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Correspondence

Hannah Whitall Smith

1983

Box 3_12 (Correspondence-Whittemore, Mrs. T.C to Wilde, Mrs. Oscar (changed name to Holland, Constance) 1895-1908)

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about forgiving people
about my books

Mount Vernon, Linn Co., Iowa.

April 8, 1908.

Mrs. Hannah Whitall Smith,

C/o Fleming H. Revell Co., Chicago, Ills.

My Dear Mrs. Smith;-

I hope you will not consider that I take too great a liberty, as a perfect stranger to you, in writing to ask you to add, to your invaluable chapters like those in "The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life", one on "Forgiveness". This seems a very difficult subject to others besides myself. Years ago, in Rapid City, S. Dakota, I heard a lady say how hard it was to say that part of the Lord's prayer, and only last Sunday a charming, gifted young lady spoke of it in the same vein. It has been very hard for me, and I have failed dreadfully at times, but think I begin to get a little light on it through "Difficulties Concerning the Will". But it is a side-light, and I do think a very great many of us need a strong and direct one to make the subject clear to us.

Even if we consider our wills as our real selves, - which I think they are, in the way you mean it - and forgive people carefully with them, will there not still be some memory of the wrong, some hurt, injured feeling? And that is not the way we want God to forgive us. We want it all free and clear and loving between us. Well, I suppose very truly far-advanced Christians are able to feel that way, but ordinary, everyday ones - as I said before, they need more light on the subject.

I want to thank you for the great help "Christian's Secret of the Happy Life" has been to me already. Have had a copy of it for eight or nine years, and it helps me from year to year more than I can say. Am to-day sending to have a copy of "Is God in Everything" sent to a very dear friend who has lived a strong, brave, noble life, but whose troubles have hurt her pastbearing them happily, or understanding, quite, how she could have so much more beautiful a life by just handing them and their consequences over to the Great Burden-Bearer. She is such a dear and lovely young woman, and deserves such good things, and I do so want her to be happy. You will sympathize with this, I am sure, from what you say about love and about intimate friendships.

This letter does not require any answer, dear Mrs. Smith, and with renewed thanks and deep appreciation I am,

Yours sincerely,

Mary E. Whittemore