

A SPIRIT FILLED LIFE

WHAT GOD CAN DO

The story of the life of Samuel Morris reads like a romance, but truth is stranger than fiction.

One of the purest souls that ever tabernacled in the clay walked among us for a few brief years bearing the white flower of a blameless life as an example of what God can do with a life that is absolutely His.

The truth spoken by Jesus, that we must come back to childhood faith to understand the Kingdom, was exemplified in the life of Sammy.

“If our faith were but more simple,
We would take Him at His word,
And our life would be all sunshine
In the sweetness of our Lord.”

The faith of Sammy Morris never wavered or questioned; hence God, who hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty ([1 Corinthians 1:27](#)), put His power upon him.

And his simple, honest, trustful life was as truly owned of God as was that of any prophet of old. Like the Bethany woman's act of devotion in anointing her Lord, little thinking her deed would live in the records of Holy Scriptures as a perpetual memorial of one who did what she could, so Sammy's life will abide—

Till the sun grows cold,
And the books of the Judgment Day unfold.

Stephen Merritt, the Christian philanthropist of New York City, gives the following thrilling sketch:

Samuel Morris was a Kru boy. He was an African of the Africans, a pure negro. When I first knew him he was probably twenty years old. He was a resident of Liberia, where he was employed among English-speaking people as a house painter, and where he first found the Lord.

The circumstances leading up to his conversion are as follows: A missionary girl came to us in New York from the far West to go out under Bishop Taylor, and, as I was secretary for the bishop, I received her. I had become intimately acquainted with the Holy Ghost, and of course was full of Him.

I talked from the abundance of my heart to her of Him. I told her if she would receive Him she would be a success in Africa, and would not be sick nor lonesome nor wearied. He would be her strength, wisdom, and comfort, and her life would be a continued psalm of praise in that dark continent. She hearkened—desired—consented—asked—and He came, an abiding presence. She departed, filled with the Spirit. Her companion missionaries thought she would be a failure, as she kept herself aloof and would sit alone, and talk and cry and laugh; they thought she had left a lover behind, and therefore her actions. She had her lover with her, hence her peculiarities. She reached her station, and sat down to her work—contented, blessed, and happy.

This Kru boy, Samuel Morris, heard of her arrival, and walked miles to see her and talk about Jesus. She was filled and overflowed with the Holy Spirit, and was glad to pour out of Him on Samuel. He became enthused, and he desired and was determined to know the Comforter Divine. Journey after journey was made, hour after hour was spent in conversation on the darling theme, when she, wearied with a constant repetition, said, “If you want to know any more you must go to Stephen Merritt, of New York; he told me all I know of the Holy Ghost.”

“I am going—where is he?”

She laughingly answered, “In New York.”

She missed him; he had started. Weary miles he traversed before he reached the place where he hoped to embark. As he arrived on the shore a sailing vessel dropped her anchor in the offing and a small boat put ashore. Samuel stepped up and asked the captain to take him to New York. He was refused with curses and a kick, but he answered, “Oh, yes, you will.” He slept on the sand that night, and was again refused. The next morning, nothing daunted, he made the request again the third time, and was asked by the captain, “What can you do?” and he answered, “Anything.” Thinking he was an able-bodied seaman, and, as two men had deserted and he was short-handed, he asked, “What do you want?” meaning pay. Samuel said, “I want to see Stephen Merritt.” The captain then gave the order to the men in the boat, “Take this boy aboard.”

Samuel reached the ship, but he knew nothing of a vessel or of the sea. The anchor was raised, and he was off. His ignorance brought much trouble; cuffs, curses and kicks were his in abundance; but his peace was as a river, his confidence unbounded, and his assurance sweet. He went into the cabin to clean up—and and converted. The fire ran through the ship, and half or more of the crew were saved. The ship became a Bethel, the songs and shouts of praise resounded, and nothing was too good for the uncouth and ungainly Kru boy.

They landed at the foot of Pike Street, East River, New York, and after the farewells were said, Samuel, with a bag of clothing furnished by the crew (for he went aboard with only a jumper and overalls, with no shoes) stepped on the dock, and stepping up to the first man he met, said, “Where’s Stephen Merritt?” It was three or four miles from my place, in a part of the city where I would be utterly unknown, but the Holy Spirit arranged that. The man accosted was one of the “Travelers’ Club,” and he said, “I know him; he lives away over on Eighth Avenue—on the other side of the town. I’ll take you to him for a dollar.”

“All right,” said Samuel, though he had not one cent.

They reached the store just as I was leaving for prayer-meeting, and the tramp said, “There he is.”

Samuel stepped up and said, "Stephen Merritt?"

"Yes."

"I am Samuel Morris; I've just come from Africa to talk with you about the Holy Ghost."

"Have you any letters of introduction?"

"No; had no time to wait."

"Well, all right; I am going to Jane Street prayer-meeting. Will you go into the mission next door? On my return I will see about your entertainment." "All right."

"Say, young fellow," said the tramp, "where's my dollar?"

"Oh, Stephen Merritt pays all my bills now," said Samuel.

"Oh, certainly," said I, as I passed the dollar over.

I went to the prayer-meeting, he to the mission. I forgot him until just as I put my key in the door about 10:30, when Samuel Morris flashed upon my remembrance. I hastened over, and found him on the platform with seventeen men on their faces around him; he had just pointed them to Jesus, and they were rejoicing in His pardoning favor. I had never seen just such a sight. The Holy Ghost in this figure of ebony, with all its surroundings,

WAS, INDEED, A PICTURE

Think, an uncultured, uncouth, uncultivated, but endowed, imbued, and in-filled African, under the power of the Holy Spirit, the first night in America winning souls for Immanuel—nearly a score. No trouble now to take care of him. He was one of God's anointed ones. This was Friday. Saturday he stayed around. Sunday I said, "Samuel, I would like you to accompany me to Sunday-school. I am the superintendent, and may ask you to speak." He answered, "I never was in Sunday-school, but all right." I smilingly introduced him as one Samuel Morris, who had come from Africa to talk to their superintendent about the Holy Spirit. I know not what he said. The school laughed, and as he commenced my attention was called, when I looked, lo, the altar was full of our young people, weeping and sobbing. I never could find out what he said, but the presence and manifested power of the Holy Spirit were so sensible that the entire place was filled with His glory.

The young people formed a "Samuel Morris Missionary Society," and secured money, clothes and everything requisite to send him off to the Bishop William Taylor University at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The days that passed while waiting to go were wonderful days. I took him in a coach, with a prancing team of horses, as I was going to Harlem to officiate at a funeral. I said, "Samuel, I would like to show you something of our city and Central Park." He had never been behind horses nor in a coach and the effect seemed laughable to me. I said, "Samuel, this is the Grand Opera House," and began to explain, when he said, "Stephen Merritt, do you ever pray in a coach?"

I answered, "Oh, yes; I very frequently have very blessed times while riding about."

He placed his great black hand on mine, and, turning me around on my knees, said, "We will pray"; and for the first time I *kneelt* in a coach to pray. He told the Holy Spirit he had come from Africa to talk to me about Him, and I talked about everything else, and wanted to show him the church, the city, and the people, when he was so desirous of hearing and knowing about Him, and he asked Him if he would take out of my heart *things*, and so fill me with *Himself* that I would never write, or preach, or talk only of Him. There were three of us in that coach that day. Never have I known such a day—we were filled with the Holy Ghost, and He made him the channel by which I became instructed and then endued as never before.

Bishops have placed their hands upon my head, once and again, and joined with elders of the church in ordaining services, but no power came in comparison. James Caughey placed his holy hands on my head and on the head of dear Thomas Harrison as he prayed that the mantle of Elijah might fall upon the Elishas—and the fire fell and the power came, but the abiding of the Comforter was received in the coach with Sammy Morris, for since then I have not written a line or spoken a word, only for or in the Holy Ghost.

Samuel Morris was an instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit for the greater and grander development of Stephen Merritt in the wonderful things of God. He then went to Fort Wayne. He turned the University upside down. He lived and died in the Holy Ghost, after accomplishing his work; and as a Holy Ghost man or woman never dies, so the life of Samuel Morris speaks to us today, and will live as long as we remain, and will never die. At his funeral three young men, who had received the Holy Ghost through his instruction, dedicated themselves to the work of God in Africa, to take the place of Samuel Morris.

The late T.C. Reade wrote a life story of Samuel Morris, from which we glean the following interesting incidents. He says:

For the early life of Samuel Morris I am wholly dependent on what he has told me. It could not be learned from any other person. No one else knew of the pangs of his separation from mother and home; no one else knew of the stripes that were laid upon his poor, quivering back by his cruel master; no one else knew of his marvelous escape and the way God led him through the wilderness till he reached the coast and was free. All this I heard him relate several times, and it fixed itself indelibly upon my memory. To me this simple black boy was a daily wonder, a visible miracle of the utmost grace of God. I learned to love him as a brother, and from him I learned lessons of faith and consecration to which I had been an utter stranger before. Do not despise him because he was a poor black boy; Christ loved him and saved him, and in the pure light of Heaven he is white today and his blood-washed robes are white as no fuller on earth could make them. Do not despise that poor, black body, for the Holy Ghost made it His temple.

EARLY LIFE

Samuel Morris was the son of a king. This does not mean, of course, that his father was a powerful potentate, for to be a king in the country from which he came it is only necessary that a man be able to build a town and rule over such people as resort to him for companionship and protection. Sometimes these petty kings or chiefs rule over only a few scores or hundreds of people. The father of Samuel Morris was one of these petty rulers among what are known as the Kru people, who inhabit Western Africa back from the coast at Cape Palmas.

Sold into Slavery

He was taken prisoner in an engagement with another African tribe when Sammy was a small child, and the little tribe over which he ruled was almost broken up. Sammy was sold into slavery, or rather, as he more appropriately worded it, was put into pawn. It was understood that his captors had no use for him, but only held him in hope that his people would be able to redeem him. This he supposes they did, for he was restored to his own tribe and remained with them till he was about eleven years of age, when he was kidnapped and again put into pawn.

Of this second bondage he had a very distinct recollection. Once, he says, his father came to redeem him, but was not able to pay a sufficient price. The money he offered consisted of ivory, the kernels of palm nuts and India rubber. This, he said, was the principal currency of the country.

Besides these the father offered to give Sammy's sister, who was younger than he, and being a girl, she was, according to the notions of these heathens, of little consequence compared with a boy. Sammy begged his father not to make the bargain, saying he was older and could bear the hardships better than his little sister. The two chiefs or kings did not come to terms and Sammy was left in pawn. After this his life became a scene of constant suffering.

Cruelly Beaten, Runs Away

The chief who held him was determined that his fattier should redeem him at the price he had fixed, and so began to punish the boy every day, taking care that the father should be kept posted as to what was transpiring. Sammy said to me: "This cruel man whipped me every day; he whipped me without any cause, and every day the whipping got harder and harder." "What did he whip you with?" I asked.

"Oh, with a vine like a rope."

"And did he make you take off your coat?" I asked.

"Oh, Mr. Reade," he said laughingly, "take off my coat? We had no coat, no vest, no shirt, no pants, in my country."

So the stripes were laid upon this poor boy's naked back, and by the strong hand of a savage who knew no mercy and cared for only one thing—that he might secure the price put upon his captive. At last, Sammy said, the whipping got so hard that he could not endure it any longer and he started from under the lash and ran with all his might into the woods, not knowing whither he was going. But God, who cared for Ishmael when his mother cast him upon the sand and turned away that she might not see him die, cared for him also. There was work for him to do. Like Abraham he was blessed of God, and in turn was to prove a blessing to others. So his path was chosen for him. The Lord led him through the wilderness from place to place, till he reached the coast. I do not know the distance he had to travel; he did not know; but it occupied many days and yielded an experience greatly varied and full of danger. He was a heathen boy; he knew nothing of God; but the Providence that feeds the sparrow fed him, and the power that led the Magi to Bethlehem led this poor boy to the coast and to Christ.

Works on Coffee Plantation

After reaching the coast he went to work on a coffee plantation, and for his services received his board and such simple articles of clothing as are worn by the natives in that region. It was here that he found Christ and entered upon that Spirit-filled life which, though it proved very brief, was, in the simple yet sublime development of its consecration and faith, the most wonderful I have ever known. It seems that a boy from his own nation worked on the plantation with Sammy, and this boy had become a Christian.

ATTENDS CHURCH

He told Sammy of Jesus, and one day took him to church. Sammy could not then understand a word of English; he could not comprehend the significance of the church, the Bible, the preacher and other things that met his staring eyes. But he says that he felt that God was in that place and that, in the presence of the pure and awful being who filled that house, he was sinful and undone. He went from that first service with in aching heart and an inquiring mind. He was groping his way

like the Ethiopian eunuch and needed a Philip to guide him. He had heard his companion pray and asked him what he was doing. He told him he was talking to God.

“Who is God?” asked Sammy.

“He is my Father,” answered the other boy.

“Then” said Sammy, in his practical way of putting things, “you are talking to your Father.”

Conviction and Conversion

Ever after that Sammy called praying “talking to his Father.” As soon as he was brought under conviction at church that day, he, too, began to “talk to his Father.” His conviction was not of that mild and evanescent type that is becoming so prevalent in these days. It was the conviction of the old-time revivals. It was not remittent and hence it led him to talk to his Father at some very unseasonable hours, and it was so deep that it led him to talk with a very loud voice. His agonizing cries sometimes broke the stillness of the midnight hour. At last his fellow-workmen declared him a nuisance, and notified him that if he “couldn’t keep still he must leave the quarters.” He then transferred his prayer meeting to the woods, and there he wrestled with the Angel night after night, as did Jacob at Peniel.

One night he tarried in the woods praying until after midnight, and then came to his humble quarters, weary and heavy-hearted, and lay down to sleep, but he could not sleep. He said his tongue was still but his heart went on praying. All at once his room appeared to grow light. He thought at first the sun was rising, but everyone was sound asleep around him and the room grew lighter till it was full of glory. At the same time his burden disappeared and his heart was full of joy and his body seemed as light as a feather. He said he thought he could fly. He began to shout and leap and praise God like the lame man who was healed at the beautiful gate of the temple. He soon waked everybody up in the quarters and there was no more sleeping that night. Some thought he had gone crazy and some, remembering their old heathen superstition, thought a devil had gotten into him. This was his conversion—plain, positive, powerful. He could not doubt, and with his limited knowledge he could never have been satisfied with anything less. Ordinarily Sammy was not demonstrative. He was unusually quiet for one of his race; but whenever he spoke of his conversion his eyes flashed fire and his whole frame quivered with emotion. His appearance was that of the poet when he sang:

“Oh, sacred hour, oh, hallowed spot
Where love divine first found
me;
Wherever falls my distant lot
My heart shall linger round thee;
And when from earth I rise to soar
Up to my home in heaven,
Down will I cast my eyes once more
Where I was first forgiven.”

How long he remained on this coffee plantation I do not know, but it was long enough to enable him to learn to speak English and to read and to write a very little. It was long enough for him to acquire a new name. His heathen name was Kaboo, but this was now changed to Samuel Morris by a lady missionary, who gave him some instruction in reading and writing and taught him the sweet, simple lessons of the gospel. Leaving the coffee plantation, he came to a town on the coast and there learned to paint houses, and seems to have worked at that trade for a couple of years.

Called to Preach

All this time he was a constant attendant on the gospel services conducted by the missionaries at that place, and all this time he felt profoundly convicted that it was his duty to preach to his people the blessed Christ who had so gloriously saved him. One day he went to the missionary, C.E. Smirl, and told him all that was in his heart on this subject. The missionary told him that to preach to his people he must be educated; to be educated he must go to America, and to go to America would cost him a hundred dollars. With these three facts clearly fixed in his mind, Sammy hastened to the woods, his usual place of prayer, to “talk to his Father” about it. “Now, Father,” said he, “you have called me to preach to my people, but the missionary says I can’t preach without an education, and that to be educated I must go to America; and, Father, you know I have not a single cent—please make a way for me to go.” When he told me this incident he added, in a simple, matter of fact way, “I knew He would.”

From the day he offered that simple prayer he looked upon it as settled that he was coming to America, and was on a constant lookout for the ship that was to carry him over. It was at this time that he met the young lady who had but recently gone as a missionary to that country and who told him of the Holy Ghost and of Stephen Merritt, one of our grand, anointed, local preachers of New York.

Two incidents that occurred during Sammy’s passage to this country served to show his marvelous faith.

Prayer Answered Again

On the third day out he began to be very sick, “never so sick before in all my life.” “And what did you do then?” I asked. “Oh, I got down on my knees and said: ‘Father, you know I promised to work for this man every day until I got to America, but I can’t do it if I am sick; please take away this sick,’” and from that moment he was well and able to do his work. He told me, also, that he had to work on the mast, a kind of work he did not at all like to do. One night he was sent up the mast to work and it was raining and the wind rolled the ship and swayed the mast over till it seemed as though the vessel would capsize, and the rain beat into his eyes and almost blinded him.

Seasick

In the midst of the storm he talked to his Father in this way: “Father, I am not afraid, for I know you will take care of me, but I don’t like to be on the mast. Won’t you please make it so I won’t have to come up here again?” “I knew He would,” he added. The next day there was work to be done above and Sammy started with another sailor to do it. When they reached the foot of the mast the other sailor turned and said: “Sam, you don’t like to work on the mast and I don’t like to work in the cabin; you go down and do my work in the cabin and I’ll do your work above.” So Sammy’s prayer was answered and he never had to go on the mast again.

ENTERS TAYLOR UNIVERSITY

The first personal knowledge I ever had of Sammy Morris was conveyed to me in a letter addressed by Stephen Merritt, of New York, to C.B. Stemen, of Fort Wayne, Indiana, a distinguished local preacher and former president of Taylor University. In this letter Mr. Merritt told

of the arrival of Sammy Morris in New York, en route to Taylor University. He said that the good Methodists of Jane Street Church would clothe this heroic young negro boy and send him to the University if we of the University would assume the expense of his education after he reached us. Dr. Stemen brought the letter to me and we consulted together as to what should be done. The University was young and struggling with a great debt, which it had inherited at its birth; we had no fund upon which we could draw for the maintenance of this unexpected charge, yet we both felt that the thing was of the Lord, and we dared not refuse. I may say here that I had for years felt anxious to help poor young men who were preparing for the ministry to acquire an education, and I had fondly hoped that some time God would open up my way to that work; but it had not entered my mind that this work was to be done at Taylor University, and especially that it was to be introduced so suddenly and in such an unheard of way.

Truly, the work was thrust upon us. But we had faith in that God who had fed Elijah by the brook and multiplied the meal and oil of the poor widow of Zarepath, and we wrote to Brother Merritt, "Send him on, and God will take care of him." He arrived in the month of December and became at once an object of curiosity both to teachers and pupils. Here was an African boy as to the purity of whose blood no one would ever doubt. No question of visible admixture would ever be asked in this case, for no raven was ever blacker than he. His lips were thick enough and his nose sufficiently flat and broad to satisfy the utmost peculiarities of his race. Yet his accent and pronunciation were entirely new to us, unlike that of the typical American negro, unlike that of any other foreigner we had ever met. We had learned a little of his former history and of the marvelous way in which God had secured a passage for him across the great deep, but we knew nothing of the choice spirit, the angel in black, that was among us. I think the curiosity was as great on his part as on ours, for everything was new to him. He had to be introduced to his clothes and made acquainted with most articles of food and told how to eat them in American style.

His First View of the Snowfall

I shall never forget his wonder when he first awoke and saw the ground covered with snow. When the Israelites saw the new food God had provided, scattered like hoar frost about the camp, they shouted in amazement, "Manna! Manna! What is it?" So Sammy exclaimed of the snow, "What is it?" He took some of it in his hand and watched it melt, and saw only a drop of water remaining, and then he asked: "Where did the snow go after it placed this water in my hand?"

While Taylor University has always been open to persons of both sexes, all denominations, all races and every color, I think Sammy Morris was the first negro who ever asked admittance to our halls. I wish to say here to the honor of the faculty and students of the University, that if he had been the president's son he could not have been treated with greater courtesy. He was loved and respected by all.

Shortly after his arrival I made a note of the fact in the *Western Christian Advocate* and invited any who felt moved to do so to send a dollar each toward his expenses. Thirteen persons responded and the money thus obtained was used in fitting up his room and buying his books. His studies were necessarily primary and he could not enter any of our classes, so teachers and pupils vied with each other in the labor of instructing him. The daughter of Dr. Stemen and my own daughter took part in the work, and were as enthusiastic as though they had been real missionaries, teaching in Africa instead of America. I have seen Dr. Fry, a man of such vast and varied learning that he could instruct philosophers, bending over this black boy and explaining to him the Scriptures.

A few weeks after Sammy came among us I was preaching in the village of Churubusco, in Northern Indiana, and after the sermon I gave a brief account of our African boy and said as there was no fund provided for his support we had taken him on faith, its we say. At the close of the sermon a Brother Thomas slipped a half dollar into my hand, and the next morning as I was on my way to the train a Brother Kichler called me into his shop, and handing me a five-dollar bill, said, "The Spirit tells me to give this to your faith fund."

It is literally true that this faith fund, originated to support Sammy Morris, has revolutionized Taylor University. From the number of young men studying in its halls for the ministry and mission work, it might almost be called a theological seminary, and this feature of the school has grown up as a result of the faith fund. Surely, if Sammy Morris had no other mission than this, it would amply justify the faith he had in God's call.

A Good Student

Sammy studied hard and learned rapidly while he was with us, and had he lived he would have become an effective teacher and preacher among his people. He was especially apt in acquiring a knowledge of the Scriptures and singularly happy in his way of expressing the truth.

A Gospel Preacher

I went to hear him preach once and was surprised at the freshness and force of his thoughts. He spoke for forty minutes in a quiet, yet earnest style, simple and natural as the style of a child, and everyone in the vast audience was interested and all who had honest hearts to receive the truth were profited.

A Child of Prayer

He was a child of prayer. Many a time have I gone down the hall where he roomed and heard him "talking to his Father." He was as calm and matter-of-fact about it as though talking to me. He was literally talking with God. I have heard his prayers early in the morning before the other students were up; I have heard him late at night after all others were locked in slumber. I have quietly set the door ajar and looked at the earnest face turned toward heaven, but he was not at all distracted. His talk with God absorbed him and he was oblivious of my presence. His power was felt in the school; we all felt it and were made better by it.

One of his fellow pupils, Thomas Newburn, says he has often gone to his room and found him engaged in audible prayer. He would pay no attention whatever to the knock at the door, but would continue his talk with God until his soul was satisfied, then he would come to the door, smiling and say: "Now come in; we done talking; for this time."

Loved His Bible

Sammy loved his Bible and not only read it himself, slowly and as best he could, but whoever came into his room to spend a few minutes was requested to read a chapter for him. One day a young man came who was not a Christian, and when asked to read a chapter he declined, saying he did not believe the Bible. "What!" said Sammy, "you no believe that book? Your Father speak, you no believe Him? Your Brother speak, you no believe Him? The sun shine and you no believe

if? God your Father, Christ your Brother, the Holy Ghost your Sun. I pray for you.” And he did pray, and the young man was saved.

One day out of every week Sammy fasted. From Thursday evening until Saturday morning he would never take a morsel of food or a drop of water, yet his work went on and he seemed so cheerful and happy that no one knew of his fasting but those who missed him from the table.

He was delighted with this country and had a keen appreciation of our Christian civilization. How often would he contrast his country with ours. Once on Thanksgiving evening I happened to ask him which country he liked best—we had fed that day on conventional roast turkey—and without a moment’s reflection he answered laughing, “Which is better, Mr. Reade, roast turkey or raw monkey?”

“Why, Sammy,” said I, “you didn’t eat monkeys?” “Oh, yes, sir,” he replied, “I eat many monkeys, and eat them raw.”

Yet, much as he admired this country, he longed to finish his studies and go back to preach to his people. He said that when he returned he would devote himself to the children of his race; he would seat them around him in a circle on the sand and talk to them about Jesus.

But this happy dream was not to be realized. He was to preach to his people to be sure, but only through the agency of others, who should be led through his life and influence to take up the work so dear to his heart. His aptness in illustration was certainly remarkable. One night in a students’ prayer meeting he rose and said: “Bread is one thing, stone is another thing. I once saw a stone with gold in it, and they told me that it was worth more than a barrel of flour; but when I am hungry I cannot eat that stone, I must have bread; so my soul cannot be satisfied with anything but Jesus, the Bread of Life.”

Another and decidedly more original saying was this: “Living a religious life is like eating meat. Some parts of the meat are lean and you like them very much; some parts are fat and you do not like them at all, but you must eat both lean and fat to be healthy and strong. So religion has its joys and its crosses; you love the joys and draw back from its crosses, but you must take them both in order to become a strong, healthy Christian.” No student in our University ever became so widely known as Sammy Morris. All who met him were impressed with his sublime, yet simple faith in God, and moved by the story of his consecrated life. They told it to others, and he became known to people in different states. Letters of inquiry often reached us and many encouraging messages were sent through us to him. Many wrote for his picture and with difficulty I prevailed upon him to have it taken. “My picture is too ugly,” he would say, and once he exclaimed, “Oh, that I could send them a picture of Jesus!”

During the long, cold winter of 1893 Sammy was a regular attendant at the revival meetings both in the African M.E. Church and in the, Berry Street M.E. Church, to which he belonged. No night was so dark, cold, or stormy as to keep him away. His honest black face was a benediction; his simple heart, yearning for the truth, was an inspiration to the minister to do his best.

But our climate proved too rigorous for him. Coming from a region where snow is unknown, he could not withstand a temperature of 20 or 25 degrees below zero.

TAKEN SICK

He took a severe cold in January, 1893, and, although it did not disqualify him for study, he never seemed to get rid of it. At last it resulted in dropsy. Long before we apprehended that his sickness was serious he told us that he had heard his Master call and he must go. When I spoke to him of the work he had so fondly hoped to do among his people, he would answer, “Others can do it better. It is not my work, it is Christ’s work; He must choose his own workers.” He bore his

sickness patiently, cheerfully; he never spoke of pain or disappointment. The nights were never too long, his fever was never too high—he always spoke of his thankfulness that Jesus condescended to come and stay with him. I once asked him if he did not fear death. He laughed and said: “Oh, no, Mr. Reade; since I have found Jesus, death is my friend.” And so one day in May he went with Jesus to meet death as calmly as he had ever gone to meet the teachers he so much loved.

Translated

“He walked with God and was not, for God took him,” So ended this marvelous life. A thousand hearts were full of grief, for we all loved him, and many of us stood in dumb amazement at the Providence which has so quickly terminated what promised to be such a useful life. His plans and ours were all shattered in a moment. But God’s ways are higher and better than ours.

Sammy’s funeral took place from the Berry Street church, to which he belonged, and was one of the largest and by far the most tender and sympathetic one I ever witnessed in the city of Fort Wayne. The church was packed from the pulpit to the street, hundreds waiting through the whole service outside the door. And strong men bowed themselves that day, and many wept who were not accustomed to weeping. But why? He was only a poor African boy! True, but many felt that in him they had seen and learned more of faith, more of consecration and the power of God to save, than they had ever known before. He had been greatly blessed of God and had proven a blessing to many. We laid him away to rest with many tears, but in the sweet assurance that his pure spirit had entered into the city of his King.

Our dear Sister Stemen reared a suitable stone above his head, and no grave in the vast cemetery at Fort Wayne has more visitors than his, and none other is watered with so many tears. But why? Ah, it is because the Holy Ghost rested on him and everyone felt that God had set a visible seal upon him.

Two Incidents

Since this sketch was first put into print, my mind has recalled two incidents in Sammy’s life which I think should be preserved. I have also received from fellow pupils of Sammy two letters which I shall insert in the narrative. The first incident referred to the room Sammy was to occupy in the college dormitory. Calling him into my office at the opening of the term, I said, “Sammy, what room shall I give you?”

“Oh, Mr. Reade,” he replied, “any room is good enough for me. If there is a room that nobody else wants, give that to me.”

I turned my face away, for my eyes were full of tears. I was asking myself whether I was willing to take what nobody else wanted. In my experience as a teacher I have had occasion to assign rooms to more than a thousand different pupils. Most of them were noble, Christian young ladies and gentlemen, but Sammy Morris was the only one of them all who ever said, “If there is a room that nobody else wants, give that to me.”

The other incident is more remarkable still, for it shows that even while in Africa Sammy was a true soul-winner. One day he came to me and said, “Mr. Reade, may I quit school and go to work?”

“Why, Sammy,” said I, “are you dissatisfied with this school?” “Oh, no,” he answered, “I love the school very much, but I want to work and get money to bring Henry O. Neil to this country.”

“Who is this Henry O. Neil?” I asked.

“Oh,” said Sammy, “He is my brother in the Lord. I led him to Jesus in Africa. He good boy; he better boy than Sammy; he walk close to God. I want him to come here and get an education.”

“Well, Sammy,” said I, “if he ought to come to America, the Lord will open the way. Talk to your Father about it.” Almost immediately he retired to his room to pray. That evening I wrote a letter to Mrs. Dake, of Illinois, who, with her noble husband, had been a missionary in Africa, until her husband died and was buried in that far off land. Henry O. Neil had been in their employ, and I wrote to know if anything could be done to bring Henry to this country. The next morning Sammy came to my office and his face was beaming with joy. “Mr. Reade,” he said, “I very happy this morning. Father tell me that Henry shall come.” In a few days from this time: I received a letter from Mrs. Dake saying that measures were already on foot to bring Henry over. In a few months he came, and after spending some time he went back to Africa to preach to his people. He was one of the first fruits of Sammy Morris’s faith. He was a student in Taylor University at the same time with Sammy.

Rev. C.F. Yoder has written me the following letter:

“There is a power goes with the Book that melts the heart, and I want everyone to have it. It is better than volumes of sermons. I am so glad to be able to testify that Sammy was all that the Book makes him, and more. He first made the truth as it is in Christ real to me. I enclose several incidents which you are at liberty to use. Sammy and I were especial friends. Many a time we took a walk along the railroad, and Sammy would ask questions and tell about his plans. ‘When I get back to Africa,’ he often said, ‘I will gather the children about me and they will sit on the sand. They will call me father, but I don’t care for that,’ he said, as his eyes sparkled. ‘I will tell them of Jesus, and soon some of them will go away in the bushes, and I will know what that means. When they come back they will be very happy.’ In speaking he would always say, ‘Father told me to do this or that,’ as if some living person had spoken to him, and indeed, was not such the case?

His Last Hours

“When he first took sick I visited him and he said, ‘I don’t understand it. When I froze my ears last winter they hurt me very much, and I asked my Father about it and they quit hurting right away, and now I can’t get well. I can’t understand it.’ But the day he died, Brother Shaffer, another student of the University, and I visited him and prayed with him. He was all radiant. ‘Oh,’ he said, ‘I’m so happy. I understand it now; I’ve seen the angels and they will come for me soon.’

“That afternoon they came. As Brother Shaffer and I paced the floor by his casket in the night watch, we asked each other, ‘Why was this holy life cut short?’ My brother said, ‘Some flowers are too beautiful to bloom on earth.’ Results are showing rather that this life has fallen to the ground and been buried, that it might not abide alone, but bear much fruit.

“The simple story of his life inspires men everywhere to exercise that unquestioning faith which still works miracles in the Father’s name.”

Volunteers for Africa

On Thursday evening, after Sammy’s death, our students had their usual prayer meeting and everyone present spoke of some blessing he had received, some lesson he had learned from the life of this devoted boy. At last, toward the close of the meeting, one young man arose greatly agitated and said: “I feel impressed this moment that I must go to Africa in Sammy’s place, and I pray that as his work has fallen upon me, the mantle of his faith may also fall upon me.” He had

hardly taken his seat when another, and a third arose: and gave utterance to a like experience. So, instead of one, we had from that hour three who were preparing to go to Africa. "He being dead, yet speaketh."

Farewell, Brave Heart

One day Sammy came to me laughing and said: "I don't think I shall love my teachers in heaven any better than I love you and Dr. Stemen and Miss Husted, but I shall learn faster there. I shall not be so dumb." Ay, Sammy, you have already learned lessons to which we are strangers. You have looked upon the King in His beauty and have drunk of the river whose waters make glad the City of God.

SCRIPTURE TEACHING CONCERNING THE HOLY SPIRIT IN HIS MINISTRY TO CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS

1. "Born of the Spirit"—[John 3:5-6](#), [8](#). Through the channel of our faith, believing that "Jesus is the Christ," the life of God is imparted to us. [I John 5:1](#).
2. "Baptized of the Spirit"—[I Corinthians 12:13](#); [Romans 6:3](#); [Ephesians 4:5](#). This baptism secures the position of the believer. By it he is put into the body of which Christ is the head, the true Church. This gives him an inheritance in Christ to be apprehended by a growing knowledge and appropriated by a growing faith. The burden of the apostle's prayer for believers is that they may know and appropriate the riches of this inheritance. See [Ephesians 1:18](#).
3. "Sealed by the Spirit"—[Ephesians 1:13-14](#); [4:30](#); [II Corinthians 1:22](#); [II Timothy 2:19](#). This is the act of God who sets His stamp, or seal, upon the life of His believing people. The Spirit Himself is the seal, for His presence in the life marks the believer as belonging to God. It implies ownership and holiness.
4. "Indwelt of the Spirit"—[I Corinthians 6:19](#); [II Corinthians 5:5](#); [Galatians 4:6](#); [I John 4:13](#). From the moment one becomes a true child of God by faith in Jesus Christ, he is indwelt by the Holy Spirit.
5. "Filled with the Spirit"—[Ephesians 5:18](#); [Acts 6:3](#); [9:17](#); [11:24](#). The Spirit-filled believer is the divine ideal both for life and for service. The Christian believer born of the Spirit, baptized of the Spirit, sealed and indwelt by the Spirit, may also be filled with the Spirit. (This was the secret of the life of Samuel Morris. He realized in experience the abundant life.) The condition for the Spirit-filled life is that of a sincere yielding of our lives to God on the basis of such Scriptures as [Romans 6:13-14](#); [Romans 12:1-2](#).
6. "Walking in the Spirit"—[Galatians 5:16](#), [25](#). This means to walk in reliance upon the Spirit who dwells within the child of God. It is the life of faith, the practice of dependence upon Him to do the things that he has come to do. See [John 14:26](#); [16:13-15](#); [Romans 8:2](#), [26](#).
7. "The Renewing of the Spirit"—[Titus 3:5](#). This is a process by which the divine life within us is renewed and strengthened and the character of the believer conformed more and more to Christ.

