

YOUTH PRAYS-GOD ANSWERS!

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Chapter 2

YOUTH PRAYS-THINGS HAPPEN!

BOB ARRIVED on the campus of The Mountain School on a Wednesday morning. The sheriff came to arrest him the following Tuesday morning.

But so much had happened in those few days! God had spoken to Bob's heart, and he had responded. An indication of this was shown in the fact that he had called his grandmother and confessed his crime of forgery and theft. He had apologized to his father for his rudeness. More than this, he had asked for and obtained victory over smoking and drinking and a variety of other bad habits. He had met Christ and what a change it had made!

On the Sabbath between the above mentioned days, Hugh James, the man responsible for training these young people, had come to be with the group. He noticed Bob sitting alone in the afternoon, deep in thought. Engaging him in conversation, Hugh found that Bob was wondering how he might come back to The Mountain School and make a new start.

His problem was principally a financial one. More specifically, he needed about eighty dollars a month. He would work off twenty dollars, but that still left a sizeable sum to be raised. Hugh took this opportunity to share with Bob a wonderful promise. He turned to Philippians 4:19 and read, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Bob saw the light! He believed, He believed with all his heart—a heart that had responded to the invitation of Jesus; a heart that was full of appreciation to the faculty members for their love and kindness. For the first time Bob could understand what love really was. Prior to this he found it impossible to understand how the faculty members could love him when he was so mean. Now he began to see what true love was, and he was thrilled with it!

But all of a sudden the feared black cloud on the horizon was overhead. The sheriff was there now to bring to a sudden end all of the new joys and possibilities that had flooded Bob's mind.

The sheriff accompanied Bob to his room where he gathered up his few possessions, He then scribbled a hurried note to his roommate Tom:

"I've left a few things for you to keep till I return; but if for some reason things don't work out, use them for yourself, Don't forget to claim the Bible promises for me."

Sincerely,

"BOB".

With that, Bob climbed into the car, a new man in Christ Jesus—yet a prisoner of the State. This trip might be for a long time—in fact it could be several years.

This event electrified the entire student body and the visiting students from La Sierra College. Word spread like wildfire. Hardly had the car disappeared out of sight when little groups of students could be seen all over the campus, praying. They were asking that somehow God would intervene and work the impossible.

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They expected great things. Had they not seen a miracle already? They had claimed I John 5:16 for Bob already—a promise for backsliders—and it had brought about a dynamic change. Now they turned to another promise. This time they opened their Bibles to Proverbs 21:1, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will.”

This promise states that God can move on the hearts of men to do the thing they had previously had no intention of doing,—like doing a complete right-about-face.

Specifically, the students were asking God to work upon the hearts of Bob’s father and the authorities to have them understand that something had happened to Bob during the past week, and to impress them to drop the charges and allow Bob to return to The Mountain School. In addition to this request, they were also asking God to provide means—at least eighty dollars a month—to defray the cost of his tuition. Someone, somewhere would have to volunteer to help to this extent. This was a large request, but with one accord they placed their fingers on the Bible promises and Asked, Believed, and Claimed the promises. Then they thanked God that very moment, for answering their prayer.

It was a glorious sight. Faculty members, youth, and children united their hearts in pressing their petition to God. All day long the spirit of prayer prevailed on the campus. Before students and faculty retired for the night, another importunate prayer season was conducted.

It must have been three or four days before any word was heard from Bob. Then the telephone rang. The operator asked for Principal R. W. Hollister. It took just a few minutes for word to get around that a long distance call had come for the principal.

"Who is it from"? The students were asking.

Anticipation ran high that it might be from Bob or from someone involved in their prayer request.

It did not take long for the "Big House" to fill up with students. Eagerly they awaited word from their principal. Soon he came into the room and with a broad smile on his face he began to tell them of the conversation. Bob's father had called.

"What did he say? What did he say?" The students could hardly contain themselves.

It was hard for Mr. Hollister to get a word in edge-wise. But finally he was able to speak.

"Bob’s father wants to know if there is a sponsor who will pay for Bob's tuition, should he be allowed to return.

"I told him that I thought there was a sponsor, but that I would have to call him back when I was certain".

There was a buzz of excitement that filled the air. "I knew the Lord had answered our prayers", someone said. This was repeated over and over again—even before it was actually known that a sponsor could be found.

Mr. Hollister immediately called Hugh James at La Sierra College and told him of the developments. Hugh promised to go right to work on the problem and call back the next day.

Again, all day long the students at The Mountain School claimed the promise of Proverbs 21:1. Now they had even greater incentive to press their petition. They were sure that God would find just the right person to finance Bob at The Mountain School. Bob's father had made it clear that he could assume no responsibility financially due to the heavy surgery bills he was having to pay.

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The next day Dr. Paulman called. Hugh James had contacted him and he had been able to arrange for several sponsors for Bob. They were now free to contact Bob's father and have Bob return to The Mountain School. What rejoicing there was that day in that little school!

Mrs. Breadwell, in relating this experience to me exclaimed, "To think that there are so many students who would love to come to The Mountain School but have no sponsor." Then she added reflectively, "But that's where prayer comes in".

The God who turned the Red Sea aside and made a way for His children in ancient days, had impressed Bob's father and the civil authorities. The great God who had moved back the overflowing waves of old Jordan, had moved on the hearts of individuals back in the Los Angeles area to sponsor Bob's tuition. I learned later that some of these sponsors were young people with very limited incomes. Isn't it wonderful how our God works to fulfill His promises to His repentant children!

Professor Hollister tried for two days to call Bob's father but he could not get through. Finally on the third day Bob's father called saying that their phone had been out of order and he was calling to find out if there was any word for him.

"Yes there sure is", Mr. Hollister replied. "All of the arrangements are made. We're waiting for Bob now.

The next day Bob and his father arrived, bag and baggage. His father was so appreciative of all that the school had done for his boy and indicated that he had complete confidence in their authority and that whatever they decided was best for Bob, he was in complete agreement.

Although Bob had tried to remain courageous during the time since he had been forcibly taken away by the sheriff, he had also, found that his strength was not too great.

He had begun to smoke again. But now here at The Mountain School among his friends who had experienced a revival and a reformation, he was beginning to see victory again for himself.

"What's the best promise for me to claim for victory over my tobacco"? he asked one of the students.

"How about Jeremiah 33:3? his kind young friend responded. Together they turned to the text and read, "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

"Say, that's great"! Bob responded.

"And here's another text to go with that one. This one is found in Ezekiel 36:26, 27. Look at what it says: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put with-in you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

"This Scripture is exactly what I need", said Bob. He thought of his dark and sinful past; of all his vain efforts to change his course of action, his thoughts and his ways.

"That's what I must have—a new heart"! exclaimed Bob emphatically. He knew in his heart that this was going to be the answer, the only answer. With a new heart he could obey God and be successful.

At last he had found the way to real success. More than anything else Bob wanted what the Bible verse had promised.

"Do you really want what God says He will give you, Bob"? his friend asked.

"Yes, I do. I really do".

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"Then I have another verse to share with you. It's a kind of a super promise". With that the friend turned to Matthew 18:19, 20 where it says, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

"We are both agreeing that one of the great and mighty things you need is a new heart—an obedient heart. And since both of us agree, it makes it doubly certain that you will receive it," his friend continued.

Then they knelt together and asked God to fulfill the promise He had made. They believed and claimed the promise, and while they were there on their knees, the promise was fulfilled! Something happened that made Robert James Babcock a new man!

"I have never so much as wanted one puff of a cigarette from that moment. I know these promises work. Praise God"! Bob's testimony was vibrant with feeling and positive assurance.

Bob now realized that there is no need that God will not supply; no longing that He will not satisfy; no habit of sin over which He will not give victory, and no sin that He will not forgive if we come in simple faith through the merits of Jesus our Lord. "For with God nothing shall be impossible." Luke 1:37.

Bob had met Jesus. He had begun to know Him personally now. Religion and the way of righteousness were becoming attractive and meaningful now. Oh, how things had changed!

"From that point on, the school did not have a moment's trouble with Bob", confided Mrs. Breadwell. "He grows more sincere as each day goes by. Truly, we have seen the working of the Lord here. To see the complete change in a life like that is a thrill that can only be experienced. It is hard to put into words. The young people from La Sierra and their program of prayer were used of God to reach that heart. Prior to that time all of our efforts were in vain—we just could not get through to him. We're all so grateful and so happy for what has happened".

It has been six months ago that this wonderful event took place. As I write these lines for this book, I felt I must check on Bob's progress. I'm happy to tell you that the report was, "Bob is just making wonderful progress, and finding renewed courage each day! The feelings of rebellion he entertained for his father have all vanished. He feels now that his father was actuated only by the most unselfish motives in the way he dealt with him when he ran away from home".

This is the difference prayer makes. Youth praying and working for youth! Isn't it wonderful! We are only seeing the beginning of great things that will yet take place to prove that there is a God in heaven that loves His children and delights to answer large requests unselfishly made.

We are not suggesting that Bob will have no problems with himself in the future—far from it! Rather, we are saying that he now has the tools which, if he will, he may use to shape his character. Whether he is defeated or victorious in the struggle, depends upon his alertness and determination or failure, in using this wonderful science he learned at The Mountain School.