

The Romance of the Doctor's Visits

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"NOT UNLESS YOU TAKE IT"

In the little village of Berwick, the folk were greatly stirred by the ministry given in the little frame schoolhouse. Night after night, the building was crowded to capacity with earnest men and women, mostly farmers, who rejoiced in hearing the story of GOD's redeeming grace. Among those who came were two families, who occupied front seats near the platform each night. During the early sessions, they manifested a deep desire to know more of the truth and to find the Saviour.

The congregation consisted largely of people who had not had the privilege of a college education, although they were not ignorant. They were earnest in their beliefs and energetic in their labors. They were not led to come to the service for foolish reasons, but were earnestly desiring help and blessing. No spirit of levity seemed evident during the services; still there existed a bright, happy spirit of confidence in GOD and of expectation, as we waited on Him for His blessing.

Charlie and Herman, accompanied by their wives night after night, came early to occupy their places and anxiously awaited the message. Although they listened intently as the speaker sought to stress the Gospel in its simplicity, yet no blessing seemed to come to their hearts. Seemingly, they agreed with all that was said, but this belief did not impart to them the peace and the joy for which their hearts hungered. The preacher introduced many Scriptures and used simple illustrations in seeking to explain the Gospel to them, and not a few angles of the Gospel were presented in the hope and prayer that these four friends would see the virtue of the Saviour's person and work, and that they might be saved.

The speaker's heart was heavy, being burdened for these four friends who seemed to be seeking, and yet could not find. He reminded the Lord of His Word -- "**Those that seek me early shall find me**" (Proverbs 8:17). Here were 'seekers' according to the first part of the verse, but they should be 'finders' according to the second part of the verse. Certainly if these friends had an honest desire in their hearts to know the Lord and to be saved by Him, they would find a ready response on the part of the Lord who came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

One particular portion of Scripture which the HOLY SPIRIT brought to the heart of the minister was John 1:12. This promise has been much used of the Lord in delivering souls from darkness and bringing them into personal contact with the living CHRIST. The passage reads: "**But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.**" Our seeking friends who came early to the service, listened closely to

every word of the text as it was read aloud, slowly and distinctly. Emphasizing the two words "**Received Him**," the speaker endeavored to show that many in the schoolroom that night believed in George Washington, but had never received him. Others believed in Kaiser Wilhelm, but had not received him. Still others there were who believed in that great president, Theodore Roosevelt, and yet had not received him. There are many, he explained, who believe about CHRIST, believe that He lived and died, believe that He is GOD's Son, and yet have not "**RECEIVED HIM**" for themselves.

A difficulty presented itself because of the spiritual blindness with which the hearers seemed engulfed, for neither the illustrations nor the explanations seemed to meet the need of those darkened hearts. Apparently there was deep desire to know the divine truth, but their inability to grasp it was distressing to the heart of the one who sought to unfold the precious Gospel and to reveal the living CHRIST to their hearts. The speaker was led to pray earnestly that the HOLY SPIRIT might speak through his lips the life-giving Word. Referring to John 3:16, he explained that this gift which GOD had given, the gift of His only begotten Son, must be definitely accepted by each individual person, ere CHRIST would become his own personal Saviour. He read also Matthew 11:28, and sought to show that the burdened heart may and must come to the person of the Lord JESUS CHRIST; there he will find a welcome, and salvation for his soul. In explaining John 7:37, he again called attention to the invitation extended by CHRIST for thirsty hearts to come to Him and find the satisfaction they sought.

Near the platform on the right side, stood a bookcase upon which there had been placed a vase for flowers. Being empty it was easy to pick it up and use it as an illustration. The preacher took the vase in his hand and addressing the audience, said: "Let us suppose for a moment that some of your friends in the room tonight have a very bad cough. You have sent for me, as a physician, to come to you and to prescribe for you the necessary remedy. Allowing this vase to represent the bottle in which I will place the medicine, I will compound the prescription carefully, using only drugs that are fresh and potent. The combination will be of such a character as to loosen the mucus in the lungs, relieve the nervous paroxysms and support the heart. Assuming you friends will agree that the physician is dependable and trustworthy, and that the medicine offered is the proper remedy for the trouble, I will now place it on the table here before me and see what the effect will be upon those who have the cough. Do you think that the medicine will stop the cough and help the patient?"

The speaker hesitated a moment, observing the effect of the illustration upon the audience. Suddenly the stillness of the room was broken, as a small boy in the rear of the room arose and spoke out suddenly and loudly, "**NOT UNLESS YOU TAKE IT.**" His intense earnestness stirred the audience to alertness and the peculiar fitness of the answer was quite obvious.

The preacher's attention was directed to the four friends on the front seat. They seemed quite moved and for a moment a deep perplexity seemed to possess them, only to disappear in another moment, allowing the light of the Lord to envelop their faces. They agreed that the medicine would do no good while it remained in the bottle, and they realized that one could not take it for another, but that each one must take it for himself. Needing no further help from the pastor, each one of the four promptly accepted JESUS CHRIST, and joy and peace filled their hearts. The answer of the boy, together with the illustration, were used of the HOLY SPIRIT to reveal CHRIST to their hearts.

The close of the meeting brought a time of great rejoicing. These two friends with their wives had also witnessed others of their relatives and friends put their trust in the Saviour, since many prayers had gone up to GOD that they, too, might be saved. Now the answer of peace had come. They had taken CHRIST and CHRIST had taken them.

This rich blessing will be yours, too, my friend, if you by faith will receive JESUS CHRIST for yourself, and let Him be the Lord of your life and the Saviour of your soul.

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