

Harold Wildish



The first time that Harold Wildish tried to preach, he was eighteen years old. His audience was a group of late night English drinkers. As soon as he began to speak, a man shouted, "Sonny, does your mother know you are here? "Why, you can't even grow any hair on your face." Suddenly a man pushed his way through the crowd. It was Harold's dad. "My wife and I knew our son was out," he said. "We would far sooner see him preaching the gospel than spending his nights drinking or carousing...I'm ashamed that a man of your age would sneer at a young fellow wanting to tell others about Christ." The result was that, as Harold went home wounded in spirit, his father led the heckler to Christ. The heckler, it turned out, had a son in prison at the time. Converted to Christ at the age of twelve, Harold had hidden the knowledge in his heart for five years. Then he heard the words "Everyone shall give an account of himself to God," and he vowed to open his mouth for Jesus.

After completing his education, he expected God to dramatically show him what to do next. No brilliant light shone from heaven, however. In desperation, he prayed one night to know God's will before midnight. He came home to find a note propped on the mantle. Someone had written him a letter quoting the great commission (which tells [Christians](#) to go into the whole world) and with it other words encouraging him to be a missionary.

Three years later, Harold received a letter from Christians in Many Lands asking him to take the place of a man who could not go to the Amazon. He had less than five dollars (one English pound) to his name. He spread the letter on his bed and asked the Lord to supply what he needed. The next morning, he received 25 pounds in a letter from a Christian businessman. "But I must have 35," he told the Lord. The following day, he received ten more pounds (about \$49) from the same businessman. "I could not sleep last night for thinking about you," wrote the man. "I believe you must need the enclosed ten pounds." And that is how it came about that on this day, June 6, 1925, Harold Wildish stepped aboard the *Amakura*, bound for South America with two other mission men.

They did not win any converts for a long time. God had to deliver them from Indians who would have killed them. Seeing no success, Harold became discouraged. "Why am I here?" he asked. Shortly afterward, a young woman converted to Christ. Her father brutally beat her and left her alone in the jungle to die. Harold had to ask himself if his faith could compare with hers.

The boy who spoke so awkwardly at his first attempt, went on to become a powerful evangelist. After repeated cases of malaria forced him to leave the Amazon, he turned his attention to evangelizing the West Indies. He also wrote several books about the Christian life.