

A Strange Life-Threatening Disease

Psalm 119:67

Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.

The high fever continued for a week. They kept me in the hospital and started doing tests. My doctor came in after a couple days of testing and said, "Dick I don't know what you have. We know that you have mononucleosis, but there's something else going on here. We don't know what else you have. You have a disease that we can't identify."

During that long fever I broke out with a rash on my skin, mostly on my hands and on my feet. I lost all my tan. My skin began to peel off, or rather, scaled off. The doctor came in again and warned me. She said, "Dick, you have an enlarged spleen. It's very dangerous and you still have a high fever. I'm warning you, do not get out of bed. Do not disobey this warning." Then she told me of a young teen in our town who had mononucleosis and a similar fever. She did not obey the instructions to stay in bed and her spleen ruptured and she died.

I was quite frightened by this. Six days passed. My hands and feet had gotten calloused and thick like elephant's skin. There were blisters all over them. Then I began to lose my hair. I lost half my hair. It fell out on the bed. The doctors continued to do tests. She came in again and warned me about getting out of bed. I had some rare disease they could not diagnose.

As I lay in bed night after night I knew why I was there. I knew that I had this fever because I was under conviction that God wanted me to do something that I could not do. I laid in bed struggling with God over this issue of courage.

Then the Lord spoke to my heart one night and said, "Dick, you could die tonight. I could take you home to heaven tonight. Or you can live for me the way I've called you to. The choice is yours. Either you surrender to me completely with no reservation, or you will die of this disease."