

# THE MINER'S LAST CHANCE

A miner was passing a meetinghouse one night and went in. The minister was speaking of the holiness of God and of the awful situation of those who were still unprepared and might be called at any moment to meet God. He begged his hearers to ask themselves the question, "Am I ready to meet God?" He urged them to answer it now, for now was the accepted time. God was willing now, and they were alive tonight. Tomorrow might be too late.

The miner thought, "I am not ready to meet God. I have lived a careless, godless life. I dare not meet His holy eye. How can I make peace with Him? I am such a sinner, I dare not stand before Him." These truths troubled him so much that he could not go away, but waited till the people went out. Then he told the minister his fears.

The man of God tried to lead him to Jesus. "Jesus is your peace," he said, but the miner found none. An hour passed by. The minister laid the way of salvation clearly before him and prayed with him and for him.

"Now," he said, "it is late. Go home and seek your Saviour there."

"No," said the miner. "I beg you to let me stay a little longer; it must be settled tonight."

"You must go home," said the minister. "It is late, and I can do no more for you. I cannot make it clearer to you."

"It must be settled tonight," answered the miner with increased earnestness. "I cannot leave this room until I find peace. Tomorrow may be too late, and I may be in hell. It must be settled tonight."

"By the help of God," the minister said, "it shall be settled tonight. Again he spoke of the finished work of Christ and of the need of repentance. Again he stressed the importance of accepting God's work of salvation by faith. Together they read Acts 3: 19: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Together they read Romans 10:9: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." They read 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Again the minister prayed, the miner following his words with sobs and tears, while the light broke in on his darkness.

"I see it!" he cried. "My peace is made with God. It is settled. I have to thank God for it! I do! I do! Praise His Name! It is settled." And they knelt again, but this time to thank God that He had heard their cry and saved the miner's soul.

The next day the miner went to his work. During the day he went alone to a distant part of the mine to fetch some tools, and as he was long in returning, his fellow workers went to look for him.

They found that a mass of rock had fallen upon him and that he was buried in the ruins. They worked with pick and spade, hoping to save him, and at last they uncovered one of his hands. It was warm. He was still living! And as they bent over him, a faint sound came from beneath the fragments of rock, rubbish, and stone that hid him from sight. He was speaking. "I thank God it was settled last night. Settled forever. I am His. Tonight would have been too late, but thank God it was settled last night!"

When at last they uncovered his crushed body, he had gone to God.

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:13)