

## THE SURGEON'S KNIFE

On his 21st birthday Robert H. received a registered parcel containing a tissue wrapped instrument which he quickly recognized as a surgeon's knife (scalpel). A student in medical school, planning to specialize in surgery, Robert was intrigued by the glistening knife, which, though not new, was handsomely designed.

Enclosed with the instrument was a note from an old friend, a well know surgeon, who had been the family physician as far back as Robert could remember. He had ministered to him and his motherless brother and sister in their childhood ailments. Robert's decision to study medicine was the result of his ever growing love and admiration for this man.

The note was brief and began: "Dear Bob: I am mailing you a gift I have saved for you for 21 years. One night before you were born I was called to attend a beautiful young woman who was very ill. An operation was necessary, and this little knife was used to perform it. The young woman died as a result of the operation ..."

Robert glanced at the instrument, glittering in the sunshine filtering through an open window. He felt a strange revulsion come over him. The thought that the scalpel had caused the death of a human being sickened him and made the knife a hideous object in his sight. But he read on.

"Like most of us, the young woman did not want to die. She had much to live for. Besides a devoted husband, she had a fine son of 6 and a beautiful little daughter of 3; now she was about to be a mother again. Her eagerness for the third baby was intense. That baby was you, Robert. The young woman was your mother..."

As Robert grasped the truth of his friend's message, stark horror seized him. He had never known how his mother died, and now, suddenly, here in his hand lay the very instrument that had caused her death.

The note concluded: "Everything medical science could do was done to save you both. It was your mother's desire that no matter what happened to her, you should be saved. She went in to the operation fully aware of the possible consequences. So, you see, Robert, this scalpel gave you life, even though it cost your mother hers. I am sure you will prize it."

Tears filled Robert's eyes as he pressed the knife to his lips. Then, as Robert stood there considering the instrument in his hand and all it stood for, he thought of the cross of Calvary, that symbol of tragic death which had often seemed so ugly, so repulsive to him: and suddenly the knowledge of its true significance swept over him.

"Why" he thought, "now I see it!" What my dear mother did for my body, the Lord Jesus Christ did for my soul. She died to give me physical life; He died to give me life everlast-

ing!” A sense of the beauty of the cross flooded Robert’s soul, and his eyes again filled with tears. For the first time in his life, he experienced that great joy and peace of heart a sinner feels when he trusts the One who died on Calvary as personal Saviour. “*The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God*” (I Corinthians 1:18).

Friend, what does the cross of Christ mean to you? Is it just a hideous instrument of death? Does it represent merely the tragic death of a good man unjustly condemned years ago in old Jerusalem? Or is it a precious symbol of eternal life to you?

Won’t you, friend, recognize and admit today that you are in God’s holy sight “*dead in sins*” (Ephesians 2:5) and “*without strength*” (Romans 5:6) and desperately need a Saviour? Jesus Christ, who died on Calvary’s cross and rose again is our only way of salvation: “*Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among me, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12). Trust the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation, and enter at once into the peace and joy of eternal life. Jesus said, “*He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*” (John 3:36).

*Anon*