



"You will know them by their fruits." Mt. 7:16

The Autobiography of Ernest Coryell

Introduction

The wise man said, "Of making many books there is no end," and rightly so. When one considers the mass of present day literary production, countless tons of pulp prepared for the newsstands of America with materials which in the major part are unfit for the public eye, the intensified efforts of false religions in spreading their reading material, truly there is a great need of some living, glorious Gospel truth that will warm the heart and draw men closer to Calvary. Feeling this need the author, Rev. Ernest Coryell, has prepared this book of life sketches and sermons.

Rev. Coryell has been a positive preacher of the Word for nearly a quarter of a century; he has preached to people of all walks of life in revivals across the nation. God has signally blessed His servant with a forceful and pungent, unctious, and tender message which has not only led many to a refuge at an altar of prayer but has, also, been a blessing to the sanctified. You will enjoy this book reverberating from the text. Romans 1:16.

It has been my happy privilege to know Evangelist Coryell for over eighteen years and I have always found him to be spiritual, sincere, sound, and soul burdened with a great loyalty to the Christ who redeemed him and to the church which he serves. It is with great joy I commend both the book and its author and pray God's richest blessing upon the man, his message, and the reader.

C. C. Corbett, Supt. Wisconsin District Church of the Nazarene Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 1, 1942



1. PARENTAGE

My parents were quaint old people whose opinions were based upon earlier experiences. Father had spent many years in the sawmill, and the element which frequents these places was to plant its influence upon the early lives of his children. He was not religiously inclined to the extent that he denied himself any of the so-called pleasures that the world of sin can afford, for in his opinion Jehovah was a God of love. He believed that Hell comprised the suffering and sorrows that we undergo here on this earth, and that the great God of love would not punish us farther in the world to come, but would lead us into that beautiful city whose streets were paved

with beaten gold. There with all the saints in glory we would sit beneath the beautiful foliage, breathe the fragrant sweet-scented air, listen to the heavenly choirs swell the praises of the Great and Mighty One, and in adoration cast our crowns before His throne on the banks of the River of Life. To him this was the ultimate end of every life, no matter how lived here on earth.

My mother had been reared in a strict old Methodist home and this environment had left its imprint on her character. Dear Mother--what a woman she was! Her life was a pattern, and example to her family, for in spite of opposition she lived a devoted Christian life, and taught her little ones in that way. Many times I have found her in tears over the conduct of one of us children. She abhorred profanity, and the roughness of the vernacular of the north woods, which was our home.

As I look back now. I realize what a battle she must have had; but in spite of it she succeeded in planting in the hearts of her children the germ of salvation the longing for a better life. At her knee we heard the God, sweet story told again, and again.

“My son, don’t forget to read your Bible,” she often said to me, “It always has something new in it for you, no matter how often you have read it.”



2. HOME LIFE

My earliest recollections of home include an old log house with shingled gables and old fashioned doorsteps. Near the door stood a huge stump, an eyesore indeed until one day Mother filled the decayed top of it with earth and planted in it the beautiful wild flowers of the woods towering high above the little cabin, the proud old pines reared their heads, filling the air with the spicy aroma of their breath. Flowers grew in profusion about their roots, tender green vines clung lovingly to their gaunt trunks; while little squirrels played tag among the branches. The floor of the forest beneath was carpeted with waving ferns and moss; here and there the carpet was patterned with bleeding heart, may flower, honeysuckle, wild rose, violet, and occasionally a sober Jack-in-the-pulpit stood as a sentinel.

Rabbits played at hide and seek through the brush; black bears lumbered across the field; and through trees the timid little doe with her young followed the path to the brook to drink. At dusk one could hear the distant drumming of the partridge; and as night settled down the scream of the wild-cat or the mournful howl of the timber wolf in search of food made the security of the fireside seem a haven to the heart of a boy.

Childhood days! How swiftly they fly. Boys with homemade bow and arrows eagerly hunting for partridge or rabbits, or, with a carefully trimmed stick strong cord and bent-pin-hook, fishing in the happy little brook as it went laughing and singing along carrying its burden of trout chubs and shiners. Trudging wearily home at sundown with the catch, to eat a delicious supper of fried trout, French fried potatoes (like Mother used to fix), hot biscuits, and honey, and occasionally juicy strawberries lying red in the bowl. Then, with the wood in the box in the kitchen, we seek the old homemade bed and slumberland. Just as we are comfortably drowsy Mother comes quietly into the room and, tucking the covers tightly about us, gives each a gentle pat and whispers goodnight. All too soon Father’s husky voice summons us from the land of dreams where boys do all the impossible things they would like to do. My father was a stern man and expected

obedience from his children.

Drowsiness is dispelled as we spring to our feet in the chill morning air of the room at the second and louder call from our father's lips. After plunging our faces into the clear cold water from the little spring back of the house we gather at the long table to partake of steaming griddle cakes, maple syrup, and venison steak. Then we sally forth into the dawn of the new day that awaits and the duties that it brings.

In our home there were five children, three boys and two girls. Many are the gay, good times recalled to mind; but life was not all playtime. At a very early age I was pressed into the service of the home. Clearing the trees and brush from the fields must be accomplished before we could proceed to plant our crops. I loved horses and it was my joy to hitch a team to a big log and watch my pets arch their necks, and pull the huge thing away. In helping my father clear the fields I soon learned that the old stumps must be removed from the ground, or we would be continually hampered by the little green shoots which sprang up so quickly (how like the Christian life).

Father was a Civil War Veteran and old pals were always welcomed into the home. It was a gala event indeed when some traveler would put up at our home for the night, We children were allowed to stay up extra late, and listen to the reminiscences of the life that was past. Our imaginations were fired and we thought that there could be nothing gayer or greater than the life of a soldier. Our lives were being molded by the atmosphere of our home. Parents, let me beg of you that you make the atmosphere of your home such that it will not mar the future of the plastic little beings in your care.

In spite of all the joys of boyhood, it is with a feeling of sadness that I recall the past, for the circle is now broken. One by one, Mother, Father, and two sisters have crossed the river and await the Day of Days upon the other side. How swiftly--all too swiftly--time rolls on.



3. BOYHOOD PRANKS

Since we lived five miles from the county-seat it was considered a real treat to go there. Our only means of travel was with a heavy work-team and wagon.

One day Father and Mother went to town to do their trading and left my younger brother and me home to care for it during their absence. After they had gone we laid plans for a big day. There was a great pile of logs by the house and in these logs we built a fireplace of brick. We placed a pipe about six inches in diameter and twenty feet long in the logs for a chimney. Then the fire was kindled and fed until it was roaring very nicely. The black smoke rolled out of the pipe and we were enjoying ourselves immensely when we heard the rumble of the bridge that warned us that our parents were nearing home Oh, how frightened we were! I sat on the pipe to keep down the smoke while my brother put out the fire. We worked furiously, and when they drove into the yard we ran to help unhitch the horses. Our faces were wreathed with smiles. We had been such good boys while they were gone. We were rewarded with a large sack of candy. What a lucky escape! One day not long after that my father and elder brother were busy in the field Mother had gone to visit a neighbor, The coast was clear and we decided to find Father's silver mounted revolver. We discovered the key to the dresser-drawer and soon had the coveted treasure in our hands We examined the magazine and discovering no cartridges

in it we proceeded to our play. My brother was my horse I decided that he was too old for further use, and leading him back of the house I turned the supposedly empty revolver upon him. There was a deafening roar and my brother dropped to the ground. I began to scream for Father to come. Across the field he came racing, chiding himself for leaving that one shell in the gun. My older brother was dispatched with haste for Mother. She came, her face bathed in tears of heartbreak. A man on a fleet footed horse went for the doctor. When the doctor looked at my brother he shook his head.

“Mrs. Coryell, I hate to tell you, but it is very doubtful if the boy pulls through. I do not expect it at all.”

Oh, the heartbreak of that hour. I was only a little lad probably six years of age. The younger brother whom I had so seriously wounded in our play was two years younger than myself. I was terrified for fear my brother would die and I would be sent to prison. Every time a new face appeared on the scene I ran to hide under the bed. As the weeks went past my brother still hovered near death.

The doctor was surprised at the resistance that little body had. Gradually he began to improve, and I think that the day he sat up in a chair was one of the happiest of my whole childhood. I have never lost the fear and hatred of a revolver that was instilled into me with that experience. That brother is now a hale and hearty man of near fifty who lives with his family in the west.

Again, I recall, I begged to be allowed to accompany Father to town. For some reason, unknown to me, he refused to let me go. After he had gone I went into the woods to pout. I walked along, musing on the injustice of life and wondering why it was that I was always the goat. Of course, all my wrongs were imagined but I was feeling very sorry for myself. I did not notice how far from familiar scenes I was wandering until I saw by the failing light that the sun was sinking. I was lost! Terror smote my heart, for the forest was peopled with wild animals that would surely attack a small boy alone in the woods at night. I thought of my mother. How worried she must be about me. How foolish of me to pout just because I could not go to town. Oh, what promises I made to the Guardian of my path if I could just find the way home.

Suddenly near at hand a timber wolf howled. Not far away another answered. In the distance I could hear still others. They were assembling for the evening chase. My heart thumped wildly. With agony of mind I remembered all the stories I had ever heard of people lost in the woods at night.

Then a bit of advice of my father's came to mind. “Line up three trees. Look for their mossy side.

That is the north side. Follow them in a straight line, keeping more trees in sight that are in line with these three first ones. You are sure to come out of the woods someplace.” Looking about me, I discovered three trees in a line. Following Father's advice, I came out upon the highway. How my bare feet patted down that road. Behind me I could hear the wolves calling and answering. It added speed to my every jump. Breathlessly I tumbled into the house just as supper was ready. When my father heard the story you can imagine what happened. Anyway, I found that it didn't pay to pout.



4. SCHOOL DAYS

One frosty morning I received an unusually careful examination after I returned from my morning ablutions at the spring behind the house. Then I was hustled into a new pair of trousers and home made cap, and shirt. It was to be my first day at school. How my heart pounded against my ribs as I made my way with the others to the little log school house in the clearing. We were there early and, too frightened to care to play with the others. I chose a desk that seemed to fit and sat waiting for the schoolday to begin,

Soon the bell rang and the children rushed in and found seats. Although so frightened that my teeth chattered, I was eager for my first class. Surely it must come soon. When finally the teacher turned her attention to me I had lost some of the fright and had become interested in my surroundings and the classes of the other children. The teacher, after learning my name and age gave to me a shining new slate and pencil, together with two or three books. You may be sure that I was a proud little lad.

After what seemed an interminable length of time we were excused for the recess period. I was coaxed outside where I took part in the old, old games of "Pom Pom Pullaway," "Prisoner's Goal," etc.

My first teacher was a woman of beautiful Christian character. Our Opening Exercises always included the singing of some beautiful old hymn, Once each week each child was allowed to choose his favorite hymn which we then proceeded to sing. The beautiful old hymns "Yield not to Temptation" and "Only an Armor Bearer" were my favorites. These songs had a great influence on my life. Although perhaps too young to realize the full significance of the messages that they conveyed, yet they were songs that my mother loved and sang, and they coincided with the life that she urged us to live. I am a firm believer in good gospel singing. One may become indoctrinated by a good song.

Following the singing the teacher repeated with us the "Lord's Prayer". Then we were ushered into the work of the school day. Time passed rapidly and soon my first year of school had passed.

For the first three years in school this same young lady taught our school and I can never thank her enough for the part she played in my life, for she helped to give me a desire for better things of life. Christian Young People who are teaching school: I beg of you, live the life that Jesus has laid out for His followers in the school room as well as outside. You may never know until the Judgment the influence that you are wielding on the young lives before you. But if you will sow the seed of kindness, love, and righteous living, the Lord will see that the seed is watered and nurtured until it brings forth fruit, and great will be our joy in heaven, if your influence has led your pupils to heaven.

It was just after school had closed one year during my boyhood, that the great fire known as the Hinkley fire broke out about fifty miles from our home. I never will forget that terrible afternoon.

The wind howled mournfully and the sky gradually darkened as the smoke filled the sky. At two o'clock the lamps had to be lighted for the sun was completely obscured, and it was as dark as the darkest night. Cattle and horses, smelling the smoke, ran to and fro frantically. The air was stifling, and so thick with smoke that we had difficulty in breathing. At our usual bedtime my brother and I were put to bed, and went to sleep, but at about ten o'clock were awakened again. Terror filled my heart when I looked out of the window, for the sparks were falling as fast as snowflakes in a snow-storm. For a time we strove to hold the fire back by carrying water but it was a futile effort.

As the fire advanced we ran to save our lives. Everywhere the little wild folk of the woods were fleeing with us. As I looked back I saw our sheep, their wool a torch to catch

the flames, as they writhed in the agony of the unbearable heat. Everything was swept away, and when we returned to the old home we found everything in ruin. The old schoolhouse, the beautiful forest, our home all lay in ashes.

For several months our home was a tent. On Christmas Day we moved into the new home hewn from logs. Often the thermometer had registered below zero but in the joy of our new home we forgot the discomforts that we had known. Beneath the house was a snug little basement, walled up with timbers. In this we placed the fruits, jams and jellies that Mother had been able to can that year.

Wild fruit is in an abundance there, raspberries, strawberries, etc. were picked and converted into jam, preserves and jellies. Many small creatures found their way into the warmth of that little cellar.

Many times I have been sent down for a jar of fruit, and have discovered some little animal eyeing me curiously with its beady little eyes,

Speaking of preserves reminds me of the method Mother used in canning her jellies, etc. There was always a coating of sealing wax over the top of the fruit. This was to protect it from the foreign matter that might have contaminated it, and to keep the air from it so that it would not sour. After removing the wax one could tell by one sniff whether any air had penetrated to spoil the fruit. It paid to have the fruit well sealed. And so it is with the life of the Christian. The Lord has provided that we may be "sealed with the Holy Ghost", that we may be "preserved." He does not intend that any foreign matter shall creep in to sour our experiences, but He says He will preserve us, or in other words, "keep us sweet" until Jesus comes again.

A new school house was built and soon we were in session again. In front of this new schoolhouse there was a deep ditch and then the road. Now in every school there is a civil engineer who plans the enterprises that the boys shall engage in. One boy, a little more ingenious than the rest, suggested that we dam up the ditch. With a group of boys that age thinking is the preface to action and so the next day saw us with shovels busily building the dam across the ditch. Soon came a day when the snow began to melt. Water came rushing down the ditch to be stopped by the secure little construction which we had completed. In the morning the ditch was almost filled with water. The next step in our procedure was to find a suitable log. When a suitable one had been discovered we hauled it to the ditch and were rewarded by the splash it made as it fell into the water.

Now for the fun. In the timber it is a disgrace not to be able to roll a log, and many are the thrilling tales told about the rides upon a rolling, pitching log down the swift current of a river swollen by melting snows or spring rains. The girls gathered about to watch the sport, and acclaim the hero.

With sharp nails driven into our shoe heels we prepared for the contest. A boy stepped to each end of the log, and they began to roll it over with the nails in their shoes. As they gathered speed the log would almost hum. After considerable speed had been reached one boy would turn his foot in the opposite direction and the log would suddenly stop. The victor remained balanced on the log but the other hauled himself out of the ditch and went to the schoolhouse to dry his clothing. This is great sport and excellent practice for the boys of the lumber woods who will probably follow the camps during their manhood. Many boys who begin in this way become expert log rollers.

By this time we had another teacher who did not read the Bible to us, and whose discipline was not as strict as it should have been. School had begun to lose its interest for me. The great "out of doors" was calling. I was eager to be out in the lumber camps doing a man's work. This desire was fed by the stories of woodsmen, and stories of thrilling scenes of the hunt. I was fully determined that if the opportunity offered I would

leave school and enter the lumber camp. School life had lost its thrill.



5. A SOLILOQUY

How many young men stop to look at the field of life? How many ask themselves: "What does life hold for me? What is beyond the sky lines of the tomorrows?" Visions often floated before my eyes those days. I thought of the great possibilities that lay before me. As I watched the approaching train I often wondered where it had come from. Where was it going? What lay out there in the world beyond the horizon? As I stood by the side of the panting engine, so anxious to be away, I watched the conductor. With his trim suit, neat cap, and shiny brass buttons, and wished myself in his place. Or, as I breathlessly eyed the engineer with his trembling hand on the throttle, anxious to be leaving our little town, I tried to imagine what it would be like to be in his place out in the big world.

Once in the city I watched the great steamers on the Lake coming into harbor. What a thrilling life it would be to go to sea. The street cars, too, thrilled me, and I longed to see the city from their windows. Out on the sidewalk, I watched the crowds. Millionaire, pauper, banker, and bum, all hurrying along, anxious to get someplace. Where were they all going? What did life hold for them? What could I do with my life?

Then, back again in the little lumber town, I followed the tide and turned with the lumber jack to read the signs on the bulletin board at the employment bureau. Here I met new men, often rough, loud and unclean. I mingled with the element that follows the lumber camps, and became enamored of the life that they lived. To my boyish imagination they were heroes of the highest class. This was the life that I craved. My life was being molded by the environment that surrounded me. I was being swept with the crowd. If I turned against the tide now, it would be against my own will.

My older brother did follow another plane of life, for he became attached to a man of learning, and turned his ambitions in that direction. The younger brother, following my footsteps, cast his lot with the element of the camps.

Youth surely is the plastic age; the clay is in the mold and is being made into the finished product.



6. CHARACTER BUILDING

The world offers a challenge to youth. Before you is the great wide world, with its rolling rivers, level prairies, waving trees, towering mountains, smoking factories, beautiful farms, happy homes, and a world of business activities. It is holding out to the youth a promise and an invitation.

Early opinions and plans formed in the mind of the youth often seem to have a tenacious grip upon the individual. Like the Prodigal which Christ told of in the gospel of Luke, the youth roams into a far country figuratively speaking.

Foundations must be laid to hold the future building. Forethought and plans laid in youth often lead the individual to the goal he has set years before. But the edifice must be built

with careful planning. What one cultivates grows and prospers. Nothing is won without a heroic effort, and a desperate attempt.

At a very early age I felt a desire to enter the medical profession. My brother encouraged me in this ambition. One day, while I was still in school, one of the trustees of the school gave a little talk to the school. In his lecture he spoke only a few words, but my hopes for a medical career were shattered. My brother, seeking to help me, made arrangements for me to go away to school. But, this venture proved a failure, for while at school I fell in with bad companions and was forced to abandon this hope.

It was while I was attending this school that the Lord spoke to my heart for the first time with conviction. A revival was in progress, and I attended regularly. Conviction gripped my heart one evening at the close of the service I rose to my feet to seek the place of prayer. Two young men thinking to help me, rushed forward and placed their hands on my arms to lead me forward.

Immediately conviction left me, for the smell of tobacco which these young men exhaled from their persons, smote my nostrils as a mockery. "Heaven does not smell like that," I muttered to myself as I left the building, still unsaved, with my heart hardened against the Spirit.

Young men, I beg of you, if you profess to know and serve the Lord Jesus, that you let not some young sinner criticize you in this manner, because of your personal habits. Souls are more precious than the indulging of fleshly desires.

Soon after this I was leaving school turning my back upon another golden opportunity, seeking again the open world, and adventure. In turn I visited the western fields and my old home. Then the opportunity for which I had been waiting offered itself. I was to enter the field of my desire. The lumber camp was opening up to me. Eager for more adventure, I plunged into the life of the camps.



7. INTO THE LUMBER WOODS

Having been raised in the midst of the swaying giant pines, and knowing the life so well, it was with a will that I entered upon my new life.

Some years before, I, as a lad of fourteen, had seen a little of this life, for I had been privileged, or so I considered it, to carry water and wait tables in a camp for some months. It was with a feeling of home coming, then, that I went to work.

The first thing to do was to erect the small village or camp in which we were to live for the next few months. Trees were hewn down and built into cabins. Roofs were put up, and floors laid. Then the rough deep bunks were hewn out of logs, and placed four and five deep, one above the other about the walls of the cabins. Into these bunks an armful of hay was tossed, and over this a few rough blankets. In the center of the room a large box-like stove was placed and about this were built great racks to dry the wet clothing of the inmates of the cabins. An old fashioned grindstone sat in a corner of the room. On this we sharpened our axes. The building was lighted with kerosene lamps, which hung suspended about the walls. This was the home of the lumber jack during the months that he was in camp.

Near the sleeping quarters stood the cook shack. Here the cook, a man, with his helpers, busied himself with satisfying the hunger of the famished workers. At one side of the

room stood a butcher's meat block, with its attendant cleavers, and saws. The meat was shipped in by the carload into the larger camps. The huge stove stood at one end of the room and the remainder of the room was filled with the long, rough plank tables.

Here the cook was the Chief of Police. He presided with cleaver, vinegar bottles, rolling pins, etc.

It was his business to keep peace and order in the cook shack.

The menu was as follows: griddle cakes and sausage one morning and oatmeal, with canned milk, and beefsteak the next. Boiled potatoes, meat, gravy, coarse bread, and oleomargarine completed the bill-of-fare for the rest of the day, except on special occasions.

The beef was kept out of doors, and froze and thawed so many times it often resembled the American flag, red, white, and blue.

Each man had his place at the table; no words were spoken during the meal except to ask for food.

There was no friendly conversation at the table.

Since new men were constantly streaming into the camp, many types were assembled at our tables. A newcomer to the woods could be recognized by his extreme politeness.

"Please pass the potatoes; please pass the bread; etc." was a sure ticket to ridicule.

Old-timers wasted no time with polite phrases. Their requests were made known in the following manner:

"Hey Jack, shoot the punk this way. Get busy with them there spuds and let them float this way.

Gi' me the smear, and be quick about it."

After breakfast was over, although it was yet dark, the boss (called "Push" because of the methods he used in getting the required amount of work from his men) stepped into the dining hall, and called: "Aright, boys, let's get busy!"

Out into the early morning we walked in the dense forest to our respective trees; some were clearing brush, piling it in great hedges; others were pulling stumps or trimming branches from fallen trees.

Soon the great rutter came through and dug a trench on either side of the road. After the road was completed the great water tank would come lumbering along, drawn by powerful horses, water gushing from the end of it. This water froze on the road as soon as it touched it, and often an ice coating three feet deep could be formed thus. This completed the road.

Giant trees were crashing down on every side; logs rolled up in piles often forty feet high at the roadside. Then along would come the big sleighs, which were often of two railroad car capacity. The logs were loaded onto these, and drawn down the glassy road.

At noon the dinner bugle was blown. Sometimes, when we were working far from camp the dinner was brought out to us. A fire was built between two logs, and the meal parceled out to the hungry workers. Often I have eaten this sort of meal when the bread was frozen. One day our lunch team ran away. Mashed potatoes and gravy were spattered all over the trees along the way. The birds must have thought that a holiday, indeed.

Finally the night came, with the tired workers pouring in from the woods surrounding the camp.

Often the clothing was wet to the skin.

After a good warm supper, the boys would tumble into bed to lay and talk of the day's adventures--narrow escapes from falling trees, heroic deeds that had been accomplished during the day. There seemed always to be a good singer in the camp. He would lay in his bunk and start some old song. Often strong men would weep for home and loved ones as they listened to "Old Kentucky Home", "A Picture from Life's Other Side", "The Fisherman's Daughter", and other old favorites.

Some of the men might start quoting poetry or telling stories. And often when there was a new man in camp games and tricks would be played upon him. There was much cursing, laughter, and occasionally a fight or two. The men, for the most part were a rough lot. Some of them even swore in their sleep.

Sunday was wash day. Nearby bushes were covered with clothing. Each man was his own laundryman.

Soon spring was upon us. Roads were breaking through. There was a rush to get the remaining logs to the river or railroad.

One by one, with sacks on shoulders, the men could be seen going down the road to town. Nearly all had been careful during the winter to save their money. Outer trousers had been used for patches on inner ones, patches being cut from the bottoms of the trouser legs. By spring the outer breeches were generally knee breeches. Yarn had been used to sew rubbers with, in order to save. Now with their winter's earnings in their pockets, with a whistle on their lips, and a feeling of well-being in the hearts, the lumber jacks sought the little town down the railroad.



8. DOWNGRADE

When the lumber jack, with his winter's wages in his pocket, entered the little town, everyone seemed to be his friend. He had never realized that he had so many friends. Paper-collared dudes waited for his money on every hand. Any sort of scheme seemed to work. Saloons, gambling -dens, pool-halls, dives of every sort, sought to interest the unsuspecting woodsman. Cardsharps, thieves, professional gamblers, and wicked women strove to intrigue, and entrap him.

Some of these lumbermen had not seen their homes for many months, and had planned to make a visit to the loved ones that had missed them all these weary months. After three or four days in town, they were usually without even the price of a meal. Sadly they returned to the camp to spend another lonely winter in the woods, far from home and friends.

The ragged and patched clothing which they had worn when they left the camp was often retained, for the price of new clothing had been spent in the saloons, or dens of iniquity in the city. Many poor boys were soaked with bad whiskey and robbed of their savings, and when they came to themselves they were in some back-alley, or gutter. Many men, sodden with drink were pushed out into the streets without the price of a place to lodge or a cup of coffee and a doughnut, to face the months before them.

Men, enraged at the treatment they had received, and with their brains befogged with drink, committed outrageous crimes, and often the peaceful, lovable backwoodsman found himself lodged in the city jail without the least idea how he had arrived there or

why he had been thus served.

In the spring there was a time of high water when the logs must be moved downstream to the mill.

They must be kept moving or they would form a jam, and stop the river. Men rode these logs and kept them rolling in the swift current, It was a very dangerous and difficult thing to do. If the logs did jam in the stream, the “river pig”, as these men were called, must pick his way on the bobbing logs out to the center of the jam and pick out and loosen the “key” log which was holding up the others. Many have lost their lives in this manner, for if they are not very agile they are apt to be caught in the jam of logs and crushed into insensibility and drowned.

After this rush there is another wait of weeks and months before they can enter the woods to work again. This is spent much the same as the earlier vacation, and the disillusioned woodsman returns to the woods for the winter season again.

After years of a life of this sort a man becomes hardened, and begins to think no one in the world cares what becomes of him. It is then that he ceases to struggle against the downhill swing of the crowd, and lets himself be led downgrade with the current of human woes.



9. ADRIFT

After years of the life of the woods, one thrill bids for another. Thus it was that I took to railroading rides in the nice red boxcars with sliding doors. With a newspaper for a mattress and a coat for a pillow, I jolted over the clicking rail joints, often changing cars without ceremony, for division points meant lay-overs.

Groves of trees served as hotels- tomato cans were our stew-kettles; fields of potatoes and corn were our grocery stores. Often the only barber supplies to be had were a sharp piece of glass and a bar of laundry soap. After a splash in a near-by-creek our toilet was complete. The “song of the road”--How many young men today are following that path. Oh the privations, the discomforts, the difficulties encountered on these trips.

Time after time, in wrecks, I saw the faces of the dead who a short time before had been companions, comrades, and friends. Time after time, the Lord sent warnings across my pathway.

Finally, after a particularly horrible accident when one of the boys was caught between two freight cars and crushed to death, I decided to “Five-up” this very unsatisfactory life.

Little realizing that only by the longsuffering mercifulness of God was I still permitted to live, I decided to pay a visit to my brother in Montana. When I reached the town where he lived I was puzzled as to which way to turn. I did not know where he lived. Slowly I walked up the street seeking someone who could direct me.

Near at hand I saw a young lady washing windows. Timidly I approached her and inquired the way from her. Very kindly she directed me.

My brother was delighted to see me, and begged me to give up the life of the road, and settle down with him. And so determining to follow the carpenter’s trade, I did settle with him for a while.



10. THE FARMER

I soon tired of the carpenter trade, since in a town of such few inhabitants there was not enough work to keep me busy all the time, and decided to try my luck at farming. With a hired man to cook for I became "Chief Cook and Bottle Washer." It was plain to be seen from the appearance of the hired man, and from the condition of the house that I was sadly in need of a housekeeper.

The young lady, who had so kindly directed me to the home of my brother had indeed won my lonely heart by her lovely, sweet-spirited character. After a time, with much forethought, and many misgivings, and failings of heart, I forced my courage enough to ask this young lady a very important question. To my surprise and delight, she consented to cast her lot with mine. What she could see in the drunken, sin-hardened bum that was myself, was a mystery to me. In due time the mystical knot was tied and the new home set up. How good it seemed to this wanderer to have a place to call his own home.

Now, indeed, I took an interest in the broad rolling acres before me. I took up the challenge that they threw to me. The climate was severe. Sometimes in the winter months the thermometer fell far below zero, going as low as fifty-five degrees below. Snow piled up many feet high. Great blizzards made it dangerous to be away from home much of the time. Coyotes ran the prairie unmolested.

One day, in the dead of winter, I left home for town twelve miles away, in the company of a neighbor. The colts, running ahead, turned back to shelter, and the neighbor said we had better make haste for he feared that the day would turn out to be a bad one, for that was a bad sign. The day was warm and lovely, and it seemed foolish to think that it would storm, but before we had reached town the snow was blowing about us so thickly that we were unable to see each other from our sleighs.

The blizzard raged all day, but I must return to my wife, and babes, and so decided to brave the storm. I was nearly home when I discovered to my consternation that I was completely lost. I floundered about in the drifts for some time, seeming to make no headway at all.

Finally I came upon my field fence and followed it home. As I neared the house I discovered that my wife had placed a large light in the window to guide me, but it was visible only a few feet from the house. How good of God to give me still another chance! But the thought of gratitude to God never entered my head. I remarked that I was a "lucky" fellow.

A near neighbor was lost that same night and drove his team around a straw stack all night. In the morning he discovered that his home was in sight, only a short distance away. He was a bachelor and had no light in the window.

One night about two a. m. someone tapped on the bedroom window.

"Come, at once, your mother is dying," was the word received. As I thought of home and past life, I recalled the many kindnesses of my mother, and thought again of all she meant to me.

The next morning, driving through a blizzard, I went to catch a train for the old home. When I reached home I was ushered into the room to look upon the lifeless clay of the mother who had borne, and reared me. As the others stepped from the room to leave me alone with my grief, I reviewed my past life, and thought of the tears of heartache I had

caused this dear mother who now lay in death before me. Then and there I resolved to be a better man. I would do better, I vowed. I would try to live by the way my mother taught me.

The funeral was soon over and I heard the cold clods of earth falling as lead on my bruised and broken heart. Sadly we journeyed back to the old home. There was mother's clock ticking valiantly on the shelf. In the pantry stood the cookie jar, which those loving mother-hands would never again fill with anticipation of her boys' hunger. It was here that I realized the saddest picture that a man can paint, "A Home Without a Mother".

I returned sadly to my home in Montana to take up the life I had left. All went well for a time, and we prospered. I was driving high powered cars, running a threshing machine, and otherwise making a place for myself, when there came a stretch of dry seasons that drove me to the wall financially.

It was time to leave this country, now, for we could do no more here.

We moved to Minnesota, working around for others for a time. We were very dissatisfied with this sort of life, and desired to have once more a home of our own. After a time, my father-in-law offered to start me out in the line of farming again.

How we rejoiced that we might have again a home to call our own. We rented a farm in northern South Dakota. On the corner of the place there was a dilapidated church building falling into ruin because of disuse.

Did the sight of the old church on the corner of my farm arouse any reverent meditations in the heart of this hardened old sinner? Never! Seemingly the vow made at the deathbed of my dear mother, had been forgotten.

Such is the carnal life of man, even under good influences, and with material success, it tends ever downward.... Earnest Seeker



11. THE REVIVAL

Spring came on. The earth put forth the buds of promise. It was for me a time of seeding and, although so very busy, I was very happy to be again in close relation with the rich black loam.

A revival meeting was begun in the little disused church and, although my wife attended faithfully, this man never darkened the doors, of that humble little house of worship. Our home had just been blessed with twin girls, and although I would not attend the religious services myself, I became an expert baby tender, and insisted that there was no reason for the wife to miss the services.

Every evening Mrs. Coryell begged me to accompany her to the little church house, but I refused.

Every night after the services she returned to tell me of the wonderful singing and preaching she had heard. I sat, with my faithful friend, my pipe, and listened unmoved to the glowing accounts of the services that were in progress.

One bright morning as I went about the morning duties of the farm. I saw two well dressed men approaching. I realized with astonishment that it was the evangelist and his singer. I was clothed in ragged clothing, an old brown slouch hat on the side of my head, high leather boots on my feet, and my old friend, the pipe tightly clenched between my

teeth. I was anything but a pretty sight. I advanced to meet the gentlemen.

“Good morning,” said the evangelist. “I wonder if we could get a room at your home,” he continued. “We have just been refused any place to stay. We spent the night in the cold church.” He smiled engagingly as he spoke.

Now, I was deeply in sin, and cared nothing for the religion of Jesus Christ, but we had always prided ourselves on hospitality, and so I cordially invited them into the house.

“My wife is the ‘Boss’ around here,” I answered. “Come in and see what she says.”

“To what church do you belong,” the evangelist asked me, as we walked to the house.

“Well, Mrs. Coryell is a Christian; I’m not. She belongs to the Methodist church. I’m a Non-partisan.”

When Mrs. Coryell was consulted about a room she answered that she would be glad to accommodate them. I think she was delighted with the turn of events that had caused them to seek our home as a refuge.

I sat and talked to the two men while the dinner was in preparation. I was astonished to learn that the evangelist had been a cowboy, an inveterate smoker, and drinker. Then he said: “Jesus saved me.” How that struck on my heart. I have never been able to get away from the power of that simple testimony. The singer strummed on his guitar, and sang a verse or two of some sacred song. Later we had dinner, and conversed on various topics. I was very favorably impressed with these two gentlemen, but when invited to attend the services that evening I flatly refused; and remained at home with my pipe, ostensibly to watch the babies, but in reality to avoid the preaching of God’s word.

When Mrs. Coryell returned she had great things to report, great messages, and songs. At midnight I arose for my usual smoke of about four pipes. I could never wait until morning to smoke.

All went well the next day until dinner time. Then the evangelist asked me why I didn’t quit smoking. I answered that I had tried it once, but in the four months that I had tortured myself I had become almost impossible to live with.

“But, why not let the Lord help you to quit?” he asked.

“I guess you don’t realize who you are talking to,” I answered. “I am an old bounder. I’ve been hopeless for years.” I was really amused by his concern in me.

“The Lord is able to save even harder cases than you,” persisted the good man.

I laughed. “Well,” I replied, “a friend of mine in North Dakota tried the ‘Thought’ method, and rid himself of the habit for two dollars. Perhaps I should try that plan.

The evangelist rose to his feet, and gazed earnestly at me, Then he prayed audibly: “Lord, if the Devil could do that, you can do this!” he cried.

Thank God! The days of miracles are not past. That man’s prayer was instantly answered. The craving for the old pipe had passed. It lay on the window sill the rest of the day, and when my wife asked me if I was looking for my pipe I answered roughly, “No, the sight of the thing makes me sick.”

Still, having thus seen the power of God I refused to attend the services that night. I went to bed and enjoyed the best night’s rest I had had for years. I never even awakened for my midnight session with the old friend, pipe, and arose at five o’clock, still not desiring to use it.

That day I went to town with a nearby neighbor. We had been pals for some time, and had had great times together. That day it seemed to me that his curses fell like blows on

my ears. When we arrived in town, we went immediately to the pool hall, our usual hangout. I spoke to the manager as I went in, and was in the highest of spirits. But I had been in the place but a few minutes when something seemed to push me out. I fairly ran from the building. We finished our business in town, and prepared to leave for home. I had not even bought one cigar, and I usually went home well stocked. My friend, noticing that I was not smoking, remarked, "Where's the old pipe, Coryell?"

"I have quit smoking," I replied. "It is injuring my lungs." I was afraid to tell him the truth, for I feared his ridicule.

He handed me a cigar, and rather than refuse I lighted it and tried to smoke. It felt as if a thousand needles were puncturing my lungs. I coughed, and, when my friend's head was turned, I threw the thing overboard. He soon noticed that it was gone however, and offered me another. I accepted it, and it followed the fate of the first.

"Are those preachers still at your place?" asked the neighbor, with some interest.

"Yes they had no other place to stay," I replied.

"Well, I wouldn't take them in," he answered. "They could sleep in the church and freeze, for all I'd care." I was not yet saved, but it hurt me to hear him speak thus of the good men who were being entertained in my home.

"You should talk with them. They are not bad fellows," I told him.

"Bah. I don't want to talk to them," he answered with a curse.

That night when my wife asked me to accompany her to church I answered that I was too tired. I remained at home to get my rest, but somehow, it seemed that sleep had flown from me. When Mrs. Coryell returned I was still unable to get to sleep.

"Oh, what a wonderful meeting," she exclaimed, as she removed her hat. "There were a number at the altar."

"Oh, is that so? Who were they?"

She named over a number of our neighbors.

"That's fine," I remarked. "They sure need it."

After a time I arose on my elbow, and stared at her. "Say, wife," I asked, "are those preachers coming back here tonight?"

"Why, yes, I presume so. That is, they will unless they have an invitation to go pray with someone."

"Well, did you ask them to come back here again?" I persisted.

"Why no, I didn't. But they know that they are welcome," she said.

"Oh, I wish that you had asked them to come back tonight," I grieved.

"Why are you so anxious for them to come back?" she asked, looking at me keenly.

"Oh, I don't know. I just wish they would come," I said, trying unsuccessfully to look unconcerned.

"There they come, now," she exclaimed, as she looked from the window, and hurried to the kitchen to fix them a lunch.

I lay still for a while, wondering greatly at the sense of peace and well-being that had invaded my being when she had seen them coming.

"I wonder what has become of those fellows," Mrs. Coryell worried, as she came back into the room. "I can't see them anymore."

My knees were immediately seized with the worst cramps I have ever known. The muscles seemed knotted together. I arose and dressed, and walked about to ease the pain. As I entered the kitchen the door opened and the evangelist and his helper walked in. Oh, the feeling of security that swept over me is indescribable.



12. BY THE OLD ROCKING CHAIR

The good men partook of the lunch that was prepared for them, inviting me to join them. For some unknown reason I was not at all hungry. I felt that food would sicken.

After the lunch was finished we retired to the other room to talk a few minutes before going to bed. The evangelist began immediately to tell of the success of the night's services.

"We had a wonderful meeting tonight," he exclaimed.

"Yes," I said politely, "that's what my wife said."

"There were a number at the altar," he continued.

"Yes," I replied, "that's what my wife said."

"You should have been there," he maintained.

"Yes, that's what my wife said," I returned.

"God was there in mighty power," he stated.

"Yes, that's what my wife said," I replied without raising my eyes from their contemplation of the floor.

"Your neighbors are getting right with God," he thundered.

"Yes, that's what the wife said," I rejoined weakly.

"Brother, you need to be saved," he told me kindly.

"Oh, no." I cried. "I couldn't keep salvation if I did go to the altar."

"Then, let God keep you," he returned, "You need God right now," he declared as he pointed his finger at me. It looked like a cannon.

Then and there the burden of my sins became too heavy to carry any longer. The panorama of my past life unrolled before me. I can never tell just how it happened, but I found myself on my knees by that old rocking chair, crying out my heart to God.

Oh, the unbearable weight of guilt and terror that sat upon me! Satan did his best to discourage me. He made it seem that the Lord was angered that I, an unutterably sinful wanderer, should attempt to clutch the hem of His garment. The preachers, and my precious wife were pouring out their hearts to God in prayer, and yet I was unable to pray.

All at once the singer laid his hand on my shoulder and began to pull heaven down. I could feel the mighty power of God in the room, and humbly, contritely, fearfully, I began to pour out of my burdened heart a stumbling prayer.

In less than ten minutes the Lord had taken out of my heart all that the Devil had put in thirty-eight years. Oh the indescribable joy of that moment! It can never again be known in just that capacity. I was overjoyed at the thought that Jesus was mine. Rising to my

feet, still dazed by the wonderful thing that had taken place, I saw the tears of joy coursing down the face of my beloved wife. Then and there I realized how patient and kind she had been never out of patience with my ungodly life, always sweet and gentle in her times of greatest trial. I opened my arms to her, and began to pour out my heart in self-accusation and reproach. Humbly I begged her to forgive for the many harsh words, and hurts I had dealt to her who loved me so.

Let us draw the curtain upon that precious, holy scene for we had a new “honeymoon” indeed.

Billows of glory continued to roll over my soul. For about an hour I was walking in another world.

Never, as long as I live can I forget that ten minutes of confessing that brought this blessed eternal peace to my heart on that night of the twelfth of June, 1919.

In ten minutes the power of God had swept from my soul the work of thirty-eight years of sin.

I have spent as high as fifty dollars in a single night trying to have a good time, but that ten minutes with the Lord brought me more joy than I had ever before known. Never, since that night, have I doubted the ascension of Jesus for I felt there would surely be another ascension that night.

The evangelist, and his singer, were walking the floor and shouting, so overjoyed were they that God had done the seemingly impossible in such a glorious manner.

Finally the evangelist went to the telephone and called a neighbor three miles distant. Now, if you have ever had any dealings with these country telephone lines, you know that the sound that greeted his ears was similar to an old hen calling her chicks. “Click! Click! Click!” went every receiver along the line. (It seems strange that no one was in bed at that time of night.)

“Coryell’s converted!” shouted the evangelist, when the man came to answer his telephone.

Immediately the word swept the countryside. And the wind sighed the echo: “Coryell’s converted.” There was rejoicing among the angels that night over one more hardened old sinner who had just had his name written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

After a time of rejoicing, we retired. I slept, to dream that all my sins were written on the wall for me to read. Oh, there were so many of them! The enemy tried to make me think that I would still have to answer for them. That night was agony. I rolled and tossed in the throes of that terrible dream.

After breakfast the next morning the singer suggested that we set up a family altar. I was so ignorant of Christian living that I thought the altar would be built of boards in the form of sort of a high bench. This precious man of God did not laugh at my ignorance, but very tenderly replied that we would just kneel at our chairs, and pray. In all my former life I had not read more than seven chapters in the Bible. I knelt to pray. It was past ten o’clock before the load of terror brought on me by that dream had been lifted. How tenderly we ought to nurture the newborn babes in Christ. They are so sensitive.

At noon we had prayer again. My oldest child, a boy of nearly five years, was so frightened when I started to pray that he ran to hide behind his mother. As I poured out my heart to God the tears rained down my cheeks.

The next time we knelt to pray, my son came to me and knelt by my side. Very sincerely he talked to Jesus, while the tears ran down his baby face, as he thanked the Lord for

saving his daddy.

Men, readers; would your children run to hide in fear if they saw you kneel to pray? How are you raising the little ones God has given you?



13. THE CALL

The whole community had received the news of my conversion, and was there in a body that night. Such a crowd! The little church was packed to the limit. Coryell, the tough old sinner of the community, was saved!

As we entered the church that night there were many curious stares and comments, but there were many that were stirred to the depths to think that God could save a sinner like me.

The evangelist asked me to come to the platform with him. After the song service he asked me to lead in prayer. God wonderfully heard and answered our prayers. He was there in mighty power.

After the sermon had been delivered and the altar song sung we discovered that the altar was lined with seekers and the over flow had taken the seats in front. Oh, how they prayed! There were strong men weeping out their sorrow for sin, and crying on God for mercy.

Even, the organist, a worldly, gum-chewing individual, was found kneeling at the organ stool.

After the last soul had been prayed through, and the victory won, we started for home. Just before we reached the house, one of the brothers suggested that we stop to pray for a few minutes. There, in a patch of quack grass, I poured out my heart to God in prayer, I heard His voice calling me to carry his word to the unsaved. That call was as clear to me as Paul's call to the Macedonians I was ignorant of the scriptures, limited in education and in my own strength I could not see how the Lord could ever use me; but I believed that he was able, and so my answer was an unhesitant "Yes" to His whole will.

Singing and shouting, we entered the house and broke the news to the wife. She was filled with joy, and remarked that she was ready for the Lord's will to be done.

As I stood beneath the starry heavens, I saw with astonishment that the stars all seemed to be wreathed with gold, and that the dew laden grass looked like a great expanse of silver. Had I been blind all these years, that I had just seen the grandeur of creation?

At about three in the morning I awoke, and the room seemed to be filled with a strange radiance.

I called to my wife, and we had another prayer meeting and praise service right there by ourselves.

That forenoon one of the neighbors called for a load of oats. He tried to talk me out of my newfound joy but I was convinced that the thing I had found was real.

Out in the oats bin I preached my first sermon on the horrors of hell. My neighbor was touched and stirred.

That night the service was one of great victory. The neighbor for whom we had been praying so desperately was the first one at the altar, and was soon prayed through to

glorious victory.

The good times continued. Every night the church was packed to capacity, and every night souls were getting saved. One neighbor went to the altar and his wife, angry at her husband for being so foolish, snatched up the baby, and ran outside. We followed and talked to her. Finally she gave the baby to a friend and made her way to her husband's side and prayed through.

It was the last service of the revival. My heart ached, I wondered, "Would my victory leave with the evangelist?" They were having testimony meeting. The preacher had asked each to give a verse of scripture. What would I say? The only scripture that I could quote was "Jesus wept." That would never do. Slipping my hand into the pocket of my coat where the can of smoking tobacco was wont to rest, I felt the leather cover of the little Testament that the evangelist had given to me. Pulling it.

Out of my pocket, I learned Romans 5:1 and rising hurriedly, for I was afraid that I would be left out, I repeated that verse: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

After the departure of the evangelist and his helper, a little Sunday School was organized with your humble servant as Superintendent. We called a preacher who came and made his home with my wife and I. He was but a boy, eighteen years of age; he was a missionary's boy, born and raised in India. He was a great preacher, and proved himself a great blessing to me. He led my soul into greater things of God. I still get a blessing in remembering the seasons of prayer we had together; they sometimes lasted until the wee hours of the morning.

This is a quality conversion. He was fully readied by the Spirit's working to bring conviction. He was not harvested while still unripe. Many these days are guided to obtain the "infilling of the Spirit" and tongues, but this is a filling out of this same time-tested evangelical work of salvation. Earnest Seeker



14. THREE MONTHS' UNBROKEN WALK

The next three months still remain in my mind as the most precious time of my whole lifetime.

There was a new beauty in nature and new appreciation of my wife and friends, a new joy in the privilege of living, that was brought about with the unbroken communion with the Saviour.

It was also a time of school days for me. I was ignorant of the scriptures, and needed to learn much in order to serve the Lord acceptably. I was so happy in my newfound joy that I could not understand why everyone should not accept it immediately when I told them. I was so burdened for my neighbors that I went often to their homes to talk to them of salvation. Some of them received me kindly and accepted the Lord. Others listened but rejected the light. Still others ordered me from their homes telling me that they could not have their children confused with this doctrine. One woman told me in the presence of her children that she had no soul.

I had been presented with a fine religious paper, and it was my constant companion in the field.

I read it as I followed, perhaps the furrows were not so straight as they would have been

had I paid more attention to them, but my heart was blessed beyond measure, and it seemed that the Lord unfolded sermon after sermon to me there in the field.

My soul was blessed again and again as I knelt in the soft moist earth and poured forth my soul to God. My mind pictured the future when I should see great numbers of souls seeking God; and should hear their shouts of victory.

Truly with Isaiah I could cry: "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not faint."

I was running this race that was set before me; and it truly seemed that at times. I was lifted into such heights that I seemed to fly "with wings as eagles." But there was coming a time when I must walk. There could not always be the mountain-top, for down below was the valley, through which I must walk.

This "honeymoon" period with the Lord, is sometimes called "the first love". Rare devout Christians retain the steadiness of their "first love" and so can enter His Rest quite easily. But they always exhibit the same stages: conviction, consecration, faith, and crisis. Earnest Seeker



15. TROUBLE WITH THE PUMP HANDLE

One evening about three months after the Lord had so generously pardoned my sins, I went to the pump to get a drink. (I always call this my "Pump Handle Experience," for it was here that I first realized that there was still an old root of bitterness left in the heart I had thought so perfectly cleansed.) As I lifted the handle of the pump it slipped, pinching my hand quite severely. I did not swear, or curse, as I once would have done. In fact, I do not remember that I said anything. But there rose in my heart a bitterness, and anger that seemed almost to smother me. I went to the house with my heart broken and my eyes streaming with tears; for I had lost that sweet peace that had characterized my life the past three months.

"Wife," I cried, as I entered the kitchen where she was at work, "I guess I've backslidden." And I poured out the whole miserable experience.

She looked up with alarm in her face; and as I proceeded to unfold the story of my break with God, she answered: "I guess those times come to all of us, dear. Just keep holding on, and try to suppress that feeling when you feel it coming." You see, we had never any of us heard that there is an experience Blessed of God, that will remove that old root of bitterness and give us constant victory over Satan.

Her reply eased the hurt somewhat for I thought: "If Wife is troubled that way, and she has been a Christian for so long, surely there is yet hope for me." But I found that every time I tried to pray that incident would flash between me and the Throne; and I could not seem to get victory in my prayers. For three weeks I struggled along. I had sought out the young preacher at once, but he was unable to help me for he had never heard of heart purity either. I could not be satisfied; for I kept remembering that three month's walk of unbroken fellowship with the Master. Surely if the Lord could forgive my sins and give me such peace as I had known the past few months: he could also take out the thing that caused me to feel anger, passion, jealousy, envy, and similar emotions. I was satisfied that He was not pleased with such things.

One day a good man stopped in to talk to me. He asked me if I had been having any trouble in my walk with God. I told him my experience. He gave me a gentle smile, such as I think the Saviour must have given His disciples when he explained something that seemed beyond their grasp: and began to explain the meaning of "Inbred sin", or the thing that had caused me all my trouble. He made it so plain to me, telling me that regeneration, or "Generating again". The new birth, had only forgiven the sins I had actually committed in my lifetime. He explained that when Adam and Eve had been created they were in the image of the Father, pure, holy, without sin. But when they were tempted and fell, sin entered their hearts and they were banished from the presence of God. Then he said that in order to again enter the presence of the Holy One we must be without sin, holy, pure, as had been this first pair. Not, he explained, holy in mind, not entirely perfect in judgment, but pure in heart. In heart like unto God. He showed me in the scriptures where God required holiness of heart to enter into the New Jerusalem. Since my heart had been so hungry for something that would foster an unbroken communion with Him, I eagerly accepted the truth, and sought the Lord in His cleansing power. I placed myself upon the altar, that is, I placed my life, my possessions, my loved ones, my past, my future, everything I knew of, and everything that I would know in the future, in the hands of God to do with as He pleased. The altar sanctified my gift to Him, and I felt again the peace and joy that I felt when the Lord forgave all my past. The joy that flooded my soul! I have never been the same man since. This Canaan experience is truly wonderful!

Oh dear Christian if you are having trouble with that inner enemy and you find that your peaceful walk with God is interrupted frequently by a feeling of anger, jealousy, hatred, or any of the various ways in which the enemy tries unsanctified Christians, I beg of you, let the Lord come in and cleanse your heart. Just take Him by faith, as you did for your salvation, and you will find such joy, such peace from these things which make you unhappy that you will regret that you did not long ago have this "Satisfying Portion" which is the Holy Ghost.

This "desperado" in the human breast is turning thousands from the faith; for Paul says in Romans 8:7: "It is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be."

Sooner, or later, if you refuse to walk in the light which God has shed in your pathway, you will find that you have lost connection with Him; for again Paul says: "The carnal mind is enmity against God."

Indeed it is. It works in the hearts of all unsanctified men, whether saved or not. The fruits of it are outbreaks of sin, strife and war. It seldom forgives, and will do almost anything to avoid shame or frustration of its will. The wise get rid of this spiritual time-bomb as soon as possible. Avoid joining the legions who fail in their faith!!! It respects no-one: it brings down the great as well as the next.

You can repent. You can cross your fingers, eyes and legs but one thing or another will eventually rise up to challenge your peace. You can be delivered of a besetting sin, but there is no substitute for being delivered from the source of all these sorrows and enter into a life in full harmony with God and His abiding presence. Blameless. His.

But observe: Coryell struggled with sin in the paradoxical mixed state for a mere three weeks before the "good man" stopped in to point the way to sanctification and His glorious Rest! I struggled for 17 years before I stumbled across the way in sheer desperation. Nobody told me anything about this in all those years. And still nobody seems to know. That is why this website was created. The vast majority of the two billion Christians on earth today consider lifelong wrestling with sin to be the best that the Lord has to offer! The church writhes in occasional torment without reason. I am so thankful that He has provided a better way than that!!! Earnest Seeker



16. ANSWERING THE CALL

I had always loved the farm. I loved the odor of the fresh, moist earth in the spring; loved the sight of the rich black loam rolling away behind the plow. I loved the springtime on the farm; gamboling lambs in the meadows, frolicsome calves in the pasture, long-legged colts staggering after their mothers, young pigs squealing after the older ones, fluffy yellow chicks racing to answer the “Cluck, luck” of the old brown hen; all these things had the power to quicken my pulse and make me glad I was alive. I loved the time of harvest with its sheaves of ripened grain, its shocks of corn, its heaps of yellow pumpkins, its mounds of dusky-faced “spuds,” its mellow ripened fruit.

I even loved the long, snowbound winters, when, with a roaring fire in the range, or open fireplace we sat, speaking of times bygone, mending the harness, or other equipment to be used in the spring.

Or, when on a blustery winter evening, we sat before the fire with a pan of freshly popped corn, and a dish heaped up with rosy-cheeked apples, I felt swelling gratitude to the God in heaven that I was a tiller of the soil.

But, now, it seemed that a change had taken place. I no longer thrilled to the “song of the soil.” My heart did not seem to be in my work. Instead, I would dream as I followed the plow, or as I went about the various duties of the farm, of great crowds listening to the word of God, and seeking Him in pardoning grace. I was living in the future and the farm, that I had loved so much, was becoming distasteful to me. I was anxious to get out into the work which lay before me, but how to go? That was the thought that kept me awake hour after hour every night. I, with the prophet, cried, “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel,” for I could see the many souls that would be lost if I did not speedily obey the call. But, What to do? There were obligations that must be met.

That year my crops were all drowned out by a cloud-burst. Still I felt that I must continue to farm until I had met my obligations. One spring day, after the crops were all in the ground, just as we arose from family worship it started to rain. “Lord,” I prayed desperately, “If it is your will that we go now, then we are willing to see the crops washed out again. We want Your will done, but we don’t know how to proceed.” That was one of the worst rains I have ever seen. There was no longer any doubt in my mind but that the Lord wanted me to leave the farm immediately, and get into the work.

I was perfectly willing to go, but how--? That was the next question.

Finally word came from the evangelist who had held the revival in our little church. He was holding a meeting near and wanted me to assist him. My heart beat high with joy at this chance to get into the work so soon. I went to the meeting, and helped as much as I could. Often the good brother even called upon me to preach. Then he would gently, and in a spirit of love, offer his criticisms. What a help he was to me.

I remember one night in particular at this meeting. There had been six seekers at the altar, but I was not satisfied. I felt that there had been two others who should have been there. After we reached our room in the hotel I began to pray that God would get hold of those two. In the wee hours of the morning these two came rapping on the door of our room at the hotel and prayed through to definite victory. It pays to pray through, and pay the price; for God will surely answer prayer.

I was soon called to hold a meeting of my own. There the Lord poured out His spirit in a

marvelous way and souls saw the glory of God. As a result of these meetings a camp-meeting association has been formed where souls find God in His fullness every summer. It is worthwhile to sacrifice, preach the truth regardless, and live the life of true holiness before the world.

I had been preaching for some time. When asked to join a church I answered: "I belong to Jesus. I'll work in any open door." My deepest regrets for that period of my experience today are that I raised so many chickens for the hawks. Finally the dear brother who had been the evangelist in the meeting when I was saved persuaded me to attend an Assembly of the Nazarene church. Here, listening to the clear, ringing testimonies of these people of God; talking with their head men; learning their doctrines; I decided that this was my crowd, and from that time I have cast my lot with the church of the lowly Nazarene. Here at this Assembly a group of five elders listened to my experience and then passed on my character and granted me my license to preach.

Never, since that time have I thought that I could do more for the Lord outside of a church organization I believe, yes, I know, that the Devil is organized to fight God's plan and defeat it. For that reason I believe that the followers of the Lord should organize and fight together the efforts of the enemy to damn the souls of men.

I am a Nazarene from the bottom of my heart. I believe that God has raised up this church for a purpose. I feel it an honor to be affiliated with a band of 140,000 saved and sanctified men, women, and children. But I am not boosting my church at the cost of any other. I am in no wise of the opinion that the Nazarenes have a corner on salvation. But I do believe that to the best of their ability they are living the life of true heart holiness; and most of them are succeeding wonderfully.

Today there are so few sanctified souls in His Rest, that we seldom get the luxury of having anyone take faith to help us to the sanctification crisis to enter upon the glorious Tableland of Rest beyond. But at least now you know the way. But in Nazarene circles this teaching has mostly become just moldy "theory" long-buried in attics... Few indeed enter in. Earnest Seeker



17. EXPERIENCES OF THE EARLY MINISTRY

After we had returned from Assembly we loaded our furniture into a hayrack and drove about thirty-five miles to our new home. It was evening when we arrived at our destination. Chills began to shake my entire body. I found that I was unable to unload the furniture. I dragged a heavy canvass into the house and lay down on it while my wife fixed a bed for me. All night I was shaken with chills. In the morning I was feeling better and moved the furniture into the house. I then began to prepare for my next meeting which was to be held in a union church nearby. The church had been unused for years and we were glad to get the opportunity to open it again. Two days later, with a dear old preacher friend, we were opening fire on the enemy's territory. I had been preaching only three nights when I discovered that queer looking spots were beginning to cover my skin. My temperature rose alarmingly and the other preacher helped me to my room.

When the doctor was called I discovered that I had a real case of smallpox. I was put immediately to bed, and a pretty red card was tacked to our door. There I lay for two weeks, fretting because the work had been interrupted. Soon the children began coming down with this dread disease. For a month I was forced to stay in the house and then the doctor let me go to the next meeting. This meeting was held in a school house about forty miles distant. It was also twelve miles from any town. The enemy immediately tried

to discourage me.

Coming to me in the form of “Common Sense,” he said: “Now you know that you can’t preach.

Why, you have only the most elementary of educations; you can never preach and convince anyone of sin. There will be men and women in your audiences who have college educations. How will you preach to them? And besides, if you persevere in this foolish idea your family will suffer. There they are. The children are ill, the wife is tired out; and there is no money to give them the necessities of life. This little place will pay you nothing for your services and your family will have to suffer. You’d better quit this foolish preaching and get a good job, and support your family.”

I left the home in which I was being entertained and walked down the creek for nearly a mile.

There, in a little clearing in the trees I fought this battle once and for all. I remembered all the great preachers who had started out with little or no education. I recalled the burning bush of Moses’ experience which was only a little scrub bush until God set it on fire with Holy Fire. I reviewed my past experiences with the Lord. I recalled how he had provided for us in past emergencies. And then, and there I settled it with Mr. Devil that preach I would regardless of all the “sensible” arguments that he could bring to bear upon the case. I promised the Lord that I would preach, if I had to, in overalls but I would preach. What a camp meeting I had there all by myself!

The next Sunday night an offering was taken for my helper and myself. It amounted to about eleven dollars and was all in small change. I wanted to send my share of this amount to my wife to care for her and the babies. Since it was so far to the post office, I asked my host if he would write a check for the amount. He took the pennies and nickels and counted them. Then with tears streaming down his cheeks he wrote a check for ten dollars and handed it to me with the small change I had given him. This check was soon on its way to the little home where the dear wife was holding out alone, that the gospel might be preached. How I thanked God that I had trusted Him and not listened to the enemy’s “Common Sense.”

This meeting went on for several weeks and proved to be a great blessing to the community.

Conviction gripped one man until he walked the floor all one night in agony of mind over past sins.

Young men were saved and sanctified and fell in with the plans for the salvation of the entire community. One little girl, ten years old, was saved. The next night she brought her mother, and, when the altar call was given, she led her mother to the altar. It was a beautiful, yet a heartbreaking sight, to see that little lass with her hands raised to heaven and the tears raining down her cheeks praying for her mother to be saved. Mothers: are you letting your little ones take the lead in spiritual things, or are you leading them in the way they should go?

After several weeks, when the meeting had drawn to a glorious close, a good sister churned about twelve pounds of butter and gave it, with a large piece of pork, to me to take home to the family.

With this offering in a sack in one hand my suitcase and Bible in the other, and a goodly offering in cash in my pocket I started for home. The people at the depot looked with curiosity at my strange luggage, but I just praised God in my soul that we had such a good meeting, and souls had been saved.

I reached home in time to help fumigate the house and tear down the red card. The children were wild with delight to be free once more. They had been in quarantine for two months.

Soon, with the help of the Methodist minister in that town, there was another meeting under way.

New souls were being born into the Kingdom. You could hear their shouts for blocks. Some people object to shouting and demonstration among the people of God; but I have noticed that where there is life there is bound to be a demonstration of some sort. Our home has been blessed with a number of fine children. Every one showed life at birth by crying but one little girl. She was spanked until she did cry. It seems to me that some of the children of God need to be spanked until they show some sort of life. If they don't show life pretty soon, they will be taken for dead.

The power of God was shown in this meeting in a marvelous way. People were getting saved in great numbers. The unsaved came through curiosity and found that the power of God was too great for them to withstand and got saved before they left. One old man, seventy years of age was saved.

He got so blessed that he preached until long after midnight.

When this meeting had closed the spirit seemed to lead definitely to a schoolhouse seven miles distant. There was no place for the evangelist to stay, and so, with a converted gambler as my helper we drove an old crippled Ford back and forth. The first three nights we got there all right but on the fourth night the Ford refused to percolate (they have a habit of that you know). We walked to the nearest phone and called the pool-hall. That was the only phone we could reach the people with. The owner of the pool-hall went to the church where the crowd was assembled, and told them that we could not be there until the next night. When we got there the next night one woman came to us and offered us the guest room in her home. She had a lovely home and we certainly appreciated the opportunity to stay there all the time.

The converted gambler who was with me had run a gambling den in that very town. Twice the police had run him out of town. People came just to see him. Sinners agreed that if the Lord could save him and change him so completely there was hope for all of them.

We were having good crowds but not many were getting saved. The burden rolled upon me so heavily that sleep fled from me and for five nights I was unable to sleep. The appetite for food also left me and I spent the entire five days praying and calling upon God for souls.

On the next night a school teacher, a model young man, raced to the altar and prayed through to victory. The crowd seemed to be held spellbound; they sat in their seats and made no move to leave.

Others began to search their hearts, and many sought the altar. One elderly gentleman came with the express purpose in mind of ridiculing me. For three nights he sat on a front seat and made fun of my speech, my grammar and my delivery. On the fourth night the tide changed. When the altar call was given he started to weep. Going to the back of the room he talked to a young man until he was under deep conviction. I stepped back to talk to him and immediately he was in a rage. He told me I knew nothing, and I agreed with him. Then I said: "You are an educated man. Let me ask you one question." When he assented I asked: "Do you know Christ as your personal Saviour?"

"No," he answered slowly, and his head dropped.

“Well, then you are lost and bound for eternal destruction.”

With tears in his eyes he answered: “Yes, I know that” and ran from the building. The next night he was in his usual place and was the first one at the altar when the call was given.

One elderly lady prayed all night in her home and was saved. The whole town was stirred. The pool hall was emptied for its frequenters were at the meeting. Avowed infidels listened attentively.

One night I preached on Noah’s Ark. I gave the dimensions as they were recorded in the Old Testament. Instantly I was branded as a liar. The next day the subject of conversation all over town was Noah’s Ark. Even at the pool hall they were discussing it. Bibles that had been unused for years were consulted to see if I had known what I was talking about. They finally admitted that what I had told them was true.

It was a busy time for me. One day I drove into the country eight miles to talk to a farmer about his soul. A few days later he drove over the country settling up old scores. He came to town and went into the pool hall. Those who told me about the affair later said that it seemed as if he were possessed with a demon. He cursed and swore and made fun of the revival. But the Lord had hold of his heart and that night he sat near the front in the service. When the altar call was given he stood to his feet and faced the crowd of mockers and scoffers in the rear of the room and said: “I want all you boys to know that I’m going to be a Christian,” and walked steadily to the altar to give his heart to God.

One morning when the meetings had been in progress for some time and were gaining in momentum I awoke to see the air filled with snow in a terrible snow storm. As I opened the door of my room the old gentlemen where we were being entertained turned to me with a laugh and said: “Well, what’s this going to do to your meeting?”

“Why, don’t you know that God answers prayer?” I asked.

I immediately set my faith to work and prayed through for the service that night. About noon the sun came out in all its glory and that night the church was packed. It was nearing, the Christmas time and many of the little tots were practicing for school programs. Some of the mothers came to me in horror, stating that in a school play two little boys had cut off a playmate’s head. I protested against the evil of showing such things to children and planting the germ of murder in their hearts.

The next morning I went to see the professor of the school where the play had been enacted. I urged upon him the evils of such thing and he became very indignant.

“Do you think then, that the germ of murder can be planted in the heart of the child in this way?” he demanded.

“I certainly do, sir,” I answered.

“Rubbish!” he exclaimed. “What will you do with the little folk stories and fairytales, like ‘Red Riding Hood’ for instance?” “Throw them in the stove!” I answered readily. “I was a large boy before I would sleep in a dark room alone, just because of the visions I had formed of the wolf in that silly story.”

Then I related to him the old court history of the woman called Mrs. Gurmis, who when a child delighted in cutting off the legs and arms of her dolls by inches, When grown to womanhood she practiced this mode of torture on several husbands before finally intercepted by the authorities. I left him still unconvinced that there was anything wrong about the whole thing. That afternoon two small boys tried the trick on one of their playmates. I sincerely hope that convinced him of his error.

Mothers and Fathers who continually tell their children of the Goblins, Bugga-Men, and Ghosts that steal disobedient children are doing those children a great injustice. The nervous temperament of the child who is fed on such lies is apt to be such that will lead him to commit unspeakable crimes in his later life.

Reading material of this type should never appear in the home at the disposal of the sensitive child mind. You are sowing a seed that will sometime yield you a harvest that you least expect. The insane asylums of our country are filled with the victims of these fantastic horrors fed them in childhood.

I decided to go home for Christmas eve and see the wife and kiddies and then return for service the next night. I was able to get home by train but was unable to make connections to return the next day. I asked a brother to take me in his car. He finally consented but with very bad grace. All the way there he kept mentioning the wear on tires; and the bad roads, and every little inconvenience seemed to add to his bad humor. In spite of his bad humor I was praying God that He would give us a good service that night. It was to be the closing night of the meetings unless there were a certain number of souls at the altar.

As the service began that night I felt the presence of the most High. I called on my chauffeur to pray. He did so. It was a glorious service. God was there in mighty power. When the altar call was given there were eleven seekers at the altar. I called my chauffeur to the platform to help pray with the seekers. He was a professed Christian. He came but I noticed that his prayer was for himself.

The meeting continued for another week and then we closed with five at the altar. I left for home with an offering of twenty dollars and many gifts of clothing for the children.

On the way home I stopped over for a watch night service at a nearby church. I preached on the text Romans 8:17: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

I preached for about ten minutes and then seemed to lose my grip. I floundered about in a maze of words for nearly fifteen minutes, then suddenly I just quit trying to preach and gave the altar call.

There were thirteen souls who responded. We prayed and shouted the old year out and new year in.

Thank God for that way of celebrating.

When I reached home I found that one of the churches in North Dakota had sent a large box. The children were walking round and round it feasting their eyes on the contents of the miraculous box.

How happy they were!

The next morning quite early five cars drove into our yard, each loaded with eatables. What richness! One dear family had brought a roast duck and the dinner that went with it, all prepared.

Another had brought two bushels of potatoes which at that time were so expensive that each might have been worn as a watch charm. There was also an enormous five layer cake, covered with colored candies. It was a beautiful sight. How the children watched.

Mrs. Coryell was peeling potatoes. They were a real treat for we had been without them for so long. One of the tiny ones came running to me with her finger in her mouth.

"Daddy," she gasped, in ecstasy.

"What is it, Baby? Do you want some cake?" I asked.

Tears of disappointment came into her eyes, as she answered, "No, Daddy, 'tatoes."

After a few days rest at home with the loved ones, I was again called. There was a field about eighteen miles distant where I felt a definite leading to go; and so, although the ground was covered with loose snow, I started to walk, carrying my suitcase and Bible. After I had walked about six miles I stopped to eat some sandwiches that I had brought with me. I was tired, but as I ate I remembered the times that the blessed Master walked for miles to preach the gospel, and my heart was filled with joy. I was soon on my way again, rejoicing in the privilege of following in the footsteps of the Lord. After about thirteen miles of the way had been covered I arrived at the home of some Christian friends. My trousers were frozen to the knees, from walking in the soft snow. I rested until evening, and the brother at whose home I had stopped, hitched his team to a sled, and we went to church. Another glorious revival broke out. Many gave their hearts to God. But there were many who rejected Him. In later years I received many letters from that community. Broken vows, broken hearts, broken homes, all resulted from rejecting the Lord when He called.

After this meeting I returned home to find the family in need. The generous offering helped and with my helper I was again enroute to a meeting. The meeting place was nearly one hundred miles from home, and that, night, for lack of finances I was forced to sleep in the depot. When we reached our destination we found that a lone woman in this town had been praying for a revival. God answered her prayers and thirteen souls were saved. Some of them have been called into the ministry.

That night just before service. I was handed a letter from home. In the very first paragraph, my wife said I knew that I was in the Lord's will, yet I was worried about the family at home. I could not think of them needing anything when I was so well cared for. I tried to tell the Lord to take care of them for me, but some way the devil kept telling me, they were in want. Onid: "The young school teacher who was converted in your meeting last summer was in to see me. She left me a crisp new ten dollar bill."

How ashamed I was for listening to the whisperings of the tempter. I arose in the pulpit that night and started to confess to my audience that I had not been trusting God as I should. The tears began to flow. The fire fell. They took up an offering and gave me twenty-seven dollars to send to the family.

After this meeting closed I shoveled snow and got five dollars to take me to the next meeting.

Here we were met with much opposition. We preached and prayed for three weeks with little visible results. The truth was going home, though, and one day, one of the leading members of the church came to the altar. The pastor was shocked.

"That woman has no business at the altar," he said.

We persuaded him to keep his hands off and let God do the dealing with souls. A few days later the dear brother who had led me to the Lord came along with his wife. They were a great help to us.

The fire fell and souls began to seek God. As many as forty-eight sought him at one service. It was a glorious service.

While in that meeting we were called to anoint and pray for a woman who was dying. God wonderfully healed her and she is now living in California. It's wonderful how the Lord will answer prayer. He never does things by halves. I am glad to tell you that the Lord can and will and does heal sicknesses. Many are getting lopsided on this issue, but I here is a middle ground, and there is such a thing as a sane doctrine of healing. I am speaking from first hand knowledge.

While holding a meeting I twisted my back and burst a blood vessel. There were a number of seekers at the altar and though I felt very weak, I did not know what was the matter and stayed to pray with these seekers. After service the doctor was called. He rushed me to the hospital with the information that I had only a chance in a thousand. I called for the pastor who came and prayed with me. As I lay on that narrow hospital bed, waiting for death, I thought of the many souls yet unsaved.

It seemed I could not give up so easily and let them slip out without God. I began to pray desperately.

After a while I fell into a natural sleep and eighteen hours later I again stood in the pulpit preaching the word of God. Over a hundred souls sought and found God in that meeting alone. And so I know that God can and will and does heal this earthly body.



18: A FORWARD LOOK

After a number of years of evangelistic work, I felt a definite leading of the Lord to take a pastorate. A year and a half I labored in this field. At times it seemed I was in prison. There was not the freedom for this work that there was in the evangelistic field. But I thank God for this experience.

I know it was for my own good.

At the next Assembly I felt that I owed every pastor I had ever worked with an apology. This I did gladly, with the Master's help.

I am looking into the future with the utmost confidence in the great Captain of my Salvation. I know that He doeth all things well, and that the way He leads is best for me. I am still thanking him for full and free salvation. I am praising Him that He is able to pick up a poor lost sinner, out of the miry clay of sin, and plant his feet upon the solid Rock of Ages, from whence he shall not be moved if he puts his trust in Him, the same Jesus of Nazareth who died that all sinners who would believe on Him might be saved from that "second death."

And when you go before the throne of the Father, with your supplications, I beg of you remember this poor and humble scribe, that his remaining years may be used of the Lord to the salvation of lost souls.

Yours under His Precious Blood,
Ernest Coryell

