



Abide



Volume 3, Issue 2

April—June 2003

Ministering to Children



Our Mission Statement:

The reason for publishing this journal is to encourage youth to mature in the Lord. We desire all to be challenged to seek the reality of God in their own lives. We hope you will see, by the testimony of many youth, a Christian life that radiates the power of God. God's desire for all of us is much more than to escape Hell. It is for us to live a victorious life by abiding in Christ. All material will be edited with this goal in mind.

The Editors

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Abiding: Rest For Your Souls Rejoice in the Lord

We welcome suggestions and submissions for upcoming issues.

A Word About Finances...

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Submissions:

We ask our readers to prayerfully consider sharing something—prose, poetry, artwork, or even a simply testimony.

If possible, please have material typed out. We will consider all submissions, although we reserve the right to select and edit them. Please provide contact information so we can contact you in necessary.

Let the Little Children Come:

The Story of Evangel Children's Home

An Interview with Ruth Sundquist

ABIDE: How did you become a Christian?

RUTH SUNDQUIST: I was brought up in a non-Christian home. I thought I was a Christian, because my parents were good. We didn't smoke or drink or rob any banks or anything, so we took it for granted we were Christians.

When I was seventeen, my older sister got acquainted with another girl who took her to a revival meeting. She accepted the Lord as her Savior and came home and told us.

Of course, I didn't understand. I thought I was already a Christian, so why did I need to be saved? But my mother had been very bitter, angry, and upset most of her life, and she turned to the Lord. Her life was so changed—a complete change—I knew I wanted her God to be my God. That's when I accepted the Lord as my Savior.

How did you get involved in mission work?

When I was twenty years old, I went to Moody Bible Institute. I had not planned on going into missionary work—anything but that, I felt. But we heard so much about missionary work, and I was wondering what the Lord wanted me to do with my life. I really prayed about it and was open to the Lord's leading. I kept asking Him—especially as graduation drew near—to show me

My mother's life was so changed, I wanted her God to be my God. That's when I accepted the Lord as my Savior.



very definitely what He wanted me to do.

Then one evening as we were in prayer meeting, the Lord spoke to me in a voice, calling my name. He asked if would I be willing to go to China to do orphanage work for Him. I said yes, and my heart thrilled with joy and peace. I knew that was what He wanted me to do.

That was in November 1941. In December came World War II. So, the door to China closed. I think that's why the Lord made it so definite, because it was a long time before I got to China.

I had already told my church the Lord was calling me to go to China. When the doors to China closed, the church suggested I go up to a Free Church work in the mountains of Kentucky. So I went to work there for four years until China opened.

What happened when you finally went to China?

When I first got to China, there were already orphanages established. I often went out to the orphanage to try to teach English. But in 1949, two years after arriving there, the Communists took over. We had to move from Canton to Hong

Kong. In Hong Kong, there wasn't any orphanage work, and people felt that I should go into young people's work. They felt that the Communists would take over Hong Kong next. What was the point of establishing an orphanage?

When I came home on my first furlough, I was sick. The doctor said I had tuberculosis in the lymphatic gland. If I was put under house arrest by the Communists, I wouldn't survive, so why go back? I asked the Lord to please heal me, and then I would go back and do orphanage work, even if I had to start an orphanage on my own.

The Lord answered. In a year's time, I was able to go back and start an orphanage. We had our first children in 1956, and the orphanage is still functioning today.

Did it seem at first that there was no hope for the orphanage?

Yes. But afterwards, when it seemed Hong Kong was not going to be taken over by the Communists, the church out there was willing that we should go into an institutional work, too.

At first someone said to me, "Well, what about funds? Have you ever trusted the Lord for money? How are you going to take care of that?"

I said, "Well, I don't know, because I never have had to trust the Lord for funds. The Lord has always supplied."

The Mission Headquarters said, "Well, you can advertise for it, and ask for support. But we don't promise you any; you'll have to get your own."

I said, "Well, Lord, You'll have to take care of

that. I'll start the orphanage, and You supply the funds." And He did.

It was supplied through Wilbur Nelson's Morning Chapel Hour broadcasts. He had felt burdened to do something for an orphanage in Asia. He heard about ours and was willing to take on the support. So he did the fundraising, and I did the managing of the children's home.

**I had tuberculosis
in the lymphatic gland.
If I was put under house
arrest by the Communists,
I would probably die.**

Was this for boys and girls?

Yes. Some of the children had a mom or dad living who was unable to take care of them. Some of them were babies left out in the street, and others were children left with no one to take care of them.

There was a lot of poverty in Hong Kong at that time, because so many of the people had left China when the Communists took over. They came flooding into Hong Kong to escape the Communists. They had no place to live but on the sidewalk and in shacks on the hillside. Because of it, there was poverty, sickness, and death, and a great need for someone to take care of the children.

I had asked the social welfare department if there really was a need for an orphanage, and they said, "Oh yes, by all means." They asked me to please start it in the city, not out in the country. They said the children would be more used to life in the city.

Then they said, "Take children ages two to five, because there is a babies' home, and a home for older children, but there is nothing for the ages in-between." So, I started with that age. Then afterwards we were asked to take babies too, and also children who were a little older.



How long was it before you started taking the older children and the babies?

We started taking babies in 1960. We knew we would soon have a larger place and be able to take children of all ages. But mostly, the children who came were younger. That way it was easier to mold them and to help them.

Through those first couple of years, we had twenty-five children, and the house we were renting was filled up. The government said, "Well, if you show that you really have a good orphanage, we'll give you a grant for land so you can build a larger place." So we did that.

After we moved into the larger homes, our numbers grew in a hurry—we were up to ninety for a while. Most of the time there was seventy-two. Quite a few hundred children have gone through the children's home in the years since it was started.

Of course, we had house-parents for the children when we were in a larger home. We were divided into families. There would be about ten to twelve children in each family, so they got more personal attention.

What sort of things went on in the orphanage? What was it like living there with the children?

Well, they had their meals, and they had their fun times. Because we were on the outskirts of the city, there was lots of places to run out and play. There was a gravel pit nearby, so it was open land. I could take the children hiking in the hills out back. In summertime, we took them to the beach nearby. And of course, they went to school.

How did you share the gospel with the children?

Every evening we had our time of devotions, and I told them Bible stories. At first, it was only Bi-



ble stories. Then after the children were going to Sunday school, some of the Sunday school teachers complained to me. "The children know those Bible stories better than we do! Would you tell them something else besides Bible stories?"

I switched to using flash-card stories, bringing out Christian principles. But the lessons were on the

Bible, and the Christian life, and learning to pray. Some of the children I led to the Lord, as they were ready.

Did many come to the Lord like that?

Oh yes, they did when they were little. After they grew up, I realized some had probably not understood, because they did not continue with the Lord. But most of them did or have come back to the Lord now.

Follow-up work is very important, I think, and the children should continue in Church and Sunday school. Some of those who left early, who did not continue so long, just turned away.

When you were working at the orphanage, how did the Lord make Himself known to you and the children?

First of all, the Lord led us as far as the location of the orphanage, finding a house suitable to rent, and then supplying the funds as time went on. As different needs came up, we prayed for them with the children. For one thing, the need for a telephone—we had an awful time getting a

Some of the Sunday school teachers complained to me, "The children know those Bible stories better than we do!"

telephone out there. It was one big prayer request the children were all rejoicing about when we got our telephone.

In other ways, I was able to share with the children some of our needs, and of course, the needs of the children themselves. Some of them were sent to different schools. The government schools were free, but they weren't very good at the time.

The Lord opened the doors for some of the children to be able to attend Christian schools. There too, we saw the Lord answer prayer and provide. The Lord did not just supply funds; He opened doors and opportunities.

In the earlier days, we would go out at Christmas time and Chinese New Year and hand out tracts to the neighbors. Later, as the home grew, we would give programs for special occasions, and invite the people from round about to come. It was a testimony, which the children realized too. It really meant a lot to them and to all of us.

Is there any one particular child who is most vivid in your memory or is most typical of the children who came?

I don't know if there's anyone very typical. I remember many of them, especially the ones from early on, because I have had contact with them.

One of them had gotten into all kinds of trouble after he left the home. But then, just two years ago, he wrote and told me he had come to know the Lord, and he gave his testimony. He had joined a church, and he is going on with the Lord. He is a lawyer in Canada.



Another one, who was in and out of trouble all the time too, still keeps in touch, but I'm not so sure about his salvation. At least his life doesn't show it.

The achievement is the children who have grown up and are making a mark for the Lord.

Then, of course, there are those who have a real testimony for the Lord, like Billy, who came to the States for college. He went on to Christian Witness Seminary. He has a Christian Witness Center in Missouri. He's a pastor besides heading up this work, which is with the students from China who are studying in colleges and universities in Missouri and states nearby. He has been really used of the Lord.

Some have gone into regular work, but they are using their time and energy for the Lord, too.

You visited the orphanage not too long ago. Is it any different now than it was at first?

These last few years it has really been changed—not because of the home itself wanted to change, but because of the government. The government has opened very small children's homes in private families, having a couple take children in, like a foster family. Because of this, the government has told the orphanages in Hong Kong they should take children who have behavior problems.

These children are in so much trouble—the children's home is the last stop. If they don't make it, they are sent to juvenile detention centers. The children are older, and all of them have problems. Their parents have problems, too.

You see, they do have parents, or at least one parent, and that parent gives the orphanage a hard time of it, too. They tell off the house-

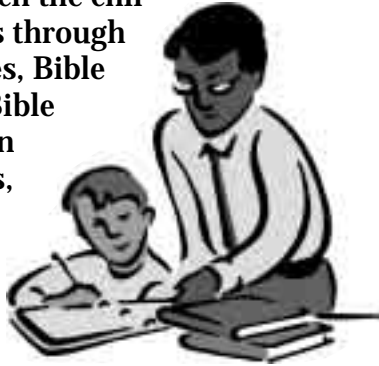
parents because they think they aren't doing the right thing. The children are very hard to manage.

It is much more difficult now than it was in the past. But they're reaching kids who really need the Lord, and they're seeing the Lord working in their lives.

What suggestions would you give for reaching children? How can we show them Jesus and His Love?

Well, it depends on the situation and the location. For example, if you were in a big city like Chicago, or any place where there are needy children, extend help to them. There are children from abused families in America, too. I think we can show them Christ's love by helping them to understand God does love them. There is help for them—the Lord cares.

I think a big way to reach the children here in America is through child evangelism classes, Bible classes, and Vacation Bible Schools. Have classes in parks and public places, reach out and find if there are children in need of help—not only spiritual help, but physical help.



What do you think has been the orphanage's greatest achievement since it began?

The greatest achievement is the boys and girls who have grown up there and are now really making a mark for the Lord in the world, who are really living for the Lord, and who are a testimony and a witness for God. He has used the home. Many have come to know Him because of the home. They in turn have spread the gospel. That's the biggest achievement, right?

Ruth Sundquist lives in Crystal Lake, Illinois. If you have any additional questions for her, Abide will be happy to forward them. Thanks to John Pazdziora for conducting and transcribing the interview by phone.

A Brief Update

As you probably have wondered, we are rather late this issue. It takes time to accumulate the material needed to print. We are very grateful for those who have submitted articles, but there has not been an abundance of submissions.

Remember the goal stated in our first issue:

We have chosen to publish a journal because a journal is, more or less, a periodical designed to give many people the chance to share their ideas or experiences.

We also chose a journal because we do not think it would be wise for us (the editors) to be constantly getting up and preaching to others. In addition, it takes too long for us to write and edit enough high-quality material to publish on any regular basis.

We do not want to begin a periodical and have to cancel issues or add material we feel is low-grade in order to publish on time. We want to provide a platform for youth to share their visions and burdens. We are ready to collect, edit, and publish the ideas and testimonies of youth.

We encourage all our readers to consider sharing something to encourage and challenge us all. We look forward to hearing from you.

We have been blessed to see the Lord provide finances. Abide is not yet completely funded by the donations of our readers, but we are steadily moving that way. Well over 50% of our expenses are paid for by your donations. Praise the Lord!

Lastly, we are making an effort to increase the number of subscriptions by at least 50. Doing so will allow us to receive large discounts on postage. We don't want to just add names, but if you know of a family that would be blessed by Abide, send in their name and address, and we will be happy to add them to our list.

May God bless you as you seek to Abide in Him!

THE EDITORS

Every child has vast potential. They can grow to be mightily used of God or of Satan. They watch us. Do we pay attention?

Tuesday Night Church

—Kimberly Nolt

Greetings in the blessed name of Jesus! By Him, we are given eternal life, and we have the privilege to know Him personally! Now our responsibility is to tell others about Him, whether on a foreign mission field or right at home.

The Lebanon Children's Ministry or "Tuesday Night Church" as our children call us, began in 1998 when God blessed Tim Zeiset and his efforts to begin a ministry for children. I have been working there regularly since 2002. It has been a tremendous blessing to me to work toward our goal—to show the love of Christ to these hurting children and their parents.

The Program:

Around 6:00pm, we arrive at the building we call "Jubilee." We meet inside for a time of sharing thoughts and tips about the lesson. Several lead in prayer to ask God's blessing upon our evening. We cannot go far without the blessing of the Lord!

After prayer, we split up into our three routes. The West Route goes to the northwest parts of town to find their children. Workers on the Spruce Park Route head into an apartment complex to collect their bunch of youngsters. The Central Route goes into the homes and teaches right within the home instead of bringing the children back to the Jubilee building.

Since I am on the Spruce Park route, I go along into the apartment complex. We go knocking on the doors of the homes of our children and usually find a handful that enjoy coming with us.

It's a pleasure to see Keaton's smile and hear him say, "Of course I'm going!" or to smile at little

Jessie's excited chattering. Perhaps

Glorimarr or Angelica are coming tonight, or the two live-wire brothers, Isuki and Chapi. Regardless of who comes, we are glad for the opportunity to plant more seeds in the hearts of the children.

We take the children back to Jubilee and set up classes in our different corners. We are teaching from the Creation to Christ Children's Edition right now. We had been making our own lesson plans before this, so this has been a change. We have taught the children the basic lesson of Creation. Now we are working through the Old Testament, teaching them about God's purpose for the world. Since I teach the younger ones, I pick and chose the stuff I think would be most beneficial to the children. I do not want them to get bored with a drawn-out lesson! It has been working pretty well.

After an hour or so of teaching, we run outside for a few minutes of tag or another active game in the big parking lot. Then we pile into the van and head for home. Many times this driving time is used to teach new songs or sing old ones. Jessie's favorite is "This Little Light of Mine", and we are sure to sing it every week she's along! Angelica's favorite is "Come Bless the Lord." All the children enjoy the men singing the first part

and the ladies singing the echo. Somebody is always sure to pick "Jesus Loves Me" or "Jesus Loves the Little Children."

It is also time to chat one-on-one with the children, to hear a little about their life, to see how school is going, and



We go knocking on the doors of the homes of our children and usually find a handful that enjoy coming with us.

to touch base with them.

Our form of punishment for unruly and disobedient children is no snack. Many times we have had to send a little child home without a snack. This helps us establish some authority. It works well as a warning in class. If you tell a child that they will soon push the limit too far, and won't get a snack, they will usually calm down a little.

Having made sure our charges are safely at home, we go back to Jubilee for a time of sharing about our evening, going over Bible Memorization, and having our own snack before going home.

The People:

I would like to introduce you to my children and share with you the challenges and blessings that come with knowing these little children. My regular students are Keaton, 6, Jessie, 5, and Chapi, 5. They usually don't all come on the same evening, and I'll have one or two at a time.

Keaton comes from a one-parent home. Keaton's mother is very open to us. She enjoys visiting whenever we have a moment or two to spare. Keaton is full of energy. It is painfully evident when you try to get him to sit still for the length of time needed in lessons. He is always ready to go out and run around the parking lot a couple of times! Sometimes he acts bored during class, but he usually can answer the questions well. Keaton is a very sweet boy and always has lots of hugs and kisses to share. He often tells me how much he misses me.



Jessie comes from a sad home situation. Not too long ago, she was a very mixed up girl, and I did not know how to help her. Some weeks, she dreads going home. We have to force her to get in the van with us, and when we drop her off, she just cries. My heart has felt torn for her. Sometimes I wish I could pick her up, take her out of that situation, and give her a real home—a real mother and father, but I trust the Lord to work in her family. Jessie is a bouncing little girl. She always seems full of smiles and fun.

Chapi, and his brother Isuki, 7, don't come with

Sometimes I wish I could pick Jessie up, take her out of that situation, and give her a real home—a real mother and father.

us regularly, but when they do, they are full of energy. It is a challenge to make the lessons interesting enough to hold their attention. Even if they are sitting down properly, they are constantly moving. They come from a better home, with a dad and a mom. I believe they are the biological parents. However, we haven't had much time in their home.



Although I don't teach the older children, I wanted you to meet Angelica, 13. She is Hispanic. Her family has been involved in witchcraft, which means there is probably bondage in her home. I have never met her mother and don't know much about her home life, but Angelica seems to have a real interest in coming to church. She's a lot of fun, and when she gets excited, she starts talking fast. Sometimes you can hardly understand her!

I would like to mention one more family: Dawn is a single mother with two boys, Anthony and Michael. Dawn knows that she isn't where she should be. She knows she's not being a good mother. She knows that she needs Jesus Christ to help her, but she hasn't been doing anything about it.

Her boys are little rebels. It is a tremendous challenge when they come along to class. They don't understand authority. They don't listen to their mom, so when they come with us, their strong wills clash with ours. They aren't used to having a man in authority over them. They need lots of extra grace, patience and love, yet firm

Satan is not happy we are fighting in Lebanon. He does everything he can to destroy our ministry.

discipline.

I have learned much from serving the Lord this way. When I first started, I was overwhelmed at how good God was to put me in the home He did. God could easily have put me into a single-parent home, or a dysfunctional home without any knowledge of God. He could have placed me with the gangs on the streets. Instead, He put me in a Christian home, and brought me to salvation in Christ. When I feel the crowded town houses, hear the booming of rock music, and see the terrible things on television, I begin to understand the broken hearts and lives of these children, and I cannot but tell the Lord that I want to be used by Him.

The children's ministry is a way to get in touch with different cultures. The Hispanic, African-American and other children we get in touch with have different ways of doing things. It has been good for me to interact with them.

The Lord has used this ministry to take me out of my comfort zone. It is a challenge to witness to others. I am so used to my sheltered life, living within a church fellowship and not being aware of what goes on in the world. It has opened my eyes to the needs of the world around us. My worldview has been stretched farther than it was before. Now I have a vision of what God can do in the hearts and lives of the people in Lebanon City.

There are times of discouragement. Sometimes, the children aren't very interested in coming to

church. It is easy to begin questioning myself: Am I an interesting enough teacher? Why were the children so hyperactive tonight? Why do they not want to listen? Are we doing something wrong? I have struggled with these thoughts.

Satan is not happy we are fighting in Lebanon. He does everything he can to destroy our ministry. I believe we need to commit the whole matter to God and trust Him to help us. Without God, everything that we do is in vain anyway. We will never prevail against the powers of darkness which are so prevalent in this world on our own. But with Christ, we have the strongest power ever known. We are on the winning side already. Praise the Lord!

The Lord does allow discouraging times to test our faith, but He also blesses us with encouraging times and experiences. Once, I worked very hard with Jessie to help her memorize her Bible verse. It was very encouraging to me when she still knew it almost perfectly one week later!

Experiences like these are what I enjoy. It is satisfying to know that they learned something.

I hope you have been strengthened and encouraged by reading about our ministry. We feel very small and worthless of ourselves, and all glory is due unto His name. May the Lord bless each one of you as you serve Him in the places where He has planted you!

"Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from Him cometh my salvation. He only is my rock and my salvation; He is my defense; I shall not be greatly moved." Psalm 62:1

In Service Of the King,
Kimberly Nolt

The Lebanon Children's Ministry sends out weekly updates via email. If you are interested, send an email to lebcm@localnet.com.



Three Essential Qualities for Effectiveness in Children's Ministry

—Mollie Jo Cassidy



Humility, tolerance, and meekness are three qualities essential to success in children's ministry.

What exactly are these qualities and how can you develop them? As we study Jesus' character and behold His face in daily communion, we will become like Him. Matt 11:29: *"Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."*

Though this is the only description He gives of His character, the Lord Jesus is the greatest example of every character quality necessary for ministry. To be successful in children's ministry, our goal must be to develop the beautiful qualities that made Him so effective with children.

Humility

Humility is defined in Webster's 1828 dictionary as, "Freedom from pride and arrogance; a modest estimate of one's own worth; lowliness of mind; a deep sense of one's own unworthiness in the sight of God, and a submission to the divine will."

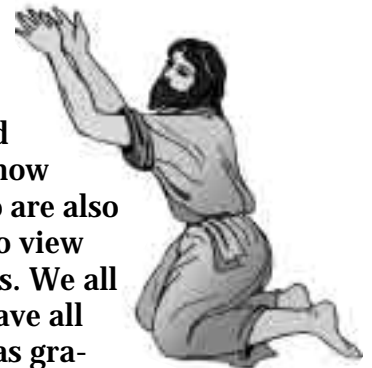
Humility is probably the most important virtue of all, because God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble. God honors a broken, humble heart with riches, honor, and life. The operational definition of humility according to the Institute in Basic Life Principles (IBLP) is "Recognizing and acknowledging my total dependence upon the Lord and seeking His will for every decision." It is God's will that we walk humbly with Him. (Micah 6:8)

It takes humility to serve others. It especially takes humility to minister to a child. In order to be great in the kingdom of heaven, our Lord said we must be willing to humble ourselves as little children. We are all children in God's sight. We

all have needs. Think of a small child and the vast greatness of God. We think, "How small that child is!" yet, in light of God's greatness, what's the difference between a small child and us?

My dad used to run a program for inner-city children. In his training session with the volunteers, he once illustrated the vital need for humility by sharing a story from 2 Kings 7. Four leprous men, who begged outside the city gate, decided they were not going to lose anything by giving themselves over to the Syrian army who had besieged the city. So, they went over to the enemy camp, only to find the army had fled in the night. They began gorging themselves in the abundance of spoil. *"Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household."*

We are just like those beggars who have found something to eat and know we must tell others who are also in need! It is not right to view others as the needy ones. We all have needs. We don't have all the answers, but God has gra-



We are just like those beggars who have found something to eat and know we must tell others who are also in need!

God used the pain of failure to show me the seriousness of honoring the parents of the children I minister to.

ciously given us some. We can most effectively help a child when we remember we ourselves were once children. It is only by the mercy of God and the investment of others in our lives we are able to help them in any way.

Submitting to authority is an important part of humility, and necessary when serving in any type of ministry. There will be many people to submit to: the leaders, fellow helpers, and especially, the child's parents. Parents are the authority of the children, and any responsibility not delegated should not be assumed.

I will never forget a difficult lesson in humility I learned while providing childcare for a church. I offended one of the couples in the Bible study when I neglected to stay within the limits of the responsibility they had delegated to me. As a result, I was reassigned to another cell group. I was shocked at their reaction, but God used the pain of this failure to show me the seriousness of honoring the parents of children He has called me to minister to.

In the case described above, my responsibility was to keep the children safe, quiet, and happy during a Bible Study. I overstepped that authority by trying to talk to the children about their need for salvation in a way frightening to some of them. I ended up scaring two girls and offending their parents. Not only was I insensitive to the children to approach the children in the way I did, but I also went beyond my dele-

gated responsibility.

One must be sensitive to the wishes of the parents. A practical rule of thumb is to ask: "Do the parents know about this activity? Do I have their permission to teach their children?" It takes time to establish trust between people. If we have not known a family long, they might be reluctant for us to teach their children. This is what happened in my case. Remember, it is the parent's responsibility to train up their children for the LORD. It is important we do not assume responsibility they have not given us.

If we are in a public setting, this is a totally different situation. If parents allow their children to wander around without supervision, they probably are not too concerned about what would influence their children. Children without their parents can be approached freely, but if their parents are with them, ask first.

As I learned in the babysitting situation described above, if I don't humble myself in the sight of God, He can humble me in the sight of man!

"...praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and his ways judgment: and those that walk in pride he is able to abase." (Daniel 4:37)

Tolerance

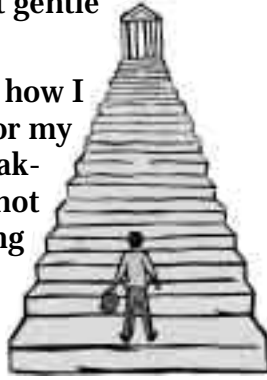
Tolerance is the opposite of condemnation. By definition: "Making allowances for those who lack wisdom or maturity and praying they will see and follow God's ways." (IBLP)



Do not have unrealistic expectations of a child. As my dad has encouraged me, "Try to remember they are still children and need our patience and some time to grow up." Naturally, they will not have the kind of maturity an adult would have. Don't take little offenses personally. They are still learning, still growing. They need someone strong,

yet flexible; someone firm, yet gentle and loving.

The Lord has convicted me of how I have held high expectations for my siblings. I realized this was making them feel as if they could not please me. Instead of tolerating their immaturity, I was making things worse and straining our relationships. I have confessed my sin to my family and am so grateful for their tolerance of me.



People often reject children and are intolerant of them. This is wrong. Jesus warns us in Matthew 18:10 *“Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven.”* It is the will of God for you to love and accept every child He sends into your life. For Jesus said, *“Whosoever shall receive this child in My name receiveth Me: and whosoever shall receive me receiveth him that sent Me.”* Luke 9:48

George Washington Carver once said, “How far you go in life depends on you being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in life you will have been all of these.”

Meekness

Webster’s says: “Meekness is softness of temper; mildness; forbearance under injuries and provocations; Meekness is a grace which Jesus alone inculcated (taught), and which no ancient philosopher seems to have understood or recommended.”

Usually people get angry when their personal rights are violated, or when their expectations are not fulfilled. Therefore, the basis for meekness is found in yielding all rights and expectations to God. It is not surprising Jesus lived in complete victory over anger. He repeatedly said He came not to do His own will, but rather to do the will of His Father.

Jesus not only taught us to be meek, He is the epitome of meekness. He was an example of

“strength under control.” He would minister all day, or be up all night in prayer. And when the crowds kept coming, His response was: *“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.”* (Luke 18:16)

Jesus became a man, and gave all of His rights, reputation, and expectations to His Father. Because of His righteous testimony, He could speak boldly: *“And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.”* (Mark 9:42) Make sure the pressures of the ministry don’t come between you and the Lord, and other people. Instead, let the pressures press

**You will reap eternal
rewards as you share the
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Jesus to each child
in your life.**

you—closer to Jesus.

May God help you walk in humility, tolerance and meekness in your ministry to children. The power to develop these three character traits is found by walking in the Spirit and crying out to God for His help. As you abide in the Vine, you will become a fruit-bearing branch. You will reap eternal rewards as you share the love of God and the gospel of Jesus to each child in your life. Your investments of time and energy will not be in vain because your heart is one with Christ. For He said, *“It is not the will of your Father...that one of these little ones should perish.”*

Mollie Jo Cassidy, 19, lives in Stillwater, Oklahoma with her sister and five brothers, and parents. Her interests are writing, music, homemaking, and missions. Molly Jo has an email ministry for young ladies. If interested,

The title is framed by a decorative border of leaves and flowers. The word "The" is positioned above "Way of the Narrow Road".

The Way of the Narrow Road

Enter by the narrow gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it. (Matthew 7:13–14)

Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the sea. (Matthew 18:6)

Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins. (James 5:19–20)



Called to be a Missionary?

–Tyler Griffin & Others

As a young boy, I heard my parents talk about becoming missionaries or entering some ministry. In spite of their desire, the Lord did not open any doors. They felt perhaps they were just supposed to raise their children to be missionaries.

I often heard and read about missionaries, but actually being a missionary never quite fit into my boyhood dreams of greatness. I can remember telling my Mom one of my great ideas of a business I could start. She listened to my big ideas and then replied, “What if God would call you to be a missionary?”

I was not overly impressed with the thought. *Me?* Be a missionary? Quite honestly, it left me uneasy. What if God *would* call me to be a missionary? What then?

When I was fifteen, God did begin to call. I was listening to some tapes by an elderly missionary who had given his life to reach the unreached with the Gospel. He was crying out for young people to pick up where he and others had to leave off. Although I had been born again two years previous, I still had little vision for sharing the Gospel with others.

It took a bit of pounding for the Lord to get the message through, but finally I heard it loud and clear. “*Son, I didn’t just die for your soul, I died so all could have new life through Me!*” I began to see how selfish *my* ambitions and plans were in light of the dying millions who had never heard the Gospel.

A missionary is not something you become when you land in a distant country. It is something you are now.



Finally, my priorities began to change. I came to the place where I actually did get excited about the call I felt God placing on my life. In fact, I became *so* excited that preparing to go to a foreign country as a missionary became the consuming focus of my life.

All I did was read biographies and mission books, learn about foreign lands and people, and wait for the day when I could go.

One day, God startled me: “*You know, if you don’t learn how to share the Gospel and win souls to Christ here, how do you think you are going to suddenly know how when you get to a foreign country?*”

I decided I had better try evangelizing here. It was *not* as easy as I had anticipated. In fact, it was not easy at all. I felt like a fool the first time I stood on a sidewalk and tried handing out tracts. But God gave me grace, and I kept trying. He purified many of my motives along the way.

Finally, I saw being a missionary is not something you do. Rather, a missionary is who you are. It is not something you become when you land in a distant country. It is something you are now—wherever you are. Being a missionary is not just something a few Christians do; it is the incredible task of being an ambassador of Jesus Christ. All Christians are called to this task. It does not take away from the call to foreign missions—it adds to it!

This changed my perspective. Previously, I had

We stumbled through learning to communicate effectively with children, so we could teach them about God and the Bible.

viewed my youth as preparation time before I would become a missionary. I had missed the mission field surrounding me.

The Beginning...

I began to see a needy, wide-open mission field in our own country. God gave me a burden for children—children who did not have the wonderful home I had, and did not grow up hearing stories from the Bible. These children have no concept of God, and our country is filled with them.

I began to learn how others start and run a Children's ministry. I talked to my pastors about it. I spent a lot of time thinking and praying about it. But for months, no doors seemed to open up.

I was picturing a ministry in the inner city—where hurting, needy children of many different colors ran the streets. A place where it would be no problem to go and gather a group of children at a park and tell them Bible Stories. I found such a place, but nothing worked out.

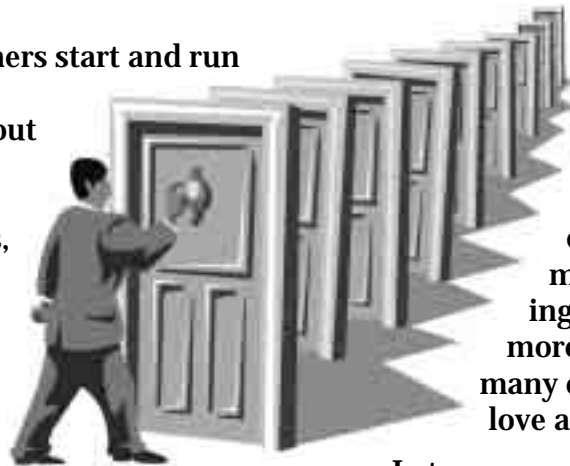
I began to get discouraged. One evening I was again discussing with my parents how I wanted to start a ministry. They suddenly asked me, "Why don't you just try to start a ministry with some of our neighbor children?"

At first, the idea did not impress me. It did not fit my mental picture of a children's ministry. The Lord showed me this was a remnant of my

missionary mentality—you had to be certain place before you could start a ministry or be a missionary. I allowed the Lord to change my heart, and I began to realize small town children have needs as well.

I talked to other youth at church and asked if they would be willing to start something. On a Sunday afternoon, we went and handed out invitations across town for children who wanted to be taken to the park every Thursday evening for Bible Stories and games. We also went and invited neighbor children.

We started slowly, mostly with our neighbors or with children we knew. Many parents were hesitant to let their children go; however, a few were open to it, so we began. We had very little experience doing anything like this; so to say the first while was stretching is an understatement. We stumbled our way through learning to communicate effectively with the children, so we could teach them about God and the Bible.



At first, we would all meet in one big group, but after many frustrating nights of trying to teach the children in one group, we started having partners. Each youth would take one or two children, teach them a Bible story and memory verse, and spend time trying to be a friend. We found this to be more effective for the time being, as many of the children were starved for love and attention.

Later, we would gather back for a time of games, snacks, and singing before we took them home. As we went along, we were able to build positive relationships with many of their parents, and they would tell us how much they appreciated what we were doing. Some said it was the highlight of their child's week.

We needed this encouragement, as some nights after a couple troublemakers would make almost constant disturbances, we would almost wonder if it was worth the effort. But over time, we began to see some of the children changing. We also saw ourselves being stretched and changed as we allowed the Lord to use us in

these children's lives.

The Worth of a Child...

The following testimonies are from some of the other workers:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..."

I believe this verse does not just mean other nations, it means at home, too. It is a blessing to be involved in the work with the children. At times, it is very stretching with the questions they ask. Most of the children have little or no concept of who God is or of right or wrong.

While reading through Luke 6:27-38, which speaks of loving your enemies, blessing those that curse you, or taking someone's coat, this question, was asked. "Since this is the way we are to live, why don't people do it?" We explained all are born sinners. We cannot do it in our own strength. We need to have Jesus living inside of us to make it possible to live the Christian life.—Mark Oberholtzer

God used one incident in December to give me a greater burden and vision for the children. We had an exceptionally difficult time with the boys in our group. They were disagreeable and had bad attitudes. As I silently prayed for them, I was reminded we are battling the devil in an effort to plant seeds in their hearts—to show them Jesus.

The head knowledge was there before but the Lord impressed on me in a real way that I should be on my knees daily for them. The influences they are around everyday drag them down. What will happen if we fail to stand in the gap for them?—Sarah C. Hustad

The children's ministry has been very stretching

God's word will not return void, even when it is taught to children and there may be no immediate results.



for me. I am with a group of smaller children, and it is hard to keep their attention very long. I thank God for giving me a love for the children. I pray they will be able to see the difference Christ makes in my life.

My goal is to show them I care about them and want to be their friend. Most of all, I pray they would know Jesus loves them and cares about them. It is an encouragement to see the difference prayer and a little bit of love makes in the lives of these children.—Kurtis E. Oberholtzer

The Lord has showed me the power prayer has to change these children's hearts. I can tell the more we pray, the better the children listen and behave. My desire is to love the children as Christ loves them, all the time, and not just when they are being good.

It is a joy to see the children's desire to come, at times even sacrificing school sports! It is a blessing to know we can, by prayer, be more than conquerors through Christ's power—no matter what struggles the children bring us.

I encourage you to seek God about starting a children's ministry in a local town or a city. God's word will not return void, even when it is taught to children and there may be no immediate results. Later in life, when these children are going through a hard time, they will remember what you taught them—Christ loves them, and desires them to be His children. God bless you as you seek His will for your life.—Justin T. Griffin

It is exciting to see the children's hearts soften as we show love to them. I am a special friend with a 12-year-old girl, and she shares her problems with me. It is definitely a challenge to always know how to point her to Christ—to help her see how Jesus would respond in different situations.

I know this is my mission field right now—in God's eyes the difference I make in even one of these children is important. We may never know just how much effect we have made on their lives, but we can pray the seeds planted will grow and multiply!—Katrina J. Oberholtzer

I have really enjoyed being a part of children's ministry. It is truly more blessed to give than to receive. This ministry has been a good stretching experience for me. It has helped me to take my eyes off myself and be a servant to others. I feel privileged to be a part of these children's lives—to be a vessel God can use to shine His love into their hearts.

It has been a blessing to watch hearts soften and see smiles on their faces. It is special to me when a little girl runs to give me a hug, or a little boy draws a picture for me. It is so important to have a vision for souls. May the Lord impress on us the worth of a soul in His sight!—Careesa Horner

God has stretched me through this ministry. He has shown me the worth of a soul, the power of prayer, and my desperate need to depend on Christ. I have seen God work in the heart of a child—moving him from disinterest in the lesson and rejection of the love shown him, to listening

**Sometimes the children
come with disturbed
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tender hearts that day.**



and asking questions.

I have thought repeatedly: How many Children in my area have never heard the Gospel? Recently I came across Psalm 2:8, *“Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”* There is only one condition in that verse—to ask. God is waiting for someone to stand in the gap and pray. Then there is a great promise: *“I shall give thee the heathen”*. I pray others will get a vision for the next generation and win them for Christ. For God's glory—

Michael Horner

I have come to love the children very much. Sometimes they come with disturbed countenances and I wonder what went on in their tender hearts that day. I am drawn to them because I catch a glimpse of what their lives can become if only we let God work through us.

Now is the time to plant the seeds. They are still forming their ideals for life and may be less teachable farther down the road.

Children mirror those around them and will quickly let you know if you are getting through to them. Sometimes it is hard to know how to be effective when the needs become so evident, but it is amazing how one genuine smile of appreciation from one of them makes it worth it all.

This is just one little ministry in a little town called Hillsboro, but I believe there is no telling what God is going to do in His time. He takes our weakness and shows Himself strong when we make ourselves available to Him for His glory!—Miriam Esh

The Vision...

Our vision is simple—to reach these children for Jesus. Over the last two years, we have changed the way we do things many times. Although we have steadily increased in numbers, many children have come and gone.

Currently, we have three classes. The oldest class ranges from 11 to 15 years old; the other two

God is not looking for someone with ability to reach these children. He is looking for availability! Are you available?

classes are for the little children, and the elementary school aged. A leader and several youth are assigned to each group.

Although we have shared the Gospel, much of the time has been spent building an understanding of who God is and who we are. Most of the children come with no spiritual foundation. Until they understand we are not just animals, they will not really understand the meaning of having a soul, and the sacrifice of Jesus.

In the oldest children's group, we are ready to clearly share the Gospel and the need to respond Jesus' calling. We want them to understand being a Christian is more than saying a prayer, but then living their life as they please. We want to take them to the crossroads where they see clearly the two choices: all for Jesus or all for the world. How we *long* to see them choose Jesus!

Our vision is to see these children living surrendered and dedicated lives that impact their homes, schools, and communities. Perhaps this goal seems lofty. I agree. With all of the influences pulling them down, it looks impossible. But when God steps in because of our desperate prayer, the impossible becomes possible, and lives forever change!

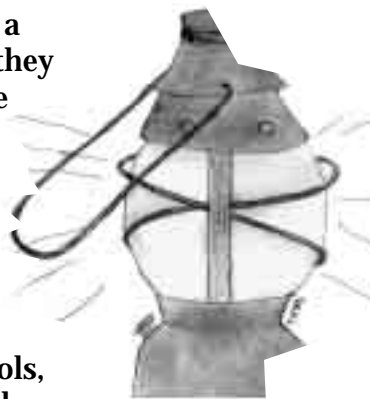
The burden of reaching these young souls lies heavy upon my heart. Satan knows the potential of their young lives! He is desperately grappling for a grip on their lives through a multitude of sources. Cartoons and video games are becoming increasingly evil. He is using Pokemon to show them manifested demons. He is using Harry Potter to teach children how to become

witches and sorcerers themselves.

If only we knew the extent of what Satan is doing! I think it would shake us to our knees. Children as young as eight years old are declaring themselves followers of Satan and becoming witches and sorcerers. They openly blaspheme Christ. They believe Satan has power and Jesus is defeated.

What if *you* were living in a home where drunkenness, violence, and divorce are a regular part of life? What if *you* were starved for love and attention, longing for godly authority and discipline, and craving for something bigger than yourself to trust in? Would you not hope someone would have the compassion to reach out as a friend and show you Jesus?

I want to tell you dear friend, God is not looking for someone with ability to reach these children. He is looking for availability! Are you available? For His sake—Tyler Griffin



You are the light of the world...Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Recommended Books

The Life Of D.L. Moody, by W.R. Moody.
Published by Sword of the Lord, \$16
(800) 251-4100
www.swordofthelord.com
booksales@swordofthelord.com

This book is not widely available. The original edition can often be found at antique bookstores.

Dwight Lyman Moody:

Evangelist Extraordinaire

by Andrew Rocke



Moody at 27:
Sunday School
Worker

Dwight Lyman Moody, born February 5th, 1837, was the sixth of nine children born to Edwin and Betsy Moody. His father died when he was quite young, and left the courageous mother to raise the children by herself in Northfield, Massachusetts. Dwight's mother was a strict churchgoer, so it was not long before Moody was attending the Sunday school at the local Unitarian Church with his family. The pastor of this church enlisted the older Moody children as recruiters for the Sunday school. In a way, this was D.L. Moody's first Sunday school work.

Although his mother was a strict disciplinarian and very religious, D.L. Moody never accepted Christ into his life nor saw the need to do so. It does not appear he was at all interested in God, but rather, he did not like Sunday.

Because the Moodys were extremely poor, Betsy Moody was advised many times to divide the children between her friends. Yet, she was not willing to do this. The creditors took just about everything as security for the mortgage. Mrs. Moody bravely struggled to make ends meet, but very seldom did.

Dwight remembers one morning, when he was young, his mother told her children to stay in bed until it was time to leave for school because there was no firewood to heat the house. Just at this moment, however, one of the two people

who helped them, their mother's brother (the other person being their pastor), arrived with a load of wood. "*Trust in God*" was his mother's creed.

Dwight was forced to work at an early age to help support the family, but in his years before this, he had plenty of time to get in trouble. Yet, he did not seem to mind the consequences that would often follow his foolish pranks. He simply found something new to do. He did not like the work he had to do, so at the age of seventeen, he told his family he was going to Boston. He left despite their pleadings for him to stay.

Going to The City

Dwight arrived in Boston in 1854 and began to look for employment. After days of fruitless searching (he arrived in the city with no money), he talked to one of his uncles in the city. His uncle told him that if he wouldn't have such an independent attitude perhaps his Uncle Holton would take him on. Finally, Moody agreed to ask his uncle for work, and with a few conditions, he was accepted.

One of the conditions was he should attend Sunday school. Dwight was unfamiliar with the Bible. At one class, when reference was made to

Dwight was unfamiliar with the Bible. When reference was made to the Gospel of John, he looked in the Old Testament.

the Gospel of John, he started looking for it in the Old Testament. Soon, however, he started to become interested. Moody began to get a better knowledge of Christ.

His teacher, Mr. Kimball, thought “he needed only an additional personal interview to bring him to that decision of the will which should determine whether he would accept or reject God’s provision for overcoming sin and entering into harmony with Himself.” The opportunity for this interview was not a chance event, but one carefully and prayerfully sought by Mr. Kimball, who thus relates the story of Dwight L. Moody’s conversion:

I determined to speak to him about Christ and about his soul, and started down to Holton’s shoe store. When I was nearly there, I began to wonder whether I ought to go in just during the business hours.

I thought that possibly my call might embarrass the boy, and that when I went away the other clerks would ask who I was, and taunt him with my efforts in trying to make him a good boy.

In the meantime, I had passed the store, and, discovering this, I determined to make a dash for it and have it over at once. I found Moody in the back part of the building wrapping up shoes. I went up to him at once, and putting my hand on his shoulder, I made what I afterwards felt was a very weak plea for Christ. I don’t know just what words I used, nor could Mr. Moody tell.

I simply told him of Christ’s love for him and the love Christ wanted in return. That was all there was. It seemed the young man was just ready for the light that then broke upon him, and there, in the back of that store in Boston, he gave himself and his life to Christ.

As a side note, seventeen years later Moody was conducting a meeting in Worcester, Massachusetts, and met Mr. Kimball’s son, Henry Kimball, who was attending the meetings. Mr. Moody led him to Christ.

A short time after his conversion, Moody applied for membership at Mount Vernon Church. However, when asked, “What has Christ done for you, and for us all, that especially entitles Him to our love and obedi-

He rented four pews every week and filled them with young men from the streets, boarding houses or saloons.

ence?” Young Moody replied: “I think He has done a great deal for us all, but I don’t know of anything He has done in particular.” The committee decided not to recommend him for membership, and three of the committee were appointed to explain to him more perfectly the way of God. Several months later, he applied again and received the recommendation.

His energetic, enthusiastic, and aggressive nature became the trademark of his life. In Boston, the conventional way of selling shoes was not to his liking, so he often went out onto the street in front of the store and cried his wares. No wonder he soon passed up his fellow clerks in sales. This energy and aggression was carried over into his ministry. Moody had it in mind to be a successful merchant. When, after two years in Boston, it seemed he had not much chance of promotion, he decided to go west to Chicago.

Go West Young Man

He arrived in Chicago in the fall of 1856. After two days, he secured a position in a firm that had greater opportunities for promotion. His letters home at this point show that he was deeply interested in spiritual things.

He was soon caught up in the revival that was happening in Chicago (undoubtedly the effects of Charles Finney’s ministry). He rented four pews at Plymouth Church where he attended, and filled them up every week with young men from off the street or from the boarding houses and saloons.



Moody In Boston

Very quickly, renting four pews and filling them up was not enough. As he didn't like the inactivity of Sunday afternoon, Moody decided to take up Sunday school work. He applied for a class at the Sunday school mission on North Wells Street. They told him he was more than welcome to help—if he could get his own class. The sixteen teachers were quite able to teach the twelve children they already had.

The next Sunday, Moody led eighteen children into the school. He knew he was not much of a teacher, but to gather children was just his ticket. Soon the little school was filled to capacity. Here he met his future wife, Emma C. Revell, a teacher at the school.

Feeling confident Moody went to another part of the city and started a second school in 1858. It became very large, with 1500 children at times. Moody had to rent one of the largest public halls in Chicago to accommodate his large Sunday school. It later became the Illinois Street Church.

Dwight gathered poor children from the streets. He used innovative methods to get them to come. Sometimes he gave them candy and oranges and rewards for attendance. His greatest asset was his friendliness to the children. They loved him for it. Once the children started to come, he tried just as hard to keep them there. If they were absent, he would visit them.

A Typical Sunday

"Sunday was a busy day for me then. During the



Moody's First Sunday School Class

The first time he rose to speak in a prayer meeting, one of the deacons assured him he would serve God best by keeping still!

week, I would be out of town as a commercial traveler selling boots and shoes, but I always managed to be back by Saturday night. Often it was late when I got to my room, but I would have to be up by six o'clock to get the hall ready for Sunday school.

Every Saturday night a German society held a dance there, and I had to roll out beer kegs, sweep up sawdust, clean up generally, and arrange the chairs. This I did not think right to hire done on Sunday, so sometimes with the assistance of a scholar, and often without any, I would do it myself.

"This usually took most of the morning, and when it was done I would have to leave to drum up the scholars and new boys and girls. By the time two o'clock came, we would have the hall full, and then I had to keep order while the speaker for the day led the exercises. We had to keep things going to keep up the children's interest.

When school was over I visited absent scholars and found out why they were not at Sunday school, called on the sick, and invited the parents to attend the evening service. By the time I had made my rounds the hour had come for the evening meeting, where I presided, and following that we had an after-meeting.

By the time I was through the day I was tired out. I didn't know much at that time, for after going from early morning till late at night with only a few crackers and some cheese, I was faint and fatigued."

For the classes, there would be someone to speak to the children when they were all together before splitting up into their individual classes. Often Dwight led the children in singing—which was something they loved to do, or else he read Scripture or told an anecdote.

He had no program. The teachers of the individual classes had to find the lessons they were going to teach. At the end of the Sunday school, Moody would take his place at the door and shake all the children's hands. He seemed to know every boy and girl by name.

Moody was not a good speaker, and he knew it. His speaking was so poor someone said to him, "You make too many mistakes in grammar." "I know I make mistakes," was the reply, "and I lack a great many things, but I'm doing the best I can with what I've got." He paused and looked at the man searchingly, adding with his own irresistible manner: "Look here, friend, you've got grammar enough—what are you doing with it for the Master?"

The first time he rose to speak in a prayer meeting, one of the deacons assured him he would serve God best by keeping still! How fortunate this advice was not taken! Dwight started to speak at the oft held Gospel meetings when he was in town. The experience he gained was of great value.

Giving Up Business

Moody was limited in how much he could minister in the Sunday school because he was so very busy with his work as a traveling shoe salesman. However, in 1860, he felt called to give up his job and devote himself to the ministries God had opened up for him. He struggled for three months with this, and no wonder—he would be turning his back on a salary of over five thousand dollars a year, and he was only twenty-four. How he came to give up business altogether may best be told in his own words:

There was a class of young ladies in the school who were, without exception, the most frivolous set of girls I ever met. One Sunday the teacher was ill, and I took the class. They laughed in my face, and I felt like opening the door and telling them all to go out and never come back.

That week the teacher of the class came into the store where I worked. He was pale and looked very ill. "What is the trouble?" I asked.

"I have had another hemorrhage from the lungs. The doctor says I cannot live on Lake Michigan, so I am going back to New York State. I suppose I am going to die."

He seemed greatly troubled, and when I asked the reason he replied: "Well, I have never led any of my class to Christ. I really believe I have done the girls more harm than good."

I had never heard any one talk like that before, and it set me thinking. After a while I said: "Suppose you go

and tell them how you feel. I will go with you in a carriage, if you want to go."

He consented, and we started out together. It was one of the best journeys I ever had on earth. We went to the house of one of the girls, called for her, and the teacher talked to her about her soul. There was no laughing then. Tears stood in her eyes before long. After he had explained the way of life, he suggested that we have a word of prayer. He asked me to pray. True, I had never done such a thing in my life as to pray God to convert a young lady there and then. But we prayed, and God answered our prayer.



We went to other houses. He would go upstairs and be all out of breath, and he would tell the girls what he had come for. It wasn't long before they broke down and sought salvation.

When his strength gave out I took him back to his lodgings. The next day we went out again. At the end of ten days he came to the store with his face literally shining. "Mr. Moody," he said, "the last one of my class has yielded herself to Christ."

I tell you we had a time of rejoicing. He had to leave the next night, so I called his class together that night for a prayer-meeting, and there God kindled a fire in my soul that has never gone out. The height of my ambition had been to be a successful merchant, and if I had known that meeting was going to take that ambition out of me, I might not have gone. But how many times I have thanked God since that meeting!

The dying teacher sat in the midst of his class and talked with them, and read from the fourteenth chapter of John. We tried to sing "Blest be the tie that binds," after which we knelt to pray. I was just rising from my knees when one of the class began to pray for her dying teacher. Another prayed, and another, and before we rose the whole class had prayed. As I went out I said to myself: "Oh, God, let me die rather than lose the blessing I have received tonight!"

**I called his class together
for a prayer-meeting, and
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gone out**

Moody gave up business and devoted himself to expanding his ministry. In effect, he became a city missionary.

I recently read in a book how a boy with a kind word and smile won the heart of a younger boy, and led him to Christ. The younger boy then led his father to Christ. A chapter of that book closed with this statement: “Thus may we see the commencement of the rapidly spreading circles started upon the vast waters of life, but how shall we trace it to the shores of eternity?”

That teacher undoubtedly did not know what an impact his desire to help his students come to Christ would have on D.L. Moody. We still feel the impact today, yet the teacher did not see the beginning.

Mr. Moody was involved with Sunday school, gospel meetings, and the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA)—especially the noon prayer meetings, which he established wherever he went. Indeed, as you read of Moody’s life, you begin to feel the noon prayer meetings were one of his biggest sources of spiritual growth. He led many of them and often enlisted visiting laymen or others at the meeting to lead.

He gave up his business to devote himself to these works and to expanding his ministry. In effect, he became a city missionary. Often parents would write to him and ask him to find their son straying in Chicago. He helped many young men this way. Unlike before, he was now always concerned about others’ souls.

Once, on his way home from a meeting, he met a man leaning on a lamppost. Dwight walked up to him:

“Are you a Christian?”



The man flew into a rage and doubled up his fists. It seemed for a moment as if the missionary might be pitched into the gutter.

“I’m very sorry if I have offended you,” said Moody.

“Mind your own business!” roared the man.

“This is my business,” the he replied quietly, and went on his way.

About three months later, on a bitter cold morning, someone knocked at Mr. Moody’s door.

“Who’s there?” he asked.

A strange voice answered, so Moody asked, “What do you want?”

“I want to become a Christian,” was the reply.

Dwight opened the door, and, to his astonishment, there was the man who had cursed him for talking to him as he leaned against the lamppost.

“I’m very sorry,” said the man. “I haven’t had any peace since that night. Your words have haunted and troubled me. I couldn’t sleep last night, and I thought I would come and get you to pray for me.”

The man accepted Christ, then immediately asked: “What can I do for Him?”

As I mentioned before, D.L. Moody was well known for his aggressiveness and boldness. Once, he approached a young man:

He asked, “Are you a Christian?”

“It’s none of your business,” came a curt reply.

“Yes, it is,” he was assured.

“Then you must be D.L. Moody!” cried the man.

Success?

Now the question must be asked: “Did Moody’s Sunday school have results?” The answer is yes. Mr. Moody says: “Some of the most active men that I had to help me in Chicago were the little barefooted boys picked up in the lanes and byways whom I had in my children’s meetings.”

I shall close this brief sketch of D.L. Moody’s be-



ginning years of ministry, the part of his life when he dealt mostly with young men, children, and their parents, with this testimony of Moody's Sunday school. It is told by Reverend John Vetter:

In the autumn of 1863, as a home missionary, I was on a tour in northern Michigan. Arriving at the county seat of M— County, I inquired about the gospel needs of the place. There was no meetinghouse, no preaching. On inquiring about Sunday school, the man, with some hesitation, as though not quite certain, said: "Well, yes, a Sunday school was started last Sunday by a little girl." I quickly went to her father's house. Mary was all animation telling me about Mr. Moody and the Sunday school in North Market Hall.

I must say that I was taken a little by surprise. I had not heard of D.L. Moody at that time. But her face was all aglow as she spoke of the Sunday school in Chicago to which she had belonged, and from which she was now so far away. Evidently she had caught Mr. Moody's enthusiasm. Captain Richardson had arrived here with his family but two weeks before, and now a Sunday school is started by this girl in her teens.

The Richardson family had arrived but two weeks before, and now a Sunday school is started by this girl in her teens.

Since their arrival here, a little child had died in the neighborhood. They were about to bury her without funeral exercises; but Mary proposed to read some Scripture, sing, and pray, which she did to the satisfaction of all.

Richardson bought a pony for his daughter, so she was enabled to go to the next town, five miles distant, and organize another Sunday school, where preaching was established soon after, with a revival following that swept the place.



This biography of D.L. Moody was based on the exhaustive biography written by William Moody on the life of his father, D. L. Moody. See page 19 for details.

Beautiful Witness

"Jimmie," said his kind protector,
Long his faithful friend and guide,

"Jimmie, do you love the Savior?"

"Yes," the happy child replied.

"Can you tell how much you love Him?"

All my heart to Him I give;

Love my Savior? Yes, forever,

I will try for Him to live."

Refrain:

Beautiful witness for God is he,
The tears of the orphan are wiped away,
I love Jesus, and Jesus loves me;
And that is all I've got to say.

'Twas the Holy Spirit led him
In the pleasant way of truth,
And he sought and found the Savior
In the early days of youth.
Should he live till years have sprinkled
O'er his brow the frost of age,
Sweet to him the words of comfort,
From the Bible's sacred page.

Children, we may love the Savior;
If we seek Him, we shall find;
Are we ready now to serve Him
With our heart, our strength, and mind?
Think of all His tender mercies,
All the wonders He has done.
Little Jimmie's bright example
Let us follow, every one.

—Fanny Crosby

First printed in *The Silver Spray*, William H. Doane, 1868.

Why Should I? They Are Still Young

Common Objections to Ministry

The Debate

I will not pretend to be ignorant of the sharp debate over ministry to children. Some people feel that children are incapable of truly accepting Christ as their Savior, others strongly think otherwise. However, I will not enter into this debate.

In preparation for this issue, I did a weeklong study on these conflicts. I read theology written by men of great spiritual stature who disagreed with each other vehemently.

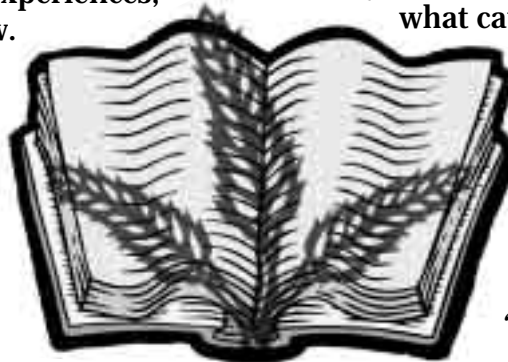
I offer no conclusion here. Rather, I wish to make paramount the one point to which all agreed: *Children are sensitive to spiritual matters.* Further, the convictions they form and the decisions they make while children are very important. Consider:

A recent poll, accurate to 2% with a 95% confidence level, found the following:

- 87% of Americans consider themselves Christian, but only 40% also claim to be born-again or saved.
- Of that 40%, only one in four had a salvation experience after they were 14. One in ten claimed to be saved after age 18.
- A full 75% of all those who claim to be born again made that decision before they were 14.

Certainly, one can raise many questions as to the authenticity of these salvation experiences, but I will let them stand for now.

The polling group concluded “Most church efforts to evangelize the unsaved is directed at adults—an age group which is relatively resistant to the message. More evangelical programs should be directed at children and youth.”



The Bible

Here are several Scriptures that speak directly to children. Ponder them. They offer insight into the hearts of children, and they have promises we can hold to as we minister.

“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)

Throughout this issue, you will be introduced to very different home-life settings. Some may surprise you, others will not; they are all actively reproducing. The drunkard’s home will beget more drunkards. A disciplined home will, most likely, produce disciplined people, but no amount of good training or discipline will ensure their salvation.

Our training *must* include the Gospel of Christ. It is not enough to reform their worldview or standards. The work of Christ must be real in their life.

“Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.” (Matthew 19:14)

It is often easier to minister to children because they have not yet acquired the many anti-God notions of adults. It is not necessary to convince seven-year-olds of the existence of God. They will accept it as fact without question. I have found they will also be ready to recognize an absolute standard for right and wrong and will readily admit to sin. Perhaps these attitudes are what caused our Savior to cry, *“Whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.”* (Luke 18:17)

There is, perhaps, no better reason to minister to children than the promise of Scripture, *“My Word...shall not return to*

Do we brush off little ones because they sing so sweetly and talk about missionary adventures and street preaching?

Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.” (Isaiah 55:11)

Do They Understand?

Ministry to children is not confined to street children or the unchurched. All children have needs. Our brothers and sisters need to be pointed to Christ. The little children at church have needs too. Children surround us. Do we notice them?

Do we ignore little brothers because they walk around reciting Scripture verses from memory? Or our sisters because they already dress modestly, and can act very mature? Do we brush off the little ones at church because they sing so sweetly and talk about missionary adventures and street preaching?

A week ago, something happened when I was putting one of my many little brothers to bed. His spiritual understanding surprised me.

I leaned over him and quietly asked, “Do you ever talk to Jesus?”

“Of course!” was his quick reply. “Everyday.”

“But do you ever talk to Him besides when you

say your prayers before you go to bed or before you eat?”

“No. Why should I?”

“Don’t you know why? Jesus loves you and He loves when you talk to him.”

His big eyes stared at me in the dark. I could see the light from the closet reflecting off them. He face was very serious. “I know.”

“Then why don’t you talk to Him?”

“I guess I just don’t. Do you?”

“Yes, all the time.”

“What do you say?”

I told him how I had called out to God that morning when I was having difficulty at work.

He asked, “Does Jesus care about those things?”

“Yes.”

“I see.”

The next night, I put him to sleep again. I asked him, “Did you talk to Jesus during the day today?”

“Yes. I talked to him today.”

I underestimated his understanding. Have you?



IN THE NEXT ISSUE...

Abide in Christ: Rest For Your Souls



In This Issue... Ministering to Children

Abide

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