

## Missed the Train, But Caught a Soul

by Walter L. Wilson, M.D.

---

While in the waiting room of the railway station of a great city, waiting for the train to be called, I sat reading my Bible and was deeply engrossed in the subject attracting my attention, and thus failed to notice the approach of a gentleman who appeared to be a prosperous business man. As he sat down beside me, he asked: "Are you a minister? I see you are studying the Scriptures and this would lead me to believe that you are both a Christian and a servant of God. I am pastor of the Bethany Church in the southern part of the state and always rejoice when I see another who loves our Lord and His Word."

This was a happy greeting and cheered my heart. During my travels I had not seen a devoted Christian for some time and was happy to make this acquaintance with one who seemed to be out and out for Christ. We talked together over the things of the Lord and especially the subject I had just been studying.

A period of about fifteen or twenty minutes had elapsed when our train was called, and to my delight I found that this friend was traveling in the same direction, although our reservations were in different sleeping cars. As we boarded the train, I asked the pastor whether I might come back to his car and visit with him as far as we could go together. He replied that he would be delighted to have the opportunity. As the train left the station, I took the Bible and went back to the last Pullman, where I found my new friend reading the Scriptures. We had a wonderfully happy time together, comparing Scripture with Scripture, and passing on to each other precious thoughts about Christ which we had received from the study of the Word. The train made many stops, but being engrossed in our subject, I paid little attention to its movements.

At six o'clock the train made quite a long stop, and the cars seemed to be maneuvered back and forth considerably in the railway yards at that place. Shortly the train started up again and I called the porter to tell him that I did not belong in that car, but that I did belong in the car that was going to the western part of the state and asked if he would kindly let me know in case the

train should be broken up and the cars separated. The porter immediately exhibited much concern, and cried out to me quickly: "Boss, dis train was done broke up in dese yards, and your train has done left on de other track. You'd better jump off quick."

I hurriedly said "Good-bye" to my pastor friend, ran to the door, and jumped off in the railway yards, before the train had attained much speed. My hat, overcoat, and baggage were all in the other car, which was already speeding on its journey.

The yard-master saw me leap from the steps of the moving train and came walking down the tracks to ascertain the cause of my trouble. I told him of my predicament, at the same time wondering in my heart what the Lord had for me to do in this peculiar circumstance. I knew quite well that the Lord ordered the steps of His servants, and therefore sought immediately to find some troubled heart to whom the Holy Spirit would bring the gospel through my lips. The yard-master assured me that he would take care of the matter to my entire satisfaction. He would telegraph along the line, catch the train with a message, and have my possessions properly cared for until I could catch up with them on the next train. He also very kindly offered to let me sleep on a cot in his office that night, for the train was due to go through at about 2:30 o'clock in the morning. He did not seem to be interested in spiritual things, although I made an effort to engage him in conversation on that subject.

In the yard-master's office there were many telegraphers, brakemen and other men connected with the work in the yards, but none of these gave a ready ear to my message about Christ, and I found no opening at all for reaching any souls. At seven o'clock, I went out to find a restaurant. The town was very small, not over fifty or seventy-five inhabitants, and the only place to eat was a little lunch counter where the railroad men could get a bite on the run. It was not at all inviting, in fact it was difficult for me to eat in the place, but there was no other place to go. I purchased a loaf of bread because it was wrapped in waxed paper and therefore sanitary, obtained a bottle of milk which I knew would be clean, and these sufficed for my supper. As soon as I returned to the yard-master's office, I heard the ringing of a church bell and made inquiry of the yard-master as to whether there was a church in the little village.

I found that there was just one church which served the entire community for miles around, and that night was the one night in the month when a service was held there. The Lord had not yet revealed to me why it was my lot to be in that little place under such peculiar circumstances. I kept looking to Him for guidance and asking Him to show me the work He would like to have me do there.

Having learned the directions to the church, I went over to attend the service. There I found a pastor who had at one time served a church in my own city. We soon were in happy fellowship with each other, and at his request, I took the evening service, giving a message on that wonderful text: "Sir, we would see Jesus." Only about twenty-five people were present in the meeting, but among them was a young lady about twenty-five years of age who seemed unusually interested, and paid close attention to all the message. At the close of the service she came to me weeping, and said: "I have been wanting to see Jesus since I was a little girl. It is not clear to me yet how to find Him. I would like to come to Him and to be saved by Him. My prayers seem to reach only to the ceiling of my room. God seems so far away. I cannot find Him. Can you help me?"

I did not wonder now why I had missed my train. My question was answered. Here was a soul in the dark, hundreds of miles from my home and in a little village where she had not much opportunity of learning the Word. The Holy Spirit arranged the missing of that train for the very purpose of permitting this young woman to receive the answer to her prayer for light. The Lord of the harvest knows where the troubled soul is to be found and He guides the willing worker to the earnest seeker. Let us learn this secret. It is a most essential one if we would not spend our time running aimlessly here and there, seeking by our own wisdom to find someone who wants our message.

I requested the young lady to sit down with me, while we read together the precious story of God's wonderful love. Isaiah 45:22 came before us, and we read: "Look unto me, and be ye saved." And so I said unto her, "Look away from yourself, your sins, your fears, and your favors to the Lord Jesus who died for you on Calvary." With these words I sought to turn her attention to Christ Jesus, God's only Saviour.

"Will you watch Him there on Calvary, and know that He was dying for you? He was taking your punishment. He gave Himself to save you from being lost. He paid your debt that you might come boldly into the presence of God, knowing that all of your obligations had been fully met. He says to you in Matthew 11:28, 'Come unto me.' You may come just now, just as you are and where you are. You may accept Him just now by faith, and trust Him fully with the saving of your soul."

These words did not seem to bring peace to this troubled heart. I therefore sought to change the line of truth a little, and said to her, "When you go to see a doctor is it not because you believe that he is able to meet your need and to cure your disease?"

"Yes, certainly," she said. "Several times I have done that."

"And when you go to see the dentist is it not because you feel that he is able to stop the pain and repair the tooth?" She nodded her head in reply. "Just so you come to the Lord Jesus Christ, believing that He is able and willing to blot out all of your sins and give you the gift of eternal life. Will you come to see Him now about this important matter?"

"I will," she said. "It is quite clear to me now. I always knew that Christ was the Saviour, but it did not occur to me that I had the privilege of coming to Him myself and receiving Him for my own Saviour. I belong to Him now and will be so glad to serve Him with all of my heart."

Again my heart went out in gratitude to the Holy Spirit for His wonder-working grace, and for the marvellous way in which He had arranged this interesting meeting. I returned to the yardmaster's office, and in the early morning hours continued my journey on the next train that carried me to my destination. Arriving there, I found that my baggage, hat and overcoat had been well cared for, and they were returned to me in good condition.

Four days after this wonderful event, I began my homeward journey, and when we arrived at this little junction point, I stepped off the train to see if I could find the yard-master and to thank him again for his kindness to me on the previous occasion. He was out near the track to meet the train, and when he saw me, came hurrying to greet me. Both his arms were thrown about me

in an affectionate embrace. Tears filled his eyes. His heart seemed to overflow with joy. "I have been watching every train since you left, so that I would be sure to see you again," he said; "for although you told me you would return this week, you did not mention the day. I knew you would be glad to hear the story of what happened after you left."

I could easily see that something wonderful had taken place and knew that the story would have to be told quickly, for the train was only held there long enough to attach the dining car.

"Tell me," I said, "what the Lord has done."

"That is just what I want to do," he said. "The lady who was saved at the church the night you were here is my daughter-in-law. For several years she has bothered us in our home, talking about Jesus, wanting to find God, and often wept as though her heart would break. We had come to the conclusion that she was a little bit crazy about religion, and were afraid she would lose her mind completely. That meeting at the church, however, certainly made a new girl out of her. She came home singing, burst into the room with the exclamation, 'I have found the Lord; I am saved; Christ Jesus has saved me, and my sins are gone. Oh, what peace and joy have filled my heart.'

"My wife and I could not sleep that night," he continued. "We saw the wonderful change in her heart and knew it was a very real work of grace by God. The next morning we sat down and had her tell us all about the sermon and about your talk with her. She told us how she had been to see Jesus, and how He had revealed to her that His death on the Cross paid her debt and blotted out her sins. She made the message so clear to us, that both of us have trusted the Lord Jesus as our Saviour, and we, too, are saved. How I wish you could stay a while and tell us more about this wonderful Saviour."

Just at this point the conductor of the train called out, "All aboard!" so I jumped on the steps of the moving train, as he cried out: "Good-bye, doctor; God bless you. Thank God you ever came."

Thus again, the Holy Spirit proved Himself to be the Lord of the harvest, ready and willing to guide the servant of God to the heart that had been troubled by Himself. Let us yield more and

more to His guiding hand! Let us look more often to Him! Let us be more supple in His care!

---

Copied for [www.WholesomeWords.org](http://www.WholesomeWords.org) from *Miracles in a Doctor's Life* by Walter Lewis Wilson, M.D. Chicago: Moody Press, ©1935. (No. 167 in the Moody Colportage Library).