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BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1634 ~ Two House Builders.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

In today's Bible Adventure, we look at part of the Sermon on the Mount where the Lord Jesus taught people to be careful about what foundation they built their lives on, both physically and spiritually.

The drama starts with two young girls watching their fathers building new houses for their families.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound.](#)

Just as there are set stages for building a satisfactory house to withstand all types of weather, there are also steps that need to be taken when building a successful ministry for the Lord. Sometimes God takes the most unlikely candidate from a ungodly background and works in that person's life until he become a believer in the Lord Jesus. From here, God equips that person to lead a chosen ministry.

In 1837 in China, a fourth boy was born into an educated family. He was called Hsi after his father. From an early age, the child had his own secret thoughts and questions about death and dying but he shared these with no one. He grew up and did well with his education, and took his place in society as a learned man. His study of Chinese classics, while stimulating the intellectual side of his nature, fell short of bringing him inner peace.

A continued conflict in Hsi's soul began to affect his health. When friends suggested that an occasional use of the opium pipe could do no harm and might bring relief, he decided to try it. Alas, like all addictive drugs, the temporary high was followed by a deeper depression of spirit than Hsi had ever suffered before. The drug had begun its dreadful work and Hsi was soon an addict, resorting to opium time and again, until he was reduced to only a shadow of his former self.

Later in 1877, a terrible famine hit Hsi's province and three quarters of that population died within the following three years before it ended. In the middle of this time of distress, two foreigners arrived in a city some 10 miles away. It was rumoured that they brought with them a new religion. They were helping the people with food and money as well as seed for planting when the rains came again.

The two foreigners ran a competition with money prizes for the people to write essays on such subjects as prayer, opium, images of the gods and how to rectify one's heart and life. Accompanying this opportunity was a packet of Christian books and tracts that each person was to study before writing their essay.

Hsi didn't want to become involved in foreign matters yet he was quite curious. His family urged him to have a go at the essay, as the amount of money being offered by the foreigners was quite generous.

Hsi wrote four different essays under different names and won three prizes for them. He was invited to become a Chinese classics tutor for one of the foreigners. Hsi happily accepted this position and moved to the city. In his new room, there was a New Testament which he read and pondered for hours, all the while smoking his opium pipe.

One day, as he was reading the story of the crucifixion, the power of the cross melted Hsi's proud heart. He fell on his knees, with the Book before him, weeping as he read. The love of the Saviour poured into his weary soul and his search for peace finally ended.

It wasn't long, however, before Hsi found he had an almost overpowering desire for opium. For a week, he experienced agony but none of the normal medicine helped at all. Prayer 'without ceasing' was offered in his behalf.

When the struggle was most critical, the addict cried out, "Though I die, I never will touch opium again!" In a fairly quiet interval, he picked up the New Testament, opening it to several verses about the Comforter, God's Holy Spirit. Suddenly it was revealed to him that the Holy Spirit could enable him to conquer his conflict.

Then and there he cast himself upon God, and instantly the calm of Heaven came down upon his pain-wracked body and into his struggling soul. Hsi said later of that blessed Spirit, "He did what man and medicine could not do. From that moment, my body was perfectly at rest. Then I knew that to break off opium without faith in Jesus would indeed be impossible." As Hsi continued to read the Scriptures with enlightened spiritual vision, he found that the Holy Spirit was promised by Jesus as an abiding indweller. He learned that there was a baptism of the Holy Spirit needed by every believer. Hsi's experience of being delivered from opium only now increased his longing for a total divine fullness with God that could be his.

Along with the abundant grace given to him, came an intense longing to spread the same blessing with men near and far. He became distinctly conscious that he was commissioned by God to do this very thing. Hsi returned to his home and destroyed all the idols there. This Chinese servant of God quickly learned that prayer alone could see victory over Satan. Hsi's life showed the price he willingly paid for knowing a life of prayer, and this is a challenge to all of us. He said:

“On account of many onslaughts of Satan, my wife and I for the space of three years seldom put off our clothing to go to sleep, in order that we might be more ready to watch and pray.”

Hsi saw that the widespread use of opium in his province required earnest and intense effort if enslaved addicts were to be rescued. His first attempt to help some was in a small town five miles from his home. He and his wife rented a shop and stocked it with medicines, of which he had some knowledge.

For 20 years, the system Hsi set up in this place became a pattern for a further 50 or so other refuges to open their doors to help unhappy users of opium. In each refuge, hundreds of people were treated with pills that Hsi learnt to make himself using a secret formula that was revealed to him by God. But only those addicts who were willing to make prayer a major factor in their treatment were admitted and treated.

Making the pills was preceded by fasting and prayer. Hsi would fast for an entire day when preparing a fresh quantity. His battle to develop his most effective evangelistic Opium Refuge project met with opposition and criticism.

So strongly was Hsi urged by other missionaries to give up his work, that in humility and deference to a ‘senior’ brother, he almost yielded. Hsi himself went before the Lord with a great burden on his heart. He cried, “Lord, have I grieved Thee? Show me the reason for this distress.” The answer came: Hsi was to help some other ladies, who at great personal sacrifice, were also doing this same type of work. Instead of stopping, Hsi was to ignore the criticism and resist Satan’s attacks with God’s spiritual weapons.

Hsi became a man of God and he literally went about his work in the strength of God, rather than his own. At times, he became conscious of great fatigue and weakness. These times became the call to much prayer and fasting, for it was in this way that Hsi knew some immediate, perplexing problem needed to be prayed through. Always when the will of God was gained or the problem resolved, the unusual energy from above was regained and Hsi's work resumed.

At one point, Hsi accepted a large donation of money just after he had cast a tormenting demon out of a man. The demon returned, claiming that Hsi had no power over him any longer. Returning the gift, Hsi confessed that the sudden possession of so large a sum had come between him and God. After prayer, he ordered the demon to go and it obeyed. This experience was a lasting lesson to him, as well as to all the witnesses present at that time. The refuges Hsi set up to treat opium addicts didn't all prosper. Some were satisfactory from the outset, financially and otherwise. However, some could never be made to succeed. Either few patients came or the men in charge proved unsuitable. But trying as the circumstances might have been, Hsi felt he had no right to go back on the steps he had taken in faith. He would say, "I was led of God to open that refuge. I am simply His servant. He is responsible. How dare I venture, without orders, to close my Master's business?" So he would go on for years subsidising the work rather than taking matters into his own hands to close unsuccessful refuges and find a way out of such difficulties. He never seemed guided by the Lord to close a refuge down.

Only once he opened a refuge without waiting on God first in prayer. After giving permission to a manager to open a refuge some distance away, Hsi felt a little uneasy. He prayed over the matter but it was then too late to get the guidance that should have been sought before.

At first, things in the new refuge went well. Then reports came of problems with premises and the manager going into debt without any intention of paying. The manager was found to be going progressively insane. Representatives for Hsi had to spend time and waste money settling accounts with the local people before this particular refuge could be closed down. But the episode brought a bad name to those claiming that the Lord Jesus was the Son of the Most High God.

Hsi had many opportunities to prove the faithfulness of God in supplying his needs. Far from growing rich, he often was hard put to supply the needs of his own household. On top, his missionary training department costs increased each year. Hsi sold his personal possessions to make up the shortfalls. Sometimes drought and shortness of food crops reduced the number of paying patients in the refuges. But God always opened a way for him and he never went into debt.

In their senior years, Hsi and his wife travelled around China visiting refuges. They went separately so that Mrs Hsi could manage the women's refuges. How God had changed Hsi from his young days! His ideals were no longer to override others but to bear their burdens; not to rule but to serve. But his time of earthly service came to an end in 1896, when he passed into the presence of the Lord.

Hsi was an outstanding example of building on a sure spiritual foundation. He trusted the Lord to guide him with all the many details of the work entrusted to him. In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 3, verses 10b and 11, it says: "Each of you must be careful how you build. For God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid."

Let us all seek in ongoing prayer, fasting and dedication, what Christ has called us to do in His power for His service.

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

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