

The Child's Way

In 1987, I had the privilege of interviewing author and former missionary Elisabeth Elliot. She is a fabulous writer, whose courageous example I really admire. At the time, she had just released a new book—an autobiography of missionary Amy Carmichael titled *A Chance to Die*.

Elisabeth had been greatly influenced by Amy's life, and I was drawn to her story. Actually, I considered both Elisabeth and Amy to be powerful models of sacrificial obedience and devotion to God, and I looked up to them.

Soon after I read the biography, I discovered Amy's books and poetry. I was completely captivated from the beginning. Her words were poignantly beautiful, her communication style seemed so pure.

Her teachings enlightened me because of the way she revealed God's truth, but I could actually feel God's embrace and power in what she wrote. When I encountered serious health issues a few years after being introduced to Amy's works, her books took on even greater personal significance for me.

While she was serving as a missionary in India, Amy suffered a crippling injury that left her with terrible pain and eventually led to her becoming permanently disabled. From then on, her movements were restricted, and finally she was confined to her room. Yet, no matter how limiting her circumstances appeared to be, they did not impede her spiritual progress or hinder the purposes of God in her life.

Amy continued directing Dohnavur Fellowship, the ministry she founded in 1901 to rescue children who were living in dangerous conditions. Today, more than 50 years after her death, her work in southern India goes on.

As the Lord provided for the ongoing needs of the ministry, Amy's compelling writings continually inspired her staff, family and friends. Eventually, the letters and devotionals, some of which were written from her bed, would be published and read by hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

Countless times, when I've needed to be strengthened and reminded of God's perspective on things, I've turned to my Bible first, but then to the works of Amy Carmichael. No other writer has the ability to diffuse my anxious thoughts when the inevitable "why" questions come around again.

Probably her best-known publication is *Rose From Brier* (Christian Literature Crusade), written specifically for those who are suffering with physical illness. The most powerful lesson I've learned from this book is that when I'm struggling with difficulties that are beyond my control, the first thing the Father wants to do is love me, not grade my performance.

This book tells me to see the cross of Calvary as the most profound demonstration of love in the history of the universe. Amy gently suggests that if I still have questions, I should ask them there.

I believe God still heals. I know many of you believe that, too, yet you're wondering why the healing you've sought has not happened.

The most courageous thing on Earth that any of us can do is to believe God in the face of circumstances that defy what we know is true. In *Rose From Brier*, Amy wrote: "What does a child do whose mother or father allows something to be done which it cannot understand? There is only one way of peace. It is the child's way. The loving child trusts."

Add to those statements, this comment from pastor and author Joel Hunter: "Faith is trust in God's faithfulness." Whenever and however healing comes, God is faithful.