

Only the Sinner Finds the Savior

John Dickie (1823-1891)

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Matt 9:13

Life was once to me like summer,
With its glitter and its smile;
I, as thoughtless as the insect,
Trifled through the little while.
All was bouyant life within me,
All was jubilant around;
Need of Jesus then I felt not,
So I sought Him not, nor found.

But the summer soon was ended,
And the gloomy winter came;
All my blooming joys were withered
Into griefs of every name.
Still, I hoped the change of season
Would bring summer round again;
But, instead, the gloom grew blacker--
And I sought the Saviour then.

Yes, I sought with cries and
weeping,
But no answer was returned,
Echo flung me back my 'plainings,
'Twas as if my cry was spruned.
Sore distressed at the silence,
I with fervour did entreat;
Still the ear could catch no answer,
Save the heart's distracted beat.

Well I knew 'twas but through Jesus
That the sinner comes to God:
But with *what* we come to Jesus?
Ah! 'twas here I missed the road;
I was bringing Him *obedience*,
When I should have brought but *sin*;
So my knocking, though half-frantic,
No admittance thus could win.

Then I studied to know better
What already well I knew;
And the good things that I practised,
Better still I strove to do:
Yet the deeper grew the darkness,
And the silence grew more dread,
So I owned my case was hopeless,
And my soul among the dead.

Then I cast me, *self-despairing*,
On the Saviour's boundless grace;
Not a hope had I of blessing,
If He met not such a case.
And I felt that need so urgent
Scarce on earth could ever be:
So I begged for one so ruined,
Mercy instant, mercy free.

Then at once the peace of pardon
Did my sinking soul restore,
And the love sprung up
spontaneous,
Which I could not force before.
When I took the place of *sinner*,
And at Mercy's footstool lay,
Jesus took His place as Saviour,
And at once put sin away.

Ah! 'tis ruinous to cover
Filthy sores with rags more foul;
Strip them bare at once before Him,
That His grace may make you whole.
He delights in showing mercy
To a should that *owns* its sin;
But the soul that thinks of *earning*,
Not a smile shall ever win.