

# **Life and Sayings of Sam P. Jones:**

A Minister of the Gospel

The Only Authorized and Authentic Work

By his wife

Assisted by

Rev. Walt Holcomb, a

Co-worker of Mr. Jones

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## **CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

### **INDIANAPOLIS, ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS**

At the close of the meetings in Baltimore, Mr. Jones was called home to Cartersville, where three of his children were ill. Upon his arrival there, however, he found that they were not dangerously sick, and was detained only a few days. Assured by his physician that his loved ones were improving, he left as soon as possible for his next engagement, which was at Indianapolis, Indiana.

The evangelist arrived in Indianapolis, on the evening of June 12, 1886, and was met by his co-workers, who had preceded him to the city, and had gotten the meeting under way during his stay at Cartersville.

His coming had been given due prominence in the Indianapolis papers, and, with one or two exceptions, they were kindly disposed toward him and his work. A great deal of space was given to the reports of his sermons and meetings, and he was treated with fairness, editorially. To say the least of it, he was not antagonized to any large extent by the secular press of the city.

The ministers of the Protestant churches had united almost completely in the invitation to visit Indianapolis, and he was greatly pleased with the earnest cooperation that was given him from this source.

As in every place he had visited for years since he had become a national character, Mr. Jones had his critics before and after his arrival.

He was beset on every side by the card-writers, who felt it their duty to enlighten the people in regard to the evangelist. Most of his critics wrote as though they had discovered Sam Jones and warned the people against him as though his worth and works had never been demonstrated at other places. It was a curious fact that these writers seemed always to feel impelled to protect their respective cities against the evils that they thought would come through a visit from Sam Jones.

It was not the custom of Mr. Jones to refer to this kind of nuisance, except when something was said that misrepresented him or something that would injure the cause. He cared little for personal opinions of men, and rarely noticed anything that was said against him. But when he was made by the card-writers to say something that he had never said, and saw that his work would be injured unless he corrected the same, he would usually devote a few moments before or after a sermon to score those who had misrepresented him.

One of the cards which greatly incensed Mr. Jones was a clipping taken from a New York paper, and enlarged upon in the Indianapolis Journal. The Journal had been printing everything it could gather that was calculated to injure and annoy Mr. Jones, but had succeeded in attracting little notice from him. This card, however, was such a palpable falsehood that it brought Mr. Jones to his feet with the following:

“I saw the biggest, meanest lie in the Indianapolis Journal this morning that was ever published on a man or devil. It was copied from the *New York Star*, and it said that Sam Jones asked one thousand dollars a week for his services, and three thousand dollars from the people of Omaha before he would consent to go there. I never made a contract about going anywhere in my life, and never said anything about money. That paper that said I did laid itself liable to a libel suit, for it damaged my character as a minister. It is a scandalous lie on a man who never made a charge for his work in his life. I wouldn't go to hear a preacher who would charge one thousand dollars per week for his work, or who demanded a guarantee.” Mr. Jones was roundly applauded after this statement.

Mr. Jones spoke first in Roberts Park church, but the crowd at that service was of such proportions that it was found necessary to remove to Tomlinson Hall, a large, new building, with a seating capacity of more than four thousand people. His first sermon was a complete victory for him, and it served to disarm his critics and those who had opposed him. Mr. Jones had only one week that could be given to Indianapolis, his engagements at St. Paul and Minneapolis limiting the time. He went straight into his work, and preached with marvelous power the entire time he was in the city.

It is probable that he accomplished more good in Indianapolis in the week he spent there than he had ever done before in so short a time. There were large numbers of people converted under his preaching and the morals of the city were given a decidedly better character. He made thousands of friends, and people who were bitterly opposed to his coming were his staunchest supporters when his work there was finished.

Even the newspapers that had antagonized him from the start, and had denounced him in the most scathing terms, saw the good that he had accomplished; and their editorials were of an apologetic nature before he departed from the city. Some of the papers praised him highly, and thanked him for the work that he had accomplished.

The sincerity, the earnestness and the directness of the manner in which Mr. Jones had preached to the people of Indianapolis had brought forth wonderful results, which were not only testified to in the meetings, but were evident in all parts of the city.

It was a whirlwind victory. Sam Jones came to the city, rushed through it in a cyclone of gospel truth and force, and before the people realized it had left the forces of the devil scattered and frightened, while the Christians who had feared his coming, and questioned his methods, were left glad and thankful. At the close of the meeting at Indianapolis, Mr. Jones proceeded at once to St. Paul, Minnesota, where he had completed arrangements for a two week revival meeting.

As is too often the case, bad news travels far faster than good news, and when Mr. Jones arrived he found that the newspapers had only received and printed the accounts of his meetings at Indianapolis which were calculated to do him injury. The papers were up in arms against his coming and had influenced the people against him. The prejudice of the people was unmistakable, but Mr. Jones had become accustomed to things of this kind, and knew how to meet the situation.

He spoke the first time the same day he arrived in St. Paul. Thousands of people came to hear him, but there was evidence of the fact that few, if any of them, were in sympathy with him. There was nothing that stimulated him to put forth his best efforts like opposition, whether implied or pronounced. And when he found the violent opposition of the press, and the silent opposition of the people, he preached with all the power of his being. It was only a few days until he had completely captured the city by his compelling personality.

His labors in St. Paul were productive of so much good, and caused so much favorable comment, that he was urged to give a part of his time to the people in Minneapolis. It was urged upon him that there were people in the other of the Twin Cities who could not go to hear him in St. Paul, and who were anxious for him to preach to them. The meetings continued for two weeks in St. Paul. He held occasional services in Minneapolis. At every service the people flocked in great crowds to hear him. He did not turn aside from his business of preaching the gospel of Christ, and a great victory was won by him in the Twin Cities.

As in every place he had ever appeared since he entered the ministry, Mr. Jones attacked the saloons and the whisky-drinking crowd with vigor. He did not spare this element in St. Paul and Minneapolis. In fact, he was more than usually severe upon the dealers as well as the drinkers of liquor. He said many things that aroused the wrath of the people who indulged in stimulating beverages, and called forth much warm criticism upon himself.

Before the close of the meetings, he had so completely won over the Twin Cities that there was not a building in either place that would hold the crowds. He was made glad by the large number of testimonials as to the good he had done, and was cordially invited to return to Minneapolis and St. Paul.

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