

An Evening Prayer

Introduction:

1. In some hymnals, this song is titled: "If I Have Wounded Any Soul Today."
2. In others it is called: "Dear Lord, Forgive."
3. It was written in 1895 by C. Maud Battersby.
4. The music was written by Charles Hutchinson Gabriel (1856 – 1932) and copyrighted in 1911.
 - a. Gabriel was a prolific writer of both music and lyrics. (Some estimate that he wrote between 7,000 and 8,000 songs!)
 - b. He used several pseudonyms including C. D. Emerson, H. A. Henry, Charlotte G. Homer, S. B. Jackson, A. W. Lawrence, and Jennie Ree.
 - c. He penned the lyrics for several well-known hymns including: "Send the Light," "God Is Calling the Prodigal," "I Stand Amazed," and "He Lifted Me."
 - d. He also composed or arranged music for many other songs, including: "The Way of the Cross Leads Home," "His Eye Is on the Sparrow," and "Since Jesus Came into My Heart."
5. This song echoes the sentiment of David's words in Psalm 19:12-14...

If I have wounded any soul today,
 If I have caused one foot to go astray,
 If I have walked in my own willful way,
 Dear Lord, forgive!

- I. Concern for Conduct (Matthew 18:6-7)
 - A. It is a fact that each person has an influence on others and, therefore, the ability to wound them (cf. Genesis 4:9; 1 John 3:12, 15).
 - B. Jesus warned of punishment for those who cause others to stumble (Matthew 18:6-7; Romans 14:13-15).
 - C. Willfulness – seeking one's own way instead of the Lord's or his neighbor's – will cause one to be separated from Jesus (Hebrews 10:26).
 - D. One whose conduct is erring must seek forgiveness from the Lord.

If I have uttered idle words or vain,
 If I have turned aside from want or pain,
 Lest I myself shall suffer thru the strain,
 Dear Lord, forgive!

- II. Concern for Compassion (Matthew 12:36-37)
 - A. Jesus taught that one should be cautious about even idle words.
 - B. The Christian's words should always be motivated by compassion for his neighbor (Galatians 4:5-6; Ephesians 4:15, 29).
 - C. Furthermore, the Christian's actions should be driven by compassion (James 1:27; 2:15-16).

If I have been perverse or hard or cold,
 If I have longed for shelter in Thy fold,
 When Thou hast given me some fort to hold,
 Dear Lord, forgive!

- III. Concern for Commitment (1 Corinthians 15:58)
- A. The child of God must be on guard against his heart becoming hardened or his will becoming apathetic (Hebrews 3:13; Colossians 4:13; Titus 2:14).
 - B. The Christian finds comfort in the shelter of the Lord's fold (John 10:9-11).
 - C. However, one must have courage and commitment to fight the battles and perform the duties given to him (1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Timothy 4:6).
 - D. One who lacks commitment to the cause of Christ must seek the Lord's forgiveness.

Forgive the sins I have confessed to Thee;
 Forgive the secret sins I do not see;
 O guide me, love me, and my Keeper be,
 In Jesus' name.

- IV. Concern for Confession (1 John 1:7-10)
- A. Though all have sinned, forgiveness is available (Romans 3:23; 6:23).
 - B. Confession is required (1 John 1:9).
 - C. Humility is required (Psalm 139:23-24).
 - D. Forgiveness is required (Matthew 6:12, 14-15).
 - E. Faithfulness is required (Psalm 121).

Conclusion:

- 1. Self-examine (2 Corinthians 13:5).
- 2. Seek the Lord (Psalm 51:2-4).
- 3. Sleep in peace (Psalm 4:8).