The Faithful Standard, vol. 2, no. 5 (January 1924)

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Poor People Who Are Rich

By A. J. TOMLINSON

The Best Value Is Not Always Money Value

Why Not Strive For The Best?

MEN and women alike are striving to acquire the wealth of this world. This is the highest aspiration in life with many. The acquirement of wealth is counted success. If one can amass a fortune in a few short years he is looked upon as a successful man. This is the way the world goes. The masses care nothing for their souls. Just so they accumulate enough wealth to be counted successful in this world they seem to be satisfied. Many of this class give no attention to the Bible with its many warnings to the rich, and its advice to seek for the true riches that will last beyond the boundaries of this world. As a rule people are short sighted. They can only see what is close around them, and comparatively few are able to see across the border into a bigger world than this one. This appears very unwise in the face of the inspired Word.

But it is not our purpose to discuss the way the people of the world look upon wealth, neither is it our purpose to raise objections to people acquiring wealth. It is our purpose to point out to our readers a few poor people that are rich. At first sight this might seem absurd and ridiculous, but when the full understanding of the subject is reached in the light of the Holy Scriptures it is very reasonable and becomes a source of comfort to those who have labored all their lives to lay up enough of this world's goods to keep them in their old days and have failed.

There is a story told of two men, one a rich man, the other a poor man. The rich man reveled in luxury during his life time while the poor man could scarcely exist. At last they both died. The rich man was buried with great pomp and splendor. He had many friends to follow his remains to the place of burial. His family and friends were arrayed in apparel suitable for the occasion. The funeral was very expensive, and was celebrated with elaborate ceremonies. Every attention was given to make the funeral as grand affair as could be purchased with money. But little attention was given to the death and funeral of the poor man. His body was thrown roughly into a board box and buried in a pauper's grave. There were no beautiful ceremonies, no mourners, no flowers, no train of friends and but little attention was given him except just enough to get him out of the way.

The next scene opens over in the other world. Here is the most interesting part. The rich man was in torment while the poor man was comforted. The explanation—given by one who has once been a citizen of this world, but was now in authority over there should be very impressive to all who care for their future welfare. "Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." And all the begging and persuading by the rich man could not reverse things or relieve his pain. The sentence had been rendered. The die had been cast. No changes could be made.

If this world was the only world, and all of life, then it might pay to amass fortunes and escape the inconveniences of poverty, but since it is not all of life to live, neither is it all of death to die, it is wiser to choose a different course. I'd rather be a poor man that will be comforted in the next world than to be a rich man in this world and tormented there. It is greater riches even in this world to carry a good free conscience than to have the millions of earth and be condemned by carrying a guilty conscience day after day and year after year. It is more pleasant in this world to have plenty so one can be comfortable, but when one gets his mind fixed on his possessions and wealth and neglects his future happi-
ness he is certainly acting very unwise, and his attention should be called to a question put by Him that spake as never man spake. “What is a man profited, if he should gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matt. 16:26.)

The Bible tells us of poor people who are rich. This reads like a paradox for the Bible is true—even if some things do seem incredible. The writer is discussing riches and poverty. He shows how God would frown upon any one for showing greater respect to a rich man than to a poor man. And in his argument he waxes bold as he puts the question, “Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?” (Jas. 2:5.) And he gives people a mild rebuke for despising the poor. God’s poor are loved by Him and He is watching over them with His all seeing eye. Anything that touches His poor touches Him. He is very sensitive to these touches. James becomes so enthusiastic in his subject that he finally declares that those who have respect of persons by reverencing the rich and despising the poor commit sin.

Paul tells of the grace of God bestowed upon the churches of Macedonia, and shows that they are poor but rich. Poor in this world’s goods but rich in faith and deep spirituality. They were in a great trial of afflictions but had abundance of joy. They were in deep poverty due to the riches of their liberality. They went beyond their power in giving to the support of the ministry and while this reduced them to poverty they were rich in grace and glory. There is a line which one may pass that will open up into the rich fields of spirituality. I’d rather have this than wealth. Jesus went the lowly way—did not have a place to lay His head. He was rich, but for our sakes He became poor. He went through this world with the poorest of men. He was so poor that He had to perform a miracle to get enough money to pay His taxes. Do you want to follow His steps? Are you willing to become the poorest of men to attain to the deep spirituality that it will take to make you like Him? Are you willing to be classed with poor people that are rich? If you are not, there is plenty of room elsewhere for you, but what will the next world be to you if you choose another path? Paul commends the churches of Macedonia for their sacrifices, even if it did reduce them to poverty, and shows what great joy God gave them.

I suppose Smyrna was the poorest church referred to in the catalogue. The message to this church shows that the messenger knew of their poverty, but He did not ignore them because they were poor. Hear the message: “I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

“Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer.”

Although in poverty yet enjoying the riches unseen by mortal eyes. The messenger found no fault with this church—no fault with the pastor. Others who were rich were sharply criticized while this poor one was commended and encouraged.

The story of Moses is very impressive. He could have heired a fine estate if he had remained with Pharaoh’s daughter and been willing to be called her son. But he saw something better awaiting him. It was not seen by the natural eye, but seen out of sight by the eye of faith. The unseen is often more attractive to God’s people than that which is seen. And this was true of Moses. It is said of him:

“Choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” (Heb. 11:25,26.)

There is something peculiar about such an experience. I know a man who could have had a splendid fortune today. He was industrious, strong physically, a good mind, capable of doing business, was making his way in the world upward, gained favor with business men until he was selected treasurer of a business concern, handled thousands of dollars without giving bond, was gaining in influence until his name was mentioned for one of the highest offices in his county, every prospect for him was prosperity. But he chose the lowly path—the one with the Savior of men. Like Moses, he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than worldly honors, property and plenty. The reproach has been more than he at first anticipated, but he has never had any intention of retracting his steps and dropping back into the world to receive the applause of men. He counted the cost at the start, deliberately made his choice because he saw the true riches in the beyond. He now lives from hand to mouth when he could have been living in luxury. To him the reproaches are riches. Like Paul he takes pleasure in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake. This seems foolish to the world, but it is glory to him. He is truly one among the poor that is rich.

This is a time for deep consideration. It is not easy to keep from becoming influenced by the world to the extent that we think we must have something to be thought well of. And since the world all around us is hurraying to accumulate wealth it may not be easy to keep out of the stream and undertake to become rich, but the deepest spiritual people are endeavoring to lay up treasures in heaven where moth or rust doth not corrupt or thieves break through and steal. The treasure house where the meek and lowly deposit their wealth is in the beyond. They have their hearts and affections set on things above and not on the things of earth. They would rather be rich in faith than to own a city. There is more happiness in being rich in faith than to have
great possessions here. This is not spoken to discourage having homes and the necessities of this life, but we are only trying to point people to the riches beyond that far exceed the riches here. It is also meant to encourage the deeply spiritual who have but little of the things of this world. I find that the things that are seen are only temporal while the things that are not seen are eternal.

It is to be remembered that Jesus did not go to the higher circles of society to select His twelve apostles. He wanted industrious men—men who could endure hardships; privations and go hungry sometimes and not complain, therefore He went after common toilers—fishermen. I was once with a brother in the ministry who had evidently never known much about hardships for the sake of the gospel, and I do not know whether he saw what the true riches were or not, but he got hungry and complained at me very much because he seemed to think I had money and would not spend it. I was as helpless to obtain food as he was but because I did not complain he seemed to think I was to blame. I do not know whether I ever got him to believe me or not, but I succeeded in getting him to deliver a message right in the time of his complaint and the Lord blessed him so good while delivering the message that he never complained at me any more about being hungry. I think he must have gotten away from present conditions and rode over the bridge to a land of spirituals where he got a glimpse of at least of the true riches.

I wish this message could be blessed of God in a way to attract people toward the plains of white heated love that will make people who are poor feel rich in faith. To get a glimpse of a few pilgrims of this sort, call attention to a conversation between Peter and His Lord. Jesus was giving a lesson about how hard it was for rich people to be saved. The teaching was deep and the listeners were amazed. They sought for expression and some said, “Who then can be saved?” But Peter always ready for his part and anxious to get a better understanding exclaimed, “Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?” He was surely looking further over to the place of reward, for he had laid aside all his business and was not even trying to make a living for his family. Here was the answer Jesus gave him:

“Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in his throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

Probably this satisfied Peter and the others for this showed them that they would be rewarded for all sacrifices they had made. They could afford to till on with the Master and believe His promise for the future. But Jesus did not stop there. He not only answered for them but for others also as He continued:

“And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name’s sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.” (Matt. 19:27-29.)

It is evident that the disciples did not get the hundred fold of earthly possessions while they lived so this must have referred to rewards beyond the borders of this world. There is another example of some poor people that are rich. They showed their faith and heroic courage by sticking to their Lord. They were poor yet rich in faith. And others beside themselves have the promise just the same. The best riches are not always money values, then why not strive for the best? Our riches are beyond. Our citizenship is in heaven anyway, and there is where we expect to receive our wealth. We are not to place our affections on things of earth, but upon things in heaven. We can be poor people and rich at the same time. I decided long ago to take Jesus and poverty in this world rather than wealth and no Jesus. To me Jesus is worth more than all this world, and I can afford to go the lowly way, misunderstood, rejected and despised, because I am rich with Him since I am a joint-heir with Him. (Rom. 8:17.)

This is not fiction, this is real. People do not understand, but we know whereof we speak. Paul said, “As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.” Mysterious, but true. Paul further states, “for all things are yours.” Isn’t that riches for you? What more could we ask for? He repeats, “All are yours; and ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.”

In closing up the last book of the Bible a broad promise is made to the overcomer. I want to be one, don’t you? Here is the promise which puts the capstone on and surely is the climax of the whole thing to prove the riches that belong to the poor. "HE THAT OVERCOMETH SHALL INHERIT ALL THINGS." (Rev. 21:7.) What more could we expect? For what more could we ask? These are the poor people that are rich getting the very best for their faithfulness.
The Valley of the Shadow

"Come, let us join our friends above
That have obtained the prize,
And on eagle wings of love
To joys Celestial rise."

Just at the moment that Charles
Wesley was passing over the tide, his
brother, John Wesley, was leading
the congregation in another place in
singing the above stanza.
And Charles himself—just before
the silver cord was loosed—requested
his wife to write—

"In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem?
Jesus, my only hope thou art,
Strength of failing flesh and heart:
O could I catch one smile from thee,
And drop into eternity!"

There was no fear of death when
Charles Wesley died—nor when the
seraphic Fletcher died shouting at the
last: “God is love! Oh for a gust of
praise to go to the ends of the
earth!”
When the beloved young Walsh
died at twenty-eight, his last words
were: “He’s come! He’s come!”

When the earnest, fearless, honest
Grimshaw, venerable minister of the
Gospel, saw death very near, he ex­
claimed: “I am as happy as I can be
in this world, and as sure of heaven
as though I were there. I have my
foot on the threshold already.”

Ten thousand times ten thousand
Saints have found comfort in their
trust in God when it came time to go
into the shadow. In the past twenty
years it has been the custom to preach
more about the value of salvation in
this present world—to give joy, and
happiness, and long life. All of which
is true.

But the supreme test of Salvation
is when you come into the valley of
the shadow. Probably not a man or
woman ever dies but they seek the
consolation of religion of some kind.

The heathen send for priests of
their idols. Members of the Christian
religion seek the comfort of the pastor.

Even in the death houses at the
penitentiaries, the priest or the min­
ister is sought by those going to be
executed.

No matter how careless a person
may be about religion, and salvation
in life and health, when sickness or
misfortune comes—then they seek
God.

On being approached about salva­
tion for his soul, a man responded in
the answer that too many are giving,
“I am not ripe yet.” Apparently for
himself he doesn’t need God. He
freely admits that he will need God
when he comes to the end of life—but
“I don’t especially need him now.”

May God save his soul—but what a
great risk he is taking.

A certain man in our town—no doubt
worth many millions—has lived
for years a nominal Christian. He
has observed the highest laws of honor
and morality. He has dealt generous­ly
with his employees of whom he
has at least a thousand. He never
smokes, and never swears. He
was once a poor man and has made his
entire fortune honestly.

But he has had little time for
thoughts of heartfelt religion. Re­
cently he read an article on “The
conversion of a Sinner.” He read it
over several times. He spoke to his
friends about it—and among his re­
marks was something like this:

“I have worked hard for all I have.
No one have I intentionally wronged.
But honestly I don’t believe that I
have really been converted. I don’t
believe I know how to pray to Al­
mighty God. I must find out.”

There is a man who has everything
that wealth can command—but he ad­
mits that he doesn’t have what you
and I have—the knowledge that we
Know God—and know how to reach
Him in prayer.

To every man on this earth it is
not given to be wealthy. But to every
man is given the full opportunity to
learn and know God—against the
time when Death shall come.

David says “Though I walk
through the valley of the shadow of
death I shall fear no evil.” And how
well could he say it, at any time in his
life.

As a boy tending the sheep he was
in danger of a lion and a bear. He
killed them both. When he walked
out to meet Goliath it was into a
valley of the shadow. When with a
thousand men he was marching into
a trap set for him by treacherous
enemies, among those professing to be
his friends—again God was with him.

Saul threw his javelin at him—and
later when he was king sons of his
own household rebelled against him—
there were enemies on every hand.
But God delivered him.

Having been through all these great
dangers, and depending upon God,
and finding deliverance, David could
say even up to his last day: “I shall
fear no evil”, for “Thou ART
WITH ME.”

None who have passed beyond the
veil have returned to tell us altogether
what it is like. Scientists in the Wool­
worth Building in New York have
been for several months waiting in
vain for some one who can demon­
strate that he can get word from the
dead. So called mediums who claim
that they can bring up the dead are
being turned away as they try to get
the $2,500.00 prize for demonstrat­
ing that they can get word from the
dead.

But the scientists are waiting in
vain.

It is a long journey after leaving
this life. We all realize that death
does not end all. The Saviour has
promised to go with us all the way.
By many supernatural signs he show­
ed that He pierced the veil. And we
know that he went on to glory and
there awaits the Faithful.
It will be wonderful comfort to feel that at the end of the road the Saviour will be waiting. The writer was at one time in great danger in a storm at sea. A ship in full view suddenly disappeared—and hundreds lost their lives. While the storm raged many were praying. The captain himself was unconscious for hours so violently was he pitched about by the vessel. The ship was half filled with water, and the outlook was altogether gloomy. It was a time to think upon one's soul—if indeed one could think in the midst of the excitement. You can judge how thankful it was to feel that he was fully prayed up. All was well—whether to live or to die—was gain—so it was God's will.

While it is true that Life is far sweeter with Christ all along the pathway—death is indeed a victory if it be to die in Christ.

The glory of the funeral doesn't insure a passage over. In a few hours the flowers will be withered; the horses and the drivers will have forgotten their recent charge; the mourners will have returned to their wonted duties. The dead will be forgotten.

Death in even the humblest home can be glorious—if only Christ be there.

"The Meanest Man in the World"

ABOUT the year 1900, A. J. Tomlinson was preaching Holiness in Cherokee County, North Carolina. In addition to preaching he was conducting an orphanage and school for the benefit of many poor in the mountains.

It was generally rumored—despite these efforts for good—that Brother Tomlinson was "the meanest man in the world." In all the history of religion, if any man follows Christ they are beset by false rumors, and uncalled-for persecutions.

One afternoon in late summer a man came up to the house where Brother Tomlinson lived with his family and with his household of orphans, and those children of the mountain poor who had left their children with him for education.

This stranger came up riding a splendid bay horse—with his saddlebags, armed with two pistols and a shotgun. He had no hair on his head, no eyelashes, no eyebrows. He said that he had killed his brother, and that his brother had come back and pulled every hair out one at a time.

He frankly told Brother Tomlinson that he had heard that Tomlinson was the meanest man in the world. He himself had been a very mean man, and he was anxious to see "the meanest man," and would surely see him when he saw Tomlinson.

He said he wanted to stay long enough to see just what the "meanest man" would do, so he stayed all night and until the afternoon of the next day.

He watched every movement Brother Tomlinson made. He was in family prayers; he was particularly surprised to find that Grace was asked at every meal.

When he went away he said to Brother Tomlinson, "I am disappointed. I came to find you the meanest man, and find you good."

This strange man went back home, selected the best cow from his herd and sent it to Brother Tomlinson to help in feeding the orphans during the winter.

And not only did he send a cow; but he helped in many ways.

He also sent his own daughter to Brother Tomlinson's home to attend the school during the winter.

Even of the Apostles of Jesus Christ it was said, "They that turn the world upside down have come hither also."
The Whole World Is Anxious For The Gospel

Salesmen, Clerks, Bricklayers, Plumbers, Printers — Every Man and Woman ought to be Active Christian Workers

A Few Remarks About JOHN WESLEY

But it is so difficult to find preachers enough who really have the blessing. There are plenty who are willing to wear the ministerial robes—ascend the pulpit on Sunday Morning and with studied and heavy decadence deliver a discourse from typewritten sheets—to have the sisters take them by the hand and say (whether they mean it or not) “That was a wonderful sermon, Dr. Gush.”

But where are the preachers that look to God for their compliments—and look to men only for their souls? They are all too few.

Those of us who are working people—and have the blessing in our own hearts must come to the rescue of lost souls.

Sinners spend their evening at Clubs, at Card parties, at Theatres, Carousals, Dances. They all manage to find time for it.

Christians must take that time to work for the Lord. They can work evenings, in prayer meeting, in writing letters, in prayer for the sick, in evangelistic meetings. Some of the finest preachers the world has ever had began their Christian service in just this way. What a wonderful blessing it would be if every Christian would improve all his time.

I was reading only recently of the tremendous work that the great Reformer and Holiness Preacher, John Wesley, laid out for himself. No sooner had John Wesley experienced the transforming power of God’s Grace than he hastened to declare it to all, taking the world for his parish.

—to the miners in the darkness of the mines, to the Newcastle felons in their loathsome jails, to the wealthy and refined worshippers in the fashionable churches, St. John’s and St. Ives’s.

John Wesley intended to preach in
the pulpits of the established churches in England. But they thrust him out. He resolved that neither Bishops, nor curates, nor church wardens should stand between him and duty.

But where he would preach he did not know. Every door seemed to close against him, and every face frowned upon him, save only the face of God.

BUT WHILE GOD SMILED HE KNEW NO FEAR.

Wesley and his fellow workers were even denied the privilege of the hospitals and the jails to hold forth the Gospel. Then they fled to the open fields, and to the streets of the cities, choosing for pulpits the market house steps, a horse-block, a coal heap, a table, a stone wall, a mountain side, the back of the horse—anything.

And consider how John Wesley worked! During a period of fifty-four years his travels averaged about five thousand miles a year! (Some say eight thousand miles). And most of this travel was on horseback.

He preached not less than twenty sermons a week, frequently more. These sermons were delivered mostly in the open air. For fifty-four years he preached on an average of fifteen sermons a week—In his lifetime more than 42,000 sermons. In our times a preacher does well if he averages a hundred sermons a year.

And while preaching and traveling he had time to read 2,200 volumes on various subjects.

He wrote and published grammars of the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, French, and English languages. He was for many years editor of a monthly periodical of fifty-six pages, known as the Arminian Magazine, requiring the undivided attention of any ordinary man in these times. He wrote and later revised “The Christian Library”, consisting of thirty volumes—a marvel of excellence.

His poetical works, in connection with Charles Wesley’s, amounted to not less than forty volumes. He compiled and published six volumes of church music. In all, John Wesley wrote more than two hundred volumes!

Besides this he had pastoral duties. For a long time he appointed the class leaders of all the bands, and select societies. He had under his personal care tens of thousands of souls.

To these unparalleled labors he added the establishment of schools, building of churches, raising funds to carry on the work, and a special care over the whole movement.

One wonders how he could have accomplished so much.

“In order to save time,” says one of his biographers, “in the first place, he ascertained how much sleep he needed; and when once settled he never varied from it to the end of his life. He rose at four in the morning and retired at ten in the evening, never losing any time, he says, ten minutes by wakefulness.”

John Wesley himself makes the remarkable statement that ten thousand cares were no more weight to his mind than ten thousand hairs to his head. “I am never tired with writing, preaching, or traveling.”

With all these labors John Wesley lived to the good old age of eighty-seven. On his last birthday he wrote:

“This day I enter into my eighty-eighth year. For above eighty-six years I found none of the infirmities of old age; my eyes did not wax dim, neither was my natural strength abated. But last August I found almost a sudden change—my eyes were so dim that no glasses would help me; my strength likewise quite forsook me and probably will not return in this world. But I feel no pain from head to foot, only it seems nature is exhausted, and humanly speaking, will sink more and more till ‘The weary springs of life stand still at last.’”

What a wonderful example he has set for Christian workers. The amount of good that he has done cannot be counted in terms of this world. He gave impetus to the message of Holiness such as no other perhaps, since the Apostle Paul.

If we could alone take the lesson that he gives in improving every moment possible for God—that would mean salvation to thousands. Too early in the evening we get sleepy—and go to bed. Too late in the morning do we lie abed, half asleep.

There is no reason in the world now why every Christian cannot become a full-fledged worker. Every Christian should become either a pastor, a Sunday School worker, a missionary, or an evangelist—The demand is great.

Your pastor will be glad for you to become a Christian worker—even if you cannot attend your own church regularly—so you are in Christian service.

It isn’t even necessary now for Christians to go away from home for a few years in order to get the Bible Training and Christian worker’s instruction. You can get instruction right in your own home and at a fraction of the cost of attending a Bible School. If possible it is good to attend a regular Bible School. But it isn’t necessary.

In the world’s work, such as lawyers, teachers, accountants, machinists, advertising men, engineers, electricians—practically every profession—the Graduates of Correspondence Schools have attained highest honors in their work—and remuneration quite the equal of the average graduate from a residence School.

Every member of the church—every one who takes the name of Christian, should be taking up some studies that will make him or her more efficient in the Lord’s work.

John Wesley’s labors were enormous, but you will notice that he had time to read more than two thousand volumes. In the course of his life, he must have spent a lot for his education and learning. He was a graduate of Oxford, and was in fact a teacher in that University for a period.

He speaks of the remarkable Bible Students that he had associated with him in his work. One of them died at twenty-eight, of whom John Wesley said: “Such a master of Bible
Knowledge I never saw before, and I never expect to see again. If he was questioned concerning any Hebrew word in the Old, or any Greek word in the New Testament, he could tell, after a little pause, not only how often the one or the other occurred in the Bible, but also what it meant in every place.”

Don’t hesitate to spend a year or two with the Bible in a definite course of Bible Study. It will give a richness to your Christian Experience such as you have not hitherto believed possible.

The Book of Books, that for two thousand years has been the Greatest Book in the World, holds ten thousand treasures that you have not yet taken for your own.

But the big reason that will prompt you to prepare for active Christian work is the call of Lost Souls everywhere. Right in your own town are multitudes that need God in their hearts more than anything else in the world.

What a crown of glory it will be upon your head at the end of the way to feel that you have done your very, very, very best for God and the souls of men. It will never do for one who has received the blessing as you have to close yourself up in a shell like a clam, and not tell the world of the blessing you have received. For soon your own blessing will have gone.

It is only a simple message—the story of Salvation. As they have often said to us, “Though we cannot sing like angels, though we cannot preach like Paul, We can tell the love of Jesus—How He died to save them all.” And that is the story.

When I was very young in the ministry I was announced to preach at a certain place the first and second sermons of a revival meeting that was to open. I diligently prepared a sermon, the first, with all the care possible. I delivered the sermon in the morning service, with what seemed to me fervor and effectiveness. The congregation received it joyously—that is the Christians, and many told me after the close, that it was a splendid sermon. But to me it was a total loss—for not one soul had come forward to get saved from sin.

That evening when I took the stand I was so broken up over the failure of the morning, and my desire to see souls brought into the kingdom, that as I opened the Book to take my text, I broke down and wept. I preached the first part of the sermon that I had felt I should preach, but it was nearly all with tears of love and pleading.

When the sermon was half over, one could see the desires in the eyes of many present to come to God. Opportunity was given, and a number of splendid young men—of my own age came forward and gave themselves to God. Two of those who presented themselves later became ministers of the Gospel—so fully were they brought into the kingdom.

So after all, it is not so much the higher education, it is THE LOVE OF GOD that wins souls.

But Bible Knowledge is essential. Those who live and move surrounded in every act by knowledge of the Scriptures, will always be led aright.

May you, in every waking hour picture the souls of men and women, waiting for some one to bring them the light.

May another sun not go down behind the western hills before you take some definite step toward being a life worker for Christ and his kingdom.

Today is the day of decision. If you pass the matter by now, you will delay, and forget. The week will pass, the month, the year, two years—five years—ten years—always, you will put it off. Then as you pass the meridian of life—you will say, regretfully, “If only I had begun younger.”

Your opportunity is NOW—those who wait for the tomorrows never get anything done.

What shall we say for the man or woman, who upon reading this retires to his closet alone with God, and in a renewed consecration dedicates some portion of every day for the rest of his life to the work of God.

With love-abounding, to every one, I am,

Faithfully yours,
A Co-Laborer in the Gospel.
The Vision of General Booth

Part II.

General Booth Was The Founder And Is Still The Head of The Salvation Army

HAD seen these sights and heard these sounds before, not so often, it is true, for I hid myself from them; but oh, they blinded and stunned me now, for they appeared a million times blacker and viler, more wretched and piteous, than ever they had seemed before! I felt like putting my hands before my eyes, and my fingers in my ears, to shut these things out from sight and hearing, so intensely real and present did they seem. They wrung my soul with sorrow and self-reproach, for alongside these recollections, the "Roll of Memory" at which I glanced appeared a million times blacker and greater soul, bringing them to His feet, and so preparing them for admission into this lovely place, I had been on the contrary, intent on earthly things, selfishly seeking my own, spending my life in practical unbelief, disloyalty and disobedience.

I must say I felt awful. Oh, if at that moment I could have crept out of the "land of pure delight" about which I had sung so much in the past, and could have gone back to the world of darkness, sin and misery, which I had just left, that I might spend another lifetime in that poverty and cross-bearing, while truly following my Lord! But that could not be. I was a fixture; I was in heaven. Heaven must be my abode forever; and, contradictory as it may seem, this thought filled my soul with unutterable regret.

And then came another thought, wilder than any that had gone before it. (You must recollect that it is a vision I am relating.) It was this: Would it be possible for me to obtain a commission, or rather permission, to go back to the world, to that very part of it from which I had come, clothed in some human from, and live my earthly life over again; live it in a manner worthy of my profession, my Christ and my opportunity? Could this be? At that moment if an answer in the affirmative could have been brought to me, I would have been willing to forfeit my heavenly blessedness; I would have gladly undergone ages of hardship, ignominy, poverty and pain; I would have given a million of money, nay, a world, had it been mine to give! But I could see no hope for such a second probation. What was to be done?

I had not been thus musing for many seconds, for thoughts appeared to flow with remarkable rapidity (as I have said) in this new world, when, quick as lightning flash, descended one of those bright inhabitants which I had watched floating far off in the clouds of glory, and stood before my astonished gaze.

I can never forget the feelings with which this apparition inspired me. Describe the shape and features and bearing of this noble form I cannot, and I will not attempt it. He was at the same time angelic and human, earthly and yet celestial. I discerned, therefore, at a glance that he was one of the blood-washed "multitude," who had "come out of the great tribulations of earth," and I not only judged from a certain majestic appearance which he bore, but from instinct I felt that the being before me was a man, a redeemed and glorified man.

He looked at me, and I could not help but return his gaze; his eyes compelled me; and in doing so I confessed to being ravished by his beauty. I could never have believed the human face divine could have borne so grand a stamp of dignity and charm. But far beyond the entrancing loveliness of those celestial features was the expression through every lineament of that countenance, and through those eyes that were gazing upon me. It was as though that face was only a sun-lit window, through which I could see into the depths of the pure, benevolent soul within. I don't know how I appeared to my beautiful visitor; I know not what form I bore, for I had not, as yet beheld myself mirrored anywhere since I had doffed mortality for immortality. I evidently had a deep interest for him, an interest that seemed of a saddening kind, for his features seemed to me to grow almost sorrowful as I lay there with my eyes fixed on him with a fascinating spell. He spoke first. Had he not done so I could never have summoned courage to address him. His voice was soft and musical and fitted well with the seriousness of his aspect. I understood him almost before I heard his words, although I cannot tell now what language he spoke, I suppose it was the universal language of heaven.

This was the substance of what he said: My arrival was known throughout a certain district of the celestial regions, where were gathered the ransomed spirits who came from the earthly neighborhood where I had resided. The tidings of my arrival had been flashed through the heavenly telephone, which spoke not in one ear only, but in every ear in that particular region. My name had been whis-
pered in every hillside and echoed in every valley, and had been breathed from every tree and flower, had sounded forth at every turn of the golden street, had been articulated in every room of every mansion, and proclaimed from every tower and pinnacle of the stupendous temple in which these glorified saints day and night present their worship to the great Father.

All who had known me on earth, all who had any knowledge of my family, my opportunities for helping forward the Kingdom of Christ, whom they worshiped and adored; were burning to see me and hear me tell of the victories I had won and the souls I had blessed while on earth; and all were especially anxious to hear if I had been the means of bringing salvation to the loved ones they had left behind.

All this was poured upon my soul. I knew not which way to look. Again and again, I remembered my life of ease and comfort. What could I say? How could I appear with the record of my life before these waiting spirits? What was there in it better than the record of self-gratification? I had no martyr stories to tell, I had sacrificed nothing worth naming on earth, much less in heaven, for His dear sake!

My mind was running in this direction, when I think my visitor must have discovered something of what I was thinking, and felt pity for me, seeing that he spoke again: "Where you find yourself is not actually heaven, but only its forecourt, a sort of outer circle. Presently, the Lord Himself, with a great procession of His chosen ones, will come to take you into the Celestial City itself, where your residence will be if He deem you worthy; that is, if your conduct on the battlefield below has pleased Him. Meanwhile, I have obtained permission to come and speak to you concerning a soul who, I understand lives in the neighborhood of your late residence, in whom I felt a deep interest. Our knowledge of the transactions of earth is, for our own sakes, limited, but now and then we are permitted to get a glance. 'Can you,' he said, 'tell me anything of my son? He was my only son. I loved him dearly, loved him too much. I spoiled him when a child! He had his own way. He grew up wilful, passionate and disobedient. My example helped him not.'"

Here a cloud for a moment came over that beautiful brow, but vanished as quickly as it came. "Memory has been busy, but that has all gone," he said, as though talking to himself, and then he finished the story of his prodigal son. He, the father, had been rescued, washed, regenerated, learned to fight for souls, and used to win many to the bloodstained standard. An accident, however, had suddenly overtaken him at his work, and as suddenly swung him into heaven. "And now," he added, "where is my boy? Give me tidings of my boy! He lived near you, had business dealings with you. Is he saved? What did you do for him? Is there hope? Tell me what his feelings are today?"

He ceased speaking. My heart sunk within me. What could I say? I knew the boy. The story of the father's death and his prodigal son had been told me. I had never spoken one serious word to the boy about his soul or about his Savior. I had been busy about other things. And now, what could I say to his father, who stood before me? I was dumb!

The cloud that I had noticed before, came again on the face of my visitor, only with a dark shadow this time. He must have guessed it all. He looked at me with a glance in which I felt that disappointment to himself and pity for me were combined, spread forth his white wings and soared away.

I was so intently gazing after his retreating form that I had not minded a second fair being, who had descended from above, and occupied the place abandoned only a moment before by my last visitor.

I turned and looked upon the newcomer. This time it was a spirit of the same class, of the same ransomed multitude who once were dwellers here below. There was a dignity of bearing, the same marvelous expression of inward power, and purity, and joy; but in this case combined (I could have imagined) with a beauty of more delicate and enthralling mold. Beautiful as I thought my first visitor to be, more beautiful than conception or dream of earth could be, yet here was a beauty that surpassed it—not, perhaps, if judged from inherent rules, but judged from my standpoint, for it must be remembered that I was still a man. My former visitor, I have said, was a glorious man; this one was evidently the glorified form of a woman.

I had, when on earth, sometimes thought that I could have wished for the privilege of beholding Eve in the hour when she came forth from the hands of her Maker, and had imagined something—only something, of what her beautiful form must have been as she sprang into being on that bridal morning, young and pure and beautiful—the fair image of her Maker—perhaps, the sweetest work of God. Now, here, I saw her—I saw Eve reproduced before my eyes as young, pure and beautiful, nay, more beautiful than her first mother could possibly have been; for was not this His finished workmanship?

But I was soon awakened from my dream by the voice of the fair creature who, from her manner, evidently wished to speak to me on some matter of great importance.

She told me her name. I had heard it on earth. She was a widow who had struggled through great difficulties. Her husband's death had been her life. Converted, she had given herself up unreservedly to fight for the Lord. Her children had been her first care. They had all been saved, and were fighting for God, but one. The mention of that name brought the same saddening cloud on her lovely face which had dimmed the bright face of my first visitor; but the cloud vanished almost as it came. That one, that unsaved one, was a girl who had been her mother's delight. She had grown up beautiful, the village
pride, but, alas! had gone astray. It was the old story of wrong and seduction, and cruel abandonment, and all the consequent train of miseries.

I listened. I had known of some of the sad tale on earth, but I had turned away from hearing of it further, as being "no concern of mine." Little did I ever think that I was going to be confronted with it in heaven!

And now the bright spirit turned on me those eyes that, beaming with love and pity, were more beautiful than ever. She said again: "My daughter liver near you. You know her. Have you saved her? I know not much about her, but I do know that one earnest and determined effort would save her?" And again she asked me, "Have you saved my child?" I must have cried out in agony. I know I put my hands before my eyes, for I could no longer bear to meet her glance. How long she continued to look on me with an expression of pity almost greater than that she had shown for her lost child, I know not; but when I withdrew my hands she was gone, and the silvery sheen of her white wings marked her out to my seeking eyes like a speck on the distant blue.

Again I gasped out, "Oh, my God, is this heaven? Will these interrogations go on forever? Will the meanness and earthliness of my past life haunt me every day and hour throughout eternity? What shall I do? Can I not go back to earth, and do something to redeem myself from this wretched sense of unworthiness? Can I not live my life over again? This question had hardly passed through my mind when there was another rush of wings, and down beside me alighted another form, surprisingly resembling the first that had spoken to me, and yet O so very different! But I will not stay to describe him; you must imagine it.

He introduced himself much in the same way as my former visitors. He had been a great sinner, but was awakened and won to Christ but a short time back by the Salvation Army, and had joined its ranks. Having had much forgiven, he had loved much. All his desire when on earth was to get free from the entanglements of business, and to devote himself a living sacrifice, as an officer to the saving of men. When just on the threshold of the realization of his wish, he had been sent to heaven, and here he was, a spirit of glory and joy, coming to inquire from me concerning the corps in which he was a soldier, and of the crowd of companions which he had left behind. Did I know his old corps? Their barracks were erected near my house of business; had I helped them in their struggles with difficulties and details? Had I done anything for his old mates, who were drinking and cursing their way to hell? He had died with prayers for them on his lips. Had I stopped them on their way to ruin?

Again I refused to speak. What could I say? I knew his corps, but I had never given them a word of encouragement. I knew the hovels in which his old mates lived, and the public houses in which they spent their money; but I had been too busy, or too proud, or too shamefaced to seek them out with the tidings of the Savior's love. I was speechless. He guessed my feelings, I suppose, compassionated me, and left in sadness—at least in much sadness as is possible in that heavenly land.

For myself, I was in anguish, strange as it may appear, considering I was in heaven. But so it was. Wondering whether there was not some comfort for me, and, involuntarily looking around, I saw or thought I saw a marvelous phenomenon on the horizon at an immense distance. All that part of the heavens appeared to be filled with a brilliant light, surpassing the blaze of a thousand suns at noonday, and yet there was not oppressive glare rendering it difficult to gaze upon, as is the case with our own sun when he shines in his glory. Here was a brilliance far surpassing anything that could be imagined, and yet I could look upon it with pleasure. As I gazed on and wondered what it could be, it appeared to come a little closer, and I perceived clearly that it was coming in the direction of the spot on which I lay; for I was still reclining on the banks of the beautiful river where I first found myself.

And now I could distinctly hear the sound of music. The distance was a great many miles away, after the measurement of earth, but the atmosphere was so clear, and I found my eyesight so strong, that I could readily discern objects at a distance which, on earth, would have required a powerful telescope. The sound came nearer. It was music, beyond question, and such music as I never heard before; but there was a strange commingling of other sounds which all together made a marvelous melody, made up, as I afterwards discovered, by the strains that came from the multitude of musicians, and the shouts and songs that proceeded from innumerable voices. Gradually it approached, rapidly, I might have said, but that my curiosity was so strongly aroused to know what it was, that a few minutes seemed an age. At length, I was enabled to comprehend the marvelous vision that approached me. But who could describe it! The whole firmament was filled, as it were, with innumerable forms, each of beauty and dignity, far surpassing those with whom I had already made an acquaintance. Here was a representative portion of the aristocracy of heaven accompanying the King, who, as the spirit had informed me, was coming to the spirits of men and women who had escaped from earth to welcome into the heaven of heavens those who had fought the good fight, who had kept the faith, and overcome in the conflict as He had overcome.

I stood filled with awe and wonder. Could it be possible? Was I at last actually to see my Lord and be welcomed by Him? In the thought of this rapture I forgot the sorrow that only a moment before reigned in my heart, and my whole nature swelled with expectation and delight.

And now the procession was upon
me. I had seen some of the pageants of earth—displays that required the power of mighty monarchs and wealth of ancient nations to create—but they were each, or all combined, as the glimpse of a feeble rush-light to a tropical sun, when put alongside the scene that now spread itself before my wonderings eyes.

On it came; the first rank of the shining host had passed me by. I had sprung up from my recumbent position and fallen prostrate as these heavenly spirits neared me, each one looking in himself, to my untutored eyes, like a god, so far as greatness and power could be expressed by the outward appearance of any being. Rank after rank swept past me. Each turned his eyes upon me, or seemed to do so, and to them all, I could not help feeling that I was somewhat an object of pity. Perhaps it was my own feelings that made me imagine this, but it certainly appeared to me as though these noble beings regarded me as a craven, cowardly soul, who had only cared for his own interests on earth, and had only come up there with the same selfish motives.

On they came. Thousands passed me, yet there appeared to me no diminution of the numbers yet to come. I looked at the train as it stretched backwards, but my eyes could see no end of it. There must have been millions. It was indeed a “multitude that no man could number.”

All were praising God, either in hymns expressive of adoration and worship, or by recounting, in songs of rapture, the mighty victories which they had witnessed on earth, or describing some wonderful work they had seen elsewhere.

And now, the great central glory and attraction of the splendid procession was at hand.

I gathered this from the still more dignified character of the beings who came marching by, the heavier crash of music and the louder shouts of exultation which came pealing from all around.

I was right, and before I could prepare my spirit for the vision, it was upon me. The King was here! In the center of circling hosts, which rose tier above tier into the blue vault above, turning on Him their myriad eyes, lustrous with the love they bore Him, I beheld the celestial form of Him who once died for me up on the cross. The procession halted, and at a word of command, in an instant formed up in three sides of a square in front of me, the King standing in the center immediately opposite the spot where I had prostrated myself.

What a sight that was! Worth toiling a lifetime to behold it! Nearest the King were the patriarchs and apostles of ancient times. Next, rank after rank, came the holy martyrs who had died for Him. Then came the army of warriors who had fought for Him in every part of the world; and around and about, above and below, I beheld myriads and myriads of spirits who were never heard of on earth outside their own neighborhood, or beyond their own times, who, with self-denying zeal and untiring toil had labored to extend God’s kingdom and to save the souls of men; while encircling the gorgeous scene, above, beneath, around, hovered glimmering angelic beings who had kept their first estate, proud, it seemed to me, to minister to the happiness and exaltation of these redeemed out of the poor world whence I came.

I was bewildered by the scene. The songs, the music, the shouts of the multitude that came like the roar of a thousand cataracts, echoed and re-echoed through the sunlit mountains, and the magnificent and endless array of happy spirits ravished my senses with passionate delight. All at once, however, I recollected myself, and I beheld Him of the High Presence before Whom I was bowed, and lifting up my eyes I beheld Him gazing upon me.

What a look it was! It was not pain, and yet it was not pleasure. It was not anger, and yet it was not approval. Anyway, I felt that in that countenance, so ineffably admirable and glorious, there was yet no welcome for me! I had felt this in the
worthy to be the companion of these glorified heroes. But, combined with this self-reproach there was a gleam of hope. My soul’s desire to return to earth was to be gratified. Perhaps it was in response to the longings I had felt ever since the consciousness of my earthly failings, which I have described, had dawned upon me that this favor was granted to me. I could have the privilege of living my life over again. True, it was a high responsibility, but Jesus would be with me. His Spirit would enable me, and I felt ready to face it with my heart.

The cloud of shining ones had vanished. The music was silent. I closed my eyes and gave myself over, body, soul, and spirit, to the disposal of my Savior, to live, not for my own salvation, but for the glory of my Christ, and for the salvation of the world. And, then and there, the same blessed voice of my King stole over my heart, as He promised that His presence should go with me back to earth, and make me more than conqueror through His blood.

The Power and Comfort of God.

Gen. i. 1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

When Mr. Simeon, of Cambridge, was on his dying bed, his biographer relates that, "after a short pause, he looked round with one of his bright smiles, and asked, 'What do you think especially gives me comfort at this time? The creation! Did Jehovah create the world or did I? I think He did; now if He made the world, He can sufficiently take care of me.'"

Sin Ready to Enter. Gen. iv. 7. "Sin lieth at the door."

A young friend was one day calling upon an old Christian woman, nearly eighty years of age, just waiting for the summons. Said this friend, "Oh, granny, I wish I was as sure of heaven, and as near it, as you are!" With a look of unspeakable emotion, the old woman answered, "And do you really think the devil cannot find his way up an old woman's garret-stair? Oh, if He hadn’t said ‘None shall pluck them out of My hand,’ I would have been away wandering long ago!"

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About Sacrificing

An excellent measure of how much you desire a certain thing, is to examine how much you are willing to sacrifice for it.

Benjamin Franklin had a little printing business started in Philadelphia. Several business men had become regular patrons. When he decided to start the Pennsylvania Gazette (now the Saturday Evening Post, probably the most successful publishing venture in existence today), these patrons threatened to withdraw their patronage.

So Franklin invited five or six of them to sup with him in his room. He was then a young man and occupied a room almost bare of furniture. When they came into the room they found a bare table with only wooden bowls and some wooden ladles to eat with. Franklin himself served them only with some coarse mush. Franklin sat down and began to eat with a vim and apparent enjoyment. The business men could not stomach such coarse food. They arose in disgust and started to leave.

At that moment Franklin rose, and stopped them, saying, “I will tell you the meaning of this parable. A man that can eat this coarse food can get along without anybody’s patronage.”

His heart was set on his new venture—and nothing could stop him, even though he would be compelled to subsist on the coarsest food.

Asbury, venerable and beloved first American Bishop of the Methodist Church, as a young man of twenty-six left his home in England under the call of God. He went down to the ship not knowing whence would come money for his passage over. But it came—in the nick of time before the ship sailed. However, he had to sleep only on boards—not enough money came to give him a berth to sleep in.

In early America, as he labored all the way from Georgia to Maine among the scattered settlements, he slept anywhere night overtook him. In malarial districts, in unsanitary beds, always in sore need of money—but he pressed on, for he wished to see the work of the Lord go on more than anything else in the world. When he died he was the Bishop of more than 700 ministers of the Methodist Church. He even sacrificed having a home, for he never married—he felt that it would be asking too much of any woman to marry and then him to be away from her at least all but a week or two a year.

Men who are seeking money or advancement in this world’s goods make great sacrifices—usually. Those who make great fortunes have in most instances done so at the sacrifice of their health.

There are millions of men and women in the world today making sacrifices for money—or for social position.

But who is making a sacrifice for the Salvation of the Lost?

If you are giving the tithe to the work of the Lord—that isn’t a sacrifice—that is duty!

Who is sleeping out under the trees these days for the sake of the Gospel?

Who is praying all night for the Lost?

Who is denying themselves of pleasant bread—fasting and praying?

Who is making any sacrifice at all?

If so, what is it?

Sit down now, and be honest with yourself.

For only if you are making a sacrifice can you expect the rewards of sacrifice.

For those that sacrifice in Christian effort are the ones who win the great rewards over yonder. And it is those that make the sacrifice who really accomplish something in this world for the Lord.

One good way to sacrifice is to give a tithe of your time to the work of the Lord—two and one-half hours a day. Supposing you take from seven to nine-thirty every evening—hours that so many waste—and spend them in the work of the Lord. In a year you would be amazed at the amount of Christian work it would be.

It takes sacrifice—for the present—but the sacrifices are after all only investments—in God’s Eternal Bank.
Why Don't You be a Preacher?

THINK about that seriously. Every year you are getting older and older. You have a feeling that every next year is going to find you flashing out as something important. You wouldn't have figured five years ago today that you would be just what you are today. You thought by that time you would be a somebody that had to be reckoned with.

Why don't you be a preacher? The chances for learning to preach are much better than for anything else. Because the first principle of preaching isn't words, oratory, or a high-sounding name. The first principle is LOVE. Do you love the souls of sinners? Would you like to see them come to Christ? What would you do to save just one soul from hell?

Would you be willing to spend the next twelve months studying the Word of God, so that you can convince the sinner of righteousness, of power and of judgment to come, if you felt that it would bring ONE soul to Christ? Or would you say, "No, it isn't worth the price." Ah, if you give but one year to preparation for gospel work, either for preaching, for leading in church work of any kind, you can count on leading MANY souls to CHRIST—not just one.

When Timothy had to study the Scriptures he had to write out the entire Bible by his own hand, in order to have it, or else pay some one else to do it. Today, you can get a Bible at a cost of a few cents—and you can be instructed in the Scriptures for a whole year—WITHOUT LOSING ANY PAY and the cost would be about one-tenth of what TIMOTHY would have had to pay for a copy of the Bible alone.

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