

# Prayed Out – Stayed Out



*“Thy Word  
&  
Truth”*



## **The Apostolic Faith**

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## PRAYED OUT – STAYED OUT

“**MY HOME** was among the dope fiends. I was in the saloons, in the gambling dens, and behind the prison walls. For years I roamed this country, heartbroken. Sorrow and sin drove me from my home when only a boy of thirteen and made me an outcast in the slums of Chicago.

“I walked the alleys down in South Park and Madison Streets, slept in the old stairways, and wished I was back home. I had left my home – not because I wanted to but because I had pulled off something I wouldn’t face my father and mother with.

“I lay in an old penitentiary down in Kentucky when I was nothing but a boy, lay there with my heart loaded, thinking of my mother and sisters – cursed the day I was born. I’ve walked the streets of these western towns with such a load of trouble and crime that my old heart seemed to choke. I am a man that knows what sin is – what sin can do for a man! I suffered ‘death’ over sin and what sin brought to me. Crimes rolled up back of me for twenty-eight years – from a boy – and every day, down under that old shirt lay a broken heart.

### Increasing Depravity

“I saw the time when I went deeper and deeper into sin, committed crime after crime. I was put behind the prison bars and suffered the tortures of hell. Hung up by the thumbs – fed on bread and

water – but never confessed! Always stood pat! – my heart as hard as stone. No trouble for me to hold a man up and take his money off him, rob him – and then sit down and eat with him. Never thought a thing of it! Held up five men in one night – and the last one walked down the street into a restaurant. I walked into the same restaurant, sat down beside him, and paid for his meal – with his own money.

“I know what it is to be an escaped convict – to wear the stripes, the handcuffs. Once I beat the cuffs off with the car pins down in the railroad yards. I didn’t think there was any hope for a man like that.

“I spent most of my life around Chicago; Kansas City; St. Louis; Terre Haute, Indiana; Danville, Illinois – running roadhouses, beer gardens, saloons and dives all over this country. I took what went with that life. I took the jolts over the road. I got into the workhouses and penitentiaries. I would come out and open up another dive. I suffered all of that. Crossed the waters to get out of trouble – but I never knew a day or hour of happiness.

“For years I had everything a gambler could have – wore the diamonds, rode in cabs, walked on Brussels carpets, danced on waxed floors, gambled with the rounders. I made big money and spent it all – lost thousands of dollars in a day. And one night I walked out – and caught a boxcar out of St. Louis. That’s what sin did for me!

“Sin robbed me of everything good. I didn’t have a friend on earth – except my mother. I hadn’t written to my sisters nor to my brothers for years. My old

father had turned me down, and had no use for me. When I went back to see my sister she opened the door a little crack and said: ‘You have brought so much disgrace on the home and your people we don’t want any more to do with you.’ I remember how I walked down the street, and said: ‘There isn’t much more left for me. I guess I have played my last card. So here goes nothing.’ I will never forget that night. I love my sisters – but I never expected to see that sister again.

### **A Praying Mother**

“But through it all, back in Middlesboro, Kentucky, up on the side of a hill, in an old log cabin by a peach orchard, was a mother praying for me. I thank God that one day He answered that mother’s prayers. Her criminal boy in a county jail wept his way through.

“My mother had mortgaged or sold everything she had, for me. Mother would go back of the prison walls and eat her holiday dinner with me, and sit and talk. The railroad was never too long, nor the prison walls too high for that dear old mother to come to see her boy.

### **Mother’s Prayers Answered**

“Up in the Spokane County Jail one afternoon an Apostolic Faith paper was handed to me behind the bars. The Apostolic Faith prints that paper to give away. I saw it in the hands of a woman – and I begged her for it.

“I crawled up on the top bunk that hung by two chains, and read two testimonies – one of a dope fiend and one of a criminal. They said that God had saved them. My life was like theirs. I was trembling and shaking like a leaf. It hadn’t been two hours before that, that I had begged the jailer to give me one more shot of cocaine in my arm, so I could lie down and rest and live a few more hours. I knew the life they had lived. When I read that Jesus could save that kind of men, it was the best message I had ever heard in all my life.

### **My First Prayer**

“I was a man who had never been inside of a church house unless my mother had taken me there when I was a small boy. I had never read a chapter in the Bible. But a hope sprang up in my heart that day; it put me on my knees on that steel floor. There were forty-eight criminals in that tank and one in the cell – eleven of them murderers. I told my cell mate, ‘I never prayed a prayer in my life, but here is where I am going to pray. If God can save that kind of man, I believed there’s hope for me, and I’m going to pray. You can stay in here or move out, but I am going to see if there is a God.’

“My knees hit that steel floor, the paper under my knees, and I called on God. It was my first prayer, but that day a criminal and dope fiend prayed a prayer that God heard. All those crimes came up before me – the men I had robbed, the prisons where I was wanted – and I would almost take the lockjaw as I

prayed. One of the men in the jail with me told me afterwards that I said, ‘O God, don’t let me get up until You do something for me!’ Two years later that man, too, was saved.

“While I was praying the men kicked the door, threw cigarette butts in on me, and cursed me. I brushed the cigarette butts off my neck. You may not think that it pays to pray; but I want to tell you it pays!

“I prayed a prayer that day that changed my whole life. I arose to my feet in that jail, walked out of my cell, and up and down the aisle, singing a song I had never sung before in my life, ‘Oh, How I Love Jesus!’ Let me tell you, I am a man that knows there is a God. Every spark of infidelity went out of this criminal’s heart the day God saved me.

### **Prayer Answered**

“I had gotten out of jail almost every way a man could get out. I have been bailed out. I have been paroled out. I have sawed out. And I have shot my way out. But that day I prayed my way out – and I have stayed out. I never robbed another man’s house; never rode another man’s horse away; never drove another man’s car off, nor blew a safe. But I thank God that I have paid for many of them. Today I have a clean record, a clean heart, and a clear conscience. I can sleep these nights. But it takes God to do that for a man like me.

“When I walked out of the jail that day after God had saved me, I was handcuffed together with twenty-three others, for trial. I said, ‘I don’t care what they

do to me. God, I have sworn to many a lie, but today I'll tell the truth.'

"I never pled guilty in my life. I had always stood my ground; but that day I stood in front of the twelve jurymen and the judge with his black robe on – I had been there before. I looked them in the face just as a little child. No fear! I didn't care. The tears rolled down my face – I sat there praising God while the trial was going on. As they read the charges – one after another – some of the prisoners were given from one to ten years. When they called the name I was going under, I arose and asked the judge to let me tell my right name. I hadn't told it for years. That day I pled guilty and dropped to my seat, and cried like a child. My old heart melted; I was so glad I could have my right name once more.

### **Confession**

"I told the judge that the two guns that lay there were the guns I had carried; the bottle of whisky was the one I had sold to the Indians; and the money belonged to two white men I had held up the Wednesday night before, and the rest of the money belonged to the Indians.

"Twenty minutes later the officer led me to the door and said, 'You can go. If you've got anything to face in this world, go face it. We are done with you.' That's what God can do!

### **At an Altar**

“A few nights later I came to the Apostolic Faith church. There I fell at the altar and I told those people. ‘You won’t be bothered with me long – I’ve got a lifetime to face behind the penitentiary bars and the county jails I have broken out of.’ I told them of the walls I had gone over. ‘I am wanted everywhere!’ They told me God would deliver me.

“God did deliver me. He went before me and set me free. I have never served a day since God saved me. Oh, how I love Jesus! It is a wonderful thing! He changed my heart and put victory in my life, and sent me on my way rejoicing.

“I have been back home to see my sisters, my old father, and brother. Today they are not ashamed of me. My old mother is in Heaven, and her criminal boy is down here telling about Jesus.

“I used to hate to tell my awful life; but the time came when I said, ‘God, I will hold up Your holy Name if You will give me power to tell it.’”

### **Fully Paid Up**

“I have gone back over the tracks of a criminal’s life, faced penitentiaries from coast to coast – and I didn’t have to do a day. I have worked hard to pay back thousands of dollars to straighten up my life. Many times when I had to go back and face a job I had pulled off I wished I had let that one alone. I went back to jewelry stores and paid them and told them I was the man who robbed them; paid for a store front that was wrecked when I blew up a safe.



“I faced the Terre Haute jail from which I escaped and took fourteen out with me. I went to Indianapolis, where I swam a canal with them shooting at me. I had slept under the bridge that night – wet, cold, and hungry.

“In St. Louis one day I returned to a millionaire’s home where I had had a shooting scrape. I never expected to have to face that thing.

“A friend went with me to that home. I said, ‘Maybe I had better tell you before I go there what I am going to do.’ So before I got there I told him what had happened. I said, ‘I have to face this home – the mother and three brothers – and I believe they are at home today. I am going in there.’ My friend said, ‘I don’t think you had better go. You have to use wisdom in doing things like that.’ I said, ‘It may not be wisdom, but I have to get this thing off my conscience. I told God, on my knees that day in the cell when I prayed through, that I would face it; so here goes, life and all!’

“I left him and rang the doorbell. The maid came to the door and I stepped into that millionaire’s home. I said, ‘I guess you people don’t remember me.’ I told them my name. The mother arose and walked toward me – fell into my arms. The three brothers came also – the one with the glass eye whose eye I had shot out. He said, ‘I freely forgive you.’ The mother wept in my arms. Don’t you see what God can do? That is just one of the hundreds of places I went to.

### **Faced a Victim**

“One day I was driving my truck and I backed up in front of a store. I looked in, and there stood a man I had held up at the point of a gun. His wife and daughter were in the jewelry store.

“I looked up and said, ‘God, I said I would face every one I met!’ I walked in, and up to the desk and said, ‘Do you ever remember seeing me?’ He said, ‘No.’ I said, ‘Do you remember being held up some years ago and a man sticking a gun in your ribs and taking your money off you?’ He said, ‘I remember it.’ I said, ‘I am the man who did it. I am back to face it.’

“Then I told him that God had saved me, He said, ‘You are surely one out of a hundred.’ His wife and daughter fell on the counter and wept like children.

“That is just a few of the people I faced. One day I went up and sat down in front of the Seattle chief of police and told him a few of the hold-ups and robberies I had pulled off in that town. When I finished telling him, he shook my hand and said, ‘If there’s never a key turned on you until I turn it, there will never be one.’

“I lived for ten years in that town where I had walked the streets with two guns buckled on me – and had used them. I lived in that town a respected citizen where I had sat on the curbstones, peddled my clothes for cocaine, and the police had dragged me into an alley, kicked my teeth out, kicked me in the ribs, and left me for dead. I held meetings on the street corners in that same city, telling them what God had done for a dope fiend.

## **A Grateful Witness**

“I have been back to that Spokane jail where God saved me, stood beside the jailer, pointed to the cell, and told the Story. I want to tell you that it pays to pray. In that cell, I prayed a prayer that brought victory in my life.

“Today I am a citizen, a taxpayer. I am not a tramp. I have paid back thousands of dollars, and worked hard to do it. I don’t own a man a dollar that I could pay back.

“I have gone back to towns where I used to hang around the dens and the dives and have told the story of Jesus on the street corners. I have stood in a street meeting and have seen a man I had held up – and I would go right off into the crowd after the meeting, and make restitution to him, and pay him. I went back to Kentucky and Tennessee where I was a night rider for two years, and told them that God had saved me.

“I have a good home – a Christian home – a house of prayer. I have never been broke, never wanted for anything since God saved me. I am one of the happiest people on earth, thanking God for victory.

“I know that God can save a dope fiend back of the jail bars – a criminal, a drunkard – and make him sing the songs of Zion. Oh, I am glad I can stand here one more time and say I love this way! I have a right to love it. I am looking forward to the day when I will stand before Jesus by God’s help. Oh, I thank God for Bible salvation!” – W. J., Portland, Oregon.

## **The Death of the Righteous**

Throngs of friends gathered to lay to rest this beloved brother who had for many years been a co-laborer in the Gospel.

As we saw the hundreds of people gathered to pay their last respects to this faithful worker for God, we thought: Had it not been for the Word of God, the message of the Gospel in a paper pushed through the jail bars when he was facing a term in a federal penitentiary, his life would never have been so completely transformed.

But for the fact that no one ever loved this “black sheep” as Jesus did, the history of his later years would have been altogether different; he might have been buried in a potter’s field. Or he might have been buried in a prison yard. We were reminded of the cry of Balaam: “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!”