

Anecdotes and Illustrations - Part 1

by R.A. Torrey

The sermon emphasizes the importance of spiritual concern, the transforming power of Christ, and the greatest joy in life, which is bringing others to a saving knowledge of Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 22:37, John 3:16, Romans 5:8

Topics: "Redemption", "Transformative Power of Christ"

Description

R.A. Torrey shares powerful anecdotes illustrating the transformative power of Christ in the lives of individuals from various backgrounds, including a drunken man, a hardened blacksmith, and a desperate thief. Through personal encounters and heartfelt testimonies, he emphasizes that no one is beyond the reach of God's love and redemption. The sermon highlights the importance of genuine concern for others' souls and the joy of leading them to Christ, showcasing that real earnestness and love can succeed where arguments fail. Torrey encourages believers to trust in the risen Christ for victory over sin and to be instruments of God's grace in the lives of others.

Transcript

Do You Believe That, Sir?

One night when I was speaking in a hall on the ground floor in Washington Avenue, there staggered into the room a man very much under the influence of liquor. He had once been prominent in his home town, postmaster of the town, but he had gone down through drink. He had drifted to Minneapolis. For a while he served beer in one of the lowest dens in the city, but afterwards became too low even for that and was kicked out on to the street. This night everything he had in the world but one small coin was gone. As he entered the hall, which by mistake he had taken for a saloon, his hat was on his head, a cigar in his mouth and he began to stagger down the aisle. A lady by the door stepped up to him and kindly asked him to take off his hat and let her have his cigar. Then she conducted him down the aisle to a seat near the front.

Just as he took his seat, a man who had formerly been in the deepest depths of degradation was giving his testimony to the saving power of Christ. The drunken man leered up at me as the other man gave his testimony and said with a hiccough, "Do you believe that, sir?"

"Yes, sir," I replied, "I know that story is true. I know this man, and what is more the same Jesus that saved him can save you." Then as the other man finished his testimony I turned to him and said: "Joe, take this man out into my office and talk with him." He took him out into my office and talked with him and

kept him there until the meeting was over. Then I went out and found him partly sobered and was able to point him to Christ. He went away that night with the knowledge of sins forgiven. He was taken to a cheap lodging house where he spent the night.

The next day he found work, very humble work but enough to pay for his lodging and food. In a little while he found a better position and soon a still better one. He entered the employ of one of the large railways entering Minneapolis. He soon won the confidence of his employers. He was beginning to think about going to Chicago to prepare for Christian work when his health broke down. The company that employed him were very kind to him and sent him to the southwest in the hope that he would recover his health but he gradually failed and in a few months died of rapid consumption.

At his death his mother, who had rejoined him sent me a letter telling of his last days, days of triumph, and also sending me the last picture he had had taken. For years that picture stood on my mantel with his story written on the back of it. To have looked into the face one would never have thought that it was the face of a man who had been down into the deepest depths of degradation. It was a frank, open, genial, true Christian face. But the same Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who transformed this man's life can transform yours.

A Deep Spiritual Concern for Your Soul

In a small country town there was an infidel blacksmith. He was a hard-headed, well-read man, strong in argument. An old deacon in the town became deeply interested in this infidel blacksmith and determined to lead him to Christ. He studied up as best he could all the infidel arguments and the answers to them. When he thought he had all the infidel arguments and answers at his fingers' ends, he called on the blacksmith and engaged him in conversation, but the blacksmith was far more than a match for him in argument and in a few moments had fought the old deacon to a standstill. The old deacon knew that he was right, but he could not prove it to the blacksmith. He burst into tears and said, "Well, I cannot argue with you, but I simply want to say, I have a deep spiritual concern for your soul," and then left the shop.

The deacon made his way home and went in to his wife and said, "I am only a botch on God's work. God knows I am sincere and that I really do desire the salvation of the blacksmith but I could not meet him in argument. He laid me out cold in five minutes." Then the deacon went into his own room by himself and knelt down. "Oh, God," he cried, "I am only a botch on Thy work. Thou knowest that I sincerely desired to lead the blacksmith to Thee, but I could not talk with him. Oh, God, I am only a botch on Thy work."

But soon after the deacon had left the blacksmith shop, the blacksmith went into the house and said to his wife, "Deacon brought up an argument to-day that I never heard before. He said he had a deep spiritual concern for my soul. What did he mean?" His wife was a canny woman and said, "You had better go and ask him." The blacksmith hung up his apron and went cross lots to the deacon's home. Just as he stepped on the front porch, through the open window he heard the deacon's prayer, "Oh, God, I am only a botch on Thy work. Thou knowest that I sincerely desired to lead the blacksmith to Thee but I could not talk with him. Oh, God, I am only a botch on Thy work." He pushed the door open and went into the room where the deacon was kneeling and said, "Deacon, you are no botch on God's work. I thought I knew all the arguments for Christianity and could answer them but you brought up an argument I never heard before. You said you had a deep spiritual concern for my soul. Won't you pray for me?" and the blacksmith broke down and accepted Christ.

Real earnestness and love succeed where all argument fails.

How the Devil Got Us an Audience

One night all of my workers that were to help me in an open air meeting failed to come except one man. This man could not sing much better than I could, and I turned to him and said, "George, shall we go out and try to hold an open air meeting?" And he said, "Yes, let us go anyhow."

We went to the corner where we usually held the meeting and stood in the road facing the sidewalk and began to sing to an audience of one. Our singing did not seem to attract any one that night, but soon a drunken man came along, and thought he would have some fun. He began to shout and dance and go through all sorts of antics in the street right beside us, and the crowds began to gather together to watch him. When the crowd was large enough, I held him by the hand and said to my companion, "Now, George, give your testimony." He commenced to tell what the Lord had done for him and also to preach a short sermon, using the drunken man as a text. When he had finished, he held the drunken man by the hand to keep him quiet and I spoke, using the drunken man as a text. Hardened characters in the audience began to say, "I would not like to be in that drunken man's place." But God blessed the Word and we had one of the best meetings we ever had. We had been unable to draw a crowd but the drunken man had drawn the crowd for us and then God had given us the message.

The Meanest Thief in Minneapolis

I WAS preaching one hot summer night in Minneapolis. The room was packed, mostly with men. The windows had been taken out of the cases to get a little additional fresh air. When I gave out the invitation a man arose by one of these windows near a door. As soon as I pronounced the benediction, he shot through the door, not waiting for the after-meeting. I forgot all about the after-meeting and saw only that man. I do not know to this day what became of the after-meeting. I reached him just as he was about to go down the stairway. I laid my hand on his shoulder and said, "My friend, you stood up to-night to say you wished to become a Christian."

"Yes."

"Why did you not stay to the after-meeting?"

"It is no use."

"God loves you," I said.

"You don't know who you are talking to," he replied, "I am the meanest thief in Minneapolis."

"Well," I said, "if you are the meanest thief in Minneapolis, I can prove God loves you," and I opened my Bible to Romans 5:8, "God commendeth His love towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

"Now," I said, "if you are the meanest thief in Minneapolis, you are certainly a sinner, and this verse says that God loves sinners." It touched the man's heart and he went quietly with me to my office.

"I was released from prison," he said, "to-day, and started out to-night with three companions to commit one of the most daring burglaries that was ever committed in Minneapolis. By to-morrow morning I would either have had a pile of money, or a bullet in my body. I passed by the corner and heard your open air meeting. A Scotchman was speaking. I am a Scotchman and my mother was Scotch. When I heard that

Scotch tongue, it made me think of my mother. The other night in prison I dreamed of my mother. I dreamed that she came to me and besought me to give up the evil life I was leading. When I heard that Scotchman speak it brought it all back. I stopped and listened and my companions tried to pull me along but I would not go. They cursed me but still I stayed. When you gave out your invitation for your meeting in the hall, I followed you and listened to your sermon."

I explained to him the way of life and he accepted the Saviour. We knelt side by side in prayer. He offered the most wonderful prayer but one I ever heard in my life, and went out of my office rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven.

A short time before the meanest thief in Minneapolis but now a happy child of God.

Forgiven by Both Fathers Some years ago an English farmer, William Dorset, was preaching in London. In the course of his sermon he said, "There is not a man in all London whom Jesus Christ cannot save." At the close of the meeting a lady missionary in London came to him and said, "Mr. Dorset, did you say that there wasn't a man in all London that Jesus Christ cannot save?" "Yes, madam, that is what I said." "Well, there is a man here in London I wish you would see. He says that he is beyond salvation."

"I will go and see him to-morrow morning," replied Mr. Dorset, "if you will take me to him." They started out early the next morning for East London, stopped before a high, wretched tenement building. "You will find him," she said, "in the top story in the back room. You had better go up alone as he will talk more freely with you than if some one else is with you." Mr. Dorset began to climb the stairs. Each flight of stairs seemed more wretched and filthy than the one that preceded it.

At last he reached the top story and found the door hanging by one hinge which he pushed open as best he could. There was not a window in the room but when his eye became accustomed to the darkness, over in the corner he saw a young man lying on a pile of filthy straw. He walked softly across the floor and leaned over the young man and said, "My friend." The young man looked up with a start and said, "You are mistaken, sir, I am not your friend; you are not my friend. I haven't a friend in the world."

"Yes, you have," said Mr. Dorset, "I am your friend and what is better Jesus Christ is your Friend too." "No," he replied, "Jesus Christ is no Friend of mine. I have disobeyed His laws. I have trampled Him under foot all my life, and He is no Friend of mine." "Yes, He is," insisted Mr. Dorset, and sat down by his side and from the Bible proved that Jesus Christ was the Friend of sinners and his Friend. The young man listened to the story of redeeming love and at last put his trust in Jesus Christ and found pardon.

Then he turned to Mr. Dorset and said, "My Heavenly Father has forgiven me. I could die happy if I only knew my earthly father had forgiven me also." "I will go and see him," said Mr. Dorset. "No, I don't wish you to do that. You would only be insulted. My father does not allow my name to be mentioned in his presence. He has taken it off the family register. He has not allowed my name to be mentioned to him for two years." "I will go and see him anyway," said Mr. Dorset. He secured his address, and hurried to the West End of London where the father lived.

It was in a beautiful mansion. He was met at the door by a liveried servant and taken into the reception-room. The father, a fine-looking English gentleman, soon came into the room, and extended his hand in a cordial way towards Mr. Dorset. "I have come to speak to you about your son Joseph," said Mr. Dorset. The father dropped his hand as if he had been shot. "I have no son Joseph," he said. "I do not allow that young man's name to be mentioned in my presence. I have had it taken off the family register.

I simply want to tell you if you have had anything to do with that young man, you are being deceived. Good day." He turned upon his heel and started to leave the room. As he was about to cross the threshold Mr. Dorset said in a gentle voice, "Well, he is your son anyway, but he won't be very long." The father turned around quickly and said, "Is Joseph dying?" "Yes, he is dying. I haven't come to ask you to do anything for him. I do not ask you even to pay his funeral expenses.

I will gladly do that; but his Heavenly Father has forgiven him and he says he could die happy if only his earthly father would forgive him too." "Forgive him," said the father, "I would have forgiven him long ago if he had only asked it. Take me to him." The gentleman ordered his carriage and they hurried down to the wretched tenement in the East End of London, hurried up the stairs and to the dark room where the son lay dying. As the father entered the door the son looked up and said, "Father, my Heavenly Father has forgiven me.

I could die happy if you would forgive me too." "Forgive you," cried the father as he hurried across the floor, "I would have forgiven you long ago if you had only asked it." The boy was too ill to be moved and the gentleman sank on the floor by his side and took his son's head upon his shoulder and he died happy, knowing that his Heavenly Father had forgiven him and his earthly father had forgiven him too. God stands ready now to forgive any sinner, even the vilest and most hopeless who will trust Him.

No Greater Joy

One of the greatest joys on earth is the joy of bringing others to a saving knowledge of Christ. I have heard people tell that when they were converted the whole world seemed different; that the sun seemed to shine with a new light; there was new music in the song of the birds; all nature seemed clothed with new beauty and glory. I had no such experience when I was converted. In fact, I was converted in the middle of the night, and the sun was not shining at all. But I did have such an experience the first time I led another to the definite acceptance of Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour.

Looking across one of Mr. Moody's inquiry meetings in the city of New Haven, I saw a young lady that I had known when I was living a worldly life. I went over to her and spoke to her and invited her to accept the Saviour that I had found, but she was stubborn and unwilling to give up the world. I dealt with her for two solid hours and seemed to be making but little headway. Then at the very close she yielded and accepted Christ. When I left the building where this decision was made, it was nearly sunset in the spring-time; the whole world seemed to have a beauty in it that I had never seen in it before. It literally seemed as if I had never seen such a light in the sun, nor such beauty in the flowers and trees and grass. It seemed as if I were walking on air. My heart was filled with a joy I had never known before. There is no joy like the joy of saving men and it is possible for every child of God, no matter how humble nor how ungifted, to have this joy.

A Converted Jewess

When after an absence of two years from America, I returned to spend a month with my church in Chicago, I found that a young Jewish woman, a very brilliant woman in the work she had to do, had been converted during my absence. Her conversion was very genuine. She was full of love to Christ as Jews generally are when they are converted. She went to the place where she worked, a well known house in Chicago, and commenced talking of Christ to the other employees. Some of them did not like it, and they went to the head of the firm and said, "Miss -- is constantly talking to us about Christ. We don't like it."

The manager of the firm called her in and said, "We have no objection to Christianity, no objection to your being a Christian. We think it is a good thing, but you must not talk it about this establishment."

"Very well," she said, " I will not work in a place where I cannot take Christ with me and talk for my Master." She had a family to support, an aged mother and other members of the family, and did not know where she was going -- just converted from Judaism to Christianity. But she would not give up her loyalty to her new Master.

"Very well," they said, "you will have to lose your position."

"Very well," she said, "I will give up my position before I will be disloyal to Jesus Christ."

They said, "Very well, go back to your work."

She went back to her work expecting every day to receive her dismissal. At the end of the week she received a letter from the manager. "Here is my discharge," she said as she tore it open. The head of the establishment said, "We have a place of greater responsibility than the one you now occupy and with a larger salary than you are getting. We think you are just the person for the place, and we offer it to you." They saw she could be trusted. Business men are looking for men and women whom they can trust.

The Greatest Sin a Man Can Possibly Commit

One night I was preaching in Chicago for another pastor. At the close of the service, the minister came to me and said, "I have a young man in my congregation who wishes to be a minister. I would like to have you talk with him."

I replied, "Bring him to me after the after-meeting," and he brought the young man to me. He had one of the cleanest, finest, most open faces I ever saw in my life. I looked into the face of this young man and said, "Your pastor says you wish to enter the ministry."

"Yes, I do."

"Well," I said, "let me ask you a question. Are you a Christian?"

"Of course, I am a Christian," he answered, "I was brought up a Christian, and I am not going back on the training of my parents."

I said, "Have you been born again?"

He said, "What?"

I said, "Have you ever been born again? God says, 'Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' Have you ever been born again?"

He said, "I don't know what you are talking about. I have never heard of that before in all my life."

I said, "My friend, see here; do you know that you have committed the greatest sin that a man can commit?"

"No," he said, "I never did in my life. You don't understand me. I have been very carefully reared. My life has been a most exemplary life. I never committed the greatest sin that a man can commit -- never!"

I asked, "What do you think is the greatest sin a man can commit?"

"Why," he replied, "murder, of course."

"You are greatly mistaken. Will you please read what Jesus says about it?" and I opened my Bible to Matt. 22:37,38, and asked him to read. He read, "Jesus said unto him, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.'"

"Which commandment is that?" I asked.

He replied, "The first and great commandment."

"If this is the first and great commandment what is the first and great sin?"

"Not to keep this commandment."

"Have you kept it? Have you loved God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind? Have you put God first in everything -- God first in business, God first in politics, God first in pleasure, God first in study, God first in everything?"

"No, sir," he said, " I have not."

"What have you done then?"

"I have broken this commandment."

"Which commandment is it?"

"The first and the great commandment."

"What have you done then?"

He replied, "I have broken the first and greatest of God's commandments. I have committed the greatest sin a man can commit, but I never saw it before in all my life."

And so have you, though, perhaps, you never saw it before in all your life.

An Angry Father Converted

When I lived in Minneapolis a child of a man deep down in sin had been converted. This greatly angered the father. One day I was holding an open air meeting at the foot of Washington Avenue. The father thought he saw his opportunity to have revenge. He got a basket of rotten eggs, and went up on the top of an adjoining building to throw the eggs at us as we held the meeting. But as he stood on the top of the building and was about to throw the eggs, the Spirit of God touched his heart and brought him under the deepest conviction of sin.

At the close of our meeting that night in our hall, a tall muscular man with a hardened face that bore the marks of long-continued sin, came to me overwhelmed with grief and asked me to pray for him. He said, "This afternoon when you were speaking down at the foot of Washington Avenue, I went up on the top of the building with a basket of rotten eggs to rotten-egg you, but I became overwhelmed with a sense of sin and I have come up here to-night for you to tell me what to do to be saved." It was easy work to lead him

to a knowledge of Jesus Christ as the One who had borne all his sins in His own body on the cross, and the man left the hall that night rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven.

The Other Half of the Gospel A MAN came to me one day in Chicago and said, "I want to talk with you." Mr. Moody was away, so I took him into Mr. Moody's room, and asked, "What do you want to talk with me about?" He said, "I am a Scotchman. When I was seven years old over in Scotland, I started to read my Bible through. Before I had read long, I came to a place where it said that if a man should keep the law of God a hundred years, and then break it, he was under the curse of a broken law.

Is that right?" "Well," I said, "the Bible does not put it in just those words, but it amounts to that. It says, 'Cursed is every man that continueth not in all the things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them.'" "Well," he said, "that is what I found, and I knew I had already broken the law of God, though I was only seven years old, and I was under the curse of a broken law. I was plunged into the deepest distress. Though I was only a child of seven, I wept over my sins often by day and often by night.

I was in distress of soul for a whole year, but I kept on reading my Bible, and at last I got over to the New Testament, and read John 3:16, 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.' I saw that Jesus died for my sins, and my burden all rolled away, and I was perfectly happy. Was I converted?" "Well," I said, "that sounds like an evangelical conversion." "Wait a moment," he said, "and listen to the rest of my story.

I grew up to manhood; I moved to America; I came over here to Chicago; I went to work in the stockyards, and live down there. You know it is a hard place. I have got to drinking, and every little while I go off on a drunk. Now, what I want to know is this, is there any way I can get victory over drink and over all sin?" "You have come just to the right place to get an answer to your question," I replied, "I can tell you the way. You have only believed half the Gospel, and therefore you've got only half a salvation.

Listen to the whole Gospel." I opened my Bible to 1 Cor. 15:1-4 and I read, "'This is the Gospel that I have preached unto you . . . that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.' That is the first half of the Gospel but it is only half. Listen as I read on and you will see the other half, 'And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.' Do you believe that half of the Gospel also? You have already believed in Christ crucified and found pardon and peace, but the rest of the Gospel is that Christ rose again.

Do you believe that?" "Oh, yes," he said, "I believe everything in the Bible." I said, "Do you believe that Jesus Christ rose again?" He said, "I do." "Do you believe He has all power in heaven and on earth as He said He had?" He said, "I do." "Well, if He has all power in heaven and on earth, He has power to set you free from the power of sin. Do you believe that?" "Yes, I do." "Will you trust Him to do it now? You have believed half the Gospel, you have got half a salvation.

You have believed in a crucified Christ and got pardon; now will you believe in a risen Christ and get victory? Will you trust Him now as the risen Saviour to set you free from the drink and other sin?" He said, "I will." "Let us kneel down and tell God so." We knelt down. I prayed and he prayed. After he had prayed he looked up and said, "Lord Jesus, I have believed half the Gospel that Thou didst die in my place and I have found pardon and peace through believing it. I now believe the other half of the Gospel that you rose again and have all power in heaven and on earth and have power to set me free from drink and sin and I trust you to do it.

Set me free now." When he had finished, I said, "Do you really trust Him to do it?" He said, "I do." We got up. I gave him a few words of advice and we separated. In a few weeks I received a letter from him, a very short letter, but very much to the point. He said, "I am so glad I came to see you. It works." Thank God it does work. A crucified Christ brings pardon; a risen Christ brings deliverance from the power of sin the moment you believe.

God Uses a Weak Instrument

Before Mr. Alexander joined me in the work, he was engaged with another evangelist, much of their time being given to meetings in large tents. At one of their meetings in Iowa, a young fellow who was very illiterate was converted. Soon after his conversion, he came to Mr. Alexander and said, "Charlie, I want to go with you in the work."

Mr. Alexander said, "Fred, you could not go with us in the work. You can scarcely read. What could you do?"

"Oh," he replied, "I could take care of the tent, black your boots, do anything, but I must go with you."

Mr. Alexander thought it was only a whim and put him off, but the man was so insistent day after day that he decided to try him. He proved himself invaluable in many ways but to the surprise of all, he not only attended to the janitor work of the tent but proved a most efficient soul winner. So great was his earnestness and his spiritual power that people entirely overlooked his ungrammatical speech, and he succeeded with many cases where every one else failed. He not only led the most desperate cases among the lower classes to Christ, but also was used among the cultured and refined. He kept an accurate record of all those whom he led to Christ. In five years he was used of God in personal work to the salvation of 1,200 persons.

Why did God so use him? Because, though he had but little, all that he had and all that he was he gave up unreservedly to God. It was a case of absolute surrender, and God kept His promise and gave the Holy Spirit to the man who obeyed Him. (Acts 6:32.)

How the Sun Burst Through the Clouds

On the day of fasting and prayer in Dundee, the rain poured down in torrents during the morning hour of meeting. We were planning for a meeting at two o'clock in the afternoon in the open air. One of the brethren as he led in prayer, offered a very earnest and confident prayer that it would clear off for the open air meeting, and as he closed his prayer expressed the utmost confidence that the prayer would be heard, that we should have clear weather at that hour. A good many that listened to the prayer were uneasy at the man's confidence and feared that God would be dishonoured by the prayer not being answered. One of the ministers said to Mr. Alexander, "That man ought not to have prayed that way. The barometer is going down all the time and there is no chance whatever of its clearing up."

I went to my room and began to pray alone to God about the various interests of the work. Before I finished the prayer, it was nearly two o'clock. I was led to pray that it would clear up and the sun shine during the afternoon meeting. As I opened my eyes, the sun burst through the clouds and streamed into my room.

There was a great gathering for the open air meeting and God's Spirit was present in power, but no sooner had the open air meeting closed and the workers and others gotten back to Kinnaird Hall, than the rain

began again and poured incessantly.

Saved and Healed

I SAT one day at my desk in my office in Minneapolis, and a hard faced woman came in and asked me brusquely, "Have you any missionaries that you send to talk to dying people?"

"Yes," I replied.

"Well," she said, "there is a woman dying around at '-----' Street. I wish you would send a missionary around there."

Soon after she had gone, two lady missionaries came in. I said to them, "A woman was just in here to have some one go around and talk to a dying woman. I judge from the woman's face and the locality where she lives, that the woman who is dying is an outcast. You and Selma hurry around and speak to her."

The two missionaries were gone a long time and came back with radiant faces. They told me how the woman who was dying from an awful and incurable disease, whom the doctor had given up entirely, was rejoicing in her new-found Saviour. The two missionaries called again and were led to pray for the woman, who was now clearly converted, that she should also be raised up from the bed of sickness and healed. When they told me that they had offered this prayer, I was not at all clear that they had done wisely, for there was no human possibility of a cure, but God did hear the prayer and raised the woman up. She became an earnest active member of my church. The last I knew, which was several years after her restoration, she was still leading an earnest Christian life.

"All Things Working Together for Good"

One Sunday afternoon we drove with our Gospel wagon down to a street in the city that was given up to vice in the lowest forms. We stopped in front of one of these dens of iniquity and began to sing Gospel hymns. The women flocked to the windows and out on to the street. Some of them were very drunk. One of the most drunken, urged on by her companions, made a sudden rush and sprang up the steps of the Gospel wagon and in among our workers. There was a great laugh, but instantly I said to the driver, "Drive on." And we went up the street carrying the drunken woman away to the dismay of her friends. We took her to our rooms and she soon became very much sobered. Wise Christian workers pointed her the way of life and she was soon in tears and before long on her knees looking to God through Christ to forgive her sins. The devil had overreached himself.

God is Love

When Mr. Moody built his tabernacle in Chicago, he was so anxious that every one that came there should learn one truth, namely, that "God is love," and so fearful that some day some preacher might stand in the pulpit and forget to tell the people that God is love, that he had these three words put into gas jets over the pulpit. So every night when the gas was lighted, there it blazed away over the preacher's head, "God is love." Whether the preacher told it to the people or not, they could see it for themselves in letters of fire.

One night the tabernacle was lighted but the people had not yet gathered for the evening service. A poor drunkard coming up the street saw the door a little ajar and saw the light, and then stumbled up the steps hoping to find warmth and cheer within. As he pushed the door a little wider, his attention was directed to

the sentence in the letters of fire above the pulpit, "God is love." He turned away, pulled the door to, went down the steps and went up the street muttering, "It is not so. That is not true. God is not love. If God was love, He would love me, and God does not love a miserable wretch like me. It is not true." But all the time, the words were burning down into his soul, "God is love. God is love."

After a while he turned about and retraced his steps, entered the church again, and took a seat back of the stove over in the corner. The people gathered and Mr. Moody ascended the platform and began to preach. All the time that Mr. Moody preached, the man was weeping in the corner. Mr. Moody's quick eye caught sight of him, and at the close of the service he hurried to him and sat down beside him.

"What are you crying about, my friend?" he said gently. "What was it in the sermon that touched you?"

The man replied, "There was nothing in the sermon that touched me. I did not hear a word of your sermon."

"Well, what was it then that touched you?" asked Mr. Moody.

"That sentence," pointing to the words in fire, "that sentence, 'God is love,' that broke my heart."

Mr. Moody opened his Bible and showed the man from the Bible how God loved him, and how Jesus was an all-sufficient Saviour for all who take Him. The man listened and accepted Christ, and went away that night a saved man.

May these same words burn down deep into the heart of every hearer, and may you all be won by the love of God to you to love the God who loves you.

First Sober Christmas in Ten Years

One afternoon a wild looking Scandinavian rushed into the office in Minneapolis. My assistant, Mr. George Sanborn, was in the office. Mr. Sanborn is not a large man, and the Scandinavian was a big, burly fellow. He rushed towards Mr. Sanborn as if he were going to do him personal violence. Though small, Mr. Sanborn was fearless. He sprang to his feet and said, "What do you want?"

"I want sympathy," the man cried.

"No," said Mr. Sanborn, "you want Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ alone can help you." In a moment the man was subdued and sank upon his knees, and Mr. Sanborn explained to him the way of life and he accepted the Saviour.

On the following Christmas Day at our testimony service, this man arose and said, "I am so happy to-day. This is the first sober Christmas that I have spent in ten years. Jesus Christ has saved me."

Three Silver Dollars ONE night I reached home from my work very late. There was no one in the house. My family were all out at Lake Minnetonka and I was to go out to them the next morning by a very early train. I knew that they would be in need of money to buy ice and provisions and other things. When I took out my pocketbook to see how much money I had, I found to my dismay that while I had quite a little money, none of it belonged to me. It was all money that I had set apart for the Lord.

The fare out to Lake Minnetonka was less than fifty cents but I did not have even enough to pay that, much less any to give the family when I reached there. What should I do? There was no possibility of my

seeing any one before the train left; for most people would be in bed and the streets deserted as I walked to the station. I had taken the ground anyway that I would never borrow money from anybody for any purpose, for the scripture says, "Owe no man anything." Of course, the thought came to me to take the money I had set apart for the Lord and repay it some other time when I had more money, but I saw clearly that that would not do, that I had no more right to take the Lord's money for my own uses than I had to take any other person's.

I knelt down and said, "Heavenly Father, I cannot honestly take the money that belongs to Thee. Thou hast never failed me in the past when I have taken my stand absolutely on what is right, and I do not believe that Thou wilt fail me now. I will not touch the money that belongs to Thee. I cannot see where money will come from, but I must have it. Send me the money I need before five o'clock to-morrow morning." I arose from my knees confident that the money would come, but I could not see any possible way in which it would come.

No one would call at my house, there would be no letters, I would not see any one that I knew on my way over to the station. In a few minutes, I went up-stairs to my office. I pulled open a drawer of the table to look for an account book. I had not opened that drawer for some time, but no sooner was the drawer opened than I saw lying before me three silver dollars. It seemed to me as if three silver dollars never looked so large as those did. I do not know how the three dollars came in the drawer.

Of course, I do not think that any miracle was performed. I presume that I myself had put those three silver dollars there weeks or months before when I had more silver dollars in my pocket than I cared to carry, but it was as plain an answer to prayer as if the three silver dollars had come tumbling down through the chimney. The three dollars would not only take me out to Lake Minnetonka, but meet at least part of the immediate necessities of the family. After reaching our home on the lake I rowed over to Excelsior to call on a friend who had asked me to come over to get vegetables out of his garden.

In the course of our conversation I was led to tell him of the answer to prayer that had come to me the night before. God blessed the story to his own heart. He walked down to the boat with me, and when I stepped down into my rowboat, we shook hands as we separated. He left in my hand a five dollar bill, which met all the needs of the family.

Prayer Answered on the Other Side of the Globe

In the early days of Mr. Moody's work in Chicago, a reckless, worthless Scotchman used to hang around the tabernacle. He was a desperate fellow, feared by his own companions. He would carry a dagger in his stocking, and many were afraid that he would draw that dagger upon them. He seemed to have an especial spite against the meetings that were going on. One night he stood outside the tabernacle with a pitcher of beer in his hands offering a drink to every man that came out of the building. At other times he would go into the inquiry meetings and try to interfere with the workers.

One night Major Whittle was talking to two young men, who were more or less interested, and this jeering Scotchman was interfering. Finally Major Whittle turned to the two young men and said, "Young men, if you set any value on your souls, I advise you to have nothing to do with that man."

This seemed only to amuse the Scotchman. But God was working. Over in Scotland was an earnest Christian mother who was praying for her wayward son. One night he went to bed as godless as ever, but in the middle of the night, he was aroused from his sleep. He awakened under conviction of sin, and as he

lay there in bed, the Holy Spirit brought to his mind a passage that he had forgotten was in the Bible. He did not even know it was there at all, though doubtless he had heard it some time in his boyhood. It was Romans 4:5, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." The Holy Spirit made clear the meaning of the verse to him. Then and there, without getting out of bed, he believed on Him that justifieth the ungodly and found peace.

He at once became as active in the cause of Christ as he had been active in the cause of the devil. For nearly thirty years he has been a member of Chicago Avenue Church and is to-day a deacon in the church.

Some time after his conversion, he went back to Scotland to visit his old mother. They had glad times of Bible reading and prayer together, but there was another wayward son, a sailor, sailing the sea somewhere, they knew not where. One night the old mother and the converted son knelt down and began to cry to God for the wandering son and brother. That very night he was in the China Seas, though they did not know it, and while they prayed in Scotland, the Spirit of God fell in the China Seas and that son and brother was converted there on the deck of the ship.

He returned to Scotland and told his mother the good news. He entered the Free Church college and commenced to study to be a foreign missionary. He was sent out by the missionary society of the Free Church of Scotland, and after years of faithful service, laid down his life as a missionary in India.

A Prayer Fifteen Years Long Almost immediately after my conversion, another man was laid on my heart, and I began to pray every day for his conversion. After I had been praying for some time for his conversion, the thought came into my mind that I would spend the night in prayer for him. I did not succeed in praying the whole night. The spirit was willing but the flesh was weak. I was on my knees almost the entire night, but part of the time I was asleep, but the best I could I spent the whole night in prayer for him.

When the morning came, I thought, "Now you have prayed for him all night, write him a letter beseeching him to accept Christ." In a very short time I received a reply making fun of me and ridiculing me for my attempts to bring him to Christ. The devil came to me and mocked me and said, "That is all your prayers amount to. What is the good of praying? Here you spent the whole night praying for him and have written him a letter and this is all you get for your pains." But the devil did not succeed in deceiving me this time.

I continued praying for him every day. I kept it up for about fifteen years, never letting a day pass without praying definitely for his conversion. In the meantime he had moved to Chicago and so had I. I visited him in Chicago, but could get no opportunity to speak to him about his soul. Indeed, he seemed to put himself out to be particularly blasphemous when I was around in order to hurt my feelings, but still I kept on praying. One morning, after having prayed about fifteen years, as I was on my knees before God, it seemed as if God said to me, "You need not ask for that any more.

I have heard your prayer. He will be converted." I never prayed again for his conversion but every morning I would look up and say, "Heavenly Father, I thank Thee that Thou hast heard my prayer, and now I am waiting to see it." About two weeks from that morning he came to my house to dinner. After dinner I said to him, "Don't you think you had better stay here all night?" He replied, "I don't know but I had. I am just up from inflammatory rheumatism and it is damp outside and I am really afraid to go home lest the rheumatism come back."

When he awoke the next morning the inflammatory rheumatism had come back to that extent that his feet were so swollen he could not put on his shoes. For two weeks he was laid up in my house. My opportunity had come. I had him. Every morning we held family prayers in his room. My friends coming in and out of the house seeing him there took it for granted that he was a Christian and seemed to talk more about religion than usual. My children running in and out of his room seemed to talk more about Christ than they usually did, though they always loved to talk about their Saviour.

After breakfast when the two weeks were up, we started down La Salle Avenue together. We had not gone half a block when he turned to me and said, "Archie, I am thinking of going into temperance work. How do you begin?" If there was ever any one on earth that needed to go into temperance work, it was he. I replied, "The only way I know to begin temperance work right is by first of all becoming a Christian yourself." He said, "I always thought I was a Christian." "You have the strangest way of showing it of any man I ever knew."

"How do you become a Christian?" he next asked bluntly. "Come over to my office and I will tell you." I took him over to my office and as Mr. Moody was away I took him to Mr. Moody's office and though he was seven years older than I, I explained to him the Way of Life as I would have explained it to a little child. He listened eagerly and when I had finished, he knelt down and accepted Christ as his Saviour just like a little child. Those who had known him in the olden time could hardly believe that he was converted.

Some in the east would not believe it until they came out and saw him for themselves. Within a year he was preaching the Gospel. He preached it up to the end. I had been down east visiting old friends of his and mine, and returned to Chicago. Hearing that he was ill at the place where he was preaching, forty miles out of Chicago, I went out to see him, and spent the day with him. I started to tell him about the old friends I met down in the east but he said, " Never mind that.

Let's have a time of prayer." We passed the whole day in prayer and conversation and a happy day it was. At evening I returned to Chicago, as I was to go south the next day, I spent the night in the Institute. About six o'clock in the morning there was a rap on my door. When I went to the door and opened it, one of the students stood there with a telegram in his hand. I opened it and read, "Your brother passed away this morning at two o'clock." I jumped on a train and hurried out to the place.

When I entered the room where his body lay, and turned back that white sheet and looked into the face of my eldest brother as he lay there at peace at last, I thanked God that for fifteen years I had believed in a God that answers prayer. Have you those that you love who are wandering far from God? There is a way to reach them. That way is by the Throne of God.

An Opportunity Lost Forever I ONCE had a friend who was a very bright scholar. He entered college at an earlier age than most men are able to enter. He was a young fellow of good habits but without settled principles. After he had been in college awhile it began to be rumoured about that he was thinking of becoming a Christian. Some one came to me and said, "Frank is thinking of becoming a Christian," but I was not a Christian myself and was not greatly interested in the information.

If I had been a Christian, I believe I could have spoken the word that would have brought him over the line, but not being a Christian and not being interested in the matter, I said nothing to him about it. After a few days of indecision, he decided the wrong way. He became infatuated with a beautiful actress and followed her about the country. He never married her but he got to going to the bad. He graduated from the college a moral wreck. Not long after graduation he married the daughter of one of the best families in one of our

eastern states.

Of course, the marriage was unhappy. One day, he and his young wife were preparing to go out riding together. The carriage stood at the door and he stood by it waiting for his wife. She did not appear. He hurried up to her dressing-room and went in. The servants heard sharp words, then they heard the crack of a revolver, and as they rushed into the room, that beautiful young wife lay dead upon the floor with a bullet through her brain. Whether she shot herself or whether he shot her, it was difficult to say.

The coroner's verdict was that she died by her own hand. At all events, he became a haunted man. Not long after, he came to the house of a friend and said, "John, can I spend the night with you?" "Certainly," he replied. "Can I have the room next to yours?" "Why, Frank, you can have anything in the house." They sat up late into the night, talking and then retired. The host had fallen asleep when suddenly he was awakened by a constant rapping at his door. "What is it, Frank?" he cried.

"Are you there, John?" the wretched man called. "Yes, can I do anything for you?" "No, I only wanted to know that you were there." The host fell asleep again but was soon awakened by another rap at his door. "What is it, Frank?" he called. "Are you there, John?" "Yes. Are you sick, can I do anything for you, Frank?" "No, I only wanted to know that you were there." Again he fell asleep, and again he was awakened by the same woeful call. All the night through the man haunted by evil memories would come and wake him by a rap on the door to find if he was there.

He could not bear to be alone a moment. The next day he left. He went west to San Francisco, took a steamer on the Pacific Ocean, and when several days out jumped overboard. Tonight his body rests beneath the waters of the Pacific Ocean. If I had been a Christian in the early days, I might have led that friend to Christ and saved all this frightful, awful tragedy. I have had the joy of leading many another young man to Christ, but that young man has passed beyond my reach forever.

If you do not accept Christ to-day you may a year from to-day, and when you do there will be opportunities to work for Christ in bringing others to Him, but opportunities are passing by you to-day and to-morrow and next day that will never come back again.

A Child's Prayer Answered

A Christian worker going through the tenements in the east end of London looking for unfortunates to help, came one day into a wretched room in the upper story of one of the large tenement houses. There seemed to be no one in the room and the worker was about to leave when he noticed a ladder leading up to a hole in the ceiling. Something impelled him to climb the ladder. When he had put his head through the hole in the ceiling, the garret at first was so dark he could not see, but as he became accustomed to the darkness, he saw a child lying on a pile of stuff in the corner.

"What are you doing here, child?" the worker said.

"Hush," the child said, "don't tell father."

"But what are you doing here?"

The child showed the worker his back bearing the marks of the awful beating that the drunken father had given him. The worker said, "You cannot stay here. You will die here. I will go and get you help."

As the worker was about to withdraw, the little fellow said, "Would you like to hear a hymn that I learned at the Sunday-school?" The worker stopped a moment to listen and the child repeated the familiar verse,

"Gentle Jesus, meek and mild,

Look upon a little child.

Pity my simplicity,

Suffer me to come to Thee.

Fain would I to Thee be brought,

Gracious Lord, forbid it not;

In the kingdom of Thy grace,

Make a little child a place."

Telling the child to keep quiet and he would soon return, the worker stole away for help. He found a place to take the child and soon returned to get him. Again he climbed the ladder and put his head through the hole in the ceiling, but everything was quiet. He spoke to the child but there was no answer. The child was dead. His prayer had been heard.

"In the kingdom of His grace,

The Lord had given the little child a place."

The President of a Racing Association Converted

One night in an Australian city after I had given out the invitation and a large number of people had risen and were standing, a minister sitting near me became very much excited and said, "Look there! Look there!"

"Look where?" I said.

"Look over there at that tall gentleman and his wife standing."

"Yes," I said, "I see them, what of it?"

"Why," he said, "that man is the former mayor of the city and is now president of our race track association. What does he mean?"

"Why," I said, "I suppose he means to accept Christ. That was the proposition."

The minister was nonplussed. He did not know what to make of it. As soon as the meeting was over, I went down to where this gentleman and his wife were standing, and stepped up to them and said to him, "Did you really accept Jesus Christ this evening?"

Quietly but firmly he replied, "Yes, I did. Would you like to know how I came to accept Him?"

"Yes, I would."

"Well," he said, "my little boy was at your children's meeting this afternoon and was converted. He came home full of enthusiasm and insisted that we should come to-night to hear you preach and we came and have decided to accept Christ."

Who can tell how much is involved in the conversion of a little boy?

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

Two little girls came to our children's meeting in Bristol, England, accepted Christ, and went home full of joy and enthusiasm to tell their mother the story of their conversion. When the mother heard the story from her children and saw the "God's Sure Promise" cards they held in their hands, her heart was full. She kept the cards with her all evening, took them to bed with her, put them under her pillow and kept her hand on them. She was afraid to go to sleep lest she should get her hand off the cards. The next day was Sunday and the meeting in the afternoon was for women only. This mother came with the cards still in her hand and when the invitation was given out stood up to accept Christ as her Saviour. Led to Christ by her own little daughters. "A little child shall lead them."

Saved Five Minutes

One evening in our church in Chicago one of the officers in going around the gallery after I was through preaching, and as the audience was going out of the church, stepped up to a gentleman and said, "Are you saved?"

"Yes, sir," he replied. He was very positive about it.

"How long have you been saved?"

"About five minutes," he answered.

"When were you saved?" asked the gentleman.

The man replied, "About five minutes ago while that man was preaching."

He did not wait until I got through the sermon. He did not wait for some one to deal with him. He came to Jesus right there and then and Jesus saved him right there. It only takes an instant to be saved. The moment you receive Jesus you are saved. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John 1:12.) Will you receive Him now?

Never be Discouraged

One night in Hobart, Tasmania, as my wife and I were walking home together from the meeting, she said, "Archie, I have just wasted my time to-night. I have spent the whole evening talking with the most frivolous girl I have dealt with for a long time. I made no impression whatever. I just wasted my time. I don't believe it pays to talk to that kind of a girl." But she went home and cried to God for that girl.

The next night that girl came to her completely transformed and brought her mother with her and asked Mrs. Torrey to talk to her. They were both brightly converted. Oftentimes where we seem to have accomplished the least, we have in reality accomplished the most.

Converted by President Wotsey's Singing

When Mr. Moody visited New Haven in 1878 I was a student in the University there. The ripest scholar in the University at the time, if not the ripest in America, was President Wolsey, Ex-President of Yale University. One night a young man went up to hear Mr. Moody preach and President Wolsey sat on the platform, and when they sang the old Gospel hymns. President Wolsey, himself a gray-haired scholar, joined in singing the hymns with all his heart. That young man said, "Well, if one of the greatest scholars in America can sing those hymns in that way, there certainly must be something in it," and he was converted, not through Mr. Moody's preaching, but through President Wolsey's singing.

How to Love Jesus

A LITTLE girl in London once came to Mark Guy Pearse and said, "Mr. Pearse, I don't love Jesus. I wish you would tell me how to love Him."

He said, "Little girl, as you go away from here to-day, keep saying to yourself, ' Jesus loves me,' ' Jesus loves me,' and I believe you will come back next Sunday saying, ' I love Jesus.'"

The next Sunday the little girl came back to Mark Guy Pearse radiant, and she said, "Oh, Mr. Pearse, I do love Jesus. As I went away from here last Sunday, I kept saying to myself as you told me to, 'Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me, Jesus loves me,' and then I soon saw Him hanging on the cross and dying in awful agony for me, and my heart began to grow warm and very soon it was full of love to Jesus."

"We love Him because He first loved us."

"If Any Man be in Christ Jesus, He is a New Creature"

I KNEW a man who used to go to dances at least four nights a week, and in summer time spend his days on the race-course. He would spend a large share of his afternoons at the card table and the remaining nights on a big drunk, or something of that kind. I have known that man so touched by the finger of God that you could not get him to a ball unless you dragged him by an ox-team, unless he went to preach the Gospel. I have known him to do that. In the olden days he loved the theatre, but to-day he would be perfectly unhappy in a theatre unless he went there to preach the Gospel. I have known him to do that. In the olden days, he played cards six days out of seven but to-day you could not hire him to touch the cards. In the olden days, the prayer meeting would have been crucifixion to him, but there is scarcely anything he enjoys to-day as he enjoys the prayer meeting. In the olden days, the Bible was the stupidest book to him, though he read it every day. He loved everything in the way of literature better than the Bible and religious books. To-day he loves the Bible and sometimes he thinks he won't read anything else. I know that man well. I know him better than I know any other man, and knowing the transformation that has taken place in his life, I know that the new birth is a reality, if I don't know anything else.

"Give Me Back My Tears"

One of the mightiest soul winners I ever knew was Colonel Clarke of Chicago. He would work at his business six days every week that he might keep his mission open seven nights every week. And every night in the week the year around five or six hundred men would gather together in that mission hall. It was a motley crowd; drunkards, thieves, pickpockets, gamblers and everything that was hopeless. I used to go and hear Colonel Clarke talk, and he seemed to me one of the dullest talkers I ever heard in my life. He would ramble along and yet these five or six hundred men would lean over and listen spellbound while Colonel Clarke talked in his prosy way. Some of the greatest preachers in Chicago used to go down to

help Colonel Clarke but the men would not listen to them as they did to Colonel Clarke. When he was speaking they would lean over and listen and be converted by the score.

I could not understand it. I studied it and wondered what the secret of it was. Why did these men listen with such interest, and why were they so greatly moved by such prosy talking? I found the secret. It was because they knew that Colonel Clarke loved them, and nothing conquers like love. The tears were very near the surface with Colonel Clarke.

Once in the early days of the mission, when he had been weeping a great deal over these men, he got ashamed of his tears. He steeled his heart and tried to stop his crying, and succeeded, but he lost his power. He saw that his power was gone and he went to God and prayed, "Oh, God, give me back my tears," and God gave him back his tears, and gave him wonderful power, marvellous power over these men.

If we would see the seed that we sow bring an abundant harvest, we must water it with our tears. "He that goeth forth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing bringing his sheaves with him."

Conquered By Compassion

One night I was preaching in one of the suburbs of Chicago, and when I gave out the invitation an enormous man rose to his feet. He weighed 290 pounds. I thought to myself, "You have caught a big fish to-night."

After the meeting was over, I went down and sat beside him and talked to him. He said, "Let me tell you how I came to accept Christ to-night. I have been a church-goer all my life, but I only went to criticise, and when men got up in the prayer meeting to talk I took out a little note-book which I kept, and wrote down what they said, and then kept tab on them during the week to see how their life agreed with their profession, so I came to say to myself, 'All Christians are hypocrites.' My heart became as hard as a stone. I was perfectly indifferent. Some months ago, I was taken very ill, and the doctors said I must die, but I was not at all afraid to die. I had become so hardened by the criticism of professors of religion that even death had no terrors for me. But one day a retired minister came and asked if he might pray for me. I said, 'Yes, you can pray for me if you want to. I have no objection, if it will do you any good, it won't hurt me any. Yes, pray if you want to, if you will enjoy it. It won't disturb me.' He knelt down beside my bed and began to pray, and I watched him out of the corner of my eyes. I was keeping tab on him to see if he was real. I thought I was dying but I was not a bit frightened. I was perfectly callous and hardened, but as I lay there watching him out of the corner of my eyes, I saw a tear rolling down his cheeks. I said to myself, 'Here is this man, a perfect stranger to me, with no possible interest in me, and yet he is weeping over my sins and my lost condition.' That broke my heart. That is why I am here to-night. That is why I got up and asked for prayers; that is why I have taken the Lord Jesus."

I tell you, you will win more men and women by your tears than you will ever win by your arguments.

The Curse Coming Home

I RECALL a man who was a daily drinker all his life. I don't think that man was ever drunk in his life. He despised a drinker but he also laughed at total abstinence. I have heard him ridicule it time and time again. He had three boys, carefully reared in most respects but reared to his ideas about drinking, reared to think

that moderate drinking was the proper course, reared to despise a drunkard, but also to ridicule total abstinence. Every one of these three boys grew up to be a drunkard.

The rumseller is bound to reap in his own family, if he has one. A friend of mine of very wide experience, I think the widest experience of any friend I ever had, once said to me that he had never known a rumseller, who did not sooner or later feel the curse in his own home. One time I was holding meetings in an America

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