

DR. WILSON'S STORIES OF SOUL-WINNING

by

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CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

BEDFAST AND BOARDFAST—YET FREE

While in a series of meetings, I was asked to visit a shut-in out in the country. The only information I received about the case was that this was a young person who was unable to leave the house, but enjoyed having company.

The next day a friend came with his car and drove out to a lovely little cottage on a farm. The place was well kept and I could see that the occupants were thrifty people, though I was not prepared for what I found inside the house. It was nearly the noon hour when we arrived at this home, and we were met at the door by a middle-aged gentleman, who greeted us most courteously, and invited us in. I saw that this gentleman was not the shut-in we had come to see.

After the ordinary greetings, he said, "I suppose you have come to see Ruby." I replied that I had heard there was a friend in this home who was not able to come to the church for the services, and therefore I decided to bring the church to her.

Our host then made himself known to me as the father of the girl who was ill in another room. He led us into the sick room, and I saw the friend I had come to see. She was a girl of about sixteen, dark hair and dark eyes that seemed to dance with joy. Her face was full of smiles. Her radiant spirit had a deep effect upon my heart. This young lady was afflicted with arthritis, which had made her a cripple, and she was unable to move. Each arm was tied to a wooden board about three inches wide, and the length of the arm. Each leg was fastened to another board, which extended the length of the limb. Her head was elevated on two pillows, and across her breast was a lectern tilted so that the book which lay upon it could be easily seen and read by this patient.

Her father explained to me that his daughter had been afflicted with this dread disease for a number of years. It had rendered her helpless. His wife, the girl's mother, had died a few years before this, and so he was left alone to manage the house, cook the meals, and take the full care of the daughter, the home, and the farm. He seemed to have a happy spirit as he related this sad story to me, and told how he enjoyed his great responsibility. He would go out early in the morning to do the chores, then come in and get breakfast for himself and the daughter. After this he would take care of the daughter's personal needs, comb her hair, change her garments, and then arrange the Bible on the lectern opened at the place where she desired to read.

He would then leave the house, go to the fields, and take care of the crops, the garden, the repairs, and whatever needed to be done on the farm. He would return to the house before noon, wash the dishes left from breakfast, make his bed, do the necessary sweeping and dusting so that he could keep the house neat and orderly. Then it would be lunch time and he would prepare the noon meal. Of course, he must always feed Ruby, for she was helpless, and could not move a hand.

After the meal was finished, he would return to the farm work until supper-time. In the evening he would prepare the meal, feed Ruby her portion, and then after his own meal, he would clean up the kitchen and prepare to spend the evening with his beautiful daughter.

Both of these were God's children. They had met the Saviour, they had trusted the Lord Jesus, and His precious blood, and were lovers of the Scriptures. Ruby would tell her father the things that she had learned from her study of the Bible that day. At the noon hour, the father would turn the page if Ruby so desired. She would meditate on what was before her eyes while praying and expecting that the Holy Spirit would teach her His thoughts and truths as she read.

As I sat beside this wonderful Bible student, I found she had become rooted and grounded in the faith. I saw then that the Holy Spirit was her Teacher. She had many sweet, precious thoughts to give to me from the portions she had been reading.

I said to her, "Sister Ruby, do you not feel hard against God for leaving you here in this condition? What is in your heart about the relationship of your Lord to you? Does this affliction bring bitterness into your spirit?"

She replied with some animation, "No, indeed, I just love to be here. I do not need to worry about work, I am not distressed about business, I do not have to wash the dishes, nor do the chores. I think it is wonderful that God would give me the honor of lying here as His child just to love Him, and be loved by Him. God is so good to me, for I have a loving father who cares for me in a wonderful way, and I have no worries at all about anything. If my Lord wants me to lie here, I am happy to be here. I love to tell my friends about the precious things I am learning from my Bible. There is nothing else for me to do, so I just lie here and sing. I am looking forward to the day when I shall see Jesus, and then I shall walk, and run, and serve my precious Saviour."

I left that home with my heart refreshed, and my spirits rebuked. I had seen an example of true faith and trust.

~ end of chapter 22 ~

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