



Amy Carmichael (1867 – 1951)

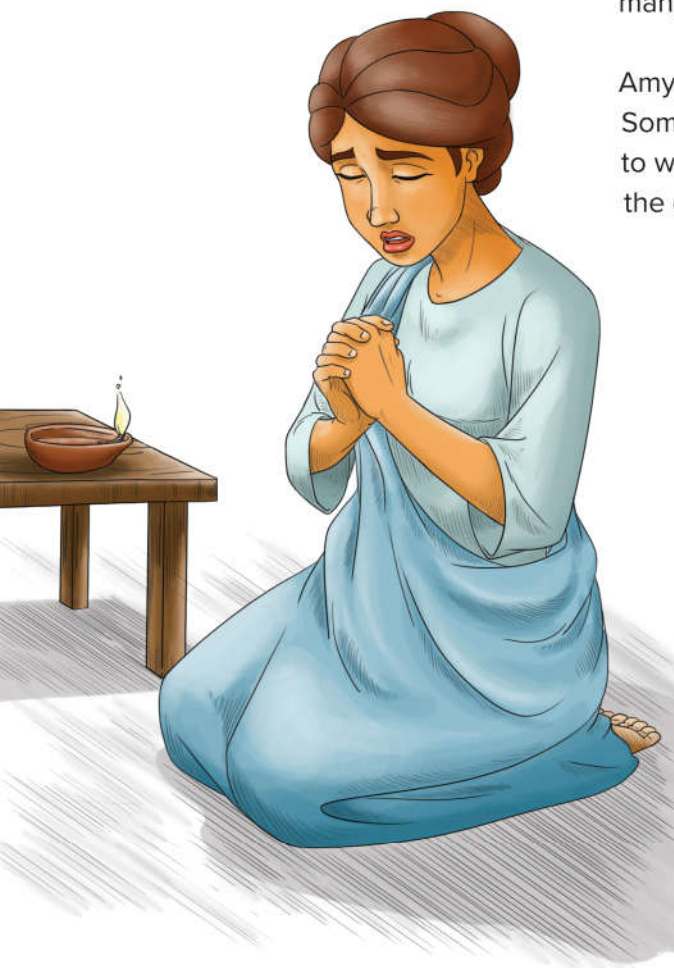
A Woman of KINDNESS

Amy's Story

"I have feelings of fear about the future," said Amy Carmichael. Amy, who grew up in Northern Ireland, was a new missionary serving the Lord in Japan. She was concerned that she didn't know where God would lead her next.

She visited a cave in the mountains to be alone with God and to pray about her future. Would she ever get married? Would she have any children? If she continued serving the Lord alone, would she get lonely? Amy felt the Lord saying to her, "None of them that trust in Me shall be desolate." ("Desolate" means abandoned, forsaken, or alone.) The reassurance from God stayed with Amy throughout her life.

Amy returned to the mission field — this time in India — where she gathered a small group of Christian women to help her witness among the people. The women called themselves "the Starry Cluster." They hoped to "shine like the ... stars forever and ever" and to "lead many to righteousness" (Daniel 12:3, NIV).



Amy's ministry is most remembered for rescuing "temple girls." Some Hindu families offered their daughters to Hindu temples to work as servants. They believed that their gift would please the gods and bring them good fortune.

Battling many obstacles, Amy and her co-workers for the Lord rescued dozens more temple children. Some grew up to continue Amy's ministry, thankful for God's grace and the missionaries' kindness. Instead of experiencing the loneliness she had feared when she was younger, Amy became the mother of many children whose lives she had saved.

About 30 years after Amy began saving the children, she fell and injured her leg. The injury kept her bedridden for the next 20 years. Amy continued to serve God by writing numerous books and thousands of letters from her bed. She died in India at the age of 83.

Key Bible Verse:

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience."
(Colossians 3:12)

Key Word: KINDNESS

Kindness: The quality of being friendly, thoughtful, helpful, and willing to share



“If Only You Knew”

Amy Carmichael grew up in a well-to-do Irish family with six younger siblings. She often got in trouble for her behavior. Once when someone told her she was naughty, she thought to herself, “If only you knew how much naughtier I could be, you wouldn’t think I was naughty at all!”



Serving God at Home

As a teenager, Amy totally gave her life and future to God. Her father died when she was 18, and Amy spent the next 10 years helping care for her younger siblings.



Learning Kindness

One day after church, Amy and her brother saw an old beggar woman with torn clothes and only rags to cover her feet. They helped the woman, but Amy was embarrassed to be seen with the pitiful beggar. Then the Lord reminded her of the things that would be important in eternity. (Read 1 Corinthians 3:12-14.) She was no longer embarrassed, and she promised God to do things that pleased Him.



No Furloughs

Most missionaries take furloughs — breaks to rest and return to their home country and families — but Amy served in India for 55 years without a furlough.



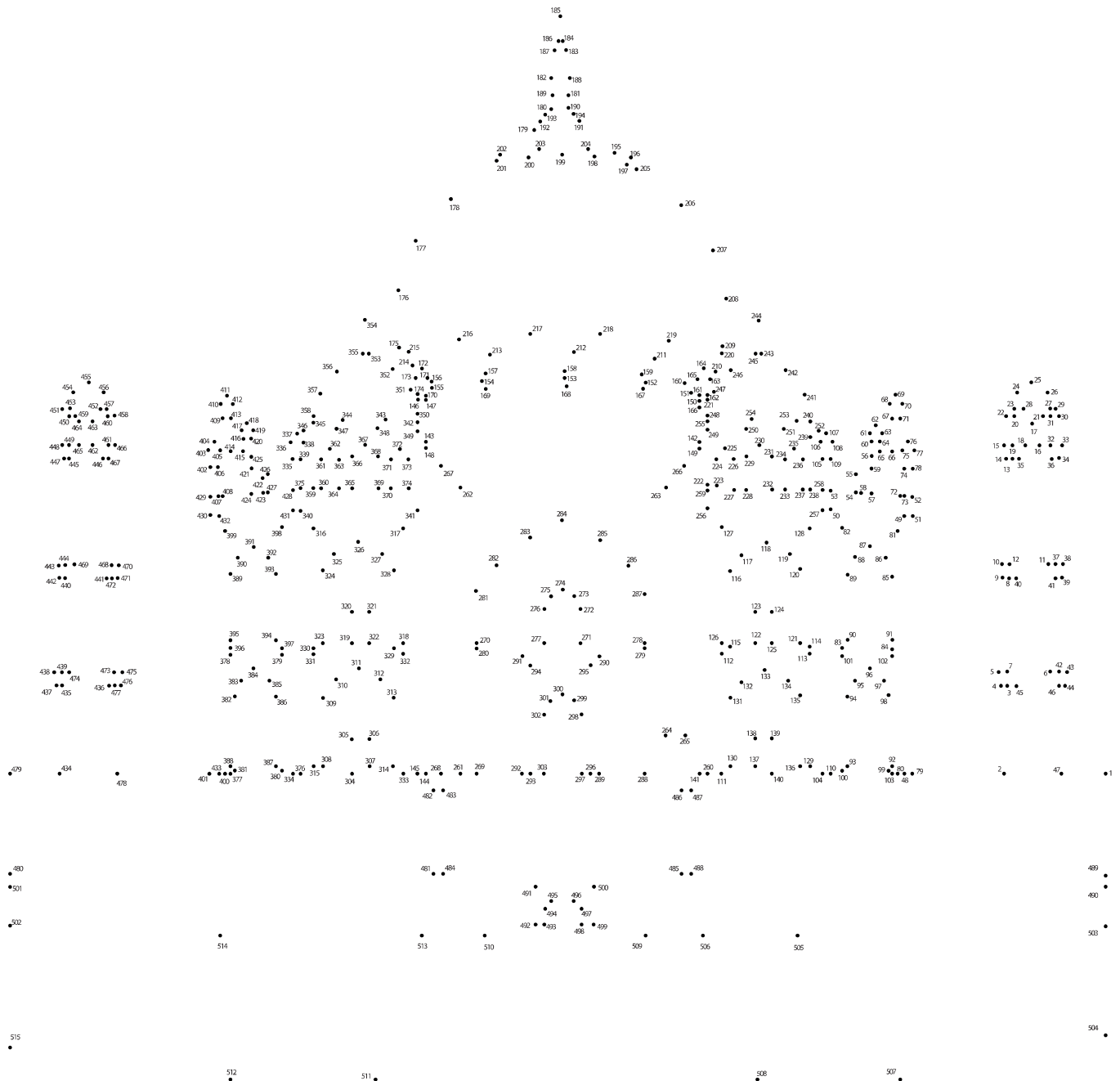
Castes

Traditional Hinduism teaches that people are born into castes. A caste is a social class. Priests belong to the highest caste, soldiers to the next, businessmen and farmers to the next, and servants and workers to the next. Lowest of all are the “untouchables,” now called Dalits. As a foreigner, Amy would have been seen as an “untouchable.” Today the government of India has laws against the caste system. But Dalits are still scorned in parts of India.

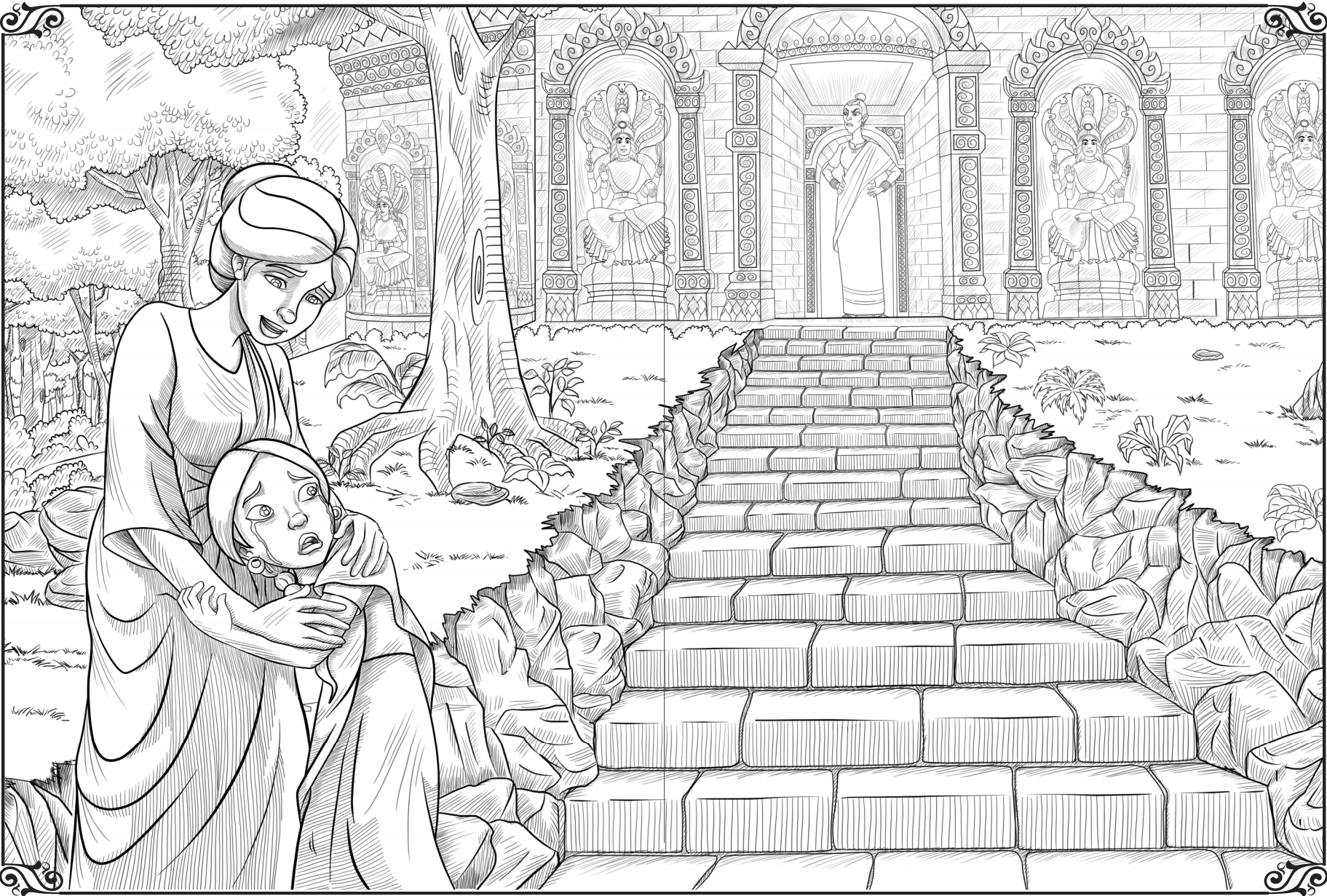


Amy’s Prayer

The morning before the accident that broke her leg and made her an invalid, Amy prayed, “Do with me as Thou wilt. Do anything that will fit me to serve Thee and help my beloveds.” During this time, Amy wrote many books and thousands of letters encouraging believers to take up their cross and follow Jesus.



One of the world’s best known landmarks is in the country where Amy Carmichael shared the gospel as a missionary. The Taj Mahal, located in Agra, India, was built in the mid-1600s by order of the emperor Shah Jahan. He gathered more than 20,000 workers to construct a 42-acre complex in memory of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died at the age of 38 after giving birth to their 14th child. The main building in the complex is made of white marble and decorated with carved flowers and gems. The Taj Mahal serves as a burial place for the emperor and his wife.



Amy rescued temple children from their life as servants.



**Has someone ever been kind to you without finding out how their kindness helped you?
Can you show kindness without expecting anything in return?**

You can make kindness rocks to bless others, but often you will not be there when they enjoy your gift. But you can thank God for the opportunity to encourage others!

- Gather rocks about 3 to 5 inches wide. At least one side of the rocks should be flat and smooth. Following the directions on the paint can, spray the rocks with any color of acrylic spray paint. Let the rocks dry thoroughly.
- Draw a picture or write a message on each rock, using fine-point oil-based paint pens. Let the paint dry.
- Seal the rocks with clear acrylic coating spray. Let the spray dry.
- Place the rocks in a park or leave them on a beach or in another place for others to find.



What Do You Think?



Amy Carmichael's kindness brought joy and hope to many children and adults in India. "Miss Carmichael was a blessing to all who came into ... contact with her radiant life," said a missionary friend of Amy.

Who Has a Need?

Amy Carmichael noticed the needs of those around her and tried to meet those needs when she could. For one week, keep a record of people who have a need. They can be people you know, people someone tells you about, or people in the news in your town or elsewhere. Put the names of the people under their specific needs on the chart below. You can put a name in more than one column.

Pray: Are there people who don't yet know Jesus that you can pray for? Have you heard about people in a place where a disaster occurred? Will you ask God to heal someone? Will you ask God to lead you to someone He wants you to bless?

Encourage: Is there someone in your town who publicly stands up for the truth? Can you send a message of encouragement to that person or to community helpers who work hard to serve others? Will you thank the "invisible" servants in your family or church who keep things running smoothly? Could you send cards or notes to family or friends who are sick or to the family members of someone who has died?

Help: Can you volunteer to help in your church or participate in a community service project? Can you run an errand or do a chore for a neighbor? Can you do a project to raise funds for a sick child or a family whose house was destroyed by fire, flood, tornado, or hurricane?

Find Help: If you see a homeless person with no coat, can you find a ministry that helps homeless people and tell them about the need or offer to donate a coat? If you know a student at school who has a need, will you talk with your parents to determine the right way to help them?

Fill in the chart below with people who could use prayer, encouragement, or help. Pick one or more people from your chart each week, ask the Lord to inspire you, and bless them with His kindness.

Pray	Courage	Help

The Blessings of Kindness



Amy Carmichael was called to share Jesus' love with the people of India — that was her mission. While she was sharing the gospel, she came upon suffering children who needed her help.

But why should we be kind and helpful to others? We cannot earn salvation for ourselves or others by our good deeds.

- **We Follow Jesus' Example**

God sent Jesus into the world “that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life” (John 3:16). That was Jesus' mission. But He also fed the hungry, healed the sick, washed His disciples' feet, blessed children, and much more. He told His followers to do the same.

- **We Follow What the Bible Says**

Luke 6:35, tells us to do good to our enemies because God is kind to even the ungrateful and evil, as well as those who obey Him. First Corinthians 13 says, “Love is patient and kind.” Ephesians 4 instructs Christians to be kind and forgiving, and Galatians 5 lists kindness as a fruit of the Spirit.

We trust in God's good plans for our lives

Amy was well prepared to care for children, as she had taken care of her six younger siblings. But she thought she might never be a mother. She never dreamed that she would help dozens of temple children. The children were a blessing to her.

**Proverbs 11:17 says,
“A man who is kind benefits himself.”**

How did Amy's kindness benefit her? Have you ever helped someone and been blessed in some way as a result?

When you help someone, what are your reasons for doing so?
