

YOUTH PRAYS-GOD ANSWERS!

Glen A. Coon

Name: _____

Date: _____

Lesson 01

WANTED! ROBERT JAMES BABCOCK!

THE SHERIFF'S car rolled into the driveway of The Mountain School, Whimsted, Washington. Kathryn Breadwell, a teacher, was busily engaged in her teaching, but then chanced to peer out of the window of the "Big House", as it was called, just in time to see Sheriff Hart Kiplinger get out of his car, walk briskly up the front walk and knock at the door.

Sheriff Kiplinger had responded to an all-points-bulletin for the immediate arrest of Robert James Babcock, age seventeen, of Costa Mesa. The authorities were aware of the fact that Bob had at one time been a student at The Mountain School; that an emergency appendectomy had forced him into General Hospital, and that his stay at the school had been abruptly terminated. NOW the authorities were checking to make sure of his whereabouts.

Bob was not a hardened criminal; however he was moving in that direction rapidly. In addition to the more common habits of smoking and drinking, Bob had had a few flings with some of the mind-affecting drugs. He had been involved in gang fights. He had terrorized the neighborhood. He had either thrown rocks or fired shots through the windows of homes and passing cars. He had been involved in violent disagreements with his ailing father, besides at least one car theft and problems which involved girls he had dated.

Even before this sickening experience of rebellion and havoc, Bob's conduct had been far from satisfactory while he had attended the Costa Mesa church school. There they had "dismissed him as a rotten apple" which was rapidly contaminating the whole barrel.

The authorities knew that it was about the time Bob was dismissed from the Costa Mesa church school that he had been admitted to The Mountain School, a new school just opening under the leadership of R. W. Hollister and his wife.

The Hollister's had known Bob when he was still in the church school. It was because of their eagerness to salvage him that, knowing his past, they still consented to his being admitted to The Mountain School. He was, with the rest of the students, entering this new school to become a part of a big, loving family. The atmosphere of sympathy and understanding would create a fellowship opportunity that Bob had been deprived of ever since his parents had been divorced. Bob had been farmed out to different homes since then and had not known the love and security that a home atmosphere provides.

However, before long the faculty at The Mountain School was to be sadly disappointed in Bob's behavior. In spite of the fact that the teaching force had taken Bob in to their very hearts he was unresponsive. He sulked. He was belligerent. He disobeyed almost every rule. He continued the very type of life he had started earlier in the church day school at Costa Mesa. In spite of this, the faculty was so eager to salvage Bob that they forgave him repeatedly. They gave him chance after chance to change his way of living.

Some of the faculty, including Kathryn Breadwell, spent so much time counseling Bob that it seemed their very health was at stake. Hours which should have been devoted to rest and sleep were spent instead in exhaustive counseling sessions with poor Bob, trying to persuade, to inspire him to a higher format of thinking, and to a nobler life. It seemed everyone had failed. There was no change.

After multiplied attempts to salvage Bob, covering a period of months, the faculty felt forced to the decision to let him go. Even as they voted to dismiss him, some of them wept as they called Bob to the "Big House" to announce to him their decision.

What a picture of contrast! There were heartbroken faculty members on the verge of tears; and there, too, stood Bob—belligerent, with lowered eyebrows and drawn face. When the decision was read to him, he grunted, "I just want OUT"!

However, as the faculty members began to tenderly explain that they did not want to have him go, but that it was the only thing they could do, Bob's attitude began to change a little. He began to see that he was about to lose the only real home he had ever known. Although he had not been grateful nor responsive, The Mountain School had been good for Bob. He had learned something of love and affection and had come to know many wonderful Christians.

All of a sudden, the stark truth dawned on him that it was soon all to be lost. His dearest friends on earth had done all they could and he was about to lose them all. Where would he go from here?

As the dreadful truth actually dawned upon his conscious mind, he sat and gazed at the floor, reliving the good times he had had in that wonderful atmosphere. Tears began to flow from his eyes. Then he cried openly, unable to control himself. He sobbed as he pleaded with these dear faculty members to give him just one more chance! He promised and vowed that he would never again cause them trouble or heartache. Would they forgive him and extend mercy just this one more time?

I shall not soon forget what happened that night. I have worked with young people in colleges and academies in various parts of America, but never have I heard of anything as dramatic as what happened that night.

As the members of the faculty looked into that pitiful face, and listened to that pleading voice, they could not refuse forgiveness. It took just a moment to take a vote, when as one man, the members of the faculty voted to give Bob another chance. Though Bob wanted to stay, the faculty were even more anxious to have him remain. Wonder of wonders! What a school! How like our Lord who never tires of forgiving the wayward!

It was only a matter of days however, before the high hopes and sincere faith of the faculty were to fall crashing to the ground. It was painfully clear that the old Bob was stronger than the new; and desire as he might to do right, he was a captive of his old nature, his old rebellion, his old life. It was then that the last ray of hope for Bob seemed to be disappearing on the horizon.

Bob knew better the next year than to request admission to The Mountain School, and so enrolled in the public school in Costa Mesa and lived with his grandmother for a while. Here he plunged deeper into his wild life of sin. His father evidently felt that this was due to the permissive attitude of the grandmother, so decided that Bob must come to live with him in Sacramento. Here he would make sure that Bob "toed the mark".

The father had evidently lost his touch with his boy and had not realized how far he had gone in rebellion; for when he tried to discipline his son, he found no sign of response. Instead, the father found his boy belligerent to the point that he feared Bob might turn on him physically.

The father was stunned! In exasperation he ordered Bob out of the house. In a fit of rage Bob left with just the clothes he wore—nothing more.

After all the conflict subsided, Bob's father began to reflect at would become of his boy? How far would he go before the law would restrain him? All of the worst possibilities loomed up in his mind. It was then that he asked the police to issue an all-points-bulletin for his arrest. The father asked the police to place him in detention home for boys until he was twenty-one. Before the police caught up with Bob, he had slipped into his grandmother's home in Costa Mesa when she was away, forged her name on a check, cashed it, and was on his way to a "high old time".

Although he now had money in his pocket, he realized that now he had absolutely no one to whom to turn. His father had kicked him out; he had stolen from his grandmother; and the school had dismissed him. Worse than this, he feared that his father might send the police after him. He was miserable. Now he had no friends at all. He became desperately lonely. Fond memories filled his mind. He remembered the "good old days" at The Mountain School. How he wished he had kept his promises to them and had been willing to receive the help they so kindly offered. If he could only return there, what a difference it would make! How he longed for his friends at The Mountain School.

Finally he resorted to more deception. He would go to The Mountain School and ask them to let him stay there for just a few days. He would tell them that he had been suspended from the public school for those few days and would they mind if he stayed there as a guest until the time of his suspension was over. The more he thought about it, the more he liked the idea.

So he headed straight for the mountains of Whimsted. He was thrilled at the sight of the mountains of the State Park. In spite of the fact that he was now a fugitive from justice, the very thought of once more really breathing the forgiving atmosphere of The Mountain School spurred him on until he arrived at the school.

This was home! How good it felt! But now what to do? He lingered around the corner of a building where he would be sure to meet some of the faculty members. It was not long until one of them walked by. He greeted the teacher with a smile and told him his lie. True to the spirit of the school, he was granted permission to stay for a few days and was granted the privilege of using the lower bunk in Tom Larson's room. Between the time Bob arrived on the school campus and the arrival of the sheriff about a week later, he was to witness first-hand an experience that could change his life.

As Providence would have it, a group of students from La Sierra College, some nine hundred and fifty miles away, had just arrived on campus for an unusual series of meetings. These young people were teenagers and young adults in their early twenties. They came by truck and car. Some flew in with Dr. Fred Paulman, founder of the school, in his private plane. They had come there to share and teach seven lessons on The Prayer of Reception."

These young people had not come to merely present the theory of "the prayer of reception", but without exception, each one of these individuals had experienced a thrilling new dimension of living through answered prayer. Each told of the change of life he or she had experienced as the result of this kind of praying. Their glowing faces and enthusiastic voices declared that they had now found what they wanted. One after another they related how they had turned to one of the 3,573 promises recorded in the Word, and had ASKED, BELIEVED, and CLAIMED the promise, saying, "I thank You Lord, I have received the answer to Your promise in this verse of Scripture". They cited two authorities for their procedure. The first was Matthew 21:22, "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive."

The second authority was taken from the book Education", page 258. There it reads:

Youth Prays . . . God Answers

“ . . . for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received”.

To make it easy to remember, the A B C’S of prayer were worded this way:

A, is Ask—Matthew 7:7.

B, is Believe—Mark 11:24.

C, is Claim, or receive—John 11:41.

The students at The Mountain School sat spellbound as they listened, not to old people, but to young people their own age, tell of an encounter with Jesus. They began to see that Christ’s love is full, real, and personal. One of these promises is, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool". Isaiah 1:18.

Another promise indicated how this change can take place: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness". I John 1:9.

The lessons taught; the experiences related brought an atmosphere to The Mountain School that was almost heavenly. The very air seemed charged with an electric current of love, joy, hope and power. Hearts were broken! Confessions followed. Lives were changed! Excitement prevailed everywhere, but no fanaticism. The Holy Spirit had visited that quiet campus, hidden away in the outskirts of the great state park.

With a joy that was contagious, students and faculty alike claimed first one promise of Scripture and then another. The young teachers from La Sierra College—called “panelists”—were drilling the youth in the truth that, "For any gift He has promised, we may ask," and, “The conditions met, the promise is unequivocal”. Education, p. 258.

“The promise is unequivocal” because “God is not a man, that he should lie”. Numbers 23:19.

But there is another factor in the certainty of the promise that is not commonly understood by students of the Scriptures.

This is that each promise of God is "seed". “The seed is the word of God.” Luke 8:11.

Now what is the significance of our Lord’s using the term “seed”? We turn to God’s other book, the book of nature, to find the answer.

Rutherford Platt, a prize winner in science, has declared that every normal apple seed contains three physical departments of an apple tree—the trunk, two leaves, and roots. It would require, he declares, a powerful magnifying glass to see them, but the tiny, tiny tree is right there nonetheless.

When I first read this statement by Mr. Platt in his book, “His Green World”, pages 25 and 29, I could, by faith, always from then on, see a tiny, tiny apple tree in every normal apple seed, and a tiny, tiny oak tree in every normal acorn.

So, declares our favorite author: "As surely as the oak is in the acorn, so surely is the gift of God in His promise. If we receive the promise, we have the gift”.—Education, p. 253.

This truth is repeated for emphasis, as follows: "We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most. —Id., p. 258.

Youth Prays . . . God Answers

You see, friends, what science taught Rutherford Platt, Ellen G. White received by divine inspiration and revelation. Therefore, scientifically, we have a perfect right to return thanks to God that we have received the gift if we claim a simple, but dynamic, Bible promise, and fulfill its equally simple, but essential, conditions.

So the drilling of texts and ideas went on. "What is 'A' in the prayer of reception"?

The answer came back, "Ask, Matthew 7:7".

"What is 'B' in the prayer of reception"?

Again the answer, "Believe, Mark 11: 24".

"And what does 'C' stand for"?

A chorus of voices answered, "Claim, or receive, and return thanks that we have received. John 11:41".

There was no question now but what Bob had found what he wanted. Never before had he understood the dynamics of this wonderful thing called "the prayer of reception" based on "Believe that ye receive", Mark 11:24.

Never before had he witnessed or been able to receive the love of God so broad, so strong, so intimate, so personal!

That night as Bob climbed into his bunk, Tom Larson overheard him sigh in relief, "Oh, it's so good to be back home"!

But the next day the sheriff came to take Bob away.

Quiz 01

1. What was the only real home Bob ever had? _____.

Note: Although Bob was not able to respond immediately to the faculty's love, it had its definite influence, and later he returned to the school for good. "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one." Testimonies, Vol. 9, p. 189. "He [Christ] passed no human being by as worthless, but sought to apply the healing remedy to every soul." Testimonies, Vol. 9, page 191.

2. Complete: "How like our Lord who _____ of forgiving the wayward."

3. Look up Isaiah 1:18 and 1 John 1:9 mentioned and read them to yourself, putting your own name right in the text. Have you, personally, asked God to fulfill these texts to you? believed He has? and claimed them as your own, because He has promised? Yes No

4. Complete: "God is _____ a man, that he _____ neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he _____ ? or hath he _____, and shall he _____?" (Numbers 23:19.)

5. True or false: The gift of God is in His promise. _____.

6. Complete: We _____ the gift if we claim a Bible promise, and _____ its simple, but essential, _____.