

YMCA Truck Driver

This is another spiritual experience that happened in my YMCA personal work program many years ago. Praying for the Lord's leading to the right room in the dormitory area was a prime activity of mine. Faith is a mystery at best, and seeing God work so that prayer becomes a living activity with tangible results is a real thrill.

This particular evening I walked down the hallway praying for a door to be open if the Lord wanted me to talk to the man living there. I was always apprehensive, not knowing how I would know what to do or say. A door ahead of me was slightly open so I knocked when I reached it. I heard a voice say, "Come in." I pushed it open, and a big, burly man was sitting in the small room on the side of the bed. I introduced myself, with a Bible in my hand, and asked if I could talk to him about the things of God. He was very nice and invited me to sit down.

My usual introduction was to tell men why I was there, under the auspices of the YMCA, and that God had changed my life and I wanted to share that experience with others. He was telling me about what a godly mother he had and a lengthy explanation about her spiritual life, which thrilled me to hear. Then I asked him about his life before the Lord and asked if there was any way that I could help him.

Every question I asked reminded him of something else about his mother. Finally I had to tell him that hearing all about her was great but it wouldn't help him any, if he didn't make his own commitment to God. When I asked him if he would like to know whether he was going to heaven or hell or not, he agreed he would like to know.

We opened the Bible and read some scriptures pertaining to sin, Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Romans 5:8, Romans 10:9-10, and Romans 10:13. He wanted to

accept Christ as his Savior and prayed to receive Him. We knelt by his bed and he asked Christ to come into his life. When we finished praying I asked him if he meant business with God and had really accepted Christ. This brought a flood of tears which shocked me because it was so unexpected from this big man.

He finally told me his story. He was a truck driver that had a wife and four children in Eastern Iowa. He did not live at home because of his father-in-law. Over a period of time his father-in-law had tried to get his daughter to leave this man and break up their marriage. As I remember, the father-in-law got a shotgun and came after him to kill him. The police picked up the father-in-law and sent him to prison for two years.

This truck driver swore to get even with his father-in-law when he got out of prison and vowed to beat him up if he ever saw him again. Of course, the father-in-law got out of prison and of course the men saw each other eventually. The man did beat up his father-in-law, which put the man in the hospital for three weeks. The verse that came to my mind when he finished crying and talking was Matthew 6:14-15: "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins." I turned to Matthew and had him read about forgiveness and he said, "I see, I must go back and ask my father-in-law for forgiveness."

We knelt and prayed again together and he prayed a different type of prayer, asking God to forgive him and that he would go home and ask his father-in-law for forgiveness. We got off our knees at the bedside, and he began to smile and said, "I feel so much better now, but I must go home to make things right with my family."

What a difference a prayer makes. I sure went home thrilled at how God can answer prayer in directing to the right room for His purposes.