

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 THIRTEEN

IN MISSOURI AND ST. LOUIS

After Mr. Jones left Nashville, he conducted several brief meetings in smaller cities, and visited some camp-meetings and Chautauqua assemblies.

In July, 1885, he held a great tent-meeting at Murfreesboro, Tennessee. The influence of his work in Nashville had extended to Murfreesboro, and he found a religious atmosphere when he began the work there. While the opportunities were not as large as those in Nashville, the work was intensely spiritual, and the whole town practically converted. Some of the most prominent men were reached, and many of the most wicked, including barkeepers, were converted.

One morning just after the early prayer-service, a leading saloon-keeper hauled his liquor down to the station and sent it back to the wholesale house in Nashville, and abandoned the business altogether. The audiences were immense, people coming from Nashville and the surrounding country, and the town was completely revolutionized. He went over to Monteagle Assembly and preached a few times before the great Chautauqua. From there he visited High Bridge (Kentucky) camp-meeting and spent a few days. His ministry was attended by thousands at this famous camping-ground. Many were converted, while others refused to yield to Christ.

One of the saddest incidents connected with his preaching there followed one of his earnest sermons, when a young stalwart fellow who had been standing listening for fifteen or twenty minutes, turned with an oath on his lips, and said that he had enough of that. He walked down to the station and stood but a few minutes, when a train came along. He grabbed at the ladder at the side of the car, missed his balance and fell, and the wheels crushed him, and he was in the presence of God in less than twenty minutes from the time that he turned with an oath upon his lips.

Part of August was spent in Cartersville, at his tent-meeting, which had been inaugurated the year before.

His first work in Missouri was at Plattsburg. He had spent a few days there in July, at the camp-meeting, and returned in September to hold revival services. The committee in charge of the camp-meeting asked him to come there ten years in succession, and promised to make any kind of preparation that he might wish. He agreed, if possible, to visit their annual gathering, and for several years had charge of the great camp-meeting at the famous Mineral Springs. The revival that he conducted in the fall was in many respects one of the greatest in his life. He repeatedly preached to ten thousand people, and frequently there were at least twenty thousand who were trying to hear him. Thousands of these hearers were converted, and the atmosphere of the town and surrounding country was wonderfully purified.

Before leaving Plattsburg, he preached his famous sermon on "*Prisoners of Hope.*" There were three or four special newspaper reporters from St. Louis and other leading cities, and during the sermon they forgot to report his words, and for ten or fifteen minutes sat there with their mouths wide open. When he went back to his tent, he locked the door, and those reporters beat and banged on the door to get him to reproduce that part of the sermon which they had lost. He seemed to be inspired while covering that impressive part of his sermon, and spoke as he never did before, or since, about the immortal life of his sainted mother. He described how she died, and the impression that death made upon his youthful mind. He pictured a long, weary journey back to the graveyard where she was buried. He said, "I must see her again, must look into her eyes and see her sweet form."

In his imagination he stood there, with a shovel in his hand, opening the grave, and with each shovel of dirt, he would say, "I must see my mother again." He went through all the motions. Finally, he reached down with both hands, and picked up a handful of dust, and standing there in the most dramatic way — Booth himself never saw the day he could have equaled it — and such a look of disappointment that came over his face, as he stood there speechless for a moment. He said, "Is that my mother? Is that all that is left of my precious mother?"

How awful was the suspense of that moment. Slowly he moved his position, and standing under the arc light, he looked away towards heaven, and a smile came upon his face, then he exclaimed: "Yes, I shall see my mother again." Repeating Paul's words, "**This corruption must put on incorruption; this mortal must put on immortality,**" with his face radiant, he said: "In the light of this beautiful scripture, my mother is transformed into an angel of light, and she hovers over me on loving pendant wings, and beckons me up to her home on high, where I shall see my mother again."

The next great meeting was at St. Joseph, Missouri.

One of the largest tents that could be had was secured, and the attendance from the city and adjoining towns was as large as at Plattsburg. The most prominent men, including physicians, lawyers, judges, and millionaires were converted at this meeting. A very striking story appeared in the morning paper to this effect: "Jones is not doing much with the thirty." Next morning the papers said: "The thirty were pretty well represented at the meeting." Mr. Jones said to some friends,

"What does this thirty business mean?"

“Oh,” they replied, “there are in this city thirty millionaires; thirty men in the world worth over one million.”

While some of those men were true, noble, generous Christians, the majority of them were not, and the meeting did not make much impression upon them, as the spirit of the work was in conflict with their lives. However, some of them were finally converted, and joined the church. Mr. Jones said to one of the wealthiest of them: “Well, my brother, you have disposed of your soul, you have given it to God, but you have a heap harder job left before you what to do with your money. You had better begin to unload now. Shell down the corn, for if you are ever damned, it will be by your money. Mark, what I tell you. If I had one-tenth of the money some of you men have in this town, and did not do any better with it than you do, the devil would get me as certain as my name is Sam Jones, and if you have got as much sense as I have, and you don’t get up from where you are, the devil will get you sure; you can put that down.”

This is just one of the many remarkable incidents that happened at St. Joseph. A very substantial result of the meeting was raising the money for a handsome Y. M. C. A. building.

It was in St. Louis where Mr. Jones waged the greatest battle in Missouri. He went there on the sole invitation of Dr. W. V. Tudor, pastor of the Centenary Methodist church, sustained by the official board and congregation of that church.

The meeting began in the Centenary Methodist church, on Sunday morning, in November of 1885. Dr. Tudor met Mr. Jones at the station, and about the first thing that happened after the preachers shook hands was an incident that was typical of Mr. Jones. The inevitable reporter was on hand, and playfully intimated that his paper intended to deal with Mr. Jones. The preacher’s reply was: “Pitch in, brother; there is nothing I despise more than a dull time.” Mr. Jones was entertained at the home of Dr. Tudor.

It wasn’t long after his arrival in St. Louis until Mr. Jones had a hold upon the city, and the other churches were opened for services. The preachers were cooperating and uniting in the meetings. From first to last he had the ear of the people, as no other man rarely had. The crowds at the church were so large that one could scarcely get standing-room. The prominent preachers gave their support and endorsement to the great work of Mr. Jones.

The day services were continued in the different churches. Some of the services were held at the St. John Methodist church; others at the Compton Avenue Presbyterian church, and still others in the Centenary Methodist church, where the meeting began. Great crowds thronged these respective places of worship every day. A very amusing little incident happened at one of the day services in Centenary church. It is an example of the exquisite aptness and humor of Mr. Jones’s illustrations.

He was conducting an experience meeting one afternoon. Finally, a godly woman stood up and gave one of the sweetest of testimonies, which was backed by her faith and piety. But before she sat down, as was usual with her she fell into the falsetto, which she called shouting, and presently remarked,

“Brother Jones, Dr. Tudor doesn’t like to hear me shout. Whenever I do, he ‘rings’ me down.”

As the good old woman resumed her seat, Mr. Jones said, “Well, sister, I do not object to shouting, but some people when they shout are like a little steamer I know of on the Coosa River, in Alabama. She has a big whistle, but a very small boiler, and every time she blows her whistle she stops — she can’t blow and run at the same time.”

St. Louis was the largest city in the South or Southwest that Mr. Jones had visited. However, he had held meetings in larger cities, as he had been in Brooklyn with Dr. Talmage. The great “Metropolis of the Southwest,” with its great national dailies, furnished him a larger scope and a greater field than any other city he had visited. The wickedness and sinfulness of the city furnished him with material he had not run across heretofore. While the opportunities were the very greatest, there were many difficulties that had to be confronted.

The newspapers of St. Louis did a great deal toward keeping Mr. Jones and his work before the public. The *Globe-Democrat* was in a position to give him greater publicity than the Memphis or Nashville papers, where he had held the two greatest meetings of his life. The editor of the *Globe-Democrat* liked Mr. Jones and published verbatim reports of his sermon. The editorial comments were very favorable. This paper brought him into greater prominence than any other one had up to that time. In later years the newspapers claimed that they had made Sam Jones.

Mr. Jones replied: “Well, why don’t you make another?”

As far as the newspapers could contribute towards the making of Mr. Jones, the *Globe-Democrat* did its share. The interest the *Globe-Democrat* took in Mr. Jones created just a little friction between the great Catholic editor and the Catholic priest — however, the editor continued to give full accounts of the meetings. This little press notice which has reference to the priest and the *Globe-Democrat* is worthy of a place here: “Father Phelan continues his sectarian assaults upon Sam Jones, but the great religious daily paper preferring the orthodox to the sectarian continues to be the organ of Sam Jones.”

While there was created a great deal of antagonism towards Mr. Jones and his methods, still, the services continued to gain momentum, as will be seen from the following clipping:

“Ten days have the meetings been held; three regular services daily in Centenary church, and in other large churches. Mr. Jones gathers the crowd. The Music Hall was packed with men on Sunday afternoon. So large an audience of men never listened to a preacher before in the history of this city. The object in holding a meeting ‘for men only’ was that they might be able to hear. The sermon was grand, strong, and very effective, and contained nothing which might not have been delivered before any audience. It was pure enough diction for any pulpit. The preacher so far has been directing his discourses to the church. The errors, follies and sins of the church have been exposed, reprovved, satirized, ridiculed, and denounced. The general tenor of the sermons has been an echo of the demand made by the stern preacher in the wilderness, ‘**Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance.**’

“The work, henceforward, is to have more direct reference to non-professors. The preacher has gained a good position for his work in this respect, his plain dealing with professors having given him the ear and confidence of outsiders, and we expect good work to be done in the further progress of the meeting.

“A large number of our preachers attend the meetings. Many ministers of other denominations are hearing Mr. Jones with interest. They admire his strong common sense, and feel that all the peculiarities of manner and style which the fastidious criticize are of little importance compared with the brave, true heart and practical sense that give to his sermons their general character and tone.

“No one can accuse Sam Jones of an affected style, or of relying on anything but the truth and the Spirit of God for success. And as to his rough speeches, the people have not found him as rude in speech as they expected. Either reports have been exaggerated, or the preacher has somewhat changed.

“Several persons went forward for prayers this morning (Tuesday), and there were nearly a hundred requested prayers last night at the church.

“Many of our young preachers have come desiring, as is commendable, to take lessons from Mr. Jones’s preaching. If they carry away something of the simplicity and honesty and zeal of the evangelist they will be profited by hearing him. If they try to imitate his language they will sadly blunder; if they make him a model in style they will make themselves ridiculous. We do not suggest that Sam Jones makes himself ridiculous. Ragged boulders seem in place upon the side of a mountain, but would be out of harmony on a hillock. There is the harmony of naturalness in Sam Jones.”

There was very little opposition on the part of the newspapers. They were very generous in their editorial comments, and allowed much space to their reporters. This was greatly appreciated, not only in St. Louis, but in the surrounding country. We notice a communication to the *Globe-Democrat* of December 2, 1885, saying: “I beg to assure you that your wonderful interest in publishing the sermons of Sam Jones is duly appreciated by your country friends. They are a great benediction to thousands of the great North and Southwest. I have been traveling nine years into St. Louis, and all the train boys and newspaper dealers everywhere tell me they sell five *Globe-Democrats* to one *Republican*. There is such a demand now for Sam Jones’s sermons that the boys on the train run out of the papers frequently before they reach me, and copies are sold in advance of the newspaper. Send more out to the boys. Hurrah for the *Globe-Democrat* and Sam Jones.”

However, the *Globe-Democrat* freely admits that it does not understand the methods of Mr. Jones. It says when the professing Christians of Nashville secured Sam Jones to convert the publicans and sinners of that town, they were no more able to understand his methods than is the *Globe-Democrat*.

“We brought you here to pitch into the sinners,” said the committee on grievances, “and here you are pitching into us and not saying a word about the sinners. What sort of a way is this?”

“Now, never you mind,” said the Georgia Member of the Democratic Church militant, “I haven’t come to the sinners yet — I never scald hogs until I get my water hot.”

The *St. Louis Republican* was equally as generous in reporting Mr. Jones’s work as the *Globe-Democrat*. They did not give verbatim reports of his sermons, but wrote up the meetings in a very impartial way. They also had a number of editorial estimates of Mr. Jones and his work, which were very fine. We insert one of these:

“Rev. Samuel Jones, of Georgia, ‘Evangelist,’ if you prefer it — though he calls himself plain ‘Sam Jones’ — is a man who challenges our admiring wonder, as a combination of Sidney Smith, Francis Bacon, Sancho Panza, and Josh Billings, with a strong leaven of the Major Jones of Georgia, who was so well known before the war. Perhaps, the Rev. Sam Jones and the Major are of blood kin, but though they certainly have qualities in common, the preacher Jones is a much greater man and one destined to a greater celebrity than the late officer in the Georgia militia. Since the *Republican*, north of the Ohio River, discovered this new Georgia wonder, our readers are not unacquainted with him, but he is a man who grows on you with acquaintance. He never opens his mouth but there issues a stream of constant truth, home-made proverbs and Georgia maxims which stick in the memories of those who hear or read them. Some of his sayings are full of a deep philosophy, and he says nothing without force, because he says nothing that he does not believe. ‘Talk about an honest man starving to death,’ he says in a recent sermon, ‘they won’t starve. God will feed an honest man if he has to put the angels on half rations.’ That sentence is a religion, a code of morals, a creed and a system of philosophy in itself, all compact enough to carry in the vest pocket for ready reference in everything from trading off a glandered horse to giving a decision from the Supreme bench. The man who believes that God will put the angels on half rations before he would let an honest man starve, is not likely to steal, starve or beg.

“‘What’s culture worth,’ inquires he in another connection. ‘It’s only whitewash on a rascal. I’d rather have to learn my A, B, C’s in heaven than to know Greek in hell.’ He does not mean that culture is worthless, but simply that culture is worthless and an evil without honesty. He prays God to keep his boy pure and honest, though the child dies a fool, forgetting only that it is the fool who is most apt to be dishonest. Though his philosophy is frequently narrow, it is always strong, even in its inconsistencies. It is not becoming in a man of his inflexible opinions to denounce opinion, but he does it, nevertheless, in a homely and forcible style.”

While in Missouri and St. Louis Mr. Jones did not lose an opportunity to preach against the liquor traffic. In fact, from the very first time he ever opened his mouth as a minister of the gospel until the last sermon fell from his lips before going to heaven, there were very few sermons in which he did not preach directly against the traffic or by suggestion hurl his truths at this national evil.

In his great meetings in Memphis and in Nashville he poured out his soul in denouncing the evils of the saloon. In both of those cities he converted hundreds, and perhaps thousands, from the intoxicating cup, and created a powerful sentiment against the business.

In his preaching against the liquor traffic he was taken to task by the *Globe-Democrat*. In one of his masterful sermons on “*Sowing and Reaping*” he answers the *Globe-Democrat* in the following way:

“**Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap,**’ is as true in a spiritual and moral sense as it is in a physical. You sow whisky and reap drunkards. The man who disputes that disputes premises as sound as eternity and conclusions as clear as the mind of God. The *Globe-Democrat* takes exceptions to what I said about sixty thousand marching to hell by the whisky route yearly. Well, it looks like it, when there are twelve hundred barrooms in St. Louis swinging them into line, three thousand in Chicago, and Kansas City sprinkled all over with them like the stars of night. Wherever there is a barroom that means ten men that will never recross the line. Directly and indirectly I have not near come up to the mark when I said sixty thousand would go into a drunkard’s grave in America. The cussing, black-mouthed barkeeper is a gentleman and a Christian by the side of a town that will license or permit it to be sold. God pity a quack doctor that carries his saddlebag full of whisky and prescribes it for everything. He is not good enough to be a dog, much less a doctor.”

This unique and fearless manner of preaching was stirring the entire city. He was making an impression upon the great lawyers, businessmen, ministers, and editors as few men have been able to do in the pulpit. The *Globe-Democrat* about this time said: “Sam Jones is a bright streak in the moral heaven. The St. John M. E. Church last night was crowded, chairs being placed in every nook and corner and the Sunday-school connecting this with the main audience-room was also filled. Mr. Jones stood on a platform near the doorway, between the two rooms, and preached as he never preached in St. Louis before. He reasoned with his hearers, told them of God’s persistent love, wept as he recited his own religious sorrows, grew solemn and serious as he depicted the day of God’s wrath, and succeeded in making a deep and lasting impression.

“The platform was crowded with the ministers of the city, who were deeply impressed with the magnificent sermon that he had preached.”

Here is a message to the husband taken from that memorable sermon on “*The Calls of God,*” as he delivered it that night: “I just want to look at every man to-night who has a good religious wife. I want to say this to you, and may the Holy Spirit of God burn it into your conscience. Listen to me, friends, listen. The man who stamps upon a good wife’s heart and almost crushes the last drop of blood out of it, let me say to you, sir, you owe that wife a debt that you can never pay her until you pay it at the cross of Jesus Christ. You owe those innocent children that throw their arms around your neck and love you with all their hearts — you owe those precious innocent children a debt that you never can pay until you pay it with your wife around the consecrated altar of God. It is a source of everlasting joy to me as I live. [Tears here coursed down the cheeks of Mr. Jones]. I had at my home a precious child when I was a wicked, wayward, godless man. It is the only sweet child I had who ever looked in my face when I was not a Christian. That child is in heaven, but, thank God, I have no other child that looked in its father’s face when he was not trying to serve God and do right.

“Oh, friend, when you talk about children!

“If you cannot touch a man when you bring to bear upon him the relations of his precious children, then he is dead to everything that is noble and pure and good. God is going to take something from us. As I said just now, there is many a happy circle in this town, but you mark what I say at this moment, you had better look out. God don’t like the way you are doing, brother. He don’t like the example you are setting your children, and if God takes two or three of your sweet children to heaven this winter, you are going to be a better father to those that are left; now, mark what I say.”

The interest increased until there was no church in the city that could begin to accommodate the tremendous crowds that sought to hear Mr. Jones. In order to give the people a chance to hear him, the Music Hall was rented at an expense of one hundred and twenty-five dollars a night, and its doors thrown open to the public. He literally preached his way into the hearts of the people until he crowded himself out of the largest churches and made it absolutely necessary for him to have larger quarters.

In making the announcement of the change from the churches to the auditorium, Mr. Jones said:

“To-morrow night you can expect us at the exposition building, where we will have plenty of room. I don’t say this in a boasting spirit. I am human and I use the personal pronoun ‘I,’ but it is all for God, and there is nothing which I have that He cannot have — every cent I have, or even my life. I don’t ask you to endorse my method; I don’t reckon your endorsement would help me or benefit you. I seek only God’s endorsement and no other’s, not even my wife’s or children’s; or even my mother’s if she were alive. I want every Christian minister in this town to take stock in this revival. It is true I am a Methodist, but I don’t have sectarianism in this fight. Methodism is only a duster; when I get to heaven I will take it off, and go in wearing the cloth coat under it. Some people don’t believe in revivals. A young lady, whose father was a minister, once said to me: ‘My father doesn’t believe in revivals,’ and I answered: ‘Then your father and the devil agree on that point, no matter on what other points they differ.’

“Once a minister said that his church was the true church, and I replied that his church was only a crocheting society. That preacher looked as if he didn’t like my reply, but after thinking the matter over and writing me a letter touching on the subject, I next heard of him standing up in his own church and saying, ‘Sam Jones was right’”

When we remember that Mr. Jones went to St. Louis for a Methodist meeting to be held at Centenary church, and was practically a stranger in the city, the people knowing nothing of him or his work but what they had gathered from the newspapers, that he should have crowds demanding such a building, is really a marvel. What preacher living or dead could have gotten such a hold upon the city? Perhaps some thought that he would be unable to fill the great Music Hall, but a notice appears in the daily paper which speaks of his first appearance in the Music Hall:

“Sam Jones drew a crowd last night that filled the great Music Hall in the exposition building, and nobody left the hall until the benediction had been pronounced. Several times during his address he was heartily applauded.

“There were plenty of other occasions when his peculiar wit evoked laughter, and every now and then there was a dead silence, where one might have expected laughter or applause, showing that the oratorical shaft was barbed and had struck home. Outside of the address there was a prayer by Dr. Tudor, the singing of two hymns and the announcement of the week’s services. There will be services at Centenary Methodist church every morning and afternoon and on Thursday evening. On other evenings services will be held at the Exposition Music Hall. Now that the work is assuming shape, the local clergy are taking hearty interest.”

Mr. Jones created such a stir in St. Louis that worldliness was being considerably checked. The social life of the city was being broken into by his preaching. The card parties and other worldly amusements were suffering at his hands. The theaters were being greatly reduced in their attendance, and all classes of people were in attendance upon the meetings. All forms of worldliness and wickedness were being disturbed. His wit, humor, sarcasm and pathos made it possible for him to be the sensation that he was. While a great many people take exceptions to the use of consecrated wit in the pulpit, nevertheless it has proved its place in the pulpit by its results. Nearly every great preacher has made use of it. Moody and Spurgeon were especially effective while employing it. All of this talk called forth a very effective tribute to Mr. Jones and his manner of speech. I think it is worthy of a place here:

“From time to time preachers have appeared who seemed raised up for the special work of raising the popular heart to an appreciation of the claims of Christ upon their allegiance. Such a preacher was John the Baptist, the greatest of them all, who spoke under the great blue vault of Nature’s heavens. Some of the popular orators have used sarcasm with singular effect, as, for example, Hugh Latimer, the great reformer, bishop and martyr. For weeks Latimer spoke in the open air at St. Paul’s Cross in London. He exposed the non-preaching prelates, the rich bishops, who never opened their mouths to the people, but occupied themselves with the politics, the intrigues, and the scandals of the various European courts.

“Latimer, too, indoctrinated the masses in true piety, and to his personal influence it is due mainly that England embraced the reformed religion. But Latimer was a prince of jokers, as well as the prince of preachers. His sermons of the ‘Plough’ abound with jokes, local hits, sarcasm and ‘points,’ some of which have not lost their flavor to this day.

“A pulpit use of wit is no new thing, and is a powerful vehicle for good. Sam Jones is as keen as a razor, as sarcastic as a Latimer himself. He uses the language, employs the ideas and exposes the follies and vices of the great mass of humanity, of which each of us are liable to esteem ourselves a most important part.

“Sam Jones is loyal to the truth — the sad truth of man’s fallen condition by sin and the glorious counter-truth of Christ’s redeeming power upon the heart. Brother Jones is fully in earnest, probably has not seen an idle hour since he was converted, and consequently he has done, and is doing, a great work for good. His humor is exquisite, his irony as keen as a thorn.

“Taken altogether, his seriousness, his fun, his pure, simple Bible religion, his evident sympathy with souls, constitutes Sam Jones a power for good — unique, peculiar, versatile, and effective.

“No such extended interest in any one man has recently been excited in our midst, and the interest seems to be everywhere the same. Great crowds have heard this newest apostle, and we have great reason to hope that our community will be permanently benefited by his ministrations.”

One of the best estimates of Mr. Jones and his work in St. Louis was written by the Rev. Dr. Godbey in the Southern Methodist:

“No evangelist that has ever visited this city has been heard by such large congregations, and no one has more impressed his hearers with his manliness, courage and broad and correct views of Christianity and Christian duty.

“His preaching is unique in style, but as natural as childhood. His wit is spontaneous and sparkles out everywhere. He has wonderful aptness in illustration. His expositions of doctrine show him thoroughly sound in theology.

“No evangelist has relied so much upon the simple word of truth. No studied manipulation of audiences, no effort to attract by music, no attempt in any sort of sensation has characterized his work.

“Jones is a genius, entitled to his own way of preaching. Any attempt to imitate him would be a miserable failure, and no man would be farther from the real spirit and character of Sam Jones than a man who would undertake it. His style is not studied, he follows no pattern. Nature has given him rare endowment, and such as he is he has offered himself to the Master’s service.”

Criticism subsided as his work went on. Expressions which grated harshly on the ears of every one when he began to preach, and which none approved, ceased to be spoken of by those who heard him from day to day, because they were ashamed to raise objections to a man who had won their hearts by so many just claims.

“Brother Jones seems to unite courage and fidelity in declaring the truth and reproofing sins with almost feminine tenderness; and with all the admiration which the public exhibit for him, we saw in him only the meekness of a Christian.

“The last service of the series was on Sunday evening. Soon after five o’clock the people began to assemble, though the service was not to begin until seven forty-five. Long before that time there was no room in pew or aisle for another one. When the sermon was concluded and the audience dismissed, the people stood reverently as if the service was going on. The benediction was pronounced a second time, but no one seemed to be willing to quit the church; and three-quarters of an hour later a large crowd was still lingering to take the hand of Mr. Jones before parting. He left us Monday morning, and the prayers and blessings of thousands of Christians went with him.”

When the meeting finally closed, it was admitted on all sides that it was one of the greatest victories the church had ever known. Mr. Jones, perhaps, saw the situation as no one else did, and was better prepared to give a correct estimate of the work than anyone else.

The last night of the meeting he made the following remarks regarding the work in St. Louis:

“There are one or two things I want to say to you before we proceed with the text. There are many things at this hour to gladden my heart, and I feel grateful to God for the cooperation and prayers of the hundreds of Christian people, and all of those faithful ministers who have stood by my side; I thank God for the hundreds and thousands of Christian people in this city, who testify that they start out from these services with renewed strength and vigor, and with their religious life quickened, with their hopes brightened, with their faith stronger.

“I thank God for all of this. Then we are grateful to God for the hundreds, I know not how many hundreds that have given themselves to God and a better life. I have seen as many as fifty at a service profess faith and love in Jesus Christ. I have seen at other services forty, and I have seen at some thirty, proving a desire to do right. This much I can say, we are satisfied that hundreds have decided and made choice of Christ as their personal Saviour and seeking heaven as their final home.

“There are some features of these meetings that when we look at them we are discouraged and heartsick. While we glorify God that hundreds have been quickened unto a new life, and hundreds have been brought to Christ, yet it makes our hearts sad when we see thousands that are out of Christ, and I never can rejoice with my whole heart over those that have found Christ when I am sad over the thousands that are still lost. Oh, Christ, go out after the lost sheep of this city and seek them till you have found them all, and lay them on Thy own loving shoulder and bring them all back to the fold.

“I leave here with a sad heart. I go away from many new-made friends; I go away with a consciousness that many names and faces are written on my heart. You may read them there in heaven, I trust.

“I leave your city to go to the bedside of one of the sweetest, best sisters a boy ever had, or maybe to her funeral, I know not. I have been very sad all day and yet rejoicing. I think this has been the sweetest religious day I almost ever spent in my life. The Lord came upon us at Centenary, and His blessings came like the falling snow, and we scarcely knew that grace was falling until we were covered up all over with the snows of divine grace which had fallen. Let us look for such a service to-night. I shall carry you away in my heart and in my memory, and I shall pray for you, and the greatest favor I can ask of you is to pray God that I may be a faithful preacher, a good man, a gentle, loving father and husband in the highest sense of the word. God bless you all.

“Then I want to say the newspapers of this city have been a great help to me in my work. They have done more through their pressrooms than I have done from the pulpit. I have had hundreds of hearers; they have had thousands of readers; I am grateful to them; and I say to you that whenever in the history of any town or community Christ shall have unto Himself four or five columns in your leading newspapers each day the Lord Jesus Christ will make an impression upon this world.

“The *Globe-Democrat* (and I make no invidious distinction of the *Globe-Democrat*) especially, has given stenographic reports of the sermons; the *Republican* has given column after column, large space to long-hand reports of the sermons, and to these two papers I owe a great deal. I commend the enterprise of the *Globe-Democrat* and the fidelity of the *Republican* to those interested in this meeting. May God bless the editors, may God bless the reporters — I know I mean that — may God bless the printers and may God bless every man who takes those papers in his hands. I thank you all for your kind words and your prayers, and your many tokens of good will and appreciation of me and my work; I thank you with all the heart I have, and if I was a bigger-hearted man you would get bigger thanks. God bless you all and save you all.”

Ten years afterwards Mr. Jones returned to St. Louis for a revival campaign. He had been invited there often, but had never been able to hold another meeting. Finally the question of his coming was introduced by some business men at one of the preachers’ meetings, and there was some opposition manifested toward him.

Mr. Jones was immediately informed of this, and after much prayer decided that he should go and hold this second meeting, hoping for as much cooperation as possible from the laity and the ministers.

While there were a great many prominent laymen and some of the leading preachers anxious for him to come, under the circumstances Mr. Jones decided to assume all the financial obligations, and therefore rented the Music Hall for three weeks, which amounted to twenty-one hundred dollars. Perhaps the greatest opposition Mr. Jones ever met with was upon his second visit to St. Louis. There were some prominent Methodist preachers in the city who were unwilling to cooperate with him, and fought his coming. In the preachers’ meeting and before their official boards they did everything in their power to break up the plans for the meeting. This was one reason why Mr. Jones was so anxious to respond to the call of some Christian laymen and a few ministers, and led him to shoulder the responsibility that he assumed.

After the meeting began some of the preachers went among the people and urged them not to attend, while others fought him from the pulpit, but this made absolutely no impression upon Mr. Jones, and didn’t seem to interfere at all with the great work which had been inaugurated. The Music Hall would not begin to hold the people, and soon the opposition died away.

One night before the great audience Mr. Jones said: “If these D. D.’s don’t let up, I will have to quit.”

“Look here, they have just got the folks away from here until there ain’t but six thousand here to-night. I ain’t mad at them, I like them; I want to meet them all in heaven, but I don’t care about meeting them until I have been there about a week.”

This was his good-natured way of showing the people that the opposition had been overcome. The revival swept on, gathering momentum, until one of the greatest victories for the cause of Christ was realized. The meeting was soon warmly endorsed by the most prominent Christian workers in the city, and a majority of the leading clergymen.

Some of the greatest and most powerful sermons Mr. Jones ever preached were created and delivered during the St. Louis campaign. When the financial responsibility had been met by generous gifts of the friends of the movement, and when the debt was paid, the committee presented Mr. Jones with a very handsome purse as a token of their appreciation of the work that he had done.

Just before leaving the city Col. Bob Ingersoll came there for a lecture. While the great Music Hall could not accommodate the crowd that came to hear Mr. Jones, Colonel Ingersoll had a rather small audience at the theater. The *Globe-Democrat* had an interview with Mr. Jones regarding Ingersoll.

“What do you think of Ingersoll?” asked the representative of the great paper.

Mr. Jones replied: “I can’t answer you in two or three words; personally, Mr. Ingersoll is no doubt a genial gentleman; physically, he is fat; intellectually, he is bright, and morally there may be worse men; theologically, he is a bad egg.”

“What do you think of the moral influence of his lectures?” asked the reporter.

“That is very easily answered. His lectures are a calamity, and the worst is, he reaches the class of people upon whom they have the most baneful effect. Mr. Ingersoll forgets that the masses were not all reared in Christian homes, as he was, and with their training his sayings turns them over to utter recklessness. Whatever virtues Mr. Ingersoll possesses is the gift of Christianity. He never got them from infidelity.”

“How do you account for his power to attract large audiences?”

Mr. Jones said: “His power to attract lies in his ability to shock. He is the devil’s dynamo, and when a man stands upon the damp soil of a sinful life, old Bob can turn a current on him that will make him almost leap out of himself.”

The reporter asked, “What about Mr. Ingersoll’s arguments?”

Mr. Jones replied: “He is an orator of the highest type. I know no man who can put English together like he can. His words put into sentences look like strings of pearls, but they are merely bracelets and necklaces for swine. He hasn’t any arguments whatever. His philosophy and religion do not build colleges, almshouses or asylums. They are powerless to reform the drunkard and the outlaw. They do not make a man kinder in his home or more respected in the community where he lives. With his wit and intellectual cunning, aided by his illogical reasoning, he may play on the weaknesses of religion, and, by his flights of eloquence, upon the duties of life, which he steals from Christianity, but, after all, a thoughtful man sees the cunning of his method and detects the direful effect his words have upon those who hear him. I see no good that can possibly come from his lectures on infidelity. I see much harm that may result from them.”

“What do you think as to his sincerity?” inquired the reporter.

Mr. Jones said: "As to whether Mr. Ingersoll is sincere or not makes no difference when you look at the tendency of his lectures. I believe a man can reach such condition and attitude that in the moral world a lie is to him the truth, and the truth a lie. I suppose he will die as he has lived, but after death he will no longer be a disbeliever or an unbeliever. When he is gone the ministry will live; churches will flourish; morality, will be taught and practiced, and Christian virtues will be embodied in men long after he has passed from the earth."

When the last night of the meeting came it was attended by the largest audience that ever assembled to hear a minister in St. Louis. After every available seat was occupied in the great Music Hall, there were as many, if not more, on the outside of the building trying to gain admittance. It was with much difficulty that the policemen opened the way for Mr. Jones to pass through the crowd to the main entrance of the building. A great crowd thronged on the outside, clamoring for a few words from him. Mr. Jones took a position on the step and addressed them for ten minutes or more. When he finished the crowd seemed to appreciate the words that he had uttered, and as there was no chance or possibility for them to get within the building they quietly and gradually dispersed.

In all, the work was one of the most marvelous victories; the strongest oppositions had been overcome and he had succeeded in spite of those who opposed him.

~ end of chapter 13 ~

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