

Great Resolutions

Program Forty-Two

Dora Yu: A Prevailing Witness

Dora Yu lived at a unique time in the history of the church. The gospel door to China had only opened about fifty years earlier through the coming of missionaries like Robert Morrison and eventually Hudson Taylor and others. The Chinese culture, under Confucian influence and long-standing norms of social order, limited male missionaries to work only with Chinese men. There were not many women like Hudson Taylor's wife who were available to reach the women within the Chinese society. By the 1920s however, doors to reaching Chinese women were beginning to open because of many social reforms. Opportunities for female Christian workers also began to open. At the beginning of the twentieth century, women were playing a vital role in spreading the gospel and teaching and nurturing new believers.

How to Reach the Chinese Women?

Initially missionary wives and eventually some single female missionaries took up this work. Although they prayed and had a burden, their numbers were few and they still faced cultural and language challenges. These

burdened ones began to find a way to communicate the gospel more effectively. They recruited local Chinese women who had received the Lord to serve with them. These “Bible women” shared the gospel with their female



Bible Women in the Foochow Mission, China, 1902

relatives and neighbors. Many of these Bible women lacked an education and needed to be taught how to read so that they could learn and teach some basic Bible truths. Thus, the burden arose to establish several boarding schools for Chinese girls. Over time the responsibilities of the Bible women grew from teaching women and children in the rural areas to ministering to the sick and eventually evangelizing and teaching groups of both males and females.

China was still a country filled with the teachings of Confucius and Buddhism. Through the missionaries, the Lord’s name, the Bible, and the gospel were brought to China. Now the local Chinese were taking up the baton to continue to bring these great gifts to their own people.

The Fire of the Gospel Burning

Dora Yu, (Yu Tzu-tu), was one of the most well-known of the Bible women. From the last program we learned that Dora had received a good education and had spent six years in Korea where she practiced medicine and preached the gospel with the American missionary, Josephine Campbell. When she returned to China, Dora was motivated out of her love and consecration to the Lord to give up medicine and devote her full time to the Lord. At first her family members were against this, but Dora was undeterred. During this time of responding to His call to service, the Lord taught her many precious lessons. She learned to lay all things before the Lord in prayer, and the Lord supplied her as she began to trust in Him for all things. She was also encouraged and comforted by reading books by Andrew Murray and D. L. Moody about abiding in the Lord. Not long after her decision to give up medicine and serve the Lord, Dora rejoiced that the Lord answered her prayers for her sister and brother-in-law. Their hearts were turned, and they no longer opposed her decision to serve the Lord and eventually joined her in her evangelistic work.

Dora was not a hired worker, but simply trusted the Lord to supply her in her service and to provide funds to rent a place for her to preach the gospel. She did not look for man's approval in her work, but as she began to speak for the Lord, she was in fear because she had never undertaken this kind of work before. She testified that God kept telling her, "I will put my words into your lips when the time comes." The Lord faithfully flowed out of her when she needed to preach, and she felt reproved by the Lord because of her unbelief.

Impact of Her Preaching

Dora held many gospel meetings and began to travel throughout many provinces as a prevailing witness of Christ, His great love, and His wonderful salvation. Through her preaching she led hundreds to Christ. Her words were powerful and caused many to be convicted and turn to Christ. In many of her gospel meetings people wept and left trails of tears between the rows of chairs.

Dora did not rely on any human source of promotion. Her service issued from the burning of the fire of the Spirit within and of her coming to the Lord in prayer; it was out from Him, through Him, and unto Him. Because Dora was sensitive to the Lord's speaking and knew how to confess her shortcomings and sins, she was able to lead others to the conviction of sin and to the Spirit and the word. At one point the



Lord touched her, “Did she love Him or the work more?” She had to confess that she was losing her first love. She repented and confessed and was able to continue with nothing between the Lord and herself. This experience resulted in new blessing in her service. Of her meetings after this experience she noted, “God indeed visited us in mighty power. The Spirit of deep conviction fell on the people whenever we met together.”

Dora began to see the attendance at her gatherings increase. She tasted of the “great joy to testify of the gospel of Jesus Christ to the hungry ones.” In 1920 Dora Yu was invited to Foochow. Here she preached the gospel

in an auditorium associated with the denomination that happened to be the place where Watchman Nee's parents attended. At that time neither Watchman Nee nor his parents had experienced salvation. One-night Watchman's mother went to hear the gospel preaching of Dora Yu. The powerful speaking had a great impact upon her. She was touched by the Lord as she heard the gospel and was saved. When she returned home, she confessed to her husband and children all her mistakes and failures. Her oldest son, Watchman Nee (Shu-tsu) was so amazed and inspired by this that he wanted to go and see what brought about this great change in his mother. When



he went the next day, the Lord drew him and captured his heart also. The Lord used the gospel preaching of Dora Yu to capture the heart of this teenager who would become an immensely useful vessel to the Lord. On that night, at the age of seventeen, the Lord saved Watchman Nee and called him to Himself. He was willing from that time to drop all to learn to serve the Lord. It was through the gospel preaching of sister Dora Yu that Watchman Nee and a group of young believers were raised up in Foochow. Thank the Lord for Dora Yu's love and consecration to the Lord. It was by this love that she ministered the gospel to her countrymen. She is a testimony of the prophecy from Joel 2:28 repeated in Acts 2:17 that the Spirit was poured out upon all flesh causing the sons and daughters to prophesy.

The gospel she preached reached many not just in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit (1 Thess. 1:5).

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