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### **THREE TRACTS**

**By**

**Mrs. H. A. Coon**

**H. C. Van Wormer**

**Evangeline Booth**

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### **EARLY FREE METHODISTS**

**By Mrs. H. A. Coon**

In looking over our loved Zion seeing the compromise, toning down, and how little is being done for God, my mind reverts to the days of Dr. J. W. Redfield, and how God used him to separate unto himself a peculiar people, the work he gave us to do, and how He [God] called us out from, and to rebuke the very things which many of our people do unblushingly. The Lord have mercy on us and let us see where we are drifting.

When we came out, there was not one of us who indulged in light and trifling conversation, joking or jesting, tale-bearing or back-biting, now so common among us. Bias pieces and ruffles, with the fashionable cut of the garment were laid aside, not even a bow found on hat or bonnet. Holiness unto the Lord might truthfully have been written upon all we possessed. Whenever we met, whether in twos, threes or fours, we never failed to inquire, "How does your soul prosper?" When our ministers came to our house we knew it was to pray, and to find out the spiritual state of every soul in the house. Always in the pulpit they preached that men must be sanctified as well as justified, and holiness was taught in every sermon. We never held a meeting without the outpouring of the Holy Ghost. There was no seeking honor one of another, while both preachers and people cried out against all manner of sin, in high places as well as low, and souls were saved in every meeting.

Covetousness, secrecy and pride received no quarters in the Doctor's sermons, and restitution was so held up before the people that they seemed to hear the awful thundering of Sinai, and men felt the pains of hell take hold upon them, until they went about restoring the things

unlawfully taken, and straightening up the crooked places in their deal. And behold all men went after him, he drove none away by telling them of their sins, either in public or private, but they listened and felt "The voice of the Lord hath spoken it," and as did the woman of Samaria, "He told me all that ever did." Churches were full, yea, literally crammed, altars full, from thirty to forty at a time, and sometimes they were obliged to clear away the dead and dying, that it might fill up again.

No coaxing people to the anxious seat then, but they ran to get there, and many fell before they reached it. No need of preaching about Pentecost, for we had it in every service, with none to cry "hush!" as we hear them now-a-days, for it has come to pass in these days that not one can speak five minutes as all did then, against the sins of the day but you hear the cry, "O hush, hush, you will drive them all away, don't be so harsh about it!"

How was it with Jesus? O charity, charity! but it a false charity they want, and by so doing we have measurably lost both the power and the people. Lord help us!

I look again and see the days when B. T. Roberts was expelled, and the power that attended him. Again sin found no quarters. Radicals to the extreme, they cried out against all manner of sin; the women looked like Quakers, and men the old stamp of Methodists. O, God, give us back those days! Even Sister Roberts preached sermons that made men fall upon their faces, and repeatedly she cried out, "Give us the old apostolic power and fire, or give us death!" and had it come only with prisons they would have proved palaces.

When they lifted their hands toward heaven, great power and glory came upon the people. I have seen three hundred fall on their faces in one grand prayer meeting, crying "Power! Power!" and it came until it was like one great view of eternity. It came not from prophesying smooth things, for it took the compromise out of the M. E. preachers as well as people; women threw their jewelry into the dirt and straw; but now-a-days they can wear it into the church, and we have chairmen who take them in with it on, and then we ask why doesn't the power come as in former days? God help us!

Do we mean by this that we want the power? Then I say, retrace your steps; have done with your compromise; have done with your seeking honor one of another, and wire pulling for position; give up your idols and get down in the dust before God. Go back to the consecration where ministers held their brother ministers not only to doing thorough work, but to having clean hands and pure hearts, and not one compromiser, or one unclean, was allowed to slip through conference, much less be transferred to an other conference to spread the leprosy...

Farther on followed the little stripling, E. P. Hart, and he went thundering through the land, "No compromise with sin." and for years never held a meeting without souls were saved, and I can truthfully say he literally swept God's house clean. His preaching and manner were with such power that men said, "There is a second Redfield." Men's hearts were stirred and hell shaken, but whom men cursed, God blessed. From North to South, and from East to West, came up the cry to this boy "Come and help us," and why? because the power of God was in him.

Oh, I see the helpmeet God gave him, as she marched around the camp singing, "If you belong to Gideon's Band, here's my heart and here's my hand," the old shaker made a great banner as she waved it in the air, (shakers were our church bonnets then), the whole camp following after.

I shall never forget the time when on the old Ogle camp ground God gave the tongue of fire to our dear Bro. Hart. I saw it when it came. He held the entire camp spell bound from 9 a.m. to four p.m., not realizing the time to be more than an hour. The baptism remained upon him for three months. Every time he came into our pulpit such burning, scathing truths as fell from his lips, I never heard save from the lips of Dr. Redfield. The sins of secrecy and pride were denounced in trumpet tones.

He stood like a man coming from the eternal world, and feared not the secret conclave, though death stared him in the face. Pride went by its own name, and women were told that unless they laid aside their feathers, ruffles, rag-roses and galvanized pewter, they would not be able to enter the kingdom. Backsliders sought the Lord, formalists were melted and hypocrites' hearts, though black as hell, were uncovered and their secret sins brought to light.

This one particular case I will mention. A man came on the ground professing holiness, and to be a minister, desiring to join us. Distress of soul took hold of some of the saints, and God revealed the fact unto them that he was possessed of the devils; the cry came from burdened souls, "Confess your hypocrisy!" and he confessed how he had abused his wife until she became insane, and how he had twice sharpened a knife to kill his neighbor. God made him to confess it publicly, and he fell, like one described in the Gospels, and wallowed foaming.

I sigh and cry, O God, send back those days of power, and so baptize our ministers that they will be flames of fire as they were when we first started. "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughters of my people" Jer. 9:1.

Following Brother Hart came J. G. Terrill, who walked through God's house, also sweeping it clean. Sin met no friend in him, for with point and edge he wielded the sword to the destruction of it in every form, and multitudes were converted wherever he went. Also James Mathers whom the Lord wonderfully used to feed His sheep. Straight, true and gloriously anointed, he made me think of one of those of the days of Wesley, come back to us.

As I sit and think, pray and weep, my soul breaks forth in cries of "fire, fire and thunder. Lord put it on us again!"

O, ministers of the entire connection "I beseech you by the mercies of God that ye" AGAIN "present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God." For Christ's sake, and for the sake of the people to whom you minister. Instead of some of you, looking at the boy preachers whom God has anointed and sitting as critics upon them, get down yourselves, consecrate clear down through, back to the anointing you once had, until it can be truly said, their ministers are a flame of fire.

You can have it, none of you are too old or too sick. There are among you, could God get you in His hands, Wesleys, Whitefields, and Redfields, but the path they took is the one you must take -- martyrs if need be for the truth's sake.

I mention the name of that holy man, I again catch the note of song which the angels gave him at St. Charles while we were laboring there in a protracted effort, it being the continuation of the old hymn, "The Sunbright Clime," which he had always said was never finished.

"But far, far above that countless throng  
I hear a wilder note of song,  
'Twas out of great distress they came,  
Washed in the blood of yonder Lamb  
Who lives in that Sun-bright Clime.

"Prophets, apostles, martyrs all,  
From mountain, cave and lion's stall,  
From Hebrews' furnace, dreadful fire  
Raised by the whirling tempest higher,  
To range through that Sun-Bright Clime.

"Ten thousand, thousand, thousand more,  
From every age and every shore,  
Who suffered till the war was O'er,  
With God shut in forevermore --  
To dwell in that Sun-Bright Clime."

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#### THE LOST AGONY By H. C. Van Wormer

Rom. 13:11 "Knowing the time ... it is high time to awake out of sleep."

George Whitefield cried, "Give me souls, or take my soul ... There is a passion for souls, a depth of burden for men, a care for the flock of God, that beggars words and sighs and tears.

An old saint, before the days of automobiles, said that he quit his work in the middle of the afternoon, hitched up his horse, and drove twenty miles to pray with a man who, he felt, was drifting from God. Listen to him: "I could scarcely help it, my love and concern for him was so great I could not rest until I had done my best to bring him to God." Beloved, this is the thing that the rank and file of the church and we preachers must recover.

David Brainerd said, "I care not where I go or how I live or what I endure so that I may save souls. When I sleep, I dream of them; when I awake, they are first in my thoughts ... No amount of scholastic attainment, of able and profound exposition, of brilliant and stirring eloquence can atone for the absence of a deep, impassioned, sympathetic love of human souls."

The seraphic John Fletcher said, "Love -- continual, universal, ardent love -- is the soul of all labors of a minister.

During the great Welsh Revival, Dr. F. B. Meyer saw, one evening, a young minister come to a crowded meeting. This young man stood up and prayed to God in behalf of two of his mates who were scoffing behind. One of these men immediately arose and said, "No, that is not true; I was not scoffing. I simply said I was not an infidel, but an agnostic, and if God wants to save me, I will give Him a fair opportunity. Let Him do it!"

That boast seemed to strike Evan Roberts so that he fell on his knees in perfect agony of soul. It seemed as though his very heart would break beneath the weight of this man's sin.

A friend of Dr. Meyer's who stood near him said, "This is too dreadful! I cannot bear to hear this man groan so! I will start a tune to drown it!"

Dr. Meyer said, "Whatever you do, don't do that. I want this thing to sink deep into my heart. I've preached the Gospel these thirty years with dry eyes. I've spoken to great masses of people without turning a hair, unmoved. I want the throb of this man's anguish to touch my own soul."

Evan Roberts sobbed on and on and Meyer said: "My God, let me learn that sob, that my soul may break while I preach the Gospel to men.

After about ten minutes Roberts arose and addressed the men in the gallery: "Will you yield?" They said: "Why should we?" Then he said to the people: "Let us pray." The air became very heavy with sighs, tears and groans. Everybody seemed to be carrying these two men upon their hearts, as if their hearts must break beneath the strain. Meyer declares that he never felt anything like it. He sprang to his feet, feeling as though he were choking. He said to his friend: "We are in a very fight between Heaven and Hell. Don't you see Heaven pulling this way and Hell that? It seems as though one heard the beasts in the arena."

After that, one of the men yielded while the other, like an impenitent thief, went his way; but Meyer could not believe but that afterwards he came back to God. If it took that to reach men in the great Welsh Revival, will it not take the same today? If you will read about the great revivals and the hundreds of men and women who were brought to God under the ministry of the great Methodist evangelist, John Wesley Redfield, you will discover that the people of that day had not lost "the agony"; that is some of them still had it. Here are two instances: "He (Redfield) began to have some of his own peculiar experiences again that had often attended his most successful efforts. He began to be burdened for the work. He had often thought he could not endure it. He had these struggles, and sometimes with a severity that threw him upon his bed as if with a fit of sickness, and held him there until victory came. One night in the church he was filled with unspeakable agony for souls. If he could have howled like the old prophets, it would have relieved him; but this he could not do. He attempted to go out of the church, but was checked by the Holy Spirit. He then said, "Lord; I'll try to hold on." He then began to cry out, "O my God! this people must be saved." At this he was instantly relieved. The whole church was now in a commotion.

Screams for mercy mingled with shouts of rejoicing were heard on every side." The result of this was that hundreds were brought to God in this meeting and the work was so deep and thorough that other churches which tried to draw away the Methodist converts could not do it. Years later it was stated: "Some of the fruit of this revival still remains." Another time: "He (Redfield) began to see that it was a burden, the spirit of prayer. His agony for souls became very great. The sensation was as if a mighty hand took hold upon his brain, drew it up, and then thrust it back with a painful shock. This occurred several times. Every time he would cry out, 'I will hold on until salvation comes.' Then suddenly he was relieved, and the power of God fell upon the people in a wonderful manner." Great results followed this.

The secret of Mr. Finney's revivals was in the fact that Zion knew how to travail. Isa. 66:8 "... for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." Listen to Mr. Finney: "It loaded me down with great agony. As I returned to my room I felt almost as if I should stagger under the burden that was on my mind; and I struggled, and groaned, and agonized, but could not frame to present the case before God in words, but only in groans and tears. The spirit struggled within me with groanings that could no be uttered." How near this is to what is given in Rom. 8:26, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

The reason for the revival which has been going on now around four years in the Hebrides is that some have recovered the lost agony. People gathered for whole nights of prayer, but it was no ordinary prayer meeting. The leader said that in those prayer meetings they moved out of the realms of common and the natural into the sphere of the supernatural.

"But the remarkable thing about that great meeting is this, that while that was happening in the church, fishermen out in their fishing boats, men behind their looms, men at the pit bank, a merchant out with his van, school teachers examining their papers, were gripped by God, and by ten o'clock the roads were black with people seeking after God who were never near me. I went along that country road and found in one place three men lying on their faces, so distressed about their souls that they could not talk to me; yet they were never near the meeting I held. This is revival."

To get the full picture you would have to read about the agonized wrestling for a whole night, four nights a week for a year before the answer came. Agonized wrestling is something more than breathing a two-minute prayer before hopping into bed, or stepping into your car in the morning. Agonized wrestling means to get down before God and stay down before Him until you get a hold of the horns of the altar and prevail. This kind of wrestling involves pleading, begging, arguing, and sweat, persevering, persistent seeking, agony, and knocking until something drops from the leaden skies. Are mothers and fathers doing this today for their children who are lost?

The sooner we confess that we have lost our agony for souls, the better it will be for the cause of evangelism in these days. Let us face the grim, startling fact that we are becoming used to the thud of lost souls as they tramp the road to a Christless eternity. It appears that we have lost the power to weep, to wrestle, to plead, and to agonize over lost souls. The multitudes out of Christ have no conviction regarding their lost condition, simply because we lack deep convictions about their iniquitous condition and eternal woe.

Indeed, it is true we have a multiplicity of evangelistic campaigns, revival meetings, crusades, and what not. But with all this, so few are being plucked as brands from the burning. Revival campaigns come and go, but the cities, towns, and villages are seemingly as lost as ever. We have become too professional, mechanical, and cold in our efforts to reach souls. Those we try to win recognize no warmth, no passion, no agony, no real alarm, and no tears over their lost condition. They see no evidence of conflict on our part to warn them of the errors of their way. All they see in our personal witness is a fitful, languid, listlessness, so they continue their godless ways.

God pity us if we are content with forming crusades, convening conferences, going through revival efforts, enlisting men and money for so-called Gospel efforts and missionary machinery. We try to persuade without passion, to win without weeping, to convert without conquest. It is impossible to win souls with cold hearts and dry eyes. Instead of mourning, fasting and intercession it is eating and drinking, fun, frolic, and rousing hilarity today and then we wonder why folk are not saved. Deep humility of soul and prayer in the upper room prepares the way of God to come.

The reason there is no intercession, no agonizing, no weeping "between the porch and the altar" is that God's people are not awake to the condition of the day. The majority feel that in every direction there is abundant proof of church growth and real spiritual progression. But the truth of the matter is that with an increased church membership, moral standards have fallen to an all-time low. Modern infidelity increases in the churches at an amazing tempo. The maturing generation has virtually no knowledge of God but is sweeping toward religious perversions which deny the deity of our Lord. The Word of God is ignored. The supernatural is spurned and materialism reigns in the thoughts of men. Lawlessness intensifies and criminals become increasingly arrogant and defiant. Dope addiction is slaying our youth. Sexual impurity is defiling our school children. Diabolical murder simply for the thrill of it is casting its lurid spell over our teen-agers. Atomic extinction is menacing us all. Do existing conditions alarm us? No, merrymaking continues; eating and drinking instead of fasting; rousing hilarity instead of a solemn assembly for intercession. Where are there any indications of humility and repentance, even on the part of multitudes who "join the church?" Oh, where are the weeping, agonizing intercessors? Who is alarmed?

As Rev. Harold M. Freligh said, in his article on "Between the Porch and the Altar" in the Alliance Weekly some time ago, "If our youth conferences are to compete with Vanity Fair, it soon will be a race to see which can put on the bigger ballyhoo to lure customers. When young people are entertained instead of challenged, their theme song will become 'Tell Us A Story' instead of 'Oh, Sweet Wonder!' If they are to respond when the evening altar call is given, they seem to require a guarantee that this will not interfere with the snack-time and the boy-meet-girl social hour following.

"There was a time when separation meant giving up even good things as well as questionable. Our Isaacs were laid on the altar. Our self-assertive, mocking Ishmaels were ejected. Our worldly-minded Lots were banished. But now Lot is made chairman of the banquet committee. Ishmael is dressed up and brought in as the jovial clown to entertain the feasters, and Isaac is given the seat of honor and toasted and told what a good fellow he is.

"Have our preachers' retreats resolved themselves into mere intellectual spreads, garnished with a few sports and inoffensively seasoned with a little prayer? Can any minister carry a burden for others when he is pressed with the urgency of getting home from his night service to see his cherished TV programs? Is there any preparation for the Lord's day among children of God when their chief talk in the Sunday morning greeting concerns the entertainment of the night before?"

"Is the rallying point of our summer conventions the lunch stand instead of the nightly prayer altar? Soft drinks and hot dogs dabbled with lighthearted talk under the yellow lights are effective cathartics against all the operations of the night service that has just preceded. An array of bulging stomachs and starved souls is not formidable to our spiritual foe. Fellowship over the teacup is becoming more fashionable than fellowship in prayer. The repentance and performance of the first works that accompany the first love are quite obliterated by feasting and frolic."

Beloved, this is no time for fun, frolic, trifling, but for tears, agony, intercession, and mourning "between the porch and altar." It is time to call a solemn assembly and go down before God with fasting and prayer. The emergency of the hour is enough to send us to our knees crying: "Spare the people, O Lord." To recover the lost agony will be costly. What did it mean for Paul to engage in soul-winning labors? Loss of fame, friends, riches, rest, reputation, and relatives; what separation, sobs, scars and scarcity were his -- all because he wanted others to find Christ! His was a passion for souls that flamed up in ardor and burned steadily in spite of all discouragement. Would we share the apostolic agony for souls of men? We can find it where Paul and other soul-agonizers found it -- at the foot of the cross. It is impossible to work and witness for Christ with cold hearts and dry eyes, if we truly understand what is meant for Him to shed His blood that sinners might be saved from sin and Hell.

When William Booth founded the Salvation Army in the East End of London, he was not long in gathering around him a few consecrated young people who had caught his vision for the outcast. In time, he had a training school for the sole purpose of teaching his cadets how to win souls. One day, while lecturing to them on evangelism, he paused, and in his dramatic fashion said, "I wish I could send you all to Hell for two weeks."

You know what he meant. If those young folks could have lived amid the moans and groans of the damned for a few days, they would have come back to earth with an undying passion to warn men to flee from the wrath to come.

Deut. 30:19 -- "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:"

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WHO KISSED ME?  
By Evangeline Booth\*



One morning I stood outside the large iron gate of a local police court and temporary prison. There were people waiting there, some out of curiosity, and some because they had a relative inside.

I waited expectantly for the opening of the gate. I heard the shuffling of heavy feet. They came close. Then I heard sounds of loud voices, and one especially that got louder and more shrill. It was the voice of a woman.

The gates opened wide, and I witnessed a sight which, if eternity could wash away from my mind, time never can. It was a woman. Two policemen walked in front and two behind. One stalwart man firmly held the right arm and the other the left. Her hair was uncombed and matted and disheveled. Her right temple was blackened with bruises. Clots of dry blood stood upon her left temple. Her clothes were torn and blood-stained. She tried to wrench her arms from the grasp of the policemen.

The very atmosphere of the morning was laden with her curses and oaths. She tossed her head wildly as the six policemen dragged her down the passageway.

What could I do? One more moment, and the golden opportunity to be of help would be gone. Could I offer a prayer? No, there was not time. Could I sing? It would be absurd. Could I give her money? She could not take it. Could I quote a verse of Scripture? She would not heed it.

Whether it was a divine suggestion or not I did not stop to think, but the impulse of a burning desire which filled my heart as she passed made me step forward and kiss her on the cheek.

Whether the police were taken off their guard by my extraordinary action and relaxed their grasp, I do not know, but with one wrench she freed her arms and clasped her hands as the wind spread her matted disheveled hair, and she looked toward the gray skies and said, "My God!"

She looked around wildly for a moment and then said, "My God, who kissed me? My God, who kissed me? Nobody has kissed me since my mother died."

Lifting her tattered apron, she buried her face in her hands, and like a little lamb she was led to the vehicle which took her to prison.

Later I went to the prison in the hope of seeing her, and at the door stood the warden. When I approached the warden, she said, "We think her mind is gone. She does nothing but pace up and down her cell asking me every time I go in if I know who kissed her."

"Would you let me go in and speak to her?" I asked. "I am her only and best friend..."

The door was opened, and I slipped in. Her face was clean, her eyes were large and beautiful, and she said, "Do you know who kissed me? And then she told me her story:

"When I was a little girl seven years old my widowed mother died. She died very poor, although she was of genteel birth. She died in a back basement in the dark. When she was dying she called me to her, took my little face in her hands, and kissed it, and said to me, "My poor little girl, -- my defenseless little girl. O God, have pity on my little girl, and when I am gone protect her and take care of her. From that day to this, nobody ever put a kiss upon my face until recently."

Then again she asked me, "Do you know who kissed me?"

I said, "It was I who kissed you."

Then I told her of Him whose life was so much more tender than mine could ever be and how He went to the cross and bore our sins upon Himself and was wounded for our transgressions that He might put the kiss of pardon upon our brow.

In Him she found light, and joy, and comfort, and salvation and healing and love. Before she was released from the prison the warden testified not only to the change in her life but to its beauty. She was made through Christ the means of salvation to numbers of others who were down as low as she had been and who were bound with heavy fetters as those with which she herself had been bound.

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\*Evangeline Booth was the daughter of Salvation Army founder, William Booth. Evangeline Booth was National Commander of the Salvation army for many years, and on Sept. 3, 1934, she was elected General, serving until Nov. 1, 1939. She was the only woman General of the Salvation Army and the fourth in succession to her father, William Booth.

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