

Still Bearing Fruit

Dr. Charles McCoy never married, he devoted his years instead to pastoring a church and pursuing a plethora of educational goals. At age seventy-two, when his denomination required that he retire from ministry, he reluctantly left his Baptist pulpit in Oyster Bay, New York. He wasn't sure what to do with himself. Over the years, he had accumulated seven different college degrees, but now they all seemed futile: *"I just lie on my bed thinking that my life's over, and I haven't really done anything yet. I've been pastor of this church for so many years, and nobody really wants me much—and what have I done for Christ? I've spent an awful lot of time working for degrees, but I haven't won very many people to the Lord."*

But just a week after his retirement, he met a missionary who abruptly invited him to come to India to preach. Dr. McCoy deferred, citing his age. He had never been overseas, had never even traveled across America, had never flown in a plane. He couldn't imagine traveling to India. Furthermore, he hadn't the money.

The thought, however, nagged at him.

And so white-haired old Dr. Charles McCoy announced he was going to India. He sold his car and few possessions and bought a one-way plane ticket. "By yourself?" asked his horrified friends. "To India? What if you fall ill? What if you should die in India?"

"It's just as close to heaven from there as it is from here," he replied.

He arrived in Bombay with his billfold, his Bible, his passport—all of which were promptly taken by pickpockets. He was left with only the clothes on his back and the address of some missionaries that he had clipped from a magazine. The man who had originally invited him had remained in America, and when he showed up on the missionaries' doorstep, they weren't sure what to do with him.

After a day or so, McCoy declared he was going to visit the mayor of Bombay. *Don't waste your time*, advised his new friends. After several years of trying, they had never been able to see the mayor. McCoy prayed about it and went anyway. He presented his calling card to the receptionist, and she looked at it carefully, then disappeared through a door. Returning, she told him to come back at 3 o'clock.

McCoy returned that afternoon to find a reception in his honor attended by the most important civic leaders in Bombay. It seems the city fathers had been greatly impressed by McCoy's tall frame (he was 6'4"), his distinguished white hair, and especially by the long string of degrees after his name on his calling card. *He is a very important man*, they thought. *Perhaps even a representative of the President of the United States.*

Dr. McCoy spoke for a half-hour, giving his testimony about Jesus Christ. At the end, he was politely applauded by the assembled crowd, and afterward he was approached by a man in an impressive military uniform who invited him to speak to the students of his school. As it turned out, his school was India's equivalent to West Point. After his first address, McCoy was invited back repeatedly.

Invitations soon poured in from all over India, and he began an itinerant ministry of preaching the Gospel. In Calcutta he started a Chinese church. He was asked to do the same in Hong Kong. He was invited to Egypt and the Middle East, traveling everywhere on a shoestring but with an energy that he had seldom before felt. His evangelistic ministry stretched to sixteen years, and at age 88, he again found himself in India, in Calcutta.

His host dropped him off at the Grand Hotel, and as he stepped from the car he said, "You know I'm speaking tonight at the YMCA. I have time for a cup of tea and a bit of rest. I don't want to be late for the meeting." He ducked into the hotel, took the elevator to his floor, and suddenly the Lord called him home.

It was just as close to heaven from India, he had said, as from America. Dr. Charles McCoy had wonderfully embodied the final words of Psalm 92:

*Those who are planted in the house of the Lord
Shall flourish in the courts of our God.
They shall still bear fruit in old age;
They shall be fresh and flourishing,
To declare that the Lord is upright;
He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.*

Is Jesus:

Liar, Lunatic, or Lord?

In *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis wrote, "A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said wouldn't be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic on the level with a man who says he's a poached egg—or else he would be the devil of hell; you must take your choice. Either this was, and is, the Son of God, or else a mad man or something worse. You can shut Him up for a demon, or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But don't come up with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great moral teacher. He hasn't left that alternative open to us. He did not intend to."

Knowing The Will Of God F. B. Meyer's Formula

One night as the famous Bible teacher F. B. Meyer stood on the deck of a ship approaching land, he wondered how the crew knew when and how to safely steer to the dock. It was a stormy night, and visibility was low. Meyer, standing on the bridge and peering through the window, asked "Captain, how do you know when to turn this ship into that narrow harbor?"

"That's an art," replied the captain. "Do you see those three red lights on the shore? When they're all in a straight line I go right in!"

Later Meyer said: *When we want to know God's will, there are three things which always occur: the inward impulse, the Word of God, and the trend of circumstances.... Never act until these three things agree.*