

STRANGE EXPERIENCES OF THE DOCTOR

by

Walter Lewis Wilson, M. D.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

THE STRANGE BELIEF OF THE POOR SWEDE

A great meeting was in progress in a large tent in Chicago. God was speaking to souls and some had trusted the Lord Jesus. An invitation was given one evening at the close of the service and among those who came forward for personal conversation was a very poorly-dressed Swede about forty years of age.

He came right to me without hesitation and said in his broken dialect, "Dr. Wilson, will you please tell me how to be born again so I can come to Jesus?"

This was a new question to me. I had never heard such an expression before, nor did I know that there was such a faith as was expressed by this friend.

I was a little bit nonplussed by his inquiry, and so as is my custom I asked the Holy Spirit to give me wisdom both in understanding the man's heart and in giving the correct answer. "Why do you ask me this question?" I inquired.

He answered, "Because I know that if I get born again, then I can come to Jesus and Jesus will save me and I want Him to save me."

"Do you think it is necessary, Mr. Swanson (for he had told me his name), to be born again first before you present yourself to Christ for His blessing of forgiveness?"

"Certainly," he said, "no one can come to Jesus unless he is first born again. Then he can come and Jesus will receive him."

"That is a strange religion. I never heard of that before. It was my experience to come to the Saviour without being born again. As soon as I came, however, the Saviour gave me the new birth and forgiveness and salvation all at once."

The Swede was just as much surprised at this statement on my behalf as I had been because of his statement. Evidently he never had heard of such an experience as I described.

We both hesitated about saying anything more. We were trying to get our bearings, for we were both confronted with a new statement, a new proposition which was a wee bit difficult to handle quickly.

I continued by saying, "Are you a lost man to-night, my friend?"

"Yes," he answered, "I am. That is the reason I came to the tent service, and that is the reason I want to be born again. I want to get right with God and be the kind of a fellow that Jesus will save."

This very friendly attitude on the part of the Swede filled my heart with gladness. I saw that here was a good prospect for heaven and a good customer for our Lord. "I am so glad to hear you acknowledge that," I said, "for the Lord Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. I can tell you with much joy that if you are really a lost man to-night, there is a Saviour who is ready and willing and able to save you just now."

I believe that he answered quickly, "I am sure that He will save me all right if I can get fixed up right so He will do it. I would like so much to be born again. Can you tell me how I can get that way? I want to get to Jesus quick, and so I must get born again as soon as possible, then I will come at once to Jesus." While he was talking my mind was working. The Holy Spirit was guiding the course of the conversation for the Lord had His eye on this man to win him.

I inquired of my friend whether or not he thought the Lord Jesus would be so good and kind as to give him the new birth and salvation both together at the same time. "I don't think He will," said my friend. "He doesn't do things that way. We have to get born again first. I have been told that for many years by good men, and they ought to know."

"Yes," I said, "good men do usually know the will of God as revealed in the Bible, but very often the Lord Jesus, being so very kind and gracious, will do things for one person that He doesn't do for another. On one occasion He healed a leper. At another time He opened blind eyes. You see the Saviour is so good that He will do anything for anybody if they really come to Him in earnest and want His help. Would you go with me just now to the Lord Jesus and tell Him that you are coming to Him without being born again to see if He will accept you and save you?"

This sincere soul was a little bit afraid to presume on such a course. He felt it would not be treating the Lord Jesus right to come in a way that was not the right way. He felt encouraged, however, at the fact that I had told him how I had received the new birth and forgiveness at the same time, and he thought that if Jesus had done this for Dr. Wilson, perhaps He would do it also for him.

He finally consented to kneel with me in the sawdust on the floor and present himself to Christ Jesus as he was. We stepped over to one side out of the crowd and knelt together. I prayed to the Lord Jesus and said, "Lord Jesus, I am bringing to You a new friend. He came to me to see how he could be born again so that he might come to You for salvation.

“Now, Blessed Saviour, this is something new to me and I do not know how to answer this good friend. I have brought him to You just as he is and I have asked him to speak with You about his case. Here he is, my Lord. Do speak to him Yourself.”

With this I pressed the arm of the Swede and said, “Just tell the Lord Jesus that you come to Him in your sins and without being born again and that you are just now trusting the saving of your soul to Him. Tell Him in your own words.”

In broken English, mingled with a few Swedish words here and there, Mr. Swanson poured out his heart freely to Christ. He said, “I thought, Jesus, that I had to be born again before coming to You, but I am coming to You just as I am. I believe You came to save sinners. I just read this in the Bible, and I am the sinner all right. A bad sinner. I want You to save me and give me the born again to-night if You will. I come to see if You will. I want You to do it because I need You so bad.”

He paused in his praying and arose to his feet. “Dr. Wilson,” he said, “if Jesus came to save the lost then He came to save me, and I am going to just let Him have me right now to-night. I believe He will save me, and I will learn about this new birth later on. Do you think that would be all right?”

I assured him that it was quite all right, and he left the tent rejoicing in his heart though a little apprehensive lest he might have missed this born again experience and thus not be fully saved.

He returned to each of the services, and the third night after the above week he saw fully that the new birth did take place when he trusted the Lord Jesus. This friend is now an effective worker in one of the neighboring churches.

My friend, no matter what your arguments may be or your thoughts, let me urge you to come to the Lord Jesus with all of them, trust Him with your soul. Believe on Him with your heart and He will settle every difficulty and save you.

~ end of chapter 14 ~

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