

"What Do You Think of That?"

by Walter Lewis Wilson, M.D.

AN EVANGELISTIC service was being conducted in a Southwestern city. The tabernacle was well filled with plainsmen and rough westerners. At the opening of the service, a fine big chap, who looked as though he might be a prize fighter, came forward and said to me, as he offered his hand, "Doctor, I am glad to see you. I have been wanting to see you for a long time. Someone sent me one of your books a while back—*The Romance of the Doctor's Visits*—and I read it with great interest. I read it through the first day I received it. Those stories certainly are wonderful. When I heard over the radio that you were to be here, I decided to drive over and see if I could have an experience like some of the men had in that book. I am not saved and I know it. I drove sixty miles to this service, and I do not want to return home until this thing is settled. I would have come twice as far to find out how to get rid of my sins."

It was just about time to begin the service, so I said to him, "I am glad you have come. I am sure that the Lord has brought you. You listen closely to my message tonight and see if you do not find your answer during the sermon. I will try to make it plain and simple, and I want you to apply it to yourself as it is given. Please do not go away after the service until I see you. We will sit down together and see if we can find in the Scriptures the answer to any matter that may remain unsolved in your mind." He agreed to this and assured me again that he had no intention of leaving until he fully understood. How blessed it would be if every person was as earnest as this friend! How profitable it would be to the soul, if each inquiring heart would take no rest until the matter was settled in God's way!

The subject of the sermon that evening was "Not Sufficient." This expression was taken from Isaiah 40:16. The passage reads, "And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering." Attention was called to the fact that in this portion of the Word God is showing us how impossible it is for any man to make an offering that is sufficient to put away a single sin.

Then I continued to explain that Lebanon is a mountain about six miles wide and fifty miles long. It was heavily timbered, especially with a thick growth of cedars—tall, straight and magnificent. There were millions of feet of lumber on this mountain. Solomon had ten thousand men, month after month, cutting down the cedars from this mountain

for the Temple of God and for his own house. It was a hunter's paradise. Wild animals, large and small, in great numbers lived in this ideal forest. The chasms and cliffs, the ravines and the peaks, made a perfect home for wild animals of every kind. In the verse before us the Lord was telling the people that though they should gather all the wood from this huge forest and place it on one pile to make a tremendous bonfire, and though they should gather together all the animals and birds in these woods, place them on a bonfire and thus offer a sacrifice to God, none of this would answer to God's demands, nor pay man's debt to God, nor put away one sin.

The young man listened closely and followed every word, but did not receive any light. I could see clearly that the message was not helping him. Apparently he was puzzled about what all this had to do with his need. It is often so with those who listen. A truth that is quite clear to one person may not be at all plain to another. I continued to explain the passage by saying, "Men seek to satisfy God's demands in their own way. They seek to obtain forgiveness and salvation by their own methods. Some try by giving money to God in large amounts, but this is not sufficient. Others try by character building to satisfy God's claims, but this is not sufficient. Others try by deeds of kindness and works of charity to meet God's demands, but these are not sufficient. Nothing is sufficient, except the precious blood of Christ. Man's guilt must be put away in God's way. God has revealed His way in His Word. He has made it quite simple and plain so that none should misunderstand. He has given us His Son, who went to Calvary to pay the debt. No one can stand in the breach between a holy God and a guilty sinner, except the Lord Jesus."

The service closed. An invitation was given but my friend did not respond. I saw him sitting with his head in his hands, in deep meditation. Others came up for personal help and some just for a greeting, but he remained seated until only three or four were waiting to see me. Suddenly he arose and came to me saying, "I want to talk with you after everyone else is through; I do not want to be disturbed at all while we are talking, for this thing is not clear to me and I want to ask you a lot of questions." This attitude was very pleasing to me, of course, for it is just under such circumstances and with just such a heart the Lord is able to work. I asked him to wait for me at the rear of the room, until I could finish helping those who were still waiting, and then we would have our visit together.

After about fifteen minutes, I walked to the rear of the tabernacle where there was a large heating stove. My friend was standing beside

the stove with the Christian friend who had brought him to the meeting. I approached him and said, "Is there any particular verse in the Bible in which you are interested, or which you feel you know real well?" He replied that the only verse he knew was John 3:16; that he had read it so often and heard so many sermons on it that he knew it by heart. I asked him to repeat it to me, which he did quite easily. Then, looking him full in his face, I said to him as earnestly as I could, "Do you know to whom God gave His Son?" There was no response to this for a while. He looked off into the distance, trying to understand the question, and, of course, seeking to find an answer. I continued, "You know that every gift must be given to somebody. Gifts are not just flung out in space. Gifts are not just handed out to thin air. There are always two who are concerned in every gift, the giver and the taker. Who is the taker?" Even then the matter was not clear. My friend stood in silence, still thinking and trying to solve the question. While he was thinking, I was praying and expecting that the Holy Spirit would do what only He can do—bring light into a dark heart.

It seemed for a while that this man would not be reached for Christ. He turned away from me, and walked up and down in the aisle. He seemed to want to be alone, and we were glad to leave him alone while he meditated on the matter. The Christian gentleman who came with him joined with me in prayer that light might enter the heart of this seeking soul. We waited by the stove, a little distance from the aisle where our friend was slowly pacing back and forth. I saw the shadows on his face. I could see that his soul was in heaviness and his mind in darkness. How true is God's description of all such: "Having the understanding darkened" (Ephesians 4:18)!

After a few moments he walked briskly over to me and said, "Doctor, ask me that question again." I repeated it as he requested, and then added, "Do you think that God might have given His Son to you?" This shocked him for a moment, and then a look of amazement, followed by an outburst of joy, revealed the fact that Christ had become real to him. He quickly turned, and with his clenched fist struck his friend a sharp blow on the breast, as he cried out in joy, "He gave Him to me! What do you think of that! God gave Christ to me!"

He then hurried over to the pastor, struck him on the shoulder quite a blow, and fairly shouted, "Pastor, what do you think of that! God gave Christ to me! I never knew before that it was for me that He came. What do you think of that!"

This new-born soul was filled with joy. He could hardly contain himself. He came over to me, and half crying and half laughing said,

"Is there anything in the world as simple as this? Why did I not see it before? I've read that verse over and over, but it never dawned on me that God gave Christ to me and that I could have Him for myself. It is simply wonderful! Christ is mine! What do you think of that! I can certainly go home now with the peace and joy in my heart that I've wanted for years."

He turned to his friend who had brought him and they left with their arms around each other.

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