

The Girl Evangelist: Miss Hattie Hammond

JOSEPH W. MARTIN



Hattie Philletta Hammond was born in Williamsport, Maryland, in 1907. She was always aware of the call of God on her life and at first wanted to be a missionary.

When her cousins would come for a visit, they would play Sunday school and church, converting and baptizing all the dolls in the neighborhood. She would preach to cows and chickens and to herself in the mirror. At school she gave out tracts and knew more about the map of Africa than the map of America.

When she was 12, Hattie was stricken with typhoid fever and was not expected to live. Her pastor was led to anoint her with oil and pray. Soon, her 106-degree fever broke, and from that moment, Hattie began to get well.

Still religiously inclined during her early teens, Hattie nevertheless found church life unsatisfying and would sneak off to take part in worldly activities.

One day, at age 15, she passed a tent where Rev. John J. Ashcroft, grandfather of Senator John Ashcroft, was holding evangelistic services. She was drawn to the meetings and eventually went inside, where she was gloriously converted and baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Hattie then became a bold witness. She preached to anyone in her high school who would listen. No longer shy and attracted by the things of the world, Hattie dedicated her life to full-time ministry at 16.

Soon after, Rev. Ashcroft invited her to accompany him and his wife to Martinsburg, West Virginia, where he was conducting services. Night after night he preached, yet nothing seemed to happen. Then one night he asked Hattie to preach a sermon.

She did not have time to pray or prepare a message. During the song service, she cried out to the Lord, and God dropped into her heart these words: "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you would turn from serving the living God?" (see Gal. 3:1). She got up and read her text over and over again.

By the third reading, a lady who was a backslider cried out for mercy and came forward to the altar. Suddenly, the power of God hit the congregation and sparked a revival in the community. Hattie's lifelong ministry of 71 years had begun.

After the Martinsburg meetings, Hattie was preaching at a church in Cleveland, Ohio, when again the power of God fell. Everywhere she went, remarkable miracles of healing took place. As a result, she became known as "the girl evangelist" and in 1927 was ordained by the Assemblies of God.

By the 1930s, she had become one of the most powerful speakers in the Pentecostal movement. Her message was simple, inspiring total abandonment and consecration to God.

Joseph Martin is a Pentecostal historian. He has compiled The Spirit-Filled Woman devotional (Creation House) along with several other books.