

Real Life Stories Harold Wildish



The first time that Harold Wildish sought to present the gospel it was to an unusual audience. He was eighteen years of age and his audience was a group of drinkers in an English pub. When he began to speak, a man shouted, "Sonny, does your mother know you are here? Why, you can't even grow any hair on your face." Suddenly, a man pushed his way through the crowd. It was Harold's dad. "My wife and I knew our son was out," he said. "We would far sooner see him preaching the gospel than spending his nights drinking or carousing. . . I'm ashamed that a man of your age would sneer at a young fellow wanting to tell others about Christ." The result was that as Harold went home wounded in spirit, his father led the heckler to Christ. The heckler, it turned out, had a son in prison at the time.

Converted to Christ at the age of twelve, Harold had hidden the knowledge in his heart for five years. Then he heard the words, "Everyone shall give an account of himself to God," and he vowed to open his mouth for Jesus.

After completing his education he expected God to dramatically show him what to do next. However, no brilliant light shone from heaven. In desperation, he prayed one night to know God's will before midnight. He came home to find a note propped on the mantle. Someone had written him a letter quoting the great commission which the Lord said before going back to Heaven. He said: "All power is given unto men in Heaven and in earth, go ye therefore and teach all nations" (Matt. 28:18-19), and with it, other words encouraging him to be a missionary.

Three years later Harold received a letter from Christians in Many Lands asking him to replace a man who could not go to the Amazon. He had less than five dollars (one English pound) to his name. He spread the letter on his bed and asked the Lord to supply what he needed. The next morning he received 25 pounds in a letter from a Christian businessman. "But I must have 35," he told the Lord. The following day he received ten more pounds (about \$49) from the same businessman. "I could not sleep last night for thinking about you," wrote the man. "I believe you must need the enclosed ten pounds." It was on Saturday, June 6, 1925, Harold Wildish stepped aboard the *Amakura*, bound for South America with two other mission men.

They did not win any converts for a long time. God had to deliver them from Indians who would have killed them. Seeing no success, Harold became discouraged. "Why am I here?" he asked. Shortly afterward, a young woman converted to Christ. Her father brutally beat her and left her alone in the jungle to die. Harold had to ask himself if his faith could compare with hers.

What a powerful evangelist Harold became, ministering the gospel and Bible teaching in the Amazon. It was only after repeated cases of malaria, which forced him to leave the Amazon, he turned his attention to evangelizing the West Indies before traveling to Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the USA, and England for the spread of the gospel and Bible teaching.

As you leave the whole burden of your sin, and rest upon the finished work of Christ, so leave the whole burden of your life and service, and rest upon the present in working of the Holy Spirit. Give yourself up to be led by the Holy Spirit and go forward praising and at rest, leaving Him to manage you and your day. Cultivate the habit of joyfully depending on and obeying Him, expecting Him to guide, to enlighten, to reprove, to teach, to use, and to do in and with you what He wills. Count on His working as a fact, entirely apart from sight or feeling. Only let us believe in and obey the Holy Spirit as the Ruler of our lives, and cease from the burden of trying to manage ourselves; then shall the fruit of the Spirit appear in us to the glory of God. – Quote by Harold Wildish

EDITOR'S NOTE

It was in 1967 when I, as a young man, went to Nova Scotia with a group of young people to give out gospel tracts and preach the gospel. It was there I met Harold Wildish, by then an elderly gentleman still serving the Lord. He was one of those individuals one meets and never forgets. Sadly I did not know how great a man he was until much later in life.