

FROM CRIME TO CHRIST

by

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Chapter 1: THE MAN WHO UNLOCKED PRISON DOORS

My wife and I were riding past a great hospital.

"Just think," I said, "such an immense building packed to the brim with sick people!"

Presently we came to a great penitentiary.

"In there," my wife remarked, "are also sick people. They need physicians as badly as the others. Of the two, the need of those in this building is greater."

We rode in silence for some time. Then I blurted out, "For years I have sought out the sick and tried to help them. But I have neglected or even avoided the inmates of the other building we just passed. And just that far have I fallen short of living a truly Christlike life. Jesus, you remember, came forth to seek and to save the sinners as well as to cure the sick. To him there were no sinners—they were merely the sick in need of a physician. I wish you would pray, Louise, that this lack in both of our lives may be filled out."

In a very few days, Mrs. Arthur Holt sent Louise and me a copy of a book entitled, *Love Can Open Prison Doors*.

"This book," she wrote, "has done more to transform my husband who teaches in the Chicago Theological Seminary than anything he has ever read."

"When penitentiaries start transforming theological seminaries that is something!" I thought.

"But the book is privately printed," I said, "so I am afraid it can't be much good."

How short-sighted I was! Turned down by the regular publishers was it? So was *In His Steps*, which became the best-seller next to the Bible and *Pilgrim Progress*. So was *The Calling of Dan Matthews*, which started Harold Bell Wright's long list of best selling spiritual books. So was *Magnificent Obsession*, declined by most publishers, the book that launched Lloyd Douglas on his career. Strange the way publishers of religious books are afraid of those that have real vitality!

My wife was soon absorbed in the book. Spotless and sinless was Louise; in fact, if she had any sin it was that she ran away as in a panic at the mere thought of sin. And here she was hypnotized by a entirely new experience—the experience of living in a world as foreign to her nature as night is to day.

What is more, this experience was transforming her. She was growing gentler, kinder, more forgiving of all mankind. A larger and more Christ-like quality of compassion was hers.

"There is one experience in this book, Glenn, that I have been living with," she said quietly one day. "It is where Starr Daily had been subjected to the third degree for days without end. He had been depending upon his power of hate to give him strength to endure it, but finally he got so exhausted that out of pure fatigue he dropped all his hate and discovered that it was easier to let his love flow out to the

officers that surrounded him. "Whereupon the chief of detectives said abruptly, 'That will be enough for him today. Call the doctor.' And the torture ceased. A physician looked him over and put him in the hospital. All the next day women kept coming and going to the hospital bringing him flowers and candies. Finally he got strength enough to ask the nurse who these women were. She replied, 'They are the wives of the detectives who beat you up.'"

Love is surely a magnet! After hearing those words of my wife I, too, sat down with that book. After reading it I said, "I want to meet that man. He has something that we folks don't have."

My wife said, "I am going to write him and thank him for what he has done for me."

A year later my wife stepped out of this world into heaven. From Starr Daily's hand came the sweetest letter of understanding consolation that I received that entire year. How could a man with his background write like that? And a perfect stranger at that! I wrote him telling of a camp I was going to hold at Glendora, California, and invited him to come. I received no reply. One day when the camp was in session and I was delivering the afternoon open-air Forum address, I noticed among the bystanders a new face. It was a face reminiscent of the face of Abraham Lincoln, in its lines of privation and hardship and suffering. But when I approached the newcomer after the meeting I never saw a face so completely transformed by a smile! All the lines vanished and a magnetic radiance made his whole countenance new. Here was certainly a man bearing scars of a dark past, but with a face turned resolutely toward the light.

"Are you—," I began.

"I am Starr Daily."

And his smile again lighted his face.

"Would you be willing to speak to our group at the Forum Hour tomorrow?"

"I didn't come to speak but to listen," he replied. He was very stubborn, but two days later he weakened and consented to speak. And then I was in for the greatest surprise of all!

Instead of a fumbling speech on the mechanics of religion, he stood before us as a prophet of old, letting the Holy Spirit speak through him. A free, released message poured forth that simply carried us up to the heights. I was thrilled especially by the sweep and ease of his gestures, by the rhythm of his sentences, by the saltiness and vigor of his words, and above all, by the pointedness and appropriateness of his illustrations, most of them drawn from his experience in the underworld.

Everything he said was vital. It was so different from the anemic firstly, secondly and thirdly method of the average religious discourse! Instead of a bouquet of cut flowers he gave us that day a spadeful of wild flowers, roots and all,

with the rich loam of the wild wood still clinging to the roots. These were experiences that, transplanted into the garden of our souls, would transform our lives. There in God's out-of-doors, with a golden orange grove for background, he spoke as a second Hosea might have spoken to the people of Israel.

"To whom do I address this message? To all who would lay hold of the larger life. To the souls of the earth who, though still trapped in the selfish interests of the little ego, have ventured beyond into freedom, and have returned with a huge dissatisfaction for the ego's narrow valley.

"I say to you, and I say it joyously, I address this message to those who have sought amiss and in vain; to those who have knocked and to whom the door has not been opened; to those who have hungered in their hearts and have not been filled; to those who have thirsted in their souls and for whom the water of eternal life has been delayed; to those who have mourned as aliens to comfort and as brothers to sorrow. Has God been absent in your life? Have you yearned for the matchless Presence? To you I address my message.

"Though you have had a spiritual urge, have you lived more in the valley of despair than on the mountain top of joy? Are you sick and oppressed? Despite your spiritual longings, have you known more of defeat than victory? Has yours been a life of repeated and heartbreaking disappointments and discouragements? Have you grown weary and jaded in the struggle? Have you been unable either to put your burden down or lift it up? Have you in your bewilderment cried out with Buddha, 'Life and suffering are one'? If you have been numbered among the lonely ones of earth, take heart right now, for I have a message for you. Christ is my message. When my new statement of him has been made, you will know what I mean by 'take heart.' Listen. If you have been hurt and hurt and hurt in this world, I shall tell you why, and I shall tell you who you are, and to whom you belong. If you have suffered, then, my message is for you.

"If you were in bondage when you came to this camp, at the finish you'll have the key to freedom. This message will cut the knots you have been unable to untie. It will slash your old moorings. The old unreliable bridges you have built, it will burn behind you.

"Has the abundance of material possessions left you bankrupt of soul? empty of spirit? bored of mind? Has the lack of material possessions left you pinched of body and spiritually frustrated? Having had neither too much nor too little—has even this left a vacancy in your heart? This, then, is your message.

"I shall not tell you so much about the WAY. But I shall tell you about a way to the WAY. I shall not tell you how to lay your burden down. But I shall tell you how to lift your burden up. I shan't explain your burden. But I shall tell you how to claim it wisely and well. Never shall I tell you to employ protest and revolt against your problem. But I shall tell you to use it unto victory. I shall not tell you to flee

from your trouble. But I shall tell you how to profit by it. I shall not suggest that you deny your suffering. But I shall show you how to use your weakness unto glory. Such is the message I have for you. A strange but let us hope a lovely message! There is power in it for you. The key word is *integrity*.

"My message cuts across Christianity to Christ. Many have been gathered out of the world into Christianity. And many out of Christianity have been gathered into Christ. There will be more. Many, many more!

"And now you are ready for the message. Here it is:

"We become like unto that which we adore.

"Here is a profound secret. A mighty message! Its greatness lies in its elusive simplicity. A message, a secret so entirely simple as to be hidden, like the paradoxes of Paul, or the ungarnished statements of Jesus. If you can take hold of this secret, consciously—very consciously, mind you—you can become the master of your conditions, the ruler over your circumstances. The whole thing hinges upon the grace of *free choice*.

"An encouraging statement, that! Let us go deeper into it.

"The thing we choose to adore will determine what we are at the moment. Let us first ask ourselves, therefore, 'What is it I adore?'

"If we adore gossip we shall, in all our characteristics, become like gossip. The timbre of our voice will betray us, the cast of our eyes, the set of our features, the tilt of our heads; our mannerisms, gestures, the way we sit, and the way we walk—all will proclaim to the world, 'Behold, the gossip!'

"If we adore resentment, the grudge, prejudice, in-tolerance, all nature will conform to our adoration, and will confer upon us the mark of the beast; and when we put our clammy hand in the hand of another, inwardly at least, this person will declare, 'I felt death in that touch.'

"If we depart from edification and adore cheap and tawdry criticism; if to frowsy fault-finding we surrender our adoring hearts, we shall become like a cheap and tawdry thing, a furtive, frowsy creature who slinks along the musty edges of life snapping at the heels of those who walk erect, and who are strong of heart, huge of mind, and vast of soul, and in every tissue of our bodies will be etched in charred and jagged letters, 'Beware! The viper!'

"If we adore the negative, sick thought, the worried, over-anxious feeling, the hangdog sentiment, we shall become gray and bloodless, a self-induced invalid, who may invoke another's pity, but never confidence and admiration.

"Let me repeat it: The whole thing hinges upon the grace of *free choice*.

"We may choose what we wish to become in our hearts and minds. The difference between suffering and happiness, defeat and victory, resides in the self-advanced inquiry, 'What is it I adore?'

"Oh, yes, this matter of adoration is a profound secret, one of the many great

ways to the WAY. It leads both up and down.

"Recently, after one of my lectures, a woman searched my face with frank scrutiny and said, 'I can't believe it. I mean, that you were ever these terrible things you tell about yourself.' I might have explained that I had changed; that I had given my adoring heart to a new Master, and that I was becoming a little more like the things for which He stood. But this might have sounded a trifle presumptuous; so I dismissed the matter with, 'I'm glad you fail to see the old man through the garments of the new.'

"Would you have me tell you your fortune? I could with your cooperation. If you will tell me what you now adore, what you have adored, and what you will continue to adore, I shall tell you what you are, have been and will be.

"If you would have me give you a character analysis, a personality reading, I should ask but one question, 'What is it you adore?' Should you answer that honestly, truthfully, I could then give you a general history of your life, past, present and future. If I know what you adore I can know your character.

"The more knowledge of the outer world a man has makes him realize the more his need for the reality which the outer world conceals. With the birth of this awareness comes the inevitable conviction that the final answer must be found within rather than without; that man cannot find his origin by seeking it; but rather his origin will come to light when he has given his faith and adoration over to his glorious destiny, which, of course, has been preserved for him in the perfect heart of God. By and by, after he has suffered enough, he will wake to the truth that the God of all grace has called him to eternal glory through Jesus Christ. His heart will yield up her folly and she will cry out triumphantly, 'I belong to Thee, Lord.'"

As his voice ceased, the audience sat spellbound, silent. That abrupt, unexpected ending was characteristic of Starr. The silence that followed, I discovered later, was also characteristic of all his audiences. The chain of thought and awakening of soul that he started in motion continued to flow, even as a glider continues its flight long after the tow rope of the airplane is detached.

Chapter 2: THE WAY OF MEDITATION

I was on the train returning from California when the thought suddenly struck me, "Why didn't I ask Starr if he would come to the Minnesota camp that starts at Koronis next week?" I wrote a letter at once and mailed it at the first stopping point. The acceptance came shortly after I arrived home.

Starr Daily walked around beautiful Lake Koronis as a man in a dream. He was so busy drinking in its beauty and absorbing the spiritual atmosphere of the camp, the "Mother Camp" he called it, and adjusting himself to the dedicated type of people who came there that he did not "let go" all the power that was in him. There was a sweetness and humility about him, however, that carried his simple message very far.

"I am gathering new substance," he said. Then he added, "I want to pay a tribute to this place. It is the most perfect place for an orchestration of this kind in the world. This camp is like a great console and on it Christ is playing a marvelous hymn. And the hymn is based upon the interweaving of two themes: Love and Prayer.

"The gift of prayer was not mine at the beginning, so laboriously I mastered the art of meditation. But in meditation one must relax, something a hunted man finds it hard to do. When the cat is out of doors it sleeps half at attention, so that it can respond to its will the moment a scent of danger crosses its nostrils. But when the cat is with those who love it, and it feels a sense of security, it pours itself out like molasses on the rug. I find that sense of security here, hence I pour myself out before God and His presence is very close to me."

"When we gather for the Galilean Hour tonight," I said, "would you be willing to give our entire group a little lesson in meditation?"

"Gladly," he replied.

That evening, following the song time by the lake under Glenn Harding, Starr Daily led us into the mystery of an art that had helped to mold his life and, I am sure, helped to mold the lives of all those who heard him.

"An old lifer said to me one day, 'There must be times of stillness. God's voice is still and small. It can't reach you if your temples are throbbing and your pulses are pounding. Stillness in you can soothe and calm the jangling nerves in others. Even the elements obeyed the quiet command of the Lord when he said, "Peace, be still." By those simple words he reduced a turbulent sea into a great calm.'

"Glenn Clark mentioned in his talk today that the two things that differentiate man from the animals is his power to use words and his power to use levers. I begin my meditation with the simplest of all levers and the simplest of all words. The lever I use is my lungs; the word I use is the word Peace. I work them simultaneously—a dual process.

"Both the inbreath and the outbreath should be slow and even and unrestrained. This is achieved by the will. The inbreath is shorter by several Counts than the outbreath, a one-count pause at the end of the inbreath, and a two-count pause at the end of the outbreath.

"While this is difficult at first, if persisted in, the particular rhythm eventually establishes itself and becomes a subconscious habit, thus eliminating the tedium of will control. So much for the lever—the lungs. Now for the word. On the slow-moving outbreath, I like to pronounce P-E-A-C-E, very slowly, sounding it and realizing it in my mind.

"It is amazing to see how this practice overcomes tension and induces sleep and relaxation—a relaxation far deeper than that attained in ordinary sleep. And it eliminates subconscious activity in the form of dreams and restlessness. It produces a quality of restful slumber that is simply saturated with tranquility, serenity and peace. It is, in fact, and in a certain way, a spiritual experience like the mystics of old, with implications too far-reaching to suggest here.

"Four hours of this sort of sleep are more refreshing than a dozen hours of the half-conscious kind I used to know. From the practice of this method I have reaped a harvest of benefits in my physical, emotional, mental and spiritual life.

"After learning the art of relaxation I found that the exact opposite to relaxation was the art of concentration. These are the two contrasting poles which, when properly combined, create the finest kind of meditation. Concentration can be used to hold the right thoughts in, if you are a Christian saint, or to keep the wrong thoughts out, if you are a Hindu Buddhist; but I selected an in-between method to begin with which proved very efficacious. I actually welcomed any negative thought that intruded itself into my mind as an opportunity to counter immediately with two or more positive thoughts. If, for instance, a negative thought entered my mind, I was not to give it attention, either by retaining it and reacting upon it, or by rejecting it with resentment. I believe that any person, no matter to what depth of degradation he has sunk, no matter to what extent he has become victim to negative thinking, could change the whole course of his life by putting this method into practice for thirty days.

"Relaxation and concentration are mere steps to the third and crowning step of meditation. Meditation itself, however, is not as high as prayer. It is possible to meditate on bad things as well as good things—without acknowledging God as well as meditating on the presence of God. Prayer, on the other hand, by its very nature, must be in direct partnership with God or it ceases to be prayer. To me, meditation is an art, prayer a gift, a grace. Anyone can cultivate the art of meditation but not everyone may take hold of the grace of prayer.

"But if rightly used, meditation is the best preparation for prayer that can ever be found; it invites prayer, it woos prayer. Meditation alone, if rightly used, can lift

one into the very heights of life. For meditation achieves three things:

"First, it assumes the mood of religion without appearing religious, protecting one from the disease of sanctimoniousness, warding off spiritual pride and self-satisfaction and yet opening avenues of reverence and expectancy. This leads to its next value, which is,

"Secondly, the establishing of a condition of consciousness that invites revelation and opens the way for the expression of that revelation to others.

"Third, meditation releases the soul without imposing violence on the mind or body, releasing greater powers for action in every way.

"The subject for meditation, however, is all-important, for the results obtained always correspond to the motive and the subject. If one meditated upon an invention, for instance, the invention might be forthcoming, and if on a painting, a great work of art might result. If one meditated upon a very spiritual subject, on the other hand, he would step into a corresponding experience of understanding. Glenn Clark derives great strength through what he calls Creative Day-dreaming that has many elements of what I am describing. The book of Psalms is a book of exalted meditations. But, above all I like to meditate upon the Christ.

"Having learned how to meditate in silence, my next step was to carry the power of the meditation and the peace of this silence into the daily routine of action. To achieve this it was necessary to bring my mind into a state of intentional dual action, much like Frank Laubach in his *Game With Minutes*. It is not an easy thing to keep one's mind focused on Christ, and at the same time do one's work effectively in store or shop. But it can be done.

"As I speak to you right now I am in this state of active meditation. My intellectual mind is busy with the memories I am trying to convey and the selection of words to convey them, but my deeper mind is turning over ideas concerning Christ and His unique purpose in bringing you and me together. My outer mind is walking hand in hand with incidents of the hour, but my inner mind is walking hand in hand with Christ. The same dual purpose may be employed with benefit in any routine duty to which one may be called.

"This is what might be called active meditation. It consists of holding a strong, constant desire in one part of one's mind to be in meditation on God, while another part goes about the task of discharging the numerous routine duties of the everyday life. To express it differently, it is the attempt to aspire to bring the glow of glory to the lesser things by keeping oneself in the meditational mood concerning the greater things.

"If you find this active meditation too difficult at first, you can at least try to cultivate its passive opposite, that quiet meditation in the inner room that is purely single-minded in its process and mystical in its result. Passive meditation begins with relaxation, as I said before, advances to concentration, and finally merges into

meditation The method demands a high degree of will control. The will fixes the intellectual mind quietly but steadily upon the idea of tranquility until the effect willed is attained. At this point, through will again, the mind is fixed on Christ, or his equivalent, Love, and is held there quietly but unwaveringly until the revelations desired are attained. This method is what an old prison mate of mine called the practice of the presence.

"After a while the personal will wearies of this lofty fixation. The effect is not that of an abdication of the personal will, but a complete and frictionless surrender of it. It is drawn in, so to speak, by the will of Christ or of God. The intellectual mind is not thus absorbed, but for the time being is purified, or cleared of all worldly confusion and speculation, and becomes a clear, transparent medium through which Christ reveals himself, and wherein love, peace and reality are known. Many facets of the Christ gem are revealed in this experience, which are by way of interpretations of his cosmic character and mystical nature. However, the predominant effect upon the mediator is that of an unqualified and unspeakable love.

"In this consciousness the highest form of healing may be practiced by those who make the healing art a part of their spiritual ministry. It has, of course, many other utilitarian values. It takes away all doubt concerning eternal life; it gives a vibrant and boundless sense of security and fearlessness; and it bestows an enormous confidence in and dependence upon God for direction and supply. It leaves the mind washed and invigorated, the emotions peaceful, the body aglow with freshness and vitality. And it produces a general, all-around joyousness that can be described only as a zest for living to the fullest each passing minute of the day and night. It completely transforms the dream life, and gives one the capacity to sleep in the soft spiritual repose of a little child. Above all it makes Christ very near and dear, and the adventure with him the very highest kind of joy, serenity and good pure fun. By assuring restful sleep it brings recovery and renewal at night, which proves a blessing during the daytime hours of work.

"Thus we find that meditation, rightly used, is the secret for tapping Source Energy; that is, the energy of God. It is the great physical rejuvenator; the great emotional stabilizer; the great mental clarifier; and above all, the great purifier of the accumulated negative habits that gather around and obscure the soul."

Chapter 3: THE PRODIGAL SON LEAVES HOME

By this time you are aware that this is a very unusual man. To have come from such depths, and to have attained such heights, he must have passed through a great filtration of the soul; he must have had an experience as great or perhaps even greater than the experience of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus Road. What was that past? What was that experience? Well, here is the life story of Starr Daily.

His mother died when he was born. This gave her a sense of destiny in his birth. She felt that somehow her sacrifice was not to be made in vain.

The first eight years of his life that mother's wish held. He was fascinated by religion. He was a good boy. Two strange fears, however, haunted him: the fear of death and the fear of being enclosed in close places. When he reached his eighth year an event happened that suddenly sent him marching down the valley of the shadow of those two fears for the next twenty-five years of his life.

A trivial incident, one might call it, but the San Francisco earthquake itself could not have made a more cataclysmic change in anyone's life than this event made in Starr's.

The third grade was having its monthly recitations. Every child had to speak a piece. Mothers were present to see their children perform. When the little boy who had no mother got up to recite his selection, he forgot a line in the middle of the piece. All the pupils laughed. That would not have been so serious—but *the teacher laughed*. The effect upon the motherless child was catastrophic. Everything fell out from under him. The psychological impact of that moment turned a child into a savage and he was destined to remain a savage for years to come.

For twenty-five years, in fact, he hated all mankind. Like the outcast Ishmael, his hand was against every man, and every man's hand was against him.

When he was sixteen years old he met an extraordinary character. A man who was the advance agent of a group of safe breakers took him under his wing much as old Fagin took, Oliver Twist and put him through special training in crime. This group had learned their "trade" from a Hindu sect that was a perversion of a Yogi system that stole from the rich and gave to the poor. No youngster was ever subjected to a sterner discipline than was Starr in the next few years. In time he became a captain of a team which was so skillful in its operations that it baffled all the skill of the Pinkertons to catch them or to hold them when caught. Had Starr kept away from liquor he would never have been caught.

Then followed a period when, for fourteen years, he was a member of chain gangs or confined in penitentiaries. But through it all his father never lost hope. That father love weathered every storm. But love of parent for child—love on this earth plane—is not enough. Even spending three fortunes to save his boy could not achieve its purpose. Hiring lawyers, bribing juries, could not save him.

"I never knew a thoroughly conditioned criminal," said Starr, "who was ever changed except by religion. Parental love alone was not enough to save me. Only the redemptive love of heaven could do that." And Starr's poor father had not learned the secret how to release that into his son's life. Affection alone can feed one's weaknesses as well as one's strength.

Finally one day the father, in great agony of soul, saw his son carried away in handcuffs for the last time. The efforts of a lifetime had failed to save his son. Then worn-out, discouraged, despairing he went back home and lay down and died.

His dying wish was for his son, and the moment he stepped into heaven that wish, freed from the inhibitions and limitations of this early body, became multiplied in power by infinity itself.

I know whereof I write. The moment my brother, my mother, and my wife stepped into heaven, their prayers and dreams for me and my work took on colossal power. When Stephen, whose dying breath was a prayer of forgiveness for his accusers, stepped into heaven, his wish for Paul of Tarsus "split the sky in two" and let the voice of Christ burst upon the new-born Paul on the Damascus Road.

The moment Starr's father stepped into heaven, his dying wish for the redemption of his son, passing through the celestial filtration of heaven, became so colossal in its power that it, too, "split the sky in two" and let the very presence of Christ burst upon his son.

Starr had been hanging in the "cuffs" for fifteen days. The warden was doing his best to break the will of this man who had been pronounced incorrigible by judges and psychiatrists all over the nation. Then the prison doctor, believing that Starr was about to die, ordered him laid on the floor. He was now only a mass of skin and bones after the fifteen days of torture. By keeping his hate in high gear, Starr had been able to stand it. But now lying there, panting, thoroughly exhausted, there came a moment when he forgot to hate, and in that moment, Christ came to him.

As Starr looked upon the apparition of Christ he became aware that never in his life had he ever seen such love as shone from those eyes. They drew the hate out of him just as poison is drawn out of an infected wound. He was in bliss, in ecstasy, in glory. He hoped that moment would never pass. When it did, something remained that he could never lose. As Dante put it when he looked into Paradise, "the sense of sweet still trickled in his heart."

The next thing Starr knew, the door opened and the jailor, who never had anything but a cuss word for him in the past, said gently, "Are you hungry? I could steal a sandwich in the kitchen and bring it to you."

Starr was amazed. But he was more amazed at the reply that came through his *own* lips. "No, don't do that. If they caught you, you would be punished. Don't break a rule for me and run such a risk as that."

At those words it was the jailor's turn to be astonished. He ended up by getting

the doctor, and Starr was carried to the hospital.

The doctor was so impressed with this remarkably changed man that he was treating, that when he recovered, he insisted on having him apply the anesthetic on the patients he operated on. The fatality in prison operations are very high, but this doctor—a profane man himself—never lost a patient when Starr administered the anesthetic. The Christ-centeredness of Starr neutralized the profanity of the other.

One day an uncommonly severe case came under the doctor's examination.

"There is no use in trying," decided the doctor. "There is only one chance in a thousand that an operation would be successful."

"You say there is one chance?" said Starr.

"In a thousand."

"Then let's take that chance."

The doctor acceded to Starr's wish and took the chance. All through the long hour of operating, Starr kept his eyes on the doctor's hands. He didn't see the hands. He saw the hands of Christ. When the operation was over, amazingly successful in every way, the doctor said to the nurses and helpers,

"Don't let anyone disturb me. I want to be alone." Without taking time even to remove his rubber gloves the doctor hurried to his office, locked his door, and spent an hour alone with his God. From that hour on he was a changed man.

The evolution that went on in Starr's life as he unfolded into greater and greater areas of spiritual living cannot be recounted here. For that you will have to turn to *Love Can Open Prison Doors and Release*. An old lifer, affectionately known as old Dad True blood, was his guide and mentor, and Starr in his turn became the guide and inspiration to many others who had been doomed to years of seemingly hopeless imprisonment.

News of Starr's transformation finally reached the ears of the members of the Parole Board, and all but one were in favor of releasing Starr on probation. That one, however, who opposed his liberation, was adamant.

"Judges and psychiatrists all over the land have pronounced him incorrigible," he insisted, "and therefore nothing shall ever induce me to give my consent to his freedom."

When word came to Starr of this ultimatum he said to himself, "I have only one recourse, and that is to the power of Love. I believe so profoundly in the power of Love that I shall now put my entire hope and trust in it as the only power that can open prison doors."

From that time on he made it his faithful practice each night after climbing into his bunk to send waves of love to this recalcitrant member of the pardon board. He even went to the bother of rigging up an imaginary funnel, extending from his cell to the study of the other (with joints in it to go over the hills), through which he sent a stream of love.

One day the man sent word, "If he has changed as much as everyone says, I have decided at last to give my consent to setting him free." So it was that love, the most powerful force in the universe, finally opened prison doors.

Chapter 4: THE PRODIGAL SON RETURNS

The rest of Starr's story falls into the pattern of the Return of the Prodigal Son. Notice how perfectly the parallel runs.

First, Starr left his human father's house and went into a far country, and he actually left his Heavenly Father's mansion of harmony and love for an abode of disharmony and sin. Second, he wasted his substance, not only financially but physically, socially, educationally and in every way, in riotous living. Third, there arose within him a famine of all the worthwhile things, of all the values for which life is held dear. Fourth, in desperation he joined himself to a citizen of "that land," not a citizen of the upper world of goodness but of the underworld of badness—to an outlaw band—and that underworld "citizen" or leader of that band sent him into a field of activity where only the ideals of swine held sway.

And out there in the pigpen of degradation and sin he caught a revelation which has been recorded for you in the last chapter, which brought about a complete turn in his life, the steps of which are perfectly recorded in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The Prodigal like Starr was about as far gone as anyone could go into hopeless defeat. He had separated himself from his family, he had wasted his heritage, he had lost his friends, and a famine had arisen which left him in bondage to a situation from which there seemed no escape. How did he extricate himself from that predicament?

First he "came to himself." A Negro preacher of little educational background but of great intuitive insight when called upon to elucidate this passage replied simply, "Well, you see, it was this way. First he took off his coat, then he took off his vest, then he took off his shirt and after awhile he came to himself." I have never found a better illustration of the discipline we all must go through—whether we are elder brothers or prodigal sons—to find our true selves, than this "elucidation" by a simple pastor.

When the Prodigal was first confronted with the question of his desire, he answered right off the bat, "I know what I want, I want gold more than anything in all the world, gold that will enable me to have a good time." So his first request was, "Give me that portion of thy substance that falleth unto me." That was his coat.

But after that money was wasted he wanted a job. That was his vest. But after he got the job he found it was confined to caring for swine, the one thing a good Israelite cannot eat. That reduced him to eating the mere husks that the swine did eat. Thus he discovered that what he really wanted more than anything in the world was food. That was his shirt.

And finally after every other way had been tried and found wanting, there dawned upon him the realization that all the things he really craved—a wholesome

job and wholesome food and wholesome friends—could be found right in his own good father's home. With that realization there came upon him the revelation that the one thing he really, truly wanted down deep in his inmost soul, was to get back to his father—*home*. Then it was that "*he came to himself*."

Starr's first wish had been to escape from all the restrictions of home and school and society. He got the wish but it brought him only trouble.

Next he wanted gold to buy the things to make life pleasant. That wish, too, was fulfilled, but it also brought him only trouble. His next wish was to get out of the prison into which his other wishes had thrown him. But because his soul was in bondage, and he was living on the husks of life, there was no real release possible for him until he returned to his Father. And so when Christ came to him in prison, all his little outer desires fell away from him, and only one desire remained and that was to make that return, the desire to belong to Christ. No longer did it matter whether he was free from the restrictions of society if he could only keep his Christ. No longer did it matter whether he had any gold—just so he possessed the Christ. No longer did he care whether he ever left that prison—if he could only remain forever a prisoner of the Christ.

Thus we find that the first great law of redemptive prayer is to find what the soul *really* wants. Not what the ego wants, but what the soul wants. The second great law is the discovery that God is a God of Love, Giver of every good and perfect gift, quick to pardon, and eagerly waiting to take us back into his loving arms. Not only is His love for us without measure, but His abundance to fulfill our needs is without measure. We too might well exclaim in our hour of need, "In my father's house is bread enough and to spare, and I perish here from hunger."

The third law of redemptive prayer is repentance. Here the prayer of Starr and the Prodigal were identical. "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am no more worthy to be called thy son." A recognition of one's own sin, remorse for it, followed by repentance for it, and that in turn followed by a desire to make atonement for it, places one in perfect alignment for his prayers to be answered.

The fourth law of redemptive prayer is relinquishment. "Make me as one of thy hired servants." One has never really truly prayed until he has "let go" of his petition and left it utterly in his Father's hands. And he has not really and truly "let go" until he is willing to give his Father the privilege of answering it in anyway he wishes, even to the denying of his wishes. "Thy will not mine be done."

The sixth law is that once get the other five laws in motion and the Father will come more than half-way to meet you. "When he was yet a great way off his father lifted up his eyes and saw him and ran and fell upon his neck and kissed him."

After reaching his Father, then came the gifts. And here again the story of the Prodigal Son is repeated over and over. Again in the life of Starr. In both cases they returned, not in order to receive the gifts, but in order to receive the Father.

But after seeking the Father, seeking first the Kingdom and its righteousness, "all those things were added" unto them. And in neither case did they reject or spurn the gifts.

The first gift was "bring forth the best robe and put on him." This robe symbolizes the new and perfect body that awaits any prodigal who leaves the husks of sin and dissipation and returns to his father. Starr certainly needed a new body after his own body had for so long a time been wasted in riotous living. Every organ and every nerve and tissue had been broken down through dissipation and brutal treatment. But from the moment that Starr, lying on that cold prison floor, a mere skeleton of skin and bones, looked up into the eyes of Jesus, his health began gradually and steadily to return until he had "the best robe" that the Father had been saving for him all those years.

The second gift was "put a ring on his finger." Now a ring stands for permanent friendships—something that Starr had never known before. His mother had died at his birth and now his earthly father had passed away. All his childhood associates had spurned him after he entered the life of crime, and now all his criminal associates had left him since he had entered the life of virtue. But from the moment that Christ came to him in prison, friends began to come to him, until today his friends can be counted like the sands of the sea. Wherever he goes people crave to be called his friends.

The third gift was "put shoes on his feet," or the gift of guidance. When he left the prison doors where should he go? The only world he knew was the underworld, and if he went there he would be stepping into old quicksands that would swallow him up again, body and soul. But after he put the shoes of guidance on his feet, the Father told him to go straight back to that underworld, but this time not to exploit it but to redeem it.

When he came forth from it again, he brought many redeemed ones that his journey had saved, but he had tested his new armor of the soul and behold, it could stand up against the inroads and attacks of sin. The guidance proved right and he was now ready for the life work God intended him for.

The fourth gift the Father gave to the Prodigal Son was the Supply for his needs. "Bringing forth the fatted calf and killed it." This gift is Jesus' way of telling his audience that when one puts the Kingdom and its righteousness first, even our financial needs will be met in ways that God Himself sees best. Anyone who has read the lives of George Muller and Martha Berry and other devoted servants of the Lord knows how often this comes true.

But with Starr this would seem a stark impossibility. When he left the prison walls this country was at the height of its greatest depression. Have you ever earned an honest dollar in your life?" asked one of his pals. "Do you know any trade or profession whatever?"

"The only trade I know," said Starr, "is crime, but I shall never follow that trade again."

"Do you realize that there are twelve million men unemployed, walking the streets of this nation," said another, "and all of them are trained in some trade or other. Competition against these competent men, you will find, is hopeless. In a month's time you will turn back to the only trade you know, and in three months' time you will be right back here for the rest of your life."

Starr smiled. "I have no fear," he said. "I have an Employer and He will see that I get a job."

"Who is your employer?" they all asked.

"The Heavenly Father is my Employer and Jesus Christ is my guide."

Before he left, an old lifer told him to write down on a sheet of paper all the trades and vocations that he thought he might have some chance at getting into. He made him fill the whole page. When he was through he asked him, "What are the vocations you are the poorest at?"

Starr replied, "Writing and speaking."

"Then go out and prepare to make your living by writing and speaking."

Knowing his limitations in this field, Starr had to lean completely upon his Heavenly Father and let Him do the writing and speaking through him. He discovered, as Saint Paul did, that out of his greatest weakness came his greatest strength. And so Starr, who never finished the fifth grade, who hardly had 300 words outside the underworld vocabulary, proceeded to make his living and support a home out of two activities and two activities alone—writing and speaking. But those activities were merely the avenues through which the redemptive love of God brought healing and blessing to those that Starr served.

Now here is where the elder brother comes in. "Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant. And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in."

I, an elder in the Presbyterian church, was down in my field working in the year Starr got Out of prison and began to make his living by writing and speaking. I had been a teacher of creative writing for twenty-five years, and I could very easily have become jealous at seeing this upstart enjoying all the privileges of the fatted calf without having earned the credentials in the conventional schools to have made that possible while my own college-trained boys and girls could hardly make a penny from writing, much less support themselves and their families by that vocation.

Many of us elder brothers and sisters may raise our brows and draw our skirts closer about us as we see these prodigal sons coming into the high places that we

thought we should occupy. What I am trying to express here is that all of us who represent in some form or other organized religion, grow a little impatient at times at seeing the prodigal sons, after "getting religion," "eat and be merry" over a fatted calf which the Heavenly Father gives them. We are still more impatient when we find that these prodigals are sometimes redeemed by groups outside our own respectable churches. Sometimes at summer camps or Ashrams, sometimes by Oxford Groups, or pentecostal groups, sometimes by New Thought or some new modern cult. Here is where some of us elder brothers may be tempted to ask the question, "How can Starr get answers to prayer when we good, respectable Christians who have sat in the front pews of our churches for the last twenty-five or thirty years have never had a single prayer answered?" The words of the elder brother can express our own feelings in this matter better than we can express them ourselves: "All these years have I served thee, and never have I transgressed a single commandment of thine at any time; and yet thou hast never given unto me a kid that I might make merry with my friends; but when this thy son has come who has wasted thy substance with harlots, thou killest for him the fatted calf."

To these complaints of ours we can hear the beloved Father answer from that great, generous heart of His, "Beloved sons and daughters of mine, members of these devoted orthodox churches, you have always been with me. My Bible promises are just as true for you as they are for Starr. You don't have to leave your great Presbyterian and Methodist and Baptist churches and join any of these cults whose slogans are 'God is our infinite supply,' 'God is our infinite health.' You can get them right here in your own church. The only trouble is that you have never *asked* for the fatted calf—you never have asked with complete faith for a new robe of health and new shoes of guidance and the ring of permanent friends. You are afraid it would not sound orthodox if you asked for these things. But when your need is great, when you, too, have been living on husks for awhile, when your hunger and thirst to get back to your Father's house breaks all bounds, when you become so humble that you beg to become my hired servants, I will surprise you someday with giving you all these gifts, pressed down and running over."

All this I know, for now for several years Starr, as the returned Prodigal and I as the repentant elder brother have gone on journeys together and over and over again have proved to be perfect complements of each other. We have found doors of the orthodox churches open to us everywhere, and we have also found that most other groups are also open to our message. Starr has summed up the different emphasis of these two groups:

"The orthodox churches accept the Giver but tend to reject the gifts; the cults accept the gifts but tend to reject the Giver. Our work is to bring the gifts and the giver together."

Chapter 5: FROM THE MARGIN TO THE CENTER

"Where does Starr's wisdom come from?" asked Roland Brown one day. "He never finished the third grade in school. He says he never finished reading a single book."

"I guess he taps knowledge like a Vermonter taps maple trees for sugar," I replied smiling.

"No, I am serious," replied Roland, "for in answering that question we not only shall find an important secret of Starr's life but something that will be of great value to many others. Let us put the question straight to him."

So straightway we sought out Starr with the question in our eyes.

"It is really very simple," replied Starr. "I found when I turned away from the *margin* and toward the *Center*, the insight and wisdom needed in each particular hour came to me."

"And how do you achieve that?"

"By getting very still inside and stepping into the Presence through relaxation and meditation, and then in the period of contemplation that follows I give my adoration not to the problem but to God."

"It is very true," I replied, for his words "You become like what you adore" were still ringing in my ears. "If you adore the One who is All-Wisdom, all wisdom will become yours."

"There is good Scripture authority for this," said Roland Brown. "In the second chapter of Colossians, in the second and third verses, Paul traces similar steps to what Starr has just cited in the words, 'that their hearts may be encouraged as they are knit together in love, to have all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery of Christ in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.'"

"Your studies of Job," Starr turned to me, "have revealed the same thing; have they not?"

"Yes," I replied, "I believe that you have been unconsciously applying the wisdom of the 28th chapter of Job. In that chapter the question is asked, 'Where is wisdom to be found?' After picturing the way gold and precious stones are mined from the depths of the earth, an authoritative revelation bursts upon Job that wisdom is something that isn't *thought* out so much as it is *mined* from the depths of the inner Soul. And the secret of that mysterious process is first to 'eschew evil,' which is another way of saying what Starr just now said about turning away from the margin; and second, to 'fear God' which is another way of saying what Starr has just said about 'turning to the Center' with adoration for God."

"The Bible," said Pastor Brown, "has a way of explaining things that psychology can't explain."

"This interchange of minds," said Starr, "is itself an example of what Job was talking about. When we are together and our minds have been turned from the margins to the Center, the result is what I call 'conversational prayer.' When we turn our minds completely away from the margins of gossip and controversy and focus them in adoration on the God of All Truth, God takes our questions and answers them. When three mutuals sit down together who would rather converse about spiritual matters than about any other topic in the world, the conversation will instantly be prompted of God into channels of real revelation. Such conversations may develop into veritable feasts of the Spirit. Where the participants become lost to the limitations of Time and Place, and all the old tensions fade away. The highest type of corporate prayer is where two or three come together in such spontaneous agreement that their minds become as one the Mind of Christ."

"That is true," said Roland Brown. "According to those words of Paul, the one essential of corporate prayer is that all hearts that come together for group prayer be 'knit together in love' if they would 'have all the riches of assured understanding and the knowledge of God's mystery,' and if they would uncover 'all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' that are hid in Christ."

"Yes," said Starr. "When several come together in mutual love and perfect alignment with God they create a Master Mind greater far than any human mind—the Mind of Christ Himself. But Jesus described it best of all when he said, 'When two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.'"

The following year at Camp on Lake Koronis we had such a remarkable opportunity to observe this power in action. The Camp was half over and for some reason the power of God's presence was not in evidence the way it had been the year before. There was not the cooperative unity, the whole-hearted, one-hundred percent surrender to God, the release that comes when all hearts and minds are completely One. Starr drew Glenn Harding and me aside and said, "If we want power here we must have more prayer. We three have been so busy in lectures and conferences that we have not taken time to pray together. Let us sit down right now on the grass under these trees and open the doorway of 'agreement' for Christ to enter into this camp and take complete control."

The campers were all engaged at that hour in creative rhythm under the inspired leadership of Alice Kraft. Out of sight of the rest with the chapel between, we three sat upon the lawn and joined hands in a circle of prayer. "When three put themselves completely in alignment with God," said Starr, "and in complete agreement with one another, the power that comes through is greater than wisdom, it is inspiration, at times it rises to revelation. This hour I feel power coming through beyond words to express."

We were thus sitting in prayer when two little children came running around the

chapel, "We were looking for you," one cried, "all three of you!"

"Yes," said the other child, "come and see what is happening."

We followed them around the building and beheld a unique sight. All the exercises in creative rhythm had stopped. All the people were gathered in a circle around Ruth Hazlett, upon whose hand a bird had alighted. Our awed interest did not seem to disturb the bird one bit. Finally it hopped upon the head of Edith Dahlby, calmly looked around at the assembled gathering, and then quietly flew away.

"You see," said Starr when we three men returned again to our Quiet Time together. "That entire group was in harmony and rhythm and balance together. Perhaps our sense of accord and oneness was all that was necessary to precipitate this bird into our midst."

"Yes," said Glenn Harding, "this personal alignment with God draws all one needs to one—not only ideas, but beauty, abundance,—even symbols from heaven itself."

"Events like this," I said, "prove that it is not just legend that Saint Francis drew birds down to him, nor that the lions in the den refused to harm Daniel when he kept his windows resolutely opened toward Jerusalem. Nor was it legend as some Bible critics claim, that when Jesus was baptized a dove flew down and lit upon his shoulder."

"Birds are very responsive to unseen forces," said Starr. "When a flock of birds fly south did you ever notice how they suddenly wheel in their flight and all descend simultaneously into a group of trees; then presently rise and resume their course? No leader commands them—an inner 'agreeing' together more subtle than telepathy brings the simultaneous action. It is a wonder that Jesus didn't have a flock of birds drawn around him at his every mountain-top experience."

"Just as our experience just now," he continued, "was not ours but was in reality drawn to us by two or three coming together in Christ. Just imagine what might happen if two or three coming together there should be one hundred and twenty gathered in one place and all became of one mind, the result would be Pentecost—an experience that transforms the world."

"Our experience just now," said Glenn Harding, "was not ours but was in reality drawn to us by Christ for we can have him in our midst, he tells us, whenever two or three come together and agree asking anything in his name—as we three did just now."

"Instead of two or three coming together," said Starr, "if there are one hundred and twenty that come into one place and are all of one mind the result can be Pentecost—an experience that transforms the world."

"Why don't you develop that theme in your talk tonight?" suggested Glenn Harding.

"Tonight," said Starr, "I am going to depend entirely upon the Spirit to send the message through me. I shall begin with a period of silent prayer and then ask the group to suggest my subject. It will be an orchestration of many minds inviting the Larger Mind to bring whatever revelation it has for us."

"I wish that power could touch Mrs. Loar," said Glenn Harding as we were walking to the dormitory. "Her suffering has been so great the last few days that every heart in the camp has been literally aching for her. It would require a real Pentecost to cure her."

For five years Mrs. Loar had suffered from a growth on the spine. For the last two years she had not been able to walk and often the agony was so great that she could not even sleep. Her husband had brought her all the way from West Virginia to Mayo Hospital, but as they could not get an appointment for ten days they were spending the intervening time at this camp which they had never heard of till they reached the Middle West.

Power began to fill the camp more and more all that day. When evening arrived the Galilean singing hour with Glenn Harding went to great heights. When Starr rose to give the Galilean talk a deep hush fell upon all and a sense of expectancy filled the chapel.

Chapter 6: FROM PENITENCE TO PENTECOST

"Friends," Starr began, "I wish a Pentecost could fall upon this place tonight. But it cannot unless we come into one place and be of one mind. I would rather that my talk tonight would not be a speech so much as orchestration where you select the theme. Now that we are all here comfortably seated, what shall we talk about?"

There was a moment's pause and then a voice called out, "Is there any common meeting ground for all the religions of the world?"

"If he can answer that," I thought, "we might see a Pentecost right here."

"That is indeed a big order," said Starr. "Let us get still and ask for the right answer to come."

The period of silence was over and Starr began speaking:

"The common meeting ground in our educational system is the school; for sports it is the athletic field; for labor it is the union; for art it is the guild; for business it is the national association; for science it is the laboratory; for philosophy it is the world. But for religion what is it? Here we seem to be stuck.

"Your first impulse is to say the church. Your second impulse cancels the first when you ask, 'What church?' For there are many folds which differ widely in nearly all respects. 'In my Father's house there are many mansions.' If there were one church system as there is one school system, we could then name the church as a common meeting ground. But each of the hundreds of the denominations, cults and sects declares its church to be *the* church. Each world religion is a rival of all others, and each denomination is a rival of every other denomination.

"If we ask a member of any world religion, 'What is the common meeting ground?' he will reply with the name of the man who founded his own religious organization. The Buddhist would name Buddha; the Mohammedan would name Mohammed; the Zoroastrian would name Zoroaster; the Christian Scientist would name Mrs. Eddy. And so on through a seemingly endless list.

"But not one of these came to bring unity, but separation; not universal peace but a sword. Of this fact Christ was bold enough and free enough to testify.

"Then is there no common ground upon which all denominations and world religions can meet? Here the answer is Yes. There is one common place of meeting for all branches of religion. This one place is found in the Comforter, the only Holy and universal Spirit. He alone speaks to all men in their own tongue. And of this one common place of meeting and worship Jesus said to the woman at the well that everybody would worship God in Spirit and in Truth and that every man ought to worship Him after this manner.

"So let us eliminate the two possibilities for universal religious unity. First let us eliminate the founders of world religions and denominations within world

religions. Second, let us eliminate the religious organizations or churches they founded. The founders are rivals and their churches are competitive. They create diversity instead of unity, and they promote and maintain diversity and reject all attempts to bring about unity. They are the marginal forms religion has taken, and have little in common one with the other.

"But every one of them believes in and embraces the Comforter, the one universal Spirit, Who inspires, empowers, guides and clarifies the Truth.

"With this we may drop the controversial aspect of religion and get down to the business of us who are here tonight. Let us consider the Comforter and our personal relationship to Him.

"In the New Testament the dispensation of the Holy Spirit was universally launched. He became the Comforter of all. He banished the idea of 'a chosen people' or the notion of a spiritual aristocracy. He became a free gift to all who were willing to receive Him and pay the cost 'Whomsoever will may come.'

"In the New Testament we find Him coming first to a woman. We read about His coming in the following words: 'Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother, Mary, was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.'

"In the person of Mary, then, the Comforter broke through in an intimate and personal way. In her He became personalized perhaps as never before. Here we see the Comforter breaking into the world in such a personal way as to banish forever the old traditional thought of Him as being remote, abstract, and so impersonal as to be unknown and unapproachable by the common man.

"Our religion finds vindication in personal realization. The Comforter had long been traditionally known to Mary. But her religion was not vindicated by her knowledge *about* the Spirit. It was vindicated at the moment she received the Comforter and realized Him in her personal experience.

"Our religion can find illustration only in manifestation. We can illustrate the Law of Love by obedience to It, and the illustration will appear in us when we manifest Love in our lives. Our knowing *about* Love and talking *about* It are empty gestures unless we manifest Love. Thus did Mary illustrate her religion by manifesting the Spirit.

"When we receive the Comforter we are initiated into the essence and source of spiritual power. We are then in union with the Spirit in a close, warm, personal way. When we experience this initiation we have the power of communication. What we receive of God we can communicate. If we receive His Spirit we can communicate His Spirit. But we cannot give what we do not receive. Is this important point crystal clear? Having been initiated by the Spirit and put into union with Him, Mary had the authority to communicate Him, in this particular as the Mother of Jesus.

"Our problem, therefore, is the personal one of being willing to surrender, accept and receive the Comforter. It is a personal proposition and an inside job. We are obligated to personal experience in order to make our religious claims valid. This is the only lesson we need to glean from Mary's union with the Spirit.

"Now we come to the second instance where the Comforter broke through into the world in a personal, intimate way, this time to a man, no less than the Son of God Himself. We read the account in the following words: 'And I knew him not; but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this was the Son of God.'

"Here in a most personal way did the universal Spirit personalize Himself once more. This time it was not a child which was bestowed and conceived. When the Comforter descended on Jesus a whole New Age had its birth, a New Dispensation, the New World Order of the Spirit Himself. And the world has been living in that New Order ever since. It is the New Order which can supply the one and only common ground for the diversity of religious temperaments to meet in cooperation and unity. It is the common ground of this Camp and of all other camps that meet in the name of religion. We here are of many religious denominations, branches and beliefs. But we have found the common meeting place in the same Spirit, and that is why we now have so much real Love one for another.

"We now come to the third recorded instance of the Comforter's breaking through into the world. This time it is collectively personal rather than individually personal. We read the account in the following words, 'And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.'

"The promise of the ages had been given to the disciples of Jesus, that man was a son of God and an heir to eternal life. They were not told exactly when the Comforter would invade their group. But they were to exercise faith in the promise and tarry in Jerusalem, the scene of their fears and failures, until He did break through to them in His own time and way.

"In one respect they were like our group here tonight. We are in one place and, because of the Love we have generated here, we are in one accord. The account says, 'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.' And they were 'endued with power from on High.'

"There were one hundred and twenty of them, including the women, as we are, they were sitting. They were not kneeling at an altar or in any way engaging in sacred postures or attitudes. The gathering was as simple and common as our gathering. Immediately after they were filled with the Spirit things began to happen.

"Note this fact, previously stressed. Their faith in the promise was vindicated, not by some mysterious voice giving a discourse on theology, but by a realization of power and presence. Now they were illustrations of God by manifestation. They had received initiation, union with God, and instantly they became communicators of the Spirit.

"Peter preached his great sermon with authority and power. Under the impact of it thousands were convicted of sin, surrendered, and had their souls liberated on the spot. Following this invasion into their lives forty-three miracles were performed by the Apostles in rapid succession. They were now able to preach with great redemptive power, and heal with great redemptive power. With this initial group, now in union with the Comforter, a whole new social and personal gospel was loosed upon the world, and for the first century at least it was vigorous and revolutionary. It was a new spiritual awakening on a vast and gigantic scale.

"We speak here of the need for a world-wide spiritual awakening. Well, we are a gathered group and we are individuals. As an individual are we ready and willing to cross over from the Promise to the Fulfillment? If one person among us tonight were actually to repent and open to the Spirit, he would instantly become a contagion, and a communicator. He would be the spark to ignite others of us, until eventually this entire group would be aflame. From these camp grounds, in this way, a spiritual fire could be started that could well become a conflagration that would sweep the nation and the world. What one among us is willing to accept a Pentecost tonight? V/ho of us here is capable of making the unmodified decision and unqualified surrender? Now don't all look at me. Let each one look at himself and herself. Dying to the world is a personal job and the act of being born again out of that death is a decision no man can make for another. We can only say that if any one among us has the courage to die to the little self here tonight that one would be invaded by the Comforter and empowered as a communicator, filling us all with the fire of eternal life.

"If there be any who may want to come forward to the step here and rededicate his life let him freely come. If there be any whose crisis is sufficiently intense and his love of self sufficiently exhausted, so that he is capable of surrendering, let him come forward and give in and give up. If there be one among us who at this moment would rather live to Love than love to live, but would prefer not to come forward, let him remain right where he now sits. But let him relax in the Love of God, let go and let God take complete charge."

As we all joined in song row after row of people went forward and knelt at the steps leading to the altar. As Starr prayed and blessed them in a beautiful meditation consisting chiefly of Bible verses the entire group experienced a miniature pentecost.

As we left that sanctuary the power of the Presence went with us. All night long

the power remained with us. Not one jot nor tittle was dissipated. I awoke the following morning as renewed as only one can be renewed who has touched the Source of all strength and power. Then it dawned on me that this was the Sabbath day. What couldn't this day bring forth if the Holy Spirit which Starr Daily's inspired address had released among us, should take complete control!

When the eleven o'clock service began I saw Mrs. Loar brought in and placed in one of the first rows.

"Oh, that Glenn Harding's wish might be fulfilled," I thought. "Would that the Holy Spirit might envelope that dear lady!"

Glenn Harding had now finished leading the assembly in song and prayer and it was my turn to give the address.

And as I stepped upon the platform I stepped into one of the greatest experiences of my life. Not only was the Holy Spirit working in me but the Holy Spirit was working in the hearts of all my hearers, releasing a power in that assembly that is hard to describe.

I announced that I would speak on Job. Down in front I could see Mrs. Loar lifting her eyes in prayer. This was her favorite book of the Bible, and she was praying that the Lord would ease her pain sufficiently for her to hear all and not miss a word.

I began by telling of Job's discovery of where wisdom was to be found, when one eschewed evil and adored God. Then I told of Job's discovery of how problems are solved when we turn from our own troubles and have compassion upon the sufferings of others, and when we turn our gaze from our own littleness and center it upon the bigness of God.

While I was speaking I felt as though the spotlight of heaven were turned upon me. Little clouds like wreaths of smoke kept rising from the platform on either side of me, uniting above me like an arch. This was so noticeable that nearly everyone in the congregation remarked on the phenomena afterwards.

Approaching my climax I quoted the passage where Job asked Jehovah the two questions, When we die do we live again and Oh, that I had a Redeemer to mediate between me and God! Again I noticed that Mrs. Loar was giving very close attention. Then I told how the answer to these two questions burst upon Job as a divine revelation:

"Oh, that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth."

As I quoted that passage Mrs. Loar felt a gentle touch like a hand moving down her spine. She turned to see if her husband's hand was on her, but neither he nor anyone else was touching her. Again that healing hand went down her spine and when it reached the place where the agony had been all the pain left. This

experience continued throughout the closing words of the sermon.

The moment I finished Glenn Harding leaped upon the platform like the Angel Gabriel himself and without announcing the song began singing, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," motioning to the audience to rise and join with him, which they immediately did. Oh, how that song shook the rafters!

Mr. Loar, turning to lift his wife, found that she was already on her feet. When friends joined him to help carry her back to the dormitory she was already walking out the door.

The Loars cancelled their appointment with Mayos. They drove back the two thousand miles to West Virginia without discomfort. Four years have elapsed and the report is that Mr. Loar has been in such demand as an evangelist that not only has Mrs. Loar done all the housework, but she often gives sermons in the church when he is meeting appointments elsewhere.

I relate all this in detail because it illustrates the truth in Starr's words that Pentecostal power of two or three agreeing together can manifest in larger groups and the results of that manifestation remain permanently. This episode illustrates one of the greatest gifts of Starr Daily, which is his capacity to help release this power to work through *others*—whether individuals or groups—as well as through himself.

Chapter 7: RESTORING THE YEARS THE LOCUST HAS EATEN

I have heard the word *redemptive* spoken professionally and conventionally from many pulpits, but I never met the word with all the majesty of this world's suffering and all the glory of the heaven above interwoven in its being until I met Starr Daily.

Just as there are tigers born in cages and tigers born in jungles, and they are totally different tigers, so there are words found in dictionaries and words found in life, and they, too, are totally different words.

Starr Daily has taken words like "Pentecost," repentance" and "redemptive love," which many people have mouthed as dictionary words or conventional words, and has transformed them into words of life and power. If "Pentecost" has been "queered by the queer," as Stanley Jones says, "reborn" is a word that needs to be reborn by the reborn, and "redeem" is a word that needs to be redeemed by the redeemed. And that is exactly what this redeemed and reborn man has done.

Here is an illustration of the new meaning Starr gave old words. I was with him one day when a woman came to us and began pouring out her tale of woe—how the world was against her, how nobody treated her right, how she was being robbed of all her chances for happiness in life.

"Don't look outside," said Starr quietly. "You say you are being robbed? That is true. But it is an *inside* job. Look within yourself and let us find the culprit there. Set yourself straight with God first, then everything will fall in order outside."

Ever since then that phrase, "inside job," has had a new and heavenly meaning—and I have used it with great power many times.

When I first visited his home in California, I found he had rigged up a little shed in the back yard exactly as his prison cell. Here he did all of his writing and much of his praying.

On speaking journeys when he and I occupied twin beds in the same room, if I was awake around four o'clock I would see a stealthy figure moving through the room as noiselessly as only years of training could have made possible. Knowing Starr's custom of spending an hour of meditation at this hour, I knew that he was going out by the lake to "steal" an hour with his Creator and his Redeemer. The discipline of those "night vigils" for which the underworld had trained him he was now using to steal new strength from the Creator. These vigils used originally for defrauding mankind he was now using to bless mankind.

The discipline that had been burned into him for a quarter of a century of keeping his lips closed and betraying no fellow confederate, no matter how terrible the torture he was subjected to, now in his transformed life had become a redemptive silence that never betrayed any of the confidences reposed in him by sin-sick souls, nor ever exposed his secret trysts with the hosts of heaven. Spiritual

workers are too inclined to want to relate all their most sacred conversations with others wherever they go, spilling them out before every Tom, Dick and Harry, forgetting that some experiences are too sacred to cast before those who might rend them or trample them under foot. Not so Starr. He knows how to obey the command of Jesus which comes to us all at critical times: "Tell no man."

Starr did not run from his past, even the darkest parts of it. He strode back into that past and redeemed it. He did not run from the underworld when he first stepped out of prison, he actually returned to it with the purpose of doing what he could to restore the years that the locusts had eaten. In doing so he gave no attention to the margins but went straight to the source. He wasted little time with the hardened old-timers; he went straight to the youth and redeemed the lost generation, turning potential criminals into saviors of the future.

Starr Daily belonged to the aristocratic order of the underworld—the yegg men, that did not associate with highwaymen, hold-up men and murderers. His art was the breaking into safes. He now took this art and transmuted it into the art of opening human hearts. I never met a theologian trained in seminaries who was a greater artist in bringing forth the treasures locked up in the souls of men. Every man, woman and child has these treasures within him and only one in a hundred knows that they are there. And of those who know, only one in ten know how to unlock the door and bring them forth.

The patience, the diligence, the persistence with which Starr opened these treasure-stores was amazing. But most amazing of all was his uncanny gift of knowing when to wait for the natural process of the "time lock" of the safe to open of itself and reveal the inner treasures, and when the sudden explosive power of a bit of nitroglycerin of confession and repentance was required.

Another gift Starr brought out of the past was of a very thrilling kind. Mary Austin in her book, *Can Prayer Be Answered?*, tells how she stumbled upon a startling discovery one day, and that was that poker is played with the deepest level of what is called the "card sense," with the aptitudes which lie almost altogether in the subconscious, that is to say, with the levels in which the prayer sense is most easily established.

"An elderly friend of mine," she writes, "suffered a severe carriage accident which lamed him for months, so that those of us who loved him had to devote much time to his entertainment with poker, his favorite card game. Sitting under the linden tree on the doctor's untidy lawn with two or three old cronies of his, I met and struggled with these half-submerged activities of their minds, coordinated with them, dominated or surrendered, and began to understand that it was so prayer worked under the surface of all mind toward an instinctive end. I was able to understand that the modern failure of group or social prayer is owing to the want of such integration?"

In other words, the greatest card sharks have gifts of mental telepathy that closely border on the realm where prayer often begins. Begins, mind you, not where it ends!

Starr Daily was one of the best poker players of his day. Since Christ captured him he has never touched a pack of cards. He knows more card tricks than any "magician" but these tricks, alas, are destined to die with him, for on this decision he is adamant. But while he refuses to use his poker sixth sense to win stakes over the card table, he uses it, redeemed and completely captive to the will of God, to win much higher stakes—the souls of men and women for the Kingdom of heaven.

The greatest of all Starr's gifts from the underworld was his gift of laying his own sins and errors down in the spirit of complete repentance and surrender in such a way as to turn them from liabilities into assets, and transform them from being a source of weakness into being a source of power.

"As I mingle among the people of these camps," he remarked one day, "I find that the greatest contributions come from the ones who have the greatest sorrows and carry the heaviest burdens. Here they relax and lay their burdens down. And in laying them down, power is created. Burdens and sorrows and even sins, when really laid upon the altar of God, become cordwood and coal for the flames."

"I never thought of that," I replied, startled by his remark. "Stop to think of it, the measure of power at our camps has actually been in proportion to the number of people who come with burdens. Burdens used to frighten me, but now they never will anymore."

"The power comes upon their laying them down," Starr emphasized. "There is no power—merely added tension—created by everyone who comes here and insists on holding on to his burden. When I began to love Jesus and learned that Grace could replace karma, then in repentance I laid all my sins at Jesus' feet and a blazing power rose in my life."

"You said once," I remarked, "that you never knew of a thoroughly conditioned criminal ever being saved except by religion."

"Yes," he replied, "but not by all religions. Only by the religion of Jesus and only by the redemptive love of Christ. I could cite scores of religions in the past and some in the present that are just as bad as the underworld, because they're all based on selfishness. The only one is the religion of Jesus when He said you have got to give yourself. In order to realize yourself you've got to die unto yourself. Not try—you've got to cease trying because it will never be done by trying. It is done by the grace of God. And self-centered discipline is not calculated to woo the grace of God. The thing that woos the grace of God is a need and a crisis in your life—a great spiritual crisis, a great point of decision where nothing matters any more, where there isn't anything out in the world of glamour that can any more get in the way of glory—a spiritual crisis. And then the grace of God comes unmerited.

In other words, you haven't earned it by discipline. It is unmerited—and it is mercy.

"And when it comes it comes as love. And love is the thing that is always single. Everything else in the world is dual. Everything but love consists of the eternal pairs of opposites, but love has only one nature, just one movement, and that is to bestow itself. *Never* to receive. Love itself is its own reward and its own defense and its own purpose for being. It is single. It isn't love when you expect something in return. But when love goes out it is like the tide—it *always* brings back a reward—it never goes out and comes back void—because love never reaches out to a void—it never fills a void—and never contributes to a void. It never contributes to a human weakness; it reaches out to human needs and always goes in strength and always contributes strength.

"A man who tries to order his life and leave God out is on the sure road to defeat," Starr said to a group of us one day. "This is just as true in the underworld as it is in the upper world. I have discovered that these laws work in all the worlds. As a gambler I learned that the percentage is on the side of the dealer. Transferred over into the upper world I find it is still on the side of the Dealer, and that you—your little self—can't win. God has the dice loaded—they are percentage dice—and the deck is stacked—and anyone who plays over on the wrong side of the table deserves to be called in the Kingdom of heaven, just as he is called in the underworld, a sucker.

"We are told that cancer cells are the same as healthy cells; their only difference is that they are on the wrong side of the basilar membrane. In a similar way I discovered that everything in the underworld is the same as in the upper world excepting that everything there—the disciplines as well as the rewards—are in complete reverse to what is laid down for us in the upper world. When I discovered that, I made a complete turn about and something wonderful happened.

"For instance, I underwent the most austere, rigid kind of discipline in the underworld in order to assimilate pain. I was taught that you can assimilate pain by hate. If you can hate enough, you can overcome all the suffering, all the torture, they apply to you. If you hate the person applying it, you can assimilate it.

"Now I take all that training I went through in the underworld and put it completely in reverse. I have found that if you can love the one who brings you pain you can more than assimilate it—you can redeem it.

"We in the underworld knew about the body being a channel of the soul. Everyone in our tribe in the underworld, when danger as lurking about, used to keep the center in the palms of the hand sand-papered until it was so thin that it just barely kept the blood from running out. Thus whenever we went on a job all we had to do was to hold that hand out and sense danger vibrations for a mile away. Better than intuition—more accurate. Any danger in that place was picked up. In

the underworld we discovered that the well-disciplined body was the antenna of God. We learned how to concentrate and use these bodies for evil purposes. We knew a great deal about the endocrine system of the body—all for evil purposes. But when you transfer it up into the spiritual plane you get the right use of it and your bodies become radio and radar receiving stations for God.

"We had disciplines there that you probably know not of—rigid disciplines. One discipline was that we were never allowed to write or associate ourselves with our parents. We were never allowed to have any association with women. We were to be cut completely off from any fraternization with anyone except our own kind. And the penalty for violation of this law was death. There was only one penalty in this world where I was brought up—death. And there weren't many violating these laws and disciplines. We were not allowed to laugh. To tell a joke and laugh about it would be to reduce ourselves to the level of the people we preyed upon. There was no humor in that world. We weren't allowed to go to picture shows or have any amusement whatever. And the only conversation that we were allowed to carry on was shop talk—crime. You couldn't be caught talking about anything else. Rigid disciplines! But we had to have them for in the underworld you simply have to root out fear.

"To show you the power that came from these disciplines I can cite an instance. I was sitting in Tex Rickard's saloon in Goldfield, Nevada, one time, holding four kings in my hand and a killer across the table had four queens in his hand. I won, of course, and had my hand on the table to take the pot. He said, 'Leave your hands right there. Leave everything there.' He was a badman of the west with a gun in his hand. I had no chance. My hands were on the table. But I caught his eye up in mine and held it. And I pitted my will against him and mine was the best disciplined and I controlled him. I took the money. I mastered him because he didn't have the discipline that I had.

"But just take all that discipline of the underworld and put it in *complete* reverse and see what happens. The same thing in the upper world gives you union with God. When you use the same concentration upon God without wavering, without a distraction coming in, this complete, unmodified, undisturbed, unbroken concentration of your will upon God's will causes your entire being to be lifted up.

"Yes, these disciplines that I got in the underworld have stood me in good stead. They have made it possible for me to go far in mastering the greatest art in the world—meditation. And the thing that keeps the average occidental from mastering the art of meditation is the inability to undergo the tremendous and terrific, austere disciplines to achieve it. Very few ever go beyond the initial stages of just trying. It is very difficult for the average person to get still for a minute and keep the distractions out—yes for just one minute. Yet if I want to I can sit for twenty-four hours without moving, in complete rapture, and hardly breathing, with

the attention fixed on God and never another thought getting in there. And I've been helped in that discipline through the underworld training.

"Concentration with love creates the single eye. And when the eye is single the whole body is full of light— every nook and cranny—every cell. And all fear is gone. But if hate is at the center instead of love the whole body is full of darkness. Hate may drive fear out of one's mind but not out of the cells of the body. Only love can do that. And so while I could hold that man's eyes, knowing that he was saying he was going to kill me if I moved, nevertheless I was afraid. The fear that is in the cells of the body I could not control. And I used to come up against that and worry about it a great deal.

"I didn't get rid of fear until I got into this upper world and let love have sway. Then love cast it out. Love washed it out of the cells. It washed it out of the brain, it washed it out of every area of the human consciousness and took it completely away, out of the blood stream, out of everything. Love really casts out all fear. And when fear is gone, the last enemy is gone. Fear is the greatest enemy we have got to conquer, it's the oldest, the greatest and the last to go. And the only thing I believe that will ever get rid of it is love.

"But getting that love is the question—and I don't believe it can be gotten by discipline. I believe it comes as an act of grace, completely unmerited mercy on the part of God. And if you try to get it by discipline, you'll miss it. But after you get it, then comes the discipline. After you get it, it *commands* you to discipline. After you get, the soul is awake. And anyone who refuses to cooperate with an awakened soul will be whipped up and down and round and round. It will be nothing but torment, fixation and conflict, until you give complete cooperation to the desire of the soul to swing back to God. Cooperation is what the soul demands and she will simply crucify the personality that fails to cooperate with her—and that is discipline.

"But if we use discipline merely for self-improvement all we'll get is personality development and not necessarily the development of character. And so it is that the Romans were the greatest disciplinarians and their religion was 'order yourself with a steel will'—put yourself under the control of the will and order every step and every thought and every feeling—and that was their greatest religion. But it brought them to corruption, to hate, to selfishness and to war, and they went down under it. But there was another discipline of a little group in Palestine who waited for the coming of the baptism of love—and they had no discipline beforehand, but after that they were under discipline. And these little knots of followers of Jesus, invaded with this love and now under discipline, took up this crumbling world that fell under the discipline of will power, and out of it has come Christianity. Through just these few who had the real discipline civilization was saved, and through those who had the false discipline civilization went down.

"Today we see the world without adequate discipline or adequate love. A powerful little group in our democracies exalting free enterprise at the expense of responsible discipline on the one hand, and a powerful little group in our totalitarian countries exalting discipline at the expense of love, could bring this world down to destruction. Again the world must depend for its very life upon these little knots of followers of Jesus who are sufficiently invaded by love, these little groups of devoted ones who have put themselves under the discipline of the Cross, the discipline that under God's grace crosses out the little self on the outstretched arms of love."