

"I'll Burn That Book"

by Walter Lewis Wilson, M.D.

IT WAS necessary for me at one time to visit a bank in a large Eastern city to see one of the vice-presidents about some of my business affairs. When I inquired for this officer, I was told that he was busy and that I would need to wait a little while until he was free. There was a settee in the outer office, so I sat down, took out my Bible and began to read.

In a few moments a young man came into the room and made inquiry about an officer whom he wished to see. He was told that the gentleman was busy, but that he could see him shortly if he would wait. The young man came over and sat down beside me. He took a book from his pocket and began to read. The book had the appearance of a novel. The paper was of the newsprint order and the cover was of rather coarse-grained fabric. I had never seen a book like this and was somewhat curious to know what it was. We were sitting rather close to each other and so I casually glanced over to see if I could discern the title. To my surprise, I saw the words "St. Mark" at the top of the page which he was reading.

The fact that he was reading the New Testament made me feel that he must be interested in spiritual truths, and perhaps would not object to having some help in understanding them. I watched for an opportunity to open the conversation. Soon another gentleman came into the office, and my friend looked away from his book and listened for a moment to the conversation the newcomer had with the guard. I took advantage of the opportunity and said to him, "The strange appearance of your book has aroused my curiosity. May I inquire what book it is?" He replied very cheerfully, "Yes, sir, this is a wonderful book. It is a new edition of the Bible in which the repetitions are omitted. You know that the Bible is cluttered up with a lot of things that are recorded twice. In this book, those things are just recorded once. That makes the book much shorter and easier to read. It is bound in this unusual way so that it will not attract too much attention."

Although I had heard about such a Bible, I had never seen one. I asked him if I might have the pleasure of looking at it, and he handed it to me at once. I gave him my Bible with the suggestion that he might like to read it while I was examining his. The first verse I sought was Matthew 20:16, connected with Matthew 22:14. I found that the second verse had been omitted. I then looked for Matthew 23:37

connected with Luke 13:34 and found that one of these verses had been omitted. My curiosity was aroused by this and I hunted out other verses which were repeated, such as the Lord's Prayer, and I discovered that these also were omitted as repetitions. The young man was quite interested in my search through his Bible and said to me, "What are you looking for?" I replied, "I am checking up on the verses that are omitted from your Bible."

We should always remember that the Lord appeals to men's minds as well as to their hearts, and always be ready to take advantage of every evidence of faith, be it ever so small. I saw that this lad had some regard for the Bible and some interest in what it said. Otherwise, he would not have had it with him, nor would he have read it while waiting. I asked him if he would permit me to analyze some of the omissions which I had found, and to this he agreed. We read the story in Matthew 20 and noted that the statement, "Many are called but few are chosen," referring to the calling of Christians for the Lord's work in the harvest field, but that only those were chosen who agreed to accept the Master's decision concerning the wages. We then turned over to chapter 22 and noted that the call was not for laborers, but was for those who would come to the wedding feast, which is a type of salvation. Only those were chosen who agreed to wear the garment which the Master provided. The young man saw at once that these two verses applied to entirely different matters, and that the second verse was not a repetition but referred to an entirely different situation. This truth was a revelation to him. He had never noticed the application of these verses. He had read Matthew, but rather carelessly. He now saw his error.

I next called his attention to the two verses in which Christ compared Himself to a mother hen, the verses indicated above. The passage in Luke 13:34 reads, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wing, and ye would not!" The passage in Matthew 23:37 reads, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" The first statement was made by our Lord in the middle of His ministry, but the latter statement was made at the end of His ministry, nearly two years later. We noticed that in the first passage Christ used the word "brood," which is a collective noun, and indicated that He desired to gather the whole nation of Israel to Himself and for Himself. In the second passage, we noticed that Christ changed the word and used the word "chickens," which is the plural form of an individual word, and indicated the Christ had now laid aside the thought of gathering a nation, and was occupied with

gathering individual believers.

The presentation of this truth aroused great interest in the mind of my friend. It was an entirely new line of thought. It revealed to him that he had read his Bible very carelessly and had unintentionally permitted an enemy to take away from him a very valuable part of the Word of God. He said to me, "Certainly this book cannot be a blessing to men when it takes away a great deal of the meaning and keeps us from knowing what Christ really did say." I replied that he was quite correct in his conclusion. I suggested that a man, who seemed to know so little about the teachings of our Lord and who handled the Bible so carelessly, was certainly not a safe leader to follow. To this he agreed most emphatically.

Having thus obtained his confidence, I began to open the gospel story and to bring before him the saving power of the Lord Jesus, but I was unable to finish the story and win him to Christ, for just as I began to explain the work of Calvary to him the guard came to tell us both that we could see the officers for whom we were waiting.

As we parted, he said to me, "This book will go into the furnace tonight. I thank you very much for showing me how false it is, and for showing me that I should read my Bible very carefully. I will buy a full sized Bible today." I trust that he has been saved since then.

Copied by Stephen Ross for www.WholesomeWords.org from *Remarkable New Stories Told by the Doctor* by Walter Lewis Wilson, M.D. Chicago: Moody Press, ©1940. (Moody Colportage Library; 180).