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To You



HE WHO SPOKE AND WROTE this message will be greatly disappointed if it does not lead many to the Lord Jesus. It is sent forth in childlike dependence upon the power of God the Holy Spirit, to use it in the conversion of millions, if He so pleases. No doubt many poor men and women will take up this little volume, and the Lord will visit them with grace. To answer this end, the very plainest language has been chosen, and many simple expressions have been used. But if those of wealth and rank should glance at this book, the Holy Spirit can impress them also, since that which can be understood by the unlettered is nonetheless attractive to the instructed. Oh that some might read it who will become great winners of souls!

Who knows how many will find their way to peace by what they read here? A more important question for you is this: Will you be one of them?

A certain man placed a fountain by the wayside, and he hung up a cup near to it by a little chain. He was told some time after

that a great art critic had found much fault with its design. "But," said he, "do many thirsty persons drink at it?" Then they told him that thousands of poor people, men, women, and children, quenched their thirst at this fountain, and he smiled and said that he was not troubled by the critic's observation. He only hoped that on some sultry summer's day the critic himself might fill the cup and be refreshed and praise the name of the Lord.

Here is my fountain, and here is my cup. Find fault if you wish, but do drink of the water of life. I only care for this. I would rather bless the soul of the poorest street cleaner or rag-gatherer than please a prince and fail to convert him to God.

Do you mean business in reading these pages? If so, we are agreed at the outset; but nothing short of your finding Christ and heaven is the business aimed at here. Oh that we may seek this together! I do so by dedicating this little book with prayer. Will you not join me by looking up to God and asking Him to bless you while you read? Providence has put these pages before you, you have a little spare time in which to read them, and you feel willing to give them your attention. These are good signs. Who knows but that the time of blessing is come for you? At any rate, "The Holy Ghost saith, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Hebrews 3:7-8).

What Are We At?



I HEARD A STORY; I think it came from the north country. A minister called upon a poor woman, intending to give her help, for he knew that she was very poor. With his money in his hand, he knocked at the door; but she did not answer. He concluded she was not at home, and went his way. A little later he met her at the church and told her that he had remembered her need: "I called at your house and knocked several times, and I suppose you were not at home, for I had no answer." "At what hour did you call, sir?" "It was about noon." "Oh, dear," she said, "I heard you, sir, and I am so sorry I did not answer, but I thought it was the man calling for the rent." Many poor women know what this meant. Now, it is my desire to be heard, and therefore I want to say that I am not calling for the rent; indeed, it is not the object of this book to ask anything of you, but to tell you that salvation is *all of grace*, which means, free, gratis, for nothing.

Often when we are anxious to win attention, our hearer thinks, "Oh! Now I am going to be told my duty. It is the man

calling for that which is due to God, and I am sure I have nothing to pay it with. I will not be at home." No, this book does not come to make a demand upon you, but to bring you something. We are not going to talk about law and duty and punishment, but about love and goodness and forgiveness and mercy and eternal life. Do not, therefore, act as if you were not at home; do not turn a deaf ear or a careless heart. I am asking nothing of you in the name of God or man. It is not my intent to make any requirement at your hands, but I come in God's name to bring you a free gift which it shall be to your present and eternal joy to receive.

Open the door and let my pleadings enter. "Come now, and let us reason together" (Isaiah 1:18). The Lord Himself invites you to a conference concerning your immediate and endless happiness, and He would not have done this if He did not mean well toward you. Do not refuse the Lord Jesus who knocks at your door, for He knocks with a hand which was nailed to the tree for such as you are. Since His only and sole object is your good, incline your ear and come to Him. Hearken diligently, and let the good word sink into your soul. It may be that the hour is come in which you shall enter upon that new life which is the beginning of heaven. "Faith cometh by hearing" (Romans 10:17), and reading is a type of hearing; faith may come to you while you are reading this book. Why not? O blessed Spirit of all grace, make it so!