

A Drunkard Redeemed

There is a true story about a man who was born into a family of seven and, as fate would have it, the father was a bartender who was reported to drink as much as he served. This boy was Mel Trotter and the year of his birth was 1870 in Orangeville, Illinois. Later, the family moved to Freeport, Illinois where he became a barber and soon afterwards took up the vice of gambling and became a heavy drinker. A few years later, he married Lottie Fisher and she was horrified that Mel was a drunkard. Mel would try his best to stay sober but that didn't last long as he went back to drink. Life became worse and worse, as he would leave home for weeks at a time. One time he returned home after a period of being drunk only to learn that his two-year-old had died. Mel thought he was responsible and so considered suicide. As he stood next to the coffin, he was determined to never drink again but, alas, within two hours he was drunk as a skunk. Leaving home once again, he hopped a train for Chicago and once there he sold the child's shoes so he could buy another drink. One may ask, "How can a person sink so low as to do that?" Friend, that is what sin can and will do to a person.

Mel Trotter was drunk and shoeless in the snow on a Chicago street when he was encouraged to go into the Pacific Garden Mission {PGM} where he was gloriously saved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He became active in the Mission and later became director of a rescue mission. Mel Trotter went from being a helpless, hopeless drunkard to become a totally changed man, a change that people still talk about after all these years. You may wonder how that was possible so, if you will, please allow me to briefly explain.

All of us are born with a sinful nature that we inherit from Adam, the man who disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:" {Romans 5:12} It is from this sinful nature that we commit the various acts of sin, sin like lying, stealing, murder, rape, child molesting, drugs, drinking alcoholic beverages, and much more. Sometimes this sin nature is referred to as the heart "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" {Jeremiah 17:9} The payment for being a sinner is both physical and spiritual. "For the wages of sin is death;" {Romans 6:23a} The night that Trotter walked into PGM, he heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, of how much God loved him and, that there was hope for even a wretch like him. "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." {Romans 5:8} That hope was in Jesus Christ, God the Son who left the glory of Heaven, took the body of a man for one purpose; that purpose was to die on the Cross of Calvary and, in doing so, to shed His innocent blood as the atonement for the sins of all mankind. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." {Luke 19:10} "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." {John 3:16} Trotter repented of his sin and placed his trust in Jesus Christ to not only forgive him, but to save him for all eternity. The Bible calls this being "born again," a spiritual rebirth, and that made all the difference in his life.

Friend, I do not know anything about you but, this one thing I know is that what God did for Mel Trotter, He can and will do for you. God has promised that anyone who repents and calls out to Him will be forgiven and saved. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." {Romans 10:13} To repent simply means you are taking God's side against your sin, that you are turning from your sin to Him. God does not want you to continue living the way you have been and then to die and spend eternity in Hell. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." {2 Peter 3:9} He wants to forgive you, to save you, and to have you in Heaven with Him for eternity. Jesus Christ has paid your sin debt with His death and blood on Calvary but, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:" {1 Peter 1:18-19} He cannot and will not force you to trust Him as your personal Saviour. You and you alone must come to Him in faith believing. God promised this and that settles it; will **YOU** now believe it and take Him at His Word? "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." {1 John 5:11-13}

~Richard A. Ciarrocca/2017

All Scripture references are KJV