steel-spined corset and prescriptions for pain killers, he had lost hope. Any surgery that might be considered carried great risks that were especially ill-advised at his young age.

A knock on the door proved to be Peck's mother. She had been raised Catholic by her Lithuanian parents who emigrated to America with her at age 5. She married a non-believer in God, but he had never prevented her from going to church—that is, *until she became truly born again, Spirit-filled and Pentecostal* at age 30. Then the devil rose up, and all hell broke loose! He became violent and pro-active against the Gospel, and anything she did to pray, read her Bible, and go to church, he vehemently opposed.

Peck had watched his father tear up the Bible, sweep it up and burn it. He would hide his wife's clothes so she couldn't go to church, but that didn't stop her. She once went wearing only a slip under her coat. One time he came to the church in an angry rage to retrieve her. The saints

quickly helped her to escape out of a bathroom window. Later, she would joke about it being like Paul who was let down over the city wall in a basket when his life was pursued.

She had done her best to get the Word of God into the hearts of her children, especially the youngest two who were born after she was saved. Peck had hated his father as a child because of his violent nature, but ironically, he had also become wild and unmanageable, driven by the same demon spirits. Just when he seemed to be getting his life together, getting married, becoming a father, he had injured his back, and his whole world had fallen apart. The insurance company was trying to cheat him from a settlement, claiming he had "arthritis" and was not injured on the job. The growing cynicism in his heart only added to his suffering.

"It's your mother," Doranne said glumly as Mother Hardy entered the kitchen.

"Hello, Peck, how are you feeling today?"

"The same as always," Peck answered with a sigh.

"Well, Peck, I have something for you. Our church is holding a special revival, and the whole church has been praying and fasted especially for you to be healed. They sent this prayer cloth which everyone prayed over. Can I put it on you?"

"Awh, Mom," Peck answered weakly. "The only time some people call on God is when they get in trouble or need something. I've never served God or gone to church. I don't feel right asking

him to help me now.”

“Now, Son, what have you got to lose? Please, the saints have prayed and fasted for your healing. I know God can heal you. Just let me pray for you and put this prayer cloth on your body.”

“All right, Mom,” Peck relented. “Go ahead. Like you said, What have I got to lose?”

Mother Hardy placed the prayer cloth on Peck’s back and prayed for his healing. As she prayed, Peck heard a voice speak to him, “Why don’t you believe?” At that moment, Peck said in his heart “Lord, I believe.” As the volume of her voice rose in faith, Doranne, who was washing dishes, began banging them loudly, even rudely, letting her perturbation be known, but Mother Hardy patiently prayed over her son, “*Father, in the Name of Jesus, touch my son! Heal this crippled, twisted body—From the crown of his head to the souls of his feet—in Jesus’ Name!*” She continued to praise God as Doranne accompanied her with her dish banging and glaring.

Peck sat quietly. Nothing had changed, but Mother Hardy was joyful as she told him goodbye: “Let me know how you’re feeling later, Peck. I know God has done something for you. I feel it in my spirit!”

Doranne turned from the dishes to Peck. “I don’t know why your mother always gets so loud when she prays! *They never pray like that in my church!*”, she huffed as she left the room.

After a few quiet moments, Peck struggled to get up out of the chair. It was so painful, and he once again

dragged his right leg across the kitchen floor. But after a few halting paces, something happened. Suddenly, he stood straight up! His back was erect, and his drawn leg was perfectly straight—the same length as the other. He took a few normal steps and began shouting, “**Doranne! Doranne! Look! I’m healed! I can walk! It’s a miracle!**”

Doranne came running and was amazed to see Peck perfectly healed. They laughed and hugged ecstatically. It was true! It was a miracle! In her jubilation, Doranne exclaimed, “Now we can go back to the way things used to be before you got hurt—Dancing and swimming, and all the good times!”

But Peck was in a totally different mindset. Amazed by the power of God that had healed his twisted body, he inwardly wondered what else God might do for him.

ACT TWO Saved in the Parlor

In the months that were to follow, Peck Hardy became increasingly uneasy in his soul. The more he pondered on his amazing healing, and how God had touched him, he realized that there might be a whole lot more about God that he needed to find out. Although he had now returned to doing all the worldly things that he had done before his accident, he found that they no longer satisfied him or gave him pleasure. There just had to be more to life, and he felt that the answer was in the “Jesus” his mother was always preaching about.

Indeed, Mother Hardy never gave

up trying to get her son and daughter-in-law to go to church, but they always refused. Finally, one night, just to get her off of their backs, Doranne agreed to go. Besides, the services were being held in a refurbished movie theatre, *so it wasn't really like going to church*, she figured. Still, Peck refused to go, and stayed home alone. Mother Hardy was happy that at least Doranne agreed to go. This was a big concession for her. After all, she and her daughter-in-law weren't exactly the best of friends. Little did she know that it would be *her son* who would find salvation that night!

It was late, close to midnight. Peck sat alone in the parlor waiting for Doranne's return, when suddenly, he heard footsteps. He felt a fiery presence just outside the french doors in the hallway.

He sat there motionless as he sensed this supernatural presence moving closer. Then, right through the closed doors, it came into the room.

Peck fell to his knees shaking.

Surrounded by an awesome presence of tremendous burning heat, in an audible voice, he heard God speak: "*Son, why don't you repent?*"

A nervous laugh tumbled out of his mouth as Peck replied, "Uh... Uh, I think I will... Lord, I repent! I'm not sure what repent means, but I REPENT! Save me, Lord!"

An awesome joy filled his heart, and he rejoiced in spirit as he sat quietly on the sofa awaiting Doranne's return shortly thereafter. When she came in, she looked at Peck and noticed something strange about him.

"Doranne, guess what—I got saved tonight!" he blurted.

"*You what?*" Doranne replied suspiciously. "*How could you get saved when you didn't even go to church?* I'm the one who went to church, and I didn't get saved, and I listened to everything they said too, and I didn't understand any of it. How could you have possibly got saved right here in this living room?"

Peck related to her the whole story of his visitation from the Lord and salvation, but Doranne was skeptical. He could not wait, however till the next day to tell his mother!

As expected, the next day Mother Hardy dropped by. "Doranne, how did you like the service last night?" she greeted. Before Doranne could say anything, Peck jumped up excitedly:

"Mom, guess what—I **got saved last night!**"

Now it was her turn to be puzzled. "What do you mean, Son?" she cautiously replied.

"I told you, Mom, *I got saved!* The Lord walked right in this room last night while you and Doranne were at church, and *He asked me to repent, and I did!*"

Raising her hands to Heaven, Mother Hardy prayed, "Lord, if this is true, *let me feel the witness in my spirit!*"

Like a lightening bolt from Heaven, the power of God hit them both and they each went shouting in two directions, shaking under the Spirit. Doranne could not believe it! Her husband had become just as crazy as her mother-in-law! Why now? After things were just getting back

to normal! She had to get a grip on herself and be strong for little Sharon, because she had no idea how she was going to get him out of this nutty religion, or how long it might take. *She just hoped it would wear off soon!* Little did she know that it would take six long, antagonistic years for her to surrender!

The very next day Mother Hardy brought her son a *Dake's Bible Course*, and he immediately began to study it from cover to cover. Night and day, for hours on end, he would read and pray. This provoked Doranne a great deal. She wanted her husband to join her in the worldly things that she and her friends enjoyed. Then Mother Hardy took him to a Pentecostal church where he received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. In a few weeks' time, he was preaching on the streets and prophesying in the church. The prophecies were highly anointed and filled with knowledge. The leaders and the people recognized the outstanding gift and anointing on this young vessel. Some became jealous and sought to remove him, but God continued to use him mightily and promote him.

Ironically, Doranne remained untouched by the Spirit of God that had so gloriously transformed her husband's body, mind, and life. In fact, she grew harder, and for a period of six long and troubled years, she fought him tooth and nail. She had him arrested on false accusations and thrown out of the house. She tried to have him committed as insane and even to be inducted into the army. Through

it all, Peck stood true to the Lord, praying fervently for her salvation. While she ran every night with her unsaved friends to all the night clubs and dance halls in town, he would go to church with little Sharon and Mother Hardy. Together the three of them also went out in street meetings preaching for Jesus. Sharon would come home singing church songs and talking about the Lord. But this only served to make Doranne madder. Still she would not yield her heart to the Lord.

It really irritated her pride too that Peck had quit smoking instantly when he got saved, and she had also tried to quit, but could not. She found herself sneaking to the basement to smoke, hiding her cigarette stash behind the furnace. Even little Sharon was putting conviction on her. Once she came in from work, gathered her up in her arms. "How's mommy's little girl?" she said, kissing her face.

"Oh, Mommy, you smell just like cigarettes! *Ugh! Even your hair stinks!*"

Doranne put her down promptly. "That's not a very nice thing to say to your Mommy! I can't help it, Sharon—I can't stop smoking! I've tried," she retorted angrily.

"Yes you can, Mommy! Last night in church a man came to the altar to get saved, and he put his cigarette pack on the altar, even left his cigarette lighter, and now he doesn't smoke anymore! You can go to the altar too, Mommy," Sharon explained with her childish sincerity.

"Who told you to say that?" Doranne snapped—"Your father?"

Or was it your grandmother?"

"No, Mommy. I saw that man go to the altar and throw his cigarettes away. And Jesus saved him!" Sharon assured her mother earnestly.

But Doranne was not ready to go to the altar. Her mother-in-law knew she was smoking in secret and finally told her, "Doranne, until you're ready to give them up from your heart, you can't quit, so you may as well stop sneaking around to smoke."

The Turbulent Years

If Doranne would have had second thoughts about serving God, her father-in-law put a quick end to that. When Bill Hardy heard that his son had gotten "saved," he immediately made the trip to Baltimore from Miami, Florida where he lived. Peck was the last of his children he ever expected to get religion. It was true, he had experienced a miraculous recovery from his debilitating back injury, and he knew how bad it was. He had come up then too to help. Many times he carried Peck to the bathroom, washed, dressed, and shaved him, and took him to the doctors. He was glad that he was better, but it had nothing to do with "God" as far as he believed.

When he realized that he could not dissuade Peck from his defecation to his mother's Pentecostal religious delusion, he then set his mind to keeping Doranne from following suit. This was not hard, and he

found in her a willing accomplice. He filled her head with every lie, negative report, and cynical thought he could. He told her that there was nothing to it all, and they were all in a delusion. If there had ever been a preacher who had fallen from grace, or had used the Gospel for money-making scams, and their stories made the newspapers, Bill Hardy had the clippings in his wallet.

As Doranne hardened her heart to the Gospel and opened her mind to the calculating lies and poison of her father-in-law, she

became more and more demonically influenced. She wanted to bring Peck and his mother down. The only reason she stayed in the marriage was for Sharon's sake, and somewhere in the deepest corner of her heart, there was still a twinge of the fear of God. But under Bill Hardy's tutoring, she became brazen and easily threw off any pangs of conviction she felt.

By the time she was 25 years of age, her heart had become as hard as a doorknob, and this began to frighten her. Little by little, the Holy Spirit was closing in on her haughty defenses. For instance, she would often hear Peck praying in the bedroom for God to save her, and this infuriated her. Finally she told him: "Stop praying for me to get saved! I DON'T WANT TO GET SAVED! I will NEVER want to get saved, and God can't save anyone who doesn't



Young Sharon Age 4

want to be saved!”

At first, Peck was grieved, but the Holy Spirit told him to stop praying for Doranne’s salvation out loud when she could hear him. As time went by, and Doranne never heard him praying for her, she became alarmed, thinking that maybe she had pushed God too far, and now she could *never* get saved! *The facade was cracking.*

One night Doranne was all dressed up for a night on the town. A very pretty woman, she looked especially fine in her little black dress, rhinestone earrings that dusted her shoulders, and false eyelashes that showcased her piercing blue eyes. She took one last approving glance in the mirror, pleased with what she saw, when she heard a voice speak the words: *“Inside you are full of dead man’s bones.”* It shook her to her core. She hurried on her way, but the rest of the night she could not enjoy anything. All she heard over and over were those words. It was not until after she was saved and read the Bible that she learned Jesus had spoken them.

Another time they were riding in the car. Peck was driving, and Doranne sat in the passenger’s seat with the window down. They were stopped at a red light. There was a group on the corner with microphones and guitars singing. The song she heard that day was like an arrow to her spirit. As the light changed to green, and they pulled away, the words still hung hauntingly in the air: *“I was lost and undone without God or His Son, but He reached down His hand for me.”*

For days it replayed in her mind, **“I am lost and undone—without God or His Son!”**

Doranne knew that she was finding it harder and harder to convince herself that she didn’t need God. The “good times” weren’t the good times they once were, and she had to admit that Peck lived the godly life he claimed. She had watched him closely for six years, and no matter how hateful she was, or rebellious against everything he did, he



Doranne and Sharon

remained true to his faith. It was unimpeachable. And in spite of the tensions between them and their disconnection—He went to church while she went to clubs with her friends—he still had peace. She couldn’t figure it out. *What if he was right? What if she was resisting God, and He stopped dealing with her?*

ACT THREE

Saved in the Kitchen!

It was on a cool crisp October night that Doranne Hardy, formerly referred to by Peck as “Mrs. Legion” gave her heart to the Lord, in a little country church in Severn, MD. And what was to be even more glorious for Brother Hardy: She came to the Lord in his own revival! He had finally convinced her to come to church with the help of one of her friends who turned out to be a backslider (much to Doranne’s great surprise). At the time, Brother Hardy was suffering from an acute case of laryngitis and could barely talk. Refusing to cancel the revival, when he got in the pulpit, God anointed him and gave him a voice to preach. God had promised him early that summer that He would save his wife before the harvest was over that year. Determined to see its fulfillment, Brother Hardy preached with all his heart. That same night, before all of those that she had ridiculed and resisted for so many years, **Doranne Hardy came to the altar to be saved!** Having been under tremendous conviction for days, she had actually prayed the sinner’s prayer earlier that day at the dinner table:

The three of them had just sat down in their small kitchen for supper, and as was his custom, Peck prayed over the meal. Having blessed the food, he added, *“Lord, meet with us in the service tonight, and give us souls, in Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.”*

Doranne had come to a crossroads. She had thought it through—She would give God 30 days, and if it worked—okay! And if it didn’t, she

figured she would not be out of circulation in just 30 days, and she could return to her party life and friends.

“You know, Peck,” Doranne said, carefully choosing her words. “I have been thinking a lot lately about getting saved, and, well, I think I’ll go to church with you tonight, and go to the altar. And...”

“You don’t have to wait till tonight!” Peck exclaimed as he excitedly jumped to his feet.

“No... I want to wait until tonight, and I’ll go to the altar then,” Doranne insisted.

But it was not going down like that! Peck laid hands on her head and started praying in his “Brother Hardy” loud, exuberant volume and tone. Sharon sat wide-eyed as her mother broke down crying and repeating the sinner’s prayer after her father, who could barely contain himself, shouting and rejoicing.

“The summer was over, and the harvest soon would be past—and Doranne Hardy was saved”—at last.



Brother Hardy, Sharon, and Doranne
September 4, 1959

COMMEMORATING 55 YEARS OF MINISTRY

R.G. HARDY HONORED at FAITH TABERNACLE CHURCH

Campmeeting 2008 was in full swing by Saturday, August 9th. The Spirit of God was moving with a fresh wind from the first service Wednesday night, in which Brother Hardy preached the illustrated message **The Mark**. Strong conviction settled over the audience as they watched the depiction of what it will be like during **The Tribulation** when the **Antichrist** is in power. At the close of the skit, the altars were opened, and without further pressure, sinners and backsliders readily came forward to repentance. It was a glorious start!

Each service was blessed with a new anointing, and as Saturday arrived, anticipation was building for the special dinner to honor *Brother Hardy's 55 years in ministry.* He

knew about the dinner, of course, *but he didn't know about the wonderful surprises that were planned!*

One of those surprises was the re-naming of *Puget Street* (side street to Patapsco Avenue) to **R.G. Hardy Way**—as shown on this month's cover. No one had any idea

what to expect when all were told to leave the building and go outside for "a surprise gift" for Brother Hardy. Everyone thought he was going to get a new car!

What a joy it was for all! *Mayor Sheila Dixon of Baltimore* (by proclamation) bestowed this great honor on Brother Hardy for his life-long contributions to the inner city communities of Baltimore and her citizens. When we honor Christ with our lives, He gives favor and honor from

God and men: *"Exalt wisdom and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honor, when thou doest*

embrace her” (Proverbs 4:8).

This honor was and is for *all members* of **Faith Tabernacle Church** and **R.G. Hardy Ministries** to share! Paul said, “...*When one member be honored, ALL the members rejoice with it*” (1 Cor. 12:26).

We Are In the Boat Together!

There is no way that Brother Hardy could have accomplished these things alone! Without **Sister Hardy** and the assistance and contributions of scores of helpers, co-laborers, ministers—and thousands of faithful, loving, generous partners like you who support **FIA**, he could not fulfill his calling—no matter how great it be or how mighty the anointing on his life. It just would not and could not be done alone. Apostle Paul, God’s architect of the Gentile churches, understood this, and was quick to commend those men and women who assisted him in ministry. He said in 1 Cor. 4:1: “*Let a man so account of us the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*”

The terms he chose are specific and humbling. The Greek word for *ministers* is actually “*under-rowers*” and in Roman times referred to *the slaves who were chained together in the bottom galley of huge ships to turn its oars*. They were literally the human engines that moved the great ships through the waters. It would be impossible for one man to move a ship by himself! It required the strength and joint effort of many men *rowing together as a team* to move the ship.

This is how Paul described those in ministry—No one minister can perform these great tasks alone—It takes many with “a servant’s heart” to perform the hard labor and continual exertion required to keep moving through the waters of opposition and satanic hostility to the Gospel.

It is the sincere desire of Brother Hardy’s heart and all of us who serve at **RGHM** *to commend your partnership and share this honor with you*, for the glory of Jesus our Lord. We also want to thank every minister and partner who was able to attend the dinner and express their love and appreciation personally. It was a joy to celebrate this occasion with you, and your presence made it even sweeter!

Thank you to all who have written and called to express your affection and remembrance of Brother Hardy’s influence on your spiritual growth. Whether in years gone by or presently, we are grateful to God for the privilege to serve you as His undershepherds and watchmen for your souls.

“*Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the Word of God, whose faith follow considering the end of their conversation.... For they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief, for that is unprofitable for you*” (Hebrews 13:7 & 17).

The *second surprise* was the presentation of a short play depicting *Peck Hardy's* miraculous healing through an an-oined prayer cloth before he was saved, and his salvation through a divine visitation shortly thereafter. Act Three was of *Doranne Hardy's* surrender to the Lord after six years of resistance and marital mayhem. We have decided to share this short play with our readers, trusting that it will encourage anyone who is patiently believing God for the salvation of a loved one, especially a spouse, son or daughter, or for bodily healing.

In Honor of Mother Mary Hardy

It is also our intention to honor and encourage those praying Moms & Dads, who will not give up or give in to despair or unbelief for their children's deliverance, just as **Mother Mary Hardy** did, in the face of great adversity, physical and mental abuse from her atheist husband, and demonic harassment.

Mother Hardy, at age 89, went home to be with the Lord in December 1988, but the legacy of her prevailing prayers and Bible-teaching ministry gift are continuing mightily through her son, granddaughter, and hundreds of students who sat at her feet and were fed a rich diet of God's Word for 30 years.



Brother & Sister Hardy, Sharon & Benny Knotts

We would love to hear from all of you who have been influenced in years passed by the Hardy Ministries through Faith Tabernacle Church, FIA, radio, TV, and missions.