

particular evening, when the audience seemed to be at its height, I felt led to try an experiment. I asked: "Are there any present here who are sincerely *trying* to get to heaven?"

At this four people raised their hands. I asked them to step forward, which all of them kindly did. I can't recall all the exact details now, but our conversation went something like this:

"You are sincerely trying to get to heaven?" I asked the first man.

"Oh, yes" he replied. "How?" I asked. "Well, I try to do what's right. I'm a good husband and father, I think, and I work hard for a living." "Now," I persisted, "just one more question: Are you *sure* that if you died tonight you would go to heaven?" "Of course not," he replied; "nobody can be *sure*." "Well, let's not settle that yet," I suggested. "All I gather so far is that *you are sincerely trying* to be acceptable for heaven, but you are *not sure* you'll get there."

The next of the four was a woman. She declared that she was sincerely trying too. She was religious, went to church regularly and read the Bible and prayed. "But," I asked: "Should this be your last night on earth, are you *sure* you would go to heaven?"

"Oh, no, I'm not *sure*," she replied: "Nobody can be *sure*." "Well," I persisted, "just let's wait and discuss that later. All I want to point out now is that you *are trying*, and you're *not sure*."

It was almost exactly the same with the other two. They too were trying, but were not sure that God would accept them should this be their last night on earth.

Then I asked: "Is there anyone in this audience who is *sure* of heaven?" and immediately one man raised his hand. He also kindly stepped forward into the midst of the crowd.

"How can you be *sure* of heaven?" I asked. "Haven't you ever sinned?" "Of course," he replied, "but I take God at His Word. He says, in I Corinthians 15:3 that *Christ died for our sins*. And in Ephesians 1:7 He says that *we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace*." "Ah, but how do you know," I asked further, "that all this applies to you personally?" "Oh, that's easy," he replied. "God's Word says in Romans 10:11 and 13 that *whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed* and that *whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*, and that includes me!"

I feel to this day that an important fact *was* demonstrated at that street corner meeting. Those who try to make themselves acceptable to God are never *sure* of heaven. This is so in the nature of the case, for if they were sure, why would they go on trying? The one way to be *sure* of heaven is to *stop trying* and to *trust in Christ*, who died for our sins.

**“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.**

**“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom. 4:4,5).**

**“For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.**

**“Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph. 2:8,9).**

**“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...” (Acts 16:31).**

—Cornelius R. Stam

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# IF YOU KEEP TRYING

You'll never succeed



This writer spent much of his youth as a city missionary and was practically brought up on open air gospel meetings.

One night it fell to my lot to lead such a meeting, and an exciting one it was. Passers-by making fun, listeners asking questions; some just heckling—for Paterson, NJ at that time was known as “the city of anarchist” and we had plenty of them around. We never minded these interruptions, though, for they practically guaranteed large and interested audiences and one soon learned to use them to advantage.

These street meetings mostly contained some “good religious people” too, so on this