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MOODY'S

Child Stories

The Lost Kiss

I remember, a few years ago, that my little girl used to be in the habit of getting up cross some mornings. You know how it is when any member of the family does not get up in a sweet temper; it disturbs all the rest of the family. Well, one morning she got up cross, and spoke in a cross way, and finally, I said to her, "Emma, if you speak in that way again, I shall have to punish you." Now it was not because I didn't love her; it was because I did love her, and if I had to correct her it was for her good.

Well, that went off all right. One morning she got up cross again. I said nothing, but when she was getting ready to go to school she came up to me and said, "Papa, kiss me." I said "Emma, I cannot kiss you this morning." She said, "Why, Father?" "Because you have been cross again this morning. I cannot kiss you." She said, "Why, Papa, you never refused to kiss me before." "Well, you have been naughty this morning." "Why don't you kiss me?" she said again. "Because you have been naughty.

You will have to go to school without your kiss."

She went into the other room where her mother was and said, "Mamma, Papa doesn't love me. He won't kiss me. I wish you would go and get him to kiss me." But her mother said, "You know, Emma, that your father loves you, but you have been naughty." So she couldn't be kissed, and she went downstairs crying as if her heart would break; and I loved her so well that the tears came into my eyes. I could not help crying, and when I heard her going downstairs I could not keep down my tears. I think I loved her then better than I ever did, and when I heard the door close I went to the window and saw her going down the street weeping.

I didn't feel good all that day. I believe I felt a good deal worse than the child did, and I was anxious for her to come home. How long that day seemed to me! And when she came home at night and came to me and asked me to forgive her, and told me how sorry she felt, how gladly I took her up and kissed her, and how happy she went upstairs to her bed!

It is just so with God. He loves you and when He chastises you, it is for your own good. If you will only come to Him and tell Him how sorry you are, how gladly He will receive you and how happy you will make Him, and oh, how happy you will be yourself!



A Boy's Victory

I remember while holding a meeting out in Kansas, I saw a little boy who came up to the window crying. I went to him and said, "My little boy, what is your trouble?" "Why Mr. Moody, my

mother's dead, and my father drinks, and they don't love me, and the Lord won't have anything to do with me because I am a poor drunkard's boy." "You have a wrong idea, my boy; Jesus will love you and save you, and your father too," and I told him a story of a little boy in an Eastern city. The boy said his father would never allow hypocrites of Christians to come into his house, and would never allow his child to go to Sunday school. A kind-hearted man took the little boy and brought him to Christ. When Christ gets into a man's heart, he cannot help but pray. This father had been drinking one day and coming home he heard that boy praying. He went to him and said: "I don't want you to pray any more. You've been along with some of those Christians. If I catch you praying again I'll flog you." But the boy was filled with God and he couldn't help praying. The door of communication was opened between him and Christ, and his father caught him praying again. He went to him. "Didn't I tell you never to pray again? If I catch you at it once more you leave my house." He thought he would stop him.

Not very long after this one day his father had been drinking more than usual, and coming in found the boy offering a prayer. He caught the boy with a push and said, "Didn't I tell you never to pray again? Leave this house. Get your things packed up and go." The little fellow hadn't many things to get together—a drunkard's boy never has—and he went up to his mother's room. "Good-by, mother." "Where are you going?" "I don't know where I'll go, but father says I cannot stay here any longer;

I've been praying again," he said. The mother knew it wouldn't do to try to keep the boy when her husband had ordered him away, so she drew him to her bosom and kissed him, and bade him good-by. He went to his brothers and sisters and kissed them good-by.

When he came to the door his father was there and the little fellow reached out his hand: "Good-by, father; as long as I live I will pray for you," and left the house. He hadn't been gone many minutes when the father rushed after him. "My boy, if that is religion, if it can drive you away from father and mother and home, I want it."

Yes, maybe some other little boy has a drinking father and mother. Lift your voice to heaven, and the news will be carried up to heaven, "He prays."



A Boy's Story

Some years ago, as I was about to close a prayer meeting, a young man got up and urged all those men present who had not yet accepted Christ to do so that night. And in closing his speech, he said: "I once had a father and mother that cared more for my soul than for anything else. At last my father died; and when my father was dead and gone, my mother was more anxious than ever for me, and sometimes she would come and put her loving arms around my neck, and she would just plead with me to go to Christ. She used to tell me, after my father was dead, that she was lonesome without having me a Christian. I told her I sympathized with her, but declared I wanted to see a little of the world. I did not want to become a Christian

in early life. Sometimes I would wake up past midnight and would hear a voice in my mother's bedroom. I would hear that godly mother crying to God for her boy. I was her only child and very dear to her. At last I felt I must either become a Christian or go away from that mother's influence; and I ran away.

"After I had been gone a long time, I heard from home indirectly that my mother was sick. I knew that she was pining for me, that her heart was broken on account of me and my wayward life. I thought I would go home and ask my mother to forgive me. My second thought was: If I did, I would have to go and be a Christian. I could not stay under the same roof without becoming a Christian.

"My rebellious heart said, 'I will not go.' When I heard again, my mother was much worse. The thought came: Supposing my mother should die and I should never see her again.

"I never could forgive myself. I started for home. There was no train to my native village so I took the coach and got in just after dark. The moon was shining. I had to go about a mile and a half to my mother's house; and on my way I thought I would go by the village graveyard. I thought I would get over the fence and go to the grave where my father was buried, to see if there was a new-made grave. It might be that mother was gone.

"When I drew near that grave, my heart began to beat more quickly, as by the light of the moon I saw the new-made grave. The whole story was clear—my sainted mother was gone!

“For the first time in my life this question came stealing over me: Who was going to pray for my lost soul now? Father and mother are both gone. And, young men, I would have given the world if I could have called that mother back and have her put her arms around my neck and breathe my name in prayer. But her voice was silent forever.

“I knelt beside that grave crying that God might have mercy on me and He would forgive me. And I did not leave that grave until the morning dawn. But before morning I believed that God, for Christ’s sake, had forgiven my sins, and that my mother’s God had become my God.

“But young men, I would never forgive myself. I never can. I killed that mother. I trampled her prayers and her entreaties under my feet. I broke her heart and sent her to her grave. Young man, if you have a godly mother, treat her kindly.”



Over the River

A minister who had lost his child asked another minister to come and preach for him. The man came and told how he lived on one side of a river and felt very little interest in the people on the other side, until his daughter was married and went over there to live; then every morning he went to the window and looked over that river, and felt very much concerned about that town and all the people there. “Now,” said he, “I think that as this child has crossed another river, heaven will be dearer to him than ever it has been before.”

Shall we not just let our hearts and affections be set on the other side of the river? It is but a step;

it is but a vail; we shall soon be in the other world.



Moody and the Children

The first two or three years that I attempted to talk in the meetings I saw that the older people did not like it. I had sense enough to know that I was a bore to them. Well, I went out upon the street and I got eighteen little children to follow me the first Sunday, and I led them into the Sunday school. I found that I had something to do. I was encouraged and I kept at that work. And if I am worth anything to the Christian church today, it is as much due to that work as anything else.

I could not explain these Scriptural passages to them for I did not then comprehend them; but I could tell them stories. I could tell them that Christ loved them and that He died for them. I did the best I could. I used the little talent I had, and God kept giving me more talents, and so, let me say, find some work.

See if you can get a Sunday school to teach. If you cannot get that, go down into the dark lanes and byways of the city and talk to them and sing some gospel hymns; or, if you cannot sing, take someone with you who can sing some of these songs of praise. Sing or read the Twenty-third Psalm, or pray, and you can get a blessing in that way. When you have won one soul to Christ, you will want to win two; and when you get into the luxury of winning souls it will be a new world to you, and you will not think of going back to the world at all.

A Child's Request for Prayer

At the close of one of the afternoon meetings we had in the Berkeley Street Church a few weeks ago, a little child brought me a note. I put it in my pocket and read it when I got home. It was this: "Won't you pray that my mother may come home?" On inquiry I found that the child was a little waif, her father was dead, and that her mother had deserted her and gone out to San Francisco and had been gone more than a year. Well, I must confess it staggered me to be asked to pray that that mother might come back.

But another note was handed to me a few days later: "You will remember the little child who asked prayers for her mother to return home, having been absent a year? This mother has returned, and was at the meeting with her little child on Friday night." The little child now wants us to pray that her dear mother may be converted.



The Little Bell Boy

I remember a mother who lay dying. She had been married the second time, and she had a boy that her second husband did not like; this mother sent for me and she said, "Now I am dying from consumption. I have been sick a long time, and since I have been lying here I have neglected that boy. He has been in bad company, and he is very, very unkind and he is given to swearing; and, Mr. Moody, I want you to promise me that when I am gone and he has no one to take care of him, that you will look after him." I promised that I would.

Soon after that mother died, and no sooner was she buried than that boy ran away and they didn't know where he went. The next Sunday I spoke to the children in my Sunday school and asked them to look for him and if they found him to let me know. For some time I did not hear of him but one day one of my pupils told me that the boy was a bellboy in a certain hotel. I went there and found him and talked with him.

I remember it perfectly well; it was the third of July. He had no father or mother, but a stepfather who did not care for him; and as I spoke to him kindly about Christ and what He had done for him, and how He loved him, the tears trickled down his cheeks. When I asked him if he wanted to know Christ, he told me he did; a little boy that was with me got down upon his knees and prayed with him; and at night—it was the night before the "Fourth"—he went up upon the flat roof, and they were firing off cannon and sky-rockets, and there upon that roof at midnight, that boy was praying and calling upon God for light, for help and for comfort. Now he is an active Christian young man and superintendent of a Sunday school. He was taken right up and held on, and he is leading others to Christ.

There is a work for you. Take these children by the hand and lead them to the cross of Christ. They can be gathered into our churches, and be a blessing to the Church of God.



Reaping the Whirlwind

I remember in the North of England a prominent citizen told a sad case that happened there in the

city of Newcastle-on-Tyne. It was about a young boy, an only child. The father and mother thought everything of him and did all they could for him. But he fell into bad ways. He took up with evil characters and finally got to running with thieves. He didn't let his parents know about it. By-and-by the gang he was with broke into the house, and he was with them. Yes, he had to do it all. They stopped outside of the building, while he crept in and started to rob the money drawer. He was caught in the act, taken into court, tried, convicted, and sent to the penitentiary for ten years. He worked on and on in the convict's cell, till at last his term was out, and at once started for home. And when he came back to the town he started down the street where his father and mother used to live. He went to the house and rapped. A stranger came to the door and stared him in the face.

"No, there's no such person lives here. Where your parents are I don't know," was the only welcome he received. Then he turned through the gate, and went down the street, asking even the children that he met about his folks, where they were living, and if they were well. But everybody looked blank. Ten years had rolled by, and though that seemed a short time, how many changes had taken place! There where he was born and brought up he was now an alien, and unknown even in the old haunts. But at last he found a couple of townsmen that remembered his father and mother, but they told him the old house had been deserted long years ago; that he had been gone but a few months before his father was confined to his house, and very soon after

died brokenhearted, and that his mother had gone out of her mind.

He went to the madhouse where his mother was, and went up to her and said, "Mother, mother, don't you know me? I am your son." But she raved and slapped him on the face and shrieked, "You are not my son," and then raved again and tore her hair. He left the asylum more dead than alive, so completely brokenhearted that he died in a few months.

Yes, the fruit was long growing, but at the last it ripened to the harvest like a whirlwind.



The Speaking Card

There was a friend of mine in Philadelphia going by a drinking saloon one night, and he saw in that saloon a professed Christian playing cards. He just took a pencil, wrote on a card, and saw a little boy and said: "My boy, here is some money. I want you to do an errand for me. You see that tall man on the side of the table where those three are playing cards?" Said he, "Yes, I do." "Well," said my friend, "just take that card to him."

The boy started, and my friend watched him when he handed the card to him. Written on the card was "Ye are my witnesses." The man took the card, looked at it, and sprang to his feet; he rushed out into the street and asked the boy where the card came from. The boy said, "A man over there gave it to me." But the man had slipped away, and the poor card-player died a few months afterwards.

"Ye are my witnesses." Wherever you find a professed Christian going in bad company, you may



look for something worse.

Moody's Mother and Her Prodigal Son

I can give you a little experience of my own family. Before I was fourteen years old the first thing I remember was the death of my father. He had been unfortunate in business, and had failed. Soon after his death the creditors came in and took everything. My mother was left with a large family of children. One calamity after another swept over the entire household. Twins were added to the family, and my mother was taken sick. The eldest boy was fifteen years of age, and to him my mother looked as a stay in her calamity, but all at once that boy became a wanderer. He had been reading some trashy novels, and the belief had seized him that he had only to go away to make a fortune. Away he went. I can remember how eagerly she used to look for tidings of that boy; how she used to send to the post office to see if there was a letter from him, and recollect how we used to come back with the sad tidings, "No letter."

I remember how in the evenings we used to sit beside her in that New England home, and we would talk about our father; but the moment the name of that boy was mentioned she would hush us into silence. Some nights when the wind was very high, and the house, which was upon a hill, would tremble at every gust, the voice of my mother was raised in prayer for that wanderer who had treated her so unkindly. I used to think she loved him more than all the rest of us put together, and I believe she did.

On a Thanksgiving day—you know that is a

family day in New England—she used to set a chair for him, thinking he would return home. Her family grew up and her boys left home. When I could write, I sent letters all over the country, but could find no trace of him. One day while in Boston the news reached me that he had returned. While in that city, I remember how I used to look for him in every store—he had a mark on his face—but I never got any trace.

One day while my mother was sitting at the door, a stranger was seen coming toward the house, and when he came to the door he stopped. My mother didn't know her boy. He stood there with folded arms and great beard flowing down his breast, his tears trickling down his face. When my mother saw those tears she cried, "Oh, it is my lost son," and entreated him to come in. But he stood still. "No, mother," he said, "I will not come in, till I hear first you have forgiven me." Do you believe she was not willing to forgive him? Do you think she was likely to keep him standing there? She rushed to the threshold, and threw her arms around him, and breathed forgiveness.

God will forgive you.



The Saloonkeeper and His Children

I remember when I first began to work for the Lord, fifteen or sixteen years ago, there was a Boston businessman who was converted there and stayed three months. When he was leaving he told me there was a man in whom he was very much interested, whose boy was in the high school; he had said there were two brothers and a little sister who