

became perfectly still, and stood as if transfixed to the spot! Not even a whisper disturbed the solemn silence.

Thoburn said that at a single glance Amanda was able to see through philosophical and religious systems that fooled brilliant men. He asserted that he learned more from her that was of actual value to him as a preacher than from any other person her ever met.

Amanda was gone from the United States for twelve years. Following her successful efforts for India, she worked for eight years as a missionary in Liberia and West Africa, where revival broke out. "The people came from all directions. We went on for two weeks without a break. We had several all-night meetings . . . Some old men were converted that were never known to pray or be serious before." Amanda did not return to the States until 1890, when malaria, rheumatism and arthritis made it no longer practical for her to labor in Africa. She was fifty-three years old.

### No Shelf Life for This Lady

Old age and ill health did not shelve Amanda. After writing her autobiography, which was published in 1893, she opened a home in Chicago for black orphans. To raise support for it, she returned to preaching and singing in churches, both black and white. She died in 1915 of a paralytic stroke at the age of seventy-eight. Her autobiography with its homey details of her struggle for survival and hunger for holiness, has become a classic in women's studies.

*"Thy will be done." Oh! That word, and to say it from the heart. When you stand by your dear ones dying, with not two dollars for funeral expenses, with a husband and father away, and when he might have come, yet he did not, with no one to go to, when the very heavens seemed brass, and the earth iron, and you and your own body exhausted from hard work and watching day and night, and with but little food to sustain the body, then to say, "Thy will be done," from the heart, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices; and this prayer, prayed from the heart, is what is meant by being entirely and wholly sanctified and set apart for God.*

*~ Amanda Smith*

## *Exerts From* **A Quest for Love** *By: Elisabeth Elliot*

With all the hearts, flowers, and red on every corner we think a lot about love, relationships, marriage and the special people in our lives at Valentine's Day. This is for all the teenagers and young single adults who will read this newsletter!

***"Moral blindness and stupidity result from an unwillingness to learn from the experience of elders"***

*"One of the hardest things to conquer in your young walk with the Lord, will not be the anger that pops out so inconveniently, it will not be the insecurity that plagues your mind, it will be your unruly emotions. Those feelings of the heart that are impossible to discern outside of the Holy Ghost's leading and guidance, those desires and feelings of the hearts that will convince you you feel one way when you really have no idea what you feel. Those passions that will make you compromise, deviate, and question your convictions. As a young person, who is endeavoring to walk holy, pure, and upright before God, beware of your heart! It is the greatest liar of all! No one knows your heart but God, trust Him, trust those around you who know. Remember this: As quickly as you received those precious treasures from God, is how quickly you can lose them."*

Ask the former generations and find out what their fathers learned, for we were

born only yesterday and know nothing, and our days on earth are but a shadow. Will they not instruct you and tell you?

Will they not bring forth words from their understanding? Can papyrus grow tall where there is no marsh? Can reeds thrive without water? While still growing and uncut, they wither more quickly than grass. Such is the destiny of all who forget God; so perishes the hope of the godless. What he trusts in is fragile; what he relies on is a spider's web.

Job 8:8-14

Let us be Christ's men from head to foot, and give no chances to the flesh to have its fling.  
Romans 13:14 (Phillips)

### **BIRTHDAYS & SPECIAL EVENTS IN:**

4 - 11, Pastor In Germany

6<sup>th</sup> - Ariel Schoolfield

8<sup>th</sup> - Joseph Flores

14<sup>th</sup> - Valentine's Day!

16<sup>th</sup> - Agnes Edmundson

18<sup>th</sup> - Jonathan Suter

20<sup>th</sup> - Presidents Day!

# NCO Kids

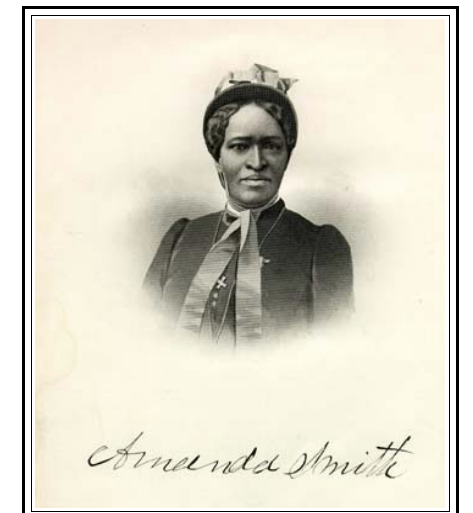
## Monthly News

February 2012

## AMANDA BERRY SMITH

*"I will pray once more," said Amanda to herself, "and if there is any such thing as salvation, I am determined to have it this afternoon or die." It was Tuesday, March 17, 1856, and she was ironing. She set the dinner table, finished her immediate duties and went down to the cellar to pray.*

*She half expected her family to find her dead. Had she not prayed before without results? "I cannot remember the time from my earliest childhood that I did not want to be a Christian, and would often pray alone," she wrote. But she could not get the assurance of acceptance from God for which she hungered. She envied the wind and sun and moon, because they were obedient to God, whereas she knew she had often*



disobeyed. She even asked the sun, moon and wind to carry a message to Jesus that she was a sinner. At another time, she thought that if only she would go to the altar rail at the front of the church, she might achieve peace with God. However, she had determined not to embarrass herself that way. Eventually she became so weary of the ache inside of her that she did go to the altar, but she came away just as miserable as she had been when she went. Satan taunted her that there was no salvation for her. "God does his work quick," she seemed to hear him say.

Amanda was ready to abandon her search for God, but a whisper said, "Pray again." And so she stepped down into the cellar. Once again her prayers seemed futile. She prayed all the things she had prayed before. Darkness settled on her, and she had no relief from the unease that warned her that she was at odds with God.

Finally, in **desperation and believing** that God would strike her dead because she had promised to get saved or die, she looked up and said, "'O, Lord, if Thou wilt help me I will believe Thee,' and in the act of telling God I would, I did. O, the peace and joy that flooded my soul!" From that day forward, Amanda had two ambitions in life: to know God better and to tell others about Him.

Born a slave in Maryland in 1837, Amanda was freed when she was three years old. Her father, John Berry, bought himself and his family and moved them to Pennsylvania. He made their home a station on the Underground Railroad, and their property was closely watched to see if they were harboring fugitives. One night a party of slave trackers burst into the Berry home, demanding to know where John was hiding a runaway. The men beat John and tried to stab Amanda's mother. Another time they did catch a terrified fugitive, who leaped from an upstairs window, and they dragged him away in chains. On yet another occasion, one of Amanda's free-born sisters was sold into slavery while she was visiting an aunt in Maryland. Amanda had to borrow \$50 to buy her back. Given these experiences, she knew slavery was all about, so when she experienced the freedom of salvation in Christ, she praised God that she had been freed twice!

Yet Amanda still had to learn obedience. "O, I would to God I had always obeyed Him, then would my peace have flowed as the river, but many times I failed."

Two years before her salvation, she had married a man who was kind when he was sober and mean when he was drunk. He went to war and never returned. Because Amanda wanted to share in telling others about God, she next married a deacon who promised to become an evangelist. As it turned out, he was lying to her about his plans, and eventually he abandoned her. She realized that she had not cleared the marriage with the Lord, and her bad choice had serious consequences that followed her through life.

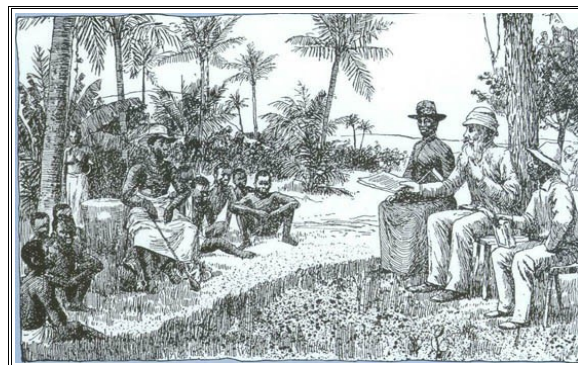
### Unwise Choices, Growing Wisdom

She suffered from poverty and had to work long hours and starve herself so that her children might eat. This suffering taught her to bring every detail of her day to the Lord in prayer. All but one of her children died in infancy, the result of lying in damp rooms while Amanda sweated over laundry to earn money for them. The one daughter who survived to adulthood died in her early twenties.

Amanda's autobiography tells of Christ's **faithful dealings** with her and Satan's whispers to keep her from obedience. She had her share of fears, doubts, and hesitations, but nevertheless she went where God told her to go and clung to Him despite bitter hardships.

### Second Blessing

In the 1860's and afterward, Methodist revivalists urged Christians to experience "the second blessing" – sanctification. This was described as an empowerment of the Holy Spirit that would allow believers to walk in deeper holiness and even to live a perfected life (*sanctification is the goal of the Holy Ghost, therefore you can call the baptism of the Holy Ghost the beginning of sanctification*).



John Inskip was a stirring speaker on this subject. One Sunday in 1868, Amanda felt impelled to go hear him preach. She believed Inskip's claim that God could bring every thought and action into subjection to Him, and she asked for this for herself. Waves of joy flooded her soul. Although she was the only black person in the church and afraid of white people, she shouted aloud.

On the way home, she met some very dignified "leading sisters", the kind who looked down on poorer black people, and she was tempted to say nothing to them of her sanctification, but as she drew near, power welled up within her. She knew that she had to be honest about what the Spirit had done for her, "They said to her, 'Well, Sister Smith, where have you been this morning?'" "The Lord, I said, has sanctified my soul." They were speechless!

### Going to the Fair

What does it mean to be "led by the Spirit"? Amanda believed that she had learned. One time around 1869, the Lord instructed her to go the fair. She questioned this command. It was not her habit to visit such places, but certain that the Holy Ghost was telling her to go, she went, feeling completely out of place. She prayed for direction, and the Lord seemed to tell her where to stand. "I got up and went and stood at the top of the stairs where the people were coming up . . . then came two young men full of glee. The Spirit seemed to pick out one especially, and said, 'Speak to that young man.'" She did, but he respectfully brushed her aside. All that night she felt that she must pray for that young man.

The next day, someone asked Amanda, "Did you hear that Charlie S, is dead?" "No", she replied. "He was found dead in his bed this morning; he was at the fair the other night well and hearty." Curiosity prompted Amanda to go look at the dead man. "There he was, dead, no sign of sickness, and the very young man that God had sent me to speak to." Incidents such as this confirmed to Amanda **that in obeying the prompting of her heart, she was obeying God.**

### Fiery Letters Commanded Her to Preach

The year after her sanctification, Amanda heard the Lord tell her to preach. This command was followed by a vision in which she saw fiery letters spelling "GO."

Women preacher were not yet widely accepted –

much less black women. Yet, dressed plainly in black, gray and white, she began speaking in African Methodist churches. Her stirring songs, sung in rich contralto voice, her vivid testimonies and her obvious faith spurred many others to seek and find similar joy. The self-educated ex-slave won souls on five continents and challenged many Christians to live lives consistent with what they believed. Through her example, women gained a more prominent role in the African Methodist Churches.

### England, India, Africa

In 1878 Amanda was invited to England to hold three months of services. A year later she was still there. From England she went by invitation to India, where she worked two years. Bishop James M. Thoburn of Bombay wrote,

I shall never forget one meeting which we were holding in an open square, in the very heart of the city. It was at a time of no little excitement, and some Christian preachers had been roughly handled in the same square a few evenings before. I noticed a great crowd of men and boys, who had succeeded in breaking up a missionary's audience on the other side of the square, rushing towards us with loud cries and threatening gestures. If left to myself I should have tried to gain the box on which the speakers stood in order to command the crowd, but at the critical moment, our good Sister Smith knelt on the grass and began to pray. As the crowd rushed up to the spot, and saw her beaming face upturned to the evening sky, pouring out her heart in prayer, they

