



Clarion Review

All is Well with My Soul: Daily Devotions

Vera Simpson Gaines

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Three Stars (out of Five)

“He spoke and things suddenly appeared” the author writes. “What power! I hope there’s a huge screen in heaven and we can hit rewind and we can see creation. Wouldn’t that be awesome?” Vera Simpson Gaines in her devotional volume *All is Well With My Soul* provokes surprises soothes and inspires. She is the author of two previous books *Jobulene* about how the Lord led her through trials and tribulations and *Are You a Job in Modern Times?* written to help victims of hurricane Katrina rebuild their spiritual lives.

Each page contains a brief thought one for each day of the year which is introduced with a Bible verse or a quotation. Gaines has a way of seeing and writing that gets beyond our predictable habits of thought. She says “Sometimes things happen and we say it was a coincidence but we as Christians know it was a God thing. Are you going to leave things to chance or are you going to depend on God? I’ve never been a lucky person so I’m not going to live on chance. I know from where my strength comes and it’s not luck.” She goes on to speak of the faulty logic of unlucky people who throw their money away in casinos and reminds us that “God always answers our prayers” even if sometimes the answer is “No.”

Her comments are always written in a gentle voice leading us to faith hope love and other good things. She seldom makes readers uncomfortable and is never accusatory. Unfortunately though they are good not all of her thoughts are very original. For example she quotes “Lord help me be the person my dog thinks I am” and then expounds briefly on our relationship with God but her own thoughts while worthy add nothing deep or insightful.

While some of Gaines’ thoughts are subtle others are not. She lays it on the line in August. Quoting Hebrews 10:22 she writes “Notice the key word ‘true’ heart. God knows our heart so don’t think you’re going to put on a good front at church and walk out the door and live your life as you wish. That won’t work but there are millions doing it. They’ll find out sooner or later the price for that false front.” Going on she encourages us to let Jesus clean our hearts from evil so that the Holy Spirit can live in us.

Some devotionals provide only comfortable ideas that have no impact on our private

lives. Gaines however often relates concepts to her own experience giving them a personal liveliness. For readers looking for a simple honest and encouraging Christian devotional *All is Well With My Soul* may be the right choice.