

DR. WILSON'S STORIES OF SOUL-WINNING

by

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE CURSING BARBER

The nicest, cleanest barber shop in town was located on the north side of the square opposite the county court house. Almost the entire front of the shop was plate glass, giving an unobstructed view of the entire interior of the shop.

Scotty, the barber, had equipped the shop with the finest of barber equipment, placed mirrors in various parts of the room, had a table for reading matter, on which were the current issues of popular magazines.

Scotty was a very wicked man—anti-Christian, anti-church, anti-religious and was vigorous in his opposition. He was a militant enemy of the Christians in that little western city. When a Christian would walk past his shop and would be seen by Scotty, he would at once curse and swear, holding up religion to ridicule, and calling down anathemas on the heads of the Christians. He was known all over the county as one who was an enemy of the church, an enemy of the preachers, and one who was definitely opposed to Christian ministry and teaching.

Scotty was not an old man, he was probably around forty-five years of age, with a lovely Christian wife and two splendid children, a boy and a girl. Scotty did not hinder the attendance of his family at church services, but he would have nothing to do with it himself, would have no Bible visible in the house, and would mock at the messages brought home by the family.

Apart from his antagonism to the church, Scotty was a pleasant, honest man. He paid his bills promptly, he did not gamble nor drink, and he would boast that he was just as good as any of these hypocrite Christians that he knew in the town. On every other subject except Christianity, he would converse freely and rather intelligently.

With those who had no interest in Christianity, he would play chess or checkers in the shop while waiting for customers. He was such a good man as a barber that even some of the Christians would go to him when they needed a barber. The merchants of the city had confidence in him because he met his obligations promptly, and made a good name for himself in the business world.

The praying Christians in the town were constantly telling the Lord about this one who was God's enemy and their enemy. They knew that the Word of God had wonderful power to "**break the rock in pieces,**" and would soften the hard heart. They were wise in their dealings with him and constant in their prayer for him. The Christian groceryman who served Scotty's family, and the Christian dentist who took care of those needs in the family, would speak kindly to Scotty about the Saviour. Sometimes through the mail Scotty would receive unusual gospel tracts containing warnings and invitations to Christ. He would glance at these and then destroy them, sometimes with an oath. The pastor of a neighboring church would sometimes go to the shop for service in order to seek some strategic opening for the gospel. The barber was very careful to avoid this issue, except to vent his feelings against the Christian religion which he called a fraud and a farce.

One day in the early fall, Scotty's customers noticed a roughness in his voice. When he spoke it was a bit harsh, and not clear and pleasant as it had been. Scotty thought that he had a cold, and purchased from the drug store some throat lozenges. He used these all day for several days, but the condition of his throat did not improve. As the hoarseness increased, his wife persuaded him to consult a physician. It seemed to the doctor that this was just a persistent cold which he could remedy by a stronger treatment. He did what he thought was best, but the throat continued to get worse. Scotty himself was disturbed about this, and felt that he should have a more thorough examination than he had received.

The physician also was impressed with the seriousness of the case and decided to have the secretion of the throat examined by a laboratory. He took a specimen from the throat, a specimen which he considered adequate, and sent it to the state hospital which was not too far distant.

After a few days the answer came back—cancer.

Soon the word was spread around the town that Scotty, the barber, was afflicted with cancer of the throat. Of course, his business began at once to fall off. Men were afraid to have him breathing upon them while cutting their hair or shaving. Parents were afraid to send their children to the shop for fear of being contaminated. Even his best friends gradually stopped coming for service because of the fear of being affected by his disease. *

** Note: Cancer is not contagious.*

The local physician was not equipped to treat the cancer with anything effective, but sent him to a neighboring city where he could receive the usual treatment for such a disease. Scotty drove to the hospital two or three times a week for treatments, but none of these were sufficient to stop the ravages of the cancer. Gradually his voice failed as the vocal chords were involved, and he was unable to converse.

About this time, I passed through that little county seat and stopped to visit the county engineer, the superintendent of roads, on my way to conduct a service. While there I was invited to remain for supper, which I was glad to do. During the course of the meal my friends told me about the precarious condition of the barber, and suggested that I go to see him. This I did.

I found Scotty sitting in the kitchen, his mouth and throat covered with bandages, and all the other evidences of the cancer were plainly visible.

I introduced myself to him and said, "I am a physician from Kansas City, who is deeply interested in the bodies and the souls of those who are sick. I came to tell you, Scotty, about a Man who loves you."

Scotty shook his head to tell me he did not believe it. I may say at this point that Scotty could swallow neither water nor food. He was slowly dying of starvation. I continued my conversation with him, and said, "I know you have not been friendly to Jesus Christ, nor to His Bible, but that very Bible tells how the God of heaven loves you, even though you have been His enemy, and He wants to fix you up so that you can come and live with Him." Again Scotty shook his head in denial. I said, "Scotty, I know you do not believe it, but let me read to you the Saviour's own words: **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish, but have everlasting life."**" I read it to him slowly, quietly, but with definite purpose of heart so that he would get every word.

Scotty listened intently, and then I continued: "Scotty, God gave the Lord Jesus to you to save you. He did not come to save good people, but wicked people. Let me read this to you, and I read— **'While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,'** for **'Christ died for the ungodly.'** Scotty, the Lord Jesus wants you to believe His Word, come to Him with all your sin, and trust Him with your soul. The Lord Jesus said, **'Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out.'**"

By this time, the tears started down the face of our friend. He closed his eyes a few moments, then he pointed up toward heaven, and then toward his heart. Again he pointed to heaven, and then placed his hand on his heart. He shook his head in approval, for he could not speak, and was telling me in this way he accepted Christ Jesus into his heart. I then said to him, **"This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."** A sweet peace filled the heart of Scotty. His wife broke into tears of joy as she saw that this one who had rebelled against God, and refused God's messengers was now trusting the One whom he formerly had hated.

The news quickly spread around that Scotty had become a Christian. The believers who had avoided him now came with their Bibles and with words of comfort to pray with this newborn babe. He did not live very long to tell the story, but those who came saw his confession as he pointed heavenward and then placed his hand upon his heart, while the tears of repentance streamed down his face. He had trusted the Prince of Peace, and peace filled his heart.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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