

STRANGE EXPERIENCES OF THE DOCTOR

by

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CHAPTER NINE

FRANK, THE CARPENTER, STEPPED OVER THE LINE

Frank Seaver was a carpenter, slow of speech, a deep thinker and one who was not willing to be influenced by snap judgment. He was not religious, although he was not opposed to religion, and certainly was not an infidel. His parents were godly people, but he had drifted away during his thirty-three years of living, and had just simply permitted religious things to drop out of his life.

Frank had a splendid wife. She had been converted about two years before the occasion which I am about to relate to you now. She was fully converted, and began at once giving an out-and-out testimony for the Lord whom she had trusted. She was saved under the ministry of a very clear Gospel preacher, and so her testimony was clear, plain and to the point, and left no cause for doubt.

She often talked with Frank about his soul, but he was only impressed by her enthusiasm rather than by her message. He felt that she had become inoculated with some strange religious fervor to which he was a stranger. He would admit that her life had been transformed and that she was a much better wife than she had been in the past.

The effect of the life of his companion, whose name was Susie, was that he was willing now to go with her frank stepped over the line to church services and to listen to the Gospel. We all liked Frank. He had a happy spirit in spite of his reticence. He was always willing and ready to lend a helping hand if anything needed to be done. He seemed very unselfish and unusually kind.

The carpenters with whom Frank worked from day to day were not interested in Christian things. The conversation was not profitable whenever they did talk about Christian truths, and his soul was vexed as he heard these men saying things which he knew were not true.

Frank had seen something happen to Susie that he could not explain, but as he talked to the other men about her, they only laughed at him and gave him no counsel or help that was profitable.

I was delighted to see Frank coming to the services and listening intently, and felt hopeful that the testimony of his companion would be the means of reaching his heart.

Several times at the close of the meetings I spoke with him personally about his soul, and he received my messages very graciously. This encouraged my heart. Where there is a willingness to listen, there is hope for a welcome, and I was not to be disappointed in this case.

One Sunday evening I chose for my text Matthew 8. 2, “**And, behold, there came a leper.**” I sought to declare the blessedness of the meeting between a needy soul and the all-sufficient Saviour. I stressed the fact that the leper worshipped the Lord Jesus before Christ had done anything to help him. I also called attention to the fact that the leper felt free to come to the Lord Jesus, although he could not go to anyone else on earth.

There was something about Christ that attracted and drew this afflicted man, and made him feel free to kneel in adoring worship at the feet of the only One who could meet his need. Frank was listening very closely to the message. In fact he was leaning forward, sitting on the edge of the seat, drinking in every word, I was praying while preaching, and looking to the Spirit of God to make the sermon very effective in the heart of this carpenter. The leper saw in this Great Carpenter one who could build a new temple out of that diseased body and build for Himself that which would be for the glory of God.

First, the leper wanted that Carpenter of Nazareth to heal him. He expected Him to do it. He came to Him for that very purpose and kneeling there waited for the answer to his prayer of trust. Just as the leper did not have long to wait, so, I told the audience, they would not have long to wait if any one there should in like manner kneel at the feet of the Lord Jesus and trust Him.

I told them how many obstacles there were to prevent the leper from ever reaching Christ.

- The crowd was in the way.
- Public sentiment was against it.
- The customs of the people opposed it.
- The condition of his own body prevented it.

All of these hurdles were easily overcome by the leper because of his passionate desire to get to Jesus and to see Him about his need.

The story took hold of Frank's soul. He seemed just waiting for the opportunity to rush to the feet of Christ and trust Him. The service was near the close. I was preparing to invite the unsaved who were present to come to the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation. Before I had time to do so, suddenly Frank jumped up from his seat right in the center of the room and laid, “Wait a minute, Dr. Wilson. I am going to step over the line right now to Jesus Christ.” He stood for a moment waiting for my response, so I said, “Frank, we thank God for this. The Lord Jesus has been wanting you and waiting for you, and our hearts, too, are glad that you are willing to come as the leper did and trust the blessed Lord Jesus.”

At the opening of the service we had sung the hymn, “Step Over the Line.” The words had fastened themselves on Frank's heart, and he was ready to step over when once the beauties of Christ were presented to his heart.

There were many tears in the audience, for Frank had quite a few friends who had been praying for him. This sudden open confession, coming as it did before the service closed, had a very blessed effect upon the audience, and caused other hearts to turn to the Saviour. After the congregation had been dismissed, I had a further conversation with Frank to confirm his faith, and found that the Holy Spirit had really revealed to his heart the Lord Jesus Christ and His saving power. He had trusted in Christ, the Living Lord, and his faith was an intelligent faith, and his trust was sufficient.

My carpenter friend, as you may read this story we trust that you will come to the Great Carpenter who is able to rebuild wrecks and restore to the Lord through saving faith in His precious blood.

~ end of chapter 9 ~

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