



“You will know them by their fruits.” Mt. 7:16

## A. P. GRAVES

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My heart became sad, faint, and wandered from Christ. I began to live prayerlessly, and to neglect religious meetings. Now began a most wretched experience, which continued nearly three years. I plunged into various schemes of wickedness, chose bad associates for my companions, and often fell into habits of profanity, intemperance, and Sabbath-breaking. But, while I inclined to give up Christ, He did not give me up. Frequently did I feel that I was wounding Christ in the house of his friends, and that I was “beating with many stripes.”

At length, I was glad to return to my Father’s house. The journey was indeed dark and tedious. Oh the bitterness, the wrestlings, and the agony of my soul in coming back to God! But, blessed be His name,

He met me in the way, and threw His arms around my neck, and kissed me. And now for more than fifteen years I have taken great delight in the service of Jesus; but not until recently have I believed there was such attainment by faith and love as are proffered to every Christian who will, by simple “trust” in Jesus, receive the “sealing of the Spirit.”

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The words of Jesus, “Come unto me, all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,” came fresh to my mind. “Well,” said I, “He spoke them for the sinner; and I have been giving them to the sinner these dozen years: they are not for me.” But a voice continually whispered, “They are for you.” These feelings of desire and travail to do something to satisfy my thirsting soul continued for months. At length, the words above referred to pressed my heart so much that I began to make a personal application of them. I said, “What is this idea of rest as presented by Jesus?”

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I felt deeply conscious that greater heights in spiritual things were attainable; but to reach them was my difficulty. It seemed I would give all the world to possess it, or do anything so that I could enjoy the fullness of that peace that passeth all understanding.

I tried again and again, with heart, lips, and pens, to consecrate my all to Jesus and His service; and for months my daily cry was, “Oh for a subdued heart!” But, with all my doing, something would frequently whisper, –

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Source: "Pioneer Experiences" by Phoebe Palmer

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