

A Glass of Milk

Dr. Howard Kelly was a distinguished physician who, in 1895, founded the Johns Hopkins Division of Gynecologic Oncology at Johns Hopkins University. He held honorary degrees from the Universities of Pennsylvania, Washington and Lee, Aberdeen and Edinburgh. He was one of the four great men who made Johns Hopkins famous, and he was a pioneer in the field of gynecology and radium therapy, as well as in the field of medical illustrations.

A story about him written by his biographer, Audrey Davis, reveals the compassion and faith of this man.

Dr. Kelly was on a walking trip through Northern Pennsylvania one spring day when he stopped by a farmhouse to see if he could get a drink of water. A little girl answered his knock at the door and, instead of water, brought him a glass of fresh milk. He visited with her briefly, then went his way.

Sometime after that, the little girl came to him as a patient and needed surgery. After the operation, the bill was brought to her room. On it were the words, "Paid in full with one glass of milk."

The story demonstrates the power of the milk of human kindness. But an examination of this famous physician's beliefs reveals why he would do such a thing.

Dr. Kelly was a medical doctor of great personal faith. "I have within the past 40 years of my life come out of uncertainty and doubt into a faith which is an absolutely dominating conviction of the Truth, and about which I have not a shadow of doubt," he wrote. "I have been intimately associated with eminent scientific workers, have heard them discuss the most profound questions, and have myself engaged in scientific work and so know the value of their opinions in science and religion."

After floundering for years in the midst of the many opinions about the authority of the Bible itself, Dr. Kelly began an intensive study. "As a result, I now believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God, inspired in a sense utterly different from that of any merely human book. I believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, without human father, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary. I believe that all men are sinners by nature, alienated from God, and that, when we were thus utterly lost in sin, the Son of God Himself came down to earth and, by shedding His blood upon the cross, paid the infinite penalty of the guilt of the whole world. I believe that he who receives Jesus Christ as his Saviour is born

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again spiritually, as definitely as in his first birth, and, so born spiritually, has new privileges, appetites, and affections and will live and grow with Him forever. I believe that no man can save himself by good works or by what men call a 'moral life,' while good works are the necessary fruits and evidence of faith."

It's easy to see the heart of the man who responded in such gratitude to a single glass of milk.

--Beecher Hunter