

Sold Out for God

By: W.W. Paulsen

As a young man, everything seemed to come my way. Whatever I put my hand to prospered. I began farming when only seventeen years of age. Later, I enrolled in a university, and graduated as a civil engineer. Soon I had a beautiful home, considerable city property, a flourishing garage business, a country home, and an eight hundred-acre farm. I was all wrapped up in the affairs of this world, piling up wealth.

Still, there was an aching void in my heart. I would say, "What good will all this do me when I am dead and gone?" I began to feel like a miserable failure. After studying the theory of evolution, I had come out of college an atheist and a scoffer against God. I even attempted to overthrow the faith of others by trying to prove there is no God. But one day in my repair garage, God spoke to my soul. Tears began to flow, and from that moment I didn't care whether I ever made another dollar.

"Take this paper along with you."

I thank God for the way He led me to the truth. One day my wife and I started touring the country. We didn't have any road maps and lost our way. But I believe God had His hand in that. We stopped at a railway station to inquire about which road to take. After informing us, the depot agent said, "Here, take this paper along with you. It will do you good."

I began to read that paper, which had been printed by the Apostolic Faith Church in Portland, Oregon, and it was a light to my soul. I read it several times and God began to talk to me. I longed to meet those people who had received such wonderful results from believing the Word of God. I said, "I am going to see for myself." We travelled eighteen hundred miles to Portland for the sole purpose of investigating this Gospel work.

I will never forget the first time I came into the Apostolic Faith Church and heard that God was delivering men and women from sin and enabling them to live pure, holy lives. As I looked upon the faces of hundreds of the happiest people I had ever seen, I coveted what they had. They told a marvellous story of victory. I said, "That is exactly what I need. I would give the world if I could get what they are talking about."

I had seen religious sham and pretense and had become disgusted with the whole matter. But when I began to measure myself by the Bible, I forgot about the church members and hypocrites I had criticized for years. I found that I didn't have time to judge the other man. I had problems of my own. God's Spirit strove with me, but I was so bound by unbelief that I could hardly believe even when I wanted to do so. God let me see that I was lost and needed Him to take sin out. He showed me that my morality was as filthy rags in His sight. I searched the Bible to see if we could really live above sin, and I found this truth all through the Word of God. How that convicted my soul!

One night as I prayed, my life came before me like a great panorama. I claimed to be an honorable man and had prided myself on my character and honesty. But God keeps books, and He talked to me about my past life. I had sins that were all covered up which I needed to straighten out. The Lord spoke to my heart and said, "Pay the price." I didn't get saved that night.

Later I came back to the church determined to get right with God. At the close of the service I knelt and said, "Lord, if You will put this salvation into my heart and give me the grace to go back and clean up my past life, I will begin straightening things out."

A Prayer Reached Heaven

People gathered about me and helped me pray and Heaven seemed to open to my soul. I felt the powers of darkness and unbelief leave my soul, and God saved me. This atheist became a believer! My heart was filled with the joy of the Lord. I walked up and down the aisles praising God.

The moment God saved my soul I became a new creature in Christ Jesus. The Lord gave me power to live a clean life. I never went back to my farm and worldly interests. Instead, I sold my assets without leaving Portland. After years of devoting my life to material pursuits, I found salvation was what satisfied.

Making Things Right

When I was praying for salvation, I promised God I would clean up the past. It was not easy to write back to people who had highly respected me and tell them of the shrewd business deals I had turned, how I had double-crossed them and taken advantage of them. It was difficult to write to institutions of learning and confess that I had stolen things out of the laboratory. God also showed me I needed to get things straight with the men in my employ whom I had underpaid.

I just didn't know if I could do it and I backed off for a night or two, but finally I said yes to God. The next morning I was up early. I began to write letters, and the Lord was right there to remind me of every crooked deal. They all came before me as vividly as though I had committed them just the day before. I didn't beat around the bush or make excuses. I just came right out and told the people I had wronged all about it. I knew I was dealing with God, as well as with man. I spent nearly the whole day writing letters of restitution, enclosing checks to cover the wrongs I had done. But oh, the joy that came into my heart!

I enjoy life today. I consecrated my life to the service of the Lord and have put my all into the Gospel work. The most wonderful years of my life have been those spent in God's service. What the world with all of its money, houses, and lands could not give me, I found in Jesus.

W. W. Paulson helped with the construction of several Apostolic Faith churches in North America. He also worked on violins and violas to help support those in the church orchestra. Some are still being used today.

