

How I Came Into Healing by John Alexander Dowie

I sat in my study in the parsonage of the Congregational Church at Newtown, a suburb of the beautiful city of Sydney, Australia. My heart was very heavy, for I had been visiting the sick and dying beds of more than thirty of my flock, and I had cast the dust to its kindred dust into more than forty graves within a few weeks. Where, oh where, was He Who used to heal His suffering children? No prayer for healing seemed to reach His ear, and yet I knew His hand had not been shortened. Still it did not save from death even those for whom there was so much in life to live for God and others. Strong men, fathers, good citizens, and more than all, true Christians sickened with a putrid fever, suffered nameless agonies, passed into delirium, sometimes with convulsions, and then died. And oh, what aching voids were left in many a widowed or orphaned heart. Then there were many homes where, one by one, the little children, the youths and the maidens were stricken, and after hard struggling with the foul disease, they too, lay cold and dead. It seemed sometimes as if I could almost hear the triumphant mockery of fiends ringing in my ear whilst I spoke to the bereaved ones the words of Christian hope and consolation. Disease, the foul offspring of its father, Satan, and its mother Sin, was defiling and destroying the

earthly temples of God's children and there was no deliverance.

And there I sat with sorrow-bowed head for my afflicted people, until the bitter tears came to relieve my burning heart. Then I prayed for some message, and oh, how I longed to hear some words from Him Who wept and sorrowed for the suffering long ago, a Man of Sorrows and Sympathies. The words of the Holy Ghost inspired in Acts 10:38, stood before me all radiant with light, revealing Satan as the Defiler, and Christ as the Healer. My tears were wiped away, my heart strong, I saw the way of healing, and the door thereto was opened wide, so I said, "God help me now to preach the Word to all the dying around, and tell them how 'tis Satan still defiles, and Jesus still delivers, for 'He is just the same today."

A loud ring and several raps at the outer door, a rush of feet, and there at my door stood two panting messengers who said, "Oh, come at once, Mary is dying; come and pray. "With just a feeling as a shepherd has who hears that his sheep are being torn from the fold by a cruel wolf, I rushed from my house, ran hatless down the street, and entered the room of the dying maiden. There she lay groaning, grinding her clenched teeth in the agony of the conflict with the destroyer, the white

froth, mingled with her blood, oozing from her pain-distorted mouth. I looked at her and then my anger burned. "Oh," I thought, "for some sharp sword of heavenly temper keen to slay this cruel foe who is strangling that lovely maiden like an invisible serpent, tightening his deadly coils for a final victory."

In a strange way it came to pass; I found the sword I needed was in my hands, and in my hand I hold it still and never will I lay it down. The doctor, a good Christian man, was quietly walking up and down the room, sharing the mother's pain and grief. Presently he stood at my side and said, "Sir, are not God's ways mysterious?" Instantly the sword was flashed in my hand—the Spirit's sword, the Word of God. "God's way!" I said, pointing to the scene of conflict, "how dare you, Dr. K-, call that God's way of bringing His children home from earth to Heaven? No, sir, that is the devil's work, and it is time we called on Him Who came to 'destroy the work of the devil,' to slay that deadly foul destroyer, and to save the child. Can you pray, Doctor, can you pray the prayer of faith that saves the sick?" At once, offended at my words, my friend was changed, and saying, "You are too much excited, sir, 'tis best to say 'God's will be done,'" he left the room.

Excited! The word was quite inadequate for I was almost frenzied with Divinely imparted anger and hatred of that foul destroyer, Disease, which

was doing Satan's will. "It is not so," I exclaimed, "no will of God sends such cruelty, and I shall never say 'God's will be done' to Satan's works, which God's own Son came to destroy, and this is one of them." Oh, how the Word of God was burning in my heart: "Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." And was not God with me? And was not Jesus there and all His promises true? I felt that it was even so, and turning to the mother I enquired, "Why did you send for me?" To which she answered "Do pray, oh pray for her that God may raise her up." So we prayed. What did I say? It may be that I cannot recall the words without mistake, but words are in themselves of small importance. The prayer of faith may be a voiceless prayer, a simple heartfelt look of confidence into the face of Christ. At such moment words are few, but they mean much, for God is looking at the heart. Still, I can remember much of that prayer unto this day, and asking God to aid I will endeavor to recall it. I cried: "Our Father, help! and Holy Spirit, teach me how to pray. Plead Thou for us, oh, Jesus, Savior, Healer, Friend, our Advocate with God the Father. Hear and heal, Eternal One! From all disease and death deliver this sweet child of Thine. I rest upon the Word. We claim the promise now. The Word is true, 'I am the Lord that healeth thee.' Then heal her now. The Word is true, 'I am the Lord, I change not.' Unchanging God, then prove Thyself the

healer now. The Word is true, 'These signs shall follow them that believe in My Name, they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.' And I believe and I lay hands in Jesus' Name on her, and claim this promise now. Thy Word is true, 'The prayer of faith shall save the sick.' Trusting in Thee alone, I cry, oh, save her now, for Jesus' sake, Amen!"

And lo, the maid lay still in sleep, so deep and sweet that the mother asked in a low whisper, "Is she dead?" "No," I answered, in a whisper lower still, "Mary will live; the fever is gone. She is perfectly well and sleeping as an infant sleeps." Smoothing the long dark hair from her now peaceful brow, and feeling the steady pulsation of her heart and cool moist hands, I saw that Christ had heard and that once more, as long ago in Peter's house, "He touched her and the fever left her." Turning to the nurse I said, "Get me at once, please, a cup of cocoa and several slices of bread and butter." Beside the sleeping maid we sat quietly and almost silently until the nurse returned, and then I bent over her and snapping my fingers called "Mary!" Instantly she woke, smiled and said, "Oh, sir, when did you come? I have slept so long;" then stretching her arms out to meet her mother's embrace, she said, "Mother, I feel so well." "And hungry, too?" I asked, pouring some of the cocoa in a saucer and offering it to her when cooled by my breath. "Yes, hungry too," she answered with a little

laugh, and drank and ate again, and yet again, until all was gone. In a few minutes she fell asleep, breathing easily and softly. Quietly thanking God we left her bed and went to the next room where her brother and sister also lay sick of the same fever. With these two we also prayed, and they were healed. The following day all three were well and in a week or so they brought me a little letter and a gift of gold, two sleeve links with my monogram, which I wore for many years. As I went away from the home where Christ as the Healer had been victorious, I could not but have somewhat in my heart of the triumphant song that rang through Heaven, and yet I was not a little amazed at my own strange doings, and still more at my discovery that He is just the same today.

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