

THE  
GOSPEL MESSENGER

*A Monthly Magazine*

EDITED BY  
W. T. P. WOLSTON.

---

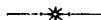
VOL. II.

---

EDINBURGH:  
T. PRIDEAUX & CO., 6A BRISTO PLACE.  
LONDON:  
G. MORRISH, 20 PATERNOSTER SQUARE

THE EDINBURGH CO-OPERATIVE PRINTING COMPANY LIMITED,  
BRISTO PLACE, EDINBURGH.

# I N D E X.



	PAGE
All, ... ..	W. R. C. 82
"A Fortnight's Warning," ... ..	P. W. 137
A Hardened Heart, ... ..	R. M. H. 279
A Lost Eternity, ... ..	W. H. S. 72
A Positive Certainty, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 122
A Sad Alternative, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 97
A Voice from the Great Deep, ... ..	E. H. C. 281
A Word to Excuse-Makers, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 131
Afar Off, ... ..	A. G. T. 317
"An Old Man of Eighty," ... ..	W. T. 184
Barriers Removed, ... ..	W. H. S. 123
"Before the Time," ... ..	J. W. S. 108
Belshazzar's Feast, ... ..	E. H. C. 9
"Change Immediately," ... ..	E. D. 169
"Cheap Enough," ... ..	C. S. 205
Christmas, ... ..	E. E. L. 325
Delay and its Dangers, ... ..	E. L. W. 250
Divine Blessing and its Source, ... ..	E. P. C. 153
Faith Must Come First, ... ..	X. 197
Fragments, ... ..	56, 183, 193, 240, 259
French Trunks for English; or, Why a Man could not be Saved, ... ..	F. T. R. 300
Giving up, or Receiving? Which? ... ..	J. W. S. 241
God's "All," ... ..	T. E. P. 289
God's Original and Man's Picture, ... ..	J. N. 303
Guilt Met by Grace, ... ..	J. W. S. 22
"Haud on, Dearie, He'll no' Shak' ye Aff," ... ..	J. W. S. 217
"He Died for Me on the Tree" ... ..	W. M. B. 42
"I am on the Wrong Road, and it is too Late!" ... ..	E. A. 194
"I am Escaped by the Skin of my Teeth," ... ..	ANON. 208
"I Cannot Bear that Great Light," ... ..	S. G. 27
"It isn't a Thing to be Laughed at," ... ..	E. H. C. 113
"I've been a Great Sinner," ... ..	T. R. D. 313

	PAGE
"Jesus and the Resurrection," ... ..	E. H. C. 172
"Jesus of Nazareth Passeth by," ... ..	F. G. P. 57
Just Like Him, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 293
Love's Victory, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 112
"Man shall not Live by Bread alone," ... ..	E. L. C. 128
Man's Wisdom made Foolish by God, ... ..	E. H. C. 68
"Maybe I'm not Trusting Right," ... ..	Y. Z. 150
"No Hope," or a "Hope that Maketh not Ashamed,"	T. C. H. 187
None but Christ, ... ..	E. H. C. 45
Of Grace,—not of Debt, ... ..	J. W. S. 267
Poetry :—Jesus Conqueror, ... ..	J. M'C. 299
Preserved and Saved, ... ..	H. E. 270
Procrastination, ... ..	O. 94
Ready to Die.—Are You? ... ..	W. R. P. 320
Saved, ... ..	X. 233
Saved in Spite of Himself, ... ..	M. 167
Sheep Marking, ... ..	J. N. 132
"So Then," ... ..	W. R. F. 98
The Converted Poacher ; or, "There must be Something in That," ... ..	E. H. C. 85
The Dying Drummer Boy, ... ..	M. L. F. 225
The "Golightly" Disaster, ... ..	W. T. P. W. I
The Four Seekers, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 75
The Midnight Cry, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 329
The Palace Guide, ... ..	T. R. D. 154
The Prodigal's Brother, ... ..	E. H. C. 158
The Postman's "Red-Letter Day," ... ..	M. F. 104
The Rope from Above, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 260
The Story of a Sinner's Conversion, ... ..	E. A. 35
The Sure Detective ... ..	J. W. S. 300
Thought-Reading and Mind-Reading, ... ..	J. N. 29
Three Aspects of Christ's Love, ... ..	W. T. P. W. 127
"Two Died for Me," ... ..	X. 253
"When He Died on the Cross," ... ..	W. T. P. W. 246
"Wine for Nothing," ... ..	E. L. C. 52
Works or Infidelity? Must it be either? ... ..	J. W. S. 214
"Yet doth He Devise Means," ... ..	W. T. P. W. 141



# THE GOSPEL MESSENGER.

---

## THE "GOLIGHTLY" DISASTER.

---



IN July 1886 a friend kindly placed at our disposal, and pressed us for a few weeks to occupy, his airy sea-side house at D——, a summer resort, the salt breezes of which have but to be known to be enjoyed. Assuredly gathering that the Lord had some work for us there, we went, reaching our quarters one Friday afternoon. The same evening the Corn Exchange, a good-sized building, was secured for a Gospel meeting on the following Lord's Day evening, and a little handbill issued announcing the subject, which ran thus:—*"Saved at the bottom; or, a lesson among the weeds. A true tale, and a salt word for sailors and landsmen."*

This arranged, I got down to the harbour, inquiring among the many fisher folk who loitered there if any one possessed a boat in which some of my party could—weather permitting—have a sail on the morrow. A weather-beaten old tar, to whom I spoke first, assured me that no craft suitable for the purpose was kept there, and then suddenly turning, shouted, "Sandy, Sandy, come here."

"Who is Sandy?" said I.

"Oh, Sandy H——. He's got a tidy little fishing yawl, perhaps he can accommodate you." Thus called, Sandy, a fair-haired lithesome young fellow of twenty-eight, with a cheery face, who had been standing amongst a group at some distance, came forward, and on hearing what was wanted, expressed his willingness to tidy up his boat and have it ready by four P.M., though fearing it would not be "o're comfie for the leddies." He pointed out his boat, a broad-beamed undecked yawl, with the well-known lug-sail so common on the east of Scotland, and assured us she was a grand sea-boat, and like her name the "Golightly."

Sandy was true to his word, and at the appointed hour was waiting our arrival, with two other men, Andrew H——, his elder brother, and James S——, his brother-in-law, whom we found to be the "Golightly's" usual crew. Andrew was the skipper, and during our little sail we were all much attracted by his sedate, good-humoured, sunburnt face, and stalwart form, as he skilfully managed his boat, which sped gaily along over the white-crested billows which a stiffish breeze produced. Telling the three men of the meeting arranged for the next evening, they readily promised to be present, and to bring some friends, and James S—— very simply confessed the Lord Jesus as his Saviour, saying he had known the Lord about a year only.

When we reached land, after a couple of hours of most enjoyable fresh sea-breeze, the three part-

ners engaged to meet us again on the following Tuesday, at the same hour, and renewing their promise to be at the Corn Exchange we bade each other good-night.

The meeting in the Corn Exchange I shall never forget. God had arranged it, and He was there, and that is everything in a Gospel meeting. The place was well filled, and amongst the listeners were our three friends of the "Golightly," and many others of the simple fisher folk of the place. Jonah's history (chapters i. and ii.) was before us, and the *downward* course of this disobedient man traced out. Sent to Nineveh, he "rose up to flee unto Tarshish" (which means destruction). Mercifully he never got there, but he "went *down* to Joppa" (beautiful); of course found a ship there going where he wanted to go, and so "paid the fare thereof,"—as the sinner pays his own way to hell,—and "went *down* into it." Once on board he takes a third *downward* step, and is profoundly unconscious of the general danger which the storm that God had sent out threatened, for "Jonah was gone *down* into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep." Thus is it with man oftentimes; God speaks, but he hears not.

But God will have Jonah aroused, and "What meanest thou, O sleeper?" rings in his ears, and rang in the ears of the Corn Exchange audience again and again, as the indifferent, the unawakened, the unsaved, the unpardoned, were besought to receive the Gospel. Thoroughly aroused, and

probed by the pointed queries, "What is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?" Jonah confesses, "I fear Jehovah, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land." This, however, cannot calm the storm; and at length, prompted by a sense of his sin, and at his own request, cast into the sea, he finds himself the object of the special care of God, for "the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah."

But sin ever brings its own fruit, and the soul that sins must know repentance toward God. "In the belly of the fish three days and three nights," Jonah passes through deep exercises, and learns wondrous lessons. He prays, he cries, and his soul faints. He gets into "the belly of hell;" floods compass him, billows and waves pass over him, and the weeds are wrapped about his head. Three *downward* steps he had taken himself; God conducts him yet lower. "I went *down* to the bottoms of the mountains," he says; and then with a sense that all is over,—that he is, as far as human aid is concerned, helplessly, hopelessly lost,—he is brought to the point of real blessing; and having learned that "*salvation is of the Lord*," he owns it, and is free on the spot,—reaching dry land in a moment. So the soul that feels and owns its guilty defiled condition, and takes the place of being *lost* before God, is taught of God that it is an object of His love and mercy, and that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that

which was lost." Hence whoever trusts in that blessed Son of Man finds a Saviour, and salvation, on the spot. Many and urgent were the appeals to the unsaved not to defer salvation to to-morrow, as it never comes, for I felt as though some of my hearers might never hear the Gospel again.

The interest was great, and it was quite evident that God's Spirit was mightily at work among souls; and when we sang the closing hymn,—

“ Salvation without money ;  
Salvation without price ;  
Salvation without labour,—  
Believing doth suffice.  
Salvation now—this moment !  
Then why, oh why, delay ?  
You may not see to-morrow ;  
*Now* is salvation's day ! ”

I could not but believe that some were accepting God's offered grace. Nor in this was I disappointed, as events afterwards shewed, and some were heard to say as they left the hall, “ The man spoke as though we were never to have another chance of being saved.” Prophetic words, indeed, as regards some.

The next day, Monday, was a lovely summer day. The sun shone brightly, fleecy white clouds soared high in the deep blue sky, and the sea was like a mill-pond, scarce ruffled by a gentle breeze. About three o'clock in the afternoon the “ Golightly,” with her wonted crew, and ten other occupants, most of them women, all cheerful, blithe, and eager for work,

put out of harbour to go to some not far distant "mussel scalps," to gather bait for the usual nocturnal fishing expedition. The boat, laden beyond its capacity, for which the calm fair weather might account, had scarcely emerged from the harbour when a sudden and quite unexpected squall struck her. The sheet—the rope attached to the lower and hinder end of the sail—had unfortunately been made fast to a thwart, and, owing to the throng of women, could not be let go. The boat heeled over, filled, and sank, within one hundred yards of shore, carrying her thirteen passengers down with her. Of these four only came to the surface, and help being quickly at hand they were rescued. Among these was James S——. Carried to the bottom, and held there by two women for a time, when they let go he rose, and was picked up. The victims, however, included my friends Andrew and Sandy H——, the former's wife, their younger brother of seventeen, and a girl cousin of a similar age. Locked in each other's arms the manly skipper and his youthful wife were shortly after brought to the surface. Parted not in life, thank God, they were not divided in death, as I afterwards learned. The others who were drowned were two young men of seventeen and twenty-two years, and two young women aged seventeen. The squall passed by, the sun shone again brightly; but how different the scene it shone on, as one by one the nine lifeless bodies were brought to shore! Oh, the terrible power of death! And what folly can equal that

of the sinner who goes on heedless of his soul's salvation ?

There was scarcely a house among the fisher folk not, nearly or remotely, connected with the drowned, and sorrow possessed many a heart to the full, as they mourned the loss of parents, children, brothers, sisters, cousins, or friends and playmates.

The gloom which this painful event cast over the town can easily be imagined, and the sympathy for the stricken and bereaved families was widespread and real. A public funeral took place on the Wednesday, and a sad sight it was, as, carried shoulder high to the old kirkyard, the coffins of the husband and wife, side by side, were followed by the seven others, borne in single file. Thousands attended, and preceded or followed. While a simple service was conducted in the old kirk, the nine wreath-covered coffins, all side by side,—a sight one could never forget,—rested in the vestibule, and then were borne each to the last resting-place near by. Over the grave which held Andrew H—— and his wife, by the desire of some relations, I read John v. 24-29, and spoke of the blessedness of having eternal life. This blessedness the two who were undivided in death had lately been taught to know, and so the saddened hearts that mourned them were comforted.

Of the nine who were thus suddenly cut off, five were at the Sunday evening meeting, two known to be believers in the Lord Jesus. Of the rest, one can only say, God may have spoken to them, and

they believed the Gospel, but no one heard them say that they were converted. It is a mistake to put off deciding for Christ till it be too late. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth" (Prov. xxvii. 1), is God's word to every one of us. How solemnly was it illustrated here. Two of the dear men who were to meet me on Tuesday passed into eternity on Monday! So much for man's proposals.

And now, my dear reader, how is it with you? Are you saved? Are you converted? Are you ready to go? Have you peace with God? Are your sins pardoned, and all washed away in the precious blood of Christ? If not, let me beseech you not to delay one single hour. God may never give you another opportunity of hearing His Gospel. Believe on Jesus now. The work of redemption is finished. The cross is past, the blood of atonement has been shed. God has accepted it; and He will accept you, if you trust the One who shed His blood for poor guilty sinners, as we both are by nature. Come then to Jesus. Come now. Come as you are; and, simply trusting Him, you will be able to say, "Salvation is of the Lord."

One word more. "Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee" (Job xxxvi. 18). "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

W. T. P. W.



## BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.



ABOUT six hundred years before the first advent of Christ, the Jews were overcome by a great king called Nebuchadnezzar. The temple of God was burnt and Jerusalem destroyed, and a multitude of the people carried away captive into Babylon, the capital of the Chaldean kingdom. This fearful judgment came upon them on account of their sins, and God transferred the kingly power on the earth into the hands of the Gentiles in the person of Nebuchadnezzar, and the times of the Gentiles commenced. Lifted up with pride, he forgot Him who had so highly exalted him, and as he walked in his palace, spake and said, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" And "while the word was in the king's mouth, there fell a voice from heaven, saying, O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken: The kingdom is departed from thee," &c. (Dan. iv. 30, 31). Smitten by the Lord, his reason departed from him, and he became an outcast. But later on the Lord restored him in mercy both to health and to his kingdom, and he extolled and honoured the King of heaven.

Succeeded by his grandson Belshazzar, the latter totally ignored the ways of God with his pre-

decessor, and lived in luxury, pleasure, and carnal indulgences. At the height of his glory and prosperity he made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before them. Picture to yourself, dear reader, this festive scene. A gorgeous palace of vast dimensions, in the midst of a city renowned throughout the earth for its immense proportions, magnificence, and wealth. In one of its vast halls, ornamented with columns, sculpture, tracery, painting, executed by the most skilled workmen and artists of the day that money could command, is spread a royal banquet. Ten thousand glittering lamps fill this magnificent apartment with one vast blaze of light. A royal throne of most costly workmanship, surmounted with gorgeous canopy, occupies one end; and handsome tables, with luxurious couches after oriental fashion, stretch throughout; the former groaning beneath the most splendid gold and silver ornaments and plate, lovely flowers and exotics, piles of the most luscious fruits, wines of the choicest vintages of Babylon, and multitudes of dishes containing all the greatest delicacies of that fruitful and productive clime, and prepared with the utmost care to meet the refined tastes of the guests of so magnificent a monarch. And surrounded with princes, princesses, and courtiers, clad with royal robes, is seated the greatest potentate of the earth, Belshazzar, king of Babylon; and reclining upon the couches surrounding the tables are a thousand of his lords, his wives, and his concu-

bines, arrayed in costly robes of every hue suited to this great occasion.

Mighty to drink wine, this impious king drank before his thousand lords, and whiles he tasted the wine, commanded to bring the golden and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple of Jerusalem (Dan. v. 3); and the king and his guests drank in them, and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone. Excited by his potations, Belshazzar openly insults the God of heaven in the presence of his guests, and all follow his wicked example. The holy vessels of the temple, set apart for the worship of God, are brought down to the level of man's carnal festivities, and the praise that is alone due to Him rendered to false gods.

How strikingly this illustrates the way of masses at the present moment! On all hands we see the mixing up of the holy things of God with the carnal ways and doings of men; Christendom reducing Christianity to a worldly level, and making the worship and service of God subservient to their own self-pleasing; and Christ Himself displaced in the heart by a thousand idols.

The men and women of this world, from the king downwards, were having what the world calls a good time of it at Belshazzar's palace,—*enjoying themselves*. God was left out altogether. There was no fear of Him before their eyes. But little did they think, that though they saw not the in-

visible God, the invisible God saw them. The eye of Him who had humbled the mighty king Nebuchadnezzar was fixed upon that guilty company. The heart-knowing God was reading the deep secret thoughts and intents of every soul, and at the height of their carnal feastings and drunken orgies the word of His righteous judgment went forth.

As that vast and notable assemblage drank their bumpers of wine, and the whole hall reverberated with praise to the false gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone (which men were using *without God* for their own enrichment and advancement in this life), suddenly the king's countenance changes, his thoughts trouble him, the joints of his loins are loosed, and his knees smite one against another. Every eye turns for a moment upon him, and wonder and amazement are depicted upon every brow. The burst of praise dies away, and the loud murmur of voices is suddenly hushed altogether. Belshazzar, at whose word a kingdom trembled;—Belshazzar, the mightiest of earth's potentates, the great master of the eastern world;—Belshazzar, the worldly, carnal, impious king of Babylon, trembles like an aspen leaf in the presence of his lords!

What is it that so suddenly caused this vast change? What is it that produced so great a revolution in a moment throughout that gay company of revellers? What is it that so suddenly turns the boldest into cowards, and men who pro-

bably had never known the fear of their fellow to quail and blanch with terror and affright? The answer is simple: *The word of God*. Yes, reader, *God spoke*. Not by a terrifying thunderclap, or fearful lightning flash; but, "in the same hour came forth the fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and *the king saw the part of the hand that wrote*" (Dan. v. 5).

The fingers of a man's hand. Only the fingers. Why should the fingers of a man's hand produce such an effect? It is what those fingers wrote. *Four mysterious words*. And over against the candlestick; probably the seven-branched golden candlestick of which the temple of God had been despoiled. It is a message from God, and written over against that holy vessel which tells us that the One who sent it *is Light*. A message from God to Belshazzar; from the King of heaven to the king of Babylon! "A guilty conscience needs no accuser," men say. Thus was it with this man. Not a syllable was uttered, not a sound was heard; the mysterious fingers write mysterious words; and it is enough,—the greatest potentate on earth, in the zenith of his glory, trembles like a convicted felon from head to foot.

Beloved reader, how is it with you? Maybe you are one of many who, instead of glorifying God, has brought down His holy things to the level of your own carnal ways and pleasure. "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). The word of

God arrested the guilty king of Babylon in his career of sin, but, as we shall see, it was a message of judgment. Has the word of God arrested your conscience? Blessed be His name, it is now a day of abounding grace. And if you have been convicted by His word as a guilty and lost sinner in the presence of God, it is not yet too late to escape the threatened judgment. A free and full salvation is offered now (Acts xxviii. 28).

Recovering himself from his first affright, the guilty king cried aloud to bring in the wise men of Babylon, promising high honours and rich rewards to any one who should read the writing, or make known to him the interpretation. But all their wisdom was unavailing. Not one could understand. Ah! poor sinner, 'tis vain to turn to the wise of this world to interpret the word of God. All the wisdom of the schools, however valuable in its place, is utterly at fault when God speaks. "Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" (1 Cor. i. 20). "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor. i. 25). "Cease ye from man" (Isa. ii. 22); for "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 13). Seeing the discomfiture of his servants, then was King Belshazzar *greatly troubled*, and his countenance was changed in him, and his lords were astonied (Dan. v. 9). And how

many like him have turned in vain to the help of men around them, when brought face to face with God and His word, only to sink into still deeper trouble of soul!

But there was one in the palace who shewed greater wisdom than the rest at this critical moment, and that was the queen. Apparently she was not present at the feast, but, "by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came into the banquet house; and the queen spake, and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed: *there is a man* in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father, light and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers; forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation."

And, beloved, reader, if your conscience is troubled by the word of God on account of your guilty and lost condition, and you are trembling at the thought of judgment to come, it is our joy to tell you too that *there is a Man* in whom heavenly light, perfect understanding, and divine

wisdom are found; a *Man of an excellent spirit* above all others, who can settle at once all your difficulties, dissolve all your doubts; yes, and *blot out all your sins*. It is *the Man Christ Jesus*, the Son of God, who died upon the cross, was buried in the grave, but is now risen, and exalted in the glory above. Now, let Jesus (so to speak) be called. Come face to face with Him. The wisest of men after the flesh cannot interpret to you the meaning of the Word of God, or give you the rest of conscience, and the peace of heart you want. But here is a Man that can do it all. Sooner or later you must have to do with Him; then why not now? "*This Man receiveth sinners.*" You are one; come to Him now, and He will receive you, and never, never cast you out (John vi. 37).

"Then was Daniel brought in before the king." And Belshazzar, having told him that which he had heard concerning him, promised him rich rewards if he could read the writing, and make known to him the interpretation. "Then Daniel answered and said before the king, Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation. O thou king, the most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him: whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive, and whom he would he set up, and



whom he would he put down. But when his heart was lifted up, and his mind hardened in pride, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him : and he was driven from the sons of men ; and his heart was made like the beasts, and his dwelling was with the wild asses : they fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven ; *till he knew that the most high God ruled in the kingdom of men, and that he appointeth over it whomsoever he will.* And thou his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, *though thou knewest all this* ; but hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven ; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou and thy lords, thy wives and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them ; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know : *and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified* " (Dan. v. 17-23).

Thus God brought this impious king face to face with His faithful servant and prophet, who boldly rebukes him for his sin, reminding him of God's ways with his grandfather Nebuchadnezzar, and of the judgment that had fallen upon him, &c., so that Belshazzar was without excuse. "And thou his son, O Belshazzar," said he, "hast not humbled thine heart, *though thou knewest all this.*" And again, "The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, *hast thou not glorified.*"

And again, dear reader, in the face of this solemn announcement, we appeal to you. If Belshazzar was without excuse, how about you? You who have God's open Word. You who have read it from your infancy, and are intimate both with His ways in judgment and in grace. You who have been brought up in this favoured land, where light and truth are disseminated broadcast. You who, unlike this poor idolater, boast, it may be, that you belong to a Christian country, and have been brought up in the Christian religion. *Have you humbled your heart*, you who know so much? *Have you glorified the God* in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all thy ways? How do you reply? Can you heartily say "Yes"? Or does it not all condemn you, and convict you of your shortcomings and sin in His sight? Be wise in time. You have to do with God,—"*the living God.*" Meet Him you must. You cannot say you have glorified Him. Oh, humble yourself then in His sight. Plead guilty at His bar. Confess your lost and hell-deserving condition, and there is mercy still awaiting you,—*mercy and boundless grace.*

As to Belshazzar, his hour was come. Judgment had gone forth from an insulted God. But for you, even though men spat in the face of His Son and crucified Him, grace is still reigning, and judgment is still withheld. But take heed how you trifle with His grace, lest His wrath should overtake you.

Next we read, "Then was the part of the hand sent from him; and this writing was written. And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: *Mene*; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. *Tekel*; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. *Peres*; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians" (Dan. v. 24-28).

Judgment had gone forth against earth's mightiest potentate. God's thoughts about him and his kingdom, his sins, and his judgment, are all pronounced in that short mysterious sentence of four words. The great Belshazzar, hitherto acting according to his own will, is now brought face to face with One far mightier than himself. The greatest of monarchs in his day, he has to learn that he is responsible to God. All he had he owed to Him; his position, his power, his glory, his kingdom, his wealth; but, like his predecessor, he glorified himself in it all. Growing bold in his forgetfulness of God, he insulted the Divine Majesty, and the stroke of richly merited judgment fell at last. The eye of God had followed guilty Belshazzar; He had numbered his kingdom, and its end had come. He who, weighed in human balances, was the glory of the Babylonian people, weighed in the balances of the sanctuary of God was found wanting. His death-knell is sounded; Belshazzar and his kingdom are about to come down with an awful crash, making manifest the

vanity of all human glory and greatness. His kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Belshazzar's last recorded act is to reward Daniel with gifts, whose paltry value he had learnt in the presence of God ; and in that same night the mighty king of the Chaldeans was slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom (Dan. v. 29-31).

Beloved reader, again we appeal to you, and beseech you to weigh these momentous events. History repeats itself. Tens of thousands are living without God, seeking their own ease, pleasure, and aggrandisement. The glory of God is treated as a thing of nought. Self is the predominant ruling principle that governs the natural heart of man. And not only so, but the precious holy things of God are dragged down in man's self-will, to suit his own tastes, and please his own senses. Who can deny that it is so, that compares the general state of Christendom with the Word of God? Man and his meddling are stamped more or less upon the whole thing. Ecclesiastical corruption increases and abounds. This will be moral Babylon in its last phase. Man may not bow down within this sphere to the gods of gold, silver, brass, iron, wood, and stone ; but how many bow in heart to these things themselves? How many hearts are practically worshipping those objects which make men rich?

And God has numbered the days of this evil, although it is not revealed to men. Christendom

has been weighed in the balances, and found wanting. Behold, the Judge standeth before the door, *ready to judge* (James v. 9; 1 Peter iv. 5). But judgment is His strange work, hence in long-suffering He lingers over Christendom and the world. Grace reigns through righteousness and abounds. Belshazzar was guilty, and judgment took its course. Christendom is guilty, but judgment is delayed, and grace flows. Sinner, beware, and bow now ere it be too late. Professor, beware, and see that you have something more than your profession. Judgment, deserved by men, has been borne by Christ, and is gone for ever for *every one that believeth*. God has provided a Saviour in the Son of His love. Once for all upon Calvary's cross He was judged on our behalf. God hath made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin (2 Cor. v. 21). Dare you pass by the cross, and risk the judgment of God? Where will you flee in the day of His wrath?

The Saviour who died, whose precious blood was shed, is in glory now. God has highly exalted the Man who glorified Him. *There is a Man*, even Jesus, presented as the object of faith to all, the Saviour of sinners. *Believe on Him and thou shalt be saved*, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we *must* be (Acts iv. 12). Sinner, professor, all have been weighed and found wanting. None but Christ could meet the claims of God. He *has* met them. God, glorified by His Son, offers free and full sal-

vation to all. Will you accept it? Without it judgment will surely overtake you. Come, then, to the Saviour now while you may. "To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). And again, "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). Be decided. Christ is all. To live without Him is to die without Him, and to perish eternally without Him. Accept Him, follow Him, and wait for Him, and *glory with Him shall be your eternal portion.*

E. H. C.



## GUILT MET BY GRACE.



This is a happy thing when guilt and grace meet one another; when a guilty sinner meets a gracious Saviour. The sure result is blessing. It is as true that He is gracious as that we are guilty,—guilty by practice and sinful by nature,—but true, likewise, that grace, on His part, answers to guilt on ours, as the healing balm the disease it cures. Grace balances and outweighs the guilt, and finds its delight in taking by surprise the soul that is trembling on account of sin, and fearing the blow of offended justice.

But the great thing is to feel your guilt—deeply—truly—adequately!

Of what possible value is the balm to him who feels not his disorder? The full soul loathes the honeycomb, and the proud heart despises salvation. The sick stomach rejects the food that fattens the healthy.

Have you felt your disorder? have you discovered that sin has thrown you into mortal sickness, from which neither yourself nor any other soul-doctor can possibly cure you?

A grand discovery that, *if made in time!* Appalling, if only *made in eternity.* Now, a balm is found; then, none! Now, a Saviour; then, a hopeless endless doom! Now, grace; then, a state of fixed and unalterable woe!

Make that discovery now! Let the light of the Word of God shine into your soul, and reveal to you, friend, the fact of your state. Instead of being pure, your heart is "deceitful,"—not good, but "desperately wicked." Instead of your works being right, they are either "bad" or "dead,"—morally bad and religiously dead; so that, in fact, you are but a sinner at best,—what at worst?

The truth is, friend, you are guilty,—and guilty before God; guilty, of sins innumerable, and responsible for every one of them! Terrible!

Now, I was thinking the other morning what a wonderful and suited Saviour we find in the blessed Lord Jesus, how full of grace He was, and how full of grace He is still. What He was, He is! We can sit at His feet, and learn the stories of His grace when He trod the earth all weary and

alone; we can place ourselves beside His cross, and witness the thief being wrenched from the lion's grip, and taken by Jesus to paradise; and we can go outside Damascus, and see converted, in his career of unparalleled evil, Saul of Tarsus, the chief sinner.

We enter the house of Simon the Pharisee, and look on his costly entertainment. We can detect the smile of self-satisfaction as he prides himself on having the Master for a guest. His house and his board are thrown open to the Teacher. All proper, but that smile suddenly gives place to the frown of disdain, as he beholds the hand of grace held out to forgive a woman of the city who was a sinner, who had, forsooth, defiled by her presence the sanctity of his self-righteous threshold! But this sinner—this notorious sinner—had for her Master what Simon had not. What confession of sin had Simon, what sense of his condition? None. She brought no beast of the forest nor cattle of the hill, no fowl of the mountain nor wild beast of the field, no costly oblation to cover the altar; but she came with tears, and sorrow, guilt, and sin, to call upon Him in this the day of her trouble, her repentance, and her salvation. She came with her enormous debt of five hundred pence, in the confession that she had nothing, absolutely nothing, to pay, thus placing herself at the mercy of her Creditor. And how did He act? Justice could fairly demand the punishment of this insolvent, but, when she had nothing to pay,



He frankly forgave her. He was at liberty to do so. His frank forgiveness answered the flood of her tears. His grace outweighed her guilt. Happy meeting!

Oh! that souls would but learn the relation between guilt on their part and grace on Christ's.

And so this poor woman passed away from Simon's house, her ear charmed by the Master's triple announcement: "Thy sins are forgiven;" "Thy faith hath saved thee;" "Go in peace."

He—the lowly Man of Sorrows—who yet had power on earth to forgive sins, displayed His saving grace to her.

Nor less, indeed, when on the cross. At His side hung the thief. He, too, feeling his guilt, gave expression to his repentance by rebuking his fellow. The fear of God had taken possession of his soul, he judged himself guilty; he turned to the Lord, he was met by perfect grace,—this blasphemous thief!—and was accordingly welcomed to paradise that very day.

You know the story! But what an illustration it is of the matchless grace of the blessed Lord! Grace changed the debtor's prison to liberty, and now, grace changes the thief's hell to heaven; grace made the infinite difference in both cases.

Again, outside Damascus the proud persecutor of Christ's people lies blinded by a ray from the glory, whence, too, he hears a voice convicting him of sin,—yes, sin the darkest, deepest, that man had yet committed. There lay this religious bigot, wedded, as he had been, to a system, divinely

founded indeed, but having now only the shell, the external form, the lifeless carcase, and, yet, only the more formally zealous, so as to compensate for the loss of power,—there lay the champion of Judaism listening, perforce, to a voice from heaven, which called him by name and detailed his guilt. Bewildered, he replied, “Who art thou, Lord?” And he was answered by lips of love, saying, “I am Jesus,”—lips that framed the word of balm and of salvation to meet the need of this guilty one. “I am the Saviour, though now in glory,—unchanged and unchanging,—my name is Jesus.” All well. Perfectly intelligible. Guilt met by grace, and so Paul can say, “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief” (1 Tim. i. 15). He understood the plan that love devised, the work that Christ accomplished, and the salvation that grace presented. And so Christ is in glory what He was on Calvary, and on Calvary what He was on earth, and *vice versa*.

If you know what He was, you know what He is.

Do you know Him? If not, “acquaint thyself now with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee” (Job xxii. 21). It is just because people don’t know Him that they distrust Him, and remain in sin, guilt, misery, and eventually find themselves excluded from Him for ever, where grace can never come, nor the rays of mercy shine.

Be wise, dear reader, and “acquaint now thyself with him.”

J. W. S.

"I CANNOT BEAR THAT GREAT LIGHT."



LITTLE A—— was not yet five years old, but young as she was the depravity of the heart of man could be traced in her. Man's desire is to get away from God, and keep away from Him. So in the case of little A——, she could not bear the thought of the Lord's coming, and when it was mentioned to her, she would cry and say, "I would rather stay here!" and would not leave this and that thing which she valued. She was content with things down here; and, more than that, she was content with *herself*. Why was this? Because the light had not shone in so as to expose everything in true colours to her. She would not admit that she was a sinner; she did not think she needed a Saviour. She knew Christ died for *sinners*, but was not conscious of her need. Those who loved her tried to make her see her unfitness for God's presence, and that sooner or later she must be there exposed to the all-seeing eye of God, who is light.

The Lord in His mercy brought this dear little one into the light of His presence at an early age, and she discovered that she could not as she was be there in peace. She had gone to bed and to sleep, but soon woke up with the thought that the Lord was coming, and was in the greatest distress and anxiety of mind. Her father and mother

went to her, thankful that she had been aroused to a sense of her state before God, manifested by her expression, "I cannot bear that great light." Those were her words in the midst of her sobs. The light which is "above the brightness of the sun" had shone on her, exposing everything that could pass well enough in the darkness, and even appear nice to her. But God loved her, and was about to make Himself known to her in His character of *love* too. Her parents spoke of the One she could not bear to see as their best Friend,—the One who loved them, and gave Himself for them. He had come down here to bleed on the cross, and die for sinners such as they were. They told her that He loved her too, and wanted her to be in His presence in perfect peace; and in virtue of what Christ had done on the cross of Calvary, she could be perfectly happy there. She was satisfied. She realised that the One who is "light, and in him is no darkness at all," loved her, and she had peace. Soon after she went to sleep,—no fear or dread; the perfect love of God had cast it out.

About eighteen months has passed since, but there is no cloud and no fear in the presence of "that great light." She can, instead, shew forth the praises of Him who has called her out of darkness into *His marvellous* light, and speak of the Lord's coming with peace and joy. S. G.

## THOUGHT-READING AND MIND-REVEALING.



RECENTLY a gentleman called upon me for some information from "Bradshaw's Railway Guide," and, when he had obtained it, introduced himself as a great "thought-reader" and "mind-revealer." He told me he could, blindfolded, read anybody's thoughts and reveal their mind, under certain circumstances, and had that day successfully read the thoughts of several ladies where he was staying.

"Can you tell me, sir, what I am thinking about just now?" I asked.

"No," he replied, "I cannot do that straight off, but must have a medium, and you would have to think of some object quite unknown to me, which I should, when blindfolded, lead you exactly to."

"Where," I inquired, "do you get your power? Is it from Satan, who wants you to be miserable in hell for ever? or is it from God, who wishes you to be happy in heaven throughout all eternity?"

"No," he said, "not *that*; but I have absolutely to ignore myself, and to become *as the person is* whose thoughts I am reading at the time, and think precisely as that person thinks!"

"But, look here," I remarked, "*I* know a Person who can read all the thoughts of everybody straight

off, without the slightest difficulty, under *every* circumstance, at any time, and who, in doing so, has not to change Himself in the least!"

"Indeed," said he, with astonishment, "is he alive?"

"Yes," I added, "He is indeed *alive*, and is my best Friend!"

"Really," observed the gentleman, "but that is *very extraordinary!*"

"Yes," I further added, "He *was* once dead, but He is now alive again; and He has said, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death.' Of Him it is also written, 'Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him'" (Rev. i. 7, 18).

"Oh, I see," he remarked, "and I think I know now whom you mean; but excuse me, I must be going, as my friends will be waiting for me."

"Just wait a minute, please," I requested. "Do you know that *that* blessed Person, who is now sitting on His Father's throne in glory, is reading your thoughts and mine at this very moment, that He has all men's hearts in His hand, and that He knows the thoughts and intents of the heart? Stop! do not go just for one moment, I beseech you, as I wish to tell you, sir, what I had on my mind just now when I asked you to reveal it. I had two scriptures, which are these,—'*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God;*' and, '*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*' Do you believe these scriptures?"

"Well," he answered, "I think I do; but I *must* now really go!"

"Well," I finally added, as he was leaving, "that Person I speak of knows not only your thoughts and mine at this very moment, but He knows whether we are *real*, and mean what we say."

The results of such an interview as this, my reader, we leave with God, who alone, in this day of His salvation, reads thoughts, reveals minds, searches hearts, and makes bare consciences for BLESSING; but who will, ere long, bring every thought into judgment, having said, "Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts" (1 Cor. iv. 5).

One man professes to reveal the thoughts of another. Man himself will not always disclose his own thoughts, and I believe the devil never makes known his thoughts to any one, as he always works behind false colours to deceive. But what a marvel of marvels it is that God, who is light, as well as love, has been pleased so fully to make known His thoughts to poor fallen man, for His own glory and our souls' eternal blessing! What so sadly hinders people from being saved, is that they are guided by THEIR OWN THOUGHTS about themselves, and about God, instead of by GOD'S THOUGHTS. They think God is not so good as He says He is, and that they are not so bad as God says they are. The last thing a person is willing to do, is to give

up his preconceived thoughts and take God at His word, pure and simple. A most striking exemplification of this is to be seen in "Naaman the Syrian," who was a *leper*. God's thoughts toward Naaman, by his prophet Elisha, were, "Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean" (2 Kings v. 10). Could anything have been more simple? Impossible! But Naaman had his own opinion about the matter, and went away in a rage, and unblessed, as so very many now do from the truth of God. Naaman said, "Behold, I THOUGHT, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, *better* than all the waters of Israel?" (vers. 11, 12.)

Naaman's thoughts led him away from blessing. He *must* be connected with Jordan, the *figure of death*, to get the blessing. And note, when he gave up his own hindering and obstructing thoughts, went DOWN, and dipped himself seven times in *Jordan*, according to the saying of *the man of God*, his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean (verse 14). If this captain of the host of the king of Syria, mighty man of valour, so great with his master, and honourable, had not given up his *own thoughts*, he must have died a leper. It is as true to-day, friend. Are not people saying? (and they *think* it first!) "Oh, I am as good as my neighbour; I am doing my best; I



say my prayers, pay my way, feed the poor, have my name well up on the subscription list, go very regularly indeed to the means of grace, and hope to get to heaven at last, having as good a chance as anybody else." But God says, "*Not* by works of righteousness which *we* have done" (Titus iii. 5); "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. lxiv. 6); "By grace are ye saved through faith" (Eph. ii. 8); "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47).

For leprous souls—as all are by nature—there is no approach to a holy God apart from the atoning death of our Lord Jesus Christ, who died the just for the unjust to bring us unto God,—*i.e.*, those who, as leprous sinners, receive Him as their Saviour. Have *you*, reader, been thus brought nigh to God?

Just look at the case of Belshazzar for one moment. What caused that mighty king's thoughts to trouble him, and make his knees smite one against another? It was that *God's thoughts* were being revealed to him, which were these, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." And what followed? "In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain" (Dan. v. 27, 30).

Were you, dear reader, now to be weighed up in *God's* balances, what would the result be? Just this,—if without Christ, you would sink into hell; but if you possessed that blessed Saviour, you would rise to where He is.

Take friendly warning, dear unsaved soul, I beseech you, for God may soon have to say to you,

"Thou fool, this night *thy* soul shall be required of *thee*" (Luke xii. 20).

Before laying down this paper will you read one or two more things God says about "thoughts"?—"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that *every imagination of the thoughts of his heart* was only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5). "The thought of foolishness is sin" (Prov. xxiv. 9). "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity" (Psa. xciv. 11). "God is not in all his thoughts" (Psa. x. 4). "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man HIS THOUGHTS: and LET HIM RETURN UNTO THE LORD, AND HE WILL HAVE MERCY UPON HIM; AND TO OUR GOD, FOR HE WILL ABUNDANTLY PARDON. For my thoughts are *not* your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 6-9).

Paul said of his unconverted days, "I verily *thought with* myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus Christ. Which things I also did" (Acts xxvi. 9, 10). How entirely opposite are God's thoughts towards man: "I know the *thoughts* that I *think* towards you, saith the Lord, *thoughts of peace*, and not of evil, to give you an end and expectation" (Jer. xxix. 11).

What thoughts have you, friend? Your own, or God's? Which?

J. N.

## THE STORY OF A SINNER'S CONVERSION.

---



HERE is something intensely interesting in the story of the conversion, and eternal salvation of an immortal soul, as there is also in the blessed way in which God deals with a soul, and leads it on until it knows Jesus—Jehovah-Saviour—and can say, “He is mine, and I am his.”

The story related in John iv. is of such a character, told as it is in touching simplicity, and revealing at the same time the perfect wisdom and the perfect grace of the Good Shepherd, in His seeking, and finding, and saving the lost sheep.

Jesus leaves Judea to go to Galilee, and must needs go through Samaria. He comes to a city of Samaria called Sychar. “Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.”

It was a wonderful sight that. Jesus was God manifest in flesh, the incarnate Word, the Creator and upholder of the universe; and yet He is there a man, tired, hungry, and thirsty. He has pushed on to that point, His disciples have gone away into the city to buy meat, and He is left alone. And why? He wants to have a meeting with a poor sinner; He wants to be alone with her; He desires

to reveal Himself as Messiah and salvation to her soul. He has chosen this very hour,—the sixth hour,—so that uninterruptedly He might converse with her, and not cease until she leaves her “water-pot,” and goes to the men of the city and says, “Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”

She comes to the well; she is alone; shame prevents her waiting until the cool of the evening when the maidens come to draw water; and in her face can be seen the expression of dissatisfaction and disappointment, for sin never satisfies, but always disappoints,—it leaves an aching void in the heart.

She comes to the well. Jesus is there before her; He always is before the sinner who seeks Him. God sought Adam, and so it has been ever since. Jesus begins with the woman; it always is the case, God is the beginner of any work in our souls. God ever seeks the sinner; reader, He is after you, but to save you from eternal woe.

“Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.” But instead of giving Him to drink, she allows her old Samaritan prejudices to hinder her doing so. Man by nature has nothing for God, and in his heart there is no disposition towards Him. But if the poor woman will give Jesus no water, He will give her some. “If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.” If prejudice

hindered her from giving, love divine prompted Him to speak to her of what she so much stood in need of,—“the gift of God,” and “living water.” He revealed to her the fact that God was a giving God, and that He gave “living water,” that quenched the soul’s thirst for ever.

But she does not understand the Good Shepherd yet; she is still a stranger to the language of grace, and is still occupied with her “water-pot” and the water of “Jacob’s well.”

“Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Wonderful words! shewing as they do the inability of all that the world can offer to quench the thirst of the soul, or meet the need and cravings of the heart. “Thirst again,” can be written over all the pleasures and pursuits of earth. Never was man satisfied with them, not even Solomon. But God “gives” something that quenches the thirst of the soul for ever, and connects the heart with the great reservoir of blessing above; it “shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

Beloved reader, do you thirst in your soul? If so, God speaks to you of a gift, and that gift is “living water,” which once drunk will slake your thirst for eternity, and fill your heart with happi-

ness and praise to God. Oh, drink of this water of life! "Stoop down, and drink and live." "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii.).

But marvellous is the ignorance of the poor woman. Man cannot rise higher than himself. Jesus has piped unto her the sweet notes of grace, and she has not danced. She still is occupied with Jacob's well, and her natural thirst. "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw."

What was now to be done? Her conscience must be awakened, the arrow of conviction must dart in there, her whole life must come up and pass in review before her. "Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither."

Dear reader, conscience-work is solemn. To be consciously in the presence of One who knows all about us is a solemn thing; but if He brings us there, convicts us, lays all bare, passes all in review before us, it is that we might know the blood that cleanses, and the grace that saves.

The woman said, "I have no husband." Jesus said unto her, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: for thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." All is out now, the whole of her filthy life; it is seen in the light of His presence, who is light. She owns Jesus as a prophet; that is, one who spoke on God's part, and revealed His mind. She now felt that she had to say to

One who was speaking to her God's thoughts about herself, and she stands a convicted sinner in His presence.

Oh, my reader, have you ever stood a convicted sinner in the presence of an infinitely holy God? If so, you know somewhat of the feelings of this poor woman's soul at this moment.

She now speaks of worshipping. Even a harlot can talk about religion and worship. But, unsaved sinners, be they harlots or church members, cannot worship God, nor live religious. They are alike away from God, all alike needing salvation. Then the Saviour speaks, "Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."

Salvation! mark, my reader, that word *salvation*. Do you know salvation? Are you saved? Are you delivered from the wrath to come? If not, you are away from God; there never has been a note of praise ascending up from your heart to God; for an unsaved sinner cannot worship; he is in danger of the wrath to come. What you need is salvation, salvation for your soul, salvation from your lost estate, salvation from the power of Satan, salvation from an eternal hell. Do not pretend to be a *worshipper* before you are *saved*. Reverse the order; be saved first, and then worship with your whole being.

Mark now what follows. The woman says, "I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things."

What is the answer ? The answer brought that Christ distinctly before her. The eyes of all, from Adam down, had been taught to look for that coming One, the seed of the woman, the Messiah, the Christ of God. Jesus saith unto her, "*I that speak unto thee am he.*"

It was enough. God's gift was before her, and she received Him. The living water was there, and she drank and lived. The Saviour of sinners had revealed Himself to her, she believed and was saved. The Messiah, the Christ of God, had come, and without a question she accepted Him. "He came to his own [the Jews], and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name" (John i. 11, 12).

Who can tell the blessedness of that hour, when that poor harlot-sinner emerged from darkness to light,—passed from death unto life, and from a state of prejudice and profound ignorance to the knowledge of the Christ of God as the Saviour of her soul? She was saved! Wondrous word, but true! Grace divine had reached her through the blessed Saviour, and saved her. She stood on earth, beneath the eye of God, and before men, *not merely a reclaimed harlot, BUT A SAVED SINNER*, a monument of divine mercy, a trophy of God's grace.

Can she be silent? Ah, no; her heart was full of her new-found joy, light divine illumines her soul, her lips must speak the praise of the One who had saved her.



She leaves "her water-pot," and goes into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Her lips confessed what her heart possessed.

Mark the effect. "Then they went out of the city, and came unto him." "Many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did." "They besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

Thus the poor woman was saved, and many of her companions in sin. What can not the grace of God do?


Beloved reader, can you say in the light of eternity, "*I have heard him myself, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world?*" If so, let your lips and life testify what your heart possesses.

"Sweet was the hour, O Lord, to Thee,  
At Sychar's lonely well,  
When a poor outcast heard Thee there  
Thy great salvation tell.

There Jacob's erring daughter found  
Those streams unknown before,  
The water-brooks of life that make  
The weary thirst no more."

## “HE DIED FOR ME ON THE TREE.”

---

E died for me on the tree.” These were the precious words that fell from the lips of an old woman over ninety years of age. She lived in the County Donegal, and during a recent visit to that portion of the North of Ireland I first spoke to her on the subject of her soul’s eternal destiny.

A dear Christian friend, who lived in the neighbourhood, suggested some visiting before the evening preaching, and to this I gladly assented.

Our path led to a mountain which commanded a magnificent view of Lough Swilly reposing in unruffled serenity under the beams of the noonday sun. Well-cultivated fields of waving corn stretched far away in the luxuriant valleys beneath, and the entrancing beauty of the scene was such as to cause one’s heart to praise the goodness of Him who sendeth “rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.”

After a delightful walk we halted opposite a structure, built of stones loosely piled together. Upon entering the solitary room of the habitation, we found ourselves almost completely excluded from the light of day. There were no windows to admit the light, and it was a considerable time before I was able to discern, stretched upon a bed, the

old woman we had come to see. The position of the bed was readily ascertained by the sounds of pain and suffering that escaped her lips, but at no time during our stay were her features distinctly visible. Sitting near the bed was her idiot son, a man in middle life. It was reported he wished her dead, and fears were entertained that he harboured the idea of strangling her, under the supposition that she had lived too long and was a burden to the neighbours. I found her hearing defective, and had to repeat in loud tones my question as to what she rested on for eternal safety. When my words were understood by her, the sounds of pain ceased for a time, and, gathering her failing strength, she said clearly, “The precious blood of Christ;” and then with a vehemence that carried conviction to our hearts she said, “He died for me on the tree.” Her painful breathing continued, only broken again by occasional repetition of precious passages from the Word of God.

How evident it was that heavenly light had shone into her soul, although material darkness reigned in her desolate home.

We looked on one another for some time in silence, pondering the wonderful ways of Him who hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. What a change of circumstances, beloved reader, from the depths of human poverty to the heights of exaltation in the presence of Him who died for her on the tree.

And such will be the eternal portion of one thus

simply resting her soul upon the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Reader, should death enter your chamber this night, and still the pulsations of life, would you enter the blackness of darkness for ever, or into the light of His presence? Can you now say, My sins are under the blood? Or are you, amid all the priceless privileges that surround you, still neglecting the great salvation provided by Him who gave His beloved Son to die on the tree for sinners such as you? The King of Terrors may assert his claim on thee this night, and usher thee laden with all thy sins into an eternity of untold and awful despair. And doubtless the most bitter ingredient in thy cup of sorrow there will be the conviction of the goodness of God that would have led thee to repentance during thy short sojourn on earth.

He who has raised from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, the One who died on the tree, still waits in long-suffering grace; and "if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved.*"

"Hark! hark! hark!

'Tis a message of mercy free;  
O sinner, thy many sins were dark,  
But Jesus hath died for thee.

Haste! haste! haste!

Delay not from death to flee.  
Oh, wherefore the moments in madness waste  
When Jesus is calling thee?"

W. M. B.

## NONE BUT CHRIST.



CHRIST is the great theme of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, and the only Saviour for sinners. "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the *man Christ Jesus*; who gave himself a ransom for all (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). Every writer points to Him, and to Him alone. "I, even I, am the Lord; and besides me there is no saviour" (Isa. xliii. 11). No sooner had sin entered, than we read in the first book of Moses that the Lord God tells of One who should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15). Abel's firstlings of the flock; Noah's ark; Abraham's son Isaac, bound on the altar on Mount Moriah; Joseph rejected and exalted—all point to *Christ*. The blood of the paschal lamb; the deliverance of Israel at the Red Sea; the sacrifices under the law,—all tell of *the death of Christ*.

The writings of the psalmist David abound with allusions to the coming Saviour. Prophet after prophet tells of the sufferings, and sounds forth the glories, of the great Redeemer. The Old Testament abounds with type, figure, shadow, illustration, pointing to Christ. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John alike present Jesus, the only Saviour, in the varied glories of His Person, and tell of His finished work upon the cross. All the apostles proclaim

the glad tidings of salvation through and in this same Blessed One, once crucified, dead, and buried, but now risen and glorified in the heaven above. Their writings testify to the perfection of His sacrifice; that His finished work is the alone ground of salvation; and that *He is all* (Col. iii. 11).

Above all, the Father saith from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son; hear him" (Luke ix. 35). The Son Himself said on earth, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John xiv. 6). The Holy Ghost witnesseth to His exaltation in glory as a Prince and a Saviour (Acts v. 31, 32).

Wherever we turn, in short, in the Word of God, both His testimony and that of His servants is to the Person and work of His Son, *the only Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*.

Beloved reader, what think you of Him? Strange that so many thousands should seek salvation by so many plans of their own or their fellows' devising, or, at most, add Christ as a kind of makeweight to their own righteousness, in the face of so full a testimony from God's own Word.

The writer was travelling in the train when a respectable-looking woman began telling another that she was on board a certain steamer when a sailing vessel collided with it, and that her master, mistress, and three children, besides a large number of others, were drowned, and added that she herself sank twice beneath the surface of the waters, when a man caught hold of her and saved her life. When asked what her title was to heaven, if she

had been drowned, she replied, with the greatest self-confidence, "*I never did any one any harm, and I often go to church.*" It seems almost incredible that there should be such sheer ignorance of the way of salvation in this land of Bibles. And what must we think of the teaching of the church that she attended that she had not learnt better than that! He replied by telling her that she *must* have another and a better title, and endeavoured to shew her God's simple and blessed way of salvation, as illustrated in her own preservation from drowning; that just as she was saved from death by the strong grasp of the man who, at the risk of his own life, drew her out of the water, so the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had descended to the depths of Calvary's cross, not only at the risk, but at the cost, of His own life, to save poor, perishing sinners, and that by simply trusting Him, He would *save her*.

Perishing in a watery grave, and unable to rescue herself, this woman needed a saviour. And perishing in your sins, you, too, need a Saviour, sinner, and *Christ Jesus is the Saviour you need*. "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, *the man Christ Jesus*; who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). Have you believed on Him? *God points you to Christ*. Moses, the Psalmist, the prophets, point you to Christ. The evangelists point you to Christ. The apostles point you to Christ. We point you to Christ. Christ Himself says, "Come unto me" (Matt. xi. 28).

Eternity is at your door. Death stares you in the face ; judgment rests upon you ; the world lying in the wicked one is all around you. Sin is *on* you, has dominion *over* you, and *comes* from you. A lifelong's sins in thought, word, and deed are laid to your charge. Your own heart condemns you ; your own conscience accuses you. And *you have to meet God*. Well, what are you going to do ? If you meet Him a sinner in your sins, you will perish everlastingly. If you seek to remedy the past by reformation in the present, you will prove no better than a whited sepulchre. But if you cease from your own vain efforts to better the flesh, and believe on God's dear Son, you *shall be saved* (Acts xvi. 31). "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). It is Christ, dear soul, that you need ; yes, Christ, and Christ alone.

And not only does every writer in Scripture point to Christ, but every sinner that has received blessing, or ever will, receives it through Him. From Genesis to Malachi, many believed the promises of God concerning the Blessed One to come, and were accounted righteous by God. The New Testament gives us abundant instances of faith in Him. Simeon took Him in his arms as a babe, and rejoiced in God's salvation. Anna spake of Him to all who looked for redemption in Jerusalem. Peter confessed Him as the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. xvi. 16). The dying thief confessed Him as Lord. Thomas says, "My Lord



and my God." Paul preached Him as the Son of God. And we might bring forward numberless instances of blessing and salvation through His peerless name. Never was self-judged sinner refused by Him. "*Any man,*" "*whosoever,*" were the precious words which fell from the lips of the Son of the Blessed, inviting all to come with confidence to Him. And whether the soul or the body, He healed, and healed perfectly, *all who came*. Will you then come to Him?

What is it that keeps you back? Do you still think you must be better first? If you tarry till you are better, you will never come at all. Do you think you are too great a sinner? Saul of Tarsus was the chief, and Christ saved him. Do you think this salvation is too cheap? Too cheap! It cost the life of God's Beloved Son. That is why it is costless to you. Do you think the plan too easy? Too easy! Why, if a single difficulty had been left, all must have missed it altogether. Do you think it seems too good to be true? That just brings out the marvellous grace of the blessed Saviour-God, whose salvation it is. It is provided just to suit the need of sinners, who richly deserve the lake of fire. Christ did the whole work, and God presents Christ to you. Receive Him by faith, and you are saved; die without Him, and you will be damned.

And in this blessed Christ of God every precious treasure is to be found. We may compare Him to a golden casket filled with precious jewels. In pos-

sessing the casket, you possess the contents. Having Christ, we have every spiritual blessing (Eph. i. 3). Everything a soul can possibly need is to be found in Him. Do you want forgiveness? In Him we have forgiveness (Eph. i. 7). Do you want to be justified? We are justified in Him. Do you want redemption? In Him we have redemption. Do you want wisdom? Christ "of God is made unto us wisdom." Do you want righteousness? Christ of God is made unto us "righteousness." Do you want sanctification? Christ of God is made unto us "sanctification" (1 Cor. i. 30). Believe on Him, and all these blessings are yours,—*now*, and *for ever*.

"'Tis a vast exhaustless treasure,  
Saviour, we possess in Thee."

The work of Christ is a finished work, and a perfect work. By it God has been glorified, His righteousness vindicated, the claims of His holiness maintained and satisfied, the curse of the law borne, the question of sin settled, death's sting removed, the victory of the grave overcome. A living, risen, ascended, glorified, seated, triumphant, coming Saviour, is one witness thereto in heaven; and the Holy Ghost, as the present, personal, abiding Paraclete, another witness on earth. Every lost sinner who believes on the glorified One is henceforth and for ever viewed of God in all the infinite value and efficacy of the finished work, and all the favour of that blessed, glorified Man, *the Beloved* (Eph. i. 6). The whole blessing is yours, reader, when you

believe. From one end to the other of His Word God presents His Son as the object of faith in a thousand different ways, using the simplest of language and figures, that sinners may be blessed. For instance, we read,—

“*Look unto me, and be ye saved*” (Isa. xlv. 22).

“*Hear, and your soul shall live*” (Isa. lv. 3).

“*Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest*” (Matt. xi. 28).

“*Take the water of life freely*” (Rev. xxii. 17).

And yet, in the very face of these simplest presentations of the Gospel, man raises a thousand difficulties of his own devising, instead of taking the Lord simply at His word. How are *you* treating Him? On all hands we meet with those who are talking of *their* religion, *their* righteousness, *their* works, *their* frames, *their* feelings, *their* experience; *but where is Christ in all these?* The religion of thousands begins, continues, and ends with themselves. Like the Pharisees and the elder son in the Gospel of Luke, it is *I, I, I, I, I, I*, from beginning to end,—morning, noon, and night. Now Christianity is just the displacing of *I* by *Christ*. As long as you are occupied with *self*, you will assuredly lack peace and liberty of soul; but the moment you look to Christ, and away from self, peace with God is yours, and *you are saved*. Therefore we would preach Christ unto you, the Son of the living God, the only Saviour; for, “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we *must be saved*” (Acts iv. 12). E. H. C.

## “WINE FOR NOTHING.”

---



FEW months ago, I overheard a conversation between two persons, one of whom was telling the other of something he had read in the newspaper that day how that in a certain place—the name of which I do not remember—an exciting accident had happened.

Early one morning a stream of dark liquid was seen issuing from a gateway that led to a wine merchant's storehouse. Evidently a barrel had burst, for the precious fluid was flowing freely. Very soon a crowd collected, and many people stooped down and drank of the wine as it flowed down the gutter.

I did not pay much attention to what was said, until I heard the words “stooped down,” and immediately the following lines flashed across my mind—

“I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
Behold, I *freely* give  
The living water ; thirsty one,  
*Stoop* down and drink and live ;”

and I thought of that precious stream, which in this day of grace is flowing world-wide, and of which any one, who *stoops* down, may drink and be satisfied. No one would have been able to drink of that stream of wine unless he had stooped down,

and so there *must* be a stooping on the part of the proud sinner ere he can drink of the water of life.

"Ho, *every one* that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath *no money*; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1).

"Jesus stood and cried, saying, If *any man* thirst, let him *come unto me* and drink" (John vii. 37).

There may have been some who could not get near enough to drink of man's unexpected stream of wine; but God's is for *every one* that *thirsteth*. Are you thirsty, dear reader? if so, *stoop* down and you will not be sent away unsatisfied. But ere you and I could drink of this stream the Rock had to be smitten. "That Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. x. 4). "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities, the chastisement of *our* peace was upon him; and with his stripes *we* are healed" (Isa. liii. 5).

Many come to the waters who want to get the wine and milk without stooping, that is, they will not own their guilty, lost condition, and so are sent empty away.

Of course none would stoop to partake of that supply, who had their own wine cellars stocked; it was those who had no cellars, and who could not afford to *buy* wine, who most gladly availed themselves of the unexpected treat; and so poor thirsty souls, who know they have nothing worth offering in exchange for God's salvation, gladly accept it as

a free gift, which it is. "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. vi. 23).

"Life is found *alone* in Jesus,  
Only there 'tis offered thee,  
Offered without price or money,  
'Tis the gift of God sent free ;  
Take salvation,  
Take it *now* and happy be."

It is an "unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. ix. 15),—the gift of a Royal giver. Who would think of insulting the Queen, by offering her a bundle of rags in exchange for a royal gift? And yet souls dare to come to God with their filthy rags of self-righteousness (Isa. lxiv. 6).

Some bring their ineffectual efforts to keep the law,—ineffectual because man is incapable of keeping it. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" (Rom. vii. 12), but man is so utterly bad that it is impossible for him to meet its requirements. The standard is perfect, and therefore it is too high for man who is sunk in sin.

The law seems to me like the stars, high above our heads; the Gospel like the daisies, low down within the grasp of the smallest child. We read in the Word that "Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them (the disciples), and said, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. *Whosoever*, therefore,

shall *humble* himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven " (Matt. xviii. 2-4).

"The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ " (John i. 17).

Grace is in direct contrast to the law ; the law is, as I said before, too high for man, but grace meets him in his need, where he is, and he gets the blessing by stooping down, owning that his condition is what God in His Word declares it to be. Rom. iii. 9-19 is the state of every child of Adam, whether he or she believes it or not ; and when such an one says Amen to the truth, and justifies God, God justifies him. Believing God is justifying Him, "Wisdom is justified of all her children " (Luke vii. 35). "All the people that *heard* and the publicans (sinners) justified God, . . . but the Pharisees and lawyers (self-righteous) rejected the counsel of God against themselves " (Luke vii. 29, 30).

Dear reader, how is it with you ? have you *heard* His word and *believed*, and so justified God, or are you still rejecting to your own destruction ?

Numbers in that crowd stooped down for the wine which satisfies not, and thought it worth stooping for—will not *you* stoop for that which gives eternal satisfaction and joy ?

The publican (Luke xviii.) justified God, owned his sinnership not only with his lips, but in his heart, and went down to his house justified. "*Every one* that exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he

that *humbleth* himself *shall* be exalted" (Luke xviii. 14), is the Lord's comment.

One word of warning, ere I close,—one word of entreaty.

Remember how the rich man lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeing Abraham *afar* off begged him to send Lazarus to dip his finger in water to cool his tongue (Luke xvi. 23, 24).

Sinner, be warned in time. *Stoop now* and drink rather than suffer such intolerable anguish, when the greatest pang, surely, will be the thought that the water of life was offered to *you* and you refused it.

The Lord Jesus is still offering this water of life; listen! "I will *give* unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life *freely*" (Rev. xxi. 6). "*Whosoever* will, let him *take* of the water of life *freely*" (Rev. xxii. 17).  
E. L. C.

---

God is now acting in pure grace, *i.e.*, irrespective of what man is. Grace is love—the nature of God—come into an evil world to work for the blessing of the sinner. It is love under a new colour, acting in an entirely new way. Moses could proclaim law, Jesus alone could reveal grace, as He was full of it—was in fact grace personified. How blessed to confide in His grace! Nothing delights His heart more than to be trusted out and out.

W. T. P. W.



"JESUS OF NAZARETH PASSETH BY."\*

"And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples, and a great multitude of people, blind Bartimæus, the son of Timæus, sat by the highway side begging. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me. And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, Thou son of David, have mercy on me. And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I may receive my sight. And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. ["Saved thee"—*margin.*] And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."—MARK x. 46-52.



WE frequently find in the Gospels incidents which illustrate very fully the way in which a sinner lays hold of Christ. In this scripture we have a lovely picture of a seeking Saviour, and a seeking sinner, and how they met. In the Gospel of St Luke we find the text that is at the head of this paper, which was (as it were) preached to this blind man. A very short sermon! "Jesus of Nazareth passeth by!" And Jesus never passed that way again! Bartimæus

---

\* The interest with which many will read this article will be enhanced by the knowledge that the beloved writer thereof will write no more. On January 2nd, after a short but painful illness, he peacefully passed away to the eternal presence of his well-loved, and faithfully served Master. Unserved reader, and Christians too, let me urge you to well weigh his words.—ED.

had come to the turning point of his history ; and had that day passed, he never would have had his eyes opened, for Jesus was then on His way to the cross. And the difference between the Lord's journey on that day and now, is this,—He was on His way to the cross, where He accomplished the work of redemption, shed His precious blood, died, and rose again ; and, having finished His work there, He is now on His way to the judgment, and the glory !

It is because of that judgment, which must come, that I would now urge on every unsaved soul who may read these words, that which we find so blessedly characterised Bartimæus,—that is, *promptness* !—the deep necessity of seizing the present moment, for it may never come again. How often moments like this, in the history of souls, are slighted, and they never return. “I shall have plenty of opportunities ; people do not often die as young as I am.” Such like excuses are pleaded by those who would procrastinate. But I would warn you. There is one sin more terrible than any in a man's history, and that is his *last* ! Souls float on easily down the stream of time ; they go quietly out of the world, perhaps without any fear of hell. Some are exercised, and for a time are in an agony of conviction ; but the many slight the warning, the fond entreaty of the father, the mother, or the friend, as to the solemn eternity which lies beyond time ; and it comes to a moment when God says, as it were, “Let him alone !” and

his heart is hardened. It is a solemn, deeply solemn thing, this hardening of the heart. And the more solemn when we think of *God* doing so. We have an example of this in Pharaoh. God warned him in nine solemn judgments, and then, as it were, gave him once chance more. Pharaoh did not yield his will to God; he hardened his heart against God, and God hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he went to destruction.

In the face of such a fact, I would press on every sinner the need of promptness in the matter of salvation. The Lord is long-suffering; He *waits* on His road to judgment, but at any moment the day of grace may have closed.

We find it more difficult now than in the earlier days of the Church to press the fact that at any moment the Lord Jesus may come. The enemy of Christ and His people has succeeded in almost blotting out the hope of the Lord's coming, a truth held by all at the first. The Word of God describes it as—"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the trumpet shall sound." So sudden will be the coming of the Lord for His own, and the transit of the blood-bought throng from earth, and the grave, to the Father's house on high!

No figure of speech could give a more true idea of the sudden,—to many, alas!—unexpected action, and yet Satan has almost succeeded in blotting out this truth. But for this also Scripture has prepared us. In Matt. xxiv. 48, we read, "The evil servant shall say in *his heart*, My lord delayeth his coming."

From his *heart* comes the thought. He is not living as he would like his Lord to find him; his heart is set on earthly things, and he does not desire his Lord to come. To cover what his heart says, he settles that there is much to be done before the Lord can return,—the Jews have to be converted, and such like things. Treat all such theories as the voice of the evil servant. *Nothing* has to happen before Christ may come *for* His own; and with that event the day of grace closes for all who have listened to the message of salvation! The denial of this truth, which should have such power in the conscience of the sinner, is immense loss; but I press earnestly and affectionately on you, and say, “Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.” Will *you* allow Him to pass in the day of grace, and meet Him in the day of judgment for the first time,—like Pharaoh?

We find three kinds of blindness in the world. There is physical blindness, like that of Bartimæus. His sightless eyeballs never gazed upon the light of the sun, as we may suppose. Then there is another kind of blindness,—that of the mind, of which Scripture also speaks,—soul blindness, which is of the god of this world. “The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not [we read], lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Cor. iv. 4). Such see no beauty in Jesus to desire Him. Fatal blindness, unless removed; the blinded one in such a case is “lost!”

Then there is mental blindness,—as we say, That man is an idiot.

Bartimæus was blind, but “he *heard* that Jesus passed by.” God’s resource for the blind sinner is the “hearing of faith.” This was the avenue to his soul. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. x. 17). Remark the little word “when” (v. 47). Bartimæus might have said :—Here is a golden opportunity; I will get me a harvest to-day from this multitude. Perhaps crowds like this were not often to be seen on the roadside between Jericho and Jerusalem. The great multitude were following Jesus that day; He had many followers, but few friends. Bartimæus might reason thus:—I will speak to Jesus some other time, and gather the silver coins to-day; such an opportunity will not come again, and Jesus may be met at any time. But he did not reason thus. How many do so! I will give myself to my gains *now*,—get rich, perhaps at some craft that is not as it should be,—then I will retire. I wish to be saved, but I must attend to other things now, then I will look after my soul.

But Bartimæus felt that the *present* was too great an opportunity to lose, it might never come again. “When” Jesus passed by he cried out. He was in earnest, and his promptness to use the moment was lovely to behold. It was his turning point! Saints and sinners have all their turning points. If he had missed his, the opportunity had never come again. We boldly say this, for Jesus

never did pass by that way again. He was on His way for His last entry into the City of Solemnities,—to Jerusalem, where, after a few days, He was crucified. He was on the road to the cross that day. He is on His road to the judgment now, and the cross is past,—His work there is done.

But a man with a need in his heart will be prompt, will be in earnest,—and “when” Jesus was passing he cried out, “Son of David, have mercy on me”!

Have you, my reader, an unsatisfied need in your heart? This may meet the eyes of some whose hearts Christ has satisfied; but I speak to those whose hearts are still unsatisfied. Do such feel their need? Then cry out, and Jesus will stop—your cry of need will arrest His steps just where you are at this moment. When was there a cry of need which He refused on earth? Will He refuse the cry of need now that He is in His glory? Will He not stay His steps, as it were, as on that day, and meet the need—fill the void of your heart?

“And Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called.” In three of these gospels we have this tale told in a different way. In Matt. xx. 32, it is simply “Jesus *called*.” This is the sovereign call of mercy through grace. This belongs to God alone. Then in Mark x. 49, it is Jesus “*commanded him to be called*.” This shows the instrumental call; of the preacher, for instance. What a word for those who preach the Gospel—for the ambassador of God’s grace. In Luke xviii. 40,

Jesus “*commanded him to be brought unto him.*” This was done by the earnest effectual guiding hands of others. It encourages the believing wife to bring her unbelieving husband under the sound of the Gospel: the parent to bring his child: the child the parent, if still unsaved. It is the earnest, seeking, guiding hand and heart of some soul, whose eyes have been opened, to bring those dear to him—others, to hear the word of God’s grace.

Oh, the deadness of those who believe, in this service! In many places “the Gospel” becomes, through the inertness of Christians themselves, a dead form. How often has the Lord answered the faith of those who have brought others to hear the word of grace preached, in saving the souls of those who have been brought! It is sad, sad, indeed, to see the empty seats in many a meeting-room, where an earnest preacher, who longs to bring souls to Christ, finds that his heart is chilled by the empty benches, and vacant listlessness of those who are there.

“But many charged him that he should hold his peace” (v. 48). They try to hinder his coming to Christ. The devil always finds ready instruments for this service. Those who labour beside one in the factory, in the counting-house, &c., are ready with their scoff for the anxious, seeking soul. But there are many ways of hindering besides the open taunt. I will tell you of one. Christians criticising the Gospel that is preached. I remember reading of one case in point. A Christian lady

brought her unconverted husband to hear a preaching of the Gospel. The servant of the Lord who spoke that night was "no great preacher," as people say. On their way home she remarked the failures—the poverty of the address; she was pulling the whole thing to pieces, but on turning to see why she got no response from her husband, it was to see the tears coursing down his cheeks. On asking him what was the matter, he replied—"Ah, I found Christ to-night in that preaching," or such words. How condemning to her—for what she derided was God's instrument in saving her husband's soul; she—a Christian too! It was God's quickening word to the soul of her husband! Oh, take care how you criticise the Word preached in the ears of the unsaved! Christians are often thus the greatest hinderers of the Gospel, by their careless ways, their speech, their lack of wisdom.

In saying this it does not excuse the sinner in the least; he is responsible to come to Christ, and God will hold him so. He does not come, because his *will* is against God. In the judgment scene of Matt. xxv., it is the absence of good, not the commission of evil, for which the sentence is passed. "Ye did it not unto one of these my brethren, . . . ye did it not to me."

And "Jesus stood still;" and thus He waits on you in grace, because "he delighteth in mercy." And Bartimæus, "casting away his garment, arose and came to Jesus." How many things are allowed to hinder the soul in coming to Jesus? Some garment or other which must be cast aside



Job was a righteous man—none like him in all the earth. And Job wrapped his garment closely around him, and it kept him from being fully in the presence of God in heart and conscience. He had to pass through deep trials—a history that fills forty-two chapters in the Bible, all concerning one man—before he would cast aside the garment of his own righteousness. Righteousness was really there, but he looked upon it as his own, and it obscured the grace which had really produced it in his ways. At the close of the book he cast it aside, and abhorred himself, repenting in dust and ashes. *Then* the Lord accepted Job!

Balaam had a garment too. He “loved the wages of unrighteousness,” and he used the truth of God against the people of God. He said, “Let me die the death of the righteous;” but he never said, “Let me live the life of the righteous.” His garment clung to him till it was too late.

The young ruler, too, had one (Mark x.)—rich and ardent—whom “Jesus loved.” He saw in him the traces of man as he once had come out of the hands of God, “very good.” Much doubtless that was lovely in nature was found in him. But his “great possessions” were his garment. Jesus said to him, “Go and sell that thou hast”—cast aside the hindering garment—and he went away grieved. He could not part with his garment—he preferred it to Christ. An anxious sinner, with a need in his heart, never “went away grieved” from Jesus.

Herod, too, had a secret garment; he loved his

lusts. John Baptist preached and reproved him. For a time he gave up his sins: "He did many things, and heard him gladly." The garment was only laid aside for a time; by-and-by he wrapped himself in it—gave way to the desires of the flesh, and ended in beheading John, who had told him faithfully of his ways. Then at last he shook hands with Pilate in condemning Jesus, and in the solemn scene before the crucifixion, when he spoke to Jesus (Luke xxiii.), "he answered him nothing." His time was over—his heart was hardened; Jesus had no word for him.

Do I address an indifferent soul like Gallio, "who cares for none of these things"? A garment of indifferentism may cover your heart like his. God has opened the very heavens, and sent down its best treasure, that man might be blessed. Oh, cast it not aside; do not go on your way heedless of the call of mercy, and still reject the Saviour. You see I am pressing the sinner's responsibility upon you. If I were preaching the other side of the Gospel, I would rather seek to unfold the heart of God, and show you His love in the gift of Christ; the perfectness too, of Jesus, in doing His Father's will; but I am seeking rather to press your responsibility to come to Him—to receive Him—to cast from you whatever hinders your coming as a *lost* one to the Saviour's feet. You are "lost," "dead;" your life is forfeited, but nothing is asked of you.

And Bartimæus, "casting away his garment,

arose and came to Jesus. And Jesus answered, and said unto him, "What wilt thou that I should do unto thee?" Jesus expected nothing from him; and all actions on your part also, as on his, would be working. But hear what Jesus says—"What *wilt* thou?" Have you a *desire*? He who came from heaven, died and rose, and went on high, waits (as it were) to serve the poor sinner, who comes as a suppliant to Him.

What is the request of Bartimæus? "Lord, that I might receive my sight." And Luke (chap. xviii.) tells us of the echoing reply from the heart of God. "Receive thy sight; thy faith hath saved thee." Faint and tremulous was the request of faith, but clear and blessed the response of the Lord—the echo of heaven—"Receive thy sight; thy faith *hath* saved thee." Not a doubt remains—his eyes are opened, and he *is* saved.

Have you, reader, a need to bring to Him? Will you trust Him, and God's heart will bless you to the full. It was so with the poor prodigal (Luke xv.); he asked a servant's place, and the father's heart exceeded all his expectations; he kissed him and received him as a son. It was more than the echo of the desire: the answer of grace ever exceeds the request of faith. It was so with the thief on the cross. He asked a place in the kingdom, but received one in paradise that day.

And Bartimæus opened his eyes, and the first object before him was the Lord! The beauty of the Lord was before him—the object for eternity.

What will the joy of the most blessed saint be throughout eternity? Surely the same object—Jesus! Jesus only! And “he followed Jesus *in the way.*” It was then the way to the cross, now it is the path of rejection to the glory. He is on His way to the kingdom and glory. Then follow Jesus in the way; suffer with Him; true in heart to Him in the day of His rejection, and when He takes His place as “King of Kings,” you shall reign with Him!

F. G. P.

---

## MAN'S WISDOM MADE FOOLISH BY GOD.

---



IN the autumn of 1885 G. A. S. and two of his companions were walking in one of the London parks, when their attention was arrested by a crowd of people gathered round a professed infidel, who was trying to prove that the Bible was not the Word of God, and that things stated therein were not true. Having drawn near to listen, they became much aroused by what they heard, and earnestly discussed it together as they walked home. Just as they turned away, a book was put into their hands, which was written to

endeavour to prove that there is no such place as hell.

This so wrought upon G. A. S. that he could not rest until he had searched the Scriptures for himself, and finding it to be a solemn reality, revealed by God, he became intensely miserable. The Spirit of God had overruled the infidel's folly, to awaken a poor perishing sinner to the awful danger in which he stood with death, judgment, and the lake of fire before him. What had hitherto been looked at in a vague way as an uncertain and distant future, now became a solemn and dreaded reality. God had spoken to his soul, and made foolish the natural wisdom of the poor devil-duped and blinded infidel. The Word of God—God, who cannot lie,—told him there is a hell, the abode of everlasting woe; and of all who go there, that their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched (Jude 7, 13; Mark ix. 44, 46, 48).

G. A. S. continued in a state of deep exercise of soul for about a fortnight, his sins weighing upon his conscience, and their fearful and eternal consequences staring him in the face, when he took a severe cold, and was obliged to leave his employment and go home to be nursed. Laid aside thus from the busy scenes of this life, he was brought to see the vanity of his own efforts to meet the claims of God's holiness, and obtain the pardon of his sins. God presented Christ to his soul as the Saviour of sinners; *he believed on Him*, and rejoiced in the knowledge of forgiveness. The fear

of judgment and hell departed, assurance of salvation took its place, and his soul was happy and free.

Beloved reader, how is it with you? Have you ever been aroused to eternal realities, and learnt that if you had your just desert as a sinner guilty and lost, God would shut you out of His blessed and holy presence in hell? If so, we would present Christ to you also as the Saviour you need. He alone can deliver you from that awful doom. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John viii. 24). But, "To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43).

The infidel may delude himself, and seek to persuade you, that there is no such thing as judgment and no such place as hell. But God has said, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27); and, "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). No infidel ever denied sin's wages, *death*; and the same passage of Scripture that tells of this appointment unto men, tells of judgment after. And it is the word of Him who cannot lie, that also tells of the eternal woe of the impenitent (Heb. ix. 27; Rev. xxi. 8).

But how blessed to know that God has no pleasure in the death of the sinner; that judgment is His strange work; and that the desire of His heart is that all should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. ii. 4). This was

the object of the gift of Christ; His death upon the cross is the fruit of God's wondrous love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). The infidel may deny the whole thing; it in no way alters the truth of it. You may try to escape the consequences of sin by fleshly efforts to please God; but all is utterly vain. None but Christ can save you *from hell*, and none but Christ can save you *for glory*. God's word is, that "*who-soever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" It is very simple. Will you be simple about it, and take Him at His word? Christ is the Saviour; His work meets the sinner's need. Unsaved one, you are the sinner that needs salvation. Now is the time to be saved. Tomorrow may be too late. *Believe in Him* is the way to be saved. And if you believe in Him *you are*.

How much wiser the infidel would be if, instead of exposing his folly by vainly trying to overthrow and escape facts, he would accept God's provision in grace, and escape the fruits of sin in God's own way. What folly for a prisoner, *who is offered freedom*, to vainly endeavour to persuade himself that there are no judge, no prison, no fetters, no punishment! How true is the Word of God, that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but *unto us which are saved*, it is the power of God (1 Cor. i. 18).

E. H. C.

## A LOST ETERNITY.



HELL and a lost Eternity are frightful realities,—who can fathom their horrors?

The soul of man will live as long as God Himself exists. God is the eternal God, and man will live for eternity.

What will it be to spend eternity in hell, the place of ceaseless torment and unimagined woe, the abode of universal despair, the region of never-ending, and unavailing weeping and gnashing of teeth?

Hope *never* enters there; the lost regard their dark dreary eternity with blank awful despair. Slowly and ceaselessly the ages roll on, but they bring no relief, no respite of suffering, no termination of time, for it is ETERNITY,—and there is no end, no termination to that; the torment, once begun, *never* ends, the wailing *never* ceases.

And the damned know this; they realise that they are lost for ever.

Oh! the soul-horror,—the passionate weeping of the lost,—the wringing of hands,—the wild outpourings of useless regrets!

Memory will be busy in hell; not one neglected opportunity of salvation will be forgotten there, and this will augment the torment; these remem-



branches, like spectres, will for ever haunt the lost, perpetual witnesses of soul-suicide.

Tears, groans, and sighs will fill that awful place, but none of these will lessen the burden of woe. That burden will ever increase; deeper and deeper in the hearts of the unsaved will grow the terrible realisation of what eternity is. Mind and thought will swiftly travel along the ever-coming ages vainly seeking the end, BUT THERE IS NO END, and the heart will fail as it realises this.

No, there is no end to eternity,—no cessation of the torment of hell,—no such thing as annihilation; the Son of God has said, “Their worm *dieth not*, and the fire *is not quenched*.”

IT WILL BE ALWAYS ETERNITY. A million ages will pass, but it will still be eternity; a million million of ages will come and go, but it will be eternity still; the end will never come, for there is no end.

Caste and class will be unknown in hell. The lost king will be on a level with the lost subject;—position and riches on earth will count for nothing in hell;—the high-born despiser of grace will suffer in company with the low-born despiser. All there are simply lost sinners, sharers of a common doom, each and every one receiving sin's fatal wages.

No sweet Gospel proclamation of salvation through the Lamb's most precious blood will be heard there, nor the strivings of the gracious Spirit of God felt; only the wild ravings and cursings

of lost men and fallen angels, the mad ravings of evil desperate natures, unchecked by a single influence for good, will resound in hell.

Joy will be unknown in hell; the sound of laughter will never be heard there. No comforter will be found; sympathy is a stranger there. None *can* comfort, for all alike are tormented; none *can* sympathize, for all are occupied with their own sorrow. All alike inherit an eternity of woe.

All the sorrows belonging to this world will be multiplied ten million-fold in hell; the woes of this life will be forgotten in the great woe of a lost eternity.

There will not be a moment of forgetfulness in hell, but an eternity of wakefulness and full consciousness. Though the blackness of darkness is there, sleep will never visit the eyes of the lost.

*"The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night"* (Rev. xiv. 11).

God is "not willing *that any should perish*, but that *all should come to repentance*" (2 Peter iii. 9).

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him *should not perish*, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

God says, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Reader, WHERE will YOUR eternity be spent?

W. H. S.

## THE FOUR SEEKERS.

(Read Matt. xviii. 10-14 ; Luke xv. 4-10, xix. 1-10 ; John iv. 21-24 ;  
1 Pet. v. 8.)

---



IN these scriptures you have no less than four seekers. It is a wonderful thing that there should be four persons busily occupied with you and me. You say, Is the sinner one of the seekers? No, it is the sinner who is sought. I get elsewhere, "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. iii. 11). If I think what man is I shall never find him the seeker at the outset ; he is always the sought.

In 1 Peter v. we read of some one seeking man. "Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

Peter is speaking of saints here, and, if the devil is busy seeking the *saints*, God have mercy on the *sinner*. Do not forget you have an adversary going about as a roaring lion. A roaring lion is a creature under the influence of excitement, seeking whom he may devour. I grant you this verse is addressed to God's people, but you know, my unsaved reader, that you are not amongst them. This is very solemn. It is God's solemn word to every Christian. But you say, will Satan ever devour a Christian? Thank God, no ; but woe betide those who are not Christians, for if this word of caution is so solemn for the saint, how much more

solemn for an unsaved, unwashed, unpardoned sinner!

O unsaved soul, you do not think of the adversary's power, I daresay, but nevertheless it is true he is "seeking whom he may devour." Young, old, rich, poor, he is bent on your destruction, with untiring activity, with unceasing malevolence. "The thief cometh not but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy." That is Satan's effort, and what an easy prey is the sinner. The devil has not much trouble to grip the unsaved soul. He is after the children of God, but, thank God, he will never catch one of them.

You, fellow-Christian, can never be lost, for of His sheep Christ says, "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any (angel, man, or devil) pluck them out of my hand." I give angels leave, and men permission, and demons full opportunity to snatch from the hand of Christ, if they can, one soul that He has redeemed. You are safe indeed if you belong to Christ, but if you are not Christ's, ponder this—the devil is "SEEKING WHOM HE MAY DEVOUR."

Child of God, to you I say, let us be sober, watchful. But, my dear unsaved friend, I want you to see that you are in a position where an untiring, relentless, powerful adversary is ever bent on your destruction. He goes after you as the lion after its prey, and how the lion tracks his prey—swiftly, relentlessly! As long as you are unsaved, the devil feels sure of you. "He is unconverted," says Satan,

"I have him safely." But God would use a scripture like this to wake you up. Suppose you were cut off as you are, where would you go? You are the prey of the enemy, and if you pass out of this scene—and you may, oh so rapidly—would it be to be with Christ? Impossible! I know you have in your heart the thought, "I hope." Yes, and the way the devil damns thousands is with this thought, "Go on hoping, attend the means of grace, and it will be all right in the end."

Did you never read in Scripture what God says as to our state?—"All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa. liii. 6). *All* gone astray. Have you got back yet? We will look presently at how you may get back.

Turn now to the other three seekers—blessed seekers I may call them—who are occupied with us. In Matt. xviii. we see that the Lord *saves* the little ones. "For the Son of man is come to *save* that which was lost," and "*seeketh* that which is gone astray." It is very blessed to see that if a young child goes hence it is to Christ, for He came to *save the lost*, and even the child is lost. In Luke xix. He *seeks* and saves, for a grown-up sinner—Zaccheus—is in question. Who seeks? The Son of Man—Jesus. He is the seeker of those who have gone astray. And who have gone astray? All. He "*seeketh that which is gone astray*,"—gone astray on the dark mountains of sin; and the Good Shepherd leaves the ninety and nine, and goes after the straying one.

Who are the ninety and nine? The unfallen angels, I believe. They never went astray. They do not need salvation and redemption; but we have all gone astray. Man is the lost sheep, "and the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Yes, the Gospel comes to you as a *lost sinner*. It does not come to you as a good person, or a righteous person. The Lord says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Why did He not come to call the righteous? Because there would have been none to answer to the call,—*"There is none righteous, no not one,"* says God.

In Luke xv. what is the shepherd after? The sheep. And how long does he seek it? "Until he find it." Jesus will never give up the search as long as you are on this scene. He is seeking you now. His voice says, "Come unto me, I will give you rest." He has been down in this world, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and He goes after His lost sheep "until he find it." And where does He go? To the spot where the sheep is on the dark mountains. Shall I show you where He found one? A man just sinking into the jaws of hell, put upon a cross of wood by the judges of this world, turns round to the Blessed One, dying by his side, and craves His power to save, saying, "Lord, remember me;" and Jesus answers, "To-day shall thou be with me in paradise." Ah! the shepherd found the sheep that day, snatched it from the jaws of death, and bore it home upon His shoulders rejoicing.

In Luke xix. Zaccheus sought to see Jesus, as the result of Jesus having come to seek him first, God having put the desire in his heart to see Jesus. Jesus sees him up in the sycamore tree, and says, "Make haste, and come down, for *to-day* I must abide at thy house." To the dying thief He says, "*To-day* thou shalt be *with me* in paradise," because the thief was going out of the world, and to Zaccheus He says, "*To-day* I must abide at thy house," but it is "to-day" in each case. To the one going out of the world it is, *To-day* you shall be with me in my house; and to the one who was going to stay in the world it was, *To-day* I am going to be with you in your house; and I don't know which was the happier, for in each case it was the presence of Christ.

But how is the lost sheep saved? By the work of Christ for us,—His atoning work on the cross. All the judgment we earned He sustained. We could only sin. He only could put that sin away. We could die, He could bring us into life. We could go astray from God, He could "suffer for sins once, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." He could do what we could not do—viz., present to God a perfect sacrifice, whereby every soul that trusts Him is brought to God.

In Luke xv. we get another seeker—the woman who seeks the silver piece—beautiful figure of the Spirit of God, who came down from heaven on the day of Pentecost. She lit a candle, and the Holy Ghost lights a candle. What does that show?

That darkness reigned. There is the light shed by the Word of God, and the lives of God's people. When Christ was in the world, He was the light of the world, as He says, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John ix. 5). But the world in wickedness extinguished the light, and left itself in darkness of its own creation, the blackness of darkness. Oh, do not, my reader, choose the blackness of darkness for ever.

The woman seeks "diligently" for the lost piece of silver "till she find it, and when she hath found it she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost." Think of the joy of the Holy Ghost in the sinner's salvation. Think of the joy that fills the shepherd's breast as he carries the sheep home on His shoulders, and you may have joy too, for the Lord wants you to know that you are saved, are forgiven, are His child. In the next parable, in Luke xv., of the father and the son, we read of their joy and merriment.

We get the last seeker—the Father—in John iv. Who is Satan seeking? Everybody. Who is the shepherd seeking? The lost sheep. Who is the Spirit of God seeking? The dead—you—I might say—to give new life. The bit of silver was lifeless, though precious to the one who had lost it. We read of being "born of the Spirit." The Son seeks the *lost*; the Spirit the *dead*. The Father seeks the *living*. He seeks worshippers. He wants to bring your heart into close contiguity with Him-



self. And how does He make worshippers? By the revelation of grace. When the cup is quite full it overflows; and when you have in your soul the thought Jesus loves me, and has died for me, though I was only a poor sinner, deserving judgment, yet Jesus has borne my judgment for me, and I see God has nothing but love in His heart towards me, then your heart looks up and thanks and praises Him. How can you worship Him unless your heart is happy—unless you are at home with Him—unless you delight in Him because of what He is? If you *try* to worship Him you cannot: it is impossible; but if you *taste* His grace you cannot help worshipping Him—you return to give Him thanks.

Oh! will you not prefer the wooings of divine love to the trackings of Satanic malevolence? Believe God's grace, and go on your way with a thankful heart, saying, "I believe the Son died for me, and the Holy Ghost quickened me, and the Father Himself loves me," and therefore you worship the Triune God, and can go on your way in the full sense of the favour of the Lord, singing—

“ Found by Thee before I sought,  
Unto Thee in mercy brought,  
I have Thee for righteousness—  
From Thy fulness grace for grace ;  
Thou hast washed me in Thy blood,  
Made me live, and live to God.”

## ALL.



SMALL word, but how great, how comprehensive its meaning! As it stands, it holds no exceptions. "All have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23). "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man" (the man Christ Jesus) "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him *all* that believe are justified from *all* things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). The refined or the polluted, the educated or the ignorant, whether old or young, rich or poor, of whatever class or condition, "*all* that believe are justified from *all* things."

Some time ago, while travelling from Bournemouth to Southsea, a passenger was anxious to know whether he changed trains for Wimbourne. No one in the compartment could inform him. Presently the train stopped at a station, and a railway official distinctly called out, "*All* change here." In getting out of the train I felt impressed to call attention to two passages of Scripture, "The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth . . . from *all* sin" (1 John i. 7), and the passage in 1st Corinthians, xv. 51, "We shall not *all* sleep, but we shall *all* be changed."

After waiting a short time, I again took my seat for Southsea, followed by another passenger, who had heard me quote the passages of Scripture re-

ferred to. None but he came into the compartment, so we were alone. My fellow-traveller, who confessed himself to be a Christian, said that the word "all" reminded him of the word "whosoever." Some interesting conversation followed, for which he was evidently thankful, and stated that he should look upon that day as a memorable one, for although he often travelled by train, he seldom met with any with whom he could converse on divine things. I was, however, somewhat startled to hear this gentleman say, that he had failed to discover any illustration of the grace of God in the account of the Samaritan, for instance, and to regard it as such, was, to him, a stretch of the imagination. How blinded even Christians may become.

It is important not to confuse the case of the lawyer with that of the ruler. Both asked the same question, viz., "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" The former stood up to tempt Christ; the latter did no such thing. The account of the lawyer is found in Luke's Gospel, chap. x., verses 25-37. That of the ruler is found in the same Gospel, chap. xviii., verses 18-23. The law is referred to in both instances, for really neither knew what sinners they were.

In connection with the ruler, those commandments are spoken of which refer to man, "Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness," &c., and he says, "All these have I kept from my youth up." The lawyer, on the other hand, flippantly speaks of the "first commandment," *i.e.*,

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy strength, and with *all* thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." The lawyer did not know who his neighbour was, therefore his question, "Who is my neighbour?" The Lord, in giving the account of the Samaritan, shows who *was* neighbour. This is different ground. The lawyer needed mercy, although he did not realise it. And if he sought to go and do "likewise," he would have found his weakness and want of strength, which evidently he had not felt. "The Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans," but this did not prevent the Samaritan dealing in mercy towards him who "fell among thieves," and whose course lay in the direction in which all sinners are going,—a downward one. "From Jerusalem to Jericho,"—and to the latter place a curse was attached by God. "When we *were enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son" (Rom. v. 10). The good Samaritan spoke of coming again; he *had* come to where the wounded man was, bound up his wounds, "pouring in oil and wine" (not only oil, but "oil and wine"). So our Lord Jesus Christ will come again for those who have been saved through His first coming,—

"Who *grace* has brought,  
Shall *glory* bring."

Is the reader ready to meet the Lord? Does he look for Him? *All* who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are ready.

W. R. C.

THE CONVERTED POACHER; OR,  
"THERE MUST BE SOMETHING IN THAT."



— K —, of L —, is a remarkable instance of what the grace of God can do for an ungodly sinner. Once a desperate poacher, he has now been well known for many years in the little town where he lives as an earnest and consistent Christian, and employed as a trustworthy servant by one on whose grounds he had often committed his depredations in former days.

His first serious impression appears to have been when he was a young lad herding cattle. He was lying one day upon his back, looking up at the clouds, when suddenly the word "Eternity" flashed through his mind. He thought a little, when he became so frightened that he fled home as fast as his legs could carry him.

But this incident was soon forgotten, and as he grew to manhood he became completely enslaved to the sins and lusts of his evil heart. From time to time he was reminded of his responsibility to God, but it was little heeded, and he went on adding sin to sin in the service of Satan.

Amongst other evil propensities, when quite a young man, he took to poaching. The first time that he possessed a gun of his own, on starting off

with a companion, he presented it at him loaded and at full-cock, saying, "Now, if you run away, should anybody come, I'll shoot you." The man was so startled, he looked as if he would have dropped to the ground with fear.

On one occasion, when out with four or five others, a hare was sighted, and a preconcerted signal given to stop. But K—— failing to observe it until too late, caused one of his companions, a reckless drinking ex-schoolmaster, to lose the shot. This so enraged the latter, that he deliberately took aim at K—— with the intention of shooting him. But, through the mercy of God, though he pulled the trigger and the cap exploded, the gun failed to go off, and he was preserved from probably a violent death.

Some time after this K—— and three others started off one night with two guns to a place where he knew that game was fed in a neighbouring wood. One of the keepers was on the watch. Finding they were discovered, they ran off to a quiet out-of-the-way spot. But being closely pursued by the keeper, they stopped and allowed him to come up, when one of the party, a powerfully built man, suddenly seized him, and holding him down to the ground, belaboured him with the stock of his gun. K—— also took his gun by the muzzle, and swinging it round with all his force, aimed fearful blows at his head, though mercifully for both, through the keeper's efforts to release himself and the indistinct light, he missed his aim each

time. Their victim's cries during this fearful struggle were perfectly awful, and making a desperate effort, he succeeded at last in disengaging himself, and running for his life. K—— was afterwards apprehended, and lodged for a month in the house of correction. To what fearful lengths men will go, in their selfwill, living without God!

On many other occasions he was fined, or imprisoned, or was compelled to flee to other parts of the country.

Meanwhile he had married, and a young family had begun to spring up around him. But in consequence of his evil course, his home became a sad example of poverty and misery. Presently the Lord, whose eyes run to and fro in the earth, beholding the evil and the good, took one of his little ones from him, and he was reminded of his evil course, but without any apparent effect.

One day, being put out about some trivial matter in his house, he broke out in a volley of curses, when he suddenly turned faint. Thinking he was dying, his cursing was as suddenly changed to a half-uttered "Lord, have mercy . . . . .," and he fainted away. Recovering, it had the temporary effect of leading him for a few nights to pray, or rather repeat a prayer, to God, with the vain thought of in some measure thereby atoning for his evil course. But still he remained in darkness, under the dominion of sin, a slave "to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit now worketh in the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2).

How many, like K——, revel in sin and wickedness, or the follies and vanities of the world, until they find themselves face to face with the dread realities of death and judgment, when their only hope is to cry to the One whose love and grace they have trampled upon and despised all their life long. It is true there is mercy at the eleventh hour, as men say, but, alas, how few there are who find it!

Eventually in the year 1863, when working away from home, and living in the grossest wickedness, the Spirit of God strove with him about his course, and W—— K—— woke up to the awful fact that he was a lost sinner on the road to the lake of fire. Morning, noon, and night his sins rose up as a thick cloud between him and God, and his soul was full of misery. On his return, an old mate, who knew how he had been living, and saw his disturbed state, got down the Bible, but knowing nothing of the gospel of God's wondrous grace, read to him from the law of Moses, winding up by saying, "There is no forgiveness for thee," and his case seemed utterly hopeless. The sport of Satan, the victim of sin, a murderer in heart, he thought he was God-forsaken, and must perish everlastingly in hell.

Dear reader, have you too discovered that you are a lost sinner? You may not have gone to the same excess of riot and sin as W—— K——, but a sinner you are in the sight of a holy God, and without an interest in Christ your case is utterly hopeless. It is no good turning to the law. Like



K—— you will find there is no mercy nor forgiveness there, but in the gospel of God's Son you will find all that you need.

Nine long weary years rolled by, and at times the burden of sin seemed almost intolerable; and the thought of death, judgment, and hell made him awfully afraid, but how to escape the consequences of his wickedness he knew not.

One day an evangelist arrived in the little town where he lived, and commenced to preach the gospel. W—— K—— was induced to go with a companion to the preaching. Impressed by the clear and powerful unfolding of the old, old story of God's wondrous love in the gift of His Son, and His finished work on the cross, he remarked to the other on their return, "There *must* be something in that; but then they say they are saved; I can't see that."

The meetings were continued for several nights, and K—— became a regular attendant, when on one occasion the preacher, dwelling upon the crucifixion of the Son of God, gave utterance to the question, "What was the difference between the thief on the right hand, and the thief on the left?" Without thinking, K—— drew everybody's attention to himself by answering out loud, "*The one had faith, and the other had not.*"

After this he was afraid to go again, especially as he heard that the preacher had been inquiring where he lived. But one night a card had been given him, on which was printed in plain clear type

a number of texts containing the word HATH, such as "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life" (John iii. 36). This he hung up on his cottage wall. Often and often he stood up and read and thought over the verses, sometimes even locking the door lest any one should come in suddenly and find him at it. And he would say to himself, "They say they are saved. I believe, but I can't say that I'm saved." And still poor K—— puzzled on.

Just at this time, he had three remarkable dreams. In the first, he seemed to see Satan in all his dreadfulness telling him how bad he was; in the second, the throne of God, but far off, and he murmured that he couldn't get near it; in the third, the world come to an end, and he awoke crying for mercy; these dreams troubled him greatly, but he went on, without telling them to any one.

Shortly after another evangelist arrived, who commenced by preaching in the street. K—— went down to listen, and was so impressed that he followed him to a hall where he was announced to speak afterwards, and sat down in the front seat. It was an earnest gospel appeal to the careless and ungodly, and was not without effect upon his soul, when, just at the close, Satan suggested, "How are you going to get out without the preacher speaking to you?" So the instant the prayer was concluded, he sprang up and made for the door. He thought he had succeeded, when he felt a tap upon his

shoulder, and he stopped as if he had been shot. Looking back, the preacher said to him, "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?"

He replied, "I believe every word in that book."

"Then your sins are gone, you are saved."

"No, I cannot say that."

"But it is not possible that a soul could believe and not be saved."

He then read a passage in John iii. and another in John v. 24, pressing home upon him the positive statements of Jesus, the Son of God, in the verse: "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.*" In a moment the truth flashed upon him. He saw, that though he had long believed *about Him*, he had never *believed on* the Son of God, or on Him that sent Him. He made no reply, but went outside.

There he stood in the street, trembling like a leaf. The Holy Ghost was applying the word in power to his soul. An intense struggle passed within his breast. He said to himself, "*I see it all clear*; and if I don't accept it, there is nothing but hell for me." Satan, loth to lose his victim, brought his wiles to bear, and challenged him how he would face the world. "I don't care for the world," was his inward reply, and *then and there he decided for Christ*. Peace, like a river, flowed into his soul. He had heard the voice of the Son of God. He believed God who sent Him. *Ever-*

*lasting life was his.* The condemnation was gone, for Christ had borne it. He had passed from death unto life. A long life of sin and ungodliness had closed. His sins, though they had been as scarlet, were now white as snow; though they had been red like crimson, were now as wool (Isa. i. 18). They were all blotted out by the precious blood of Jesus (1 John i. 7). W—— K—— was saved.

Some fifteen years have rolled away since then, and he still lives as a consistent witness to the almighty power of God's wondrous grace. Once a desperate poacher, a would-be murderer, an ungodly sinner, he is now, as many can testify, an earnest follower of the Blessed One who saved him, delighting to look back and trace the good hand of God in preserving him in His infinite mercy during his long course of sin, and on the one hand from being murdered, and on the other from becoming a murderer himself.

And now, dear reader, how is it with you? Do you see it all clearly? And have you accepted the great salvation of God? Without it, as K—— said, there is nothing but hell. No, nothing but hell. *Glory with Christ for ever* for all who accept Him; *hell without Christ for ever* for all who reject or neglect Him. You may see it all clearly in your mind, but have you accepted Christ as your own personal Saviour? Tens of thousands are speaking of Him as "*our Saviour*." But can you call Him "*My Saviour*"? Is He yours, and are you His? Paul could say of Him, "Who loved me, and gave

himself for me," as though he were the only one that was rejoicing in the glorious results of His finished work. But every one who believes on Him may say the same. It is an individual matter.

The present moment is always God's time, for *now* is the day of salvation (2 Cor. vi. 2). There is no certainty that you will have another opportunity to-morrow. The Lord may come, or death may come before that. To delay is to run the risk of missing the blessing altogether. And to miss salvation now, is to miss it for ever.

God is waiting in long-suffering mercy, and grace reigns through righteousness and abounds. But, alas, men trespass upon His grace! What are you doing? The moment is at hand when grace will cease to flow. Then judgment will take its course, and woe to all who are exposed to it! Bow then, even now, dear reader, in self-judgment before God, and accept the fruit of His wondrous love, manifested in the inestimable gift of His only-begotten Son. God presents Christ to you as a present and everlasting Saviour. Will you receive Him? Do you say, How am I to do that? *Believe on His name.* The moment you do, your sins are *forgiven*, you *have everlasting life*, and you are a *child of God*. "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe on his name*" (John i. 12). *Believe now!*

## PROCRASTINATION.

“And as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”—ACTS xxiv. 25.



SCRIPTURE is silent as to whether the convenient season that Felix looked forward to, ever came. Present surroundings seemed to have a greater power over him than eternal things, and he let the golden opportunity slip.

“Procrastination is the thief of time;” it is also the devil’s prime minister, as has often been said, in carrying down souls to the dark domains of hell. There are thousands now in that place of endless woe and unutterable anguish, who never meant to be there, but who listened to Satan’s whisper, “Time enough yet, you will get a more convenient season some day.” They put their soul’s salvation off, until they found themselves beyond the reach of mercy. There the gentle, loving call of Jesus, “Come unto me,” is heard no more, and shut up in hell, eternal misery is their portion, “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

Reader, perhaps you may be one of this class who believe the Bible to be the Word of God and know much of the letter of it intellectually. You may know, too, that it is only by believing in the finished work of Christ that a soul gets salvation,

but careless and heedless you say, "Oh! it's only by believing, I can do that at any time; I fully intend being saved, but not just yet; I mean to enjoy life a little first; I will trust in the Saviour by and by." Dear reader, I do earnestly entreat of you not to trifle thus with eternal realities by giving heed to the evil suggestions of Satan. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked." "Beware lest he take thee away with a stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." I do affectionately pray you, be not so foolhardy as to put off your soul's salvation another moment, it is dangerous to delay. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Before another sun may rise, *Death*, with its cold and icy hands, may lay hold upon you and claim you as its victim, and if unsaved, you shall wake up in hell, duped by the devil, then

"What horrors shall roll o'er thy godless soul,  
Waked from its death-life sleep;  
Of all hope bereft, and to judgment left,  
For ever to wail and weep."

There is another event which may take place at any moment—*The Coming of the Lord*. He is coming soon to take His people home. Should He come and find you still a procrastinator, the door of mercy will be for ever closed for you. "They that were ready went in, and the door was shut." Then you will cry in right earnest, "Lord, Lord, open to us." Oh! how will you receive those withering words, "Depart from me, I never knew you?" The day of grace will then be over for

you, and for all who have heard the gospel, as we read in 2 Thess. ii. 10-12, "They received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, and for this cause, God shall send strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness." But thanks be to God it is still the day of His grace. "The long-suffering of the Lord is salvation, He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Oh! come now to the Lord Jesus, and own the truth of your condition to Him, and He will in no wise cast you out. Think of what He endured on the accursed tree, when all the waves and billows of God's righteous, holy wrath went o'er His blessed spotless head when He stood in the sinner's place. "He looked for some to pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but there were found none;" deserted by all His trusted followers, He was abandoned by God, whose delight He ever was. What a scene to gaze upon! The One by whom the worlds were framed, and by whom all things consist, taking such a place, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, and all in order that poor sinners might be brought to God, and have His place in everlasting glory. Will this awful scene, dear reader, not move your heart? if not, it must be callous indeed. Oh! what love thus to take such a place for such rebels as we. And having met all the righteous claims of God's holy throne, and vindicated His character, He cried,



"It is finished," and bowed His head in death. God, to show that He was infinitely satisfied and glorified too, in the work which He accomplished, raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory.

Now, dear reader, the question remains to be answered, Are you satisfied with this finished work? To be satisfied with it is to be saved eternally, seeing that God and you are at one about it. Delay not one moment longer, I pray you, but "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And instead of looking into the future with fear or dread, you can say in triumph—

"Death and judgment are behind me,  
Grace and glory are before ;  
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,  
There exhausted all their power."

O.

---

#### A SAD ALTERNATIVE.

What is the absolute alternative, for a sinner, if Christ be not received? The dreary darkness of an eternal night, in which the only light is that shed by the lurid flame that is "never quenched;" the only companions sinners and devils as wretched as himself; and the only occupation vain regrets at the folly and unbelief that have landed him, for eternity, in a spot beyond the reach of the hand of God Himself.

W. T. P. W.

## “SO THEN.”

“SO THEN EVERY ONE OF US SHALL GIVE ACCOUNT  
OF HIMSELF TO GOD.”

(Rom. xiv. 12).



AY, reader, have you ever thought of this solemn fact? You are travelling on to a moment in your history when YOU MUST HAVE TO DO WITH GOD. None can gainsay that. Reason may refuse, foolish unbelief affect to despise, or indifference turn the deaf ear, but there it stands in the living, lasting record of the Word of God:—  
“For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to ME, and every tongue shall confess to God. SO THEN every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

O sinner, then, give ear! Thou art being borne along life's short journey as fast as the wings of fleeting time can carry thee! Whither? Ah! that is the point. It demands thine instant and earnest consideration. Thy precious bark is floating down life's stream into eternity. Any moment, and it might strike the jagged edge of an unseen rock, or be stranded on some treacherous sand-bank. What then of its precious immortal freight? Soon wilt thou have passed into the surges of yonder ocean. Canst thou weather the fierce winds that lash its waters into wild raging tempests, and will beat upon thy poor frail vessel? Sinner! what are thine eternal prospects? Whither art

thou bound? Onward to the haven of eternal rest? or downward to the deep dark waters of death and judgment? Carest thou not if thou perish and lose thy life,—thy precious soul,—thy all? “What shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this THE JUDGMENT” (Heb. ix. 27).

Only the other day, a young man lay dying. His life, though a short one, had been gay and careless. He was, in fact, just a poor pleasure-seeker, and had sought to enjoy the world with his boon companions of sin and folly. But now they surround his bedside. “Cheer up, old fellow,” say they, “you are getting better, and will soon be well; the day is not far distant when we shall have you amongst us once more.” Mark the mournful answer that such miserable comfort awakened in the soul of one standing on the very threshold of time, and about to cross its border into eternity. “Ah! mates, I am dying; *this is death*, and I want to see what that means for me.” Such was the solemn reply of this dying one. Shortly after, and he had passed away. To which side of that impassable fixed gulf, that for ever separates the eternal abodes of the guilty lost, and the joyous redeemed, God alone knows. He had time given him to face death and its cold terrors. “That day” will reveal whether, or not, he fled, by faith, for refuge to the Saviour in glory, who passed through death’s dark waters, and in deepest love to poor sinners bore the judgment due to sin, so that

“WHOSOEVER believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John iii. 16).

What would DEATH mean for the reader of these lines? Remember, if it find thee out in thy sins, afterwards *will* come the judgment! Then that awful day of reckoning, “that certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries!” In *that* day it will be “a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;” but *now*, in this day of grace, there is mercy full and free awaiting the vilest. Said one of old, when he had sinned, “Let me fall NOW into the hand of the Lord;” and he was right too, “*for very great are his mercies*” (1 Chron. xxi. 13). Mark the time, “NOW!” Then why not this moment for thee? “Him that cometh to ME I will *in no wise* cast out.”

O sinner, be wise, take heed, give ear. “To-day, if ye will hear his voice,” you are not beyond the reach of mercy. To-morrow, you may be. God’s free and full salvation is held out to you. Will you spurn it, neglect it, or take it? Which shall it be? “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. vi. 23). Take it *now*, and happy be.

“Haste! haste! haste!

Delay not from wrath to flee;

Oh, wherefore the moments in madness waste

When Jesus is calling thee?

Calling thee, calling thee.

O sinner, thy many sins were dark,

But Jesus hath died for thee.”

But, methinks, I hear some one say, "That may be a right enough word for some poor prodigal, or bold blasphemer, or debauched drunkard, and the like, but *I* have steered clear of all that kind of thing, and I think it's all right with me."

Hold, friend! Have you a sure foundation for your hopes? What saith the Scripture? "EVERY ONE of *us* shall give account of HIMSELF to God" (Rom. xiv. 12). Will you pass muster, then? "Well, as for that, I don't think I have any reason to fear the consequences; I have been born, baptized, and brought up as a Christian, and have always endeavoured to lead a decent and honest life. I'm a regular attendant at a place of worship, and seek to keep the Sabbath, and I don't see what more can be expected of *any* man."

And so you think, then, that *you* will have a good title to heaven when you die, and will be ready to meet the all-searching gaze of a holy God, partly because of what you have *not* done,—*i.e.*, gone into *open* sin,—and partly because of what you *are* doing and *hope* to do? Is that it?

"Well, I quite admit many shortcomings; we are none of us perfect in that respect. But my belief is, that if a man *seeks to please God*, and do all the good he can in this world, he will be all right for the next."

Alas, then, for all your hopes! for it is written,—"SO THEN they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Rom. viii. 8).

Reader! God forbid that we should help to

deceive any on a question of such eternal importance. We shall seek to be short and simple, plain and pointed, concerning this most subtle snare that Satan has laid so successfully in the hearts of thousands. KNOW, THEN, that your case has been gone into. Already God's Word declares you to be guilty, condemned, *lost*. Hearken! "There is none righteous, no, not one;" "There is none that doeth good, no, not one;" "FOR *there is no difference*;" "ALL have sinned, and *come short of the glory of God*" (Rom. iii. 10, 12, 22, 23). It is no question of great or small sinners. One sin committed, small or great,—whether in thought, word, or deed,—is sufficient to close heaven's door for ever against you, and ensure your utter and eternal condemnation in the lake of fire.

But there is more. Every soul of Adam's fallen race is possessed of a sinful nature, so corrupt that it is incapable of producing fruit for God, and *cannot* be improved. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh;" "SO THEN they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God." There is nothing within the hidden springs of the natural heart that will do for God. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? *I the Lord* search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jer. xvii. 9, 10). Rightly, indeed, were the words of the Blessed Lord suited to that respectable religionist of old, "YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN," "for

he knew what was in man.” Ah, reader, at the cross God gave up expecting any good from the natural heart. But His love has measured your need, in sending down from the brightest glory His well-beloved Son, to die in your stead. There Christ “once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God” (1 Pet. iii. 18). Your works will never avail. You have not to turn over a new leaf, form pious resolves, or become religious. Away, then, with your own thoughts! “*Without faith* it is impossible to please God” (Heb. xi. 6). Do you ask how this is to be obtained? Listen!

“SO THEN faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. x. 17).

FAITH, not in yourself, or your own doings. Ah, no! But a living personal faith, in that living personal Saviour who sits at God’s right hand in glory. Behold Him there, and as you listen to what God’s Word says about it, *bow to it*. Own yourself as lost and undone, and trust in His worthy name. He alone could do the work that was needed to cleanse and fit us for the presence of God. That work He finished on the cross nearly nineteen hundred years ago, and you cannot add to it. But, “To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, WHOSOEVER believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43). Oh! dear unknown and unsaved reader, will not you trust Him?

## THE POSTMAN'S "RED-LETTER DAY."



THICK mist hung in the valleys, dense clouds rested on the hilltops, the autumn sun seemed trying to rise from behind the cloud-wrapt hills, as a postman wended his way across a moorland road with his usual morning's letters. His step had none of the elasticity which usually characterised it; his brow was clouded, his eyes downcast, and as he stopped at the various houses to which his missives were addressed, the recipients marked the absence of his customary cheery jest, and more than one inquired as to the cause of his despondency. And good cause had he to look distressed, for deeper than the vapour that enshrouded the surroundings was the mist that hung around his soul. A stern conflict was going on in his heart, the conflict between sin and God. He had been brought up by Christian parents, had received careful instruction in the Sunday school, had led a strictly moral life, and was spoken of as a good Christian lad; but now, for the first time, he found himself in God's presence, and in the light of that presence his comeliness was turned to corruption. He saw that he "was lost and vile indeed;" in his soul there was only "blackness and darkness and tempest;" and in despair he cried out, "What must I do to be saved?"



While in this state he heard a rumbling noise of wheels behind him, and turning round saw approaching him a lumbering baker's van, so commonly seen in country roads. At the sight of it a ray of hope lighted up his face, for the vanman who accompanied it was a well-known Christian, one of the "revivalist" type, who openly said he was "born again."

Hitherto the postman had avoided him, as the plain way he spoke to him about his state before God, did not agree with his tastes; but now, awakened to the reality of his lost condition, he welcomed his approach.

One word, fellow Christian:—Is our light so shining, that anxious souls may at once know, that from us, they will receive suited balm to their weary hearts? or, are our lives emitting so uncertain a sound, that they would hesitate to come to us for needed instruction?

The next delivery the postman had to make was at a farmhouse two miles distant, and, as the baker went to the same place, he knew he would get a drive with him, so, without waiting an invitation, he jumped up and seated himself beside him. Some cursory remarks passed about the weather, and then the vanman inquired as to the cause of his agitation.

His answer was<sup>f</sup> simple, "I am in deep distress about my sins."

He could say no more, for the load of them seemed crushing him down. For a few moments the van-

man closed his eyes and silently thanked God for awakening this soul, and asked for grace to place Christ clearly before him.

"What did Christ say when on the cross?" at length he asked.

"'It is finished,'" replied the postman.

"But there was something else He said, what was it?" asked the vanman.

"'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?'" returned the postman.

"And why did God forsake Christ then?" asked the vanman.

"Because He was bearing sins," replied the postman.

"But whose sins was He bearing? were your sins on Him?" asked the vanman.

"Yes, my sins were on Him," said the postman, "for we read 'the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.'"

"Exactly," said the vanman; "but is Christ dead now?"

"Oh no!" replied the postman; "God raised Him from the dead."

"And where is He now?"

"At God's right hand."

"Well," reasoned the vanman, "if God laid your sins on Christ (Isa. liii. 6), and Christ died for them (1 Cor. xv. 3), was buried (1 Cor. xv. 4), and God raised Him up from the dead and gave Him glory (1 Peter i. 21), where are your sins?"

In a moment the light dawned on the troubled

soul; his eye beamed, as he exclaimed "They *must* be gone." And they were gone, for Christ had blotted them out.

The house where the postman had to go was now reached, and he came down from that van a new creature. He looked around; the sun had now risen in splendour, the mist from hill and dale had disappeared. Fit illustration of what had taken place within himself,—the mist of uncertainty gone, and a glorious sun now shining in his heart, a sun that never will go down.

That day was a "red-letter day" in very deed to him, and moulded the course of his whole after-life. True, he had opposition to encounter. His friends thought he was beside himself when he told them he was converted; those who had called him a "good Christian lad" before, now said he had turned a big hypocrite. But he rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for Christ's name; and so will you, anxious reader, if you too, by simple faith, see that your sins have been borne by Jesus, "the substitute from God."

" 'It is finished!' 'He is risen,'  
 Ye who these blest words receive,  
 Peace in Him is now your portion,  
 Peace eternal He will give;  
 'Peace unto you!'  
 All who on His name believe."

M. R.

## “BEFORE THE TIME.”

---



THE faith of devils is stronger than that of men, and far more influential. They believe in future punishment, and they live under a wholesome dread of it. They “believe, and tremble.” Men disbelieve the fact of coming judgment, and live accordingly.

When Christ was dispossessing poor “Legion,” the devils, on finding that they must let their captive go, said to Him, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?” (Matt. viii. 29). They knew full well that He was their judge, as they knew that the time of their judgment was fixed. To them “torment” and the “Son of God” were closely connected together. For them He had no salvation, no mercy, no pity. Whatever their sin, or its causes, their case was utterly hopeless. They could look for no clemency. The blood of the cross, so divinely efficacious for men, had no saving virtue for them. They lay under eternal ban, and in the darkness of God’s immutable displeasure.

Hence, when Jesus came for man, with healing in His wings and pardon in His bosom, He carried but forebodings of terror to *them*. That lovely name, fragrant of salvation to sinful men, had no

meaning but damnation to fallen angels. “What have we to do with thee, Jesus?” was their despairing cry. There was nothing in common. Can you conceive such a state, dear reader? But it was known and felt by these miserable deceivers. Their fall from their first estate was the result of their pride. Fearful fall! Who can tell the light, and glory, and intelligence of that estate? who fully picture the depth of their present degradation, or who conceive the agonies of their future and eternal woe? Then, to add to their criminality, they must alienate man from his allegiance to God! It is bad enough to sin for oneself,—worse far to plunge others into a common ruin. But so with the devils, the whole history of man, from Eden downwards, is but a melancholy record of Satan’s enmity, subtilty, cruelty, malice, and detestation of that which proved God’s chief work in creation,—man.

By the devil’s subtilty Adam fell; by the devil’s craft David brought pestilence on his people; by the devil’s malice Job was bereft, ruined, and diseased; by the devil’s permitted touch Paul suffered from the thorn; by the devil’s lion-like ferocity the early Church was persecuted;—whilst we read of Satan’s accusations reaching the very throne of God. He is man’s persistent enemy. He found ingress to the garden of Eden; he scales the heavens, and acts there with wiles and darts. He has full control over his children; he tempts, though with broken snares, the children of

God. He appears as a serpent or a lion, as a dragon or as an angel of light.

Legion was possessed, as we say, of the devil, and became a terror to the community and a source of misery to himself. The evil under which he suffered was unmitigated. In point of fact we see in this man an instance of the concentrated malevolence of Satan.

But Jesus comes on the stage, at the sight of whom the devils tremble. Well did they know Him. They owned Him Son of God, but this acknowledgment was not the fruit of faith in a Saviour-God, it was rather a forced confession of His almighty power. As a guilty conscience quails before an officer of justice, so the sense of rebellion against heaven made them tremble at the presence of its Lord. "Art thou come," said they, "to torment us before the time?" Coming torment at His hand they knew was their desert whatever their then condition, and here was the appointed Judge! Is there not something mournfully plaintive, hopelessly desperate in the words "before the time"? As though the period of comparative ease were finished, and that of deeper, fuller woe were about to begin! As though the dreaded moment, long anticipated and profoundly feared, had at last arrived, when outraged holiness must inflict her full and final award, and retributive justice mete out the only desert that is commensurate with the gravity of the crime! For where sin is not atoned for by the blood of Christ, its punishment is eternal.

Yes, these words declare all this. To the devils the certainty of coming doom is a settled conviction, a mere matter of cause and effect,—sin against God, and an eternity of punishment as the only consequence. Hence, as quoted above, “the devils believe, and tremble.”

But man has also sinned, and is sin in him less reprehensible than in devils? No, but whilst sin is the same in all cases, we do not read of redemption for devils, but for man. “He took not up (the cause of) angels; but he took up (the cause of) the seed of Abraham” (Heb. ii. 16). And thus God has “so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Blessed redemption! ineffable love! and that for man,—for you, dear reader, and for me!

But mark, it is “*whosoever*,”—it is any one, but not every one. The word discriminates. It implies a condition,—that of personal faith in the Son of God as Saviour. It precludes universalism,—none but they who believe are blessed; all others are as fully exposed to judgment as are the devils. “He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John iii. 36). Alas! the time is coming for the unbeliever’s doom. If perchance, reader, you are one, you have but a moment of respite ere your sentence be executed. When your time may be I cannot tell, but it is appointed by God. He regulates the motions of the universe; He has fixed your time of judgment.

Ah, soul, you have not one moment to spare! If "Jesus" meant nothing but woe to the devils, shall that blessed name not mean to you what it means to multitudes,—salvation in all its present and eternal blessedness? The devils believe, and tremble; sinner, may you tremble too. But ye who trust in Jesus, let your terror cease, let your fear be gone. You are the objects of His love, and the happy subjects of His salvation. When Legion was dispossessed of the devils, his heart was so filled with the love of Jesus that he prayed to be with Him always,—the magnetism of His love proved its own irresistible power. May it be so with you.

J. W. S.

---

### LOVE'S VICTORY.

Heaven, and earth, and hell witnessed a stupendous struggle the day that Jesus died—a struggle between life and death, between love and hatred. But love more than conquered, and Jesus, dying, leaves the priceless legacy to every poor sinner, "It is finished." The work was done that sets the sinner free. Heaven rejoiced with loud hosannas; hell, I believe, trembled, and was dismayed. And what shall earth do? What shall you and I do? Take these words, and believe them, and rejoice in them.

W. T. P. W.



"IT ISN'T A THING TO BE  
LAUGHED AT."

---



ONE evening in July 1877 some Christians went out-of-doors, in a town in the north of England, to preach the glad tidings of God's grace. Gradually the people came forth from their doors, and gathered around to listen. Among the number was a young man named R—— M——, who was speedily convicted of sin. The Word arrested his conscience, and he was brought face to face with the solemnities of eternity. He discovered that he was a lost sinner on the broad road to hell. But the joyful news of salvation also sounded upon his ears, and through grace he believed the testimony of God to the finished work of His beloved Son, and was saved.

The meeting closed, and the preachers and the crowd dispersed, but R—— M——, in deep exercise of soul, remained riveted to the spot. Just then two of his usual companions came along, returning from a long walk in the country, and greeted him jestingly, not knowing what had taken place. He answered seriously, "*I am converted now,*" and his words went like a dart through the soul of one of them, whose name was J—— K——. The other, an utterly careless young fellow, laughed outright at the very idea of such a thing. But K——, deeply convicted by R—— M——'s words,

replied, "*It isn't a thing to be laughed at.*" No, dear reader, it is not indeed. Those who laugh and mock now will weep and wail by-and-by; and then the Lord will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh (Prov. i. 26).

Now K——'s father, who had been a wild character in his young days, had been converted, and had often spoken to his son about his soul, so that he was not altogether ignorant of his need of a Saviour, or of the way of salvation. From time to time he had been aroused, but stifled his convictions in sin and wickedness. One thing that had often troubled him was a large gospel text that hung upon the wall of his father's cottage, which read thus,—

DEATH.		LIFE.
DAMNATION.		SALVATION.
SATAN.		GOD.

*Which are yours, sinner?*

These words had continually haunted him both at home and at his work, and he was conscious that death, damnation, and Satan were his portion unless he repented of his sins. His spare time was spent in the public-house and other haunts, card-playing, &c., and he strove hard to drown his fears in the pleasures and follies of the world. But with an awakened conscience, all was in vain, and his misery was increased by often finding, upon his return home, his father upon his knees praying aloud and earnestly for his conversion to God.

Many a night he lay awake for hours, thinking of his soul and eternity. He knew that if he died the lake of fire for ever would be his awful portion (Rev. xx. 15).

About this time K—— learned somewhat of the truth of the second coming of the Lord, and he was conscious that if He came he would be left behind for judgment. A little incident that took place brought this solemn truth most vividly before him and other unconverted ones in the house. One morning his father had risen early, and gone out unperceived. When the rest rose for breakfast, he was nowhere to be found, and they thought that the Lord had come and taken him to glory (1 Thess. iv. 15-20), as he had often said might happen, and that they were left behind. It was a terrible moment for poor J—— K——, as he remembered how the foolish virgins knocked in vain at the closed door in the parable (Matt. xxv. 10-13). It was an immense relief and joy to them when the father presently returned.

Notwithstanding this J—— K—— went on without Christ, living in sin. But the gracious Lord still followed him in mercy. One night, having gone to bed, trembling lest he should die before morning, he dreamt that he was in hell. It seemed to him as a dismal place of darkness, and the wicked suffering each in a place by himself. And then he looked up and saw a Man above him in heaven, whom he knew to be the Lord Jesus Christ.

He awoke with a start, and wept profusely, but

thankful to find that there was yet time to escape so awful a doom. His sobs aroused his father, who was anxious to know the cause, but, afraid to be spoken to about his sins and his soul, it was some time before he could confess what had happened. His father pointed him to Christ the only Saviour, and told him of His finished work, His precious blood. But instead of bowing to that blessed Name, and believing on Him to the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation of his soul, he tried Satan's old plan, the well-beaten road trodden by so many convicted but unsaved souls, the way of reformation. Poor K—— followed this path, but like thousands more, found it hard toil and no profit. His good resolutions soon gave way, and it was not long before he was back again at his old haunts and his old sins. Satan is far more than a match for all who seek heaven by "doing." It is a vain delusion indeed to seek to improve the flesh, which God gave up as incorrigible nearly nineteen centuries ago (Rom. viii. 3-8). The sinner's fit of improvement is generally of short duration.

Gospel meetings held in the streets were a special source of trouble to K——. He knew that the truth was preached, but he shrank from it because of his sin. The very sight of the preachers caused him to colour deeply and to drop his head. What cowards even the naturally brave become when the salvation of the soul is in question. In depths of misery his only consolation was that his very state proved that God had not entirely given him up, although

at times he was ready to think that his case was hopeless, and that he must be eternally lost.

Dear reader, what do you know of these ploughings of conscience? Are you going on self-satisfied and indifferent, or have you had to do with God? It is a personal matter. You *must meet Him*. Now grace abounds, and He is a Saviour-God, but soon grace will cease to flow, and woe to all who are exposed to His judgment. Oh! then, have to do with Him now. "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job xxii. 21). But if you refuse or neglect the salvation of God now, you will surely reap the eternal judgment of God in the future.

It was after this time that the incident occurred which we referred to in the opening of this paper. R—— M——'s words, "I am converted now," did their work. They went right home, and J—— K—— said to him, "If you are saved now, we will go and burn the cards." Turning their steps at once to M——'s house, where they had been playing night after night, they consigned them all to the flames. From this moment K—— broke with his old companions in sin, and was so deeply convicted that he thought he was the most wretched creature upon the face of the earth.

M—— asked him the next night to attend a Bible-reading, but he couldn't face it. He was afraid of the reproach and scoff of the world. A little later, however, he summoned courage and went, being broken down before God. The fear of

death and hell tormented him morning, noon, and night (Heb. ix. 27). He felt he deserved eternal woe, and although he knew the plan of salvation, there seemed no way of escape for such a sinner as him.

Then he tried hymn-singing, which he thought would be more pleasing to God than his former habitual bad language and swearing. This seemed to bring a temporary happiness, but his conscience pricked him that the contents of the hymns had no application to him. However, he persevered at this, trying meanwhile to be as good as he could! One night he thought he would go home and tell his father he was saved now, for he knew what a joy it would be to him. But, alas! his false happiness deserted him before he reached the door, and all was in vain. Another day passed, and still he lacked peace. But the long night of darkness of soul was about to be succeeded by a morning without clouds. The next day was Saturday, and K—— and others left off work early, and he had arranged to go out for the afternoon with a friend. But as he left the door of his house his distress of soul was so great, he felt he could not go. The thought rushed through his mind, "If you put salvation off this time you will be lost for ever," and he told his friend he would not go.

Re-entering the house, he reached down a Bible, and went into a room by himself. Opening it at John iii. 16, he read and re-read that blessed verse, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his

only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But he could make nothing of it. All seemed dark. He could grasp the first part about God's wondrous love, and the gift of His Son, but could not apply the latter part, that "*whosoever believeth* in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." How could God save such a sinner as he by simply believing on His Son? He read it again, but could make nothing of it. Satan suggested that he was past salvation altogether, and he thought it was of no use to read it any more. But still he hesitated, and could not leave it. He could not close the book, and think that he was lost for ever. He read the verse again, and wept before God about his sins.

By this time his father had come home, and he entered the room, and spoke to him from the word that he was reading, and also turned to many other precious scriptures. One was that familiar and blessed passage, "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 6). Still all was dark. At last he opened at John v. 24, and read, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." Pressing it upon him, he said, "'He that *heareth*,' that's the first thing, and '*believeth*,' the second, and '*hath*' the third;" and he went over it again and again. Then once more,

reading the whole verse, he pressed upon his son the importance of taking God at His word, saying that if God says "*hath*" He means what He says, for He could not tell a lie.

In a moment the light broke in upon J—— K——'s soul. He saw that if God said *hath*, He meant it. All was clear in an instant. He heard, he believed, he *had*. He took God at His word, and *everlasting life was his*. Tears of sorrow were succeeded by tears of joy. Darkness was dispelled by light. Unbelief gave place to faith. Fear fled before peace. *Hath* took the place of *hope*, and J—— K—— *was saved*. From that moment to this perfect peace of soul has been his blessed portion.

He saw then how that hymn-singing had even been used of the enemy to keep him away from Christ. Satan will use good things as well as bad to attain his object. But now he could sing with the spirit, and the following verse expressed the joy of his heart:—

“Once as prodigals we wandered,  
In our folly far from Thee ;  
But Thy grace, o’er sin abounding,  
Rescued us from misery.  
Thou the prodigal hast pardoned,  
Kissed us with a Father’s love,  
Killed the fatted calf, and called us  
E’er to dwell with Thee above.”

Yes, the wandering prodigal was now the subject of grace. Rescued from misery, he had received the Father’s kiss, and was now enjoying His



love, and feasting upon the riches of His grace, as His child. His soul enjoyed that blessed assurance which the sure word of God alone could give, and which all the power of Satan can never take away. Joy and peace filled his soul, and praises issued from his lips to the One who had so richly blessed him. The dread of hell, the fear of judgment, the shrinking from death, had all been dispelled, and the coming of the Lord instead filled him with joy and delight. Eternal life his present portion, he knew the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ. Life, love, and liberty, all were his. The wanderer was brought to God.

And now the once coward-hearted sinner became the bold-spirited follower of Christ, telling forth the glad tidings in His name. It was with him as with others, "I believed, and therefore have I spoken" (2 Cor. iv. 13). He could not keep the blessed joyful news to himself. His Saviour was a Saviour for all; he must declare it. In his simple way he told others what the Lord had done for his soul; how he had passed from death unto life, and was saved. And he has been found from that day to this, in fellowship with others of the Lord's people, worshipping and serving Him.

A word with you, dear reader, before we close. What do you think of all this? It's not a thing to be laughed at. Are you sceptical about it? Is it all a delusion? Is there nothing in it? Or is this but one sample of thousands of the true and only way in which God brings souls to Himself.

Rest assured it is no dream, but a solid reality. Christendom is filled with professors and imitations, but conversion is a reality, and without it there is not a ray of hope for you. Scripture is plain, "*Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" "*Ye must be born again*" (John iii. 7).

Have you undergone this great change? If not, we beseech you to look this momentous matter in the face. Take your place in self-judgment before God, believe on His Son, and everlasting life will be yours also, for "he that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life" (John iii. 36). But the same sure word declares, "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." May your heart be opened to believe on that Blessed One, that you too, like J—— K——, may be filled with joy and peace, and be found worshipping, following, and serving Him. E. H. C.

---

#### A POSITIVE CERTAINTY.

THE day is coming, dear unsaved soul, when all you cling to so tightly will be torn from your grasp most ruthlessly, and you must pass into eternity. Listen! You have not wanted Christ *here*; you have lived without Him *here*; consequently you *must* be without Him *there*. When a man dies here, he passes out of the sight of his fellows; this is the *first death*. The *second death* is infinitely worse, he passes out of God's sight for ever. Awful future! Terrible eternity! W. T. P. W.

## BARRIERS REMOVED.



IN the third of Genesis the Holy Ghost narrates the fall of man, his banishment from Eden, and that the Lord God placed at the east of the garden cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

In chapter iv. two things are delineated,—the way of salvation; and the two classes who inhabit the earth, the saved and the lost.

Two men, Cain and Abel, the children of fallen Adam and his wife, bring each an offering to the Lord. Cain the husbandman comes with fruit of the ground, but the offerer and the offering are alike rejected; and the reason of this is learned in the offering of Abel, who brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof, and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering.

From Abel's offering we learn the necessity and value of atonement, *i.e.*, "a life given and accepted as sacrifice for life forfeited."

Adam by his sin had insulted the majesty of God, and put himself at a distance from Him, and righteousness demanded satisfaction. Both Cain and Abel were Adam's offspring, the inheritors of a sinful nature, born outside Eden, and themselves sinners.

Abel by faith apprehended and bowed to the truth of his condition as a sinner, and of God's righteous claims upon him, and that a life offered up in atonement was the only way and ground of approach to Him, so he slew a lamb of his flock and offered it to God, who immediately accepted the sacrifice and the offerer.

The cherubim and the flaming sword had a voice for Abel which he regarded. He had no right to life; as a sinner, death and judgment were his due. *The lamb, as his substitute, endured both;* and Abel thus found the way to heavenly and everlasting blessing.

Ages afterwards, in fulfilment of this and every other type of Himself, our Lord Jesus Christ, for the Father's glory, and the salvation of lost sinners, went to the Cross, and there, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God. There the mighty work of redemption was accomplished, through the shed blood of that spotless peerless Victim. Jesus, the true tree of life, has been into this world of sin and death, and access to Him is denied to none. Concerning Him it is announced to every poor sinner under heaven, "HE THAT BELIEVETH ON THE SON HATH EVERLASTING LIFE."

Cain ignored the fact of the insult offered to God's majesty and holiness by sin, and of his own fallen and sinful condition. He disregarded the presence of the dread guardians of Eden, and, as though nothing had happened, came before God

with a gift, the product of his own labour. But it was a bloodless offering, and this from a sinner is an offence to God; and we read that "unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect."

Cain is wroth;—the proud sinner is angry, because God is true to His nature and character, and refuses to look over sin without atonement.

But the great principle is established, that "without shedding of blood is no remission," for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul.

Though man had lost paradise, and incurred the just wrath of God, yet had God appointed a way by which he might escape the wrath, and obtain greater blessings than those forfeited. Thus grace as well as righteousness shine out at the very commencement of the reign of sin and death, THE GRACE OF GOD TO POOR SINNERS.

The despiser of the blood murders his brother, goes out an accursed fugitive and vagabond from the presence of the Lord, and dwells in the land of Nod, *on the east of Eden*. But between him and the garden of delights were the cherubim and flaming sword, and between him and the paradise of God, of which Eden was the type and figure, was his sin unpurged by blood; for he had refused the only thing that would propitiate that sword, and shelter him from the righteous wrath of God.

And yet, in sight of lost paradise, and with the full knowledge that he had departed for ever from

God's presence, this doomed man builds a city, calls it after the name of his first-born son, and surrounds himself with a world without God! Cain, the unitarian, was the ancestor of Jubal, the inventor of music, by which man would fain drown the perpetual groan of a sin-burdened creation. But the groan is still heard, and will never be hushed, until He comes, who shall bring with Him deliverance.

Centuries afterwards God in grace came down and dwelt among a people separated to Himself from amongst the nations, but His presence and glory were hidden from the gaze of men by the mystic veil on which were wrought *cherubim of cunning work*.

Once a year only did one man draw aside that veil, and for a moment approach the golden mercy-seat, but only to sprinkle the blood of propitiation beneath the gaze of the watchful cherubim.

At the gate of Eden, those zealous ministers of God guarded the way of the tree of life; afterwards, in tabernacle and temple, they guarded the approach to Jehovah's holy presence.

Where are the cherubim and the flaming sword now? GONE. That sword, at the awful Cross of Calvary, awoke against Him who was Jehovah's fellow, and sheathed itself in His blessed bosom. The claims of divine justice were there, once and for ever, met for all who believe in Jesus; in testimony whereof, God, in righteousness and grace, rent the temple's cherubic veil from top to bottom.

A new and living way was opened up for the sinner, through the pierced side of Christ, right up to the presence and glory of God.

Cherubim and sword are now alike taken out of the way; the sword has smitten the Good Shepherd, the dear Saviour and Friend of Sinners, and pardon and peace are proclaimed to the guilty. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "*How* shall we escape, if we neglect so *great* salvation?"

W. H. S.

---

### THREE ASPECTS OF CHRIST'S LOVE.

WHAT has Jesus done for us? "Christ LOVED the church and (1) GAVE HIMSELF for it; (2) that he might SANCTIFY and CLEANSE it with the washing of water by the word; (3) that he might PRESENT IT TO HIMSELF a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. v. 25-27). Yes, blessed be His name! deep into the dark waters of our condition did He fling Himself, that, by dying, He might blot out our guilt, and then, rising from the dead, connect us with Himself in everlasting glory. His love was the spring of all. In the *past*, "he gave himself"—that settled every question of our guilty state before God. At *present*, He sanctifies, purifying us by the water of the word. In the *future*, He will present us to Himself. What love! Our past, present, and future are canopied by a love that leaves nothing to be desired but hearts more appreciative and more responsive; for *love is only satisfied with love*, and can brook no less requital. W. T. P. W.

## "MAN SHALL NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE."



"I'm sorry to say a little of that goes a long way with me." These words were uttered by a doctor who was attending a Christian friend of the writer's. Stopping to chat with the nurse on his way out, their conversation turned to the low price of bread, and he rather suddenly exclaimed, "Let me see, doesn't it say, 'Man shall not live by bread alone'?" His patient finished quoting the scripture, "but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4). He was silent a moment, then with a touch of sadness in his voice, repeating the words already quoted, he hastily left the house.

About a fortnight after this he was suddenly taken dangerously ill, and after six days' illness he passed out of this scene.

It is possible, though not very probable, that he turned to the Saviour on his deathbed; for when the brain is weak, and the body racked with pain, there is little if any ability to think of eternal things, even though there may be the desire.

Sincere regret was felt by most if not all of his patients when they heard of his death, for he was kind and gentle always; but his naturally amiable disposition would not fit him for the presence of



God. “Ye *must* be born again” (John iii. 7), said the Lord to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, a master in Israel, and a Pharisee, one who was looked up to no doubt as a “good man.” It was imperative that *he* should be born again, and *every one*, to be able to stand unabashed in the presence of Him who is “light” (1 John i. 5), *must* believe in Him who is the “true light” (John i. 9). He said, “I am the light of the world” (John viii. 12). “While ye have light, *believe* in the light, that ye may be the children of light” (John xii. 36).

“I’m sorry to say a little of that goes a long way with me.” What was *that*? It must have been the scripture. How sad to own that he was satisfied with “a little” of that Word which is so precious to the believer in the Lord Jesus, and which is as necessary for the soul as bread is for the body. How different was the speech of Mr B—— to that of Job, who said, “I have esteemed the words of his mouth *more* than my necessary food” (Job xxiii. 12).

The prophet Jeremiah said, “Thy words were found, and I did *eat* them; and thy word was unto me the *joy* and *rejoicing* of mine heart” (Jer. xv. 16). And the Psalmist could say, “The law of thy mouth is *better* unto me than thousands of gold and silver;” and again, “Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they are the *rejoicing* of my heart” (Psalm cxix. 72, 111).

Dear reader, I ask you to be warned by the sad end of this young doctor. In the last month of

1886 he was laid in the grave, there either to wait till death and the grave deliver up the dead which are in them, to stand before "the great white throne," and hear the awful sentence "depart *from me*," and finally to be consigned to the "lake of fire," the place "prepared for the devil and his angels;" or, to awake in response to the shout of the Captain of Salvation (calling His loved ones *to Him*), "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God" (1 Thess. iv. 16).

Unsaved reader, again I beg you to be warned. You are in imminent danger; you may be cut off even more suddenly than the one of whom I have been writing. Oh, search that precious book the Word of God; it is full of Christ—the *only* Saviour—from Genesis to Revelation. Faith in *Christ* is *sure* salvation to you, and "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the *word of God*" (Rom. x. 17). The Lord Jesus Christ said, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that *heareth my word, and believeth* on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall *not* come into condemnation; but *is* passed from death unto life" (John v. 24). Believe in Him, and you will delight to read His Word. A little of it will not go a long way with you when you *know Him* who is the theme of the book; you will find it to be more precious the more you study it.

"He that *cometh* to me shall never hunger; and he that *believeth* on me shall never thirst" (John vi. 35). Oh! *come, believe*, and be satisfied with the "Bread of Life." If you once taste, you will never

again hunger for the worldling's portion ; real and lasting satisfaction is to be found only in Christ.

Beloved *Christian* reader, are you as a child of God, "*holding forth the word of life*" (Phil. ii. 16). The heart of the apostle Paul was filled with joy and thanksgiving by the walk of the Thessalonian saints. He said, "*What thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God ; night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith ?*"

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the *word of God* which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the *word of men*, but (as it is in truth) the *word of God*, which effectually worketh also in you that believe."

*They "received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost ;"* and then from them "*sounded out the word of the Lord*" (1 Thess. i. 6, 8). How is it with you ?

E. L. C.

---

#### A WORD TO EXCUSE-MAKERS.

EXCUSES have ruined and damned thousands of souls. Have you one solitary excuse that will bear the light of day ? Not one ! You may say, "I am too bad—too young—too old—too hardened." No, the Lord says, "*Ye will not come to me that ye might have life.*" Your *will* is at work, you don't want to come, and so you don't come. If you really wanted Christ, you would soon find your way to Him.

W. T. P. W.

## SHEEP-MARKING.



FARMER H—— lived at a rustic farmhouse near the far-famed Bolton Abbey, in Yorkshire.

In his kindness Mr H—— opened his kitchen for gospel preachings once a month. On one of these occasions I went over a little earlier than usual to see my family, who were lodging there. Wishing to have a word with Mr H——, I visited the farmyard, where he was superintending his men engaged in marking his newly-shorn sheep. As the animals passed under the marking-iron, and each received a black "H" of hot tar on its side, Mr H—— evidently enjoyed watching them run off to the meadow, bearing the initial of his name. While he was thus occupied I asked him the question, "Why do you *mark* your sheep?"

"Oh," he said, "that I may know they are mine, to be sure; and that nobody may run off with them."

"Yes, that's a very good reason, Mr H——, and may I also ask, Do you know how many marks the Lord Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, puts upon all *His* sheep?"

"No," he replied, "I don't think I do."

"Well, Mr H——, He puts at least *three* marks upon all who hear His voice, and believe on Him to the saving of their souls."

“Does He?” said Farmer H——.

“Yes, He does, indeed,” I said; “and I will tell you what sort of marks they are. The first is: ‘*I give unto THEM eternal life.*’ The second is: ‘*THEY shall never perish.*’ The third is: ‘*Neither shall any pluck THEM out of my hand*’” (John x. 28). Now, Mr H——, do you possess these three marks?”

“I am afraid not, sir,” was his reply.

“Oh, do let me press upon you, Mr H——, the absolute necessity of not resting satisfied till you know you are a sheep of that Shepherd, who, in such love and compassion, came such a distance to seek and to save lost ones, wandering on the dark mountains of sin, where all are by nature, ‘for all have sinned, and have come short of the glory of God; and there is none righteous, no, not one.’ Do not, Mr H——, I beseech you, for one single moment stop short of trusting the precious blood of Christ, the great Shepherd, that alone cleanses from all sin, shelters from all judgment, and brings the soul nigh to God; and may you, without delay, find grace to help you to receive the three marks from the loving Shepherd, who so freely gives, and who is now so graciously waiting to bless.”

Farmer H—— was taken ill, and on his death-bed he wished to see me.

In that interview he gave evidences of having accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as his Saviour, and of possessing His three divine marks. He reached the advanced age of eighty-four, which was a long

time to stay away from Jesus, the Shepherd of His sheep, and was it not running the fearful risk of for ever losing his never-dying soul in that awful place where the Great Shepherd never goes to seek and to save! Ah, friend, there is no grace *there*! No salvation *there*! No Good Shepherd's marks *there*! All damnation *there*! All who are *there* bear Satan's marks, which are these: "To steal," "to kill," and "to destroy!" (John x. 10.)

Dear reader, do not think me advancing a step too far when I ask (and I ask it solemnly), Will *you* in reality say what marks you now bear? Have you, as a lost sheep, been found by the Good Shepherd, accepted Him, and been marked by Him? Whether or not, He is yet seeking, and saving the lost, and His word still is, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mark xi. 28).

The marks on Farmer H——'s sheep (like all human marks of good works for salvation) would have, at the latest, to come off when shearing time arrived, but the divine marks of a believer in the Lord Jesus *abide for ever*.

As I said to Farmer H——, his sheep might have died, got strangled amongst thorns and briers, been drowned in the ditch, killed by dogs, stolen from his fields, and the marks cut out by the thief, or the like, but the divine marks of the sheep of Christ, on the authority of His own word, are "ETERNAL LIFE:" "SHALL NEVER PERISH:" "NEITHER SHALL ANY MAN PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND."

Farmer H—— said he paid about three sovereigns for each of his sheep, but the “Great Shepherd” (blessed be His name for ever!) gave His LIFE for *His* sheep, and you may depend upon it He values and cares for them accordingly; and is it likely He will ever give them up or let them go? No, never! We have cost Him too much for *that*! Dear soul, whoever you are, *you* either have eternal life or are on your way to eternal judgment, with its stamp already upon you. Either you are found, rescued, and marked for the bright fields of glory, or you are still lost and undone. You are under the power of Satan the wolf; or safe in the hands of the heavenly Shepherd. You are on your way to the lake of fire, where you will be in eternal misery with that deceiving wolf, and bearing his foul marks, or you are at this moment on your road to glory, where you will be eternally happy with the Chief Shepherd, who has glorified a holy God, and met all His righteous and just claims as to sin; and “who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” and is so soon coming to take all His own to be for ever with Himself in the “sweet fields of glory.”

Jesus said, “I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be *saved*, and shall *go in and out* and find *pasture*” (John x. 9); and all His sheep can say with the Psalmist, “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters” (Psa. xxiii. 1, 2); and they can say with the poet—

“ We'll sing of the Shepherd that died,  
That died for the sake of the flock ;  
His love to the utmost was tried,  
But firmly endured as a rock.”

Jesus is seeking lost ones ; He always finds, saves, and satisfies them for ever ; this He only can do. I ask, dear soul, is He YOUR all-satisfying portion ? If not, why, oh, why not ? Delay not, but enter while there's room, for soon the door of heaven will be shut for ever. If you bear your own marks of *doing your best, striving, giving, improving, turning over a new leaf*, and so forth, give them up, I beseech you, for, if you leave this world with them upon you, they will be substituted by Satan's eternal marks. Then, do be warned. Do be encouraged to accept the Lord's own marks, which will neither be exchanged nor altered throughout all eternity. How blessed are you, if you can say :—

“ The Shepherd sought His sheep,  
The Father sought His child ;  
He followed me o'er vale and hill,  
O'er desert waste and wild.  
He found me nigh to death,  
Famished, and faint, and lone ;  
He bound me with the chains of love,  
He saved the wandering one.

No more a wandering sheep,  
I love to be controlled ;  
I love my tender Shepherd's voice,  
I love the peaceful fold.  
No more a wayward child,  
I seek no more to roam ;  
I love my heavenly Father's voice,  
I love, I love His home.”



"A FORTNIGHT'S WARNING."



OME time ago, in a town in the North of Ireland, a fire broke out, which caused a good deal of excitement and alarm, so widespread were its ravages. For some time after it was a general topic of conversation. One evening before the excitement had subsided, a Christian man, while getting into a 'bus to go home, was observed by two gentlemen who knew him, who determined to have some amusement out of him with reference to the fire. One of them asked him in a jocular manner if he had heard of the fire. He replied he had, and remarked rather solemnly there was going to be a greater fire some day, quoting the well-known scripture (2 Peter iii. 10), "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up." To this the gentleman scoffingly replied, "Surely God would not burn up His creatures like that. You say God is a God of love, and yet you mean to affirm He is going to burn us all up. He surely would not do that without at least giving us a fortnight's warning."

"God is light," replied the Christian, "and must punish sin. He cannot clear the guilty. He has manifested His love in the fullest possible way in the

gift of His own beloved Son, but man has despised and rejected it, and has manifested the wickedness and enmity of his heart by murdering the One who came in lowly grace, the expression of that love; and do you think God will overlook what man has done to His beloved Son?" The gentleman was rebuked, and could only reply, "God will surely give us at least a fortnight's warning." "I have often warned you," solemnly replied this Christian man, "and I solemnly warn you to-day, that 'except you repent you will surely perish.'" He then left the 'bus, saying, "Remember you are on your warning." That was his last warning, for, solemn to relate, on that day fortnight, while sitting in his office at mid-day, this poor scoffer dropped off his chair a lifeless corpse.

Dear reader, if you are unconverted and still in your sins, has this not a voice to you? If death were to steal into your chamber to-night and lay its cold clammy hand upon your heart, and you were ushered into the presence of God, how would you meet Him, the God against whom you have sinned? How, I ask you, would you meet those all-searching eyes, piercing into the innermost depths of your soul? How could you stand before the presence of such infinite holiness? He "is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin." Ah! there is but one answer. The lake of fire would be your everlasting portion; you would join in that everlasting wail of despair, cast out from the presence of a sin-hating God,

whose grace and mercy you had all your life spurned.

"What horrors shall roll o'er the Christless soul,  
Waked from its death-like sleep !  
Of all hope bereft, and to judgment left,  
For ever to wail and to weep."

And now, dear reader, as this Christian man said to the scoffer, I would say to you, "Remember you are on your warning." It may be your last. God alone knows. Do not, I beseech you, put the solemn question of your soul's salvation away from you, but face it now ere it be too late. Remember God has said, "He that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." How often has God spoken to you in one way and another, and yet you are still hardening your neck and rejecting His Son. You have, like Felix (in Acts xxiv.), been putting off till a more convenient season, which, be assured, will never come. Then why put it off even for another hour? "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." To-morrow is the devil's time. Now is God's time. "To-day, if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

"Now ! Now ! Now !

To-morrow too late may be !

Oh, wherefore the moments in madness waste,  
When Jesus is calling thee ?"

Oh, I beseech you, dear reader, in love to your precious never-dying soul, to take your place before

God as a poor, guilty, worthless, hell-deserving sinner, owning what you are, your only title to come being your sinfulness, and hear Him say unto you, "Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven." "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." "To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." God declares you are a sinner, both by nature and practice; but listen to what He also says, "If any say, I have sinned (remember it is *I* have sinned, a personal matter), and perverted that which is right, He says, deliver him from going down to the pit, for I have found a ransom." The blood of the Lord Jesus Christ is the ransom. If you take your place as a confessed sinner before God, allow me, on the authority of His Word, to tell you, that He has been perfectly and fully satisfied, yea glorified, about all your sins by the death of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, . . . by whose stripes ye were healed" (1 Peter ii. 24).

If God is satisfied, well may you, my dear reader. Believe on the One who sits on the throne of God, who once bore your sins on the cross, and is now in glory without one of them, and you are immediately and eternally saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31).

“YET DOTH HE DEVISE MEANS.”

(Read 2 Samuel xiii. 23, xiv.)



HE narrative contained in these two chapters shows, most beautifully, the way in which God acts now, in His grace, and in His desire to bring back the sinner to Himself. There is one great point though, in which the narrative differs from—indeed, is entirely in contrast to—the gospel; because whatever God does is righteous, and if He loves, He loves righteously; whereas this narrative shows us love travelling faster than righteousness, and the sequel is, there is a grand revolt, and David's throne is upset, as we see in chapter xv. If God show love, if He save me He does it righteously; He saves by His grace, He saves utterly, but He saves righteously.

David brings back his son Absalom, but he brings him back unrighteously, without judging his sin, and the consequence was he got bold; and that is what people who do not believe in the solemn realities of eternal judgment, and an endless hell now are; they are bold and defy God. Absalom was a murderer. However deep might be Amnon's guilt, there was no excuse for Absalom. He was a murderer; and yet you hear him saying in the end of chapter xiv., “If there be any iniquity in me.” His sin had not been judged, he had been

brought back unrighteously, his conscience was hardened, and the consequence was the moral character of the throne of David was destroyed; and where the moral character of the throne is upset, all is lost, as chapter xv. tells us, for "the throne is established by righteousness" (Prov. xvi. 12).

Now God cannot make light of sin, though He has only love in His heart for the sinner. Reader, you and I have outraged God's character and God's throne, but we have not changed one whit the heart that fills that throne; and though you may be a sinner of the deepest dye, yet you are an object of the love of God; His love has not been destroyed by your sin. And so we see in David, his heart yearns after the runaway.

It is worthy of notice in chapter xiii. that it is recorded three times "Absalom fled." Why did he fly? Because his conscience, then fully alive to his guilt, told him that, though his father might be king, yet he himself was a murderer, and that there was nothing, in righteousness, for a murderer but death. So he fled, for sin makes cowards of us all, and when a man has sin upon his conscience, he feels he cannot face God. It is a solemn thing, my friend, to have to face God in your sins. Have to do with God you must; you cannot evade it; and you have sinned. I do not care how much, or how little you have sinned, but you have sinned, and "the wages of sin is death." But what is sin? Sin is man following the desire

of his own heart; and have not you done that? You know you have.

Here, the desire of his own heart makes Absalom a murderer, and he flies from the presence of the king. And have not you got away, have not you fled from God? Does not your conscience still keep you at a distance from Him? But oh, do not you desire to get back to God? May His word bring you back just now. Why is the gospel preached? Because the world is away from God. If you were not away from God why need the gospel be preached to you? The gospel tells you that you are away from God, but that His love wants to bring you back. *God wants to have you.*

“Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.” Not to bring us to heaven, nor to bring us to peace, but to bring us to God; and no soul is brought to God till it is brought to trust the blood of Christ. How the grace comes all from God’s side, too! Have you been seeking to know God? God has been beforehand with you. He has been seeking you. He gave His own Son for me long before I ever had a thought about Him; and now the Cross tells me God wants to save me; and the Cross tells me God can righteously save me.

Are *you*, my reader, unconverted, with a weight of sins upon your conscience? God wants to bring you back to Himself. The soul of David longed after Absalom. Three years had Absalom been away! and how long have you been away? Twenty years?

Thirty years? Threescore years? Well, I do not know your age, but this I know, that if unsaved, you have never been near God yet. You have spent your life at a distance from God, but He wants to have you brought back; God wants to have the link of relationship formed between Himself and you.

Cast your eye back for a moment over life's pathway, and tell me what relationship has there ever been yet between your soul and God? Has Christ been uppermost? Has He had a place in your thoughts? Has He had a place in your plans? Has He been your object? The soul that is unconverted, and honest, says, "No, God has had no place in my thoughts hitherto; my plans have all been formed without Him; Christ has not been my object." But you *must* meet God. Why not meet Him now in grace, when in the love of His heart He wants to save you? Can you meet Him in judgment? In your sins? To do so is to be lost for ever.

The reason man does not accept God's offer of mercy is because he does not care for it. Why did not the men in the Gospels accept the invitation to the feast? Because they were like you, who remain unsaved; they did not care for it, they had no heart to come, and you have not cared to be saved. If the heart had been right, the man with the yoke of oxen would have said, "The oxen are very fine, but I can wait until to-morrow to prove them;" and the man with the piece of ground would have



said, "I can wait till to-morrow to go and see that;" and the man who had married a wife would have said, "I am going to a feast, my dear, and you had better come with me," *i.e.*, he would have gone himself, and taken her with him. But they had no heart to go, and you have no heart for Christ's invitation; but though your heart is all wrong towards God, His heart is towards you.

David's heart was towards the prodigal, but for many a long day he must have felt, and said, "If I gratify my heart and bring him back, my hand holds a sword that must be planted in his bosom as soon as he returns."

But time rolls by, Absalom's sin is forgotten, and Joab, using the wise woman of Tekoah as a tool, gets his own way, and the end of it is that David gives way, and brings his son back without judging his sin. But does God bring back His prodigals without judging their sin? No, no. He has judged it in the Cross of Christ.

Until the Cross, where Christ suffered and bare sin, there was a barrier between man and God. Until the Cross of Christ God was behind the veil; God dwelt between the cherubim (symbol of His righteousness); and there was a thick veil between man and God. The high priest drew near once a year; went inside that veil, alone, with blood of others; but he came out again, and the veil remained. But when Jesus died; when man had nailed Him to the tree; when man had done his worst—for it was man's hand that drove in those

nails, it was man's hand that planted the crown of thorns upon that peerless brow, it was man's hand that plunged the spear into that blessed side—then, I say, when man had done his *very worst* against God, that very moment, in His matchless, His exquisite, His infinite grace, did God seize to do His *very best* for man. Christ, in that hour of darkness, when God's righteous wrath and man's unrighteous wrath alike fell on His blessed head, did a work that enables God to come out in righteousness and in love to man, and save the vilest sinner on earth who believes.

When Jesus died, not only were the rocks rent, but he who entered the temple next found the veil rent from the top to the bottom. Why from the top to the bottom? Because it was God's hand that had done it. If man had rent that veil it would only have been to bring swift destruction on himself; and if man goes into God's presence now without Christ's blood, what must it be but sure destruction to him? But God Himself breaks down the barrier. The Cross where the Holy One died for the sinner, opened the way into God's very presence. "I am the way," says Christ, and if you seek another way you are on the wrong road altogether.

David's love, as we have seen, outstrips his righteousness, but when God brings back the sinner, He brings him back in righteousness. The Cross of Christ tells me this, that God's grace reigns now, in the place where death reigned

before, and it reigns through righteousness, not at the expense of righteousness. Instead of death falling on the guilty soul, death falls on Jesus—the death of the Cross, death in the dark shades of Golgotha—and that death opens the way into God's presence for you and me.

If I were not brought to God in righteousness, I should be afraid some day He would rake up the question of my sins; but when I know my sins have all been taken up by my substitute, Jesus, and that He has borne every one of them, not as I know them, but as God knows them, then I know that I escape the penalty due to them, through sovereign love indeed, but love that is based on righteousness.

Do you believe this story of the Cross? Then do you not see in it how God loves you? Yes, He wants you? He tells me first of all that He has gauged my guilt, and that Christ took the full weight of that guilt on Him when He died; and "mercy and truth meet together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

The wise woman of Tekoah said to the king, "We must needs die," *i.e.*, the moral of her story is, Make haste; and the moral of my story to you, my dear reader, is *make haste*, for you may soon die, you know not how soon, and you must meet God. "Yet," she says, "doth he (God) devise means that his banished be not expelled from him." What wondrous means doth God devise! The death of the guiltless for the guilty, the holy

for the unholy, the sinless for the sinful. Who but God would have given His Son for a wretched sinner like me? Yet, alas! these means find little acceptance in the eyes of man. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness," but the Cross of Christ is God's only way of salvation. Christ maintains the character of the Throne of God in righteousness, while He manifests the character of the heart of God in its deep, deep love. Can you, my friend, agree with a lunatic who once thus exquisitely expressed it?—

"Could I with ink the ocean fill,  
Were every blade of grass a quill,  
Were the whole heaven of parchment made,  
And every man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry :  
Nor could the scroll contain the whole  
Though stretched from sky to sky."

Now, observe the contrast between David's message and God's message. The king's character breaks down; love reigns at the expense of righteousness; God's love reigns through righteousness. The king's message is, "Go, bring the young man back," but "let him not see my face." What is God's message to you? "Bring him, bring her to *me*." "Christ suffered for sins once, the just for the unjust, that he might *bring us* to God." Luke xv. says that while the returning prodigal was "yet a great way off, the father saw him, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him."

After two years Absalom gets the kiss, but how long has the repentant and returning sinner now to wait for the Father's kiss? Two years? No! Not two seconds!

What do you find when you come to God? That He has open arms for you! I think the prodigal must have stood still, in downright, sheer amazement, when he saw his father *run*; and he kissed his unwashen cheek; kissed him in his rags,—fell on his neck and kissed him! What wondrous grace! God's own heart proposes the plan for our salvation. God gives up His Son to die; God's hand raises Him from the dead. God sends down the Holy Ghost, and God now Himself sends out the message, inviting the sinner to come near. It is all wondrous grace and love. In David's heart there is love, but not light—not maintained righteousness. In God there is both. He has shown me up in my true character. He has to make no discoveries of me by-and-by. He has discovered my true state, and love comes in and meets that state. Light shows me my sin, love puts that sin away. Love and righteousness are the two immovable pillars on which the whole superstructure of Christianity rests.

Oh! will you not turn to this One—the One in whom both love and righteousness are combined? Will you not receive Christ at once? With Him everything is yours. May you receive His grace, and taste the joy of it, and be a witness and confessor of how good is God.

W. T. P. W.

## "MAYBE I'M NOT TRUSTING RIGHT."



AM glad you have come to-day ; Alice was wishing so much to see you ;" and as the mother spoke, she placed a chair for me close by the bedside of the sick girl I had come to see.

A glance at the invalid told me that she was sinking fast. It was only a few days since I had been there before, but the disease (consumption) from which she was suffering had made rapid progress since then, and it was evident that in a few hours at most her earthly course would be run.

"And why were you wishing so much to see me *to-day*, Alice ?" I asked, as I took the offered seat, and bent down my ear to catch the answer she was almost too weak to give.

"I'm afraid maybe I'm not trusting right."

"But who is it you are trusting, Alice dear ?" I asked.

"Jesus," she whispered feebly.

"Well, He does not tell you to trust Him *right*, but only to *trust* Him, and none perish that trust Him. To trust is just to leave all *to Him* and nothing to yourself. Don't you remember, Alice, last day I was in, we spoke together of the preciousness of the blood which cleanseth from *all* sin, and how you rested upon that ?"

"Yes, but—but the evil thoughts come yet," she replied faintly.

"Well, Satan can and does trouble us, causing us to doubt and fear when he gets us to look into ourselves, instead of just looking straight off to Jesus, and keep looking. But, Alice, there is one thing Satan knows well he cannot do, and that is, he cannot take a single one of those who have really trusted in the Lord Jesus out of His hand; even the feeblest is just as safe as the strongest when they are in His hand, for He has said none is able to 'pluck them out of my hand' (John x. 28). Surely that is quite enough, Alice?"

A look of rest came into the young sufferer's face, and she lay quite still for a little while, and then the shadow came back again.

"What troubles you now, dear?" I asked gently.

"When I pray to Him," she whispered, "I cannot get just the right words I would like."

"But the Lord Jesus does not tell you to pray with 'right' words, Alice. Indeed *He prays for you*. Listen to what is here written in His Word. 'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing *he ever liveth to make intercession for them*' (Heb vii. 25). You know already what He has done for you when on the cross—taken your place, and borne your punishment; but think what He is doing for you now in the glory. 'He ever liveth to make intercession for you.' What else do you need?"

Rest and peace and joy were now plainly written

on the dying one's countenance. The entrance of God's Word had given light. Satan had done his utmost to make her occupied with herself, her trust, her thoughts, her prayers, but she saw now that nothing depended upon her, but that Christ was all and in all. We thanked Him together for His matchless love and grace; and as she was now becoming much exhausted, I rose to go.

"Will you come back the morn again?" she asked.

"Yes, Alice, but it may be that before then you will be with the Lord." She smiled brightly, for the thought gave her joy. And I then asked,—

"How long are you going to be *with Him*, Alice?"

"For ever and ever," she murmured softly.

These were the last words I heard her utter, for in the morn when I called it was only to see the frail tabernacle of clay. Alice was absent from the body, present with the Lord. Yes, gone to be for ever with Him who had redeemed her to God by His blood.

Perhaps this simple story meets the eye of some doubting one, who, like Alice, is troubled as to whether they have the right kind of trust.

But why think of yourself at all? Look away from yourself and all that you are, unto Him who suffered and bled and died for you here, and now lives for you in the glory above.

You will never find comfort or rest of heart in looking into yourself, or in looking around upon others. But, oh, what rest and peace and joy you



will find in looking unto Jesus! And as you keep doing so, you will be enabled to live for Him and to Him. Once you were lost *from* Him, now you are to be lost *in* Him; that is, letting yourself sink out of sight in His abundant fulness, finding Christ all in all.

"You've trusted your soul to Christ, haven't you?" asked one of an aged saint of God, who lay at the point of death. "Yes," he gasped, in a hoarse whisper, "and had I a thousand souls I'd trust them all to Him." Surely, for He is not only able to save, but also able to keep. Then doubt no more, dear reader, but trust Him only, trust Him fully, and be enabled to run with patience the race set before you,—*looking unto Jesus*.

"Jesus, the One who knew no sin,  
Made sin to make us just;  
Thou gav'st Thyself our love to win,  
*Our full confiding trust.*"

Y. Z.

---

#### DIVINE BLESSING AND ITS SOURCE.

REALITY and pride do not go together; but unreality and hypocrisy are ever twin companions. Where the soul is real, ignorance is no barrier to blessing. I do most earnestly desire to impress the soul of my reader with the fact, that *there is such a thing as deep divine eternal blessing*. Do you ask, Where is it to be found? I answer, Not at Jerusalem, but in Jesus.

E. P. C.

## THE PALACE GUIDE.



WHEN wandering amidst the grey ruins of Dunfermline Palace, a decent elderly man addressed me with, "This was the wine cellar, sir." "A spacious place indeed," I replied, "it must have held a goodly store in its day." It was a structure well adapted for the purpose, having a strong vaulted roof, supported by heavy arches upon massive stone pillars. The guide pointed to one corner, saying, "There is an underground passage leading to the Abbey Church, where King Robert Bruce was buried. A townsman had once been missing several years, and his bones were found in there, known to be his by the shoe-buckle." Passing to another part, he showed me the kitchen, having a large fireplace, where many a good ox must have been roasted entire. Little now remained of the stone roof, the vast pile having been destroyed by fire. We stood alone, gazing up at the lofty moss-covered walls, which had bravely resisted the brunt of near a thousand years. In the glen far below murmured the Lyne Burn. The only other sound at times breaking the quietude, was an occasional caw from the rooks in the bare trees of the once fair palace gardens. Visions of the past crowded upon my mind of those who must have lived and loved, hated and died, within these venerable

precincts. Turning to my companion, I remarked, "The hands have long been cold that built this pile. Man dies, and leaves his works behind him; not so God, He survives His works. 'These shall perish, but thou remainest; and they shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.'"

"Very true, sir," he answered.

"A little while, and you or I may be with those who once lived here."

"Where?" asked he.

"Either in an eternity of woe or eternal glory."

"But does it not say that the spirit goes to God who gave it; and if so, will the spirit not be happy there?"

I replied, "At death the spirit certainly goes to 'God the Judge of all;' and the body returns to dust from whence it came, but God disposes of the spirit as He wills. How think you, I asked, looking him full in the face, that the soul of an ungodly sinner could be happy in the presence of infinite holiness, unless by a mighty change? How could poor sinners stand before, and enjoy Him, except He made us fit, by imparting to us a new nature capable of enjoying Him?"

"Very true," he replied.

"When we believe, upon the authority of God's own word, that He is perfect love, as well as perfect light, and has showed that love to perishing mortals by sending His only begotten Son to bear

their judgment upon the Cross, laying upon Him the iniquities of us all, then we can trust Him, and by faith rejoice in Him. Salvation rests upon what the Lord Jesus Christ has borne, not in what you can do. God must have perfection, and you have none to give. But since He knows your wickedness, and yet has given His Son to save you, is there any reason why you should not trust Him now, and be at peace?"

"Sound reasoning that, sir," he answered.

"Now let me make it plain to you. There is first the necessity of the new birth. If you quietly read the third chapter of John, there the Lord plainly told that blameless man Nicodemus that he must be born again. To make the truth simple, Christ takes him back to the time when the Israelites lay dying by the stings of the fiery serpents. Had you been there, you might have seen an old man, gasping in his death agonies, directed to look at the brass snake upon the top of a pole. As his languid eyes rested upon it, instantly a sudden flash of energy filled them, and he springs from his couch perfectly cured. Or you might have seen a sorrowful mother hold on high her darling child, pining under the deadly venom, and bid him look toward the pretty glittering thing on the staff. As he looked, a fresh flush spread his face, and a merry smile dimpled his cheek. Then the happy mother pressed her dear one closer to her bosom, while her heart gushed forth in thanksgiving to the Lord who had visited

His people. Now listen, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.'

"Sound reason, sir; very good," said the guide.

"It is the *truth*," I answered; "the only thing to save your soul is the *belief* of it."

When parting I again pressed the acceptance of Christ the gift of God upon my guide, and urged him to think seriously over what I had spoken to him. He seemed evidently solemnised, and said, "I might do worse, sir."

"You could not do better," were my last words to him, as he turned to speak to a new visitor.

Reader, "what think ye of Christ?" Perhaps you are only an assenter to the truth about Him. Devils do that and tremble, for they know the terrific results to those who do not yield to His grace. Salvation is wrapped up in the Son of the Father. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him."

"Hark! hark! hark!

'Tis a message of mercy free,  
O sinner, thy many sins were dark,  
But Jesus hath died for thee.

Haste! haste! haste!  
Delay not from wrath to flee;  
Oh, wherefore the moments in madness waste  
When Jesus is calling for thee?"

T. R. D.

## THE PRODIGAL'S BROTHER.



HERE are but few of our readers who are not in some measure acquainted with the story of the prodigal son, so blessedly setting forth the manner of a sinner's reconciliation to God. But many have not so fully considered the character and folly of his elder brother.

From the opening of Luke xv., it is clear that in speaking of a certain man with two sons, our Lord represented two classes of persons who listened to his teachings,—the publicans (or tax-gatherers) and sinners on the one hand, and the Pharisees and scribes on the other. The younger son, the prodigal, sets forth the former; the elder son, the latter.

The grace of the father had reconciled the younger, and lavished upon him all that a loving heart could devise, calling upon all his household to feast with him and make merry, when the elder son, who was in the field, came and drew nigh to the house, and as he did so heard the music and dancing. But although he drew nigh to the house, he had no thought of drawing nigh to his father. And although the sound of the merriment fell upon his ear, he had no heart to join in the merry-making.

Calling one of the servants, he asked "*what these*

*things meant?"* (verse 26.) He would like to know all about what was going on. Inquisitiveness was part of his nature. But the unbroken pride and self-righteousness of his deceived heart would not allow him to share the joy. The servant replies, "Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in" (verse 28). Strange conduct this on the part of so good a young man (as he thought himself). Angry at the return of his scapegrace brother; angry that the fatted calf had been killed; angry that the long-lost one had been received back, safe and sound; angry at his father's love and grace!

One would have thought he would have been overjoyed, and followed his father's example by running to embrace his brother, and share in the festivities which celebrated his return. But no, the father's grace to the ungodly spendthrift only produces anger from his self-righteous and self-satisfied soul.

And, dear reader, what a living likeness is this picture, drawn by the Perfect Artist, of the Pharisees and scribes who surrounded our Lord! And, alas, how many are found like unto that same race at the present moment. To-day, as of old, "there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Prov. xxx. 12).

Grace still reigns. Thousands of prodigals are

welcomed home. But thousands of self-righteous religionists stand aloof from the joy and the blessing, and will not come in. On all hands we hear the cry, What is all this fuss about? What do these people mean by being converted and saved? What is all this hubbub, and singing and praise? Do you think people are going to heaven for their much psalm singing? &c. Thousands come near the house of blessing, but refuse a loving Father's grace. They hear the sounds of joy over sinners saved, the praises that ascend from hearts happy in the love of God, feasting in communion with Himself. They are interested or inquisitive enough to ask what it all means, but come in and share the blessing and the joy *they will not*. "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John v. 40).

Every sinner who comes as a sinner, is welcome. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Of each who has come, it can be said that God "hath received him safe and sound." Yes, safe and sound; *eternally safe, and eternally sound*. Safe in Christ, and sound through His finished work. Reader, have you come? Are you a pardoned and reconciled soul? or a self-righteous, angry, and self-willed religionist?

But is the elder son to be left to his angry mood, and away from the festal scene? Listen, "he was angry, and would not go in; *therefore came his father out, and entreated him*." Think of that. Ah! dear reader, grace reigns. God is in the attitude of beseeching the self-righteous to be re-



conciled to Him, as well as the ungodly sinner. It is said to *all*, "as though God did beseech, . . . be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. v. 20).

But the father's condescending grace and loving entreaty to the elder son are in vain. He, answering, said to his father, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee; neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends: but as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf" (verses 29, 30.) Good-for-nothing fellow to answer his father thus! "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" (Rom. ix. 20). And note his answer, I, I, I, me and my; *self* from first to last. "These many years do *I* serve thee." Nothing more than he ought to do, and which he was morally bound to do. Even God's people are enjoined to say, when they have done all, "we are unprofitable servants," &c. (Luke xvii. 10). "Neither transgressed *I* at any time thy commandment." In short, he had *always done right*, and he had *never done wrong*. What a delightful specimen of human nature! God says "all have sinned," and "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." But if we are to take this young man's character from his own lips, we have found for once an exception to the rule.

Alas, alas, man deceives his own heart; deceives himself, and is deceived of Satan. He is all wrong, but has no true sense of it. Moral and religious as

many undoubtedly are, yet are they duped by the enemy, deceived by sin, Christless, godless, lost. "Yet thou never gavest me a kid," he continues reproachfully, "that I might make merry with my friends." Why, this is just what the younger son had been doing. He had been feasting with his friends, away from his father; and here is this good young man, that had always behaved so nicely (according to his own account), nursing his dissatisfaction for years, and now, when the testing moment comes, lets it all out. He reproaches his father, reminding him that he had never given him a kid that he might make merry with his friends. Why does he not come in, and share the fatted calf with his father and *his* friends? Ah, that will not suit his selfish heart. With all his many years' show, his love to his father, and delight in his company and service, were just about on a par with that of the younger son. Its amount may be summed up in the word *nil*. No, there was *nothing* there but *self*. Self, morning, noon, and night, from first to last, from beginning to end, for all these many years that he was so careful to remind his father about.

Ah! beloved reader, rest assured that the Lord has not overdrawn the picture. Here are you, as plain as life, if you have nothing more than a fleshly service of God; if you have never been born again, and reconciled to Him. The generation that are pure in their own eyes, is a very large one. Its ranks are recruiting daily. Whatever you may

be outwardly to the eye of man, inwardly your heart is all wrong, "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." You may not have been an ungodly spendthrift like the prodigal. Outwardly you may have led a blameless life; but God looketh upon the heart. He knows you *thoroughly*,—thought, word, and deed; mind, lip, and heart. It is for yourself you are living, unless Christ has taken possession of your heart. Without a living personal interest in the living risen Saviour, at your best you are but like the elder son. *Self* predominates and rules. There is no sense in our natural hearts of the joy of the heart of God in dispensing grace, and no sense of our need of it, until aroused in infinite mercy by Him. "A kid to make merry with *my* friends," is what every natural heart delights in. We are all fashioned alike as to this.

And this is not all. The elder son has not done yet. He has something more to remind his kind father about besides his own goodness, and that is his brother's badness, and his father's unwarrantable favour. (Everybody is wrong but himself; poor young man!) "But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf."

Now the father had received and reconciled the younger son, without a word of reproach for his misspent life. His return in self-judgment showed the genuineness of his repentance; and he ran to

meet him with nothing but kindness, love, and grace. So is it with God and repentant sinners. But the elder son is full of accusation, citing his brother's misdeeds.

And then he complains of the ready welcome his father had given, "As soon as this thy son was come." Why, here is one of the chief beauties of grace, "*as soon as*." There is no delay. As soon as he came, he was welcome. "Now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Not by-and-by, but the present moment. And as soon as you come, dear reader, whoever you are, you will be received too; that is, if you come as the prodigal did, on the ground of "I have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23). Of course, if you stand outside like the elder son with "I have not sinned," you will just miss the blessing as he did.

And "*this thy son*," says the disrespectful young man. The father might own the scapegrace if he pleased; but would he own him as *his brother*? *Not he*. He winds up by saying, "Thou hast killed *for him the fatted calf*." This last sentence shows how utterly he was out of communion with the heart and thoughts of his father. He saw nothing in it but unmerited favour bestowed upon one who was utterly unworthy of it. This was perfectly true. But the father loved him notwithstanding all, and also had his own joy in the reception of his son.

All this wonderfully shadows forth, on the one hand, the grace of God to sinners, and His joy and

delight over their reconciliation ; and on the other, how utterly the natural heart, however moral and religious, fails to enter into the thoughts and joy of His heart. We learn that, whilst grace saves the vilest who return in self-judgment to God through Christ, the self-righteous remain outside the door of blessing, murmuring against God, and looking down upon and accusing the saved.

The Lord has brought out in the character of the prodigal elder brother a picture of the Pharisees of his day, and all who resemble them in the present, as a generation that are jealous, inquisitive, angry, self-willed, unyielding, disrespectful, self-righteous, selfish, reproachful, accusing, and ungrateful.

The prodigal was bad, very bad ; as to the elder, the foregoing will speak for itself. Tens of thousands who have sinned deeply against God, have returned in deep self-judgment before Him, and have been pardoned, reconciled, and saved through the finished work of Christ. And tens of thousands with the profession of Christ upon their lips, but steeped in self-righteousness and unbelief, pass on their way to the judgment of God.

The father said to the elder in reply, " Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad : for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again ; and was lost, and is found " (Luke xv. 31, 32). The Pharisees and scribes were religious leaders of the people, who had all the privileges of Judaism (Rom. ix. 4, 5). All that God had in the earth was Israel's, so

to speak. But now *grace* was going out to publicans and sinners, and the prodigal's welcome was a sample of the reception of all who come. "It was meet," the father continued, "that we should make merry, and be glad." Yes, indeed, "there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke xv. 10).

Dear reader, have you returned? Has the heart of God found joy over you? Is heaven filled with gladness at your reconciliation? If not, why not? Delays are dangerous. *There is no reconciliation in hell.*

"For this thy brother," the father says in closing, mildly rebuking the elder son, for he *must* own him, "was dead, and is alive again; was lost, and is found." Blessed words! Yes, reconciled ones have passed from death unto life. The Son of God says so. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed *from death unto life*" (John v. 24). And Jesus has found them, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was *lost*" (Luke xix. 10).

Again, beloved reader, we appeal to you, ere we lay down our pen, Are you reconciled? Are you safe and sound? Have you life? Are you found? Or, are you priming yourself up in your own fancied goodness, a strait-sect religionist, but outside the door? Prodigals and Pharisees are alike invited to return. There is "bread enough and to

spare" for all in the Father's house, for the true bread of heaven, Christ, is there. "Fatted calf," too, at God's festal board, and heavenly merriment, for all who confess their sin and come. But soon the door of grace will be closed; the lips that cover prodigals with kisses, pronounce the solemn doom of the impenitent; and those everlasting arms of love, that fondly embrace repentant prodigals and self-judged Pharisees, be stretched out in everlasting judgment upon all who neglect or refuse His grace. May God in His infinite mercy lead *you* to return *now*.

E. H. C.

---

## SAVED IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.



WALKING along the other evening, I was overtaken by a man, of whom I asked my way. After telling me, he showed no sign of going on, so I offered him a tract. "Oh," he said, "I see the road you are going." "Yes," I replied, "it is a blessed thing to be going to heaven." He assented, and then went on to say, "I was converted six years ago, by a paper like this" (alluding to the tract I had given him) "that was blown between my feet in New Zealand." I said I should like to hear the story, and he continued:—"It was one windy day, it was blown between my feet on the street. Something seemed

to say, 'Pick it up, and it will put you right.' I swore I would not, and moved away about the length of that lamp-post (pointing to the next one on the road); but something still said, 'Pick it up, and it will put you right,' and though I swore I wouldn't, I had to turn back and pick it up. It had a hymn printed on it, called, 'I always go to Jesus;' and conscience asked, Do you always go to Jesus? I was obliged to own I did not, so I went to Him then, and He has saved me."

I was thankful to hear this simple story of God's dealings with this poor stubborn sinner, and proceeded to inquire had he been very bad before God thus met him. Outwardly he had not, and he told me he had had convictions of sin for years, but would not let any one speak to him; in fact, he had been resisting the strivings of the Spirit of God. "Well," I said, "do you ever have doubts and fears now?" He owned he had. "Why do you not look at the receipt, then?" I asked him. "So I do," he replied. "What is it?" I said. "Why, the blood of Christ," was the reply. "No," said I; "that is the money the debt is paid with, the receipt is the risen Christ. God has raised Him for our justification, and His resurrection is full discharge, or the receipt for the debt we owed." "Well," he replied, "I never knew that before." We had some more conversation before parting, but it was clear he was a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. Reader, are you?



“CHANGE IMMEDIATELY.”



HERE were three of us only in the compartment of a railway carriage on the short journey from Charing Cross to Blackheath, the latter place being the destination of two, the other going to an intervening station. Scarcely had we started when my friend sought an opportunity of ascertaining the spiritual condition of our fellow-traveller. After some preliminary remarks a conversation ensued of the following import:—

“Do you confess that you are a sinner?”

“Of course I do. I am not much different from other people, and all, I suppose, are sinners.”

“Very true; but do you know that you are a lost sinner?”

“What do you mean by that?”

“Well, I mean by the term lost sinner, one who is utterly without hope, one who is already under condemnation. In other words, let me ask if you are prepared to take the place before God of deserving nothing but hell on account of your sins? And together with this, do you acknowledge that, as far as you are concerned, you are entirely without the means of recovery or salvation?”

“It is very evident you do not know me.”

“Why so?”

“Because if you did, you would never speak to me in that manner.”

“Indeed!

“No; for I am not so bad as you think. I am a sinner, I admit; but I am not so bad as many I see round about me; nay, I am better than many of my neighbours.”

“How do you make that out?”

“Why, I send my children to a Sunday school; I always go to church or chapel once on the Sunday; and I take in, and read, a religious periodical every month. No, no, I am not so bad as you think.”

“And do you imagine that any one of, or all, these things will avail before God for your salvation?”

“I don’t know about that; still I cannot be such a very bad man.”

“Listen then, for one moment, to what the Word of God says. ‘There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.’ Again, speaking to those who prided themselves upon the possession of the Scriptures, and upon being the people of God, the apostle says, ‘We know that whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore *by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*: for by the law is the knowledge of sin’ (Rom. iii. 19, 20). Thus God has declared that salvation by works is impossible, that if we rest upon what we are and do, we are lost for ever. He has closed up the way of works, and no man can henceforward open it. But if He has

done this, He has opened another way, and that is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom He has set forth a propitiation through faith in His blood . . . that He might be just and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus (verses 25, 26). If man cannot bring his righteousness to God, God brings His own to man, and justifies freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Do you understand?”

“I am not the lost sinner you would make me out to be.”

At this moment the train drew up at a station. I suspected that this man was in the wrong train, as I had heard him name the place to which he was going. Turning to him, I said :

“Are you in the right train?” “Yes, I am.”

“Are you sure?” “Quite sure.”

“Quite sure you have made no mistake?”

“Quite sure.”

Putting my head out of the window, I said, “Guard, is this the train for S——?”

“No, change immediately for S——.”

Our companion at once rose to depart; but, as he departed, I said, “You mistook your train, and you have mistaken the way of salvation. Be warned, and listen to the words you have heard.”

Are any of my readers in the wrong train? If they are, let them rectify their mistake while grace still lingers, for there is no way to salvation but through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. “Change immediately!”

E. D.

## “JESUS AND THE RESURRECTION.”

---



MOST of our readers will have heard of the celebrated city of Athens. It still exists, though comparatively a place of but trifling importance, but once it was the chief centre of power and opulence in the earth. At the period of which we are about to speak, the Greek empire, of which it was the capital, had succumbed before the power of the Roman. But it was still a remarkable city, renowned as a great seat of learning, philosophy, science, and art. But with all its boasted enlightenment and renown, the pen of inspiration tells us that it was *wholly given to idolatry* (or, full of idols).

Whatever the favourable circumstances and progress of man, as long as he remains in the unconverted state, he is without Christ, . . . having no hope, and without God in the world (Eph. ii. 12). And blinded by the god of this world, his heart becomes enslaved to idols, even though found amongst the ranks of learned Athenians. Men of all sorts had gravitated to this great centre, and we find the representatives of demon worship in the idolatrous mass, Jews cleaving to the traditions of their forefathers, devout religionists worshipping they knew not what, commercial men whose object was gold, rationalistic

philosophers of different schools of thought, and newsmongers gloating over the latest follies of the day. And Satan reigned supreme over all (John xiv. 30; Rev. xii. 9).

But the eye of God was fixed upon this blinded people, and His heart of love was about to send a message to them for their good. The learned Saul of Tarsus, brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, now Paul the apostle, His devoted servant, is the chosen herald. Waiting at Athens for his fellow-labourers, in the course of his journeyings, his spirit was stirred within him, when he saw the city full of idols. True to the ways of God, and fearless of man, he first confronts his kinsmen after the flesh in their own citadel, *the synagogue*, and then the devout persons, all sorts and conditions of men, in the market daily, Epicureans, Stoics, &c. Tradition, religion, idolatry, rationalism are all alike brought face to face with the truth of God. The Lord's servant has but one theme for all, "*Jesus and the resurrection.*" The rejected and crucified Jesus of Nazareth was the true Christ, the Son of God. And God had raised Him from the dead as the Saviour of sinners, both Jews and Gentiles alike. Jews, religionists, idolaters, business men, philosophers, newsmongers, all needed *Jesus*. And the resurrection was God's testimony to the value of His sacrifice once for all. If Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins. But He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore, being justified by faith,

we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. iv. 25, v. 1).

The learned philosophers are the first to challenge the new-comer. The doctrine of a risen Saviour was quite outside the misty philosophy, and the reasoning minds of both Epicureans, and Stoics, alike. Their eminence and renown will soon go to the winds, if the people are to believe such stuff and nonsense as Paul preached. However they will give him a hearing, that they may all the more easily confound him publicly, and expose him to the ridicule of the mass. So boldly advancing to the encounter, some said, "What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached to them *Jesus and the resurrection*. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus," &c. (Acts xvii. 18, 19).

Some looked upon him as a mere chatterer, babbling forth his own inventions to exalt himself, and perhaps put a little cash into his own pocket on the quiet. Others, such was their ignorance, with all their philosophy, seem actually to have thought that "*Jesus*" was one god, and "*the resurrection*" another. In this land of open Bibles it seems almost incredible, but so it was. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). Accustomed all their days to found their doctrines of this life on a system which was

the concoction of their own brains, how could they understand the blessed truth of Jesus, the Son of God, risen triumphant over all the power of Satan, death, and hell, a Saviour for the guilty and the lost, His precious blood and risen life a sure passport for the life to come? Ah! dear reader, the dark grave is the end of all human philosophy,—the portal, God tells us, to judgment and everlasting woe. “*Jesus and the resurrection*,” the blessed theme of the so-called babblers at Athens, is the only key to true wisdom, and a philosophy that opens the way to everlasting glory.

Well, the philosophers take the preacher, and bring him to Areopagus (or Mars Hill), saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest is? *New doctrine indeed!* “*Jesus*” a new doctrine! What! could Athenian philosophy boast a longer existence than the doctrine of Christ? Was it older than the precious promise, the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent, &c. (Gen. iii. 15). And “to him give *all the prophets* witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43). Where was Athenian philosophy then? But what knew they of Scripture promises, and what did they want to know, even now that their blest fulfilment in the Person of God’s Son is brought before them? Ah! dear reader, as the sequel will show, the mass of them had no heart for Christ, though, through infinite mercy and grace, a few were won to His blessed name.

“Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears; we would know, therefore, what these things mean?” they continued. “For all the Athenians and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.”

The latest news appears to have been the thing of greatest importance in those days at Athens. How about the nineteenth century? Newspapers had not yet come into vogue. But Mars Hill was the convenient spot where both natives and foreigners could discuss at their leisure the latest topics. Paul with his “strange things” was the lion for the moment. A glance would tell the clever leaders than he was no ignoramus. The strange things that crossed his lips had reached *their ears*, as they said (would that they had sunk into *all their hearts*!), and they would like to know the meaning of them. Curiosity often brings the preacher a congregation, even though the hearts are closed to the precious gospel of God’s grace. But God could break Athenian hearts (and *yours too*, dear reader; may He do so). As they spent their time in nothing else, they had plenty of leisure to listen to a new thing at Paul’s lips. Their itching ears were ready at once to hear the babbler! But alas! how few cared for the truth he announced, by which alone, when all their time was spent here, they could reach eternity in glory. Ah! this was entirely outside the range of Athenian wisdom.



What a scene Mars Hill must have presented at this moment! Picture to yourself, dear reader, the vast crowd of rationalists, religionists, Judaists, idolaters, worldlings, with Paul in their midst, every eye fixed upon him, and every ear eager to catch his burning words; and all heaven intent upon the issue. Paul, in the confidence of faith, standing before God, boldly confronted the vast audience, and said, “Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, *TO THE UNKNOWN GOD*. Whom, therefore, ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you,” &c. &c. (vers. 22-31).

The Lord’s messenger faithfully delivers the Lord’s message. Suiting his words to his audience, he exposes the folly of idolatrous worship, and their confessed ignorance in dedicating an altar to “*the unknown God*.” He it was who had revealed Himself to Paul, and whom he now declared to them; God, the Creator of the universe, the omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent One, the Lord of all, Governor amongst the nations, who alone had determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of man’s habitation, &c. What utter folly, then, for men to think that the Godhead was like gold, silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device! And what a manifest confirmation of the truth of the Word of God, that the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not (2 Cor. iv. 4); and that “the world by wisdom knew not God” (1 Cor. i. 21).

And how about the world of to-day ? “ Well, we are not idolaters,” some may boastfully reply. What, are there no images in Christendom ? No idolatrous pictures ? No worshipping of man and angels ? No strange fire or false worship ? Are God and Christ the only objects of worship and adoration ? Alas ! alas ! superstition, tradition, and the commandments of men are found more or less wherever we turn, and the Word of God made of none effect. The mass have lapsed into a mixture of Judaism, heathenism, and Christianity ; and worship in spirit and in truth is offered but by the few. Ah ! dear reader, as the apostle said, “ *We ought not to think ;* ” that is, we ought to let God think for us, for His thoughts are not as ours (Isa. lv. 9). “ I hate (vain) thoughts,” says the Psalmist (Ps. cxix. 113). Man’s blinded mind thinks wrongly both about God and himself. Naturally we are “ alienated and enemies in our mind by wicked works ” (Col. i. 21). On all hands the Christian is met with, “ I think this,” and “ I think that,” and “ Mr So-and-So thinks the other.” But the point is, “ What does God say ? What are His thoughts ? How does His Word say that He is to be worshipped and served ? ” “ Ye do err,” said the Lord to some, “ not knowing the Scriptures,” &c. (Matt. xxii. 29). God has spoken. And “ to this man will I look,” saith the Lord, “ even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and *trembleth at my word* ” (Isa. lxvi. 2). “ The way of the ungodly shall perish ” (Ps. i. 6). His word endureth for ever (1 Peter i. 25).

The apostle continued, "And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent," &c. &c. (Acts xvii. 30). The period when God overlooked men's ignorance had passed, and all men were now called upon to judge themselves before Him. Christ had been presented to the world. The world would not have him. The world crucified Him. And the world was under judgment (Rom. iii. 19). *God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.* Dear reader, dare you disobey?

Who is He who commands? God.

When does He command? Now.

Whom does He command? All men.

Where does He command? Everywhere.

What does He command? To repent.

Why does He command? To escape judgment.

What will be the consequence of disobedience to the command? Death, judgment, and the lake of fire. What will be the consequence of obedience? Life, salvation, and the glory of God. Then will *you* obey?

Thousands have been aroused to their responsibility to repent, and yet lack salvation, because their thoughts are all wrong about repentance itself. Sensible of their sinful condition, and unfitness for God's holy presence, they have what the world calls, turned over a new leaf. Giving up their former habits of sin and folly, they strive to lead a good and religious life(!), thereby hoping to make amends for their past misdeeds; and

Christ having died, in some vague and indistinct way, they trust they will reach heaven at last. But is this repentance? Nay, but the manifest evidence of the deeply rooted self-righteousness of the poor deceived heart of man. It is simply reformation. Now God commandeth to repent, not to reform. Reformation is all very well for this world, but repentance towards God and repentance unto life are quite another thing. Reformation, if trusted in, is self-justification; repentance is self-judgment. Now the self-justified are judged by God, whereas the self-judged are justified by faith in His Son. How vast the difference!

The self-judged sinner is met by the abounding grace of God. And there, dear reader, if you will but take that place, God will meet you. A sinner, guilty and lost, you are, and hence of the class whom Jesus came to seek and to save (Luke xix. 10). "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15). And "to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Jesus, the appointed Judge, is the Saviour now. And the same resurrection that is the sure witness of the judgment of God upon all the impenitent, at the hand of the risen One, is for the justification now of *every one that believeth* (Rom. iv. 25). Works worthy of repentance will follow as the fruit of faith in Him who died and rose.

Now when the Athenians heard of the resurrection of the dead, we read, “Some mocked; and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. So Paul departed from among them. Howbeit certain men clave unto him and believed: among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them” (Acts xvii. 32-34).

The testimony of the apostle was received in three ways. Some mocked, others procrastinated, and others believed. It is the same to-day, even in this so-called Christian land. The class of mockers is on the increase. Many are scoffing at sacred things. Scarcely a truth of Christianity but what is rejected in some quarter; oftentimes even revelation itself. Striking confirmation of the Word of God, which warns that “there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,” &c. (2 Peter iii. 3). Well, men may scoff and mock; but “be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Gal. vi. 7). Ah! there will be no mocking in hell, though all scoffers, mockers, sceptics, and infidels will most surely be there. God grant, dear reader, that you may not be found amongst them.

Others too say to-day, “We will hear thee again of this matter.” Like Felix they put it off to a more convenient season (Acts xxiv. 25). But, alas! how often the convenient season never comes. Thousands delay the momentous question of their

soul's salvation, whilst acknowledging the importance of it. They recognise that there is a great deal of force in what the preacher of *Jesus and the resurrection* says. It is a matter they would like to hear about again and again, but still they go on *undecided*. Undecided, and every day, yea, every moment bringing them nearer and nearer to death, and judgment, and the lake of fire!

Procrastinator, when will you be wise? This night your soul may be required of you, and you may never hear of this matter again. No message of love and grace can reach you in hell. Repent of your folly and unbelief you surely will then, but it will be too late to repent unto salvation. No joyful news of *Jesus and the resurrection* will ever be sounded forth in that awful region of woe. The same lips of Jesus, the Son of God, which proclaimed the joyful news that "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," added, "but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36).

"Howbeit certain men clave to him and *believed*," &c. Yes, a third class reaped the blessing. Whilst some mocked, and others delayed, certain men believed. There do not appear to have been many, but it is blessed to find that there were some. *Are you one to-day?* The name of one man, Dionysius the Areopagite, and of one woman, Damaris, are handed down to us, and there were others. Their faith is precious. There was joy

in the presence of the angels of God over them (Luke xv. 7). Dear reader, shall there be joy over you? Believe in Jesus, the gift of God's wondrous love, and you are forgiven, justified, saved. God is “just and the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus*” (Rom. iii. 26). “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” &c. (Acts xvi. 31). The whole blessing is yours in believing. Not in believing about Him as an historical fact, but faith in the blessed Person and finished work of the risen One. “*Jesus and the resurrection*” are what you need (Acts xvii. 18).

You cannot do a single thing to please God before you believe, for “*in all your doings your sins do appear*” (Ezek. xxi. 24). Good works are the fruit of faith, not the ground of salvation. You must believe on Him first, and then He says, and not till then, “*Follow thou me*” (John xxi. 22). E. H. C.

---

THE last time the world saw Christ they gave Him “a crown of thorns”—emblem of the curse—put a reed in His right hand in bitter mockery, and then pierced that hand with nails, and fastened it to the cross. The next time the world sees Christ He will be crowned with “many crowns,” out of His mouth will go a “sharp sword,” and His yet pierced hand will hold a rod of iron. That will be a sad day for the world and the worldling. Reader, will you risk meeting Him in judgment then? Had you not better meet Him *now* in the day of His grace?

W. T. P. W.

## "AN OLD MAN OF EIGHTY."

---



N a small village, in the county of Norfolk, a friend and the writer were scattering the printed ministry, and speaking to those who received the tracts, as opportunity occurred. Coming to the house of an old man of eighty, and saying, "How do you do? will you take the Word of God?" The old man said, "Yes! walk in." We accepted the offer, walked in, and asked him about his soul and his prospects. The old man knew the Lord, believed in Him, and said he had eternal life.

"Quite sure?" said we. "Yes," replied the old man. "Well, how do you know?"

"Because God says it," was his answer. That was the best news we had heard in that village. He had got eternal life, God said it. He was happy in the Lord, and, said he, "Bless Him, I have known Him a many a year."

He was a member of society, but his minister had not called to see him, nor any one else belonging to that flock, that he was aware of. "How did you learn that you had eternal life?" said we.

"Oh! it was through that book," pointing to a well-thumbed Bible; "that's where I learnt it, that's the place to learn God's things, in His own Word."

We liked this old man, and so we said, "Shall we



sing?" He would be glad if we would, and so, as best as we could, we sang:—

"Safe in Christ, the weakest child  
 Stands in all God's favour;  
 All in Christ are reconciled  
 Through that only Saviour.  
 Safe in Christ! safe in Christ!  
 He's their glory ever;  
 None can pluck them from His hand,  
 They shall perish never."

He liked the first verse and the chorus; it was all new to him, and so we went to the second verse.

"Once their sins on every side  
 Seemed to tower o'er them;  
 Christ has stemmed the angry tide,  
 Been through death before them.  
 Safe in Christ," &c.

"Ah! bless the Lord," said he, "that's it. I do like it; I am glad you are come; don't know who you are, but the Lord does."

We read together that Book which suited him,—that Book out of which he learned he *had eternal life*, and then sang again,—

"Dead with Christ they've crossed the sea,  
 Passed through condemnation;  
 Well they may triumphant be,  
 Saved through God's salvation.  
 Safe in Christ," &c.

By this time the old man began to warm to the subject, and lifted his stick up and down heavily,

whilst he sang in a very trembling eighty-year-old voice,—

“On the resurrection side,  
Death’s dark sea behind them,  
All their sins beneath the tide,  
None can ever find them.  
Safe in Christ,” &c.

“Now by faith the justified  
Know that God is for them,  
To the world they’re crucified,  
Glory is before them.  
Safe in Christ,” &c.

Now, dear reader, the old man was eighty, and had eternal life. How old are you, and have you got eternal life? Well, some one says, “I hope so;” and, dear soul, I reply to you, “I hope you have.” And God’s Word says, if you have, you “shall not come into condemnation” (judgment), John v. 24. Do you ever read “that Book,” God’s Book? Did you ever read that God loved you? Yes, you! I don’t know you, but God does; He knows all about you and every thought of your heart. Do you know Him and His love? Open up that Book at John’s Gospel, the third chapter and the sixteenth verse. There’s a wonderful statement for you! and it’s all about God’s love and God’s gift to the world. Have you received the gift? You cannot buy it, nor merit it; it’s a gift, God’s gift, His Son Jesus. Have you received Him? If so, you have life, “eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”

W. T.

# "NO HOPE," OR A "HOPE THAT MAKETH NOT ASHAMED."



WE *have peace with God* (Rom. v. 1); "*Being now justified*" (ver. 9); "*We have now received the reconciliation*" (ver. 11); "*Ye are saved*" (1 Cor. xv. 2); "*By grace are ye saved through faith*" (Eph. ii. 8); "*We have redemption through his blood*" (Col. i. 14); "*We have . . . the forgiveness of sins*" (Col. i. 14); "*The Father . . . hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light*" (Col. i. 12); "*You . . . now hath he reconciled*" (Col. i. 21); "*Jesus . . . delivered us from the wrath to come*" (1 Thess. i. 10); "*God, even our Father, . . . hath given us everlasting consolation*" (2 Thess. ii. 16); "*According to his mercy he saved us*" (Tit. iii. 5); "*Your sins are forgiven you*" (1 John ii. 12); "*God hath given to us eternal life*" (1 John v. 11); "*These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life*" (1 John v. 13).

Classifying these scriptures, we have,—

1. Present Peace with God.
2. Present Justification.
3. Present Reconciliation.
4. Present Redemption.
5. Present Fitness for Glory

6. Present Deliverance from Wrath.
7. Present Possession of Everlasting Consolation.
8. Present Salvation.
9. Present Forgiveness of Sins.
10. Present Possession of Eternal Life.

It is difficult to understand how any one professing to accept the Bible as a divine authority, can, in the face of such plain statements as the foregoing, positively, persistently, and publicly declare that no man can know for certain in this world that he *is saved*, that his *sins are forgiven*, that he *has eternal life*, and so forth,—that we must all go on day by day, doing the best we can, praying to God for mercy, and humbly hoping that it will be all right in the end. I believe this doctrine to be one of the devil's most effectual means for ensuring the eternal ruin of souls. Men make a liar of God, and give credence to Satan, and must suffer the bitter consequences of their awful guilt in the lake of fire for ever.

When a person accepts this theory as true, he settles down pretty composedly, thinking that, since these things cannot be known as certainties, he will take his chance as to the issues, content to let the most important and solemn question of his eternal destiny hang on the fragile thread of a hope that has *no foundation*. Whereas, once admit the truth of the Word of God, and give it its full force, when it states with such clearness that salvation *is* a present portion, the forgiveness of

sins, eternal life, &c., things to be *known* and *enjoyed now*, and the question immediately addresses itself to the conscience, "*Are you, then, saved or lost?*"—"Are your sins forgiven, or still unpardoned?"

Come then, my reader, I ask your serious attention while solemnly, as in the presence of God, I remind you that there are *but two roads* to eternity,—on one of them you are travelling at this very moment, and speeding onward as fast as time can carry you,—the *broad road*, which leads to *destruction*; and the *narrow*, which leads to *life*. Destruction, "*everlasting destruction*" (2 Thess. i. 9), is the goal of the one; and life, "*eternal life*" (1 John ii. 25), the terminus of the other. Stop, and think a moment, *Which are you on?* Perhaps you answer, "Well, I *hope* I am on the narrow one that leads to life." Just so; and you will contentedly lay your head on your pillow to-night, will you, if nothing should occur to prevent you so doing, *hoping* that it is so, to find, perhaps before the morning dawns, your *lost soul* launched out into the shoreless ocean of "*everlasting destruction*"? to discover, when, alas! too late, that *it was* the *broad road* you were travelling on *after all*. Oh! how can you, dare you, risk it? Is not your soul of more value than that? What! *hope* to be all right in the end, while *now* you are all wrong? *hope* to get to heaven when you die, while *now* hell is yawning, but *one step*, it may be, before you? And the devil lures you on, blinding

your eyes with a false hope, till he has you with himself and his angels in the place of eternal hopelessness, "then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." Most earnestly I entreat you, therefore, to face at once this solemn reality. Don't give it another moment's delay. Time is short; the Lord Jesus is coming quickly to take His people home; life is uncertain. Yet, once more, God warns you; oh, do give heed!

Just picture by yourself a man that lives in Dublin being summoned in all haste to Glasgow, to receive from a friend rapidly dying there a title to a property worth some thousands. He goes off to the quay, and gets aboard the first steamer he sees, without ever ascertaining whether it is a Glasgow boat or not. The fact is, it is a London steamer he has embarked in; and while he tells you that he *hopes* it will take him to Glasgow, as he would be exceedingly sorry to miss such a splendid opportunity, and he knows that there is not a moment to be lost, yet he is altogether indifferent as to whether he is in the *right* boat or the *wrong* one. Why, you would say the man is mad to treat such an important matter so carelessly; to be satisfied with the *hope* that he is going right, when the loss or gain of so much money depended entirely on whether he was or not, is most extraordinary. But let us apply the illustration. If *you* are *unsaved*, and yet *hoping* to get to heaven by and by, are you less foolish than he? He risks a few thousands, you risk your soul; his is

a question of time, yours of eternity. He in a short time may find to his dismay that he is in London instead of Glasgow; and can it be possible, that before another morning the soul of the reader of these lines *may be in hell*, and his voice raised in that awful cry, that "weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth," "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"? Oh! what road are you on? the broad or the narrow? Where, oh where, are you bound for? the lake of fire, or the glory of God? Think of the thousands now in that "outer darkness," who, when on earth, would have said, like you, they hoped to go to heaven when they died. But they were deluded by the devil, and refused to believe the truth; and now, the sight of the "great gulf fixed" shuts out the possibility of the entrance into their souls of the faintest glimmer of a hope for ever. How awful to contemplate the very expression! "I hope," tells that the question is not settled. Beware, lest you leave it unsettled till too late. Dear reader, God is not mocked. May He arouse you even now to a sense of the urgency of your need.

Dear soul, would you not like to be saved, to be justified, to have your sins forgiven, to have eternal life? Notice, then, God's own precious simple words, written for your ears to hear, your heart to believe: 1st, SALVATION,—"*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast*" (Eph. ii. 1, 9). 2nd, FORGIVENESS,

—"When they had *nothing to pay*, he frankly *forgave* them both" (Luke vii. 42); "Your sins are *forgiven* you for *his name's sake*" (1 John ii. 12). 3rd, JUSTIFICATION,—"*Being justified freely* by His *grace*, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24); "By him *all that believe* are *justified* from all things" (Acts xiii. 39). 4th, ETERNAL LIFE,—"*The gift* of God is *eternal life*" (Rom. vi. 23); "*Whosoever will*, let him *take* the water of *life freely*" (Rev. xxii. 17).

Dear reader, won't you accept now these wonderful blessings which God offers you? "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). The terms on which they are to be had are fixed unalterably, and oh! how simple, blessed be God! Do you ask, What are the terms? Read them again; glorious tidings! "Frankly" (Luke vii.); "freely" (Rom. iii.), "without money and without price" (Isa. lv.), "to him that worketh not" (Rom. iv.), and that hath "nothing to pay" (Luke vii.), "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii.).

"Who paid in blood the dreadful score,  
The ransom due for me."

Yes, in that glorious ransom, the blood of the Lamb of God's own providing, every demand of God's justice, every claim of divine righteousness, against the believing sinner is met to the full; and, in testimony to it, God raised Him from the dead, and put Him sitting on His throne at His own right hand,—grand, glorious, eternal proof that the



work of redemption is *done* to God's complete satisfaction. He is there now, the infinitely precious object of the Father's love; and if you, in simple faith, accept Him as your only and all-sufficient Saviour, resting upon His precious blood as meeting all your need as a guilty hell-deserving sinner before God, you *are* saved—your sins *are* forgiven and forgotten by God, you are His for ever, none can ever pluck you from His hand (John x.). And as long as that blood retains its value in God's estimation, so long will the foundation on which your hope is built endure; for this only is the ground on which God receives and saves you, even "through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Hence the glorious character of *this* hope; hence its *eternal stability*. It is one that "*maketh not ashamed*" (Rom. v. 5), because it can never fail, being both "*sure and steadfast*" (Heb. vi. 19). "It is of *faith*, that it might be by *grace*; to the end the promise might be *sure to all the seed*" (Rom. iv. 16).

T. C. H.

CHRISTIANITY is not a set of dry doctrines, but divine truth and blessing for man, wrapped up in the living person of the man Christ Jesus, who came down, and did a work on the cross by which all my sins are put away, and who is now gone up again into glory, and draws my mind and heart to Himself there.

W. T. P. W.

## "I AM ON THE WRONG ROAD, AND IT IS TOO LATE!"



ATAN is called a "liar," "deceiver," and "murderer." As a liar, he contradicts the plainest testimony of God, as, "Thou shalt not surely die," when God had said, "The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Satan meets God's "Thou shalt," with his "Thou shalt not." As "a deceiver," he deceives in a thousand ways, in order to accomplish his hellish purpose as "a murderer." "He blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. iv. 4). He wishes their damnation, and, therefore, he acts out the part of a liar, deceiver, and murderer?

How many who would shun the society of a human liar, are found under the baneful influence of this great Satanic liar!

How many who would feel indignant and enraged at a human deceiver, are by this Satanic deceiver, deceived themselves!

How many who feel thankful that the hand of justice takes hold of the man that murders his fellow, and hangs him until he is dead, are, nevertheless, spirit, soul, and body, under the control of this wholesale "murderer from the beginning"!

Think of it, reader; the Son of God says that

Satan is a liar, deceiver, and murderer! Are you content to go on another day under his influence? "The whole world lieth in the arms of the wicked one" (1 John v. 19). He "deceiveth the whole world" (Rev. xii. 9). Are you deceived by him?

Remember that light has come into the world, but, alas! men love darkness rather than light. Do you, my friend?

In the day when Christ was here, men had to choose between Satan's man and God's Son,—between Barabbas and Christ. And sadly strange to say, they chose Satan's man, Barabbas. Are you doing the same? Pilate's appeal rings in our ears to-day, "Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you?" Alas, how many are replying, "Barabbas!" Are you, beloved reader?

*You have to be Christ's friend or enemy.* You are ranged with those who serve Satan or Christ. You are either of the world, or amongst the children of God. You are either converted or unconverted. All your sins are upon your soul, and yourself exposed to the terrific judgment of God, or you are washed from your sins in the blood of the Lamb, and thus made meet for heaven. Fellow-traveller to eternity, which is it? Are you under the control, and have you committed the keeping of your priceless soul, to the arch-liar, deceiver, and murderer; or have you as a sinner turned to God, trusted Christ and His atoning blood, and thus committed the keeping of your spirit, soul, and body to Him, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life?"

A man who lived not far from the writer recently died. He had served Satan faithfully, and often had scoffed at the gospel, the power of God to save; but, poor man, the solemn moment of death came, and for him what an awful moment!

He said that he saw a light above him. "What is that light? what is that light?" he kept asking. At the close, he said with a half-shriek to his son standing by, "*George, I am on the wrong road, and it is too late!*"

Oh, my unsaved reader, how I would like to take you by the hand, and with all the energy of my being beseech you to turn from Satan to God, from your sins to Christ, from death to life.

If death to you seems a long way off, there is another event, the accomplishment of which we do not know the day nor the hour. Christ may descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, on any day or hour. Think of this deeply and soberly, and ask yourself the question, "Am I ready to meet Him? Am I saved?" Surely, if not, wisdom would lead you at once to Him, the Saviour of sinners, to be saved. He is willing, able, and waiting to receive and to save you. His word is, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

One word more: *Now*, He says, "*Come unto me;*" but, appalling thought, *then*, to every Christ-rejecting one, He will say, "*Depart from me.*" It must be "COME," or "DEPART."

E. A.

"FAITH MUST COME FIRST."



IN the summer of 188—, after a long and severe illness, it was thought advisable that I should spend some months out of England, and, as we moved from place to place, we asked the Lord to guide us to the right spots in which to take up our abode, and that, while health, in my case, was being restored to the body, we might have the opportunity of presenting Christ, as the Great Physician, to some sin-sick souls, be channels of blessing from the heart of a loving, giving God, to some needy human hearts, whether they felt their need or not.

The Lord in His abounding grace gave us many answers to our prayers, but one answer, though long delayed, filled us, when it came, with special thanksgiving.

Early in August we took rooms in an hotel near a village bordering on the Rhine. The view from our windows was lovely, and, as I was then unable to walk, my sofa was placed each day on the broad balcony which faced the hills, and the setting sun, with only gardens and vineyards and shady woods, and a rapid stream in between.

It always seemed to us afterwards that the hand of our Father placed us in these special rooms, for they were not the ones we had chosen, and in which we passed our first night. Through some

mistake, about which the landlord came to us in trouble, those had been promised to some one else, and we willingly offered to change.

Through this change, *apparently* so accidental, we came to know one who was wandering far off on the dark mountains of unbelief, but over whom the Good Shepherd's heart so yearned that He did not rest till He had her in His arms "carried like a child."

The balcony that adjoined ours was connected with a suite of rooms, evidently only separated from ours by a thin partition, for each evening we heard a musical voice reading aloud, sometimes in French, sometimes in Italian, occasionally, but rarely, in German. We could hear the voice distinctly, and sometimes a few words, just enough to know the language that was being read, though never a connected sentence; but the sound of the voice so near, and yet the speaker hidden, kept that speaker in a curious way before us, and we felt interested in her, and often spoke of her, wondering as to her nationality, as to whether we should meet,—above all, as to whether she knew our Saviour.

After a few days we saw on the next balcony a young and handsome lady. The face was thoughtful; at times there was even a sad look in the clear dark eyes, but the expression of the face was ever varying; now it was lighted with keen intellectual brightness, and then again softened and subdued by womanly tenderness. We knew

this must be the reader whose voice we had heard, and we felt still more attracted to her. She was accompanied by a gentleman of soldierly bearing, who seemed devoted to her. We learned, from the visitors' book, they were Austrians of rank.

After a day or two, during which we saw them casually on the balcony, I was ill for a short time, and then a lovely little bouquet of flowers was sent in, with the Baroness von C——'s card, and the courteous offer of the services of her maid, also asking if she herself might call when I was well enough. This threw down, figuratively, the iron palisade between the two balconies. When I was better we met daily. The Baron took long walks with my husband, and the Baroness and I were then left together, during which time she told me much of her history.

Though then only twenty-five, she had been married seven years. Her husband was her idol, and she his. She was not strong, and he had given up a distinguished career that he might not be called away from her, and had left his ancestral home because its climate did not suit her. They travelled constantly, now settling for a few weeks, and then again for a few months, according to the effect of the different places on her health. She told me she had not been well during the first few days of our coming to the hotel, which accounted for our not having seen her, but, she said, they had watched us intently, and she had wanted so much to know us, because she thought we always

seemed so very happy. We felt the whole circumstances were ordered by the Lord, especially when she told us it was the first time they had ever sought the acquaintance of any strangers who came to the different hotels in which they stayed.

We soon found that though so attractive naturally, the young Baroness did not know Christ, and that there was an unsatisfied void in her heart, though she had so much for earth—a secret longing to which she could not give expression, yet which was always there. How plainly it testified that wealth, rank, youth, beauty, intellect, and even the best of human love, all together, cannot fill and satisfy a heart created to know God, and to enjoy God. He alone—God in Christ—can meet, and satisfy those deep yearnings which each one of you, my readers, has doubtless felt at some time, even though you have tried your utmost, either to fill the void, or to forget the heartache.

We spoke of Jesus to our new friend, as the secret of our joy, as the One who had met the claims of a righteous God against us, by dying in our place—the Just One for the unjust—and who had thus acquired the right to put us in His place before God; who had taken our past upon Himself, and made our future secure, and was, all the way along, the dearest to each of us, making bright days brighter by His love, and lighting up otherwise dark ones.

She was interested, attracted. Jesus seemed a Friend she would like to have, a good example to



follow, but as *God's Son*, Himself God, this she could not accept; it upset her previous thoughts. She could not see the *necessity* for the atonement, but reasoned about it. The authority of the Bible as a whole, as God's Word, she disputed, though willing to receive some parts of it. Courtied and caressed on all sides, she could not take in, that, in God's sight, she was a *lost* sinner, and that Jesus must be to her what His name implies, "Jehovah the Saviour," or nothing.

The days wore on, her interest deepened, her heart was attracted, but her human reasoning always came in the way. Her anxiety to know the truth increased; she wept often as we spoke of these things; she was "almost persuaded;" she almost accepted God's salvation in Christ, "almost, but not quite."

When the last day of our stay arrived, she parted from us with much affection, and with tears. We promised to write, and exchanged addresses, for they also were leaving that place the following week.

The Baron had none of his wife's doubts and difficulties, but also he had none of her interest; he accepted the whole thing as quite true, but alas! it was nothing to him. Religion, he thought, was only for women and priests.

After our return to England we wrote, as we had promised, and sent some books which we hoped might help the young Baroness, but no answer came. We spoke of her often to each other, and to

the Lord; she had seemed so near to safety and yet not safe.

Four years rolled away during which our paths did not again cross, and we had heard no tidings of her. It was summer time once more, and we were preparing to leave England, when, in our own city, my husband one day met the Baron. The meeting seemed accidental, but the circumstances that led to it were so unusual, that we felt sure at once the Lord had arranged it.

"How glad my wife will be when I go back and tell her that I have seen you," were the Baron's first words: "she has so much wished to meet you again, and, by mistake, your cards were packed in a desk left behind in —, so we could not tell where to find you."

"We will come and see her this afternoon," was the answer, and we did. "Oh!" she said, "I am so glad to see you, I have not forgotten one word you both said to me, and I have prayed that if it were all true, and all for *me*, I might meet you again. It did not seem likely in this large city, but ever since I knew we were coming to England I have been praying about it, and specially since we came here. I thought no answer could be coming, for we leave in three days, and, to-day, when my husband came in I could scarcely believe the answer had come. It seems as if God must be thinking of me!"

Before we left that day the Baroness told us how she had written, once, and again, but had

never sent the letters. She could not tell us she believed, and she thought we should grieve to know she was just where we had left her. The world in various ways, and Satan had been busy with her, trying to uproot the seed sown, but it remained in the soil, though, as yet, it had not brought forth fruit.

It was arranged that the Baron and Baroness should come to us on the following day, and we besought the Lord earnestly Himself to open their eyes that they might see Jesus. In her case He answered. She saw that God had either left us without a revelation of Himself, or that the Bible was that revelation, and that to accept part, and not the whole, was not to accept it as God's Word at all. Page after page we looked together at God's testimony concerning His Son. Faith took the place of reason in her soul, and peace and rest followed. Her own words written afterwards best describe the change :—

“I had asked the Lord to let me know the truth about Jesus, and when I heard your husband speak last week, that was the Lord's answer to me. I never can thank you for all your patience with me, it is like the Lord's. I used to wonder why it was so difficult to believe, but I see now the greatest difficulty was in my own want of humility. When I reasoned about Him and His Word, in my own foolish pride, I could understand nothing, but when I came to Him simply, letting my own thoughts go, and asking Him humbly to give me

His thoughts, He made everything so clear. I feel so unworthy, but when I think of all the agony, and the death Jesus had to endure for my sins, and that just my sin was the cause of my not finding Him sooner, it draws out my heart so to Him, that I want to find all my joy in Him."

The entrance of the love of Christ into her heart made the young Baroness very touchingly humble. Referring to a very dear relative, she wrote, "Do you think I may venture to tell her what the Lord has done for me. I am so afraid of hindering her by not putting the truth quite clearly. I send her on all your letters to read."

I gave her in reply one verse: "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

In her answer she says: "I have written to —, and begged her to ask the Lord Himself to show her His truth, and I told her that, if she wanted it, He would as surely answer her as He answered me. I used to think you must understand in order to believe, but I found that *faith must come first*, and then we begin to understand. I see how very stupid it was of me to think that we, weak, and sinful, and finite creatures, ever, of ourselves, could understand the infinite and holy God. I ask Him to keep me, and to teach me more and more about Himself, and above everything to draw to Him my dear husband."

Later on, she tells us, in a letter, of one or two near relatives having found the Lord also, but still

she waits for the joy of knowing her husband is one with her, not merely for time but for eternity. From the first he never opposed her, she was so the centre of all his thoughts that he seemed glad that she had one great joy more, even though he did not share it. But this does not satisfy her, it could not satisfy a heart that had found out what the love of Christ is, and that had realised something of what eternity *without* Christ would be; she cannot be content till he shares her joy.

Reader, have you faced what eternity without Christ will be? Eternity with the devil and his angels? and that it is only your own pride and unbelief that will make you share Satan's portion for eternity? “*To-day* if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts;” this moment is the only time that belongs to you. To-morrow your doom may be irrevocably fixed. “Behold *now* is the accepted time, behold *now* is the day of salvation.”

X.

---

“CHEAP ENOUGH.”

---



ANY years ago I was called to visit a dying young man, in a colliery village in Yorkshire. He was near his end, but had no clear perception of the grace of God to lost sinners. He had been told to pray and repent, as if these were in some way to secure the favour

of God. But by these means he could not find peace, yet he was lulled into a kind of dreamy hope, that he should have prayed and repented enough before he died to get saved.

I was led to tell him how God had sent him the message of free forgiveness of sins, entirely through Jesus, who died for our sins, and was raised for our justification. I quoted those words, the very proclamation of God to every lost sinner:—"Be it known unto you . . . that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him all that believe are justified from all things." This was the very message God had sent me to proclaim to him before he died, as Jesus said to the poor man let down to His feet,—“Thy sins be forgiven thee.” Ah! this young man was not yet let down, helpless at the feet of Jesus, the only Saviour. No, he still thought he had a great work of repentance to do, and he must do it. He had no idea that repentance was seeing and owning himself a poor, helpless, vile, lost sinner. He looked at me with a look of pity and a touch of scorn, that I should know no better than to come to him with such a story as free forgiveness to him, just as he was, and he said,—“CHEAP ENOUGH!”

Seeing this, and hearing these words, I said, “You have a beautiful primrose here in the window; what might it be worth?”

“I should say it would be worth a shilling,” he replied.

"Yes, I suppose a thing is worth what it costs. Now I will tell you what the good news of free unmerited forgiveness of sins, God has sent me to tell you, cost:—It cost the agony and bearing of sin, enduring the wrath and judgment due to us, by the Son of God, who created the heavens and the earth. He gave Himself, He gave His precious blood, that forgiveness might be proclaimed to you. And all you can say is, 'Cheap enough!' Good morning," and I left him.

I called again in a few days. What a change! The Holy Ghost had opened his blind eyes.

God had shown him what a fool he was to despise the amazing price which had been paid that salvation might be as free to us as the air we breathe. It is too long ago now to remember all he said, and how God had shown him his folly. He had treated the infinite price paid by the Lord Jesus with contempt; he had thought of his own repentance as of more value than the death of Christ! God blessed the message, His own message of free forgiveness of sins to his soul.

In a few days he passed away to enter heaven, by that which he had despised as "cheap enough," believing God produced that repentance which he had rashly sought to put in the place of the infinite value of the death of Christ.

Reader, you will soon pass into eternity. Are you despising the gospel through the atoning death of Christ as "cheap enough"? and seeking to present to God your prayers, and repentance,

and works, instead of believing His blessed message of free forgiveness? God proclaims to you forgiveness through Jesus and His finished work. Will you despise this, and say, "Cheap enough"? If so, may God open your eyes ere it be for ever too late!

C. S.

## "I AM ESCAPED BY THE SKIN OF MY TEETH."

(JOB xix. 20.)



AWOKE in hell. Of course I knew millions had done so before. It was no new thing, but it was new to *me*—that was the point, and I felt miserable, wretched. "Is this hell?" I said, so unlike what I had expected, the one place I had all my life vowed I would never come to; I am sure I *intended* hard enough not to come. "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments." I had heard the words scores of times, now they were quite changed and altered, for then they referred to another, now to myself. "Fool that I had been," that, I think, was the keenest point of the situation.

"What was it like?"

Utterly different to what I had expected—I soon saw that. Before, it had sounded most unreal, now it was the very opposite. I had always been fond of exploring strange places—I had no wish to explore this. I dreaded even to move, for I felt



certain the more I saw, the worse it would prove to be. And the company, that was the worst of all, if hell has a worst.

Suddenly I heard my name mentioned, though I could not recognise the voice. It appeared a list was published in hell, daily, of the people arriving in a day or so, and my name was down, and they were soon expecting me. I had come a day too soon.

Next moment I awoke on earth. Was it earth? I trembled with an eagerness of excitement I had never felt before. I was covered with a clammy sweat. Where was I? On earth or in hell? What tremendous issues depended on the answer! The agony of that moment was more, I believe, than ever man suffered before.

It was quite dark, and I dared not move. Hell seemed the more real, but I was on earth. I lay fearing to close my eyes. I dressed as one dazed. My servants were afraid of me, but were too well-behaved to ask what had happened. What *had* happened? I looked ten years older at least, and was quite white.

I had ordered my trap to drive to Ascot. It was the Cup day—there it was at the door. I felt somehow unable to think. I got in as a machine more than a man. How we got there, and why I went, I could not say, my whole time was spent on thinking where I had been. I got cold and hot in turn, sometimes I shuddered so that I shook the trap. I was awakened in a kind of a way (I never

seemed really to awake) by running into a drag. I don't quite know what happened, it occurred so quickly ; it was my fault, I suppose ; some wrangling took place.

I heard as a man in a dream, till I was suddenly brought up by a shout from the drag—"Go to hell!" I had heard the phrase thousands of times at Eton, at mess, at the club—ay, used it too ; but now it was like a new language that I had got the key to.

I shuddered. My knees would have knocked together had I been standing. My groom asked me if I was ill, and took the reins. He proposed to return ; I said "No." The fact was I dare not be alone.

We arrived soon afterwards. I tried to walk to the stand, but I could barely do so : hardly any one had yet come. The first man I knew, who saw me, was a brother officer. He had not seen me for years—not since I left the regiment. After shaking me by the hand heartily enough, he said, "Where the hell have you been all these years?"

I heard no more ; I knew I had fallen and was being taken home. I heard, as I was carried along, oaths and curses on all sides. I had heard them at race-meetings all my life ; now I started each time I heard the name—*that* name—mentioned. It was jest to them ; it was grim earnest to me.

I arrived home. The doctor said I must have had a shock—he never said a truer word in his life—and that I must be kept perfectly quiet ; but he did not say *how*. I would have paid him the

biggest fee he had ever had in his life if he could have answered that. Keep me quiet ! You might as well have talked of keeping the sea quiet.

How did I know I might not fall asleep and wake up where I had been the night before ; I was not expected *then* ; I was expected *now*—yes, and for ever.

The paper on the wall was a kind of diagonal pattern with spots on it. I began counting them—I could not help it. Suppose I allowed one hundred years in torment to each spot, how many years would it make ? I got confused and began over and over again. Would life there never end ? I think I fainted. When I came to, Jack, my brother, was there, sitting by my bedside ; they had sent for him.

I asked him to read to me about Lazarus and the man. I meant the dead man, but I could not bear to name the word, and half closed my eyes. Jack went out and did not come back for some time. It appeared in my house, which I had bought two years back for £60,000, "furnished with every modern requisite," as the advertisements say, there was no Bible. Strange, for every soldier carries one in his kit. So they sent for one. Then Jack had to go out a second time—he could not find the place. Nearly an hour had passed since I first asked him to read. At last he was beginning, " Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus." That was wrong ; I meant the beggar Lazarus. However, Jack read on slowly, though I did not listen. This story had

no concern for me ; but I knew Jack could not find the other one.

Lazarus was sick, was he ? So was I. "Lazarus is dead." Should *I* be in another hour or so ?

Then I heard no more till the words, "Lazarus, come forth, and Lazarus came forth." Had I really been in hell ?—where had this man been ? Strange, too, Jack should read about him. Jack stopped : I said, "Go on." I heard little till he read, "Many people were there to see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead." Would people come to see me ? Hark ! "They consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death." How I pitied him. Would Jack like to see me die to step into my shoes ?

"Jack ! I have had a shock."

"Yes, old man, what was it ?"

"I was in hell last night." He started.

"I *was*, but only for an hour ; now, you see, Jack, I may be there for ever *this* night." I saw a tear in Jack's eye, dear old Jack ; he tried to speak but couldn't, and so we remained silent. Then I asked him to read it all again. Jack read it more slowly even than before. This time I drank in every word.

"Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again." Jack's voice trembled. "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, *though he were dead*, yet shall he live." "Stop !" I shouted ; "say it again." Jack went over it three or four times. "Jack, do you believe that ? Go on." Jack went on.

" And whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die ; believest thou this ? " Now I always had a good voice. For the life of me I couldn't help it ; I gave such a shout as woke the whole house.

" Jack, believest thou this ? " Never patient had such a recovery. I was out of bed at once.

Before they were afraid my mind was affected, now they seemed certain of it, all but Jack, I think, he half saw it ; but then, you see, he hadn't been where I had been the night before.

I read that chapter over at least fifty times, it got clearer and clearer. How I praised God for it. " Should never die," I cried over the words for joy. No more hell for me, for though " worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God."

My chief concern was Jack, but he saw it too, only he was quieter. " To think, Jack, that I am forty-five and you forty, and we never saw before that Christ died for our sins to save us from hell."

I was never so happy in my life. I had been going to Norway to fish for salmon. I would fish for men now. God had saved my soul through a chapter of the Bible being read. I would pass my life in future in reading it to others.

ANON.

## WORKS OR INFIDELITY? MUST IT BE EITHER?



WE met. I asked him the question,—  
“Are you going to heaven?”

“I *hope* so,” said he.

“But I *know* that I am, thank God,”  
I replied.

“Oh, well, I am *working* for it,” he

continued, in order, doubtless to show me that his hope was based on some real foundation, and that it was not a mere illusion.

“Then I’m not,” I quickly rejoined.

“What!” he said, “you’re not *working* for it; then are you an infidel?”

“No,” I replied; “I am neither working for it, nor am I an infidel.”

This fairly perplexed him. He could see no mean between works and infidelity,—between doing your best to merit God’s favour, and throwing the whole thing overboard as so much folly. That is, he was totally ignorant of the way of salvation.

I may say that we met casually and were total strangers, but that we thus conversed together.

But, then, I feel persuaded that the state of this man’s mind is the state of many who, though they might hardly speak so openly, yet can see no *via media* between these two extremes.

The natural thought is,—“If I don’t do my

best there can be no other way; it is that or infidelity."

It is neither. Very clearly infidelity cannot save; but neither can works. Granted the two principles are opposites; but while infidelity rejects revelation, the principle of works ignores, though professing to own it. Both of those evil fruits grow upon the same bad tree,—they both flow from the same wicked heart; both are absolutely fatal. No more can works—the most laborious—take you to heaven, than did the splendid offering of Cain meet with God's approval. They are utterly vain.

"Then how do you know you are going to heaven?" he again asked me.

"By Christ alone, for He is 'the way, the truth, and the life,'" I said.

Yes, dear reader, by Him alone, for "there is no other name given whereby we must be saved." The acceptance of that blessed name implies faith indeed, as opposed to infidelity, but it also signifies the repudiation of all confidence in your own good works.

It demolishes both principles, and saves you on another. Yes, it *saves*, and gives you the *knowledge* of salvation,—not the mere hope. It leads you to build on the death and resurrection of the Lamb of God,—it causes you to acknowledge your personal guilt and the demerit, too, of all your fancied good works, but it points out to you a sacrifice better than Abel's,—better than those that lay on Jewish altars,—a sacrifice than

which none could be better; for "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,"—one that God has provided, so that love has given all that light demanded, and grace supplied all that justice claimed. What heavenly harmonies,—what divine consistencies! "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

He that builds on his own works can never get beyond a hope; and did he but know it, his hope is false.

He that builds on the finished work of Christ builds on a certainty, and should always live in the enjoyment of it. He is saved.

The one is human, the other divine; the one of man, the other of God.

If a friend paid your debt in your stead, how much would you pay? Nothing. Salvation, as to its basis, is wrought out apart from me altogether. Faith claims it as graciously presented under the character of a "*gift*."

Then "good works" follow as a sequence. Oh! how plain, how simple,—all plain to him that understandeth. The sorrow is that the many close their eyes and harden their hearts, and will not be charmed.

Infidelity awaits its doom, and "works" their curse,—for the refusal of God's way must be fatal. The Christian awaits the coming of the Lord,—when He shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Reader, what is your prospect?

J. W. S.



# “HAUD ON, DEARIE, HE’LL NO’ SHAK’ YE AFF.”

“And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment: for she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.”—MARK v. 25-34.



WAS travelling in a third-class carriage on the Caledonian Railway some years ago, starting for an evangelistic tour, when, at a small station in the country, a middle-aged woman of grave and serious demeanour, and evidently of the humblest class of society, got into my compartment. Giving her a gospel tract, she read it, and then made some comment which led me to judge she was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, an impression which further conversation quite confirmed,—in fact, she was a child of God, and happy in the sense of His love to her. Presently she volunteered that she was going to her home, but with rather a sad heart, as she had been at the death

and burial of one who had been her most intimate friend from the days of childhood. On my inquiring if her friend had died in the Lord, she replied,—

“Ou, ay. I believe she was a guid womun.”

“What grounds have you for that statement?”

“Weel, sir, she was a guid-livin’ womun, for I’ve kenned her frae I was a bairn, but jist afore she deed I spier’t\* at her what her hope for eternity really was.”

“And what did she say?”

“She answered me, ‘I canna say that I ha’e that peace, an’ that assurance, I’ve heerd some folk tell o’, but I can truly say I’m like yon puir womun in the Gospels wi’ the issue o’ blood, who, when she heerd o’ Jesus, cam’ an’ touchit the hem o’ His garmint; and tho’ I canna say I feel as I wad like tae, an’ my faith is weak, I’m jist clingin’ tae Him.’”

“That was good,” said I; “and what comfort did you seek to give her?”

“Weel, weel, sir, I jist said, ‘Haud† on, dearie, He’ll no’ shak’ ye aff!’”

The train stopped; my friend got out. I have never seen her since, and I never expect to again till I see her in glory, but her last words have remained firmly engraved on my memory; and, though many thousands have doubtless heard this simple narrative in the preaching-rooms where I may have related it, I put it on paper and send it

---

\* Inquired.

† Hold.

forth in an enduring form, with the hope and prayer that it may cheer some timid, doubting, yet withal believing soul.

“Haud on, dearie, He’ll no’ shak’ ye aff!” It was a fine word for a dying soul, that clung to the Saviour, to hear. It is in such moments that Satan gathers up all his powers, arrays all his hosts, marshals all his forces, and shoots all his poisoned arrows to distress and distract the physically enfeebled one. What comfort in such a condition must it have been to this dying one, to hear such a sweet testimony to the blessed Lord as this, “He’ll no’ shak’ ye aff!”

Let no one suppose that in narrating this incident I am pleading for an uncertain state of soul. Quite the contrary. If my reader has been hitherto in uncertainty as to his or her relationship to God, my deep desire is that the apprehension of what God’s grace really is may for ever dispel all the gloomy clouds which have hindered the enjoyment of the sunshine of His favour. Do not tell me about yourself, and what you are, or are not; what you have done, or have not done. Peace, and the assurance of salvation, are not found in anything that springs from us, but in what God is and has been for us, as seen in the life and death of His blessed Son, the Lord Jesus. You must then keep your eye on Christ, and your ear attentively open to what He says, if you are to have peace.

Look at the touching tale which heads this paper, and to which the dying woman referred. What

was the state of matters? Twelve years ill, she had "suffered many things," had "spent all," was "nothing bettered," but "rather grew worse." Twelve is the number that speaks of completeness in matters of human administration. Here it was complete misery. Every human resource had been found to be a source of vexatious disappointment, not of healing. Complete poverty was the result, for she had "spent all." This is just the case for Jesus; and if you, my reader, have found that you are a poor weak sinner, needing salvation, and unable to save yourself,—spite of all the remedies which incompetent spiritual physicians prescribe, in the shape of good resolutions, amendment of life, almsgiving, attendance on the means of grace, observance of ordinances, prayers, tears, penitential imposts, and perhaps even bodily flagellation,—you cannot do better than follow her footsteps.

Her faith was beautifully simple. She had heard of Jesus, and what she had heard had begotten in her heart the full conviction that to get into contact with him, even remotely, meant sure and certain blessing. So convinced, her course is simple: may yours be the same. She "heard," she "came," she "touched," and "*straightway* the fountain of her blood was dried up," and, as a very simple consequence, she "felt" that she was "healed."

Now this is always the way the soul comes to Jesus, for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." It is what you hear of Him

in God's Word that leads you to cast yourself simply on Him. The moment faith does that, the blessing is sure, and present too. Faith always secures the blessing, because it has Christ for its object, and not "self" in any shape or form. There was no virtue in her touch; all the virtue was in Him whom she touched, though it flowed forth bounteously in response to that touch of faith.

But there is a point of immense importance here. Not only is she sure she has touched Him, though it were only the hem of His garment, the sense of healing being "straightway" communicated, but He knew He had been touched, and by whom. Yes, Jesus knows if you have come to Him in simple faith or not. He is not an unobservant witness of the heavings and throbbings of the weary restless heart, that scarce knows what it needs, yet finds all that need met in Himself. Here "Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, . . . said, Who touched my clothes?" In vain do the disciples speak of the throng. The multitude had thronged but not "touched" Him; faith alone did that. Yet did He not know who it was? Clearly, for "he looked round about to see *her* that had done this thing."

Why, then, does Jesus put these queries? Because the Lord loves to confirm faith wherever He finds it. The woman, healed thus perfectly, was about to retire without any confession of Him whose grace she had tasted. So now is it with many

souls. They have trusted Jesus, got a sense of relief, perhaps even the half hope that they are forgiven, but they have never got full peace or assurance. Why? Because they have never simply and fully confessed Christ, and hence never got to the point where they were free to listen simply to what He has to say to them. Till this moment is reached, two words describe the condition of such souls, viz., "fearing" and "trembling," which is just what we read: "But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth."

This is unreserved committal of one's self to Jesus, and what is the result? What I am wont to call the finest "confirmation service" in all Scripture. Had the Lord allowed her to go off without what now follows, she never would have had peace; for Satan would have followed her, and whispered, "Oh, yes, it's quite true you are better just now, but your trouble will be sure to break out again; you are relieved, not cured;" and the fear of the impending plague would have corroded the joy which she rightly had. How gracious is the Lord! He does not like any soul that has trusted Him to be duped, deceived, and distressed any longer by the devil; so He speaks words which for ever calm the troubled heart, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and *be whole* of thy plague."

Not only is she made whole, but peace is to fill

her heart if she thinks of the future; for “*be whole of thy plague*” are His last words to the one with whom He owns relationship by the exquisite epithet “daughter.”

She had therefore the divinely given certainty, that she could never relapse into that state out of which the virtue, which flowed from Jesus, had drawn her. Similarly, the one who trusts Him now is entitled to know that forgiveness and eternal life are present possessions, and never can be lost; for what He gives in grace, He does not recall.

Scripture testimony is abundant on this point; *e.g.*, “To him give all the prophets witness, that, through his name, whosoever believeth in him *shall receive* the remission of sins” (Acts x. 43). “In whom *we have* redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. i. 7). Again, “I write unto you, little children, because your sins *are forgiven you* for his name’s sake” (1 John ii. 12). Thus we see on what ground God *forgives*. Christ’s work, and faith in His name. But not only does He *forgive*,—which takes up my past history, pardoning my sins,—He *gives* something that I am to enjoy now and for ever. Thus my present and my future are met by what He gives, *viz.*, “eternal life.”

How is this obtained? Hear His own word, and doubt no more. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life” (John vi. 47). “My sheep hear my voice, and I

know them, and they follow me: and I *give* unto them eternal life; and they *shall never perish*, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John x. 27, 28). What certainty!

If you trust the blessed Son of God, ever so simply and feebly, present and eternal blessing is yours, and you ought to know and rejoice in it. Not only is it yours, but you can never lose it, for it is "in Christ," and therefore secure. Weak and feeble may be your faith; but, since it has Christ for its object, all is secure and certain, for "Christ is all;" and possessing Him, you possess all things. Do you think sometimes He will give you up, because even since you trusted Him you have failed to rightly respond to His grace? Such a thought is entirely a suggestion of Satan, contrary to the Spirit of Christ, and the teaching of Scripture; for it is written, for our comfort, that "Jesus . . . having loved his own which were in the world, loved them unto the end" (John xiii. 1). These things being so, of all who trust the Saviour, this also is true: "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning *chosen you to salvation* through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth: whereunto *he called you* by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess. ii. 13, 14). Therefore, dear trembling fellow-believer, I will only add a closing word, "Haud on, dearie, He'll no shak' ye aff."

W. T. P. W.



## THE DYING DRUMMER BOY.



WO or three times in my life God in His mercy touched my heart, and twice before my conversion I was under deep conviction.

During the American war I was surgeon in the United States army, and after the battle of Gettysburg there were many hundred wounded soldiers in my hospital, amongst whom were twenty-eight who had been wounded so severely that they required my services at once,—some whose legs had to be amputated, some their arms, and others both their arm and leg. One of the latter was a boy who had been but three months in the service, and being too young for a soldier, had enlisted as a drummer. When my assistant surgeon and one of my stewards wished to administer chloroform previous to the amputation, he turned his head aside and positively refused to receive it. When the steward told him that it was the doctor's orders, he said, "Send the doctor to me." When I came to his bedside, I said, "Young man, why do you refuse chloroform? When I found you on the battlefield you were so far gone that I thought it hardly worth while to pick you up; but when you opened those large blue eyes I thought you had a mother somewhere who might, at that moment, be thinking of her boy. I did not want you to die on the field, so ordered you to be

brought here; but you have now lost so much blood that you are too weak to endure an operation without chloroform, therefore you had better let me give you some." He laid his hand on mine, and looking me in the face, said, "Doctor, one Sunday afternoon, in the Sabbath school, when I was nine and a half years old, I gave my heart to Christ. I learned to trust Him then; I have been trusting Him ever since, and I know I can trust Him now. He is my strength and my stimulant; He will support me while you amputate my arm and leg." I then asked him if he would allow me to give him a little brandy. Again he looked me in the face, saying, "Doctor, when I was about five years old my mother knelt by my side, with her arm around my neck, and said, 'Charlie, I am now praying to Jesus that you may never know the taste of strong drink; your papa died a drunkard and went down to a drunkard's grave, and I promised God, if it was His will that you should grow up, that you would warn young men against the bitter cup.' I am now seventeen years old, but I have never tasted anything stronger than tea and coffee, and as I am, in all probability, about to go into the presence of my God, would you send me there with brandy on my stomach?"

The look that boy gave me I shall never forget. At that time I hated Jesus, but I respected that boy's loyalty to his Saviour, and when I saw how he loved and trusted Him to the last, there was something that touched my heart, and I did for

that boy what I had never done for any other soldier—I asked him if he wished to see his chaplain. “Oh, yes, sir,” was the answer.

When Chaplain R—— came he at once knew the boy from having often met him at the tent prayer-meetings, and taking his hand, said, “Well, Charlie, I am sorry to see you in this sad condition.” “Oh, I am all right, sir,” he answered. “The doctor offered me chloroform, but I declined it; then he wished to give me brandy, which I also declined; and now, if my Saviour calls me, I can go to Him in my right mind.” “You may not die, Charlie,” said the chaplain; “but if the Lord should call you away, is there anything I can do for you after you are gone?” “Chaplain, please put your hand under my pillow and take my little Bible; in it you will find my mother’s address; please send it to her, and write a letter and tell her that since the day I left home I have never let a day pass without reading a portion of God’s Word, and daily praying that God would bless my dear mother; no matter whether on the march, on the battlefield, or in the hospital.” “Is there anything else that I can do for you, my lad?” asked the chaplain. “Yes, please write a letter to the superintendent of the Sands Street Sunday School, Brooklyn, N.Y., and tell him that the kind words, many prayers, and good advice he gave me I have never forgotten; they have followed me through all the dangers of battle, and now, in my dying hour, I ask my dear Saviour to bless my dear old superintendent; that is all.”

Turning towards me, he said, "Now, doctor, I am ready, and I promise you that I will not even groan while you take off my arm and leg, if you will not offer me chloroform." I promised, but I had not the courage to take the knife in my hand to perform the operation without first going into the next room and taking a little stimulant to nerve myself to perform my duty.

While cutting through the flesh Charlie Coulson never groaned, but when I took the saw to separate the bone the lad took the corner of his pillow in his mouth, and all that I could hear him utter was, "O Jesus, blessed Jesus, stand by me now." He kept his promise, and never groaned.

That night I could not sleep, for whichever way I turned I saw those soft blue eyes, and when I closed mine the words, "Blessed Jesus, stand by me now," kept ringing in my ears. Between twelve and one o'clock I left my bed and visited the hospital, a thing I had never done before unless specially called, but such was my desire to see that boy. Upon my arrival there I was informed by the night steward that sixteen of the hopeless cases had died, and been carried down to the dead house. "How is Charlie Coulson; is he among the dead?" I asked. "No, sir," answered the steward, "he is sleeping as sweetly as a babe." When I came up to the bed where he lay, one of the nurses informed me that, about nine o'clock, two members of the Y.M.C.A. came through the hospital to read and sing a hymn. They were accompanied by Chaplain

R——, who knelt by Charlie Coulson's bed and offered up a fervent and soul-stirring prayer, after which they sang, while still upon their knees, the sweetest of all hymns, "Jesus, Lover of my soul," in which Charlie joined. I could not understand how that boy, who had undergone such excruciating pain, could sing.

Five days after I had amputated that dear boy's arm and leg he sent for me, and it was from him on that day I heard the first gospel sermon. "Doctor," he said, "my time has come; I do not expect to see another sun rise, but, thank God, I am ready to go, and before I die I desire to thank you with all my heart for your kindness to me. Doctor, you are a Jew; you do not believe in Jesus; will you please stand here and see me die, trusting my Saviour to the last moment of my life?" I tried to stay, but I could not, for I had not the courage to stand by and see a Christian boy die rejoicing in the love of that Jesus whom I had been taught to hate, so I hurriedly left the room. About twenty minutes later a steward, who found me sitting in my private office covering my face with my hand, said, "Doctor, Charlie Coulson wishes to see you." "I have just seen him," I answered, "and I cannot see him again." "But, doctor, he says he must see you once more before he dies." I now made up my mind to see him, say an endearing word, and let him die, but I was determined that no word of his should influence me in the least so far as his Jesus was concerned. When I entered the hospital I saw he

was sinking fast, so I sat down by his bed. Asking me to take his hand, he said, "Doctor, I love you because you are a Jew; the best Friend I have found in this world was a Jew." I asked him who that was. He answered, "Jesus Christ, to whom I want to introduce you before I die; and will you promise me, doctor, that what I am about to say to you, you will never forget?" I promised; and he said, "Five days ago, while you amputated my arm and leg, I prayed to the Lord Jesus Christ to convert your soul."

These words went deep into my heart. I could not understand how, when I was causing him the most intense pain, he could forget all about himself and think of nothing but his Saviour and my unconverted soul. All I could say to him was, "Well, my dear boy, you will soon be all right." With these words I left him, and twelve minutes later he fell asleep, "safe in the arms of Jesus."

Hundreds of soldiers died in my hospital during the war, but I only followed one to the grave, and that one was Charlie Coulson, the drummer boy, and I rode three miles to see him buried. I had him dressed in a new uniform and placed in an officer's coffin, with a United States flag over it.

That dear boy's dying words made a deep impression upon me. I was rich at that time, so far as money is concerned, but I would have given every penny I possessed if I could have felt towards Christ as Charlie did; but that feeling cannot be bought with money. Alas! I soon forgot all about

my Christian soldier's little sermon, but I could not forget the boy himself. I now know that at that time I was under deep conviction of sin, but I fought against Christ with all the hatred of an orthodox Jew for nearly ten years, until, finally, the dear boy's prayer was answered and God converted my soul.

About eighteen months after my conversion I attended a prayer-meeting one evening in the city of Brooklyn. It was one of those meetings when Christians testify to the loving-kindness of their Saviour. After several of them had spoken an elderly lady arose and said, "Dear friends, this may be the last time that it is my privilege to testify for Christ. My family physician told me yesterday that my right lung is very nearly gone, and my left lung is very much affected; so at the best I have but a short time to be with you; but what is left of me belongs to Jesus. Oh! it is a great joy to know that I shall meet my boy with Jesus in heaven. My son was not only a soldier for his country, but also a soldier for Christ. He was wounded at the battle of Gettysburg, and fell into the hands of a Jewish doctor, who amputated his arm and leg, but he died five days after the operation. The chaplain of the regiment wrote me a letter, and sent me my boy's Bible. In that letter I was informed that my Charlie in his dying hour sent for that Jewish doctor and said to him, 'Doctor, before I die I wish to tell you that five days ago, while you amputated my arm and leg, I

prayed to 'the Lord Jesus Christ to convert your soul.'"

When I heard this lady's testimony I could sit still no longer. I left my seat, crossed the room, and taking her by the hand, said, "God bless you, my dear sister; your boy's prayer has been heard and answered. I am the Jewish doctor for whom your Charlie prayed, and his Saviour is now my Saviour."

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. xii. 2).

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16).

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know" (John xiv. 4).

"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13).

"'Whosoever heareth,' shout, shout the sound,  
Send the blessed tidings all the world around;  
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found,  
'Whosoever will may come.'

'Whosoever will, whosoever will,'  
Send the proclamation over vale and hill;  
'Tis a loving Father calls the wanderer home;  
'Whosoever will may come.'"



# SAVED.

---



T was early morning, at the pretty watering-place of E——, a bright summer's morning. The blue sea rippled and sparkled underneath the blue sky, and the sun shone cheerily down, but as yet there were but few people astir.

The beach was almost deserted, save by here and there a straggler who thought the fresh cool morning hours too precious to be missed.

Had there been any watchers, they might have seen a swimmer strike out boldly to sea, through those rippling waves. A strong swimmer he was, and every stroke told, and put the shore at a greater distance from him. He was alone, and a stranger to the place, having only arrived there the evening before.

Had he asked the fishermen they would have told him of strong and dangerous currents, they would have warned him of risk, and counselled him to care; but he was in the very prime of manhood's strength, and he never thought of danger; so on the swimmer went, and never turned his head to see how far he had left the shore behind, till at last, a little wearied, he rested a moment and thought of returning. Then he found he had been carried out far beyond his thoughts or intentions by the strength of the current, and that between him and the shore there was a long distance. "It

is time, indeed, to return," he said to himself, and struck out once more for land.

But the Lord's eye was on him, and He had something to say to him alone on the face of the deep ere he touched the land again.

I have said he was strong, and a bold swimmer, but now he found he had wind and current both against him, and his utmost efforts made no appreciable headway against them. For long he battled on, but the shore was still far off, too far off for any cry of distress to reach it. He raised himself and shouted; no answering voice, no friendly shout replied. Still he struggled on, till, worn out by his exertions and utterly exhausted, he felt nothing but a watery grave was before him. His strokes got feebler and more unsteady each time, and he knew he was losing the little way he had made and was being drifted seaward. Then he ceased struggling, turned on his back, and gave himself up for lost.

There and then the Lord spoke to his soul. He had been religiously brought up; nay more, Lord's Day after Lord's Day, from the pulpit of a fashionable church, he had preached to a large congregation Bible truths as to the way of salvation. He had made Scripture his text, and discoursed ably from it. He had read prayers in public and in private. He had visited in his parish, and administered the sacrament to the dying. He had lived a careful life, and attended to every rite; and till this moment he had been on very good terms

with himself, fully persuaded that a life such as his was fit to bring to God.

Now, with death and eternity before him, his soul awoke to find he had no hope for eternity; he had never met God, he was not ready to die,—he had one thing lacking, he had no link with Christ.

Horror and agony seized him. The noise of the waves seemed to be roaring this verse into his ears again and again, “Lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”

He felt he had preached a Christ he did not know, had told others of a salvation he himself had not got. His whole life came before him, with its outward ceremonies and its inward hollowness. The life he had so prided himself in he loathed now as only mockery of the God who had said, “My son, give me thine *heart*.”

He felt he had given Him his time and his money, but never his heart; and had thought to merit heaven by these poor gifts. Now he saw them at their true value, “dead works.” Now he saw that “without faith it is impossible to please him,” that the work that could save his soul must be done for him, and done by another,—that the righteousness he had prided himself in God looked on as “filthy rags,” and his offerings to God had been like Cain’s bloodless offerings, and “without shedding of blood there is *no remission*.”

It was not concerning his body, but his soul, that he cried there on the mighty deep, there alone with God on the waves, a great cry, “*Lord, save me,*

or I perish ; God be merciful to *me* a sinner, a hypocrite,—save *me!*” Even as he cried the answer came, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all sin* ; whosoever believeth on him shall *not perish*, but have everlasting life.”

Faint and weary, with the natural life almost gone, the once strong man murmured, “Lord, I believe that precious blood was shed for me ;” and with that murmur, life, and peace, and rest, came to his soul, and then utter unconsciousness.

“Father, father, look ahead ; what is that on the waters,—surely it’s a man ?” said the young son of the skipper of a fishing smack, which was putting in towards the shore. One moment the father looked in the direction his son indicated, the next he sprang to an oar, calling out to the little crew, “Row for very life, men, there’s a fellow-creature perishing.” The men rowed with a will, not waiting even to ask a question ; rowed in silence, bending all their energies to the task. The skipper looked ahead, saw the body of a man sink once and rise again, rise farther from the shore and nearer to the boat ; sink a second time, and this time he concluded it would rise almost close to them if they made a desperate effort. “Bend to your oars, men,” he cried, “for one last pull, and then stop ; it is now or never.” They did so. When next the body rose, it was within arm’s length of the boat. Strong arms were stretched out to grasp it, and more than one was prepared for a plunge.

They saw that the man was apparently lifeless ;

he could not help himself ; if he were to be rescued, it must be entirely through the work of those in the boat.

It was no easy task. Had there been more sea on, it would have been an impossibility to bring that apparently lifeless body into the boat. But they managed it, and then took every means in their power to restore animation, making all possible haste towards the shore to get more efficient help. By the time they reached it, they had the satisfaction of seeing the man they had rescued show some signs of life.

Plenty of willing hands were found to carry him ashore, for it was a living breathing man they carried, and not a corpse,—a living man in two ways, possessing now not merely natural life, but eternal life.

A week later, in that same fishing smack, the one that had been lifted into it from the waves in utter helplessness was sitting, in the calm of a summer's evening, telling the skipper and his crew, with some others of the fishermen who had gathered round, the story of what the Lord had done for his soul only a week before, when death and judgment to follow had threatened him.

The men listened intently. He was an object of special interest to them ; for had they not saved him from a watery grave ?

He spoke to them of Jesus the Saviour, of the impossibility of our doing anything to save ourselves the work must all be done by Him, or we

must be lost ; and he read to them these verses from God's Word :

" But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved); . . . For by grace ye are saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast."

He illustrated his meaning by referring to his own condition. " When you saw me in the water that morning, was I in need of salvation, skipper?"

" Ay, ay, sir, indeed you were, as much in need of it as ever I saw any one yet."

" Could I help myself?"

" No, sir, you were o'er far gone for that, you were like dead."

" Did I feel my need even?"

" No, sir, no, you were past feeling."

" Then I owe everything to you and your brave men?"

" Well, sir, if we had not been bye it would have gone badly with you."

" Exactly : did I pray and beseech you to help me or save me, or take me into the boat?"

" Why, no, sir, you couldn't have done it, and we didn't need it; we should have been worse than brutes to see a fellow-creature perishing, and not put out a hand to save him."

" Just so ; I did not pray you to save me, I did not help you to save me ; *you* did all the work, and

I got all the good, I never even lifted a finger for myself. Now, my friends, do you not see how it is with the Lord and us? He does all the work, and we get all the good. We, dead in sins, could do nothing for ourselves. We did not even ask Him to come and save us. He came unasked, took our sins on Himself, the sinless One, suffered in our stead, and now offers salvation as His free gift; that is, *He took our place*, and offers us His place. You risked getting into my place in order to bring me into your place that morning."

"Oh, sir," said the men in concert, "don't say any more about that; you make too much of what we did. But we see what you mean, sir, it's very plain; we think God has taught us all a lesson by this."

"One word more, my friends, let me say about your act. Do you think, however long I live, I shall ever forget that morning, ever cease to be thankful to the brave men who rescued me from a watery grave? Do you not think I shall always carry about with me feelings of gratitude and love for the men who did so much for me? Nay, do not mind my saying it," he continued, as the men disclaimed having done anything but what any one would do, "I must feel and express my gratitude to you, and this is how it is with us to the Lord. When I know He has saved me at such a cost, I cannot go on just as I did before, as though it were all nothing. I want my life to show out my gratitude and love and praise; I want to be a friend of Christ, as I am your friend to-day."

The men were silent; there was a reality about the whole thing which deeply touched them, and every head was bowed and reverently uncovered during the few words of prayer that followed,—earnest supplication for their souls. In more than one case there was complete surrender to Christ at the time; and the whole of the fruit unto life eternal of that morning's incident, will perhaps never be known till "the day" declares it.

Reader, what must you do to be saved, beyond believing in Jesus?

*"Nothing* either great or small;  
*Nothing*, sinner, no;  
*Jesus did it, did it all,*  
Long, long ago."


X.

"As to righteousness, we read that 'all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.' It is not said that 'all our wickednesses,' merely, 'are as filthy rags.' This would, at once, be admitted. But the fact is, that the very best fruit which we can produce, in the shape of religiousness and righteousness, is represented, on the page of eternal truth, as 'dead works,' and 'filthy rags.' Our very efforts after life, do but prove us to be dead; and our very efforts after righteousness do but prove us to be enwrapped in filthy rags. It is only as the actual possessors of eternal life and divine righteousness, that we can walk in the divinely prepared path of good works. Dead works and filthy rags could never be suffered to appear in such a path."

C. H. M.



## GIVING UP, OR RECEIVING? WHICH?

“HE would like to be a Christian, but she shrinks from giving up the world.” Such were the words said to me concerning a young lady. Such was the opinion formed by one who knew her well, and who longed for her salvation,—who had prayed for, and spoken to her about the value of her soul, and the importance of being right with God.

The loss of the world,—that was her difficulty! Two opposing forces wrought within her mind,—which was to win? Was her eternal interest to outweigh that of time,—the claims of heaven or the pleasures of earth,—the peace and joy of a heart reconciled to God, or the fleeting merriment of life! Which shall gain the ascendancy? Alas! the latter was chosen. “*The world*” won! But “*the world*” means a great deal to-day, and the opposite seems very small. “The world” is so tangible, so attractive, so varied! It carries so many charms and such rich embellishment. How winning are its smiles,—how dazzling its promises. It covers so large a space. The prince has his “world”; but so, too, has the pauper. So the man of science, so the clown, the millionaire, the miser, the moralist and the libertine, the religionist and the infidel. There is such expansiveness, such unbounded power of adaptation in “*the world*”

that it can meet the largest demands of its votaries. Its resources are so multiform that it can accommodate itself to the ten thousand tastes and wishes of the natural heart. No marvel, then, that it can record so many successes, and report so many conquests.

True, its beauty is only on the surface, and its deadly poison hidden by a sweetened flavour. Its pleasures are but nominal and quickly over; its friendship false and its smile delusive. But this is not readily seen. Its true character is never really known but by bitter experience. One of the wisest and wealthiest of kings, after a full trial, said, "Vanity and vexation,—all is vanity;" and One still greater said, "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." These testimonies are true. Happy the soul that heeds.

And, therefore, in order to keep "the world," this poor young lady bartered away her soul! Sorry exchange indeed! Oh, "what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

But what is the remedy? How can I give up the world when I find it so pleasant? Clearly the convent is of no use. To don the veil and immure yourself behind the walls of a monastery is but an exchange of "*worlds*,"—a step from an outside world, where, at all events, nature can have her swing, to an inside world of enforced and unnatural religious slavery, where you sell yourself spirit, soul, and body, conscience, heart, and mind, to the rigours

of a spiritual superstition which robs you of everything, and supplies you with nothing but the vain hopes of heaven won by good works, and God appeased by charities. An infernal delusion ! The convent is no cure ! Nay, salvation is not on that miserable principle. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking." Is God not a giver ? Did He not love us and give His Son to the death for us ?

Of all delusions I think that a religious delusion is the worst. It is certainly the most ensnaring. Religious wars are always the most bloody. Religion affects the conscience, whilst other delusions touch only the heart or mind, and are accordingly much more easily banished. A man may give up drink and other evil habits. That is no great difficulty comparatively ; but the iron chains of superstition are well-nigh irrefragable, to be broken by nothing short of the power and grace of God. This is true, doubtless, of "the world" as an enslaving power under all circumstances, if indeed deliverance from it and the knowledge of salvation are in question. But the blinding effect of mere religiousness is hardly credible. As often remarked, it was not the gross sinners who clamoured for the death of Jesus, but the chief priests, scribes, and Pharisees. And so, "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into them."

Well, but what is the remedy ? The remedy is *an object superior to "the world."*

A heart that loves "the world" wants something better. Can this be found?

A conscience that groans under a worldly religious bondage wants freedom elsewhere. Can this be supplied?

A soul possessing aspirations beyond the finite limits of the world, wants enjoyment of the infinite. Can this be given?

Weakness cries for strength; poverty for wealth; desolation for friendship; guilt for pardon; a sinner for a Saviour; a lost and prodigal child of sin and sorrow for a Father, whose kiss, and covering, and comfort satiate for ever more. Do such things exist? Yes! and ten thousand living witnesses spring before you in the declaration that they know them in blest experience.

Votaries of the world once, and having proved its folly, they heard the words of the Son of God, "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." Their thirst is slaked for ever.

Guilty once, they trust in His precious blood, and are pardoned.

The famine of sin's distant land drove them to the Father, whose bosom is their shelter, whose house is their home.

Weak and needy once, the Spirit of God dwelling in them is their Comforter.

Friendless and forlorn once, a glorified Christ is their friend, whose arm does not fail, nor heart play them false.

Heaven is their coming abode ; but meanwhile—and that is the point before us—they are better off than they were,—better off than are they who “shrink from giving up the world,” because of *what* that loss entails. Yes, better off now, and immeasurably better off on that soon-coming day, when, poor worldling, you will cry to the rocks to fall, and beseech the hills to hide you from the wrath of the Lamb. *The remedy is Christ !* We don’t ask you to give up the world. No ! we leave that to the legalist, to the ritualist and Romanist. We plead with you to come *as you are*, to a living, loving Saviour, whom having found, and being satisfied with His love, you will unconsciously forsake the world, through the enjoyment of Himself. Happy, truly happy, will you be, when you can sing—

“ I’ve found a Friend ; oh, such a Friend !

He loved me ere I knew Him !

He drew me with the cords of love,

And thus He bound me to Him :

And round my heart still closely twine

Those ties which nought can sever,

For I am His, and He is mine,

For ever and for ever.

I’ve found a Friend ; oh, such a Friend !

He bled, He died to save me ;

And not alone the gift of life,

But His own self He gave me.

Nought that I have my own I call,

I hold it for the Giver :

My heart, my strength, my life, my all,

Are His, and His for ever.”

## "WHEN HE DIED ON THE CROSS."



HE sudden illness of a beloved servant of Christ called me some years ago into the Western Highlands of Scotland. As it was to be a comfort to the patient, and those round her, I remained a few days, staying with them in the comfortable farmhouse where they had secured lodgings for some weeks for change of air. The evening following my arrival, we gathered a few of the country-folk into the farm-kitchen for a little gospel meeting. It was an out-of-the-way, picturesque, but lonely spot, so that gospel services were of rare occurrence, and gladly hailed, though, as it was then the height of the wheat-harvest season, only those who were in thorough earnest came, after a hard day's work.

Among my auditors I noticed two interesting-looking children, about twelve or thirteen years of age. They turned out to be part of the farmer's family, being twin-sisters. At the close of the meeting, I intimated that I would preach on the morrow evening at a schoolhouse some three miles distant. The Word of God was with power, and these two dear children were arrested by it, which was evidenced by their close attention, and an urgent request to their father to be allowed to attend the meeting of the following evening.

To this request the cautious farmer gave a nega-

tive response, not that he disliked the meeting, but that he would need their services to carry food to the reapers, go messages, and help generally in the harvest field, and he thought they could not thus toil all day and walk six miles at night. Much disappointed, the young truth-seekers pressed their suit again, and promised to rise as early as he liked, and work as hard as he pleased, if only they might go.

Their earnestness carried the day, and having obtained consent, they retired cheerfully to rest, rose early next morning, toiled all day in the burning sun, and at sun-down set off together for the meeting. • Little wonder, thought I, if God should bless such earnest souls.

That night many gathered together: the third of John was my theme, and I noticed the intense eagerness with which the young couple heard the word of life. “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye *must* be born again;” and, “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life,” showed the *two musts* in their full force. Man—every man—*must* be born again, and to this end Jesus *must* die. But who is this Son of Man giving Himself for others? That query verse 16 answered. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The Son of Man is no less than the Son of God. A

human being, but a divine person. In Him the heart of God is made known, and God is seen *loving* and *giving*, while man's part is *believing* and *having*. How simple! And "whosoever" was shown to be any one, every one,—each poor sinner that believes God's Word.

I felt sure God was blessing His Word, and when the meeting broke up, and we were on our way home, I quite expected to find among the blessed the earnest young souls who cared to travel six miles for the gospel after a hard day's work. Nor was I disappointed. Overtaking Violet, I asked her if she had understood the gospel. "Oh yes, sir, I see it all clearly now, and I believe in Jesus, and know I have eternal life." A little more conversation assured me of the dear child's real faith in the Lord; so leaving her, I quickened my steps; and was soon alongside of Marion.

"Well, Marion, are you saved also, as well as Violet?" was my query. "Yes, sir, I believe I am; I see to-night that Jesus died for me, and I believe in Him," was her response, while the youthful face was as bright and joyous as the one I had just left. I could only praise the Lord as I saw the girls were twin-sisters in grace as well as in nature.

Slackening our steps a little, Violet overtook us, whereupon I introduced them to each other in their new relationship as sisters in the Lord, each welcoming the other with great gladness on hearing of her conversion. Then, as we walked on, I sought to instruct them a little, and confirm their new-



born faith. Just before we reached home, I said, “I want to ask you each one question more: When was it that Jesus put your sins away?” In a moment Violet replied, “Oh, to-night, sir.” Turning to her sister for her reply, I had a moment to wait, and then the little maiden firmly said, “When He died on the cross.”

“Right, my child, right,” said I; “it was when He was on the cross He bore them, and there He atoned for them, and then He put them away from God’s sight for ever. You and your sister have got the knowledge of that blessed fact this night for the first time in your history, but the work was done when Jesus died.”

I have often heard of my young friends, since then, as following the Lord, and trust to meet them in glory with Him. I narrate this simple story, because so many earnest souls are not clear on the last point alluded to. Many a true and honest soul is troubled about sins, and afraid of being finally lost on account of those committed after conversion. They put it thus: “I believe Jesus bore my sins up to the time when I was converted, but what about those I am guilty of since?” Let me ask you a question, When Christ died on the cross how many sins had you or I committed? None; we were not either of us born; but still, blessed be His name, I know He bore mine,—all of them too. “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree,” says Peter, and this is enough for me. He *bore them* when *He died*; He *forgives* them when *I*


*believe.* That is a great difference. He blotted them out on the cross. *I know* they are pardoned, and blotted out, when I believe Him; and I know it, not because I feel it, but because God says it.

W. T. P. W.

---

## DELAY, AND ITS DANGERS.

---

BOUT the year 1837 a severe snowstorm visited Lewes in Sussex, and the snow drifted along the South Downs, so that in one part, which was very high and overhung some alms-houses, great fear was entertained lest the weight of snow might cause the cliff to give way, or lest the snow itself falling should injure the inmates of the alms-houses. As the day wore on the danger became apparent to the onlookers, who with great kindness warned the inmates of their danger. Surely, you will say, such a timely warning was thankfully accepted. I am grieved to tell you that only a few would even listen to those who urged them to leave their homes and escape for their lives.

One woman came to her door, and looked up at the overhanging mass of snow. One of those who saw her and knew that destruction was certain

should she go in again, caught her by the arm and dragged her from the doom she sought, for which he was rewarded by the sound of her complaining voice as she quitted the ill-fated dwelling. A few moments after the snow fell, crushing the Boulder Cottages, as they were called, and burying alive fifteen of those who refused to listen to the solemn warning given. The crier went through the town calling men to dig out the sufferers. But, alas, not one of those who had remained in one house was saved; their mutilated bodies were carried in one large cart to their grave, there to await the judgment day, unless among that number there were some who had listened to the warning voice of Him who said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

*Dear reader, have you listened to the gentle, pleading, loving call of Him who died for sinners? have you taken your place in His presence as a sinner? and do you believe what God says respecting you? "The soul that sinneth it shall die." There is yet time. God is warning, persuading, beseeching you to come to Him; to own your sinfulness and worthlessness, to come out of that house of self-complacency and indifference; to throw away that flimsy covering of self-righteousness, which may perhaps look well in the sight of men, but is in God's sight but as a filthy rag.*

I beseech you, delay not. Every day brings you nearer the end of your time here, and "after death comes the judgment." Are you ready to

stand before that Holy One? Are you happy in the thought of standing in His presence now? If not, be not like those foolish ones of whom we have just read; do not rest until your feet are upon the Rock,—then the winds of God's judgment may come, but they cannot touch you. You are sheltered by "the blood;" you shall have boldness in the day of judgment. Once more, let me as it were put my hand on your arm, if you still linger, and say, "To-day is the accepted time," "now is the day of salvation." You will, I am sure, think how foolish those poor creatures were who refused to give up their few possessions to save their lives. But, dear reader, they had only the death of the body at stake; if you neglect the voice of Him who speaks from heaven, eternal death will be your portion. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?"

"'Come!' for night is gathering quickly

O'er this world's fast-fleeting day;

If you linger till the darkness,

You will surely miss your way.

And still waiting—sadly waiting,

Till the day its course has run,

With His patience unabating,

Jesus lingers for you—'Come!'

'Come!' for angel hosts are musing

O'er this sight so strangely sad;

God 'beseeching'—man refusing

To be made for ever glad!

From the world and its delusion

Now our voices rise as one;

While we shout God's invitation,

Heaven itself re-echoes—'Come!'

"TWO DIED FOR ME."



THE morning had broken bright, and clear, and beautiful after a wild night of fierce howling wind and driving rain. The wind had seemed to us like a hurricane, sweeping by, relentlessly uprooting trees, hurling down chimney-pots, breaking or bending everything that opposed its mad career; and our hearts had ached as, above the noise of the raging storm had come to us sounds of distress over the foaming waters, and we had known too surely that some vessel or vessels were battling with the waves, and that men, and perhaps women and little children, were facing the dread realities of eternity, and that, alone in the darkness, terror-stricken and despairing, many a one might be finding a watery grave.

When morning came I stood on the sea-shore; the storm had ceased, and now the sun shone brightly, the sea sparkled and gleamed as though studded with gems, the birds sang sweetly in the corn-fields near at hand, and the storm and its accompaniments might have seemed only a hideous nightmare but for the scene on the shore. There there were traces enough of wreck and ruin.

Sadly I gazed, and wondered as to how many had been saved from present death and how many had been saved from eternal death of those on board the wrecked vessels. As I thought this I

was conscious that a sailor had come up close to me. I turned and asked him somewhat of the events of the night. He told me of the brave attempts at rescue, of their partial success; and then, as sorrowfully I spoke of the lost, he said to me very earnestly—

“Beg pardon, ma’am, you’ll forgive a plain blunt question. Are you saved or lost yourself? I mean,” he added, “do you know Jesus?”

Very sweet the question was, for I could assure the questioner that his Saviour was my Saviour too. And as we spoke a little of the One dear to both our hearts, and shook hands heartily, I asked him how long he had known this blessed Saviour, and what had brought him to Him.

“It is nigh on to five years since He saved my body from a watery grave, and my soul from the lake of fire,” he said. “Never will I forget it, for *two* died for me.”

“Two?” I questioned in astonishment.

“Ay, ma’am, two,” he answered. “My Saviour died for me eighteen hundred years ago on Calvary’s cross, and my mate died for me just five years since, and that brought me to know my Saviour.”

Seeing I was interested, he continued:—

“It was just such a night as last night that our vessel was driven on to a rock just off the coast of ———.

“We hoisted signals of distress and fired guns, and by-and-by brave men on shore manned the lifeboat and put out. We hardly thought it could

live in such a sea, but they tried it, and God helped them to succeed. With difficulty we got our women and children in, and she put back to shore. Once more, manned with another crew, she put out, and this time the passengers were got on board. Then we knew some of us must die, for if the lifeboat could put out again she would not hold all that were left, and the vessel must sink ere a fourth journey could be accomplished. So we drew lots who should stay. My lot was to stay in the sinking ship. What a horror of darkness came over me! 'Doomed to die and be damned,' I muttered to myself, and all the sins of my life came before me. Still I was no coward. I made no outward sign, but oh, ma'am, between my soul and God it was awful!

"I had a mate who loved the Lord. Often he had spoken to me of my soul's welfare, and I had laughed and told him I meant to enjoy life. Now, though he stood by my side, I could not even ask him to pray for me, though even then there was a moment's wonder that he did not speak to me of the Saviour. I understood it afterwards. His face, when I once caught a glimpse of it, was calm and peaceful, and lighted up with a strange light. I thought bitterly, It is well for him to smile, his lot is to go in the lifeboat to be saved. Dear old Jim, how could I ever have so mistaken you? Well, ma'am, the lifeboat neared us again; one by one the men whose lot was to go got in. It was Jim's turn, but instead of going he pushed me for-

ward. 'Go you in the lifeboat in my place, Tom,' he said, '*and meet me in heaven*, man. You mustn't die and be damned: it is all right for me.' I would not have let him do it, but I was carried forward. The next one, eager to come, pressed me on. Jim knew it would be like that, so he had never told me what he was going to do. A few seconds, and I was in the lifeboat. We had barely cleared the ship when she went down, and Jim, dear old Jim, with her. I know he went to Jesus, but, ma'am, *he died for me!* Did I not tell you true, *two died for me?*"

For a moment he paused, his eyes filled with tears. He did not attempt to disguise them. They were a tribute to the love that had gone into death for him. Presently, when I could speak, I just said, "Well?"

"Well, ma'am," he said, "as I saw that ship go down I said to God in my heart, 'If I get safe to land Jim shall not have died in vain. Please God, I *will meet* him in heaven. Jim's God must be worth knowing, when Jim died for me that I might get another chance of knowing Him.'"

"Was it long," I asked, "before you found the Saviour?"

"It was not long, though it seemed so to me then. I did not know where to begin. The thing always before me was Jim going down in that sinking ship with the quiet smile of peace I had seen on his face; waking or sleeping it was before me. At first I thought more of Jim than of the



Lord, and when the men wanted me to go back to my old ways and to the drink, I said outright to them, "I could not do it, mates. Jim died that I might get another chance of going to heaven. I know I cannot get there that way, and I vowed poor old Jim should not die for nothing.' So when the men saw I meant it, they left off asking me, and so I got left to myself. Then I thought I would get a Bible, because I had seen Jim reading it, and he loved it so, and before I began to read it I just said a bit of a prayer. I was very ignorant, and I told the Lord so, and that I did not know the way to get to heaven and meet Jim, and I asked Him to show me the way."

"And He did?"

"Ay, ay, ma'am, that He did. I did not know where to begin to read in the Bible, so I thought I would just begin the New Testament and read straight on till I found out how I was to be saved. But, oh! I had an awful time of it at first. When I came to the fifth and sixth and seventh chapters every line seemed to condemn me, and I said to myself—'It is no use, Tom; there is no chance for you. You have been too bad,' and I shut up the book. Then Jim's last words came over me again, 'Meet me in heaven, man.' So I thought Jim must have thought there was a chance for me, and he knew about God and his Bible and about my life too. So I opened it again, and read on, and on, and on. I was always at it whenever I could get a few minutes.

“At last I came to the part about the two thieves and the Lord saving the one, and I thought, Here is a man almost as bad as I am. So I dropped my Bible and fell down on my knees, and said, ‘Lord, I am as bad as that thief; will You save me just like You did him?’ My Bible had dropped down open, and as I unclosed my eyes after praying this they fell on these words—‘Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.’ I took them as my answer. I did not think I was going to die. I almost wished I was, but I thought Jesus had sent me these words to tell me He had forgiven me. So I went down on my knees again and thanked Him. Of course I was very ignorant, but bit by bit I saw just the way of salvation: at first I had only come to the Saviour, and I never doubted He had saved me before I saw the way.

“You will wonder, perhaps, how I could be so ignorant, but I had no pious parents. I was an orphan, and went to sea very young, and never read my Bible, so I thought people got to heaven by turning over a new leaf and saying long prayers, and some day I meant to begin to be good. Then Jim died for me, and that set me thinking in earnest. Well, ma’am, it was not long after this day I have been telling you about that I discovered all about the way—how Jesus had died instead of me, and taken away all my sins by His precious blood, and how His blood was on me instead of my sins, and that was how I could be brought to God now and taken to heaven by-and-

by, for 'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin,' and it is only sin that keeps us away from God. At first, ma'am, it was Jim's watery grave that stood between me and my old sins, and since then, ma'am, it is another death—it is the blessed Lord's own death that comes between, for He died for those very sins; and so I feel as if I did not belong to myself at all. My earthly life has been bought for me by blood, and next to seeing the Lord Himself I do long to see Jim shine up there."

And now let me ask you, my reader, the same question my sailor-friend asked me—"Are you saved or lost yourself? I mean, do you know Jesus?" And if before God you can say, "I am saved by the blood of Jesus, and safe for all eternity," then let me leave with you the verse that my morning's conversation left with me:—

"Ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." X.

---

"But I don't feel saved," said a young man to me, lately, at the close of a gospel meeting. "Never mind," I rejoined, "the Lord does not bid you 'feel' but 'look.' His word is 'Look unto me, and be ye saved.' Are you looking to Him?" "I am." "Well, when you are looking, what is He doing?" "He is saving. I look, and He saves. Dear me, how simple! Then I am saved, when I look to Him." He found peace on the spot. W. T. P. W.

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.



SOME years since I was passing early one morning down one of the thoroughfares of Edinburgh, when I noticed numbers of people hastening rapidly in the direction in which I was going. The cause of the unusual stir I had no need to inquire, for just then the road made a bend, and full in view was a large crowd gathered before a house on fire. Sheets of flame leapt out of the windows, and dense volumes of smoke were rolling forth from the first floor.

Technically speaking, the burning house, itself the centre of a row, was "a first flat," and, fortunately or not as the case may have been, the tenants were out at the time. For the sake of my readers who are not acquainted with the "flat" system of building houses, I may say that the house in question and two above it entered from the street by a stair common to them all, each house having its own door opening into the stair at various levels. This being so, ingress to, or egress from flats No. 2 and 3 can only be had by passing the door of No. 1, which really answers to the drawing-room floor of an ordinary house, the ground floor being usually, as in this case, a shop.

Drawing near the scene, I saw at a glance what was the state of matters. Neither fire-engine, fire-escape, fireman, nor fire-ladder were as yet at hand,

while at the open windows of flat No. 2, stood two females, an aged woman and her daughter. Their dishevelled state and general attire told that from their slumber they had been awakened by the cry of "Fire," only to find the floor beneath their feet in flames, their house filled with choking smoke, and the common stair, by which they sought escape, a miniature crater through which it was hopeless to attempt to pass.

Baulked in their efforts to leave by the stairs, at the windows they now appeared in company, uttering distressing shrieks of fright, and imploring help from the populace beneath. A fearful agony was on the face of each as they cried and looked in vain for help from below. True, the help of firemen and ladders had been sought, but they were long in coming. At such a time each moment seems an age!

It was a touching sight as, side by side, they stood,—themselves utterly helpless,—while the devouring flame below seemed only to mock their agony, and with lurid blaze ever and anon leapt madly forth and up from the window directly beneath them, as though it would gladly devour them where they stood, or drive them back to suffocation. The breeze was fresh, and the snow-white hair of the terror-stricken mother was waving wildly in the air, a strange contrast to the black smoke and lambent flames around. Altogether it was a weird and painful sight.

Just then a cheer rang forth from the crowd,

and, looking higher than the women, I saw that some kindly workmen had, by another common stair, managed to get on to the roof, carrying with them a slender rope. To fasten it round a stack of chimneys—fortunately in a direct line behind the open window—was the work of a minute or two, and then, giving the rope a coil, and a well-directed fling over the eaves of the house, right down in front of the terrified and now surprised women (for they expected no help from *above*), fell their only way of escape. Loud hurrahs greeted the providers of this way of salvation, while cries of “Lay hold of the rope,” “Come down by the rope,” indicated plainly to the unfortunate pair what they were expected to do. A way of escape having been provided by others, they were expected and urged at once to avail themselves of it. How right, and how simple this judgment; do you not agree with it, reader?

Quick as thought, I saw the women lay hold of the rope; but now the question arose, who should go first—in other words, who had faith to trust this slender means of safety. From where I stood I could note an altercation as to who should first avail herself of it, and some minutes I think must have elapsed, while encouraging and hastening words rose thickly from below,—“Make haste,”—“Don’t waste time,”—“You may safely trust it,” &c. &c. At length the mother gained her point; she was stout and heavy—it might not sustain her; the daughter was thin and fragile, she might safely

trust it. A mother's love, I doubt not, was under and behind all,—a love only eclipsed by a Saviour's. The daughter took the rope in both hands and got on to the window-sill. The crowd held its breath. The rope was pulled on first, to see if it held on above. All right. The thirty-five or forty feet beneath was looked at. The rope was long enough, and it was strong enough, and yet she lingered. I saw the reason why; when just about to launch away, doubts and fears evidently rose, and by the heels of her boots she clung to the raised sill. This lasted a moment, and then, with instinctive love, the mother gave her a push, and fairly forth she swung.

Descending too rapidly her hands "fired," and, while still some distance from the ground, she let go the rope and fell. Fearing this event, some strong men had gathered underneath, and into their arms she tumbled, receiving no harm whatever. The mother, encouraged by her child's success, and learning by her fall not to be too hasty in her descent, now committed herself to the trusty rope, and, hand under hand, slowly coming down, was soon by her daughter's side, right thankful for the rope from above.

At the time, and since, I have often thought how this scene illustrates the state of man as a sinner, and the dealings of God with him in grace. Man has sinned, and his sin has placed him in a position of imminent danger. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. iii. 23). This word includes you and me, dear reader. Further,

"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. vi. 23). And again God speaks thus, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Heb. ix. 27). As to what this judgment is which overtakes the *dead*, we are left in no doubt whatever. Hear God's testimony, "I saw *the dead*, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 12, 15).

Here we are told the final doom of the dead. They have no life suited to God. "Dead in sins" delineates their time condition. "Eternal life, the gift of God," they cared not then to accept; hence their eternal condition corresponds to their time state. Solemn truth! The actions of life bring forth fruit for eternity. Read what follows: "But the fearful (*i.e.*, cowards,—those who are afraid or ashamed to trust and confess Christ), and unbelieving (those who are avowed infidels and scoffers, though outwardly moral and well-behaved,—and is it not notable that these two classes should head the list?), and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: *which is the second death*" (Rev. xxi. 8). I know men scoff at these solemn words of God. This does not make



them less real or terrible, but only manifests the folly of the human heart, which refuses to believe God's testimony as to its present guilt and godless state, and future equally godless condition for eternity, and despises the way of salvation which God in His grace has provided.

The women I have written of were in as much danger while asleep and unconscious of it, as when fully alive to their critical state. Is your case different, O unsaved reader? Not one whit.

But perhaps you bow to God's Word, and seeing your guilt and sin, tremble in view of "judgment to come." It is well with you if so, and better still if you are willing to take God's way of salvation. He it is who alone can save. He has, so to speak, let down a rope *from above*, long and strong enough to meet any and every sinner's case, no matter how many or heavy his sins may be. Christ is God's way of escape from the lake of fire, and if you would escape the due reward of your deeds, my friend, you must trust to Him.

"Lay hold of the rope," said the crowd, preaching a suited gospel to the women. "Lay hold of Christ," say I. "This is my beloved Son, hear him," says God the Father. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. Come unto me," says Jesus. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. . . . He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life: but the wrath of God abideth on him," says John the Baptist. "Believe on the Lord


“Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” say Paul and Silas. “Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God,” says Peter, the fisherman. “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,” says John the Evangelist. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed,” says Isaiah, the prophet. “Blessed are all they that put their trust in him,” says David, the Psalmist-king. What a cloud of witnesses to His worth! He has come down to save,—it has all come from His own side,—and is it not strange that sinners will not trust Him?

Dear reader, if you still have your heels hooked on to some window-sill of feelings or hesitancy, oh, let me give you the push just now that shall cause you simply and sweetly to trust the Lord Jesus.

Fear not that you will fall. He will hold you up, the rope will not break; and His grasp of you—when once you commit yourself to Him—will never unloose: and He will land you in glory as the fruit of His work on the cross for you.

W. T. P. W.

## OF GRACE,—NOT OF DEBT.



“**N**OW to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness” (Rom. iv. 4, 5).

Notice, most particularly, dear reader, the conditions here stated under which the believer is counted righteous. He is to “believe on him that justifieth the ungodly.” Now that is a bold statement, but it is written by the Spirit of God, and is therefore perfectly correct. Yes, God justifies the ungodly! He does not, nor can He justify ungodliness,—that is clear. But yet He justifies the ungodly; and why? Because there are none else for Him to justify. There is not a soul out of Christ but is ungodly. As the previous chapter has carefully explained, “There is none that doeth good, no, not one.” How comprehensive! Hence, did God not justify the ungodly, He could justify none; and if you refuse to own yourself as ungodly, you place yourself outside the possibility of blessing.

Well then, He justifies the ungodly,—any such, and only such, but not all such. All are ungodly, some are very ungodly; but, blessed be His name, none are too ungodly to be justified; and why?

Because it is a question of grace on His part,—sheer unbounded grace, and not of merit on ours. That makes all the difference. Grace on His part can meet infinite demerit on ours, and the demerit and guilt of any sin is infinite. So God in grace can justify the most ungodly; but on this condition alone, that he should “*believe on him.*” That is the one simple condition. It is not that he should believe that God justifies the ungodly,—a fact which is very generally admitted; and faith must do more than attach itself to a fact, however blessed. No, he must believe on Him,—on God Himself,—that justifieth the ungodly.

That is the condition; and though it be so simple and so reasonable, yet it is where many go wrong.

Faith in God for justification implies the abandonment of “good works” for the same end, and that is just the difficulty!

“What! am I to give up the whole principle of good works, my life-long good deeds, and efforts, and character, and so on; to fling them all aside, and place myself on the dead level of fallen nature, in order to be blessed on the principle of faith in God?”

Yes, that is your only hope!

Ah! stay, dear reader, do not throw down this paper in disgust; remember that your soul is at stake, and be patient; listen not to the words of man, but to those of God. What is the first statement of the passage quoted,—“To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.”

Now that is a plain, well-known matter of business. If I work to you for a week at four shillings a-day, I claim the sum of twenty-four shillings on the Saturday night. That is the amount of your indebtedness to me for work done. No thanks to you for your payment; it is not grace on your part to give me what is due, it is debt.

But, on the other hand, supposing you found me a stranger, destitute and friendless, and out of benevolence you gave me a charity, that would be grace,—not debt. Further, had I been your enemy, your kindness would but shine the brighter, and your grace would be all the fuller. It is thus God acts.

The question of working for wages, so that God is our debtor, is settled in the earlier chapter thus,—“By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” How sweeping! The reward, then, cannot come on the principle of debt.

“But to him that worketh not,”—here is the negative side of another principle,—“but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly,”—that is the positive side,—“his faith is counted for righteousness.”

The negative side makes you repudiate your works; the positive side connects your faith with God, who, in grace, takes up the ungodly, the stranger, the destitute, the enemy, and justifies them. Was there ever such benevolence! He is “the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus;” for

in the blood of Jesus He has the ground on which He can righteously do so; and hence He "is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."

God justifies the ungodly,—any of them. But why are not all justified? Because they will not believe on Him! They will work, but they will not believe,—they will do anything but simply trust their guilty souls to Him. They will go about to establish their own righteousness, and "go about" it always; whilst they decline to submit themselves to the righteousness of God. They won't submit, won't go down, won't repent. That is the trouble. Well, they must be finally condemned.

But, thank God, the most ungodly who believes in Him is counted righteous; and from that moment onwards he becomes a righteous man, both before God and before his fellows.

J. W. S.



## PRESERVED AND SAVED.



NOW true indeed are the words of the Psalmist concerning the wicked, "God is not in all his thoughts;" and how solemn is that warning in Eccles. xi. 9, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou,

that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

The following brief account gives an example of the wondrous care of God over one wandering far from Him, but, through grace, brought out of nature's darkness into His marvellous light.

Few people perhaps, on looking over the past years of their lives, could be able to trace so many instances of preservation from what might have proved fatal accidents, as those that happened to a young man named C——. One of a large family, he was brought up carefully by a God-fearing mother, whose one object was the welfare of her children. When about thirteen years of age he heard that some of his brothers had been converted to God, but at the time little apprehended what it meant. It was only in after-years that he learned the meaning of these words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii.).

At the age of sixteen C—— left school, where for ten years he had had every advantage in the way of a good education, and, above all, instruction in the Word of God. But notwithstanding this, restraint being removed, and with greater liberty for the exercise of self-will, C—— was soon attracted by the allurements of the world, and only too readily availed himself of its pleasures. Early after leaving school it was arranged for him to go to a country town for two years to learn a business. Free now from the double restraint of school

and parents, and drawn into the association of fast company, tastes soon developed for billiards, drinking, cards, smoking, &c., and many were the hours spent in these unprofitable occupations.

During the succeeding years many were the prayers offered up on C——'s behalf; and faithful warnings were constantly sent by letter and pamphlet, pointing out the sinner's need of a Saviour, and how the Lord Jesus Christ had died to meet that need.

One day when C—— was living in a town in the east of England, an arrangement was made for a party to take a boat for a sail along the coast to a neighbouring town. An early start was made in order to secure the flowing tide for the return voyage. Reaching their destination, some of the party went ashore, and by delaying their return caused the boat to be very late in starting homewards. Night came on, and in the darkness the boat ran on to a sandbank some miles from the shore, and was only moved out of its dangerous position after great effort on the part of the sailors who had charge. After this things went well for a few hours, when suddenly, without warning, the boat bumped on to a stone-bank, placed artificially at the entrance to a river which there flowed into the sea. The party, gambling and drinking in the cabin, little thought of the danger they were in, and that had the tide been six inches lower the whole of them would probably have been launched into eternity.



Thus man goes on, regardless of God, and heeding not the words of His servants. Pause a moment, whoever you may be who read these few lines, and consider the One with whom you have to do. It may be that you would have shrunk from being of such a party as those described; and yet, if still in your sins, without Christ, the danger of your soul is equally great, for the scripture says, "There is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." But thanks be to God, who tells us in His Word, that it "is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Hence, in order to be saved, you must accept the blessed Saviour, who, in His infinite love, shed His precious blood for you on Calvary's cross. If you die in your sins, the lake of fire must be your portion. God's Word presents no middle path; you will have no one to blame but yourself, for the Gospel will have been no strange story to you while on earth; and it may be you will look back, and see how you despised and rejected God's sovereign grace. It may be that you do not thus treat His message of love, but simply ignore it. Beware! The scripture says, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?"

Some time after the incident mentioned, when out with a shooting party, C—— was waiting, gun in hand, for some others to come up. Unconsciously he held his gun with the stock on his boot and muzzle close to his face, and accidentally the trigger

touched his knee, causing the gun to go off, the charge missing him by but a few inches. Another warning, but no heed!

On another occasion, shooting in the west of England, on the wooded side of a hill, several rabbits were soon on foot, and C—— perceived one running straight to a bush just in front of him. It was also seen by a friend who was with his gun some ten or fifteen yards higher up the hill. The latter took aim, and, about to fire, was caught sight of by C——, who saw in a moment that the charge must come in his face. Immediately he threw himself flat on the ground, just in time for the shot to pass over him. "God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14).

One winter C—— and a younger brother went out early one morning before breakfast to skate in a neighbouring park. There having only been a few nights' frost, the ice was far from safe. The lake was a very large and deep one, and C—— felt it unwise to venture far from the shore. For a few minutes, having lost sight of his younger brother, he skated about, little thinking what was shortly to happen. Suddenly a crash reached his ears, and on turning round a terrible sight presented itself. Some hundred yards off, in the centre of the lake, he perceived but the head and shoulders of his brother, who shouted loudly for assistance. What was to be done? No house, ladder, or rope within half-a-mile! Unless prompt action were taken,

C—— felt the icy cold water must soon do its work. Could he hold on while help was procured? What thoughts passed through C——'s mind! How could he return home without his brother? and yet, at the moment, he felt powerless to avert such a terrible calamity. Suddenly the thought occurred to him, that though the ice in the centre of the lake might not bear him while in an upright position, yet by lying down flat the rescue might be attempted. Hastily divesting himself of coat, vest, and skates, he proceeded as quickly as possible to work himself up to the one in danger. A critical moment indeed, as he approached within a few yards of him who was "ready to perish"! The ice bent greatly with his weight, and any moment he thought they might both have a watery grave.

Even at such a time God was not in his thoughts, but the One who was thus ignored in mercy enabled him with great effort and risk to effect the rescue of his brother. This was done by C—— holding out a long stick with bent handle at arm's-length, and as his brother seized hold of it, he worked himself backwards with the other hand; and so with their united effort the two succeeded in getting out of danger.

A fitting moment, surely, to fall on their knees and thank God for His loving, providential care, but man does not want to retain God at all in his thoughts; and why so? because he does not know Him. Have you ever considered, dear reader, what

God's attitude towards the sinner really is? Let me tell you now! He is for the sinner, but against his sins. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv. 10).

It will suffice to mention one more incident. When travelling to the West of England by an express train, at a speed of about sixty miles an hour, as they were going along a high embankment, the crank of the engine's driving-wheel broke, throwing the wheel quite fifteen inches off the rail. At the moment of the accident C—— was dozing, and was only aroused by a quantity of stones flying against the windows of the compartment in which he was. By prompt effort on the part of the engine-driver the train was brought to a standstill some few hundred yards farther on, and it was considered by all to be a remarkable escape.

A year or two after this C—— became awakened in his soul, and saw for the first time that he was a lost sinner in the sight of an infinitely holy God, and began to feel how valueless those things of the world were for which he had striven for so many years, and that they brought no real rest of heart. On turning his thoughts towards his brothers and sisters he felt that they had enjoyment in things to which he was a stranger, and began to realise that the attractions of this poor world were but shadows after all. Thoughts of eternity, of death, judgment, and the lake of fire came before his

soul, producing nothing but wretchedness. Many a time his life of sin and selfishness passed vividly before him, and then the future hell for the ungodly, a destination to which he was convinced he was approaching. The outward observance of the forms and ceremonies of religion had never been totally neglected, and many a time had he heard the glad tidings of salvation proclaimed, but ever ready to listen to the lies of Satan, he said to himself, — “By-and-by will do.” Had he been taken away in one of the previously described accidents, how awful a future; for God says, — “After death the judgment,” and “Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”

Passing several weeks in deep exercise of soul, he sought amongst the various churches in the neighbourhood where he was living for something on which to rest his weary soul, and sad to say, the notes of grace were wanting in all but one. There he heard tell of the wondrous love of God, manifested in the gift of His well-beloved Son for poor lost sinners, and then it began to dawn upon him that he individually was an object of the love of God. A ray of comfort entered his soul, but did not bring at once the rest and peace he needed; it was only when under deep conviction of sin and in an agony of spirit that he one night knelt down at his bedside, scarcely conscious of what he was doing, and besought God for peace. In a moment, as it were, C——’s thoughts flashed

to that wondrous scene on Calvary's cross, of which he had so often read and heard, and the truth came vividly before his soul that the Lord Jesus Christ had suffered there for lost sinners like him. He believed that Jesus had died for him, and soon afterwards learned the meaning of those blessed words,—“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life ” (John v. 24).

Rising from his knees, he felt that his burden of sin was gone. This newly found joy scarcely allowed him to fall asleep on his pillow that night. On the following day Satan brought crowds of difficulties to hinder him confessing Christ, as he ever seeks to do to those starting on their path of faith; but as time passed on, C—— was through grace enabled to speak to others of that blessed Saviour who “ came to seek and to save that which was lost,” and in whose precious blood he had been washed.

Unsaved reader, there is no future for you but the lake of fire if you die without Christ. If you will only come to Him, mark his words of love,—“ Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.” God's Word contains promise after promise of blessing to all those who in self-judgment take their true place before Him, and accept that blessed Saviour that He Himself has provided in the person of His own well-beloved Son.

H. E.

## A HARDENED HEART.



SITTING one afternoon on a seat in the lovely grounds of the Arboretum, I noticed a tall elderly gentleman of quiet and sedate appearance, but somewhat foreign features, who was walking slowly across the green sward, but who presently came and sat down by my side. We exchanged a few words about the mildness of the day, and then my friend spoke of the conference of scientific men which was then being held in Paris, and of how the scientific world would benefit by the meeting. I remarked that science was very well in its place, but that it would never reach up to God. He said that was true, God is too great, man's life too short. I had some further conversation with him, which resulted in reading a part of the third of Romans; but I left him with a very sad heart, as he told me that he was a Roman Catholic when a boy, but since he had grown up he had thrown off that yoke, and now, although eighty-six years of age, he did not believe in eternity, or in judgment to come, but thought the soul would cease to exist at death. Nothing could exceed the cold indifference with which this poor man treated everything pertaining to his immortal soul, although the Lord in His mercy had spared him for more than sixteen years beyond the allotted time. He said that he was too old now to

disturb his mind by looking at these matters from any other point of view than that to which he was accustomed, but that he had two children who were Protestants with whom he never interfered.

Now, dear reader, is not this a terrible example of the power of Satan? Here is a soul blinded by the god of this world, and *hardened by the deceitfulness of sin*.

Oh, what a picture!—a long-suffering God—and a *hardened heart*.

Eighty-six years spent in this scene without God, having no hope! and now, at the end of this long span of existence, without any desire to seek or feel after Him. Fatal indifference! Oh, the madness of unbelief!

And do you not think, dear reader, that even now God would have that old man to be saved and sheltered from coming wrath by the blood of the Lamb?

Yes, oh yes! He is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. Moreover, we read He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him. Yes, dear reader, whether you be old or young, the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. Believe me, He would accept the very dregs of this long life if there was the smallest contrition, or sense of goodness in God, and consequent turning away from self. But, alas! like the young man in the tenth of Luke, this old man sought to justify himself, and so really he condemned God. Are you like him? R. M. H.



## A VOICE FROM THE GREAT DEEP.



IN the early summer the usually quiet little town of Stornoway, the capital of the Hebrides, is all astir. The season of the great Scotch herring industry begins there, and many hundreds of hardy fishermen come from all parts of the mainland to ply their busy calling. A lively scene presents itself to a stranger, when, after a successful night's fishing, the boats come crowding into the bay, the men all eager to reach the quays and land their fish. Quickly the herrings are shovelled into baskets, and swung ashore, to be cleaned, cured, and packed, by immense numbers of men and women from all parts, engaged for that purpose. This done, they are then loaded on steamers, and other vessels, specially chartered to convey them to the home and foreign markets.

Amongst the boats which arrived this last June was the "Helen Ann," from F——. The skipper, A. P——, with his two sons, and four other men, formed the crew. P—— was an earnest Christian, who rejoiced to stand with others in the little town square, and tell out the glad tidings of God's boundless grace. Large companies of fishermen and others attended, manifesting deep interest in the Word preached.

Presently the time came to turn the "Helen Ann's" prow homewards again. The weather was beautifully fine, the sea calm, and a light wind sped them

quietly along round Cape Wrath, and the north coasts of bonnie Scotland. All on board were looking joyfully for the moment of their safe return to their homes.

Entering the dangerous waters of the Pentland Firth, they sailed on without fear, for they were familiar with the coast, and their boat was new and strong. Passing, however, into the narrow channel between the Isle of Stroma and the mainland, they found themselves suddenly enveloped in a dense fog. All eyes kept a sharp look-out, peering through as best they could, whilst P—— had a firm hold of the helm. But, owing to the thick mist, and the strong current, which was running some nine or ten knots an hour, it was impossible to make out their exact position.

Suddenly, about nine o'clock at night an unwelcome sight ahead told them of danger. A cry was raised to alter the course, which was immediately done; but, despite every effort, the boat struck with a tremendous crash against the outer sunken rock of the "Men of May" at St John's Point. Carried on by the current, P—— hoped for the moment to be able to steer her into a neighbouring inlet. But the keel was so injured, that the water rushed into her, and she began to sink.

It was an intensely anxious moment for all on board. A sudden and violent death stared them in the face. The floats used with the fishing nets were hastily seized, and fastened round their bodies. It was only just in time. The skipper's younger

son, Jamie, a lad of eighteen years of age, looked piteously into his father's face, his countenance speaking more than words. P—— could only say, "Jamie, look to the Lord, my boy, look to the Lord," as hurriedly he fastened two floats around his shoulders, when down went the boat from beneath them in some sixteen fathoms of water, leaving them clinging for dear life, as best they could, to the buoys and loose spars.

There was no excitement. All were kept calm; and cries were raised for help, if perchance any other boat might be passing, and come to their rescue. P——, with heart uplifted to God, prayed earnestly and aloud that He would send help and deliverance in their deep distress. Happy in his own spirit, knowing Whom he had believed, his two boys weighed heavily upon his mind, although he trusted that they were under the shelter of the blood of Christ. The thought too that if all perished, what a blow it would be to the friends of the other men—three out of the four being brothers—was very distressing. As the tide rapidly carried him away from the rest, and the darkness obscured him from their view, he raised his voice in praise to God, singing that beautiful verse—

"Lord Jesus! to tell of Thy love,  
Our souls shall for ever delight,  
And sing of Thy glory above,  
In praises, by day and by night.  
Wherever we follow Thee, Lord,  
Admiring, adorning we see  
That love which was stronger than death,  
Flow out without limit, and free."

His mates feared they would never see their skipper again, even if they themselves should be saved; and his two poor sons were filled with alarm as they lost sight of their beloved father. Both were clinging to a spar, one at each end, but Jamie, the younger, who had been acting as cook on board, and was therefore the more thinly clad, soon succumbed to the exposure, and quitting his hold, fell back exhausted into the sea and perished. One of the four men, who was a Christian, pointed the others to the Saviour, and told them, in his simple way, of the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that there was yet time to believe on Him and be saved.

Borne along by the tide, again and again they raised their voices, and shouted for aid. Not being far from shore, a gamekeeper heard their cries, but could see nothing on account of the fog. He spoke to others, who thought it was only the men on the Isle of Stroma opposite, shouting, as was their custom, to warn passing vessels. But not being satisfied, he continued to listen, and the cries being renewed, was convinced that some of his fellow-creatures were in distress; so he urged some men upon the seashore to put off with him to search for them. At that moment the fog lifted, and they could plainly see five poor fellows drifting along at no great distance off. It was but the work of a few moments to pull out and rescue them from their perilous position. Two of them were on the very eve of exhaustion, and Jamie had perished. Was

there any possibility of finding P——, or had he also succumbed? The hope of saving him was faint; still they could but try. So on they rowed, till at last they had the joy of finding him some five miles from where the boat sank. A few more moments and it would have been too late.

For two long hours P—— had found himself carried farther and farther away, with nothing around him but sea and fog, and only two small buoys to keep him afloat. Eternity stared him in the face. There seemed no hope unless by the direct intervention of God. The past came crowding upon his mind, and then the future, the bright future of being for ever with the Lord. No doubt or fear filled his breast, for P—— had long known what it was to be a sinner saved by grace, washed in the precious blood of the Lamb. Yet it was a testing moment, but the grace of his Saviour-God sustained him, and the knowledge of His wondrous love kept him during that terrible ordeal.

At last, being nearly to the mouth in the water, surrounded by darkness, shivering with cold, strength gone, and senses failing, the thought pressed upon him to quit hold of the buoys, and end the struggle. But life is dear, and he felt afterwards that it was the suggestion of Satan. Lifting up his heart again to God, he thought that if He meant to keep him here, He would find means even then to save him, and looking round, in a half-unconscious state, he saw a boat apparently about to run right over him. But all were keeping

a sharp look-out, and through the Lord's infinite mercy they had steered straight to him. In another second or two loving hands had laid hold of him, and he was hauled safely into the boat. He was rescued at the last moment from a watery grave, for he was on the eve of drifting into a part of the current where the waters ran with such violence than he must have succumbed from sheer exhaustion. The fishermen were soon all conveyed ashore, not far from John O'Groat's, and restored, with medical aid, from the effects of the long immersion.

The news of the wreck and the rescue spread far and wide, and the following Lord's Day—it having been made known that P—— would preach—a large concourse of people from many miles around assembled in the open air. Barely recovered from the effects of the recent ordeal through which he had passed, and sore at heart at the loss of his son, he scarcely knew how to speak. But seeking grace from God, the word went forth from his lips with power. It seemed like *a voice from the dead*. Many were deeply impressed, and tears freely flowed, as he sounded out the old old story of God's wondrous love, and pleaded with them about their precious souls.

Turning to the younger folk present, he said : " Dear young people, were you to die to-night, where would you go ? Are you ready ; are you prepared to meet God ? Are you converted ? Have you been born again ? Have you been washed in the blood of Christ ? If not, you are *not ready*. I do

not ask, are you good? I do not bid you be good. And if any tell you to be good to get to heaven, whether father or mother, they are not your friends. No, no, you cannot be good, nor do good of yourselves, because your nature is bad, enmity with God, and a bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit. *It is Christ that you need.*"

Then to the aged, he said: "You are on the threshold of eternity. Are you ready? I am not asking what your life has been, or what is your kirk or creed, but I do ask, have your sins been washed away in Christ's precious blood? Have you owned the righteous judgment of a holy, holy, holy God? Have you bowed under it at the Saviour's feet? *Have you believed on Him?*"

And to the anxious, he pointed out the way of salvation, illustrating it by his own condition in the sea when the boat came, how glad he was to let go the feeble support he had clung to, and to allow strong hands to save him.

Yes, dear reader, this is the simple way to be saved. Your case is hopeless; you cannot save yourself. The strong arm of the Lord alone can deliver you. Will you trust it? To remain as and where you are is to perish everlastingly, to die in your sins without hope. But, "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 6). Have you discovered that you are powerless to save yourself? If so, trust Him, trust Him now, and you shall be eternally saved. "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me

there is no Saviour" (Isa. xliii. 11). "Whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). He is the Lord, mighty to save.

At the close of the meeting a few young men lately converted were unwilling to go away, so a Bible reading was arranged in the schoolroom near, which was soon crowded to the door, deep interest again being manifested, as P——, in dependence upon the Lord, sought to instruct them in the Word.

The next day, a boat having come to take him home, P—— parted from his new friends with tears. God alone knows the results of that day's meetings. Doubtless it was a day never to be forgotten by many, and we know that God's word shall not return unto Him void.

And now, beloved reader, ere we close, we would appeal to *you*, how is it with you? Are you ready? Are you still a poor sinner ready to perish, or have you believed on the Son of God? Have you been plucked from your perilous position, as a lost sinner, by the strong arm of the Lord? Have you been washed in His most precious blood? If not, once more you have the opportunity. To-morrow may be too late. God's time is now.

"Time is earnest, passing by ;  
Death is earnest, drawing nigh.  
Sinner, wilt thou trifling be ?  
Time and death appeal to thee.  
Oh, be earnest ! death is near ;  
Thou wilt perish lingering here ;  
Sleep no longer, rise and flee ;  
Lo, thy Saviour waits for thee !"

E. H. C.



## GOD'S "ALL."



NOW important it is, dear reader, to hear God speak in His Word, and to bow to what He says.

If you will turn with me to the Epistle to the Romans, we will see it there plainly declared that "*all are under sin*" (ch. iii., ver. 9), that *all* the world is guilty *before God*. Mark you, it is *before God*, not man. Again, "ALL HAVE SINNED" (ver. 23). God, too, *includes all* in unbelief (Rom. xi. 31). This little word "*all*" includes you and me, as children of Adam, and as sinners before God. We are *all* put on the same platform of *guilt* and ruin in God's estimation, and it is with Him we have to do. How universal! How inclusive it is! How impossible for us to get outside this comprehensive "ALL" of sin and guilt, that belongs to us as in God's sight.

What a dark picture! What a circle to be in! made up of man in his natural state, away from God. Yes, friend, you are in it, if unconverted. "ALL" are included. Unbelief will keep you there. It is a world-wide circle, with man in his distance from God filling it up—brought in guilty before Him.

Say, dear friend, do you bow to the truth of it? Do you see *yourself* included? Are you prepared

to take your place now as a lost and guilty sinner? That is the first step to blessing, and to get out of the embrace of this terrible "ALL." Put it not from you, I beseech you, as unpalatable, but rather bow to it as God's own truth about you. We are not told these solemn facts to shut us up to despair. Blessed be His name, God has acted for the sinner; He has provided a way of escape. His righteousness is declared. If He proves us to be ALL under *sin*, and *all guilty*, and *all sinners*, does it not the more clearly bring out His own grace in the Gospel? To meet the *all* of guilt and condemnation God makes known His righteousness—His own righteousness, that He can never find a flaw in—seen at the cross in the utter judgment of sin, and the putting away of sins in the person of our substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ. It is *unto* ALL.

The gospel is as wide as the guilt. God now "justifies freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24). Let not unbelief keep you bound any longer. One step! and you are out of the dark circle of guilt and sin that must end in judgment. God's righteousness is *upon* ALL that believe (Rom. iii. 22). ALL that BELIEVE. How simple! The "*all*" of faith delivers from the "*all*" of guilt. Be simple then yourself, dear reader. By faith in the Lord Jesus Christ step from the first circle into the second. God has "set *Christ* forth a propitiation through *faith in his blood*" (Rom. iii. 25). Trusting in Him, God reckons to your credit *all* the value of His finished

work, *all* the cleansing power of His precious blood, *all* the worth of His peerless person. God is "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. iii. 26). The moment you believe in Jesus He sees you righteous instead of guilty. Faith thus lands us safely in the second circle, made up of those who have escaped from the first. It is the "ALL" who believe "that are justified from *all* things" (Acts xiii. 39). God's righteousness is "upon ALL that believe" (Rom. iii. 22). Of these it can be said, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin (1 John i. 8). What a blessed change, and this for eternity!

Dear reader, which circle are you in? No efforts of yours, no prayers, nor tears, no reformation, can deliver you from the "ALL" of guilt and condemnation. I beseech you to turn away from yourself to Christ. Trust in Him simply and solely, just as you are—a sinner—and all will be settled for eternity. Hear the voice of Jesus saying, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, *he that believeth on me hath everlasting life*" (John vi. 47). Again, listen to those thrilling words spoken to the anxious jailer at Philippi, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*" (Acts xvi. 31). Harken to those peace-giving words (Acts x. 43): "To him give *all* the prophets witness, that through his name, *whosoever* believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

One solemn word more, my dear friend, for you, if still in the circle of guilt, with the ALL of sin and

unbelief attached to you. To remain there is certain judgment. Death may overtake you *at any moment*, or Christ may rise up and shut to the door. If outside then, your doom is sealed for ever. Beware lest you are found in the *all* circle of judgment. How solemn these words: "*That they ALL might be damned who believed not the truth*" (2 Thess. xi. 12). Not one unbeliever will escape the righteous judgment of God in that terrible day. *To-day* you may escape. "*To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your heart."

Listen, then, now to God's ALL of grace—"He willeth not the death of ANY, but that ALL should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9). "We *all* like sheep have gone astray. We have turned *every one* to his own way, and *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us ALL*" (Isa. liii. 6).

"Welcome! welcome! sinner, hear!  
Hang not back through shame or fear;  
Doubt not, nor distrust the call—  
Mercy is proclaimed to *all*."

None can come that shall not find  
Mercy called whom grace inclined;  
Nor shall any willing heart  
Ever hear that word 'Depart!'"

T. E. P.

## JUST LIKE HIM.

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then *flew* one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged."—ISA. vi. 5-7.



HE Lord is ever swift to bless, slow to judge. He delights in mercy; judgment is His "strange work." David said, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy" (Ps. ciii. 8). Isaiah's experience of this blessed fact is recorded above. Paul wrote with a full heart: "I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, *putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained (What? wrath, judgment, an everlasting hell—the due reward of my deeds? No! but) mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting*" (1 Tim. i. 12-16).

These witnesses are joined by another to the

same effect, who says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is *long-suffering to us-ward*, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. . . . And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation" (1 Pet. iii. 9-15).

Thus it is evident that God, though He must and will assuredly judge sin, delights in blessing, and wants all men to be blessed and saved. This surely is a fact of immense moment for you and me, dear reader, and if you are yet unsaved, shows that the fault is not on God's side. God is slow to judge; man is slow to believe. God hastens to bless and save, when the soul takes its true place of self-judgment before Him.

Now, if you are not yet saved, why should you go any longer unsaved? You cannot answer that query save by confessing that you do not simply and fully trust the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the deadly evil that afflicts you,—unbelief.

But perhaps you are somewhat anxious to be saved, but cannot see the "way of salvation" clearly. If so, may the Lord, in His mercy, use the simple little narrative which follows this to help you to see clearly His grace, and urgent desire to set your anxious soul at rest in His presence.

One Friday evening, in April 1872, I received the following letter:—

"15th April 1872.

"SIR,—I heard Mr S. and you preaching the gospel on Sunday evening; and, if you remember, you were

speaking about the sprinkling of the blood on the door posts (Exod. xii.). I understood it was a type of the blood of Jesus, and those that are saved sinners have, as it were, the blood sprinkled on their door posts. Well, I have not got that blood sprinkled upon my door posts. You ask, Why not? I don't know myself, for I would like very much to have it, yet I cannot find it. I suppose I am not seeking for it in earnest, or I would have a share of it with others. I have longed to be saved for six years or more, and I cannot find peace. I believe that Jesus died for all sinners, and that I am one among the worst of them, and I am in great need of a Saviour, yet there is something I don't understand. I think it is because I have not faith; but, if you can explain it any better, I will be at the hall the Sunday after next, if the Lord will spare me, to hear you once more. I am afraid I will never get another chance. I have had the gospel set before me plain enough, both by you and by my parents, but I think I get harder-hearted every time. I have tried to pray for faith, but Satan seems to laugh at me, and tell me I am too late. I feel as if he had too fast hold on me now to get away from him.

“Oh, will you pray for me, that I might have light, and that I might find the true Saviour? I hope the Lord will bear with me a little longer. I have given up all hopes of being a Christian. I shudder to think of a terrible judgment day.”

As there was no signature appended, and I did not at all know the handwriting, I was quite at a loss to know who the writer could be. That it was a truly anxious soul I was sure, and could only

pity any one remaining ten days in such a state of sheer wretchedness, and I looked up to the Lord to give a suited word when the time should come of which the writer spoke.

But God's ways are not as ours, nor His thoughts like ours, "for as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him."

The Lord's Day following the receipt of this letter, I was just about to commence a Bible class with some young men in my own house, when a violent ring of the door bell came, and an urgent message for me at once to see a patient who was thought to be dying, if not already dead. Hastily driving to the house, I found that the mother of the family had suddenly become unconscious, and her husband and several of her children were gathered round her, expecting each breath to be the last.

She certainly was in a most death-like swoon, but she was breathing, though quite unconscious. I proceeded to apply suitable remedial measures to her, and sought to calm the fears of those who tremblingly watched their loved one. My patient I knew was a Christian, and so also was her husband and some of the other members of the family, but at the fireside stood some of whom I was not sure.

Turning to the father I asked, "Are all your children converted yet?" "No, no," said he, "I wish they were." Then, addressing the eldest of this little company round the fire, who had come



home from her place of service for two or three hours, and whose name I knew, I said, "Is it true, Mary, that you are still unsaved?" A painful "Yes" was her only reply, but as it was coupled with a deep sigh, I thought she might be anxious, so begged her to come with me into another room, that we might be alone for a few moments, while others carried out my directions with regard to the mother.

"I suppose you know where your dear mother would be if she died?" I said.

"In heaven with Jesus," was Mary's reply.

"And if you died?"

"I should go to hell, I know," she answered, bursting into a flood of tears.

"But have you no desire to be saved?"

"Oh, yes, indeed I have. I want to be saved, if I only knew how."

"How? Why, it is very simple, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' Only believe Him. Just trust Him as you are,—a poor guilty sinner. He has died for sinners; His blood avails to cleanse the most guilty; and He says, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' Come to Him, that is all you have to do. Just trust Him. Do you think you can?"

"I should like to. I wish I could. Will you pray for me, doctor?"

"Let us kneel together before Him," I said, and then, while she wept, I prayed the Lord to spare the beloved mother, if it was His holy will, and

save the sin-burdened child who knelt before Him.

As I rose to go back again to see the sick one, I said, "Don't get off your knees till all is settled, and you have found Jesus." The mother I found decidedly rallying, and she shortly completely recovered. On returning to Mary, after the lapse of some minutes, I found her awaiting me, standing on her feet, with a beaming though still tearful countenance. But these tears were tears of joy, as she said, "I have found Him; Jesus is mine." Yes, thank God, she had found Him, and peace and life and joy in Him, and has gone on her way rejoicing ever since.

Two days afterwards I learned that Mary was the writer of the anonymous letter!

Was not this just like the Lord, my reader? This anxious soul proposed to itself to wait ten days. But Jesus loves to meet the truly anxious one at once, and ~~thus~~ He must needs let the mother fall sick, and the physician be sent for, just at the moment when the sin-burdened one was by, that His own message of grace might be spoken to her.

May He speak to you *now*. The seraphim *flew* to relieve Isaiah. The father *ran* to meet the prodigal. God *makes haste* to be gracious to you, my friend. Do you trust Him as simply as Mary did, and pardon, peace, and joy divine are yours for ever.

W. T. P. W.

## JESUS CONQUEROR.



HE everlasting Son of God  
In time a babe was born ;  
The lowly Jesus, Son of Man,  
In woe, in want, and scorn.  
What works of love, what words of grace,  
He heralded afar ;  
And then He bled for sinful men,  
A dying Conqueror.

Exalted on the throne of God,  
In majesty and might ;  
His name the sinner's joyful plea,  
The Father's full delight.  
Messiah, Lord, a Saviour-God,  
The Bright and Morning Star ;  
Oh, tell His triumph and His fame,  
The Risen Conqueror.

Oh, sing His praise, the sinner's Friend,  
The Church's glorious Head ;  
Who burst the bands of death and hell  
A Victor from the dead.  
The Light of life, the Joy of men,  
The mighty Man of War ;  
He's coming soon, o'er all to reign  
A glorious Conqueror.

Ten myriad voices, loud and clear,  
Ring from the ages past,  
And ransomed souls of every clime  
Proclaim their Lord at last;  
Through all the darkened lands of earth  
His servants shout afar,  
That Jesus Christ is Lord alone,  
Eternal Conqueror.

J. M'C.

---

## FRENCH TRUNKS FOR ENGLISH; OR, WHY A MAN COULD NOT BE SAVED.

---



FRIEND of mine recently told me of a man whom he had persuaded to go and hear the gospel preached; that is, to go and hear the "good news" that there is in God's grace for every sinning, desolate, and burdened heart in this sad,

bad, mad, world.

He went, that man did, and he was impressed and *convicted*, but not *converted*. He acknowledged the truth of it all, and wanted my friend to ask his wife and children to go and hear the glad tidings of salvation also.

My friend consented to do this, but pressed on him the importance of deciding for himself; that was the first thing for him to do. He hung back and

would not ; but after much pressing the truth came out why he would not accept the mercy and love of God.

He was a trunkmaker, and had a wife and five children, and he could not make sufficient profit, as he thought, to live *unless he sold French trunks for English*. “Now,” said he, “it is no use for me to think of having to do with God while I do this, and I cannot afford to give it up. I should like my wife and children to hear the gospel and get the benefit of it ; as for me, I cannot afford to do it.” And so far as I know, or my friend knew, the matter was left.

This is a very sad and solemn case, and what makes it more sad and more solemn is, that it is such a common case.

There are tens of thousands who will go to hell, and lose this life, and eternal life also, because they will sell French trunks for English—so to speak.

Some positive sin or sins, some imagined profit or pleasure, stops the way to the acceptance of the gospel. Such *know* it is sin, and *believe* it is pleasure or profit, blinded as their judgment is by the sin, and thus Satan through sin, and then unbelief, holds them captive at his will.

Few rogues are so honest as this trunkmaker. He was right so far ; he could not have to do with God, in the way of grace, while he sold “French trunks for English,” but he forgot, when he made his choice, that he would have to do with God all the same, only in judgment instead of grace.

For the most part rogues offer other objections, doctrinal and speculative, like the woman of Samaria in the fourth chapter of John's Gospel. They want to know how about the heathen, or the Chinese, or election, or original sin, or somebody or something, heedless of their own dire need.

The fact is, a definite habitual sin, or some definite sins, are often at the bottom of the refusal of the gospel, and are rolled like a sweet morsel under the tongue, which refuses to be given up. The moment will come, and is not far off, when those self-same sins or pleasures will bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder. Remorse will possess that soul, and too late despair will seize it, and of itself it will find its own way to hell as its own most proper place.

The wonderful grace of God once known and rejected, the devil has a fair chance which he will not neglect to get between that soul and mercy, and to plant despair in it, and the end of that soul is a Judas end.

May God awaken thee, reader, if thou art sinning in the teeth of the known gospel of the grace of God, for, so refusing it, thou art already nigh to destruction.

“O sinner ! ere it be too late,  
Flee thou to mercy's open gate,  
And join Christ's waiting band.  
Trim your lamps, and be ready !  
Is the midnight cry.”

F. T. R.

## GOD'S ORIGINAL AND MAN'S PICTURE.



WHEN seated in a tram-car the other day, in one of the North of England large towns, I observed two men walking slowly down the street carrying between them, and suspended from a pole resting on their shoulders, an immense yellow advertisement board, upon which was a large crimson-coloured ring, encircling in bold black letters the words, "CHRIST ON CALVARY," and underneath it was printed, "*Now on view.*" I said to a gentleman, who took his seat opposite to me—

"Where is that picture exhibited, sir?"

"At the Philosophical Hall," he replied; "and over a million of spectators have seen that picture since it was first brought out."

"No doubt," I said, "many who have viewed it will have been much gratified with the sight, at least for a time, as I understand it is a wonderful work of art, though I have not seen it myself."

"Yes," he said; "it is by Munkacsy, one of the ablest painters of the day, and certainly it is a most splendid picture."

"But," I added, "what a glorious sight GOD'S ORIGINAL is, as compared with *man's best picture*, and how very different are the after-view results! May I ask, have *you*, by faith, seen and received that Blessed Son of God as your *Saviour*, who was

nailed to the cross of Calvary in the behalf of God's glory and the ruined sinner's need?"

"Yes," he readily rejoined; "I have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and am saved."

"Bless God for that," I added—"so have I, and soon we shall see *His* face in glory, 'for when we see him we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is' (1 John iii. 2). Soon also we shall see what countless myriads have, by faith, viewed and received as their Saviour *Him*, who, in such love and compassion, allowed Himself to be nailed to that cross of curse and shame—'the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' Yes, very soon, all who have received the benefit of His finished work will join in that full chorus glory-song of redemption—'*Thou* art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof: for *thou* wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by *thy* blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests.'"

"Yes," said my friend, "it is the delight of my heart to look forward to that glorious time."

"So it is mine," said I; "and ere long He will come and take us to be for ever in the full enjoyment of it all, for he said, 'Surely I come quickly'" (Rev. xxii. 20).

Reader, I do not ask if you have seen M. Munkacsy's picture, nor what amount of gratification seeing it may have afforded you, but I do venture to inquire, Have you by faith accepted CHRIST,



*God's Original*, and got your soul saved? And if not, oh, why not? For still—

“There is *life* in a look at the *Crucified One*;  
There is *life* at this moment for *thee*;  
Then, look, sinner, look unto Him and be saved,  
*Unto Him who was nailed to the tree!*”

Tens of thousands flocked to see this man's picture, willing to pay the reasonable charge for the sight, which at the most only gives gratification for a time; but how few avail themselves of looking to Jesus, and of receiving God's eternal salvation, and escaping eternal damnation! “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live” (Isa. xv. 1-3).

Dear soul, Christ is not on Calvary's cross now; He is on His Father's throne in glory; nevertheless He is, so to speak, *now on view* for all by faith to see, and to be eternally saved, and fully satisfied. There He is as the One who “humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus *every knee should bow*, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that *every tongue*

*should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*" (Phil. ii. 8-11).

"Lamb of God, we bow before Thee,  
Calvary's tale creation awed ;  
Well may Thy redeemed adore Thee,  
While we sound this note abroad—  
Calvary's Victim  
Vindicates the throne of God.

Man of sorrows, God of glory,  
Wondrous path Thy foot hath trod ;  
Cross and crown rehearse the story,  
Joyous sound this note abroad—  
Calvary's Victim  
Now adorns the throne of God."

It is at people's option to look at that clever artist's picture in the town where it may be exhibited, but *all are responsible to look at Christ Himself* for blessing; and faith will always find Him seated on the throne of grace in glory, ready to save to the uttermost all that come to Him in this His day of salvation; but, solemn to say, He will before very long, withdraw Himself from His rejecters' view as a *Saviour*, and will be found in the character of *Judge*. Ah, friend, if you have thus to view Him, you will not find Him dispensing *blessing*, but *eternal judgment*. While reading these lines you may, in the pride of your heart, turn away, and refuse to accept Him as a loving Saviour, but *then* you will be compelled to look at Him on that great white throne—"for *every eye* shall see him, and they also which pierced him." So that it will not then be "Christ on Calvary," nor "Christ on his Father's throne," but "CHRIST

ON THE GREAT WHITE THRONE OF JUDGMENT," *now on view.*

*That* viewing will be *compulsory*, and *that* judgment will be *eternal*!

Oh, think of it, reader! He will search you through and through!

That Son of Man, with eyes as a flame of fire, will then view *you* when you, will have nowhere to turn, with the burden of all your sins upon you. You will then say to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath has come; and who shall be able to stand?" (Rev. vi. 16, 17.)

Well, indeed, is it for the unsaved that He waits to be gracious, and will wait during this waning day of His grace and longsuffering mercy. The word still is—"Look unto *me*, and be *ye* saved, all ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isa. xlv. 22).

Could Michael Munkacsy fill the world with such marvellous productions of art, the viewing of them all would not help you a hair's-breadth towards Christ in glory. Furthermore, had all the people that have ever lived, from Adam downwards, looked at Christ dying on the cross of Calvary's mount, it would have availed them simply nothing, apart from faith. "For without faith it is impossible to please God." For example, see that crowd of Jew and Gentile spectators viewing the Lord of life and glory, lifted up on the cross, for the sinner to receive

by *faith*, and how few got the blessing, so far as Scripture records give; then contrast the two thieves near Him on their respective crosses receiving the due reward of their deeds. For all we know, they both saw "Christ on Calvary," they both heard what *He* said there, and it is not told us the one thief was less needy than the other. But look at the difference, the one by *faith* accepted Christ as his Lord, confessed Him as his Saviour, and consequently went with Him to paradise the same afternoon, while his companion continued to rail upon the Lord, and refused to confess Him, consequently he went down to hell that same day.

If you can be lowly enough to confess that humbled, spit-upon Saviour as your Lord, you will soon be exalted to where He is in glory; but only a little longer refuse to bow to Him, and you will be abased to that place "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Christ Himself left the *highest* place in glory, and took the *lowest* place on earth, and as the man Christ Jesus He has thus got the most exalted place in glory, where He now sits. All who have been identified with Him in the humbled place will ere long have the honour of being identified with Him in the highest place of glory for ever.

I beseech you, friend, bow now, and yours is "glory with Christ for ever." Refuse, and hell will be your eternal portion, with the devil and his angels.

Nay, God forbid!

J. N.

## THE SURE DETECTIVE.



WHILST driving past the famous Kilmainham Jail, in Dublin, the other day, I was informed by the carman that, within its walls, the murderers of the two ill-fated Irish Secretaries had met their doom. He pointed out the flag-post in the centre of the mass of buildings, that form the prison; and told me that, from the top of that post a black flag was floated on the day of punishment, to proclaim, at large, the execution of the righteous verdict of the law.

For a period of twelve months, these miscreants had succeeded in escaping the vigilant eye and powerful hand of retribution; but, as though "murder must out," and sin carry in its bosom the fatuity of detection, so, at last, betrayed and discovered, they had to atone for their dastardly crime by meeting a felon's fate. Whatever excuse they might have urged for their action, they were reckoned as murderers by law, and being tracked out, caught, tried, and condemned, they had to suffer its extremity. Black, indeed, was the flag that overhung the gallows; dark the crime that made capital punishment necessary; and mysterious the circumstances that forbade the social blot from being covered, or the sin concealed.

Does it not seem as though some principle were

at work—unexpected and inexplicable—whereby such deeds of darkness are forced into light—some strange disclosing power, some tell-tale or “king’s evidence,” some informant or traitor that cannot allow sin to lie dormant? Is it conscience? Is it that which caused Cain to wince beneath the words, “Where is Abel, thy brother?” or David to quail under Nathan’s charge, “Thou art the man!” or Ananias and Sapphira to drop dead at Peter’s accusation, “Thou hast not lied unto men but unto God.”

Whatever it be called, the words of Moses to the people, in Num. xxxii. 23, “*Be sure your sin will find you out,*” are a declaration of divine certainty. “Some men’s sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after,” said the apostle Paul (1 Tim. v. 24); “For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; nor hid that shall not be known,” said the Lord Himself (Luke xii. 2). Do you say “*When,*” my reader? Well, perhaps, they may be concealed successfully for a twelvemonth, and the guilty perpetrators may dodge the eye of the detective—perhaps sins may not be open to all beforehand, yet assuredly they will follow with faithful tread, and dog like the bloodhound, until, run to death—nay, to judgment—the dread pursuers overtake the would-be fugitive—and there before the judgment seat the very “secrets of men” will be judged by Jesus Christ (Rom. ii.). Fatal encounter—awful trysting-place—yes, hidden up, covered over in time, all must become patent there. Sins of youth, manhood, and

maturity, never divulged to human ear, and, if possible, forgotten by the sinner himself, all must, perforce, start into direful and overwhelming prominence on that day.

Rocks and mountains will be sued in vain—the refuge of lies which formed so good a covert on earth—the cloak of simulated sanctity that deceived the eye of man—the religious veneering that polished the corruption beneath—all this will fail on that day; things, then, will appear as they are, and the keen detective that follows you day by day, and moment by moment, unseen and disregarded, will be acknowledged when escape is impossible.

Ah! sinner, black the flag that will notify your eternal doom—dark, dark the day when the hidden crimes of every shade and dye must come out. For notice, God bids you “*be sure*” of one thing—be certified in the most positive way that God Himself can certify any one—“*be sure your sin will find you out.*” Could words be plainer? Your sins and yourself must come into collision one day, that is absolutely certain. Now, if this collision be in time, if your soul be crushed under its conscious load of guilt, what should be done? There is but one course open. It was adopted by the publican of old, who cried with bowed head and smitten bosom, “*God be merciful to me the sinner*”—opportune and exquisite prayer! “He went down to his house justified”—quick and gracious answer! But, when the greatest sinner comes in contact with the grace of God, a full free perfect salvation is the immediate

consequence, and the thousands of sins known and unknown, confessed or unconfessed (but covered by the acknowledgment, "me *the* sinner"), all these are pardoned, and the sinner now believing is justified from all things, made a child of God, and placed in the full and welcome favour of that very God against whom he had sinned. All glory be to Jesus who, by His blood, has paid the price of redemption and who now brings the believer into His "banqueting house," waving over him love's fair banner, whose infinite folds unfurl all the rich treasures of God's salvation; and, the guilty one, blessed and accepted, finds his pleasure now in celebrating the Redeemer's praise, as he awaits the consummation in glory.

But, on the other hand, if the sinner come into contact with God's judgment, if he fail to act, as did the publican, in repentance and faith, then, alas, there remains nothing but condemnation. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

And, therefore, dear reader, if you have never yet "fled for refuge," be persuaded to do so now—who can tell but that the next moment may be too late?—and then your doom would not be temporal death, but that second death that knows no hope nor ending.

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18). Accept by faith His death for yours, and, then, seek to live for Him. J. W. S.



"I'VE BEEN A GREAT SINNER."



We were quietly engaged in our classes at Sunday school, when a knock at the door was heard, and a woman with a child in her arms asked if some one would come and see her sister, who, she said lay dying.

School ended; we prayed the Lord to send a word of salvation to the sufferer; for pain and death are terrible things to be encountered by the soul that is unsaved, and estranged from the God of all grace.

From the description given I readily found the house. Ascending the stair, the woman who had called at the school welcomed me, bidding me enter an inner chamber where lay the object of my visit. The room was better furnished than the exterior of the abode had led me to expect, and bore about it an air of homely comfort, indicating the hand of provident care. Some children played about, and a woman present acted as nurse.

On approaching a bed at the farther corner of the room, I recognised the face of one who had occasionally attended our gospel meetings. Her face bore the traces of former comeliness, but wore that pinched and flushed look which denotes intense suffering; her lips were parched, and respiration extremely difficult. She was fast and surely sink-

ing. Bending down, I spoke a few words of sympathy, and then asked tenderly, "Are you ready to die?" Fixing her eyes upon mine, she replied with difficulty, "No,—I've—been—a—great—sinner."

I felt thankful that the Holy Spirit had wrought conviction of sin, in her heart, for He alone can impart a real sense of being unfit for the eye and presence of God. The mere and too common assent, "We are all sinners," is not enough, but the heart-learned and honest conviction which leads to the true confession, "Behold I am vile," ever accompanies real conversion to God. There was here no need for stripping the poor soul of false hopes of fancied righteousness; she was seeking the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ—the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Taking the Scriptures, I read to her from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, about the Man of Sorrows, wounded and bruised, upon whom the Lord laid the iniquity of us all, who poured out His soul unto death, who also was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many. Having "once suffered for sins," God had raised from amongst the dead—

"The Lord, almighty now to save  
From sin, from death, from endless shame."

Just as a thirsty traveller receives a refreshing draught, so did this poor dying woman receive the gospel of Jesus Christ. With the simplicity of a child, she believed God's word. Seeing her much

exhausted I left, after committing her to the Lord, with a promise to return at a later hour. It was late in the evening when I returned. She felt free from pain, and was propped up in bed with pillows. The room was filled with friends; her husband, a man of rough exterior but feeling heart, sat near, while her aged mother silently watched by the bed, a tear now and then trickling down her furrowed cheeks.

God was about to give a bright testimony to His own grace and power in her, who was beyond all human help, and so soon to bid the sad world farewell.

"She has been longing for you," said her sister; "and feared you wouldna come." Looking for guidance I opened my Bible at Luke seventh and read, "And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping." While reading, I observed the sufferer's eyes fixed intently on my face. I read to the end of the chapter, laying special stress upon the words, "Thy sins are forgiven. . . . Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

I then asked her, so that all present might hear, "Are you a sinner like this woman?"

"Yes," she answered.

"And you now trust in Jesus alone for salvation?"

"Yes."

"Are you like this woman when she entered

Simon's house—unforgiven, unsaved, and at enmity with God; or are you like her when she came out—forgiven, saved by faith, and told to go in peace?"

She summoned up strength, then with labouring breath, said decidedly and distinctly, "I—am—like—her—when—she—came—out."

Oh! the grace of God which gives such boldness, even in view of coming death—the perfection of that love which casteth out all fear! Now she was at rest, in the peace of "a great calm." Peace—not the result of anything she had done, but—won for her by the blood of Christ, was assured to her by the voice of Jesus.

It was a blessed confession to the mercy of God, and I was not slow to use the golden opportunity to press upon all present the necessity of accepting the gift of God so freely offered to perishing mankind.

Once again I stood beside that bed. The pallid face spoke of speedy decay, but peace, deep as a river, filled her heart, for she had come to Jesus, and left her weary burden at His feet.

"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be *saved*, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

Christ Himself is the way to God, to the Father, to life eternal, to everlasting glory. Unsaved reader, beware lest you trifle with the "great salvation." Now, near you, even in your mouth, and in your heart, is the word of faith which we preach—namely:—(See Romans, chap. x., verse 9.)

“That 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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Oh! sweet words of grace!

Are you ashamed to confess yourself a vile, hell-deserving sinner? There is none too bad for Jesus. He “will in no wise” cast you out. He will own you as an object for His saving power, His cleansing blood, His infinite love. Accept and confess Him this moment, as you are, and you will find that “this man receiveth sinners.”

T. R. D.

---

## AFAR OFF.



HE LORD JESUS, as He entered into a certain village, was met by ten lepers, but they stood *afar off*, for God's command was that such should “dwell alone, without the camp.”

They see Jesus, the reputed “Friend of publicans and sinners,” so they venture to call to Him from their place of distance for mercy, thus owning their need of it.

He heard that heart-felt cry, and heeded it.

"Go, show yourselves unto the priests," He said; "and, as they went, they were cleansed."

It needed not the priestly touch. Jesus did it all. He had compassion on those lepers in their solitude and terrible condition, and He spake the word, and they were made clean.

Now, most people know that in the Word of God leprosy typifies *sin*; therefore, my reader, these lepers are a picture of your awful case,—"*unclean*," and "*afar off*" from God. But the rays of His piercing eye are concentrated upon *you*. He knows all your evil ways; and remember, *all* are recorded in those books which will be opened to seal your damnation in the last day, if you go on as you have begun!

Take care, lest you find yourself "*afar off*," and *without hope*, like the rich man who was tormented in the flames!

God sees you "*a great way off*." He waits and watches to see you turn right about, that He may "*run*" and embrace you, and bring you "*nigh*" by the blood of Jesus.

Hell is a reality, sinner; and know this, that in your present state you are the dupe of the devil; and the older you grow, the more firmly is he entwining his chains around you, until finally he lands you in that hell, the home of *desolation* and *damnation*!

You will then have plenty of time to think of the rejected Christ, of the great love of God who made you, against whom you spent your life

sinning, but who, in His matchless grace, offered you salvation at the expense of the Son of His bosom.

Regrets on earth are painful enough, but what will they be in *hell*, where *no* ray of hope can ever enter, or spark of light fall to vary the monotony of the blackness of darkness of that pit of terrors !

Why will you die in your sins, poor soul ? Is the gospel *too* simple for you to believe ? Its simplicity is its charm.

Be like the dying gipsy boy, who, when told of God's love for him, "that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," took Him at His word, believed with joy, and said, "I 'turn Him many thanks."

You stand convicted of sin before God ; you had better own it, this is your only hope. Let God justify you, ungodly sinner, but seek not to justify yourself. If you do, you will die in your sins.

Be warned in time. The dark clouds are gathering, the vials of judgment are filling, the voice of the archangel and the trump of God are about to sound, and what then for *you* ?

" 'Almost persuaded,' harvest is past !

'Almost persuaded,' doom comes at last !

'Almost' cannot avail ;

'Almost' is but to fail !

Sad, sad that bitter wail—

'Almost'—BUT LOST."

## READY TO DIE.—ARE YOU ?



EARLY one Saturday evening in the month of June, the rumour of a sad fatal accident reached I——. There had started in the forenoon, by steamer, an excursion party for a well-known place in the neighbourhood, and the report was that a number of them had been drowned. It was difficult to ascertain the exact truth of this, as there was no means of communication between the two places. Meanwhile the friends and relatives waited in anxious suspense.

Later on, about nine o'clock that same evening, the party returned from their pleasure-trip, but with one missing from their midst. The sad story was soon told. It had been intensely hot that day, and the air close and sultry. Arriving at the end of the outward journey, four of the number—young men—started off for a bathe. They had only been a short time in the water, when one of them was seen suddenly to throw up his hands, and almost immediately without even a cry he sank, to the horror of his companions. Rising to the surface, ere they could reach him, he sank the second time, to rise again no more, despite brave efforts on their part to save him by repeatedly diving.

Quickly the mournful news spread, casting a



gloom over the whole town, for the deceased was well known. By profession an architect, he bid fair to make his mark in the world, and was already looked upon as a rising young man. Member of a church choir, and taking an active interest in religious work, he was a general favourite with everybody, and had but lately joined the volunteer corps. But there was that beyond all this that caused such wide-spread sympathy to be felt over his loss. He was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. He had been both her comfort and support. Who can describe the feelings of that widowed heart as the crushing blow, that left her now childless, fell so suddenly upon her, or the thoughts that must have passed through the minds of those who saw him sink beneath their very eyes? Rather we would turn to ask you, dear reader,—Had you been in that young man's place, would death have found you ready? Thank God, there is every reason to think he was, though the summons was so short and sharp. And if only you would come to Jesus and get your sins washed away by His precious blood, you too would be ready. "Be ye also ready."

There is always something very solemn in death, and it seemed more than usually so in this instance. The wages of sin, as Scripture says it is, it makes cowards of the boldest. Like the cutting east wind that nips off the bud just breaking forth into lovely bloom, so was it as if the relentless hand of death had snatched one from this scene, just when

life was opening out, and the future prospects seemed so fair. A fine promising young fellow cut off, and not yet twenty-two years of age! But our God makes no mistakes. His way is perfect, if past finding out. The awful mistake is when precious souls go on from day to day neglecting the great question of eternity, full well knowing the utter uncertainty of life. Ah, unsaved reader, take you warning. Who knows how soon your turn may come. The Lord grant it may never find you out unprepared.

A search was made for the body, which was found some hours after by means of grappling irons, and carried back into the town. It was resolved to give him a military funeral. A few days pass by, and then, as we look across the smiling river below us, from the windows of our lodging we can see a procession slowly wending its way to the cemetery. Only the day before had we watched another procession along the same road. Then, it was that of thousands of school children, all making their way to a park near by, where a day's entertainment had been provided them by kind friends. How their bright happy shouts filled the air, as merrily they had trooped along! But now, what a different sight meets our gaze. Headed by the pipers playing their plaintive melody, the funeral cortège passes out of the town, followed by a large number of the townspeople and the men of the battalion, who with arms reversed march with measured step to the beat of

the muffled drums. A solemn spectacle truly ! Enough to sober the most careless, to melt the hardest heart. The cemetery reached, the body was gently lowered into its resting-place, over which were fired three volleys as a last tribute paid to the memory of their departed comrade. This done, a hymn was then sung, and all was over. The assembled company separated, dispersing to their different homes.

My reader, has this nothing to say to you ? Yes, it has. It is another warning from God about your long-neglected soul. "God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not" (Job xxxiii. 14). Alas ! how true is it. Oft have you been spoken to in the past. Many ways has God of speaking. Perhaps you have lost some dearly loved one, whose death has left an aching void in your heart never yet filled up. Perhaps you yourself have lain at death's door. Or again, your business has been unsuccessful, your health crippled, or some bright hope or long-cherished plan rudely dashed to the ground. "So, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man to bring back his soul from the pit."

Think of all that He has done in the giving up of His only begotten Son for you. Think of that loving Saviour stooping so low, and dying on Calvary's cross for you. Think of Him now as the Saviour for every poor sinner that will come unto Him. Think of this day of grace when salvation is held out to you. Think what it will be

if ever you should miss it. Oh, stop! Consider your latter end.

Many are the devices that Satan has to keep souls from deciding for Christ.

The young he will persuade that there is plenty of time, and that they need not bother their heads yet awhile. Ah, to you I would say,—Don't you be cheated into hell. Be warned by the solemn incident you have just read. Let me plead with you to decide now for Christ and come out boldly on the Lord's side. Nail up your colours, friend, and start life and go through life with Christ. Not one jot or tittle of true happiness will you have away from Him.

The middle-aged he will remind of all their cares and anxieties, and say to them, "You have got on well enough hitherto, better wait till you are past hard work, and have time to think about the future." And I ask, will you listen to his lie, and run the fearful risk of being damned for ever in the lake of fire through mad neglect? Oh, forbid the thought. Haste thee then to the Saviour. He ready waits to save you.

And the aged, who with uneasy conscience are fast nearing the end of life's journey, he will seek to soothe, by bidding them do the best they can the last few moments they have, and leave the past to God. Awful delusion! As if any works of our own can make amends for the past. Impossible. No, no, dear friend. The only way of safety is to come to Christ confessing all the past,

and trusting in His precious blood. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). None have sinned too deeply or stayed away too long to be denied. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

Once more, ere I close, let me ask each reader, Are you ready? "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. iii. 15).


"To-day thou livest yet ; to-day turn thee to God,  
For ere to-morrow comes, thou mayest be with the dead."

W. R. P.



## CHRISTMAS.



E shall soon have Christmas here, miss ; that's the time the young ladies like, isn't it?" The speaker was a gasfitter, who was at work in the house where the writer lives, He was engaged in repairing a pipe, and he commenced a conversation with the above remark.

"Christmas merry-making is a very awful thing," was the reply. "What?" questioned he, in an incredulous tone. "A very awful and solemn thing," was repeated.

“What do you mean?”

“I mean what I say; here is the world pretending to keep the birthday of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom it has murdered.”

The last word seemed to strike him, for, after a few minutes' silence, he said, “Murdered? But He came to die; God knew He was going to die; didn't He, miss?”

“Yes, He did come to die, and God knew it; He knew everything from the beginning; ‘Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world’ (Acts xv. 18); but His foreknowledge does not justify man's deed in murdering His Son. We get both sides of the question in one verse in the Acts, ‘Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, *ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain*’” (Acts ii. 23).

Another silence, which was broken with these words, said in a tone of relief, “Well, you and I were out of that job, miss.” “No, indeed; let me tell you that you and I were both represented there.”

“But it was the *Jews* who crucified Him.”

“Not the Jews only; they were unanimous in the rejection of their Messiah. But we read again, ‘Both *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, with the *Gentiles*, and the people of Israel, were gathered together’ (Acts iv. 27) against Jehovah and against His Christ. Gentile as well as Jew was there. *All* mankind—civilised Gentile and religious Jew included—was

involved in that crowning act of wickedness and rebellion, the murder of the Son of God. There is 'no difference,' 'both Jews and Gentiles' are proved to be 'all under sin,' and all the world is guilty before God! Man's heart is not changed; and if you have not accepted Christ as your own personal Saviour, you would join with the multitude in crying, 'Away with him, crucify him,' were He here on the earth to-day. Through *grace* I am forgiven my share in the foul deed; I pleaded guilty, and received the free and full pardon which God in His great mercy is offering to all who will accept it."

Dear reader, if unsaved, *you* need His pardon. God delights to give; will you not take the place of receiver? There is no getting away from the truth that God holds man responsible for the death of His Son, His *well-beloved*, the One of whom He could and did say, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am *well* pleased." He was the only one that received such a witness. The heavens opened while the Holy God told out to men, that at last there was a Man upon the earth who pleased Him *well*; and when the chief priests, in their murderous hate, led Him away to the judgment hall, the very one who delivered Him up to be crucified was forced to testify that He was a *just* person. Three times did Pilate say, "I find *no fault* in him" (John xviii. 38, xix. 4, 6). The dying thief said to his railing companion, "This man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke xxiii. 47); and the centurion "glori-

fied God, saying, Certainly this was a *righteous* man" (Luke xxiii. 47).

This *righteous* man was the One whom man murdered; but God, who is sovereign, brought good out of man's bad deed, and the blood man spilt is now the only plea for the sinner. The One who was the *just*, died for us the *unjust* (1 Peter iii. 18). He who *knew no sin*, was *made sin* for us (2 Cor. v. 21). "He *did no sin*, neither was guile found in his mouth" (1 Peter ii. 22). "*In him is no sin*" (1 John iii. 5). Here is the ground of peace for the poor sinner. If He had not been the holy spotless One, He could not have put away sin; but He was "*without sin*" (Heb. iv. 15). "He offered himself *without fault* [marg.] to God" (Heb. ix. 14). The lambs "*without blemish*" all pointed forward to the "Lamb of God" (John i. 29, 36), whose precious blood, "as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Pet. i. 19), should redeem His loved ones. The Lamb of God "was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world," for whom? "For *you*, who by him do *believe* in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory" (1 Pet. i. 20, 21).

Dear reader, do you understand? God is perfectly satisfied with that sacrifice. More, He is infinitely glorified by that *one* offering, which has met all the claims of His holiness, and given Him room to display His love to the poor lost sinner *righteously*. Now He can forgive. *He could not* pass over *sin*, but He says, "When I see the *blood*,



I will pass over *you*." We who have believed in Him, rejoice to know that He *could not* surrender one jot of His holiness.

Reader, pause! *Do not* neglect this great salvation. The time is fast approaching, when forgiveness of sins will no longer be proclaimed, but the day of the "*wrath of the Lamb*" will have come, and that blood *will* cry for vengeance which is *now* the ground of pardon. Then there will be no mercy, but all judgment, for those who have despised mercy's call.

Where will you be in that day? With the Judge? or before Him, "without excuse"?

E. E. L.



## THE MIDNIGHT CRY.



O a heart that loves the Lord how sweet is the midnight cry, "Behold the bridegroom! go ye out to meet him" (Matt. xxv. 6). What emotions it stirs; what affections it moves! For Him we have waited; for Him we long, and now the Spirit's voice says, "Go ye out to meet him." He is coming; He is near at hand! Another hour and we may hear His blessed voice calling us up to Himself in the air. We shall see Him—Jesus—our Saviour, Lord, and Friend; Eternal Lover of our

souls, and Bridegroom of our hearts. We shall be like Him, and with Him for ever. His presence shall be our everlasting joy, His love our portion, His home our resting-place. His heart, too, shall be satisfied then, when He has His blood-bought, and tenderly loved Bride in glory with Himself :

“ Oh wondrous day of promise !  
The Bridegroom and the Bride  
Are seen in glory ever,  
O God, how satisfied.”

This, dear fellow-believer, is what we wait for, and long for. Have you heard the midnight cry ? Is your lamp trimmed ? With loins girt are you waiting for the Lord ? These are serious questions, and we do well to put them to our hearts in the Lord's presence. Happy, indeed, are those hearts when we can sing—

“ I'm waiting for Thee, Lord,  
Thy beauty to see, Lord ;  
No triumph for me,  
Like Thy coming again.”

Thus sings the happy Christian on his way to glory ; but what shall be said of you, my reader, if still unsaved ? Dark, indeed, is your outlook. Before you is nothing but an horizon, gloomy with guilt, and its sure and certain judgment.

I have a title without a flaw, and a prospect without a cloud. Your prospect is dark, indeed, without

a break in its sombre clouds of divine judgment ready to burst upon your guilty, and even now lost soul. But all may yet be changed. Yes, changed in one moment. Look to Jesus, turn to Him, believe in Him, and all shall be forgiven.

God delights in mercy, and there is no limit to His grace, for "the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation." Yes, it is a wondrous truth that He "is long-suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Had His patience been exhausted yesterday, had the Lord risen up from the Father's throne, and come for His own, then the door would have been for ever shut on you. But, thank God, the day of grace still exists, the gospel trumpet still sounds, and the Spirit of God still labours to win the unsaved sinner, to soften the hard heart, and bless the hitherto Christless soul. Say, dear unsaved reader, will you still refuse the call of grace? Is it wise to trifle with God and His infinite goodness? What greater love could He show than the cross exhibits, and what ~~greater~~ indifference could you manifest than by refusing to turn to the One who hung there? Only in Him is salvation, but in Him is there now, for you, salvation full and free. Free as the air you breathe is the offer of God's salvation. Take it, I beseech you. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Ten thousand witnesses around you can testify that true is the word, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and that "whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

Let not 1887 pass away and leave you still among the lost. Be persuaded. Do come to Jesus. Come now. Come just as you are. Wait for nothing. Delay not one moment. "Behold the bridegroom; go ye out to meet him." He comes! Another day, another hour, may find the door shut, and you outside for ever. It will be of no use to come then. "*Too late*" and "*I know you not*" ever go together. Be wise; be in time. Heed the cry of mercy, the call of love, the silvery voice of grace. "Come! come! come unto me, and I will give you rest." Procrastinate no more, trifle with God's love and patience no longer. Procrastination is the thief of souls, the recruiting-officer of hell. Enlist not, I implore you, in the laggard host that knocks only at heaven's door to find it eternally *shut*, and, in the recoil of startled surprise, falls into the open mouth of hell. Eternity can afford you no comfort, for there is no rest in hell for the weary, nor water for the thirsty. Despair shall seize, and remorse torment you. The deathless worm, the quenchless fire, the bridgeless gulf, will ever be your portion; and the added sting of all will be that you could have been in heavenly glory with Christ, only, you came

TOO LATE.

W. T. P. W.