

FROM THE MIRE TO THE CHOIR!

*He drew me out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock...
He put a new song in my mouth... (Psalm 40:2-3).*

No one could have predicted that Reuben "Bud" Robinson would amount to anything. Born in 1860 in Tennessee, the 13th child of a poor mountain family, Bud had virtually no formal education and stuttered uncontrollably. Yet "Uncle Bud" became an evangelist who preached over 32,000 sermons, wrote over 10 books and won some 200,000 converts to Christ. And what a colorful character he was. His witticisms and figures of speech delivered with his distinctive lisp, made his messages unforgettable. In the book *Sunshine and Smiles* he tells of his conversion at a tent revival in Texas when he was 20. Sitting on the back bench next to a red-headed girl who he was hoping to "spark," he soon found himself under deep conviction of sin. At the altar call, Bud went forward. Laying prostrate in the straw, it seemed as if all the watermelons he had ever stolen were piled up around him, their stripes grinning in mockery at his condition. About midnight, the glory of heaven flooded his soul. He began to walk on the backs of the benches (!) shouting and praising God.

What a step I took that night! I stepped from nothing to everything. I went out and unloaded. Nobody had told me to unload, but somehow when a fellow gets religion he naturally unloads. I threw my old pistol into the thicket and burned my cards in an old camp fire and lay down under a wagon and put my old hat on a mesquite stump for a pillow, but sleep, oh my! I never thought of going to sleep. The Lord marched out all the stars of heaven on a dress parade for my special benefit, and the stars leaped, and hopped and skipped and jumped and turned somersaults and clapped their hands and laughed all night....

The next morning the minister opened the doors of the church and the people marched up to join. I had never seen anybody join a church and did not know what they had to do, but I marched up with the crowd and the preacher said, "What church do you want to join?" And I said, "How many have you got?" And he said, "Well, we have the Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian." (It was a union meeting.) I said, "Which one are you in?" He said, "I am a Methodist..." I said, "I want you to put me in the same one that you are in." Then he said, "How do you want to be baptized?" I said, "How do you fix a fellow when he is baptized?" He said, "Some want to be immersed... some want the water sprinkled on them; others want the preacher to take a pitcher and pour clean water on his head. I told him I wanted to be fixed in that way... So while he was pouring clean water on me, I was shouting as loud as I could and I haven't stopped yet.

I'm afraid many of us stopped shouting long ago. We've lost the wonder of salvation. There's no longer anything *amazing* about grace. This morning, while I don't recommend walking on the backs of the pews, I do invite you to let the glory of salvation reignite a hallelujah in your soul. Get out of the mire and into the choir!

Pastor Stan