

## Apollos Robins Beswetherick

### Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by E. Powell

#### MEMOIR OF THE REV. APOLLOS ROBINS BESWETHERICK.

The subject of this memoir was born at Bodwen, a small hamlet in the county of Cornwall. He was blessed with a very pious mother, who sought to train up her children in the fear of the Lord. We have inquired, but in vain, for some particulars relative to her method, and also of the early life of our departed brother. All we can tell is that in 1854 he was living without a saving interest in Christ, but not running to any excess in evil, feeling the restraints of his early training, and the influence of the example of his pious mother and two pious sisters. At that time he felt some pleasure in attending the means of grace and conversing with the ministers of the truth, who always found a welcome in his father's house. Books were also his delight, and early morn and the midnight hour frequently found him and his brother Paul pursuing their favourite studies, and gathering stores of information on every subject which in their circumstances they found possible.

In the year 1856 he lost his devoted mother, and this painful circumstance, under God, was the means of leading him to give himself fully to Christ and to his service. In a letter addressed to his father shortly after he had entered into the work of the ministry he refers to this. He writes, "In the order of Divine Providence I, your son, have been called to labour in the vineyard of the Lord, to preach to poor perishing, dying, yet immortal men, the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Four years or more have now elapsed since I left the home of my childhood, the home once dear to me, around which my affections entwined, where I received instruction which has proved and will prove a light to my feet till my eyes shall be dim in death, and I shall have passed to worlds unknown. Oh! I repeat it, it was the home of my childhood, and there while under the protecting care of those who loved me I whiled the pleasant hours away. But soon, ah soon, they fled, and darker days came on, and then my young heart sorrow knew. I well remember in those dark days one darker than all others came, and yet in that dark, most dark day the Holy Spirit touched my heart and shone upon my mind, and then my soul resolved for God to live and die. I refer to that day when I was called to stand in my mother's room to see her die. Weeping around her bed we gathered, and while we stood weeping a scene transpired which I would not forget if I could. My mother stretched out her pale, thin, wasted hand and beckoned me to approach. I drew near. It was to receive the parting kiss, the last farewell, the dying counsel. Ah, it was then as I saw her lovely countenance made still more lovely by the refulgent glory which was bursting upon her, and by the sweet calm smile which played around, — it was then when I saw how her soul was supported in the final struggle, when I heard her say that she felt that death had lost his sting; when I saw how peacefully she was sinking down to rest, how happy she was dying, — no, no, I know now that was not dying, that was only departing to be with Christ, — O then I saw and felt that there must be a reality in religion, and that were I called to die at that moment my end would not be like hers. But once more her eye was on me, and I heard her say with her pale, pale lips and hollow voice, 'Apollos, my son, my son, give God thy heart,' and these are the words, father, which bowed me down at the footstool of Divine mercy. I fell and cried, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' and he who has said, 'Whosoever cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out,' heard my child-like prayer, and set my soul at liberty, and pardoned all my sins; and having obtained help of him I continue until this day, and now it is my chief business here below to cry, 'Behold the Lamb!'"

After his conversion he united with our society, and was soon employed as a local preacher in the St. Austell circuit to preach Christ crucified to the perishing around him. In this capacity he was respected by all and highly valued by many. He passed at this time through some very painful trials which proved the genuineness of his trust in God and his attachment to the Saviour. Those who knew him best and loved him most rejoiced to see him "pursue the even tenour of his way," and rise to higher heights of usefulness and hope.

In the year 1859 he received a call to the regular work of the ministry from the Frome circuit, and he entered on his labours with much fear and trembling in December of that year. His boyish appearance and unassuming manners soon won for him the sympathy and affection of his hearers, and his clear enunciations of the Gospel message and pointed applications of the

cardinal truths of our holy religion gathered around him listening crowds, many of whom were pricked to the heart, and were heard saying, "What must we do to be saved?" His constitution was not strong, nor his general health good, and therefore his labours in this extensive circuit had a few interruptions. But he had the pleasure of seeing the work of the Lord prosper.

The spirit in which he engaged in his work may be gathered from his journal, At the commencement of one year he writes, "I have entered on another year. It may be my last. How then ought I on earth to live! For the glory of God and my own salvation. Many are my opportunities for good. Eternally important in every respect is my work. My own eternal woe or joy hangs on the faithful discharge of the same. Let the cross of Christ be my theme, the salvation of souls my object and aim." Further on he writes, "What is it ails me? I feel so dead, I can stay my mind on no subject. I feel but little power in prayer. Quicken me, O Lord! I must preach at Frome this evening. O that souls may be saved. This is what I must see, or surely I shall die."

He was not left to mourn and say, "Who hath believed my report?" many were the saved of the Lord through his agency who will be the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

The Conference of 1862 stationed him in the Bath circuit, and the same spirit of devotedness to God and his cause characterised his conduct on that station, He entered in his journal soon after his arrival in that city, "I am now in the Bath circuit, still desiring to see souls saved and resolved to labour for this only. I determine to know nothing among this people but Jesus Christ and him crucified. I have reason to believe that the hand of God is in my appointment to this circuit. Therefore, although there are many things and many places which look dark and discouraging, I do believe that we shall rise and see better days." Under date of September 6th he writes, "Another week is gone. O that in the great day of account it may be seen that I did some good this week. Tomorrow I must preach in Bath (D.V.). Surely God will help me and souls will be saved. O, I do expect this. 'Let the day declare it, O God.

"September 7th.—Preached at Twerton in the afternoon, and at Bath morning and evening. At the former place I felt unusually dead, and fear the meeting was altogether unprofitable. At the latter we had good meetings. In the evening a most crowded congregation, and one soul saved and another penitent promised to pray continually until she shall be saved. But O that the people clearly understood the plain way of salvation.

"September 8th.—Quarterly meeting. Peace is amongst us. But there is evidently deep sorrow felt at the state of things, and a desire to live for the salvation of souls. We are much behind this quarter both financially and numerically. We have a gross decrease of 58 members, additions 17, net decrease 41. Look upon our distress, O God, and send now prosperity we beseech thee.

"September 28th.—Preached in Bath to large congregations. A gracious influence rested upon us. Deep feeling was manifested. Surely good was done. After the evening service administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper. This is the first Sabbath I have preached in Bath without seeing souls saved. O that it may be the last.

"October 13th.—Preached again in Bath. Large congregations; a gracious influence. In the evening one soul saved, Praise the Lord, O my soul.

"November 8th.—I have spent a very happy week with my old friends in the Frome circuit. Was very glad to find that most of the young converts hold on their way rejoicing. May the Lord stablish and strengthen them in the faith. Now I have returned to my circuit. How I long to see it rise. O for the baptism of fire! I am resolved that henceforth I will strive to attain to higher heights of holiness, that I will strive to spend my time obedient to the will of God, and that I will make all my engagements more than ever I have done subjects of special prayer to God. Help me, O God of my salvation."

Early in the following May he was taken ill and remained very feeble and unable to take his work to the end of the connexional year, when being by the Conference stationed to the Swansea circuit, he was by that circuit returned on his pledge to the Frome station. He arrived here in a very weak state, and we all saw that he came among us again to die. With much resignation he bore

the severe sufferings of his poor emaciated body, and constantly expressed his confidence in God and his interest in Christ.

He testified that the truth he had preached to others was the stay of his soul; and repeatedly rejoiced in the God of his salvation. He spoke of his death with composure, solemnity, and hope; and when the time drew nigh that he should depart, he sweetly spoke of Jesus and his power to save, of the happy meeting with his mother, brother, and sister, who had gone before, and friends with whom he had taken sweet counsel; and referring to a conversation which he held with our dear departed sister, Betty Vickory, previous to her death, in which she had promised him that, if permitted, she would open to him the gates of the celestial city, he looked up, and fixing his eyes steadfastly on the ceiling of the room, he repeatedly said, while a sweet smile played upon his pallid cheek, "She said she would welcome me in;" and calling out, "Mother, mother," he fell "asleep in Jesus." Thus closed the life of one "whose name," for his earnestness and zeal, diligence and success in the cause of his Master, in this and in many places where he laboured, "is like ointment poured forth."

As a student of God's word he was diligent and painstaking; as a preacher of that word he was earnest, pointed, and faithful; as a colleague he was obliging and laborious to the utmost of his physical strength; far from being a lazy man, he was at it, and always at it.

In him the connexion has lost a warm adherent to its laws, a devoted supporter of its institutions, and a faithful and successful minister of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. May his like be multiplied abundantly, and the many who sincerely loved and honoured him on earth, meet him in our "Father's house above."

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#### References

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