

Removing Copper Nails from the Conscience

One night in our church service the following story was told: A christian boat builder worked for a infidel, who was always sneering at the young man's Christianity. In vain he talked to the infidel and tried to get him to see the error of his ways, only to receive a mocking reply.

This young man decided to build a boat for himself, and desired certain expensive copper nails, used by his employers in their boat building, as they did not rust out as iron nails do; but they were too costly for the young man to afford; so each week he would slip a few of these nails in his kit as he packed his tools to return home in a nearby town.

One Sunday a preacher spoke on the necessity of confessing one's sins; and in the case a neighbor had been wronged, making full restitution. Under this preaching, the young man felt himself to be a common thief. He had known all along that his action was wrong, but always tried to justify himself in the matter. But what could he do? If he went to his infidel boss, the man would lose all respect for Christianity.

The minister dealt faithfully with the troubled young Christian. Two weeks later he returned again, and the minister knew by the look on his face that the burden was gone – he was rid of those copper nails at last.

He had asked forgiveness of God; then took all the nails he had left and brought them to his boss with full confession, and offered to pay for what he had used.

The boss looked at the man earnestly and said: "I always thought you were an old humbug; but I am beginning to think now that there is something in you religion."

The infidel told the story to his wife that night, and she replied, "I also, have a copper nail in my conscience; the butcher made a mistake and gave me too much change; I'll take it back in the morning."

She did, and told the butcher how she came to return it; he was impressed thereby, and repeated the tale to the preacher visiting in his home, who was to address a group of high school students the next day.

The preacher used the story as an illustration in his speech. Later the principle called up the speaker and said that over fifty fountain pens, pencils, books, etc. had been returned.

"Now let us get rid of the copper nails in our consciences," our minister urged, "and see if God won't bless. If you have taken anything, return it. If you have wronged someone, straighten it out. If you are unforgiving, critical, and gossipy, get it out of the way. Copper nails in the conscience – oh, what a relief to get rid of them!"

The next Sunday night our hearts were much gladdened. Someone returned a nice pair of ladies' stockings. She had taken a pair from a clothes line some months before; it had bothered her ever

since. She wanted the copper nail out of her conscience, so she brought a new pair in return, to make it right.

Another person had drained gas out of a man's car twice. He brought some money to pay for what he had taken, and the copper nails were gotten rid of.

Someone returned three hymn books he had taken home from the meetings. One returned a quarter which he had helped himself to, when the collection plate was passed. Another went to five people whom he had wronged and lied about, and copper nails in his conscience were removed. He then prayed until nearly morning, and the glory of God swept over his soul.

Friends, we had a wonderful meeting that night. It is grand to be right with God and man!

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psa. 32:1).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

– Copied

