



# The sin of *Trifling*

A collection of writings  
on the seriousness of  
trifling with the  
affections of others.

Sponsored by Mrs. Sam Barton

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## Foreword



Bro. Sam Barton and I have just passed our 60th year of married life. Our life together has not always been sunshine, nor has it been strewn with roses. We have had some hardships along the way, and at times the waves of trouble have rolled high. But we have had God to help us in those troublesome times and He has brought us through.

We have worked together to the ending of a happy life. I am convinced that it has paid great dividends in various ways.

Young people, I desire the very best in life for you and eternal life in the end. But remember it comes through a denial of yourself and being true to God's ways which are plainly written in His holy Word.

You will find in reading this booklet some accounts of those who have not always chosen the right ways. I send forth this booklet with a prayer and a desire for your happiness.

—Mrs. Sam Barton

Tulsa, Okla., July, 1968.



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## The Sin of Trifling With Another's Affections



Girls and boys, I want to speak plainly on a subject that will interest all of you who are old enough to think you should have a girl friend or a boyfriend. Now in this day we find small boys and girls confessing to elders, "I have a boyfriend," or "girl friend."

Oh, children and young people, do you know these should be sacred thoughts? This involves your whole life; it will make you happy or make you unhappy. Because some did not guard their affection they have paid for it with years of grief and remorse of conscience. They just let their affections run out to the opposite sex freely. Dear ones, we have to pay. God has given your affections as a precious gift to be given to the one you are to love and be a companion to through life. But what will happen if you trifle with your God-given affections and let everyone you may chum about with have a portion of those God-given affections? The time will come when you feel you want a companion to go with you through life, but sad, sad for you cannot make up your mind whom you do love for you have trifled on your own self. You made your chummy friends think they were the one of your choice and they have begun to think you love no one but yourself, which is true, for you were enjoying trifling and you find that you have no true affections for anyone.

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By and by you will be shunned by both girls and boys, for they will call you a flirt.

Oh, dear ones, wake up! This sin of trifling is after all ages, married or single. Many homes are broken these days by the SIN of trifling. Little children are becoming orphans all because of the sin of trifling.

Let us see what trifling will do. It will cause deception, murder, adultery, fornication, jealousy, hatred, lying, and many things too numerous to mention. It is deception. People who trifle have no principle. They are of such character as not to be trusted in after life.

People who will so deceive another as to let them believe they love them and then turn about and deny having any affection for them, lack in certain fundamental principles of womanhood (or manhood) which are necessary for the formation of a happy home. Dear ones, you can't build your happiness on the ashes of someone else's love; it is impossible for you to go unchastened. And, oh, that bitterness of knowing that you caused some dear unsuspecting soul to lose faith in the thing God so intended to bring every woman and man happiness. You can never build your home on one you wrecked. These are real gospel truths.

Remember, folks who are capable of deceiving before marriage are capable of being just as deceptive and treacherous after marriage.

Trifling is based on a carnal heart, a romantic heart, and it carries the guilt of lying in word, thought, and deed. Your actions seem to speak louder than your words.

Let us look into the Word of God about trifling with one's affections. Judges 16th chapter. Samson, the strongest man of the



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world, lost a great deal by trifling with a woman's affections. 1. He lost God out of his heart. 2. He lost his hair, which was long and beautiful. 3. He lost his strength to resist enemies. 4. He lost his eyes. 5. He lost his freedom. He became a slave to the Philistines who made him work at a task that should have been done by a strong ox or horse. 6. He lost his reputation, for his enemies used him for making sport or fun for thousands of spectators. What a come-down for a holy Nazarite whose strength was God-given. 7. Lastly, he lost his life and all as a result of trifling with a woman's affections.

Today we have many, many pictures of broken lives all because of people going out of God's bounds and serving the sin of trifling. Trifling slips in among people who claim to be saved. They go around with different ones. Oh, they will say, there is nothing serious. We just want to be together and after a while one of them gets to drifting into a mood of trifling and the devil will take advantage and soon they have drifted too far and they become caught in the current of a trifler. Then they find that the grace of God has leaked out of their hearts. The devil has placed a carnality in their hearts which has come in the form of love. Then there must come a breaking up. They will say, "I did not know I was letting my affections go out to the other." Then loss of confidence comes and it will affect both parties. You know I am telling you the truth. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked. Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Married life is beautiful, but we cannot build on the ashes of broken affections. Life together can be very beautiful. Look at that white-haired couple who have lived for God, for each other, and their home. During those days when they were striving for their home and little ones, their love has been a wall of protection for both husband and wife, and children included. See those lovely ones

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setting God up as the head of the home with their love for each other, bending right into God's plan. And as the children come along, they fit into God's plan, so it just completes a beautiful home with God and love reigning.

Then we see the things that come against their love—sickness, death, troubles, poverty, crop failures, storms, floods—but all these only make love grow and they become nearer and closer to each other with God as their leader.

—Mrs. Sam Barton

## Prisoner's Life Story



### **“The wages of sin is death.”**

In a lonely prison cell, behind iron bars, shut out from the world and all my loved ones, I will try to write the story of my life, hoping it will help some man or woman, some boy or girl just starting on life's voyage. It may help them to steer clear of rocky shoals when they are hit by the waves of sin, as they are sure to run through these sin waves while passing through the world. Had I, Ira Willingham, only listened to the pleadings of my dear old father, my precious mother and my kind eldest brother I would be a free, well-respected man, free to walk and to work in God's sunlight, meeting my fellowmen face to face and could feel happy in the thought that I had met the trials of life and had conquered them in the way that our Father meant for us to overcome trials and temptations.

Though my trials were many and more than most men could have borne, I, by putting my trust in God, could have kept my ship on calmer waters and finally landed on peaceful shores. I could have been a protector and a breadwinner for my poor heartbroken mother and my little worse-than-orphan children. Instead, I am in a lonely dark cell with just my thoughts for company. Oh, if I could never think again!

I was reared on a good farm near a beautiful river. My father was counted well-to-do. I had four brothers and two sisters. We were

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used to all the needful things of life and many things we could have done without. Our parents were kind but strict. They were honest and true, living as they understood the teachings of the holy Word of God. They were careful to teach their boys and girls to obey the Ten Commandments. Why did I not obey these teachings after I became a man? How could I have waded through prayers that have ascended to the throne of God for me? We lived far out in the country away from others of our age. We boys picked our chums among each other. Lee was my favorite brother, there being just eighteen months' difference in our ages. We slept in the same bed, ate our stolen apples together, went swimming in the same swimming hole, and shared every joy and boyish trouble. If one had a little fight with the other boys, the other took it up and it became his fight. After we became older we went with the same girls.

The years rolled on. Lee met and married the one woman for him. He was happy and so was I. It always made me happy to know that Lee was happy. Yet I missed his companionship. He had always been both father and brother to me, guiding me over many rough places of life's road and keeping me from stumbling and perhaps falling. I loved Lee's wife like a sister. She was never too tired to help any of us boys and girls. She has proved in a thousand ways her love for Lee and his folks. She is like Ruth, "Thy people shall be my people, thy God my God."

I did not care to be with girls and therefore I was thirty years old when I met Donia. I knew as soon as I saw her she was the one girl for me. I did not know her name but managed through a friend to be introduced to her. I was with her all I could be that day. I knew I was in love with her. I thought of her all the time. I dreamed of her at night. Her image was in my mind and who could blame me? She was so lovely, light brown wavy hair that sometimes looked red. Her

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eyes were gray, fringed with long black lashes and had such an innocent, pure, sweet look. But my love for Donia was the worst thing that ever happened to me. I loved her passionately, deeply and devotedly with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. Why did I have to love her—madly, blindly? Had God withdrawn His helping hand? I could not listen to reason where Donia was concerned.

I tormented myself day and night with the question, “Does Donia care for me?” I felt I could not live without her; in a few weeks I told her of my love and asked her to be my wife. To my great delight she told me she had loved me ever since we met. Was there ever a man so happy as I? I was intoxicated with love and happiness. In two months we were married.

I had rented a little house in the city of Henderson. I was very happy and thought my wife was happy and contented. Imagine my surprise when Donia left me, told me she did not love me. My world crumpled then and there. My life seemed to go out. I did not try to hold her against her will. She brought suit for divorce. I did not fight it and Donia was soon free and so was I. But I could not think of anything except my loss and I did not know why she tired of me. To me her kisses were the sweetest moments on earth. I remembered her caresses. Even yet and here in my prison cell I can almost feel her sweet kisses.

She married another man and lived with him for about one year. That was a long miserable year to me. To think of Donia, my Donia, in another man’s arms. It was like a knife plunged into my heart. It rocked me back and forth at times. How I wanted to choke the life out of that man! Then I would be in utter despair wanting to take my own life. My poor father, my precious mother, and my big noble brother, Lee, did and said everything in their power to comfort me. For their sakes I tried to pick up the threads of life again.

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Life for me drifted on, I at times, trying to be a man, at other times wishing for death. The man Donia married died. She was thought to have killed him but I did not think she could or would do such a thing.

After his death she turned to me and I trusted her against all the pleadings of my kind parents and persuasions of my good affectionate brother. I married her the second time. When she was in my arms, her pretty head resting again on my chest and looking into my eyes with such a sweet, innocent, honest look on her face, I could not doubt her when she said, "Ira, I love you. After I married that man I knew you were the one I loved but what could I do? I did not think you could love me after I had caused you so much sorrow. My saddest times were when I would think of you and thought that you surely hated me." Hate her! Could I ever hate Donia? No, I loved her with an undying love.

My brother did not believe she was true. I wish I had believed the truths he told me before I married her the second time. But I was blindly, madly in love with her. If I saw her faults I could find an excuse for everything she did. We lived happily for a while. I was converted and united with the church I had attended in my boyhood days. Life looked good. Lee became a minister of the Gospel. My precious wife looked contented and happy. Then our baby came to make us happier and, as I thought, to bind us closer together. The years rolled on and a little girl came to bless our home. I worked hard and every task was a pleasure. I was working for Donia and our children.

After our little girl was about a year old I noticed a change in my wife. She was restless, dissatisfied and often cross. I could not do anything to please her. She looked strong and healthy. I could not understand what was wrong with her but tried all the more to please

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her and thought, "Something is worrying her; she will soon be the same sweet woman."

In two years our third child was born, a sweet little girl. How foolishly proud I was of my wife and children! But Donia had developed an awful temper. She would shun me all she could and would sometimes beat our children cruelly over some trivial matter. I tried to reason with her but she had no time for my reasoning. Our home was fast becoming a hell on earth. But still I loved her and tried to pet her, tried to show her that she and she alone was all to me.

I then began to smell liquor on her breath. She was steadily growing worse. My boy began telling me of men visiting mama. It kept coming to me of other men visiting my wife. I was hoping and praying it was a mistake. I came home unexpectedly one day and looked in through the window. There was my wife at the cabinet making bread. A man was standing by her, his arms around her, she smiling and looking up into his face.

I was almost a raving maniac. I leaped through the window, pitched him out on his head, gave him a few kicks and told him to leave. Donia was furious, but imagine my surprise when the police came to arrest me for breaking the peace. They, the policemen, Donia, and the man that was hugging her told me that if I would leave home and town in two hours that I would not be arrested. I went, as I did not want Donia's name spread over town. I think I would have suffered anything, even death, to have shielded her. I stayed away some time. Donia sent for me. I found that we were to be the parents of another child.

In due time it was born, pretty and sweet. All seemingly went well for a while, then my wife became restless and dissatisfied again. I would often come home and find her drinking or drunk. Always

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when she was in this condition several men were there and sometimes her older sister, who, I was sure, had more influence over my wife than anyone else. I talked to both my wife and her sister. I pleaded, but to no avail. I decided to stand it, to do the best I could both for her sake and the children's. I really blamed her sister more than her. Everything was going against me. I could not give satisfaction to my employers and went from place to place doing whatever I could get to do. I became despondent. I admit at times I was gloomy, morose, morbid, and silent.

One day I became very sick and went to the place I had to call home. My mother-in-law was there. She gave me some medicine and as I was getting better I heard my wife say to her, "Mother, if that doesn't put him out of business I can get something that will." Evidently her mother had not given me the right kind of medicine my wife intended for me to have or it had not had the desired effect. It was shortly afterward that I learned from her own words that she had killed her other husband at home.

Everything went from bad to worse. Donia drank more and more. I became more and more discouraged. I hated her sister and the men that came there with a deadly hate. It had become a consuming fire in my breast. I dreamed about it at night. It was never off my mind. When awake I would leave my bed and walk for miles, a raging burning—what? Was I maniac? Had I gone mad? I would think of our little children and would try to control myself. Oh, the fury and hatred that burned in my heart! I did not hate my wife, though. I blamed her sister for the life she was living. She cursed me and our poor little children but in my blinded love for her I laid it all to her sister's influence. Finally it got so bad I had to leave home. We were then living near Drake Park Race Track in Kentucky. She wanted me to leave a long time before I did.



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I took the two older children, she kept the two younger ones. The first time I heard from her she was living with another man, a man who had a wife and children and he was living in the home I had provided for her. I stayed away from them, yet I could have forgiven, forgotten and looked over all that had happened had she given me a chance.

One day I received a letter from her asking me to bring our children home as she wanted to put them in school. My heart sang. Hope sprang up in my heart. I hoped for the children's sake she had decided to start life over again. The next day I went. I lived in a small town a few miles from where she was. I had to cross a small river. I got to the river early. Somehow the joy I felt when I received her note or letter had all gone. I felt like something was telling or warning me of danger.

I went on.

When I got there Donia was drinking heavily. I had our oldest child with me but did not take the little girl. My wife asked me why I had not brought her. I told her she was visiting. That made her mad as my little girl was visiting one of my brothers. I tried to talk to her again about the way she was living, trying to show her or make her realize the shame and disgrace she was bringing to her children. If she had not been drinking perhaps I could have convinced her. As it was she seemed to recoil at first. She then got mad, looked brazen, and talked back using very ugly language. She said, "I have money, clothes, anything I want. If you raise your hand my man will kill you." I did not doubt that he would try to kill me, and I believed that she would help him, but I did not think they would try to murder me until they got the little girl who was visiting my brother.

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Donia and I were upstairs when we were talking. After saying, “My man will kill you,” she went downstairs. I followed to try to come to an understanding about the children. When I reached the foot of the stairs I saw her lying on the bed and beside her was John Upton, the man she was living with, the man who before God had promised to love, cherish, and protect the woman he had married years before, the woman who had gone through suffering untold to give life to his children.

As I looked at them Donia said, “Ira, don’t start any- thing. John will kill you.”

I said, I’m leaving here.” I thought, “What good will it do to start a fuss with him? He will kill me or I will have to kill him.” I felt then I did not want my hands stained with blood. It was a distance to the river from my house. (I called it mine. It was the house I had provided for Donia, the children, and myself.)

They insisted on taking me to the river in a car. John, Donia, her sister, two of our children and myself. Before we entered the car, Donia went up to John, threw her arms around his neck and said, “This is the man I love. I love him more than anything on earth.”

I was past getting angry. I was sick, blind, and numb, but I controlled myself. I will never forget the numbness that came over me. It seemed as if my brain refused to work. I know now that I had almost reached the limit, had stood about all mortal man can stand. Somehow I got into the car. John and Donia’s sister in the front seat; Donia, our two children and myself in the back. Why did she insist on taking me to the river? Why did she have her sister sit with John and her with me? Was it all premeditated, planned, fixed? I think it was. No one said much while we were driving to the river. I noticed Donia kept her hand close to her side, but thought nothing of it at the time.

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Finally we reached the river and had to wait for the boat. How can I tell the rest! It sometimes seems like a dreadful nightmare. How I wish it were a horrible dream, but it is an awful reality! O my God, why did my hands have to be stained with blood? As you dear Lord, were my witness, I will tell it just as it happened.

I asked Donia if she would not go across the river and help take care of the children. Oh, how I was wishing she would say, “Yes, Ira, I’ll go with you”! I could have forgiven all the past and would have tried to forget it. I would have been kind to her, would have done the most menial labor to have provided for her. I think my heart was standing still waiting for an answer, when suddenly, without warning, without one word her hand came from her side. She tried to cut my throat. John had a gun drawn on me.

I think I lost all brain control. I caught the razor, breaking the handle in her hand, cut her throat and turning cut John’s throat. Her life’s blood flowed out on our poor little innocent children. I had killed her with my own hands, the mother of my children, the woman I loved more than life. I can see her eyes now as she looked into mine the last time. Her eyes were filled with anguish and grief. Did her past life pass before her in that brief moment? Just before she went into eternity, did she repent? Who can tell? God only knows. When I slashed John’s throat he dropped the gun, though I failed to kill him.

It was all over in less time than it takes to tell about it. Donia’s sister saw it all and could tell it just as I have told it if she would tell the truth.

I left the car and started walking down the river through the corn fields. I was running from the crime I had committed. My mind was in confusion. But I knew as soon as I could think clearly that I was going to give myself up to the law. I could have got away. The

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officers hunted me night and day. In a few days I sent my brother to tell them where I was hidden. They came after me to take me to jail. It was one of my childhood friends that came to arrest me. I'll never forget how kind he was to me. The day was set for the trial. It rolled around. I was taken to the courtroom. There were my little motherless children. They all came to sit with me, their innocent eyes looking into mine, sometimes hopeful, more often in sad despair. All hope was gone from their little faces. But they showed me that they loved papa.

Dearest children, did you know that papa's heart was broken? Did you know that papa was thinking of the shame, sorrow, and disgrace that your mother and I had put on you? You did not know that papa was thinking, "What will become of my babies?"

Now I did not think much about the trial. I did not care about it, therefore did not try to defend myself. My dear family tried to do all they could for me, but what could they do if I would not help? The prosecution had witnesses to show I killed Donia and tried to kill John. But they need not have had those witnesses, for I have never tried to deny it. I have never told anything but the truth. But these people also swore that John and Donia had not tried to kill me. Their God and my God knows how it was. They will have to face Him and so will I. The jury were conscientious, honest men. I do not blame anyone.

I will spend most, if not all, my life behind prison bars, thinking of and longing for my wife and children, knowing that life really ended for me, when I found my wife was untrue to me. Wherever you are, Donia, you were sent there by my hand. Is it possible for you to think of your devoted slave? (for that was what I was, always doing her bidding) Can you see our children? Do you shudder when you think of me?

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I wish I knew, dearest mother, as you go about your work, your poor heart breaking for your boy's sins, are you glad that father didn't live to see his boy in the state prison, sent there for murder?

My dear brother, are you praying for me? I feel that you are.

Dear precious children, as you grow older and think of papa and mama, try to forget the sorrow we brought on you. Put your trust in God, ask Him to guide you in straighter paths than we led. Remember Papa's love for you and that I am in my feeble way asking the good heavenly Father to be a father to you and show you the way to shun sin, misery and disgrace.

To all who read this story: Be careful when you choose a life's companion. Remember my mistake, the terrible suffering of mind, the regrets, remorse and a wasted life in a prison cell. Think of the sorrow and disgrace you may bring to the ones that are near and dear to you.

How I wish I had not married Donia the second time. I would have always felt the loss of her, but oh, this gnawing, burning conscience! It never leaves me, day nor night. This living death has been with me ever since she looked at me the last time even though I had to kill her to save my own life. It is killing me slowly, but surely. I feel and know in my heart that the wages of sin is death.

After all is said, I expect to meet my saved loved ones in glory. I want the prayers of God's praying people that I may reach the top of the high calling in Jesus Christ

Here endeth the story of Ira J. Willingham as far as this book is concerned. May the story of this twiceborn man never end until he, the man, can say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge,

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shall give to me in that day and not to me only, but to all them also that love His appearing.”

From despair to joy and peace. When God found me I was wandering along the devil’s highway. The blessed Saviour turned me. I am now journeying as a stranger and a pilgrim along the beautiful road which leads to my eternal abode, heaven. I am really writing a gospel. Gospel means good news, glad tidings, and it is good news and glad tidings to know that one has been born anew from above, that he is transformed in body, soul, and spirit, by divine power.

From a prison cell to the pearly white city,

Ira J. Willingham

# Trifling

(By Julia A. Shelhamer)

(This chapter is added with the hopes that it will prove a timely warning to young people. Please read it seriously.)

Now, girls, I want to speak plainly on a subject that will interest all of you who are old enough, viz: trifling with another's affections. By this I mean allowing one to believe you love him when really you do not think enough of him to give him your heart and hand for life.

This is next to a crime, for it is of such a serious nature that it sometimes leads to a crime.

Let us analyze the guilt of it:

1. It is deception and carries the guilt of lying for one to allow another to feel that she loves him when that love is weak or entirely absent.
2. It is prompted by base passions, for it enjoys the admiration of several of those of the opposite sex at one time and to no purpose, except to gratify the carnal heart. It is that kind of sin that renders the association of the harlot with several men at once enjoyable, and could be called mental adultery.
3. This sin weakens the love you will hold for the one you will finally choose. It creates a vacillation making the heart more unsteady in its true affection later on, for the one it holds dear, and

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has a tendency to render one more or less dissatisfied after marriage; for there is not the romantic life of having half a dozen lovers at once, all vying with each other in the expense of their gifts and offers of a good time; but, rather, the steady, humdrum life of keeping home in order and staying home alone all day, with ever increasing responsibilities.

4. People who trifle are unprincipled. They are of such character as not to be trusted in after life.

A young woman who will so deceive a young man as to let him believe that she truly loves him, and then will turn right around and deny having had any affection for him, lacks in certain fundamental principles of womanhood which are necessary for the formation of a happy home.

Young men who are worthy of good companionship should remember that a girl who is capable of thus deceiving before marriage, is capable of being just as deceptive and treacherous after the nuptials are celebrated.

We could cite a number of instances of those who have brought sorrow to themselves and others by trifling, but will mention only a few.

Samson, the strongest man of the world, lost a great deal by trifling with a woman's affections. 1. He lost God out of his heart. 2. He lost his hair, which was long and beautiful. 3. He lost his strength to resist enemies. 4. He lost his eyes. 5. He lost his freedom, for he became a slave to the Philistines, who made him work at a task that should have been given to a strong ox or horse. 6. He lost his reputation, his enemies using him for making sport for thousands of spectators. What a comedown for a holy Nazarite, whose strength came nearer equalling that of God Almighty than that of a man! 7.



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Lastly, he lost his life, and all as a result of trifling with a woman's affections.

Another case: A young lady friend of ours once had many suitors. Among others was a young man for whom she really cared nothing. She, however, very unwisely allowed his attention until he was completely "carried away."

Now, when the time came to decide one way or another, he discovered that she really did not love him; in fact, she told him so. If she had done this earlier it would have been to her advantage. He was enraged, remorseful, and threatened to commit suicide; so she reluctantly gave in and was finally married, much against her will. They lived together five years, a hell on earth, as he was strong-willed and unprincipled. At last his dissipation ended his life, and she was left a physical and mental wreck, all because she trifled with his affections.

In Harvey, Illinois, lived one of the most beautiful and talented young women. There was also a young fellow in that town whom the neighbors declared was not bright.

However, he fell in love with this girl. We remonstrated with her people, but they laughingly declared no harm could ever come from the alliance, as the boy was "idiotic."

But Miss M. lost her heart and finally married the one whom she did not think she could love, and all because she trifled.

While holding a tent meeting in Florida, some years ago, we were assisted by two young people of talent— one a young brother and the other a young sister who came to church nightly in company. We thought, of course, that they were engaged, as they seemed so sedate and sensible in their attentions to each other, and both were decidedly religious.

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After the revival the lady went back north, but before she left her friend wanted a final answer. To this she replied that she did not care to marry him. The result was that his confidence in humanity was so thoroughly shaken that his mind became unbalanced. Our people visited him after he had been taken to jail for a trial before leaving for the insane asylum, and found him raving mad. My sister accompanied the workers, but as soon as the turnkey saw her he turned out the lights so she could not view the awful sight, for the poor boy was so wild that he had torn off every stitch of clothing and would allow no one to dress him. His brother, a minister of the gospel, came a long distance to visit him. But he was hurried off to the insane asylum where, instead of recovering, he soon died, all because of this awful sin of trifling.

Some have not had this sad experience, but have trifled until their virtue has flown and marriage became a necessity; while still others have been refused marriage by the very men that ruined them and, as a consequence, have been forced into rescue homes, or worse, been turned out onto the charities of the people to secure a living for their fatherless babies.

Remember, sin always brings retribution and fearful punishment. Determine here and now at once to stop trifling, and that you will do unto others as you would that they should do unto you.

—From Heart Talks to Girls

## I'm 21- May I Do As I Please?



Why certainly! Even the laws of the land admit that three times seven make a man. How can we say otherwise? Mother or father may entreat you, friends may advise you and clergymen may preach to you, but after all is said and done, you are a full grown man or woman and may do as you please.

You may marry whom you will, without asking anybody's consent, but the one whose companionship and partnership you seek. You may choose the profession you, yourself want. No one can really hold you back.

You may even be a robber, a gambler, or a drunkard if you want to—but wait. Do you want to? Are you able to pay the cost? It costs something to be a robber. In fact, it costs more to be one than it does not to be one.

You may do anything you please, so long as you can pay the price. That's where the pinch comes in—settling up the account after a life of sin. The rent man, the grocer and the butcher are not all who make collections. Hell has a claim on every sinner and that claim must sooner or later be paid. Thank God that the Christ of Calvary breaks that claim for us if we pray Him to do it, and promise Him our lives in exchange for His deliverance.

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No, my friend, it's not the sowing nor the scattering of evil thoughts, stinging words, and wrong doing that retards our steps or slows down our speed. Sowing never made a broken old man out of any lad; sowing never made a weary, heart-broken woman out of any fair, rosy-cheeked lassie. It's the reaping that does the damage.

It's not altogether the amount of years you live on this earth which makes you old or young; it's largely the amount of sorrow, worry, heartache, or reaping you have done that governs this.

Your crop may not have grown to full harvest yet. We don't plant seeds today and harvest tomorrow. It takes time for seeds to sprout. It takes time for even wickedness to ripen into a harvest. This is due to the mercy of a loving God. He spares you as long as He dares, hoping, trusting you will turn to Him and forsake your evil ways.

He has seeds of kindness for you to plant, seeds of love and mercy toward your neighbors, friends, and family. Plant a garden of pure thoughts, clean language, and helpful deeds, near the pathway of mankind. Watch your plants grow and bloom into flowers of fragrance, which bless and not blight the many over whom you hold influence.

I say, young man, do as you please, but please do the will of God. Look at the outcome of life, not the starting point and take your steps with the end in view. As a youth you are started on a journey. It may be long; it may be short. None of us know for sure. Coffins are made of all lengths and tombstones are ordered for all sizes of graves.

No one is guaranteed another day in the realm of the living. Be prepared to die and you will surely be prepared to live. Make your preparation the old-fashioned way down on your knees in true

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repentance before God. Persons who are doing this are finding the same satisfaction and rich reward that all true-hearted and sincere believers of the past received.

Young woman, the future is ahead of you. You may make it what you please, but may you please to make it a life of happiness, and pure thinking and doing. This comes through Christ who died to show you the way to a happy, righteous life. Let the past be past forever. Look forward to the amount of days you may be permitted to spend here, whether many or few and consecrate each one with its moments and hours to the Lord. Bow in His presence and say: "Here, Lord, are my feet and my hands; my days and my years; my talents and my gifts. Take them all; use them for Thy glory in my youth."

This is a young person's short-cut to happiness: Serve God and please to do His whole will. Take the short-cut today.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28:13.

—Sel. by Mrs. Ira Stover

## Married To a Drunkard



Daily as we go up and down the streets of our towns and cities we see whisky, gin, ale, beer, and liquor signs of various sizes and kinds flaming in our faces. Beautiful manhood and womanhood are seen inside the windows of the places where these signs hang above the doors, or are painted on the windows. In years gone by, the accursed liquor was sold behind curtained windows and screened doors—away from the public eye, but, alas! Today it has become so common, and so tolerated, and apparently so little hated that multitudes drink it in full view of the public eye. But with all this, liquor has the same cruel, yea, damnable effects that it had in years gone by. God help the people to get their eyes open and see where America is sending her young folk, and what the future will mean if this continues.

The following article was printed many years ago and we do not know the author, but we feel like reprinting it and are praying that it may have a restraining influence on many and save some from the pangs that this poor woman suffered:

This woman rose in the meeting and spoke as follows: “Married to a drunkard! Yes, I was married to a drunkard. Look at me! I am talking to the girls.” We all turned and looked at her. She was a wan woman with dark, sad eyes, and white hair placed smoothly over a brow that denoted intellect.

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“When I married a drunkard, I reached the acme of misery,” she continued. “I was young, and oh, so foolish. I married the man I loved, and who professed to love me. He was a drunkard and I knew it—knew it, but did not understand it. There is not a young girl in this building that does understand it, unless she has a drunkard in her family; then, perhaps, she knows how deeply the iron enters the soul of a woman when she loves and is allied to a drunkard, whether father, husband, brother or son. Girls, believe me when I tell you that to marry a drunkard is the crown of misery. I have gone through the deep waters, and I know. I have gained that fearful knowledge, at the expense of happiness, sanity, almost life itself. Do you wonder that my hair is white? It turned white in a night— ‘bleached by sorrow,’ as another said of her hair. I am not forty years old, yet snows of seventy winters rest upon my head, and upon my heart— ah! I cannot begin to count the winters resting there,” she said, with unutterable pathos in her voice.

“My husband was a professional man. His calling took him from home frequently at night, and when he returned, he returned drunk. Gradually he gave way to temptation in the day, and was rarely sober. I had two lovely girls and a boy.” Here her voice faltered, and we sat in deep silence, listening to her story.

“My husband had been drinking deeply. I had not seen him for two days. He had kept away from his home. One night I was seated by my sick boy; the two girls were in bed in the next room, while beyond, was another room into which I heard my husband go as he entered the house. That room communicated with the one in which my little girls were sleeping. I do not know why, but a feeling of terror suddenly took possession of me, and I felt that my little girls were in danger. I arose and went to the room; the door was locked. I knocked on it frantically, but no answer came. I seemed

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endowed with superhuman strength, and throwing myself with all my force against the door, the lock gave away, and the door flew open. Oh, the sight! The terrible sight!" she wailed out in a voice that haunts me now; and she covered her face with her hands, and when she removed them she was whiter and sadder than ever.

"Delirium tremens! You have never seen it, girls; God grant you never may. My husband stood beside the bed, his eyes glaring with insanity, and in his hands a large knife. 'Take them away!' he screamed. 'The horrible things; they are crawling all over me. Take them away, I say!' and he flourished the knife in the air. Regardless of danger, I rushed up to the bed and my heart seemed to stop beating. There lay my children, covered with their life-blood, slain by their own father. For a moment I could not utter a sound. I was literally dumb in the presence of this terrible sorrow. I scarcely heeded the maniac at my side—the man who had brought me all this woe. Then I uttered a loud scream, and my wailings filled the air. The servants heard me and hastened to the room, and when my husband saw them, he suddenly drew the knife across his throat. I knew nothing more. I was borne senseless from that room that contained my slaughtered children and the body of my husband. The next day my hair was white, and my mind was so shattered that I knew no one."

She ceased. Our eyes were riveted upon her wan face, and some women present sobbed aloud, while there was scarcely a dry eye in that temperance meeting. So much sorrow, we thought, and through no fault of her own. We saw that she had not done speaking, and was only waiting to subdue her emotion to resume her story.

"Two years ago," she continued, "I was a mental wreck; then I recovered from the shock, and absorbed myself in the care of my baby. But the sin of the father was visited upon the child, and six



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months ago my boy, eighteen, was placed in a drunkard's grave; and as I, his loving mother, stood and saw the sod heaped over him, I said, 'Thank God I'd rather see him there than have him live a drunkard,' and I went to my home a childless woman on whom the hand of God rested heavily.

"Girls, it is you I wish to rescue from the fate that overtook me. Do not blast your life as I blasted mine; do not be drawn into the madness of marrying a drunkard. You love him! So much the worse for you; for, married to him, the greater is your misery because of your love. You will marry him and then reform him, so you say. Ah! A woman sadly overrates her strength when she undertakes to do this. You are no match for that great demon, Drink, when he possesses a man's body and soul. You are no match for him, I say. What is your puny strength beside his gigantic force? He will crush you, too. It is to save you, girls, from the sorrow that wrecked my happiness that I have unfolded my history to you. I am a stranger in this great city. I am merely passing through it, and have a message to bear to every girl—never marry a drunkard!"

I can see her now as she stood there amid the hushed audience, her dark eyes glowing and quivering with emotion as she uttered her impassioned appeal. Then she hurried out, and we never saw her again. Her words, "fitly spoken," were not without effect, and because of them, there is one girl single now.

—Selected

## **Ungodly Affections**

**(2 Sam. 11, 12)**

One evening David arose from his bed and walked on the roof of his house. He saw a woman bathing and she was very beautiful. He inquired who she was. He was told she was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah. David sent for her and she lay with him and then she returned to her house. Later she sent him word that she was with child. David then sent for her husband, Uriah. He wrote a letter to Joab, who was in a battle, and sent it to him by Uriah. He asked Joab to put him at the front of the hottest battle so he would die. Later Joab sent word that Uriah was dead. When Bathsheba heard that her husband was dead she mourned for him. When her mourning was past David sent and brought her to his house and she became his wife. But the Bible said, “The thing that David did displeased the Lord.”

One day the prophet Nathan came to see the king David. He said, “There were two men in one city. One was poor and the other rich. The poor man had nothing but just one little lamb. This lamb was loved by him and his children. They fed it the same kind of food that they ate and it lived with them in their house. One day a traveler came to the rich man’s house. The rich man did not want to take one of his flock to feed to his visitor but he took the poor man’s lamb, killed it, and fed it to him.” When David heard this he was greatly distressed and he said to the prophet Nathan, “As the Lord liveth

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the man that has done this thing shall surely die. He also shall restore four-fold, because he did this thing and did not have any pity.”

Nathan said to David, “Thou art the man. The Lord delivered you out of the hand of Saul and made you king. He gave you houses, wives, and many things. If that had been too little He would have given you more. Why did you disobey the commandments of the Lord and do evil in his sight? You had Uriah killed and took his wife. The Lord will punish you and the sword shall not depart from your house. You did this in secret but I will do this thing before all Israel.”

David said, “I have sinned against the Lord.”

Nathan replied, “Because of this deed you have given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme. The child that is to be born unto you shall surely die.” As Nathan departed, the child Bathsheba had borne unto David became very sick.

David besought the Lord for the child. He fasted and lay upon the ground. They could not raise him up. David was sorry for his great sins. In Psalms 51 we read of his prayer to the Lord. He begged for mercy and forgiveness. He said to the Lord, “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. I acknowledge my sins and have done this against you, and in your sight. Purge me and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than the snow. Blot out mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence: and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation: and uphold me with thy free Spirit. I would give sacrifices but you delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise.”

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For seven days David fasted and prayed to the Lord. His grief was great and he reaped sorrow upon sorrow for his wrong deeds. Sin brings sorrows and disappointment. The pleasure of his sin had melted away. Poor miserable David. I am sure he wished over and over that he had not given in to the trap the devil had set for him. Immorality destroys one's contact with God and cuts him off from heaven. Secret sins will be opened up. "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Num. 32:23) "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing whether it be good, or whether it be evil." (Eccl. 12:14). Immorality degenerates and its traveling companions are disease, crime, sorrow, weakening of the home and many times crippling of the offspring. Our nation is fast slipping into moral corruption and historians show us that many great nations have fallen because of internal moral corruption. Crimes are increased because of the indecent dress, lewd pictures and filthy literature.

Petting and kissing will lead to the sin of fornication. Save your kisses for your life's companion.

The Bible says, "Marriage is honorable in all." God has ordained it and if a married couple will be true to each other it will not bring frustrations, nor emotional disturbance to the mind nor soul. Do not let the devil destroy what is made beautiful by God.

David saw the servants whispering and asked if the child had died. They said, "He is dead." David arose, washed and dressed, then asked for food. He then went into the house of the Lord and worshipped Him. Some questioned him as to why he now would eat when he heard the child was dead. He said, "While the child was yet alive I fasted and wept, for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead. Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him but he shall not return to me." David then comforted Bathsheba.

—M. Miles







