

Biographical Sketch of Walter L. Wilson

“Yes, that is my principal business in life.” This is how Dr. Walter Wilson would often respond when some troubled soul asked him if he could explain how to get to heaven. His words take on special meaning when one realizes how varied were this man’s talents and how wide his experiences—medical doctor, natural scientist, salesman, businessman, author, preacher, school administrator, and more. Yet in every activity his consuming passion was to help needy souls find eternal life.

Walter Lewis Wilson was born in Aurora, Indiana, May 27, 1881. In some ways he followed in the footsteps of his father, a druggist who turned to preaching and doctoring. Tragedy struck early, though, for Walter’s mother died shortly after his first birthday, and he went to live with his grandparents in Fort Smith, Arkansas, for the next nine years. In 1891 the Wilson home was once again united when his father remarried and settled down in Kansas City, a town destined to become Walter’s base of operations for most of his long life.

While still very young, Wilson showed a strong interest in religion. He joined a Methodist church in Kansas City, but the church, being liberal, did not preach the gospel. Although he realized his need of God, he had not the slightest suspicion that salvation was through grace alone. In fact, he had the firm conviction that he must pay for his sins, and