

podownfall of the industry.

Amy Carmichael did not merely write about her missionary work. Many of her books are devotionals that have inspired countless men and woman into deeper love for their Saviour and a hunger to follow him more completely. Perhaps the greatest lesson that Amy's life and writings teach us is how to know Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings.

Suffering was a constant companion to Amy Carmichael. Despite the bodily hardships she faced, her worst sufferings were not even physical. Having so much love and tenderness in her heart, words cannot describe her anguish when occasionally she would lose a child she thought she had rescued, sometimes from her very doorstep.

Despite the difficulties of her life, the Lord helped Amy to see these sufferings positively, as battle wounds and honours gained in the service of her Saviour. The following poem reveals something of this approach to suffering:

*"From prayer that asks that I may be  
Sheltered from winds that beat on Thee,  
From fearing when I should aspire,  
From faltering when I should climb higher  
From silken self, O Captain, free  
Thy soldier who would follow Thee.  
From subtle love of softening things,  
From easy choices, weakening,  
(Not thus are spirits fortified,  
Not this way went the Crucified)  
From all that dims Thy Calvary  
O Lamb of God, deliver me.  
Give me the love that leads the way,  
The faith that nothing can dismay  
The hope no disappointments tire,  
The passion that will burn like fire;  
Let me not sink to be a clod;  
Make me Thy fuel, Flame of God"*

The above article first appeared in Christian Voice's May 2010 newsletter.



# Answers

Happy

1. silence

2. a coin

3. a towel

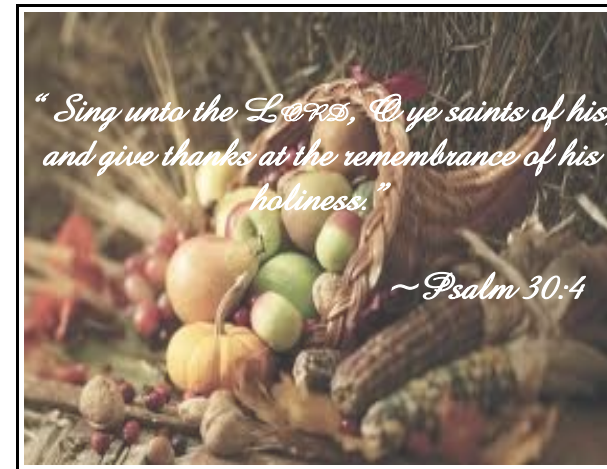
4. a cold

5. a stamp

Thanksgiving

It would do us all good to get our eyes off of ourselves and think about our brothers and sisters in Christ who are paying a much higher price than we are! This man is thirty-four years old, has a wife, and has two children. Because he is a Christian, he has been in prison for the past three years. Disturbed to learn of a false story on the internet that he had complained about his suffering, Farshid Fathi wrote a letter to clear up the matter.

*"How can I complain about my suffering when my brothers and sisters are paying a high price for their faith all over the world? I recently heard about many people killed in front of a church in Pakistan. I also heard a young sister in Christ sharing about how she lost her family for the sake of the Gospel and still she is willing to return to share the good news. So, when I look at all these heroes of faith, how can I complain about my suffering? Thank you so much for your prayers and for your support and for your love."*



## BIRTHDAYS & SPECIAL EVENTS IN:

# November

3<sup>rd</sup> – Daylight Savings ends

5<sup>th</sup> – Election Day

11<sup>th</sup> – Veteran's Day

11<sup>th</sup> – Chris Marcoux

9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> – Pastor in Donetsk, Ukraine

28<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Day

# NCO Kids

## Monthly News



November 2013



## Amy Carmichael

Few would have expected David and Catherine Carmichael's eldest daughter Amy to grow up to become one of the world's most famous missionaries.

Born in 1867, in the small village of Millisle, Northern Ireland, there was nothing particularly unusual about this girl. She was known for her wilfulness, tomboyish attitude, and a propensity to get into mischievous pranks. Little did the Carmichael parents realize that their daughter would be God's tool for rescuing hundreds of children from a life worse than death in the darkness of the Indian jungles.

Though Amy's father died when she was five, the gap had been amply filled by the widower Robert Wilson. Co-founder of the Keswick Convention, Wilson was a catalyst for the holiness movement in England and a support for many missionaries around the globe. When she was in her young twenties, Wilson asked to be allowed to adopt Amy for whom he felt a special fondness after the loss of his only daughter. Thus it was that Amy moved in with Mr. Wilson and his sons to work as his secretary. The job put Amy in direct contact with many of the missionaries around



the world, including Hudson Taylor, Theodore Monod, and F.B. Meyer. This was no doubt instrumental in pressing upon Amy the call to mission work.

Amy was an unlikely candidate for the life of a missionary.

She suffered from neuralgia, a disease that

stimulates the nerves to feel pain. This caused Amy to have to spend entire weeks in bed. Moreover, she felt reluctant to leave Robert Wilson, as the two of them had grown extremely attached to each other. Yet the call of Jesus upon her would not go away. Around this time, she wrote to her mother saying,

*“Everything, everything seemed to be saying ‘Go’, through all sounds the cry seemed to rise, ‘Come over and help us.’ Every bit of pleasure of work which has come to me, has had underlying it the thought of those people who have never, never heard of Jesus; before my eyes, clearer than any lovely view has been, the constant picture of those millions who have no chance, and never had one, of hearing of the love which makes our lives so bright.”*

Amy initially had no idea where the Lord was leading her to go. She only knew that she needed to go somewhere. Rejected by the China Inland Mission because of her frailty, she was eventually able to go to Japan as a Keswick missionary with the Church Missionary Society. In the providence of God, however, Amy was only able to stay in Japan for fifteen months because of ill health. God had other plans for this young woman.

Amy remained restless, eager for a new assignment. The opportunity presented itself nine months later when she was accepted by the Church of England Zenana Mission to go as a missionary to India. Sailing for India in 1895, Amy had no idea that she would remain there for the next fifty-six years.

It took Amy some time to settle down to life as a missionary in India. Having little in common with the other missionaries and being unable to speak to the natives, Amy experienced acute bouts of loneliness. Additionally, she struggled with ill health to such a degree that some of her fellow missionaries predicted that she would not last more than six months. Despite these setbacks, Amy persevered with a rigorous study of the Tamil language, longing to be able to share the gospel in a language the natives could understand.

It was after being appointed to minister in the Tinnevely District that Amy first became aware of the horrifying practice of dedicating little girls to the Hindu gods. The practice, which had begun sometime around the 6th century, involved grooming girls, some of them only babies, for a life of ritualised prostitution. These girls were a valuable commodity since they would become the sex slaves of the Brahmin priests who ran the temples. Considered to be the property of the gods, the girls had no rights of their own and could be abused and tortured without censure.

Because the Hindus were taught that it was meritorious to donate their children to the gods, and since there were often financial rewards for parents who did so, many

children were dedicated even before their birth. Some girls were simply kidnapped and forced to spend the rest of their lives as sex fodder in the darkness of the jungle temples.

Amy’s work in the Tinnevely District brought her to Dohnavur, a small village thirty miles from the southern tip of India. Originally, Amy and her fellow missionaries intended to use Dohnavur merely as a base for a few month’s missionary activity in the region. But again, God had other plans. Dohnavur became a base for one of the world’s most successful missionary endeavours, offering sanctuary to hundreds of girls, and eventually to boys too, who had escaped from a fate worse than death.

It started when a small girl named Preena was given as a gift to the gods at the age of seven (possibly younger). Preena was removed from her mother and placed in the care of a woman charged with teaching her singing and dancing in order to make her more desirable to the Hindu priests. Like all the others in her position, she was also subtly trained to find sin attractive in order to break down the natural barriers that might inhibit her usefulness once she reached puberty.

Preena was too young and innocent to understand what it meant to be “married to the god,” but only longed to be back with her mother. When she could endure it no longer, Preena escaped and made the two day journey back to the town of Tuticorin where her mother lived. However, the woman into whose care she had been placed was quick on her heels. No sooner had Preena arrived home than the wicked woman caught up with her and demanded to have the girl returned. While Preena clung to her mother, begging not to be sent away, the woman threatened wrath from the gods should she refuse to consent. Fearing the Hindu deities, Preena’s mother unloosed her daughter’s clinging arms and returned her to the temple’s service.

As a punishment for escaping, Preena had her hands branded with a red hot iron. Yet this incredibly painful procedure seems to have only made Preena more eager to be free. Not long after this, Preena overheard her captors making plans to marry her to the god as soon as possible. Misunderstanding the Hindu idiom “tied to the god”, Preena believed she was to be tied with ropes to the figure of an idol she had seen in the dark recesses of the temple. Terrified by the prospect, Preena made up her mind to escape again. This time, she was wise enough not to flee to her mother, but escaped to the town of Pannaivilai where she was found and offered accommodation by a Christian woman. Providentially, Amy and her friends happened to be traveling through her old town at the same time and met Preena the next morning. Preena described her first meeting with Amy:

*Our precious Ammai [‘Ammal’ means ‘true mother’ in*

*Tamil] was having her morning chota. When she saw me, the first thing she did was to put me on her lap and kiss me. I thought, ‘My mother used to put me on her lap and kiss me – who is this person who kisses me like my mother?’ From that day she became my mother, body and soul.’*

The stories Amy heard from Preena filled her with horror and made her more determined than ever to bring down the horrible industry of sex trafficking. Amy began finding out everything she could about the trafficking, developing a growing network of helpers and informants. After gaining a reputation for rescuing children, many escaped girls made their way to Dohnavur. But Amy did not just wait around for people to arrive on her doorstep. Whenever she heard about someone in danger, Amy would be proactive in doing all she could to rescue the child. She would sometimes travel incredibly long distances on India’s hot, dusty roads just to save one child. As the years progressed, Amy became a shrewd detective, often finding missing clues supplied by a chance circumstance or even a dream that could only be explained by the Providence of God. However, she was not always successful. One child she had been unsuccessful in saving was drugged and (as she confided to her own private notebook after learning the horrifying facts) “then died in such agony that the one who was responsible fled from the house with his hands over his ears to shut out the sounds of her screams.”

In 1918, a boy arrived, the first in what would become a whole community of boys next to Dohnavur’s small village of girls. Amy loved working with the children, always finding time to play with them and let them know that they were loved and valued. Inspired by her example, many others came and joined the ministry at Dohnavur, offering their unique skills and gifts to the expanding operation. As more and more children were rescued, Dohnavur became an expanding orphanage. But it was more like a family than an orphanage, with Amy functioning as the mother for hundreds of unwanted children. She was affectionately called ‘Ammal’, by the children, the Tamil word for Mother.

The Dohnavur fellowship, as it came to be known, became a model of Christian living. Though not perfect, the growing community had few parallels in modern times for the unity, prayer, and love that emanated from it. The following quotation, taken from a little manuscript Amy wrote for some of her closest co-laborers, shows what Amy’s heart was for all of Dohnavur:

*“We are trusted to spread the spirit of love, tenderness in judgment, the habit of thinking the best of one another; unwillingness to believe evil, grief if we are forced to do so, eagerness to believe good, joy over one recovered from any slip or fall, unselfish gladness in another’s joys, sorrow in another’s sorrow, readiness to do anything to help another*

*entirely irrespective of self- all this and much more is included in that wonderful word love. If love weakens among us, if it ever becomes possible to tolerate the least shadow of an unloving thought, our Fellowship will begin to perish. Unlove is deadly. It is a cancer. It may kill slowly but it always kills in the end. Let us fear it, fear to give room to it as we should fear to nurse a cobra. It is deadlier than any cobra. And just as one minute drop of the almost invisible cobra venom spreads swiftly all over the body of one into whom it has been injected, so one drop of the gall of unlove in my heart or yours, however unseen, has a terrible power of spreading all through our Family, for we are one body – we are parts of one another. If one member suffers loss, all suffer loss. Not one of us liveth to herself.”*

When she was in her young sixties, Amy broke her leg and twisted her spine in a fall. The injury left her bedridden for the remainder of her life and in almost constant pain. Rarely did she sleep through an entire night without waking up in pain. Being convalescent did not come easy for Amy, who was naturally an energetic and active person. She would later reflect, “I never found patience easy, being by nature a most impatient mortal; even one week in bed seemed impossible in old days.” Despite her own suffering, Amy remained remarkably others-centred. Because of her own trials, Amy was able to have a remarkable empathy for the sufferings others had to endure, offering comfort and refreshment even when those trials were comparatively mild compared with hers. The love of God radiated from Amy like a power magnet, touching so many lives and irresistibly pointing people towards Jesus.

When Amy died in 1951, at the age of 83, she left behind herself a remarkable legacy, both in the lives of those she had touched as well as in the literary output that she left behind.

From Dohnavur, Amy wrote book after book, including the highly influential *Things as They Are: Mission Work in Southern India* (1903) and *Gold Cord* (1932). As a result of her books, more and more Westerners began following the work, supporting it with gifts and prayer. Moreover, these works alerted the West to the evils of the Hindu temple system and played a key role in the eventual