

Acres of Diamonds, a true story.

One of the most interesting Americans who lived in the 19th century was a man by the name of **Russell Herman Conwell**. He was born in 1843 and lived until 1925. He was a lawyer for about fifteen years until he became a clergyman. One day, a young man went to him and told him he wanted a college education but couldn't swing it financially. Dr. Conwell decided, at that moment, what his aim in life was, besides being a man of cloth - that is. He decided to build a university for unfortunate, but deserving, students. He did have a challenge, however. He would need a few million dollars to build the university. For Dr. Conwell, and anyone with real purpose in life, nothing could stand in the way of his goal.

Several years before this incident, Dr. Conwell was tremendously intrigued by a true story - with its ageless moral. The story was about a farmer who lived in Africa and through a visitor became tremendously excited about looking for diamonds. Diamonds were already discovered in abundance on the African continent and this farmer got so excited about the idea of millions of dollars' worth of diamonds that **he sold his farm to head out to the diamond line. He wandered all over the continent**, as the years slipped by, constantly searching for diamonds, wealth, which he never found. Eventually **he went completely broke and threw himself into a river and drowned.**

Meanwhile, in 1866, the new owner of his farm picked up an unusual looking rock about the size of a country egg and put it on his mantle as a sort of curiosity. A visitor stopped by and in viewing the rock practically went into terminal convulsions. He told the new owner of the farm that the funny looking rock on his mantle was about the biggest diamond that had ever been found. The new owner of the farm said, 'Heck, the whole farm is covered with them' - and sure enough it was.

The rock was an 83.5 carat diamond. The farm turned out to be the **Kimberly Diamond Mine** . . . the richest the world has ever known.

The original farmer was literally standing on 'Acres of Diamonds' until he sold his farm.

Dr. Conwell learned from the story of the farmer and continued to teach it's moral.

Each of us is right in the middle of our own 'Acre of Diamonds', if only we would realize it and develop the ground we are standing on before charging off in search of greener pastures.

Dr. Conwell told this story many times and attracted enormous audiences. He told the story long enough to have raised the money to start the college for

underprivileged deserving students. In fact, he raised nearly six million dollars and the university he founded, **Temple University in Philadelphia**, has at least ten degree-granting colleges and six other schools.

When Doctor Russell H. Conwell talked about each of us being right on our own 'Acre of Diamonds', he meant it. This story does not get old . . . it will be true forever . . .

“Opportunity does not just come along, it is there all the time - we just have to see it.”

Written by Earl Nightingale