

My Bed Became an Altar

Philippians 2:27

Indeed he was sick, nearly unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him alone but also on me, that I should not have sorrow upon sorrow.

I laid in bed weeping. I was trying my best to be a witness for Him, but I was a failure. I asked God to please spare my life but argued that He made me this way. I told the Lord I was trying but I could not do what He was asking me to do. Then the Lord spoke and said, *“You’re trying to do it in your own strength. You’re trying to do it as Dick LaFountain would do it. I want you to do it in my strength. I’ve created you to be a missionary. I’ve given you a new heart. I’ve given you a new mind. I can give you the courage you lack, but you need to surrender everything to me unreservedly.”*

I remember so clearly what was happening that night as I lay on my bed. I felt like I was on the edge of a precipice and I was going to live or I was going to die. Laying in bed with tears streaming down my face I lifted up my hands to heaven with those tears streaming down my face and said, “Oh Lord, I give you my all. I cannot do this. I give you my heart. I give you my mind. I give you my body. I surrender my soul to you Lord. I need you. Without you I can't do this, so I give up my rights. I give up my privileges. I give up my will. I surrender to you Lord. I want you to be Lord of all.”

With that I finished my prayer and went to sleep. I don't know what happened but something changed. When I woke up in the morning they tested me again. The doctor said, “Your fever has broken. You are starting to mend.”

I stayed another week in the hospital. The doctor came in after that week and they believed I passed the danger point and would survive. I still had mononucleosis and would need to be careful not to overdo myself. They were sending me home to recuperate and in two weeks, if all went well, I could go back to work.

I went home to my own bedroom. I looked a mess. I had half my hair. I lost my beautiful dark tan. I was left looking like a pale invalid. I was home to rest and regain my strength. During those two weeks I continued to pray and read my Bible, asking the Lord for courage to do what I needed to do. At the end of those two weeks I was ready to go back to work.

The day that I had to go back to work, I knew what was before me. I had to carry my Bible. So again, I prayed. I was determined my life belonged to Jesus, not to

myself. I took my big Bible and boldly put it into my lunchbox and went to work. I kept repeating Galatians 2:20;

"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."

It was true. The old Dick LaFountain died in that hospital bed. I no longer would be allowed to live for myself but for him who died for me. As I sat in the parking lot this time I prayed and I said, "Lord I'm not going to ask you for the courage. I've already got the courage. I have to do what I have to do." So, I carried my Bible into the factory and at my lunchtime the Lord said, "I want you to open the Bible and read it." So, I opened my lunchbox, pulled up my Bible and spent my time on my breaks reading the Bible.

You need to understand that the guys at the factory were very profane. These guys cussed, swore and told dirty stories constantly. They were filthy talkers. Especially during the lunch period there were nonstop dirty stories going on. One of these guys stood out as the most wicked among them. He was very loud, vulgar and obnoxious.

When I opened my Bible to read I thought, "Lord I hope this guy doesn't see me." I could see him across the room. He kept looking at me. I prayed, "Lord don't let him come over here." But no sooner had I prayed I saw him walking across the room looking at me. I thought, "Here he comes and he's going to mock me. He's going to tell me I'm such a wimp and such a stupid Christian." Because he had done that before with other people.

But this time he came to the picnic table where I sat taking the seat on the other side of me, he looked straight into my eyes and asked, "What are you reading?" I told him I was reading my Bible. He asked, "Are you a Christian?" I responded, "Yes I am." Then he shocked me by saying, "I always wanted to know what was in the Bible but I've never read it. Could you tell me what's in the Bible? So, that night I was able to share Christ with him and tell him some of the stories of the Bible. To my surprise He did not mock me. He respected me. He thanked me for sharing that with him and I promised to give him a Bible.