

Littleproud , J. Bio

by John Bjorlie

This sermon is a biographical sketch of Roy Littleproud's life, highlighting his early life, ministry, and contributions to the Christian community.

Scripture: Nehemiah 2:10, Psalm 116:15, Proverbs 27:17, Ecclesiastes 12:10, Matthew 25:21, John 3:16, John 14:2, 1 Thessalonians 4:14, 2 Timothy 4:7, Revelation 14:13

Topics: "Christian Biography", "Faithful Service"

Description

Roy Littleproud, born in Forest, Ontario, in 1889, was raised in a Christian home where Christ was recognized as Lord. He became a teacher and later married Hilda Vance, who played a significant role in leading him to Christ. Littleproud's ministry extended to teaching the Word, organizing Bible classes, and editing materials for Sunday School teachers, impacting many lives with his dedication and love for God's people. Despite a tragic accident in 1941, he continued to serve faithfully until his sudden passing, leaving a legacy of devotion to God and service to others.

Transcript

Roy Littleproud was born in Forest, Ontario, on February 21, 1889. His parents were both Christians, meeting with those gathered to the Name of the Lord Jesus in that place. Under these circumstances he grew to young manhood, knowing the atmosphere of a home where Christ was recognized as Lord. In later years, he often referred to the godly character and life of his father and mother, and their influence on his life.

From his youth he seemed to be especially qualified as a student, and as a young man commenced his career as a teacher in a country school in that district.

When about seventeen years of age, he became awakened to the need of his soul's salvation. About this time he became acquainted with a young woman, Miss Hilda Vance, who was very faithful in speaking with him about eternal things, and it was through her instrumentality he was later pointed to Christ through the truth of that wonderful and well-known word, John 3:16 .

Five years later, this same young woman became his wife on April 19, 1911. Hilda Littleproud was a true helpmeet to him through the 30 years of their happy married life, and those who knew them often heard him pay glowing tributes to his beloved wife.

After eight years teaching in the Munsey Indian Institution, he moved his family to teach in London, ON. He later became a vice-principal. During these years two boys, Hugh and Donald, were born.

In 1926, he received a government appointment to the position of Inspector for the Penny Bank of Ontario, which resulted in his taking up residence in Toronto. In this position he was particularly successful in his task of encouraging the careful handling of money among the children of Ontario.

On coming to Toronto, Littleproud made his home in the east end of the city, where he became associated with the Swanwick Assembly, where he continued until his death.

His moving to Toronto brought him into contact with a considerably larger number of the Lord's people. As he became acquainted in the different assemblies, his exercise and ability in the gospel, among young and old, soon manifested itself. His kind and sympathetic nature made him many close friends, while his knowledge of the Bible, coupled with his ability to minister, soon put him in great demand among the Lord's people.

In 1927, Mr. Littleproud was exercised about helping some of the young men in his assembly. They arranged to meet in his home every other Saturday evening to study the Word together. These meetings commenced with about a dozen, but the numbers soon increased until his home became too small.

As some of the young men attending were coming from the west end of the city, it was felt advisable that a central location be found. The Central Hall brethren offered the basement of their building. For 14 years it was carried on through fall and winter, with 100 or more attending regularly. Other brethren assisted Mr. Littleproud in this work, but the main responsibility of the class rested on him. He was untiring in his labors, preparing regularly detailed notes of all the studies taken up. These were given to everyone attending.

Some of the subjects taken up during those years included: the Doctrine of God, of the Lord Jesus, and of the Holy Spirit; the Tabernacle; Prophecy concerning Israel; the Tribulation and the coming of the Lord. One of his most intensive studies with the young men was the "Principles of the Christian Assembly." These studies lasted through a number of seasons. They were published in book form under the title of "The Christian Assembly."

Four years after the start of the Toronto Bible Class, Littleproud became associated with some other brethren interested in the promotion of the gospel among the young. He edited the Sunday School Teacher's Lesson Manual, which has been wonderfully used by God in developing a systematic scheme of lessons throughout various assembly Sunday Schools, as well as providing helpful instruction for the exercised Sunday School teacher. Much of this material was incorporated into the present curriculum of the Modular Bible Lessons produced by Gospel Folio Press.

His writing in the Manual were deeply appreciated. The publisher of the material, William Pell, said of his contributions: "Mr. Littleproud was one who, like Nehemiah, sought the welfare of God's people (Neh. 2:10). Oral ministry demands time; written ministry demands more time, and to both he gave himself willingly. Someone has said: 'Duty makes us do things well, but love makes us do them beautifully,' and the latter was true of Littleproud. Not only had he choice thoughts, but he sought to find acceptable words (words of delight, marg. of Eccl. 12:10) in which to couch them, and every detail of composition and punctuation was done with the greatest exactitude. Thus those who labored with him 'in the service of the Best of Masters' (as he often ended his letters to fellow-workers) felt inspired to do the best things, and to do them in the very best way, for 'as iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his

friend' (Prov. 27:17).

James Gunn also worked with Mr. Littleproud. At the time of Littleproud's passing he made this comment: "He was a true fellowservant. He would not only share the work, but he would most gladly share the honor. In fact, he would help you in the work, and then commend you because it was well done."

Mr. Littleproud was also a great help in his ministry at Sunday School Teacher's Conferences. Many addresses of a devotional character were an inspiration to discouraged teachers; but particularly his instructions in the art of teaching were invaluable.

His work as the Inspector of the Penny Bank of Ontario took him out of town a great deal, and on most of these business trips he drove his own car. On January 17, 1941, he left Paris, Ontario, to start for home. Suddenly the steering in his car broke and it swerved from the road, going down a 15-foot embankment, and crashed into a tree. The car was a complete wreck, and he was pinned in his seat by the steering wheel so that it was necessary to use a hack-saw to finally release him. He was taken to a nearby hospital. As well as cuts and broken bones, he suffered severely from shock, and it seemed a miracle that he had not succumbed to these injuries at the time of the accident.

For several weeks he was in a very weak condition. However, he gradually gained in strength, and was greatly encouraged when able to read a little. In fact, in the latter weeks of March he began preparing material for an address that he had been asked to give at the Sunday School Teachers' Conference in May, hoping he might be able to attend.

The first week in April he was finally able to have his leg taken out of the harness, and he was living in great expectation of going home. But on April 7, an X-ray revealed that a fracture in his upper leg had not healed properly. It was decided after consultation that an operation should be performed, enabling him to be moved home within a week or so.

His wife was with him on the following day when the operation was performed. The doctors assured them that everything had gone well, and apart from feeling very tired and weak, Mr. Littleproud seemed in satisfactory condition when his wife said good-bye to him at the hospital on Tuesday evening. He was left in the care of a special duty nurse.

The nurse advised that he slept off and on during Tuesday night but about 6 o'clock Wednesday morning he asked for a drink of water, saying that "he felt a little faint." A moment later she turned to give him the drink, but he was at Home with the Lord.

His funeral, shared by Hugh McEwen, Peter Hynd, and William Pell, was attended by more than 600. Peter Pell, a co-worker with Littleproud, received news of his passing while preaching in western Canada. He wrote, "'The doctor promised he could come home by Easter.' This was in the letter I received shortly before the notice of our brother's homecall...'Home by Easter!' Yes, but far better than his expectations. It is good by His will to be here, but better by far to be there

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