

The List of Questions Did the Work

by Walter Lewis Wilson, M.D.

AN INVITATION was received to hold services in a little manufacturing city, where there were a great many Swedish Christians. The pastor took me to a pleasant home, where I was to be the guest. I arrived there just before supper and was served a delightful meal, after which we went to the service. My host and his wife seemed to take a deep interest in the message, but when we returned home after the service no comments were made concerning the message and no questions asked about the subject.

The next morning we had our breakfast together, and then the host hurried away to his business. His wife and the children sat at the table and we visited together about friends, the church, the meetings and other matters of general interest. I felt that perhaps the conversation should be a bit more personal, so I said to the lady, "Are you enjoying the presence of the Lord as much as you might?"

She blushed and seemed to be somewhat disconcerted. She gave a short laugh as though endeavoring to hide her real feelings, and then answered, "I hope none of the other preachers who have stayed here have told you about my case. They all make a target out of me and I suppose I deserve it. I never have known whether or not I really am a Christian. Of course, I am active in the church and give as liberally as I can to it, but I seem to be a long way from God and cannot seem to get near Him."

There was no doubt but that the Lord had sent me to that home to help this friend. She had been distressed for years about her condition, and had never found relief. She had read her Bible a great deal, but had not found the peace that she desired. She certainly was not an avowed enemy of God. She had not accepted any false doctrine. She was orthodox and yet she did not know whether she was in the family of God, or whether her sins were forgiven. She told me that quite a few well-meaning friends and Christian workers had talked with her, but that none of them had solved her problem.

I prayed to the God of heaven for wisdom in handling this case and then dropped the conversation on this subject for the moment, in order to decide what plan to pursue. She rose from the table to clear the dishes. The children helped her and soon they were all busy in the kitchen washing them. Meanwhile, I was waiting on the Lord for light

as to how I could best help this hungry heart.

Just off the dining room there was a porch enclosed with screens. It was used as a sitting room and in the center there was a table at which the children studied and on which they played their games. I went out and sat down by this table with my Bible and waited until my hostess would come out for a visit. When she came, I asked her if she would like to get her Bible and let us have a visit together over the Scriptures. She said that she would be glad to do so, because she did want to obtain all the help possible. Soon we were looking up various gospel passages which I thought would bring light and help to her. After a short time of Bible searching, I said to her, "Do you believe that the Bible is true?" She replied at once that she did. I then asked, "Do you believe that what it says about you is true?" and to this she readily agreed. I pressed the question a little closer by saying, "Did the Lord Jesus save you when He died for sinners at Calvary, or did He fail to do so?" She answered without hesitation, "Of course, I know He died for sinners and He did save some people, but He certainly has not saved me." She seemed disturbed by her own answer and felt that she was quite wrong in what she said, even though she was truthful and sincere.

Her case is not an unusual one. There are many such cases scattered here and there throughout the country. There has been a failure to apply to the soul the truths which are believed and accepted. In order to help this friend to see what she was doing, I asked her if she would please obtain a lead pencil and a sheet of paper so that she might write down a number of questions which I would like to ask her. I wanted her to write them down so that she could consider each one carefully and thoroughly and then write the answers at her leisure. She went away to her desk and was gone quite a while. She was not taking care of the children, for they were with me on the porch. I wondered whether she would want to continue the conversation, or whether I had overstepped the bounds of hospitality when I inquired into her personal condition. Of course, we never should intrude into the privacy of one's own heart without permission. I was somewhat apprehensive about this until she finally appeared bringing her pencil and paper.

She began the conversation by explaining that the reason for the delay was that she had taken time to decide in her own mind whether she would be honest with me in answering the questions, or whether she would attempt to mislead by a profession of faith as she had sometimes done with others. She decided that she would be honest with me because she felt that I would be honest with her. This spirit of

confidence is always necessary if we are to do a thorough and satisfactory work for the Lord. If the motives are questioned or the sincerity is doubted, then suspicions will arise and probably no good results will follow.

The first question I asked her to write on the paper was this:

Did Jesus die for you personally?

I then continued the list with the following questions:

Did the Saviour fail in His efforts to save you?

Did the Saviour blot out my sins, or did He not?

Are my sins gone or do I still have them?

Do I believe God or do I doubt Him?

Is it possible that the blood of Christ is not sufficient to cleanse me?

Did I trust Christ and yet God did not give me eternal life?

Do I believe the first half of John 3:16 and not the last half?

Is the Bible true about everyone else except me?

Did the Saviour leave me out of His plan of salvation?

Did the Saviour put away the sins of others and neglect to make provision for me?

Do I want some other Saviour beside Jesus?

Do I want Jesus to do something more to save me?

What did Christ fail to do at Calvary to save me?

Did God make a mistake when He said "eternal?"

Can I believe what the Bible says without any other evidences?

Will I believe the Lord Jesus without any feelings?

Do I want to be saved some other way than by the blood?

She wrote these questions down carefully and then she asked me what she was to do with them. I replied that I would like very much for her to leave the children with me, ignore the telephone calls and spend enough time alone in her bedroom upstairs to answer each question carefully. I suggested that it would be best for her to kneel beside the bed with her Bible and her lead pencil and write the answers on the page after carefully considering each question. She left the porch with a promise that she would do so.

I played with the children for they had their toys there, but as we played I prayed. I knew that the Holy Spirit had gone upstairs with my friend and felt confident that He would reveal the loveliness of Christ to her. I felt that she would handle the questions honestly and that she would answer them only after giving them careful consideration. She was honest and earnest in her attitude and I knew that she would not do the thing carelessly or hurriedly. Two hours went by, and they were long hours, for I had such a desire to know what was transpiring in the holy place upstairs.

When she appeared, the radiance of heaven was on her face. She had seen the Lord and He had won her confidence, her trust and her faith. She threw the paper down on the table with an enthusiasm that had been lacking and said, "Of course, He blotted my sins out. He came to do it and He did it. How foolish I have been to question whether He succeeded or failed. He is not coming back again to die. He did it all for me while He was here. My sins are gone; there is no doubt about it. Thank you so much for showing the truth to me."

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