

Testimony

by Mel Trotter

From Rags to Riches

This is a true testimonial of a former alcoholic named Mel Trotter

From the time I began going to school and playing ball with the boys on the sand lot in my little hometown, it was easy for me to make friends. Wherever I went I never lacked for a gang around me. This continued on through my young life and even on into the beginning of my married life.

This, early, caught the eyes of the town folk and they were heard to remark that I was a born leader and that someday I might even be President of the United States. Of course, I was unmindful of their remarks and expectations but some of the men were serious about it and began to “groom” me with political ambitions in mind, not only for me, but for themselves and what they might gain with their own in office.

Soon what had started as rather innocent ball games and fellowships began to be turned into social events, including the social drink and all that goes with it. The old gang was soon forgotten, why I was heading for the big time! But you know, it wasn't long before the social drink was not reserved for the special occasions, but it became a morning, noon, and night experience. The virtues I had been noted for began to disappear as steam does when it hits the cold air. My ambitious political friends were the first to leave. Why they couldn't have faith in a “young lush”, even if they had been the ones who had started me drinking. It wasn't long until even the children began to give me a wide berth because I was anything but friendly when I would weave back from the corner saloon. I went from one job to another, from one place to another to live, and each time both the job and the living quarters became less desirable.

One day it found me in Chicago living in a rat-infested cellar apartment in the worst section of the city. Why my wife and little child stayed with me only God knows, for the pain and suffering I caused them cannot be described.

One day our little child was taken seriously ill. A faithful doctor came even though he knew that there would be no payment for his call. After diagnosing the case he reached into his own pocket, took out some money and thrust it into my hands shouting, “Mel, run, don't walk, to the drugstore which is two blocks from here, here's the prescription, come right back, it may even now be too late, so hurry!”

I climbed the stairs and was out onto the pavement. I looked to my left and sure enough I saw the drugstore about two blocks away, but then I looked to my right and saw that the saloon was only one-half block away. A sudden desire came over me, one that drove all thought of my little sick child out of my head. Even the fact that the money in my hand did not belong to me was erased as I blindly rushed to the saloon, threw the money on the bar, and shouted, “Let's all drink, it's on me”. Soon the doctor's money was gone and then some other fool threw his money on the bar and we continued on and on through the day and into the night. When it was time to close I was so far gone that the saloon keeper just threw me in a back room to sleep it off. When he came back the next day, I was still there, and it wasn't until the night began to approach that I came enough to my senses to decide to go home.

When I arrived back, I slowly descended the rickety stairs. I saw that someone was talking very quietly to my wife and they were crying. I still did not know why and was still too far gone to have understood. I then looked into another room. There had been no furniture before, but now there was a little box on a stand. I wondered what it could be. As I went over and looked into the box I saw that it was the body of my little child, but looking very different. Someone had put on her clean, new clothes, and somehow there was even a pair of brand new little shoes. Still I didn't get the message. As I stood there that urge came over me. I craved another drink. What I wouldn't do for another drink!

My dear friends, as I think back on this next part my heart feels as if it were ripped out, for I'm so ashamed. As the urge overwhelmed me, I hurriedly slipped the new shoes from the cold feet of my precious little child, rammed them into my pocket as yet I had not attracted the attention of my wife and woman with her. I stole out of the apartment and I sold those little shoes for a few pennies and bought another drink. I had gone so low that I have often said I had to reach up to touch bottom. With all of this, I was not awakened to reality, until one day, after some more debauchery and drinking, I decided to end it all. With me out of the way, I reasoned the world would be a lot better off, particularly my wife.

With this in mind, I headed for Lake Michigan to drown myself. It had gotten dark and cold and, as I wove my way down Clark Street heading for one of the streets which would take me east to the lake, I was suddenly given a push by someone who said, "why don't you go in there, Bud, it's nice and warm."

And as I went through an open door, someone sat me in a chair. It had all happened so quickly that it took my muddled brain a little while to realize that I was in a room filled with men, and a man was speaking. He was talking as if he knew all about me as he said, "Perhaps you've come in here tonight and you haven't even planned it, in fact you had decided that you're going to end it all, you feel no one understands you, no one cares, and there is no hope."

"My friend, I'm here to tell you that you are wrong, for there is someone who understands you, there is someone who cares for you and I assure you that there is hope for you. You will find all of your answers when you come to Jesus Christ and receive Him as your personal Saviour. He not only wants to save you from your mess, but wants to go with you for the rest of your life, to keep you from getting into any more trouble."

The speaker was Harry Monroe and the place was the Pacific Garden Mission. I became a different person that night. God saved me and made me a new man. My wife got a new husband, the part with its sin and stain was washed away and I found a brand-new tomorrow.

Mel Trotter went on to become a preacher of the same message that saved his soul and changed his life, the message that "**Jesus Saves**". He saw many hundreds come to put their trust in the only One who has the remedy for broken hearts, and broken homes. . . broken by sin.

His story is printed so that you might know that no matter how hopeless you might feel your case to be, there is One who knows all about you and understands your deepest need. That One is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. And that deep need is to have a new beginning in your life . . . not the turning over of a new leaf, but the turning over of your entire life to Christ. You have made a mess of your life and will go on doing so until you come to Christ.

Your heart is stained with sin. You need a new heart. Only Christ can give you that. He Himself says: "*I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh.*" (Ezek. 11:19)

If you ask the Lord to save you . . . to give you a new heart, a new mind, and a new will, He will. He saved Mel Trotter and completely changed his life forever, and he can do the same for you.

*Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus ready stands to save you,
Full of pity, joined with power:
He is able, He is able,
He is willing – doubt no more.*

*Come, ye weary, heavy laden,
Bruised and broken by the fall;
If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all:
Not the righteous, not the righteous,
Sinners – Jesus came to call.*