

Gospel-medical Evangelistic Campaign, conducted jointly by the Southeastern California Conference and the College of Medical Evangelists, under the direction of Evangelist John Tindall, Redlands, California, 1922

Evangelist Tindall Tells Audience Story of His Life in Night Lecture

Those who have been hearing Evangelist Tindall Sunday nights in the Wyatt and the Contemporary Club, have looked forward for weeks to the time when he would tell the people of Redlands his life's experience—how he became an infidel and what converted him to Christianity. Last Sunday night he gave the first of a series of lectures narrating his experience. He said:

I was born in the city of Van Wert, Van Wert county, Ohio. My father moved to Albany, Delaware County, Indiana, when I was but four years of age. My childhood life was spent in that vicinity until the age of sixteen.

As a child I was like many children, a veritable question box, and desired to know where things came from—father, mother and people in general, the world, and everything I saw. As I gazed upon the stars, that familiar little rhyme of childhood days voiced the query of my heart:

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are—
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.

But I received no satisfactory answer to the riddle of the world and the universe or the mysteries of life and death; all these were shrouded in mystery.

The death of my brother Willie brought a new and strange experience into my life and stamped my mind with thoughts that germinated and grew and ripened into atheism. They put him in the cold ground, but told me he was in heaven. When I looked at him in the casket I saw his eyes were closed, but they told me he could see, and that he was pained at any wrong I did and smiled at my good behavior. When I saw him he was cold and could not talk, and I wanted to know if his soul could talk and had eyes and feet and hands and could play—if he was the same little Willie up there as I knew him here. How does it come that he is up there when I saw you put him in the ground? But they could not explain it. My mother, being a Methodist, took me to her preacher, but he gave the same answers my mother gave. About this time a noted Methodist evangelist came to town and held revival services. He said many good things and I do not speak in disrespect, but I want to show you things that confused my mind. Psalm 139:7–12 was read to show that we could not get away from God; Hebrews 4:12–13, that God knows our thoughts and sees every act;

I John 2:15, which requires that all men love Him. Then he emphasized that if we are not converted and love God, it is known by Him and there is no place where we can go and get away from Him, and that we have an eternal destiny to meet, either heaven to enjoy eternal bliss, or hell to suffer eternal torment. It was either to love God or burn forever. Revelation 20:10 was read and an awful word picture drawn of the eternal fires of hell burning millions of people for millions of years because they did not love God. It was so terrible that I nestled closer to my mother. And when going home mother appealed to me to love God and give my heart to Him and be prepared to join little Willie in heaven. To such pleas I had nothing to say, for I greatly feared, but I did not love God; I had been impressed that the evidence of our loving God was when all fear was cast out of the heart; therefore, I knew that I was not prepared to die or to meet God. Mother would ask me if I did not want to go to heaven where Willie was, and I would not answer for I dared not express my feelings. If I expressed an honest conviction I was condemned, and if I lied about it God would know it and punish me, and so I was silent. I wanted to be with Willie but not with God. I wished God was as good as my father, but did not dare say so.

Then, too, I heard that if men did not love God, the devils would torment them—heard about ghosts and haunted houses and so lived in constant fear of these said-to-be spirits of bad men and demons, of graveyard and dark places in the woods, of the dark at bedtime, and of the black man under the bed, etc.

One day as I looked into my dog's eyes the thought struck me, I wonder if Nero has a soul, and what becomes of him when he dies. Mother said, "No, Johnny, when dogs die they're dead and that is the end of them." Then I went back to my dog and said, "O Nero, I wish I could be like you." I envied the dumb brutes who did not have a soul to be punished.

So I grew up with such feelings and left home to mingle with the world, feeling more and more that it was impossible to love God, who would treat poor finite creatures so unjustly. The church had no attractions for me. If a friend tried to talk to me about my soul I avoided him, because it only brought more distress and agony of mind, having had such a sad experience all my life over the fear of God that I wanted to be let alone upon that subject.

My associates in later life were college graduates from Europe and America, practically all of whom were skeptics in regard to the Bible and religion. I came into close association with a scholar from Europe who knew conditions there and the influence of Romanism. Later a graduate of the Law Department of the University of Michigan read from "Tom Paine," "Bob Ingersoll," and others, to me. As I associated with men who thought like Paine and Ingersoll I became convinced that the codes of morals advocated by Plato, Socrates, Confucius and others were as good as the Bible, and did not contain its inconsistencies. I became convinced that science was contrary to the Bible and that the Bible was untrue; that it had been fabricated by [the] priesthood to grind down the people and bring them under their will, and the purgatory and hell had been invented to scare people into obedience. History seemed to bear out the theory that wars and strife of the world were caused largely by religious fanatics attempting to force other men to bow to their superstitious ideas. I considered religion to be the chief curse of families and nations. Thus I came to regard Voltaire, Paine, Ingersoll and such men as champions of true liberty—that they were "free men," noble and true, braving the storm and persecution of religious fanatics, fighting the battles of freedom to think and act. Like Eve, when she took the forbidden fruit, I felt a delight and exhilaration of freedom and liberty which words fail to express. Now being delivered from the thralldom of superstition, the fear of judgment, hell, and God, I decided to be "a free thinker," "a man of reason," a fighter for liberty. I felt this to be the greatest need of the world. A passion seized me that this was indeed the true righteous cause to which I should devote my life. I aspired to take the public platform in the interests of humanity and liberty.

Without Hope and Without God in the World

While my heart was now free from the fears of earlier life, I longed for companionship that would help me to solve the future, for although I was cut off from the fear of hell, there was yet no hope for the future. To me the future was dark—death a leap in the dark beyond which I could not see. I wanted to live. The thought of living forever was indeed sweet to me, but I had no confidence that this life would be perpetuated, I longed to converse with somebody who could give me some ray of

light that would solve the mystery of the future. I longed to be associated with some good man who was filled with wisdom and who could fill up the empty space in my life.

A Dream

While in this condition of mind I had a dream one night. I seemed to be leaving this world and gliding through space. The world seemed to grow smaller and smaller and finally fade away in the distance. As I approached another small speck in the sky, which grew larger and larger until a world appeared covered all over with the most beautiful flowers and trees. Before me appeared a path leading up to a building covered all over with flowers. A tall, stately old gentleman with [a] long white beard, who seemed to be the owner of the place, appeared to be expecting me and as I approached the building his kind, benevolent face gave me courage to tell my mission to his world. I told him I was tired of earth's environment and wanted to live with him in his world. He said, "Come and follow me," and led me by a circuitous path to a great hole in the ground whose depth I could not fathom. As my eyes grew accustomed to the darkness of the pit I perceived the most horrible creatures at the bottom, leaping up at me. My guide gravely said, "My son, do you want to live with me forever in this better world?" I said, "Yes." "Then," he said, "you must voluntarily plunge into that pit and let those beasts eat you up, and I will bring you back to life, and you may then dwell with me forever." I hesitated a moment, but thought, "It is my only hope," and I plunged into that horrible pit, and the reality could scarcely have been worse, for I could feel those beasts crush my body until I knew nothing more. That dream made a lasting impression upon my mind. I could not understand it then, but now I know that God meant for me to make the plunge into this dark and wicked world bearing the Cross, that I might dwell forever in that better world, and that "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whosoever will lose his life for My sake the same shall save it" (Luke 9:24). However, I dismissed the matter as only a dream, and having plunged deeper into atheistic evolution, I now considered that death ended all and that while the race lived on, man died and that is his end. As this thought fastened itself upon me I became like the Stoic of old, "Eat and drink for tomorrow ye die"—henceforth I took the plunge right—I felt I did not come here by my own free will and had no responsibility outside of man's duty to man, and as I saw in business, in politics, in society generally, that it was indeed the survival of the fittest, I decided that this world owed me a goo living and a good time. I entered the newspaper and publishing business, later becoming a promoter of many enterprises. Desiring to see the world, I took to travel. I had the utmost freedom at horse races, ball games, theaters, cards, etc., wore on proper occasions my silk hat, my Prince Albert, carried my leather singlet cane and changed clothes as often as three times a day. "Oh, friends," said the Evangelist, "I know what I am talking about. I have been in the 'swim' and through the 'mill.'"

In a Cyclone Without God

While located at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, for several months, one hot summer afternoon I noticed the peculiar condition of the atmosphere, which seemed to ebb and flow like the waves of the ocean. Between these was a death stillness, not a leaf seemed to rattle. I asked the meaning of this peculiar condition of the atmosphere, and was told that a western tornado was in the distance. During the storm which ensued and which raged throughout the night, a great fear laid hold upon me, and I was caused to utter out of the distress of my heart the following prayer: "Oh, God! If there be a God, deliver me from this hour." Next morning I drove around the city looking at the wreckage, and by 10:00 o'clock I was in a "cinch game" at the hotel, with no thought of God or the hereafter. I was angry at myself for showing such weakness, considering it the result of my early training, and I plunged deeper into atheism and rebellion against the "God theory."

On a Train with a Messenger From God

When James J. Hill put his fine transcontinental flyer on the Great Northern, I took this train from Seattle, Washington, for the Buffalo Exposition, on its initial trip across the continent, which made but few stops. A party of seven or eight gentlemen being gathered in the smoking room of the buffet car, after talking over everything from game shooting to politics, finally drifted into a discussion of religion. Always ready for an argument, and particularly so on this subject, as I was honestly

at war with what I believed to be the greatest fraud ever perpetrated on mankind, I soon had things going my own way. After about half an hour or so a tall, stately gentleman, with a very pleasant countenance, came in and took a seat almost directly in front of me and listened attentively to my arguments. After a little he asked me a question which seemed at once to open the whole controversy anew. It took some time for me to give what I supposed to be an intelligent and logical answer to this question. When I finished, he asked me another, quietly and unobtrusively. His second question staggered me. I had hard work to handle it, but I did my best. After about ten minutes' reasoning, he asked a third question, which so completely upset my arguments that I was speechless. I verily felt dumbstruck. My mind failed me, and I was not able even to utter a word. After a few moments the gentleman arose and passed quietly out, and one by one the others followed until I found myself alone, humiliated, defeated. The more I thought it over, the more humiliated I became, until anger and grim determination to find this man took hold of me. As I tried to think of just what he had asked me I was unable to recall exactly the questions. That train did not stop within an hour or more, being a through train, making very few stops, and I hunted that train through and through, making inquiries of those who were in the smoking room, watching every door, leaving no corner unsearched, but the man could not be found. The train was running at least forty-five or fifty miles an hour—the man did not get off: who he was, where he came from, what became of him, is a mystery, but I believe him to have been a messenger from God to me, and no ordinary being. From that experience I passed into a state of agnosticism, for in my heart I felt I had been talking about a subject which I had better take the negative side of rather than the positive, and that I would never again say, "There is no God"; but I did not know there was a God, and that I did not believe that anybody knew.

On my way to Buffalo I visited the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, where I came in touch with unrestrained liberty—wine, women, cigars, cards, and an inspiration to graft and to have "a good time."

Influence of Nobel Womankind

Several years more of migratory life and I met a woman in whom I felt sure I could have confidence, as before that time I had seen so much in society that disgusted me that I felt a loss of confidence in womankind generally, but this one so greatly attracted me with her quiet, modest, sensible ways, together with the sweetest face I had ever looked upon, that I sought her society through her uncle, a friend of mine. The more I met her, the more I admired and loved her. My attractions for old friends began to change—I would rather be with that woman than all the rest of the world, and so she drew me to a more quiet and settled life. We were married and settled in San Diego, California, where I was preparing to practice law.

I became interested in mining properties in the mountains near the Mexican border, where I met the long-looked-for man who cleared up the mysteries of life and death and solved the riddle of the universe for me, taking me from the rocks to God. This will be my second lecture on my life's experiences next Sunday night.

Tindall Tells of Steps Toward Conversion

Evangelist Credits San Diego Mountaineer with His Conversion

"From the Rocks to God" was the subject of Evangelist Tindall's lecture in the Contemporary Club last Sunday night.

On a prospecting trip into the mountains of San Diego, I was told that we would stop at the humble home of a very peculiar man—a man of about 64 years, who would not wish me to smoke in his house, who ate no meat, and who was very peculiar in his religion and in many other ways, but who would make us in every way comfortable and at home. He received us cordially and gave us the best of everything in the house. When we went out prospecting he wished to go along, and in spite of his years and peculiar diet we found he always led the party and came home in a far better condition than the rest of us. When we asked him where he got his strength without eating meat, he replied that real strength does not come from meat and that all the elements of value gotten from meat were taken secondhand and would better be taken direct from the vegetation. I saw that he was

keen mentally and strong physically and bethought to test his character and his peculiar religion, and so for many days I purposely did those things which I knew would displease him to see if I could make him show temper, and even made fun of his religion and his keeping part of Friday and part of Saturday for Sunday; but he was always of the same sweet temper. One day I told him I had been fooling with him, but now wished to ask him some serious questions. I said: "Why do you keep Saturday for Sunday?"

"Because I believe the Bible," he answered.

"Do you believe in the God set forth in the Bible, and do you get your peculiar religion out of that book?"

"Yes," he said.

Then I took him back to the hard questions my parents had faced in my childhood and asked him why a God of infinite love should torment a poor, helpless man in hell-fire always—asked him if man did not have an indestructible soul and that at death went either to heaven or burning hell forever. He replied:

"Let us not argue the matter, but let us see what the Bible really does say on that point."

He gave me Ecclesiastes 9:5 to read, "The dead know not anything." And then I read to him Revelation 20:10. He replied he would study that a little later, and he showed me Psalms 146:3–4, "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish." Then he said, "The Bible does not teach that when a man dies he still lives or that he has an immortal soul, but the Bible teaches that immortality is a thing to be sought after and obtained through the gospel of Jesus Christ only—Romans 2:7, 2 Timothy 1:10, 1 Timothy 6:16 says: "God only hath immortality." 1 Corinthians 15:51–55 says that the time will come when this "mortal shall put on immortality": this would take place at the resurrection when Christ comes (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). In John 5:28–29, at the resurrections both the righteous and the wicked are brought out from their graves, showing that Jesus taught that both classes are in the grave till His second coming and the time of the resurrection, when the righteous will be raised, the wicked not being raised until a thousand years later. Revelation 20:4–6. He read 1 Kings 2:1–2 and Acts 1:16, Acts 2"29–34, how David said by inspiration that he was going, at death, the way of all the earth, and Peter by inspiration, a thousand years later, said that David had not yet gone to heaven but that his tomb was with them at that day. All these things greatly interested me, because from this question I had gotten my misconception of God and so rejected Him.

Then I said, "What is the spirit that leaves us at death and returns to God who gave it?" After studying the Bible on the questions of Soul and Spirit, he gave me the Greek and the Hebrew of these words. In short, he made the Bible tell the same story all the way through without contradiction anywhere, and he said the trouble is that men have differing and conflicting theories in their heads and so they will not listen to the exact words of the Bible.

Then I asked, "Can the soul be destroyed?" And he read me Matthew 10:28, "Fear God who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell": and Ezekiel 18:4, "The soul that sinneth it shall die," and many other like texts. Then I said, "What does Revelation 20:10 mean?"

He gave the explanation I gave you from this platform when I spoke on "Gehenna," that the word "ever" means a period, and that those who deserve one measure of punishment will burn for one period and their smoke go up, and those who deserve more punishment will burn for a longer period and their smoke will go up, and so on until even the devil himself will be burned up and gone, burned up "root and branch"—Satan is the root and his followers are the branches (Ezekiel 28:16–19). Obadiah 16, "shall be as though they had not been"; Psalms 37:20, "In smoke they shall consume away."

And I said, "Daddy Bell, that is interesting. Do you mean that the Bible teaches that when a man dies he goes into the grave and remains until the resurrection, and then, if he is a sinner, he is given a just punishment according to what he did while he lived and then is put out of existence and becomes as though he had not been?"

"Yes, certainly," he said. Then he told me that the doctrine which had caused me to despise and reject God came about in this way:

In Genesis 2:7 is a record of man's body being formed and organized from the dust of the ground; afterward God breathing into it the breath of life and so "man became a living soul." In verse 17, God told man that if he transgressed he would die. In Genesis 3:1–5 another party asserted, "Ye shall not surely die." He then asked me, "Who said 'Ye shall not die'?" and I saw that the contrary teaching came from Satan. Daddy Bell said: "That first lie is the root cause of most of the false doctrines in the world; Satan has deceived men into thinking that they do not die, but that the real man lives on—is liberated and goes free, unencumbered. Satan knew

very well that man would die, but he told him this lie so that after people died, he (Satan) and his angels could come back to the friends of the dead in the form of the departed, and impersonate our dead friends, and we have had spiritism ever since. Another reason he has in this teaching is that man, having a supposed immortal soul, is a part of the Eternal and cannot die, and so we have Pantheism, Theosophy, Christian Science, Purgatory, Hell Fire forever, etc., etc. Another purpose in it is to give men such a black view of God as to make them into infidels and atheists and so reflect on God.

And so I had to acknowledge that he had made the Bible consistent with itself all the way through and had drawn a picture of a God who was just. Then I said, "I am an evolutionist. I do not believe the Bible. Is there any other way by which you can lead me to know there is a God aside from the Bible?" Wonderful were the arguments put forth here by Daddy Bell. Among these he minutely described the processes by which elements of the soil are transformed into vegetable life, and the vegetable life as food is in turn transformed into animal life. The power in the vegetable to draw out of the soil the dead, inert mineral into a solution fit to sustain animal life—what made it so? Is it reasonable to think that it just happened so? Then he took me to the human body filled with its intricate and marvelous wonders, and asked, "How can you account for all these? Oh, Mr. Tindall," said he, "Man is but a part of a plan; the Heavens above have something to do with sustaining life on the earth. Could this rock get up here to the house alone?" pointing to a piece of quartz. "No! Matter has not the power of locomotion, and if moved, must be moved by something outside of itself. Laws are indeed there, but laws are the result of mind or intellect." To illustrate this he said, "Water and fire must be combined to produce steam, but the steam must be controlled and directed if it works to a plan, otherwise it produces only destruction, so the elements must be directed and controlled. Go up with me to the skies till the earth looks like a small ball; upon what does it hang? Who holds it there and turns and swings it through space? It is composed of matter as inert as is this stone! By whose law does it act, never varying? What about the rest of the universe? Does all this just happen? Oh, there is a mind somewhere that guides all this. Who is He? The rays of the sun express His will upon the earth, shining upon the infidel and Christian's land alike, impartial and unprejudiced good will toward all. Now, Mr. Tindall" said Daddy Bell, "I will tell you why I keep the Sabbath. It not only stands as a faith that takes God at His word, but back of that truth lies the answer to that hared riddle that has bothered you all your life. It points to the origin of things and how they came into existence. If we believe the Bible and are willing to take it as it reads, we will find that God made the world in six literal days as truly twenty-four hour days as we have now. Observe," said he, "that the greater light (sun, Genesis 1:16, Psalms 136:7-9) was to rule the day and the lesser light (moon) the night. Were not those days there marked off by the laws of our solar system just as they are now? If men say they were a thousand or more years long as if those days were long periods, how could vegetation exist a thousand years without sunlight?

"Observe again how that Adam was made on the sixth day and lived through the seventh and yet Genesis 5:5 shows that all the days that Adam lived were but nine hundred and thirty years. No, Mr. Tindall," said Daddy Bell, "men have believed some foolish things in the name of science that today are proving groundless. Why, don't you know that the stratas of earth are not the same all over the earth as Werner supposed? The Uniformitarian theory has been exploded. Theologians have tried to harmonize infidel science with the Bible and they don't mix. Science and the Bible do agree—but true science is never contrary to the plain word of God. When God upon Sinai gave the reason for keeping the Sabbath He said: "For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." Now I want you to observe God points to the seventh day of that first weekly cycle, which day He hallowed. Genesis 2:3 says He sanctified it—that is, He set it apart for man. Mark 2:27. Here, Mr. Tindall, is a reason for my peculiar religious views of keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. God never intended that man should forget the Almighty Power that was displayed in the creation of our world and truly He was able to do in a single day what would seem to man to take a thousand years to perform. He is omnipotent and His word and law tells the truth about the origin of things. And there is a moral element in this question also. To charge God with the folly of

making the world by the evolutionary theory is indeed a gross perversion of the truth. If that theory is true, then “might makes right”—survival of the fittest by strife is God’s law and war for supremacy is inspired by Him. Then strong nations have a right to get up at the expense of the weaker. Now, Mr. Tindall, you are an American. You do not believe that. No! God’s law condemns murder and killing for selfish ends. You can begin to see if your mother had been rightly instructed in regard to the origin of things she could have answered your very natural questions on the origin of man and the world, and if she had understood the truth of man’s make-up, the mystery of death would have been explained and you would not have had the sad experience of misunderstanding God’s character. You would never have sought those infidels and listened to their theories. Oh! The misery and sorry these false doctrines have brought upon the human race!”

Tindall Tells of Steps of His Conversion

Daddy Bell had now cleared up the mystery of death for me; he had shown me that God is a just God; had convinced me that the origin of all things was by the creative act of God and not by evolution, and that the Sabbath institution is a preservative of the truth about creation and so preserves the knowledge of the true God, and so shuts out and safeguards against all other teaching concerning the origin of things and belief in all other gods.

I could see that evolution only professed to explain certain changes in matter and could not give the origin of matter, while the Bible set forth a God who created the matter. I could also see that reason and organized nature demand a belief in an infinite mind and power great enough to create and take care of and operate a universe at once both infinitely great in extent and infinitely minute in detail.

Then Daddy bell sought to bring me closer to the Bible itself. I admitted that history records that some nineteen centuries ago a man lived who claimed to be the Son of God. Daddy Bell appealed to my legal mind by saying that history not only says such a man lived, but that he had twelve witnesses like we have twelve jurymen, whose business is to get at the facts. “Now,” he said, “we want to establish the fact that He was the Son of God. You know that a death-bed testimony is the best of all testimony. These twelve men all sealed their testimony with their blood. Even Judas, who killed himself, by his acts and words after the betrayal, bore witness to the divinity of Christ. These twelve men witnessed that they saw Him make real grape juice without waiting for the process of the transformation wrought by nature. In other words, they witnessed to having beheld a thing which only Creator could do, and of which the Sabbath is a memorial. If infidels will turn water into wine or produce an atom, then I will hear them. Then, too, He healed all manner of diseases. Again, He fed thousands of people with food from but a few loaves and fishes, showing that he who made food was present. On the sea He quieted the wind and waves, giving evidence that the God of nature was there. Then a dead man, who was decaying, was made to live. From whence does life come? Surely this must be man’s Maker. He foretold His own death and resurrection, and came forth from His own tomb, according to His own words. Surely no man could do that! He in His life and work—according to these twelve witnesses—fulfilled in detail the words of prophets written of Him thousands of years before, even coming into the world at the exact time mentioned in Daniel 9:25, and proclaimed that the time is fulfilled (Mark 1:15; Romans 5:6 margin). Then I wanted to know if this God had ever sent down from the sky any communication to man aside from nature—something that I could read in my language and study and understand; and Daddy Bell said, “Yes, He has. This Jesus whose twelve witnesses swore to all He claimed, said that the Bible is the words of God (John 5:39; Matthew 4:4).

Then I wanted to know how this book came down to men and how did God’s words get into human language and how I might be sure that it came from God. And so Daddy Bell read to me 1 Thessalonians 2:13, how the word of God is received through men but yet is not regarded as the words of men but of God, and then (2 Peter 1”21) that “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” and (2 Timothy 3:16) “all scripture is inspired of God,” and he explained to me that the Spirit takes hold of a man and moves him to speak the words of God, and that each writer of the Bible and each prophet said he was writing and speaking

the words of God; that God sent His angel from heaven to speak to His prophets and tell them what to say; and giving them visions (Revelation 22:8–9; Daniel 8:16; 9:21–23), that many of these prophets sealed their testimony with their blood.

Then I said, “Daddy Bell, is there anybody living today to whom God talks like that? Why doesn’t He talk to men now? Is Heaven shut and sealed since the days of John, the writer of the Revelation? Is there a demonstration of God opening heaven and sending an angel to speak to men today? If so, that will help to support the claims that He has done it before.” Then he read to me Ephesians 4:8, 11–12, and 1 Corinthians 12:23, and showed me God’s plan of having prophets in His church as one of the gifts of His Spirit. And I said, “Why has not God done this since the days of the apostles?” Then he read me 2 Thessalonians 2:1–12, how there would come a great apostasy and a man standing in the place of God to dictate in church affairs called a man of sin, who would stand for sin, which is transgression of God’s law, and Acts 20:29. This apostasy grieves the Spirit of God away from the church even as Lamentations 2:9 says that when the law is taken away the prophets find no vision from the Lord. Then he read me from Nehemiah 9 how the object of the prophets was to turn men back to the law of God, and Isaiah 30:8 (margin), how this would be the work of the latter days.

And I said, “Then why do not Christian people keep the law and let heaven be opened again and speak to men?”

And Daddy Bell said, “I belong to a people who are trying by the grace of God to keep the law so that can speak to men again, but it is now as it was of old, when a person speaks for God, he is persecuted for doing so.” Then he read me a prophecy of the last days and specifications describing the true church at that time (Revelation 12:17), “the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.” The remnant is the last, and so the last true church of God will be persecuted for keeping the commandments of God and having the testimony of Jesus, which Revelation 19:10 says is the Spirit of Prophecy. Then in Revelation 22:8–9, the angel said to John that he was the same angel that spoke to all the prophets of old and who will still be with those who in the last day keep the sayings of the book of Revelation.

Said Daddy Bell, “People make fun of those who keep the commandments and are coming into the place where they can receive the Spirit of God, but obedience comes first!”

Then he said to me, “Do you want me to read to you things which God has revealed to men in the English language in our time—things which have not come through the translation of other languages?” And I said, “Yes, I do.”

Announcement was made that this subject will be continued from this point on next Sunday evening.

Continues in Plea for Sabbath Keeping

Evangelist Tindall in Address at Contemporary Clubhouse Sunday

Daddy Bell had showed me how it had always been God’s plan to speak to His church through a human messenger, by an angel, and by the Holy Ghost, but that He speaks only through men who kept His law, and that the true church of the last days would be distinguished by its obedience to His commandments and by it having the Spirit of Prophecy. He had made plain to me that the apostolic church did not settle its discussions by a mere vote of a council, but the Spirit of God indicated what the decision should be. I could see that such a procedure was quite consistent, and that by hearing such a voice from the sky was the only way we today can find our way through the maze and confusion of conflicting teachings and doctrines of Christendom, and that it would not be consistent for God to place such a messenger in any church that did not keep His law, for Proverbs 28:9 says that “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination.” I saw that in such a church there would be no room for any man to set forth his own private interpretation of the Bible, and I was anxious to be introduced to that church and to the fresh message from heaven. Then he began to read to me from the writings of one whom he said had seen the angel of the Lord.

Now, I want you to listen to a few thoughts which I will read from this author. Here is a paragraph about the Bible:

“The word of God should have a place—the first place—in every system of education. As an educating

power, it is of more value than the writings of all the philosophers of all the ages. In its wide range of style and subjects, there is something to interest and instruct every mind, to ennoble every life. There is history of inestimable value and absorbing interest. The light of revelation shines undimmed into the distant past where human annals cast not a ray of light. There is poetry which has called forth the admiration and wonder of the world. In glowing beauty, in sublime and solemn majesty, in touching pathos, it is unequalled by the most brilliant productions of human genius. There is sound logic and impassioned eloquence. There are portrayed the noble deeds of noble men, examples of private virtue and public honor, lessons of piety and purity.

“There is no position in life, no phase of human experience, for which the Bible does not contain valuable instruction. Ruler and subject, master and servant, the buyer and the seller, the borrower and the lender, parent and child, teacher and student—all may here find lessons of priceless worth.

“But above all else, the word of God sets forth the plan of salvation; shows how sinful men may be reconciled to God, lays down the great principles of truth and duty which should govern our lives, and promises us divine aid in their observance. It reaches beyond this fleeting life, beyond the brief and troubled history of our race. It opens to our view the long vista of eternal ages—ages undarkened by sin, undimmed by sorrow. It teaches us how we may share the habitations of the blessed, and bids us anchor our hopes and fix our affections there.” [*Review and Herald*, September 22, 1885]

And here is another:

“It came fresh from the fountain of eternal truth, and throughout the ages a divine hand has preserved its purity.... Here only do we find an authentic account of the origin of nations. Here only is given a history of our race unsullied by human pride or prejudice.” [*Education*, 173]

Concerning the relation between the revelation thus given and the revelation of the Bible, this statement is made by the author above quoted: “Let the word of God stand just as it is. Let not human wisdom presume to lessen the force of one statement of the Scriptures. The solemn denunciation in the Revelation should warn us against taking such ground. In the name of my Master I bid you: ‘Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.’” [*Testimonies*, vol. 5, 711]

“The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed.... Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse.” [*Testimonies*, vol. 5, 665]

Concerning divine inspiration given through human instruments, this same writer says: “The Bible points to God as its author; yet it was written by human hands; and in the varied style of its different books it presents the characteristics of the several writers. The truths revealed are all ‘given by inspiration of God’ (2 Timothy 3:16); yet they are expressed in the words of men.... Those to whom the truth was thus revealed have themselves embodied the thought in human language.... The Bible, with its God-given truths expressed in the language of men, presents a union of the divine and the human.... Often the same truth is more strikingly presented by one than by another. And as several writers present a subject under varied aspects and relations, there may appear, to the superficial, careless, or prejudiced reader, to be discrepancy or contradiction, where the thoughtful, reverent student, with clearer insight, discerns the underlying harmony.... a different aspect of the truth in each, but a perfect harmony through all. And the truths thus revealed unite to form a perfect whole.... God guided the mind in the selection of what to speak and what to write. The treasure was entrusted to earthen vessels, yet it is, nonetheless, from Heaven. The testimony is conveyed through the imperfect expression of human language, yet it is the testimony of God; and the obedient, believing child of God beholds in it the glory of a divine power, full of grace and truth.” [*Great Controversy*, v–vi]

I at one time met a man who claimed that his church had communication with an angel, and I had made the same statement concerning the church to which I belonged. Then the question arose as to which angel had spoken truth from heaven, and I proposed that the angel whose message was in complete harmony with the Bible should be the true angel, and to this he agreed. Then I asked him to read Isaiah 8:19–20, and asked him if the angel had spoken in harmony with the word of God, or if he had not claimed that the Sabbath was changed to Sunday. He admitted that his angel taught that change. Then I said that the angel speaks to my church taught that the law was unchanged and that the transgression

of it was sin. Friends, it is as simple as that. I want to belong to a church to which heaven is opened, in which the Spirit of God dwells, so that I may come under the influence of its teaching.

Reconciled to God

Evangelist Tindall Finishes His Life Experience

“The Reconciliation,” or “The Last Step in My Conversion,” was the subject upon which Evangelist Tindall lectured Sunday evening, March 26, at the Contemporary Club.

Said Mr. Tindall: I had now become convinced that God had not abandoned His age-long plan of speaking through a human instrument to His church in the earth; and that the Scripture taught that He would surely so speak to His “remnant” church—His true church—in the last days; and I could see that the voice which claimed to come fresh from the throne in the heavens by revelation through the angel, was not advocating a “different gospel” from that of the Bible, but on the contrary was exalting the Bible above itself, and seeking to draw all men to the Bible—to a more perfect understanding of it, a fuller acceptance of it, and more perfect obedience to it. And so this looked to me like a genuine thing.

Then I looked about in the world and saw the scholars of nearly all religious denominations claiming to be able to go back to the languages in which the Bible was originally written, and sustain their conflicting doctrines from the original, and contend that the Bible was not correctly translated. Then Daddy Bell read Psalm 12:6–7, how God had promised to “preserve” His words in their purity “forever.” So I was more and more convinced that the voice which stood by the word of God was from the angel of God, and that the teachers who were tearing the word of God in pieces were unsafe to follow. Daddy Bell had told me of the people who had come out of this confusion—this Babylon—who endeavor to keep the commandments as stated in Revelation 12:17, and who enjoyed the presence of this Spirit of Prophecy like in olden times and by the same angel as promised them in Revelation 12:17 and 19:10 and 22:8–9.

Thus it was that the three great points over which I had stumbled in my youth, and all my life thus far, were cleared up, viz:

- a. The nature of man and the character of God. I had found that man did not have an immortal soul, and this had changed my conception of the character of God and revealed His justice to me.
- b. The origin of all things and of life. I now saw that the only consistent and true explanation of the origin of things was the act of creation, and that the Sabbath stands as the sign and memorial of this truth, and that if the Sabbath were received today there could be no standing room for evolution, Christian Science, or similar teachings, and that it was intended of God to be a safeguard to His people against all such influences.
- c. How the Bible came to man; inspiration in the ages past, and in the “remnant” church through the Spirit of Prophecy. I could see that the confusion in Christendom and the higher criticism that was rampant in the churches and in the institutions of learning—that such a situation demanded a fresh voice from heaven to be our guide; and failing in that, men were almost sure to be swept off their feet by the multiplicity of error within the church as well as without.

Thus my head was getting straight, but my heart was not yet converted. Daddy Bell was trying to explain to me one of the great mysteries of the plan of redemption. He told me that when Adam sinned God promised that Jesus would come into the world as a man to live here among men and become man’s Saviour; that He would keep the law of God which man had transgressed; that men would crucify Him; that He would be raised from the dead and return to His Father; and that all who accepted Him as their substitute would be absolved from sin.

This thought of substitution troubled me. How could one die for so many? But I found that He was divine as well as human and so great enough to be equal to any number of human lives. Then, too, He was innocent. And furthermore, it must be satisfactory to the one who laid down His life, and He being satisfied, those who are to be absolved surely ought to be. Then He would give power to those who accepted Him that they might thereafter keep His law, and so they would be saved from their sins. Daddy Bell was reading to me from this book called *Desire of Ages*. At first I objected

to it as a man's book, but he proved to me from the Bible that it was divine; that it was not to take the place of the bible but to lead men to it. He was reading to me about Jesus, and gradually I began to see that man could be redeemed; and as he read on there came a time when this burst upon me in all its glory. I saw how Jesus treated sinners when He was here; that He was always doing them good; that He went to their homes to minister to them in love and tenderness be they ever so sinful and unworthy; that He healed them of their diseases and forgave them of their sins. I saw how He treated the woman taken in the act of adultery—how He wrote the sins of her accusers in the sand till the one by one left, and when they were all gone Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more." These things helped me to see that I could be redeemed. The thought stole over my heart that this Jesus would forgive me also of my sins.

Then the reading passed on to the priests (preachers) of that day. I saw they were the ones who stirred up the people against Jesus because He reproved them for their false ideas. They would not stand for this, and because He did not agree with them they would not have Him to be their Saviour. I say how this went on till this religious prejudice resulted in His death on the cross. Thus I could see that men today are but repeating history in allowing their prejudice to lead them to oppose the message of heaven. As the reading went on I continued to watch the development of this religious prejudice control their attitude toward Jesus, and I saw them spit in His face, strike Him, and on the cross taunted and mocked Him. I saw that He took it kindly and had no thought of retaliation, and that with His dying breath He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." To me it was wonderful, and the more I heard of it the more I admired Him and the more it seemed to me that God would accept me, but I did not know how to go about it. I said very little—not enough to give Daddy Bell to understand what was going on within me—and he continued reading from the book which he said was inspired. He read Matthew 27:46, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? And then he read the comment in the book where this short passage was opened up in a wonderful way. "And now the Lord of glory was dying," he read. The thought that impressed me most was how keenly Jesus felt that God had separated from Him eternally and how sinful man was unwilling to give up his sins—this "broke the heart of the Son of God." "The sun refused to look upon the scene." I could not understand why He must suffer so and be separated from His Father. But the reading made clear that He suffered this for me and died because He loved me. Such love touched my heart, for no one had ever loved me like that before. Then He was put in the tomb. On Sunday morning Mary came (for she loved even the dead Christ), and found the tomb empty, but knew not that He was risen. He found her and made Himself known but would not allow her to touch Him because He had not yet been up to His Father and received assurance that His sacrifice and atonement were accepted. So up to glory He goes, passing porters, watchmen, and angels and hastens anxiously into His Father's presence and show Him His hands and feet and side, and asks what the separation means, and is not the sacrifice sufficient to redeem the lost? If so, "I will that they also be with Me where I am." And God stepped forward and clasps Him in His arms and they embrace each other while God says, "Let all the angels of God worship Him," and all the angels bowed and worshiped and with them all creation. And I saw that some day sinners redeemed could be with Him forever. Just at that moment the Spirit of God came upon my heart and I got up and stole silently away to my own room and fell on my knees before God, for when I saw Jesus accepted I knew that I was accepted "in the Beloved." I there confessed my sins to God—confessed all my opposition to Him—and it was the moment of my life.

The next morning was beautiful; but I had no interest in gold, but wanted to hasten back to my wife and baby to embrace them and tell them I had found Jesus the Pearl of great price. They could hardly comprehend what had happened, for I went away from them a rough, swearing man—a man of the world—to seek the world's treasure. I came back a man of God, with gold far better than earth's mountains contained. Then I hastened to my brother, who was a worker in the Baptist church, who, with his wife, greatly rejoiced, for they had many times endeavored to lead me to God. But when I told them of Daddy Bell, a Seventh-day Adventist, of the Sabbath, and how the Seventh-day Adventist church was the true

church of the last days because it taught the keeping of the commandments of God which the other churches were transgressing, he was angry with me and went at once to his pastor to get information, and brought back a pile of books on the Sabbath to prove that Sunday is now the Sabbath, and books to show that the soul is immortal, and other to condemn the Spirit of Prophecy. Thus you can see that he would bring again the very things that led me astray, and he condemned the things that God had used for my conversion. From that time the church that ought to be saving men was doing all it could to undermine my faith. Passing strange that the devil could obtain such avenues through which to show his enmity to God, His law, and the soul of a lost man.

And so I seek not gold, but desire rather to give my life to proclaiming the wonderful message through which salvation came to me. Since those days a goodly number of my relatives have found the preciousness of this message, including this brother and his wife. My dear mother lived to hear me preach on the things she taught me which led me astray, and she, too, accepted the light.

When somebody brings you a book or paper to unsettle your faith, I advise you to test them by the word of God, and when you find a book containing something contrary to that word, lay it aside.