

The Secret to Power in Business

by Glenn Clark

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II. Teamwork

As little boys we all enjoyed the exciting story of the Forty Thieves, where Ali Baba, by merely pronouncing the right Word in the right way in the right place, opened doors to wealth and happiness.

If I were to tell you that there is a Magic Word that if pronounced in the right way at the right time to the right people would bring a business that was tottering on the verge of ruin into immediate success, you would say I was crazy, or had gone into my second childhood. But that is exactly what I am going to say, and what is more, I am going to follow it up with abundant proof. Indeed, if this book were to be expanded to the size of an encyclopedia instead of being compressed to the size of a handbook small enough to carry in one's pocket, it would still not be able to hold all the examples that could be assembled to prove it.

My father possessed that Word. It never failed to convert a failing business into a thriving business whenever he spoke it in such a way as to reach from his inner soul to the inner soul of those to whom he spoke it. And what was that Word? What was that "Open Sesame" that opened doors to business success?

My father began life as a lawyer. Desiring to find a safe place to invest his savings, he selected an insurance business. The business began to fail. The directors appointed what they considered an efficient manager, but to their dismay, the business went from bad to worse. The manager in despair committed suicide.

They appointed another manager. The business declined faster than ever. They fired the manager, who bitterly resented it and immediately joined himself up with a rival syndicate of men who began to use their influence to speed up the failure of the business. When the insurance company was thus at its very lowest ebb, the trustees asked my father to take over and see if he could save it.

He found the office a regular bedlam. Nearly every clerk smoked all day long, wasting much time rolling and lighting cigarettes. There was much idle talking, calling clear from one end of the office to the other. Pandemonium reigned.

He began by making a new set of rules. No smoking during working hours, no loud yelling, every man attending to business. But that did not increase the volume of business sales. It merely prepared the way for big business to come in. So he called in all the agents from all over the state for a united meeting—an unheard-of thing.

Then he sprang his secret upon them. He spoke the magic word.

The result—they went out and doubled their business within a year.

Years went by. The company prospered until it became the leading fire insurance company in the state. Father gave up his law practice and continued as manager. Then the outside syndicate, headed by the jealous manager who had been deposed, bought out the control of the company over his head. It looked hopeless for father! The work of years crashing down around him! Deposed at the moment of his greatest success! Was he defeated? No. He still held his secret, like Aladdin's Lamp; undaunted he started all over again.

Another company which had envied his power in handling salesmen, engaged him as manager of agents. The first thing he did was to invite in all the agents from all over the state. Again he sprang his secret upon them. They all went out and to the amazement of the directors, they *doubled* the business of the company within a year.

Then the directors of another company came to him and begged him to accept the presidency. He acceded to their plea. Again he sprang his secret and his agents again *doubled their business within a year*. The company grew and grew until it became one of the strongest companies in the state. All this happened in Des Moines, Iowa, the insurance center of the Middle West.

When a thing happens once, it might be called an *accident*. When it happens the second time it might be called a *coincidence*. But when it happens the third time it should be accepted as a *law of God*. That this truly is a law is attested by the fact that long after my father was dead, the most successful railroad president in the United States came to me and told me his success came through applying the secret he learned from my father years before.

Because this secret is very simple I hesitate to write it down upon the pages of this book. It is almost like saying, the way to keep from starvation is to eat, and the way to keep the heart going is to *breathe*. And yet it is as powerful as the winds that blow, as life-giving as the very air we breath.

You will find this secret is all summed up in one word in the Bible. That word is "AGREE." The full passage is, "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father who is in heaven." The word most intently looked at in this passage is *ask*; the word most constantly *overlooked* in this passage is the word agree. Many people ask without first "agreeing" and nothing happens. But once agree in the right way, and something like an atomic bomb is dropped into the situation. And when I say "in the right way" I mean when the agreeing takes place deep down in the deep consciousness of all and is not a mere insincere, surface acceptance of the word.

When I say it is as powerful as an atomic bomb, I mean it! I have been an athletic coach for twenty years and have seen it applied in dramatic situations over and over again. When used rightly in that deep way I have never known it to fail. Let me illustrate.

One day years after I had retired from coaching football a football team came into my office.

"We are going to play a great team tonight under the arc-lights and the papers say we will lose by a 40 to 0 score," said the captain to me. "We have the jitters, and we want you to steady us."

I went over to the electric light and although it was broad daylight, pressed the button and the light flashed on.

"See this light, how easily it was turned on? No effort on my part, save the mere pushing of a button." They nodded.

"If you look into the wiring inside you will find there is a break in the connection at one point. The pressing of the button closes that break. Now, fellows, if there is any break in your connection, if there is any fellow who hates another on the squad, if there is antagonism or selfishness, cut it out right now; that turns off the switch. If there is anyone who has an inordinate desire to outshine all his fellows among you, that causes another break. My wish is that each of you fellows tonight will press yourself into the connection." I paused a minute. "If any one of you has contact with the source of the power way up there in the hills, all the better. Then there may be infinite power released in the game tonight."

When the team went out on the field that night, the coach, a thick-necked, rough and tumble fellow, who brooked no sentimentality, said, "Now boys, put on your fighting faces ... put on your fighting faces, I say!"

Then turning to one standing near he said, "Look at them. They have about as much fight in them as a bunch of sheep. They look as peaceful as a bunch of cows going out to eat grass. No wonder we have lost all of our games!"

That night the team played as no football team of that college ever has played before.

Over and over again have I seen this principle applied with remarkable effects in both athletics and business. When people read of the vacations that Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Harvey Firestone, and John Burroughs used to have together, they naturally thought of them as ordinary hunting and fishing trips, such as a great many business men seek when they go for a rest from their work. But their vacation times were in reality a coming together of kindred souls and *agreeing together*. Stanley Jones gathers two hundred choice souls together in what is called an Ashram, and I gather people together in what is called a Camp Farthest Out. Our purpose is just the same as that of these four men: *to gather together in human fellowship and agree together in divine consecration*, so that Christ can come into our midst. Any group that could have for its leader such a great spiritual soul as John Burroughs, who went all the way out in finding God in nature, would be fortunate and blessed.

People are not accustomed to associating the work of a college president with business, but that is exactly what his job often is—and big business at that! President Briggs of Phillips University came to the Camp Farthest Out one year when his school was at its lowest ebb, its debt increasing every day, with such a deficit facing him that the teachers were becoming sensitive and apprehensive lest they would not receive their salaries on time. The atmosphere of the college was all tension, distrust, discord, and confusion. Four years later I visited this university and to my amazement I found that the debt was all paid off and four new buildings had been added to the campus. A lovely spirit of

harmony overflowed the faculty and students alike. When I asked President Briggs how this happened he replied, "When I returned from the camp I gathered the faculty together and for two hours filled them with the spirit of the secret word 'Agree' as you yourself have used with athletic teams. And this is the result."

As I write this Dr. Briggs has become President of Lions International.
Yes, there is a method for unlocking power greater than ourselves!

One is not accustomed to associate one's home with one's business, but they have a real connection. Here is a place where the word agree gets its stiffest test. One of the most important places for harmony is between husband and wife. There is nothing that blocks prosperity for a man more than a nagging wife or one who condemns him every time he takes a necessary business trip, or who always reminds him of mistakes he has made in business in the past. The wife who has faith in her husband's business integrity and efficiency is a great factor in his business success. As that trust grows and expands it becomes a vortex that actually draws success to him. And if he rewards this faith by being worthy of it the success becomes steadily greater. And when the husband takes his wife into his confidence in all the larger, more important undertakings, he is building a solid foundation for permanence that cannot fail.

A man who has given remarkable expression to this secret of my father's is Thomas J. Watson in the creed he has laid down for International Business Machines Corporation: "*In all the seventy-nine countries where this business operates, we are all one brotherhood. We have but one thought, one creed? mutual helpfulness to each other. We feel that brotherhood in our very handshake. It is real. Our very language is a universal one. We all understand each other, no matter what our tongue. We want that friendliness to reach out into every other business. This business is a mountain of good thoughts piled one upon the other. If they are all good thoughts, our business will endure forever.*"