

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 TWENTY-THREE THE WORK IN THE SOUTH

I have spoken of the great meetings in Memphis, Nashville, St. Joseph and St. Louis, which gave Mr. Jones a national reputation, and have given lengthy accounts of the meetings in Cincinnati, Chicago, Baltimore, Toronto and Boston, which established him for all time as the world's greatest and most unique evangelist. The question was never raised after these great meetings as to his ability, power and marvelous personality.

The great meetings in the central West, including Indianapolis, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Omaha and Kansas City and other places stirred up that portion of the United States, and won for him a great place in the hearts of the people of the central West. His work on the Pacific coast including meetings at Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Francisco made him a well-known and prominent factor on the Pacific coast and in the extreme West and Northwest.

Indeed, his fame now reached so far that the most urgent and repeated invitations came to him from England, Scotland and Australia, where he was offered every inducement if he would come and conduct meetings in those countries.

But he had conducted marvelous meetings in his early days in most of the Southern States, which had made his name a household word, and about the year 1900 he refused to accept calls from other parts of the United States to devote the best part of his life to the people of the Southland, who were so dear to his heart, among whom he had been born and reared.

To begin and give a detailed description of these great meetings, held in the leading cities of all the Southern States would make a volume as large as the present one. To recite the hundreds and almost thousands of remarkable incidents and marvelous conversions to Christianity would be more thrilling than those that we have already given, which are certain to furnish an insight into his marvelous character and ability. Those who heard him in his early days, and who followed his great triumphs throughout the other portions of the United States, declared that he never preached with more earnestness, mellowness and power than he did in these great Southern campaigns.

He had reached the zenith of his glory and power, and these years, by the marvelous results that followed him wherever he went, demonstrated the fact *that* he held his own in the hearts and the affection of the people, and that he was approved of God. The upbuilding of the churches, the moral reformation of the people, the awakening of sentiment against the liquor traffic, and all the sins that go with manufacturing, selling and drinking the accursed stuff, can only be estimated by the fact that the entire South was thrown into a great revival of righteousness, and that the sentiment throughout the Southern States against the liquor traffic was so intensified that prohibition followed many of his meetings, and that the South at large has placed its endorsement upon his work in the great temperance movement that seems destined to rid our fair Southland of open saloons. He had so impressed himself upon the people that the mere announcement that he would lecture or preach would bring out audiences that tested the seating capacity of the largest auditoriums in the different cities of this section.

In Mississippi he held fifteen meetings, including Jackson, Greenville, Columbus, Vicksburg, West Point, Aberdeen and Meridian. At some of these places large tents were used, and at others large warehouses, cotton-sheds and wooden tabernacles were arranged especially for his meetings. Special trains were run from all parts of the State. The people came in private conveyances for twenty-five miles, and the audiences numbered from five to ten thousand. The immense crowds bewildered the people of the towns and cities in which he preached, and it was difficult to find lodging and entertainment for the crowds that the excursions brought in.

At the close of his great meeting at West Point, Mr. Jones desired to leave on one of the special trains, but the coaches, aisles, platform and steps were crowded so that he could not get standing room, and the depot agent made arrangements with the engineer to give him a seat in the engine with him, and ride there until the cars were sufficiently emptied for him to find a seat.

In one of the great meetings in Mississippi an editor who became enraged at Mr. Jones and came to the meeting intoxicated started down the aisle with a pistol in his hand to shoot Mr. Jones, but was overtaken by an officer and put in prison. When he sobered up he became penitent and Mr. Jones had him released from jail and he came back into the meeting and was happily converted.

At Vicksburg the great tent blew down in a rainstorm, but a number of the most wicked men in the city, who had fought his coming had gotten interested in Mr. Jones's sermons, assisted in putting up the tent, and some of them were converts of the meeting. On the way to the tent one night he noticed a man following him closely. After turning several corners, Mr. Jones stopped and said: "Are you following me?"

The man *replied*: "I am."

"Then," said Mr. Jones, "for what purpose?"

The man shook with emotion as the tears came to his eyes, and said: "I have been trying to get up courage to speak to you and ask you to pray for me; my mother attended your meetings at Jackson and on her dying bed she made me promise that if you ever came within fifty miles of my home I would hear you preach.

In fulfillment of that promise, I have come fifty miles that I might hear you. I am a very wicked man, but I am here to seek religion, and I want you to pray for me.”

Mr. Jones preached to him there, and in the great meeting that night he was converted.

In another town a drummer walked up and registered, but when the clerk informed him that he could not get a room, he said, “What does this mean?”

The clerk replied, “Sam Jones is in town, and thousands of people are attending his meetings, and the hotel is crowded.”

The drummer said: “You don’t tell me that this crowd is here to hear Sam Jones?”

“Yes, sir,” replied the hotel keeper.

“Well,” said the drummer, “I can understand why a man would go to hear a blackguard like Sam Jones, but I cannot understand why a decent man would take his wife to hear him.”

A sinner who had come about thirty or forty miles, and brought his wife to the meeting, walked up to the drummer and struck him in the face with his fist, and knocked him down. When the drummer recovered, he said, “What do you mean?”

The man replied: “I just wanted to show you how a decent man could take his wife to hear Sam Jones; I want to teach you a lesson.”

The next morning the man with his right hand in a bandage came to the meeting and gave his heart to God.

In Greenville, at the close of one of his services, the wives of three prominent business men said: “Brother Jones, we have combined together to pray for our unsaved husbands, and we want you to join us.”

Mr. Jones replied: “Where two or three agree as touching one thing, it shall be done. We will pray with you and expect their conversions.”

All three of the men were happily converted, and became most earnest Christians.

He requested all the business men to close for the day services. With the exception of two saloons, every business house in the town was closed. One of these saloon-keepers stood in front of his saloon and cursed Mr. Jones for wanting him to close his saloon while he was abusing his business.

Mr. Jones heard about it, and said in public: “I meant no harm by this invitation; it was only my interest in these men that led me to make the request, but mark my word, you will see doors closed with black crepe on them before many days.”

A few weeks later a copy of the Greenville Delta was sent Mr. Jones, with a paragraph marked, in which it stated that that saloon-keeper had dropped dead at his saloon door, just as he went to open it one morning. Those who read his words and yielded to his appeals were blessed of God, while some who hardened their hearts and resisted the calls of mercy, died horrible deaths, speaking God's approval and endorsement of the man who had warned them so faithfully.

At Meridian some very remarkable things happened under his ministry. Some of the wicked men of the city were cursing and gambling on Mr. Jones, and went down together to see who was the winner, which resulted in two of them coming forward for prayers at the close of the sermon. They were happily converted later on in the meeting, and became prominent members of the church.

The meeting changed the history of the city, and a fight had begun on the saloon business that never stopped until every saloon in the city was closed.

Mr. L. P. Brown, a prominent citizen, and a very earnest Christian of that city, in a personal letter, says:

“Meridian, where I have lived for thirty-eight years, with a population of twenty-seven thousand souls, has stood for fifteen years without a barroom, brothel, or licensed liquor in any form — a monument of what God can and does and will do — and at the same time memory takes me back to the help given us by Brother Jones. He spared not the curse of drink, and at the same time won the drinker and the seller. Around thousands of family altars his name is honored for his work's sake. In our household his face not only hangs from several walls but around our hearts the memory of his presence and his life-work are in daily and hourly evidence.”

The great meetings in Mississippi were the leading factors in almost freeing that State from the open saloons.

In his native State, meetings were held in Macon, Rome, Augusta, Marietta, Columbus, Waycross, Brunswick, Covington, Savannah, Atlanta, and many other towns. In all, he conducted meetings in more than fifty of the prominent towns and cities in Georgia. It is difficult to say which was the most powerful in immediate results, but perhaps Savannah and Atlanta were the scenes of his greatest work. It was in Georgia where he came into closest touch with the railroad men.

At Macon he was thrown with them in the shops, and visited and prayed with them in their homes. Here began his great interest and love for railroad men. In that city he learned of their generosity and liberality while holding revival services. The railroad men came up and extended him cordial invitations to visit them. In their homes he found their wives and loving little children, and seeing how they were attached to one another, his love grew stronger for them the longer he lived. Instead of finding them the rough, uncouth men that they had been pictured, he found many of them cultured, refined and gentle. Some of their wives were the most devoted Christians.

Wherever he went he usually held a special meeting for them in the railroad shops, and no class of men were greater admirers of him than the noble railroad men throughout the South.

In Atlanta a meeting was held for them in the Western and Atlantic shops. This brought together a great crowd, including all the employees of the company. Mr. Charlie Tillman sang "The Railroad Song," and just before Mr. Jones arose to speak. Col. W. M. Bray stepped to the front and said: "Mr. Jones, I have been requested by Mr. Lamar Collier, and the representative and substantial railroad men of Atlanta, to perform a service for the operators of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. I am here in obedience to this request, as I never fail to perform a duty when I can. I am commissioned through him, and in behalf of these railroad men, to present you a testimonial of their appreciation of your advocacy of their right. This testimonial is not like most testimonials, of little worth; but of priceless value. I present you in their name a book that is the Book of books. I believe that its principles will always be presented intelligently and fearlessly by the recipient. Here is a handsome Oxford Bible, beautifully bound, from the men of the Western and Atlantic Railroad. This is a testimonial of their great regard and love for you."

Mr. Jones took the Bible, and said: "Little did I think a moment ago, when I found that I had left my Bible at my room, that I would be supplied with one in this way. I appreciate the gift. I have always found the railroad men noble in their homes, and regarded them as a big-hearted and brave set of men. I shall leave this beautiful Bible as an heirloom to my youngest child. Now," said he, "I will preach from this book, taking as my text these words: '**But thou hast kept the good wine until now.**'" Great power attended this meeting, and hundreds of them arose at the close and dedicated their lives to God.

Mr. Jones visited all the schools and spoke to the children, the young men and women of the colleges, and held many precious services with them. Every conceivable place was utilized for preaching services. He spoke at the recorder's court room, at the police headquarters, and before every class of people brought there, he preached with such tenderness and power that the officers and criminals gave him their hands as an expression of their desire to lead a Christian life.

One of the most unique services was held on the roof of the Equitable building, at that time one of the tallest buildings in the city. It was at high noon, when the spring sun sent its rays through a rift in the threatening clouds. Nine hundred people by actual count, by a man standing at the little door opening on the roof, came to hear him preach. Half of the occupants of the Equitable building were there.

They stood on the tar and gravel and looked into the earnest face of the revivalist, while down from the streets came the ceaseless murmur of traffic and clamor of wagons, horses' hoofs, and buzzing of trolleys. Behind and around him stretched the amphitheater of the blue Piedmont hills, while in the distance were the colleges resting on the eminences which gird the city. The smoke arose from a hundred furnaces and chimneys, and rolled over the high pulpit, while the steeples of the churches were in plain view.

He took for his text Mark 8:36: "**What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul.**" He concluded his sermon by asking all who would promise to lead better lives to hold up their hands, and hundreds of those on the roof responded.

The meetings in Atlanta not only resulted in the conversions of thousands of souls, but started a wave of temperance and municipal reforms, the fruits of which are seen to-day. The audiences in the great Moody Tabernacle ranged from eight to twenty thousand people. After the immense building was crowded part of the thousands were turned back. The meetings became instrumental in creating sentiment against the open saloons, and other immoralities that made his work go down in history as the most powerful religious services ever held in the State of Georgia.

In Texas, meetings were held in Palestine, Tyler, Waco, Houston, Fort Worth, Dallas, Galveston, San Antonio, and other places. Large wooden tabernacles were constructed that would seat from five to ten thousand people in many places, while in one or two cities immense cotton warehouses' were fitted up. It was after one of his early meetings in Texas, at Palestine, where he had preached against the open wickedness and loose municipal affairs that he was attacked by the mayor of the city, which resulted in a fight.

The moment that the mayor struck him, this flashed upon Mr. Jones's mind, "If I am going to preach as I do, and have such encounters as this, I must back up my ministry with physical courage. The eyes of the world are upon me, and I must let the people know that at any sacrifice or danger, I am in dead earnest."

While not wishing a fight, or taking any delight in such, he immediately wrested the cane from the mayor's hand, and gave him a genteel thrashing. The city showed its approval by calling a special meeting, and making the mayor resign, while the people of the United States applauded his bravery. We give an account of this episode in a telegram that Mr. Jones sent home and to the Atlanta papers. Just before stepping upon the train, Mr. Jones sent the following telegram to his home, and the Atlanta papers:

"Mrs. Sam P. Jones, Cartersville, Ga.:

"The one-horse mayor of Palestine, Texas, tried to cane me at the train this morning. He hit me three times. I wrenched the cane from him, and wore him out. I am well. Not hurt. I will lecture to-night at LaGrange.

"Sam P. Jones."

The one sent to the *Atlanta Constitution* was as follows:

"The one-gallus mayor of Palestine tried to cane your Uncle Jones this morning at the depot. I wrenched the cane from him and wore him out. I am a little disfigured, but still in the ring. I criticized his official career last November. It needed criticizing.

"Sam P. Jones."

The trouble in Palestine originated in this way: In November, Mr. Jones had held evangelistic services there.

He paid his usual respects to lukewarm church-members, easy-going preachers, gossiping men and women. All these classes took the messages with meekness and approval, but when he arraigned the mayor for not enforcing the law against the liquor business, he stirred up a great deal of resentment among the city officials. The mayor was absent at the time, but upon his return to the city was informed of what Mr. Jones had said.

He had very little to say at that time, but laid his plans to get even with Mr. Jones in the future. Mr. Jones then returned to the city for a lecture, and after repeating his utterances against the loose administration, he went back to his hotel and retired for the night. Next morning he went to the station to take the nine o'clock train, when he was assaulted by the mayor.

He immediately dropped his valise, and took the cane from the mayor and "wore him out." He left at once for his next appointment, and the indignation of Palestine was so aroused that the leading citizens called a special meeting, in which they asked the mayor to resign. The matter was telegraphed all over the United States, and from almost every paper came editorials approving of what Mr. Jones had done, and praising him for his manliness and fearlessness as a minister of the gospel.

In the large cities — Dallas, Galveston, San Antonio, Houston, and Fort Worth — were some of the most marvelous meetings any man ever held. They came up to, if they did not surpass, many of the great meetings that won him national fame. However, it is impossible to go into detail about these meetings. Words could not describe the wonderful scenes that took place in all these cities.

It was the custom of Mr. Jones to preach to the colored people nearly everywhere he went, and perhaps in Houston one of the greatest meetings was held for the colored folks. The immense audience filled the great tabernacle, and from the platform the sea of dark, earnest faces upturned was a sight long to be remembered. He talked to them in a very plain, practical way, creating wonderful enthusiasm, and presenting the truths that they should know, in a way that the humblest and most ignorant colored person could understand.

In speaking to them of politics, he said: "The Democrats and Republicans don't care anything about your vote, further than to help them into office — one thinks about as much of you as the other. The Democrats and Republicans just use you as a tool."

He urged them to live sober lives, and to be true in their homes and look to the Lord Jesus Christ as their only hope to help now and hereafter. He was always a friend of the colored people, and gave thousands of dollars to them in building their churches and schools.

At a great mass-meeting held in Houston, he suggested that they organize a Law and Order League to fight the saloons. He asked for one hundred men to come up and give him their hand and to promise to meet at the tabernacle on the following Tuesday night to perfect the organization. Instead of one hundred coming, a thousand men practically ran over each other in response to the call.

In nearly every city in the State such organizations were perfected, and the saloon element and the corrupt municipal affairs were fought until the cities regulated the saloon business. Nearly everywhere through the South such movements followed his preaching.

The most remarkable men's meetings that he ever held were throughout Texas. He frequently preached to as many as ten thousand men, and from five hundred to one thousand would come forward, promising to reform their lives and begin the Christian life. The influence of these great meetings went out into the neighboring towns and through the counties, and led other preachers to follow up the work, which resulted in thousands of conversions and crusades against the liquor traffic. It would be almost impossible to follow these influences and get any just estimate of the final results.

In many of these cities he was instrumental in raising money to build Y. M. C. A.'s and churches, the collections frequently aggregating from twenty to fifty thousand dollars. As a result of his work in Texas, the great "Lone Star State" was swept from one side to the other with the tidal wave of conviction to salvation and municipal reform. It will require eternity itself to furnish a correct estimate of his work in Texas.

In North Carolina he held meetings in the following cities: Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Durham, Wilmington, and Charlotte. A remarkable revival followed his ministry in Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and Durham. The saloons were made to observe the laws in Durham, and were voted out in Winston and Greensboro. These were not only great moral movements, but resulted in a spiritual awakening, which brought hundreds of the people into the different churches.

At Charlotte one of the greatest men's meetings of his entire career was held. There were eight or ten thousand men within the tabernacle. After he had preached one of his most searching sermons, strong men from the city and adjoining towns and country literally ran over each other as they rushed to the altar with the tears streaming down their cheeks begging for mercy and help. A thousand or more gave their hearts to God. This wonderful manifestation swept away all the prejudices of the most fastidious, and the meeting is spoken of in that city to-day as an epoch-making hour.

The saddest incident connected with the men's meeting was that of a bright young man, perhaps in his twenty-sixth year, who was conductor on the Atlanta and Charlotte Airline. At the close of Mr. Jones's sermon he walked down the aisle more than two-thirds of the way, and then suddenly turned and went back to his seat. It may have been the scoff of a companion, or the jeer of a friend that turned him back. The next morning he went down to the depot, and about eight o'clock he stepped on his train to leave the city. After he had run down the road a few miles he held his train to meet another passenger train, and there was a freight-box standing on the side-track, and when the passenger train backed against it he was standing just in the rear of it, was knocked down and the wheels ran over him from head to foot, and mashed the very watch in his pocket until it was as thin as a piece of tin. Scarcely had fifteen hours passed since the sermon until he was called into the presence of God.

At Wilmington he held two great meetings. Rev. W. S. Creasy, D.D., Pastor Grace M. E. Church, South, was instrumental in his going to Wilmington. The ministers of the other denominations were not at all in favor of his coming, and some were very hostile; however. Dr. Creasy, with a few of the ministers, and by the help of Christian laity, prepared for the great tabernacle movement.

The announcement of the meeting brought forth a great many criticisms, which appeared in the Wilmington papers. These were mostly from the ministers. One prominent Presbyterian minister offered four reasons why he objected to the coming of Mr. Jones. One was, he lowered the dignity of the pulpit, and the other was the danger of confusing the people as to a true revival. Another because of his deep appreciation of the ministry of the church, and the last one, as a conscientious Presbyterian he could not endorse a man who makes a point of caricaturing what, to him, were the most precious truths of the Bible.

A prominent Episcopal rector said he could not see that any really spiritual good could possibly be gained by this community from any preaching by Mr. Jones.

A prominent Baptist preacher fought his coming from the start, and wrote a lengthy article to a religious paper, giving his reason for his position, claiming that Mr. Jones's wit was exceedingly coarse, his humor low and vulgar, unbecoming a Christian minister in any circle, and, in his judgment, a gross and grievous desecration of the pulpit.

There were other criticisms offered by some of the less prominent ministers of the different denominations. It seemed that there had been formed an alliance in Wilmington with the society element, gamblers and liquor-dealers that made the ministers fear his coming.

At any rate, the society people, gamblers, liquor-dealers, and people of that class, were in the heartiest sympathy with the criticisms expressed by these ministers, and heartily endorsed all of them.

When Mr. Jones arrived in Wilmington he began at once to overcome the opposition, and it wasn't long until these same ministers were attending his services and cooperating heartily with him in the salvation of the lost. His preaching against the worldliness and wickedness of the society people and his arraignment of the evils of the liquor traffic wrought great reformation in the lives of hundreds, and created a mighty sentiment against the liquor business. For ten days he preached, with thousands attending his ministry, and one of the greatest meetings held in North Carolina was that in Wilmington. In view of the opposition and obstacles that he overcame, perhaps it was one of the mightiest works of his life.

In Virginia he visited Roanoke, Danville, Lynchburg, and Richmond. In Danville, where an immense auditorium was erected and named "The Sam Jones Tabernacle," he completely revolutionized the life of the people. One of the most notable results of that meeting was the consecration and call to the ministry of Mr. James E. Schoolfield, a prominent hardware merchant and cotton manufacturer. He immediately entered upon the work of the ministry as an evangelist and preached all over the South, paying his own expenses, and became one of the most successful soul-winners of his day.

He attributed his change and call to the ministry to the evangelist. A few years ago he laid down his armor and preceded Mr. Jones to his heavenly reward.

This is just one instance of the thousands of men who were converted and called to the ministry, and afterwards entered the pastorate and evangelistic field to become honored and accredited workers in the kingdom of God. Perhaps more preachers have entered the work of the ministry through Mr. Jones's preaching than any other man living or dead.

Great results followed his preaching in Lynchburg and Norfolk. In Richmond a large tabernacle was erected on Franklin street, almost opposite the Richmond College, with a seating capacity of eleven thousand. As the tabernacle was located in the extreme western part of the city, it was difficult for the people to attend, but they came in carriages, on the street-cars, trains, and afoot, until the great building would not accommodate them. The work was difficult at first, but in his men's meeting one Sabbath afternoon when twelve thousand men had been seated and three thousand turned away, he preached that masterful sermon, "*Conscience, Record, and God.*"

The power of the Holy Spirit came upon him, and the people, and at the close of the meeting the men were standing en masse in their endorsement of his work, and pledging themselves to be faithful Christians. As he looked down upon the scene of that victory, he said, turning to those who had been slow to believe, "What do you think of that? Thank God for a scene in Richmond like this." From that day the tide had turned, and Richmond was in repentance and seeking salvation.

In Tennessee, where he had held so many meetings, he revisited Jackson, Knoxville, Chattanooga, Memphis, and Nashville. At all these places great meetings followed, and in Nashville he continued his ministry in the great auditorium that he had inspired and raised the money for, visiting the capital city each successive year, and sometimes twice during the year, for eighteen meetings. The cause of temperance in Tennessee was always very close to his heart, and in these last meetings he preached and pleaded for the close of the saloons and general prohibition, until the State now, with the exception of four or five of the leading cities, has local option. If the day comes, and the signs point that way, when the State is entirely free from saloons, at the judgment bar of God Mr. Jones will receive much of the reward for the faithful and earnest work which closed the saloons.

In Kentucky meetings were held at Paducah, Hopkinsville, Owensboro, Bowling Green, and Louisville, and many other places. Large tabernacles were erected in these cities for the meetings.

At Bowling Green the most wonderful meeting ever held in Kentucky was under his ministry. Here the city was aroused on the subject of temperance to such an extent that they closed all the barrooms. Perhaps the hottest fight he ever had for the cause of temperance was during his meetings in Kentucky. At Bowling Green a hundred and twenty-five of the employees of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad wrote out a pledge that they would drink and curse and carouse no more.

“Do Everything You Can and Leave the Rest to God.” — Sam Jones.

Bowling Green, Ky., April 10, 1893.

Be it Known by all Men, That we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being employees of the Louisville & Nashville Railroad Company, and residents and citizens of Bowling Green, Ky., having seen and felt and realized the sad effects of intemperance among our citizens and its fatal results to railroad men in particular, we do hereby agree and covenant with each other not to enter a saloon in Bowling Green, or anywhere else, or enter a barroom of any hotel or restaurant in said city, or anywhere else, under any circumstances, except absolute necessity requires our entrance, or we receive positive information that a person is on the inside whose name appears upon this list.

We further agree that, if at any time we find it impossible to keep this, we will get the consent of five (5) members of this agreement and have our name erased from this list before we enter a saloon door. We further agree that should we break or violate this agreement that we hereby consent and agree that each remaining member of this agreement be furnished a “card” bearing our name and the date of violation, and that it be known and said of us that we have sworn falsely and are not worthy of confidence in any business or social relation or transaction.”

He preached in his own inimitable way, until the irreligious could stand the impact no longer, and the forces of Satan were utterly broken, and the rout was complete. It was a meeting of wondrous power, the like of which was never witnessed before in that city, and may never be again. Men tried to brace themselves against the influence, but it was like an effort to breast the onrush of a cyclone, and they soon found themselves swept before the tide off their very feet and into the kingdom of God. One man said he would not hear Sam Jones, and though often importuned to go, persistently declined, and sometimes without much show of politeness. He continued in this course, until the first Sunday morning of the revival, when, strange (?) to say, he went, and when the invitation was extended, he came forward and made a complete surrender.

A prominent business man had secured a large building for a saloon, and had gotten his license. He heard Mr. Jones preach, gave his heart to God, surrendered the building, cancelled his license and is to-day a prominent church-worker in that city.

Rev. John W. Lewis, who was pastor of the largest Methodist church, writes: “It was amusing as well as serious, to hear his arraignment of sin and witness some of the attendant scenes. But it is rather of the character and lasting effects of his work that I would write. He reached all classes from the old monumental sinner to those of tender years, and when the ten days were over, it is safe to say that there had been one thousand conversions. The first Sunday, after the ‘Amen’ was pronounced, I received seventy-two into the church at one time, and more for several Sundays. Many of these were among the best citizens of the city, and some few were reclaimed from a drunkard’s life. Other churches shared alike.

“Did the work last? Yes, emphatically, yes. Only a short while ago I was talking with one of Sam Jones’s converts at Hopkinsville (we had just heard of the evangelist’s death), and he remarked:

‘If it had not been for him, the devil would have gotten me, sure.’

He is now and has been since his conversion, a consistent and faithful member of the church. So it was at Bowling Green and Hopkinsville. Many from both localities will rise up, in the last day, and call him blessed.”

In Louisiana he held meetings at Monroe and New Orleans. He went to New Orleans on the invitation of the Evangelical Alliance, and arrangements were made for him to hold the services in the Washington Artillery Hall. His engagement lasted for a month.

The principal fight in New Orleans was made against the Louisiana State Lottery. In a number of sermons he preached directly against this great crime and the spirit of gambling. The Morning Picayune gave him three columns the first day, two the second, one the third, and, when he made his greatest speech against the lottery, the paper refused to print a line of his notice in the city.

He said: “You have been sowing these Louisiana State Lottery tickets for twenty years; you have now a harvest of gambling in this city enough to make the devil himself tremble to look at. That lottery leads to every sort of gambling, opens the gates, the gap is down, and thousands of dollars that it is stealing from the United States and the Provinces of Canada, daily breaking up homes, and bringing sorrows to mothers is something appalling. I believe that that institution could pay a tax of forty thousand dollars a day, and still make money. It spreads its wings over this city, and takes the clothes off the backs of the children, robs the poor, and yet you sit down and say nothing about it. I know that there are powers that be, that can say ‘hush, and stop,’ and they do hush and stop some of you; but so help me God, there is not enough money, or men, or devils in hell to crush out the honest sentiment that leaps from my heart and conscience. If I were a member of the Louisiana State Legislature, I would vote against that contemptible scheme for fear that somebody would say if I did not that I had been bought by it.

“A man who will play ‘seven-up’ or ‘buck a faro-bank’ is a gentleman and a scholar and a Christian beside a fellow that will sit down and ‘buck’ against the Louisiana State Lottery. I hit you that time — I could see you wince. You gamble on anything in this city, from a million dollar wheat or a cotton deal down to a cigarette. When will New Orleans wake up? Georgia and Missouri have passed laws against the lottery, and said it is a criminal offense.

The government will not allow letters to go through the mail, if they know it, and old New Orleans remains absolutely quiet, and the balance of the Union is standing up and slapping you in the face. I would have enough pride to go and straighten myself out before the other States of this Union.”

The crusade against the open wickedness of New Orleans continued, while the audiences grew day and night, until there was the greatest revival in the history of the town. No other meeting ever took such hold upon the city. All the churches were greatly strengthened, and many hundred people were brought to the Saviour. The stalwart blows given the Louisiana State Lottery were the beginning of the fight which finally resulted in the infamous scheme to swindle the people being swept from the face of the earth.

In Alabama he preached in Selma, Mobile, Montgomery, and Birmingham. The same results followed in all these meetings, and in the last few days of the work in Birmingham he saw more than a thousand souls brought to the Lord Jesus Christ.

After the arduous labors throughout these Southern States, Mr. Jones's health completely broke down, and for several years he had to rest from evangelistic labors. The best physicians in the land despaired of his life, and, as he expressed it, in private and in public, while suffering so intensely, "I am a dying man."

Frequently he would have to take his seat while preaching, and would become completely exhausted and have to cancel his meetings. But he could not be idle. Believing that the lecture platform afforded him a great opportunity for doing good, and as the speaking was relieved of the close tension of revival work, he went all over the South lecturing, and stirring up the people again.

His lectures were made up to a great extent upon the lines of his preaching. In this way he continued to get the gospel before the thousands. It is doubtful whether he ever lectured without pungent thrusts at the liquor traffic. Letters received by him, and in my possession, and personal experiences related to him, which he told me of, attest the fact that hundreds were led to change their lives during the years when he devoted much time to the lecture field. His lectures, while they entertained, always contained good and wholesome truths, which inspired men to renounce their evil ways and be better husbands and sons. His health was regained, and he took every opportunity for evangelistic work during the closing years of his life.

In his last great tabernacle meeting, the citizens of Cartersville say they never heard him preach with such earnestness and power. This was the second greatest meeting of the work at the tabernacle.

The last sermon he preached in the meeting was before an audience that filled the building, and stood within the sound of his voice, that numbered fifteen thousand or more. His text was taken from Philippians, third chapter, eighth verse: "**I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.**"

The people will never forget the divine presence that pervaded the assembly, and the sighs and groans that were heard while he made his last plea for temperance, and uttered his most fearful denunciations of the liquor traffic. Following the tears and sobs he spoke to them of the triumphs of faith, and of the experiences that he had been going through, and the great audience shouted praises to the great Consoler and Comforter of bereaved and broken hearts.

It was during this meeting that his youngest son, Robert W. Jones, a noble and gifted young man, was happily converted. When he gave his father his hand in promise of a new life, and God his heart, the great assembly was thrilled by the scene, and his father moved to tears of joy. This son was in a short while thereafter licensed to preach, and his first sermons were so blessed of God that men said, "He is being raised up to take his father's place." And yet, alas, in a little while a fatal illness supervened and after a week of suffering, he passed with beautiful resignation to his father's side on the other shore.

He went immediately to Oklahoma City, turning aside a hundred other calls to create a sentiment for temperance, reformation and godly living in the flourishing city of the new State. In a large unfinished department store he preached day and night to the throngs, with every odd against him, yet never murmuring or complaining, until the last men's meeting, when he preached to the immense audience of fathers, husbands, and sons, the most powerful sermon that I ever heard him deliver. That great men's meeting resulted in several thousand men coming to the front and promising him to meet him in heaven.

The last night he preached in the city, it was on "Sudden Death," that fearful message from the twenty-ninth chapter of Proverbs, first verse: **"He that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed and that without remedy."**

In speaking of how he would like to die, if it should be God's will, he said:

"I don't know where or when or how I will die. I may fall in the pulpit; I can't tell. I may die away from home; I can't tell. But this I say to you: If God will answer my prayer in this and give me the choice of my heart, I would come home some day, worn out and tired, and lay quietly down diseased and sick, upon the bed in the family room, and there I would linger for a week or ten days under the kind ministrations of my wife and children; I would look upon and enjoy their sympathy and ministrations, and as the day drew nigh that I should bid them good-by, I would talk to my wife and talk to each child; I would gather them about me daily, encourage them to love God and live for God, and get home to heaven, and on and on until the last evening came, I would take my children, beginning at the oldest, I would gather them about me and say my parting words; and then, when the doctors had turned their backs upon me and said that my case had swung beyond where *materia medica* reaches, I would spend my last moments talking to her who has been such a friend to me and who has helped me in all my life.

And then, when the last moments came, I would wade down gently into the river of death, and when the river should come up to my shoulders I would reach back and kiss my wife and children goodbye, and go home to God as happy as any schoolboy ever went home from school."

At the close of the personal reference the great audience was subdued, and every eye bedewed with tears, and then as if looking into the future, and seeing something that was hidden to all of us he said in the most pathetic and pitiful tone, "Men of Oklahoma City, look out, before my voice has died out in your ears, there will be deaths following this meeting that will shock this city and State, and maybe this nation."

The next day, feeling indisposed, he preached to the women, while his assistant took the evening service. The following morning he preached a sweet, tender sermon on "My grace is sufficient for thee." That day the heavy rains came, and the meeting was moved from the unfinished auditorium to the First Methodist church, where his assistant again preached. The papers had announced that the meeting would close Sunday afternoon. He remained in his room praying until the hour passed for service, and the rain was coming down in torrents. He laid down upon the bed, fell asleep, and suddenly he awoke, and turning to me, said:

“Mother, if the afternoon train should be running late, we will go home, and not wait for the night train, as I want to get home for my birthday dinner.” Going to the room of his chorister, Mr. E. O. Excell, he said: “Ex., as you are not well, I would go home; it’s no use for you to stay any longer.”

Then going to the room of his assistant, Mr. Holcomb, he called him by his first name, saying: “Walt, we’ll go home.” We left on the afternoon train, but before reaching our home in Cartersville, he had gone to his home in heaven.

~ end of chapter 23 ~

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