

STRANGE EXPERIENCES OF THE DOCTOR

by

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CHAPTER ONE

THE LAWYER AND HIS JUDGE

The subject of the radio message on a certain morning was "The Five Judgments of God." The speaker took up briefly the Judgment of the Great White Throne, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the Judgment of Calvary, the Judgment of the Sheep and Goats, and the Judgment of one's own Self. A very prominent lawyer of the city was listening in his home as the message was given, and because it pertained to those things with which he was familiar in his daily occupation, he gave very close attention to the message of the speaker.

Before leaving the radio room the doctor received a telephone call from this attorney requesting him to take lunch at the noon hour with him, as his guest. This invitation was gladly accepted, and arrangements were made to meet in the Savoy Lunch Room at 12.15.

I was not personally acquainted with this attorney, but I knew that he was quite active in one of the larger churches of the city, and was known as an active and successful builder of a large Bible class of men. This class bore the name of my friend, and was known as the Harris Men's Bible Class." There were about five hundred men enrolled, and they met each Sunday morning to be enthused and stirred by the leadership of this lawyer. Mr. Harris did not teach the class, but engaged other men whom he thought were better qualified.

All during the morning I pondered over this engagement, and wondered why a man of such prominence and ability should wish to have a conference with me. He was a very prominent person in legal circles, and held a political position of much power. I had often wondered about his class as to whether Christ was known there, and whether the members heard the Gospel. The daily newspapers often carried stories concerning the class and their activities among the poor, the crippled, and in civic improvement enterprises. The class gave liberally to needy families at Christmas time, and in the summer season sponsored a summer camp for boys and another for girls.

I wondered whether my new friend would like counsel and advice concerning this social service work, or whether he might wish to talk with me about the interests of some friend who perhaps was in difficulty with the law. Never having had personal contact with Mr. Harris, I was quite in the dark concerning the desire for this meeting.

At 12.15 I met Mr. Harris at the Savoy Lunch Room as appointed. He knew me at once, and made himself known to me, for he had been in some of my services without making himself known. We were soon seated together at a table for two in this beautiful Colonial restaurant, and proceeded to order the meal. We conversed together about various local and national matters of public interest while waiting for the meal to be served. After the waitress had placed the food before us and we had begun to partake of it, I said to my friend, "Mr. Harris, what was on your mind when you invited me to have this lunch with you? Do you have some problem that I may confer with you about; do you have any burden on your heart that I might share with you? Do feel quite free to tell me anything you wish, for I shall regard our conversation as confidential."

This invitation seemed to relieve the heart of Mr. Harris so that he felt free to tell me the real cause for our conference. He did not reply immediately, but seemed a wee bit confused as to just how and where to begin his conversation. I waited quietly for him to answer. "Do you know the work in which I am engaged?" he asked.

I replied, "Not exactly, Mr. Harris. I do know your official position in the city, and I have read in the paper of your activities at the Barnard Church where you have built up such a large Bible class. I have no direct information about you or your faith, and only know what I have read. I should like very much to have you tell me something about yourself, if it fits in with your desire at the present time."

Mr. Harris was not eating his meal as though he enjoyed it. He seemed to be only tasting the various foods without much interest or appetite. His mind was evidently on things that were more important, and his interests were deeper than the satisfying of his physical hunger. He began his story quietly and earnestly.

"For many years I have been practicing law in this city, as you perhaps know. My ability has been recognized, and for that reason I have received a vote of confidence from the public which placed me in my present excellent position. During this time I have felt the desire for religion in my life. Being naturally a leader of men, I started this Bible class at the Barnard Church with the thought of increasing my own religious conceptions, and also bringing into Christianity a lot of men who would be more attracted, by business men than they would by a preacher. I found some good singers among the men that came and some good, enthusiastic workers. We have put on 'PEP' meetings and 'PEP' songs to work up the enthusiasm. We appointed team captains to increase the attendance. We offered prizes for the largest attendance by sections, and also individual rewards for those who would bring the largest number of men at one meeting or during the course of the month.

"The scheme has worked splendidly as you know. We have one of the largest classes in the Valley, and the fellows certainly do take an interest in every opportunity for doing good that is presented to them."

Mr. Harris had told the truth about this group of men. They were enthusiastic about the class and about their various administrations of help where opportunity offered. They had a name in the city of being very liberal and very thorough in their work.

Of course, Mr. Harris received the credit for managing such a large and efficient group, and was accorded quite a little recognition by the Churches of the community as well as by the City officials.

While Mr. Harris was giving me this information, I was asking the Holy Spirit to cause him to open his heart to me fully. I was also asking for wisdom in making a reply. I could see that something was wrong with Jack, for that was his name. I knew that he had not told me all the story. His conversation had thus far sounded as sort of a preamble to the real story of his heart.

As he paused a little in recounting this much of his life, I said to him, "Tell me, Mr. Harris, whether all of this activity has satisfied the hunger of your heart. Do you feel that what you have done and what you are doing is enough to meet your need and to satisfy the demand of your God? How do you feel about it, Mr. Harris?"

Evidently this inquiry was exactly what he had wanted hear. It seemed to relieve the restraint that was in his mind and to remove any doubt as to my interest in his welfare. We should always seek to make it easy for people to unburden their hearts to us; otherwise, they will hold back the real secret, and will hide from us the matter that should be exposed.

The meal was becoming cold while we conversed and studied each other. I was seeking to diagnose the case of my patient, and he was examining me to see whether he could confide in me and unburden his soul to me. Neither of us cared much for the food. The Spirit of God was hovering over us. The solemnity of eternity had made itself felt. We drew near to the vital point of our conversation with a sense of the presence of God.

He answered me shortly by saying, "Doctor, I listened to your message on the radio this morning concerning the Judgments, and it stirred me deeply. I have been practicing law long enough to know that a guilty man cannot be acquitted when the judge and the jury have all the facts plainly placed before them. Sometimes the lawyer for the defence is clever and is able to turn the attention of the jury from the facts to his own deductions and conclusions, but this scheme will never work in God's Court, and I know it. I have seen defense lawyers, by clever manipulation, prevent the introduction into the trial of evidence that is of very great importance. I know that this can never be done in the Court of Heaven, where Christ has charge of the proceedings. He is a righteous Judge."

The logic of this honest heart and splendid legal mind appealed to me very much. I saw at once that I was not dealing with one who thought carelessly or decided foolishly. There was an earnestness here that appealed to my heart. I looked to the Spirit on God again with joy because of this wonderful opportunity to help a darkened heart. Mr. Harris was a younger man by some years than I, so I felt free to ask his permission to call him by his given name. He gladly assented.

"Jack," I said, "there will never be any such perversion of justice in God's Court. You are right in what you said. I am glad that you recognize that God will deal with us in righteousness. Tell me more about your thoughts in this matter."

He was eager to continue, and replied, "As you gave the message this morning on the Judgment of the Great White Throne it made me very uneasy. I asked myself the question 'How will I ever get through that Judgment?' My life has had lots of sin in it, and He has the evidence against me. There is no use my pleading extenuating circumstances. There is no use my pleading an alibi. God has the evidence against me, and I cannot deny it. I tell you, Dr. Wilson, it has troubled me tremendously all the morning. I have been able to save some guilty men from punishment in my legal practice, but it will never work in heaven."

My heart was rejoicing in the conclusions which Jack had reached. I could see plainly that the Lord had been dealing with this heart, and was leading him straight to the Saviour. I saw that the Holy Spirit had already convicted him, and that his desire now was to find a way out.

"What are you going to do about it, Jack?" I inquired.

"I do not know, Dr. Wilson," he answered. "That is the reason why I sent for you. I want you to tell me. I cannot and must not go on without knowing the remedy."

This answer filled my heart with a greater joy, and taking my Bible I opened it to John 5:24 and gave it to him to read. He did read it slowly and carefully. I asked him to read the verse several times and he did in. "I do not understand it," he said. "What does it mean to believe? I have always believed that the Bible was true. I have never questioned it or doubted it."

The problem he presented was one that is common among men. Everywhere we find those who are unsaved affirming that they agree with all that is in the Bible and have no doubts concerning its veracity.

"Jack," I said, "to believe the facts is good, but the blessing comes when you appropriate them.

- You believe that this food is wholesome, but it will not help you until you partake of it.
- You believe that medicine is potent and pure, but it will not relieve you until you take it.
- You believe that the street car will take you downtown, but you must get on it in order to receive the benefit.

So it is in this case. The Lord Jesus came to save you. God sent Him to do it, but you must receive Him and turn your case over to Him, individually. You handle the cases of only those clients who commit themselves to your care; so Christ saves only those who turn themselves, with all their sins, over to Him."

This explanation brought a new light and a new hope to Jack's heart. He could see at once the analogy between himself and his client and the Lord Jesus with the sinner.

"Do you not see, Jack; that the Lord Jesus can blot out your sins, put away your guilt, and win your case at the Judgment, only when you have trusted Him to do it? He is there at God's right hand, a living Man on the Throne, in His own Body of flesh and bones, ready and willing and able to take every case that is committed to His trust.

“And He will handle that case successfully before the Supreme Bench, if you will trust Him just now, He will blot out the sin stains. He will remove your guilt. He will make you His child.”

I turned to John 5:16 and let him read the story of God’s gift to him. Then we read in Isaiah 44:22: **“I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee.”**

These passages were used of the Lord to reveal to Jack the ability and sufficiency of the Lord Jesus Christ to blot out the records that were against his soul.

He looked at me most earnestly, his face flushed, and as he trembled with emotion, said, “I see those facts as if I have never seen them before. I accept Jesus Christ, and I believe that He accepts me.”

We bowed our heads in thanksgiving, and while he told the Saviour that he trusted Him, I praised the Holy Spirit for revealing the Lord Jesus to this needy lawyer.

As we separated at the close of the meal, Jack went to his office with a load off his heart, and I went back to my work happy to have been with Christ when He saved a human soul.

How blessed it is to watch the Lord deal with men, revealing their need and then supplying a sufficient remedy. The remedy is always found in the Person of the Living Lord. Let us remember that it is not the work of Christ that saves, but the Person of Christ. We trust the Lord Jesus Himself personally, and He applies His blessed and sufficient work to our souls. He makes the precious blood avail to the cleansing of our sins as we trust ourselves to Him. **“He that hath the Son hath life”** (1 John 5:12).

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