



Paul and Vera reading God's Word together at home. (Photos by Laurel H. Kenney, Jr.)

Upper photo: Paul and Vera Walls launching out in their new cabin cruiser.

By Robert M. Fine

WHILE ENJOYING SEAFOOD at the Polynesian on Pier 51 in Seattle, I asked Paul Walls about his life. Of course, I knew most of the facts. I'm his pastor. Also we are both Free Methodist preachers' sons whose dads ministered together in Iowa years ago. But, there were new facts. I faced a new man, a top appraiser who didn't want me to appraise his life. Rather, he wanted me to join him in praise to God for his new lease on life.

Paul remarked, "Bob, I came from Yale-Yale, Oklahoma, that is." Here he got his first lease on life on January 27, 1914. His father, the Rev. E. W. Walls, pastor, superintendent, and general conference evangelist, served during Paul's early life in Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Iowa.

#### Proud grandparents

In Lincoln, Nebraska, he met Vera McMullen, a high school girl from Rapid City, South Dakota. Vera and Paul attended Central Junior College in McPherson, Kansas. After graduation he continued his studies at Parsons College in Fairfield, Iowa. On April 1, 1936, they were married. Today they have a son, Roger, and a daughter, Linda, who have each presented their parents with a grandchild.

Beginning as a Wearever salesman for ALCOA in Des Moines, Iowa, Paul later moved to Yakima, Washington. Here he set up a real estate, mortgage, and insurance company. Meanwhile, during vacations he continued his studies at the Universities of Utah and California. In 1952 the letters M A I were added to his name card (Member American Institute of Real Estate Appraisers). Only four thousand in the thirty-year history of the institute have earned this designation



Paul Walls sitting at his office desk.

Now he is the senior partner in the firm of Butler and Walls, the largest appraisal firm in Seattle.

As a specialist in condemnation proceedings, Paul is often called to testify as an expert before both superior and federal courts. After the Seattle World's Fair built its famous monorail as a temporary tourist attraction, the city of Seattle decided to keep it in operation permanently. However, the original permits for the street had not included a monorail. The owners of eighty-two parcels of ground containing department stores, hotels, apartment houses, and shops each brought suit against the city. To provide expert testimony in their defense, the city secured Paul Walls. During two years of preparation for these cases Paul visited every monorail in the world, including Wuppertal, Germany, and Tokyo, Japan. After one year of exhausting, pressure-packed testimony, the rights of the city were established. "Only daily communion with God gave me the strength," said Paul following this victory.

#### Fulfills conference duties

While in Alaska fulfilling contracts for the government, Paul found opportunity to help his conference. As chairman of the Pacific Northwest Confer-

ence Committee on Building and Locations, he assisted in the relocation of the Free Methodist Church in Anchorage.

He also helped in the planning and development of the Warm Beach Conference Center and served on the Warm Beach Manor Board. Other conference duties included chairman of the Light and Life Men's Fellowship and membership on the Board of Trustees.

Paul represented his conference at the last three General Conferences. Each time he was elected to the finance committee, serving twice as chairman and once as secretary. He has been active in the formation and progress of the United World Mission for Christ. Now, as an area lay representative on the Board of Administration, he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Board and serves on the Commission on Administration.

For nineteen years Paul Walls has served as a member of the Board of Trustees of Seattle Pacific College, chairing the board for ten years.

In their travels throughout the world, Paul and Vera have visited Free Methodist mission fields in Egypt, Japan, Hong Kong, Rhodesia, and South Africa.

On July 4, 1969, Paul suffered a

heart attack. His lease on life might have run out. Yet, in answer to prayer, he slowly recovered for two months. Then his condition became worse. Finally he was told in August 1970 that the arteries supplying his heart were impaired. Two of the three arteries were blocked. Surgery was indicated.

On November 30, 1970, he would undergo an artery bypass, a new type of surgery performed by the famous Dr. Dudley Johnson of St. Lukes Hospital in Milwaukee. Although he was a good risk, no guarantee of survival was offered.

On a Sunday morning a few weeks before surgery Paul came to church, filled with fear. "Even my faith was shaken," he later said.

At the sanctuary door that morning he told his pastor of his inner struggle. George Delamarter, who had recently undergone heart surgery, was present that Sunday and offered his encouragement. I suggested that Paul and Vera attend the Service of Prayer for the Healing of Human Hurts to be held that evening.

#### Finds new peace

That evening, kneeling at the altar, I prayed that in a few days Paul would find a new faith to conquer his fear. How small was my faith! After the service Paul strode across the narthex to say, "As I returned from the altar to the pew, I became calm." Now, one year later while talking about the greatest moment in his life, he said, "I became a Christian when I was five years old, but this experience was as real as my conversion. It can be described with only one word—*peace*."

The surgery was successful. Recovery was rapid. Over the long distance phone he exclaimed, "I have a new heart."

All the months of preparation for either life or death had resulted in a new man. There is a new beauty in God's world for Paul and Vera Walls. All the majesty of the mountains and lakes of the Pacific Northwest belong to them as they explore them together in their new cabin cruiser, properly named *New Lease*. □