Along the Way



This youth version was adapted from "Who Was Amy Carmichael?" – an article originally written by Aaron Garriott.

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It was March 1901. A seven-year-old Indian girl named Preena escaped a Hindu temple where she had been abandoned by her mother and forced to serve as a slave in "devotion to the gods." It wasn't the only time the child fled the temple. After the first incident, Preena had hoped her mother would rescue her. Sadly, her mother rejected her again, and the temple women punished Preena for her desertion.

The second time Preena was on the run, she wandered across a large body of water, arriving in the dark at a church in the village of Pannaivilai. The young girl hoped this church was different than the temple where she had previously been living. Was her mother living close by? Would her mother keep her this time?

The next day, the young girl embraced and kissed her "Amma" (which means "Mother" in Tamil). But Amma wasn't her birth mother. Instead, Preena's new compassionate caregiver was a 34-year-old Irish woman named Amy Carmichael.

By that time, Amy had been serving as a missionary in India for six years. When she left Ireland to do ministry work in India during 1895, she would never see her home country again. But that didn't concern her, for she was determined to proclaim the Gospel to unreached peoples in other parts of the world. Having grown up in a Godly Irish home, Amy loved Christ from an early age and eventually began teaching the Bible to poor girls in Belfast, the capital city of Northern Ireland. She later became a missionary in Japan and then in India. Her unexpected meeting with Preena years after, however, transformed the way in which she would go about her missionary work.

Due to Preena's difficult situation, Amy learned about the horrific problems hidden within the Indian caste system (involving social ranking classifications) which is based on Hindu religious ideologies and traditions. In turn, the system imposed an insurmountable burden on Amy to snatch as many children as possible from its snares. After all, how could she continue travelling to teach and evangelize when so many children were in danger? Her calling, as she saw it, had fallen into her lap. Amy's love for God, which had always fuelled her evangelistic efforts, was now notably channelled into a singular, prayerful devotion to the rescuing, preserving,

educating and discipling of destitute children, especially those who were dedicated as temple slaves.

With the help of her missionary companions, Amy began housing children at the Dohnavur Fellowship mission (located in southern India), which would become the hallmark of her expanding missionary work. During the year of 1904, there were more than 30 children in Amy's family at the Dohnavur mission. By 1913, it had grown to house more than 130. Over the next five years, the mission expanded to also include a home for boys. Indeed, only God truly knows exactly how many children were housed, taught and, quite literally, saved from lives of misery.

> "Southern India, in many ways, still bears the mark of Amy and her dedicated work. Hundreds of abandoned babies and mistreated children were rescued from slavery in Hindu temples...."

Southern India, in many ways, still bears the mark of Amy and her dedicated work. Hundreds of abandoned babies and mistreated children were rescued from slavery in Hindu temples. Converts were transformed. Churches were formed. Baptisms were administered. All, in large measure, connected in some degree with Amy's relentless labours. It's clear that this courageous woman of God deeply understood how the love of Christ can help us lead lives of faith and obedience. The example of her own life and ministry encourages us to question: Do we love Christ enough to give up our earthly comforts?

Reading Between the Lines

How well did you understand the story? Select answer **a** or **b** for each question:

1. What is this story about?

a) Life for young girls in India.

b) Amy Carmichael's story demonstrates how the love of Christ can help us lead lives of faith and obedience.

2. How many countries did Amy reside in?

a) Four

b) Three

3. How did God redefine Amy's vision for her ministry in India?

a) An unexpected need moved her heart and she filled it.

b) She longed to become famous and inspire people around the world.

"Which Way?" Teaching Tips: Learn about words

Check out the expanded "Reading between the Lines" literacy resource to support you and your family's teaching time. More **free** resources are available at our website: **vomcanada.com/TableTalksIndia25**