

"Madam, the text is plain, if ye being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to—"

"But I am *not* one of his children, sir."

"The text does not say, *to his children*, my dear madam; it says '*to them that ask him.*' 'Ask and ye shall receive.'"

"O! I *have* prayed—I *do* pray."

"Allow me to ask you, madam, how long you have been in this state of mind?"

"About three years. I was first brought to think of my salvation, soon after the birth of my first child; when my duty to my family led me to feel the need of religion. I could not have it baptized, for I was not a member of the church; and what troubled, me more, I could not do my duty to it, for I was not a child of God."

"And have you been accustomed, for so long a time, to read your Bible carefully?"

"O! I have read it all, again and again! I read it daily. I have prayed and wept over this subject, for long *years!* and have waited for the Holy Spirit to renew my heart."

"And have you been waiting for the Holy Spirit for three years, in this state of mind?"

"Indeed, sir, I have."

"Then, for *three years* you have been waiting for what God *gave* you *three years ago*. It was the Holy Spirit, which first led you to feel you were a sinner and needed Christ. The Holy Spirit has been striving with you all along, and you did not know it. He led you to the Bible. He led you to prayer. He sent you here to-night. He strives with you to bring you to Christ for forgiveness."

"Do you think *so!*" said she with astonishment.

"I *know so*," said I. "God has been better to you, than you have thought. He has done what you have never given him credit for. He has called and you have refused. He has invited, and you have held back. The Holy Spirit has not left you yet. I wonder that he has not; but you have another call to-night. And now, madam; accept his invitation; repent; take Christ as your Savior. Go home and give your heart to God, just as it is. You cannot make it better. The Holy Spirit is with you. Do not resist him any longer. You have stayed away from Christ, because you supposed you must. You wanted the Holy Spirit *first*; and thought you must not come to Christ till your heart was better. The dispensation of the Spirit was in his hand. Go to the fountain. The Bible no where tells you to *wait* for the Holy Spirit; but, fleeing to Christ, to depend on his aid *now*."

"Pardon me, sir; I must ask you again, if you really think the Holy Spirit is striving with me?"

"Yes, my dear friend, I *know* he is. He has been for years. He offered you his aid. He calls you to Christ now. Go to Christ. Repent to-night. Accept and rest on Christ now. The Holy Ghost saith, 'To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart.'"

"And is that all you have to say to me about the Holy Spirit?"

"Yes, that is *all*. The Holy Spirit this moment strives with you. God is willing to save you. Nothing but your own unbelief and impenitence can ruin you."

"Has the Spirit been striving with me? and I did not know it?" (said she, in the manner of meditation, the tears streaming from her eyes.) She left me and returned to her home.

Early the next morning, before the sun rose, as I looked from my window, I beheld her coming through the thick dew which lay upon the grass, with hasty steps ascending the hill, on which the house where I lodged was situated. She asked for me at the door, and I immediately met her in the parlor.

"I thank you, my dear friend, I thank you a thousand times for telling me that;" (said she, the moment she saw me; her eyes streaming with tears, and her countenance beaming with joy.) "It was all true. I have found it true. I can rejoice in Christ now. I am happy, sir, O, I am happy. I thought I *must* come and thank you. I am afraid you will think me rude in calling upon you at such an hour. But I was afraid you would be gone if I delayed; and I could not let you leave town without telling you how happy I am, and how much I thank you. After I heard you preach, three months since, I thought you could tell me something about obtaining the gift of the Holy Spirit, and when I asked you about it last night, I was very much disappointed by what you said. I was amazed and confounded. You did not say what I expected. But I *believed* you. I spent the night over this subject. Happy night for