

# GOD'S GLAD TIDINGS.

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## TOO GOOD FOR JESUS.

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**F**OR many weeks I had been visiting regularly in one special ward of the — Hospital, but though I was in the ward always once, often twice during the week, there was one bed that I had always passed by, or rather, I should say, I had never spoken to its occupant.

Sometimes the patient in it was asleep sometimes her head was turned away and her eyes closed as soon as I came near her bed, at other times she would call a nurse to do something for her at that very moment, but at all times there was on her face a cold, hard, stony look that seemed only varied by a satirical smile, and which effectually deterred me from trying to speak to her.

Often I left flowers, occasionally a Gospel story on the little locker by her bedside, now and then, when I heard her coughing much, I had put some grapes there too as I passed out of the ward; but, even if awake, she never showed by sign or sound of any kind that she

had heard me, and it was almost a relief to me that no one had called my special attention to her, so repelled was I by the expression of her face.

She was a woman of nine-and-twenty, with fine regular features, a broad forehead, and large grey eyes. It was an intelligent face, *that* you saw at once; but its cold, cynical expression made it anything but a pleasing one.

Possibly, had the ward been a smaller one, it would have troubled me more to pass her by thus week after week, but it was very large, and so many were eagerly looking for a visit. Some because they knew the Lord, and it comforted them to be spoken to of Him whom their souls loved; others because they were thirsting for the water of life, yet could not believe that all they had to do was to drink it, for it was flowing freely all around them. Others again, though really caring for none of these things, were sick and lonely, and sometimes friendless too, and a friendly voice and words of sympathy, or a listening ear to their tales of suffering and woe, brought a little bit of sunlight to cheer them, or, at any rate, varied the monotony of the day, and made them willing to hear of one Friend, the Friend of sinners, whose ear was ever open to them, who was listening for their

cry of need to go up to Him, who wanted not merely to help, but to save them.

Thus it was that, in my interest in others, any uneasy feeling which would creep in at times, about passing by the one bed, was quieted: besides, I argued with myself, hers was not at all an urgent case. It was thought in the ward that she was getting better.

In this way weeks rolled on, till at last I felt thoroughly uneasy at being afraid to speak one word for Jesus because of a hard look and the possibility of a hard word. I am sure it was Satan seeking to keep a door closed against the Lord Jesus, so I asked that blessed Lord Himself to open the door and clear the way if He had any message to give me to carry to that sick woman, and to keep me listening to Him so as to get His own message.

Then came a deep sense of the nothingness of the messenger, and the greatness of the message, that it was EVERYTHING, that His words were Spirit and life, though uttered by ever so slow and stammering a tongue, that I had only to carry His own precious written words, and leave Him to do all the rest.

Now that I was looking for an opened door, I had not long to wait. The Lord opened it simply enough, thus rebuking me for so long trying to force it open myself, instead of asking

Him to do it in His own appointed way.

I had taken into the ward, one day, some flowers in flower-pots, at the special request of one of the nurses, who came down the ward, as we entered, to take them from my hand and that of the friend who was with me. I had just reached the foot of the bed in which Margaret A—— was lying, when the nurse came up, and as she expressed her great admiration of the flowers, she turned to her patient and said, “I will put this one,” taking up a lovely little rose-tree, “opposite your bed, and then you will get the benefit of it.” At the same moment I turned and asked, “Are you fond of flowers.” “Yes, very,” she answered, and, as the nurse moved on with the rest of her treasures, I drew a chair up to the bedside and began to ask her some simple questions as to her health. She answered these freely enough, told me that she was getting better, and hoped soon to be out, that she had nearly died when she first came in, indeed had never expected to be better again, but now she thought she only needed to get up her strength.

It was really consumption she was suffering from, though she evidently did not know it then, or did not believe it if she had been told such was the case.

We talked a little of her bodily state, and then I said, "You spoke just now very calmly of expecting death, would it have been a friend or an enemy to you?"

"Oh a friend, certainly," she said, "I have nothing much to live for; I have buried all I loved best on earth. Not but what I have those who love me, and are kind to me, still living," she added in a sort of proud, self-contained manner, as though to say, "Do not for a moment imagine I am an object of pity, even though I have told you my trouble."

"It is terrible agony to lose those we love best," I said. "I, too, have known that sorrow."

She softened a little now, evidently she felt we were on common ground. Pity she would have none of, even sympathy she seemed inclined to resent, as though she feared it might border too closely on pity; but against some one who had felt the same as she had, she need not arm herself, or put out bristles. Of course she did not say all this in words, but it was plain to me then she felt it, and in after days, when speaking of our first meeting, she frankly owned these had been her feelings.

For a moment there was silence between us, then she told me a little, a very little of her loved and lost ones, adding, "To those who

have lost all that made earth a Paradise, how can death be anything but a friend?"

"Then you have no fear of death?"

"No, why should I; I have suffered as much pain already as I should probably suffer if I died."

"I did not mean fear of the bodily suffering of death," I said; "but have you no shrinking from what comes after death—are you safe for eternity?"

"What do you mean?" she asked, coldly. "Why should I not be safe?"

"There is only one ground of safety," I answered; "the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. Are you safe under the shelter of His precious blood?"

"I am safe," she said, "because I never did any harm in my life; I never did anything to make me deserve to go to hell. I was taught religion from my cradle. I have done my duty always, and more than my duty. I went to church, read my Bible, and said my prayers, and worked hard to support myself respectably, and I thank God I have done it. I could not call myself a sinner even in church, as people do, because I do not feel I am one. I have been always moral and religious."

For some moments I sat in silence, almost bewildered by this long list of virtues, all well

remembered and rested securely on as quite sufficient to meet the claims of a perfectly holy God, who cannot look upon sin, and in whose sight the thought of foolishness is sin, who "charges his angels with folly," and before whom the heavens are not clean. My mind wandered off to what God's thoughts of sin are, as expressed and measured by the cross of His Son, and the cry of that Holy One when sin, the sin of others, was laid on Him, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Almost without knowing what I was saying, I murmured "I am so sorry for you, so sorry for you."

"Why?" she asked, sharply.

"Oh, because Jesus could not have died for you, and it is the blessedest thing in all the world to know that Jesus died for me."

"Why do you say He did not die for me?" she asked, still more offended; "I have prayed to Him all my life."

"Because you are too good for Jesus. He died for *sinners*, and you say you are not a sinner, you have no interest in Him, for you are secure of heaven through your own good life. So He need not have left His home, veiled His glory, and come down here and suffered and died, for you do not need Him. Christ died for the ungodly, and you are not

ungodly. The Son of Man came to seek *the lost*, but you are not lost. Oh, I am so sorry for you. I would not for worlds be out of the number that Jesus died for."

"I cannot say I am a sinner when I am not, and I cannot say I have led a bad life when I have led a good one," she replied; then added abruptly, "Good bye, I am tired now," and summarily and unceremoniously she would have ended our interview; but in spite of the now closed eyelids, as though refusing further conversation on the subject, I said, "I will read you a verse or two of God's Word about this, and you need not weary yourself by answering me, but alone with God ponder which is right—God or you. I read :

"There is *none* righteous, *no, not one.*"

"There is *none* that understandeth, there is *none* that seeketh after God."

"They are *all* gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is *none* that doeth good, *no, not one.*"

"Therefore, by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in His sight."

"But now the righteousness of God without law is manifest . . . even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Christ Jesus, unto all, and upon all them that believe, for there is no difference."

“For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

“This is man’s side of the picture, all sin, all badness; and now look at God’s side, all love, all goodness. ‘But God commendeth His love toward us, in that *while* we were yet *sinners*, Christ died for us.’”

In spite of the closed eyelids, I could tell by her face she was listening; but there came no answer, and leaving a little book called “Abraham believed God” by the side of the flowers on her locker—she had a Bible of her own—I passed on to the other end of the ward, asking the Lord to let His own Word do its work in her heart, and shake her out of her false rest, her false security.

Later in the afternoon, as I again passed her bed on my way out, I noticed that her eyes were open, and she was watching me, with an anxious look on her face, but did not stop, or speak again, wanting to leave her alone with the Word of God, and feeling that any words of mine, or any argument, could but weaken the power of that precious Word. A week passed away before I saw her again, a week, during which she had been constantly in my thoughts, and I alternately desired and dreaded the day to come for me to go to that ward again. I was interested in the woman,

and yet I shrank from going back to her.

It had seemed comparatively easy to tell people, who were anxious to be saved, of a Saviour who was willing to be *their* Saviour, or even to warn of danger and coming judgment those who knew and owned they were sinners, and to entreat them not to linger or delay; but here was one resting peacefully in fancied security, not merely unconscious of danger, but disbelieving the very possibility of it. I trembled lest anything I might say should lull her still, and would gladly have sent a friend in my place: but my friend had others she had promised to see, and had no time, so in conscious weakness I entered that ward, and went straight up to her bed.

She was sitting up in bed, wide awake now, and evidently expecting me. The self-satisfied look was gone from her face, and an anxious enquiring expression had taken its place. She seemed relieved that I came at once to her, and as I sat down, said, in a low hurried tone, "I was very rude to you last time."

I could see how much it cost a proud spirit like hers to say even those few words, and felt as though it must be the Lord who had broken her down, and therefore that He must have commenced a work in her.

"Never mind," I said; "would you like me

to stay a little while with you to-day and read?"

"Oh, yes," she answered. "I have had no rest for days, for though I pretended not to listen, those verses of Scripture have never been out of my head since. I thought I was good enough, and I find I am a sinner. I thought I had a better chance of heaven than most, though, of course, nobody can know for certain, and I find I have no chance at all. I was so angry with you when you said you were so sorry for me, that Jesus could not have died for me; but the words have haunted me all the time."

I could only say "Thank God."

"Why do you thank God?" she asked, in astonishment.

"Because He has brought you off the ground on which there was no hope for you, on to ground where Jesus can meet you and save you. Before, you shut Christ out by your goodness, now, you have taken the place of a lost sinner, you are the very one for Jesus, for He is Jehovah the Saviour."

She only looked hard at me. The wrong thoughts of years were slowly being dispelled; but it seemed as though the darkness disputed every inch of ground with the light.

"You made two great mistakes just now," I

added, seeing she did not speak. "You said nobody could know for certain, and that you found you had no chance at all. Now God speaks *certainly*. He says, 'Whosoever believeth on Him'—*i.e.*, on Christ Jesus—'shall not perish but have everlasting life'—that He *is passed* from death unto life. So you *can* know for certain. And Jesus says 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out'; *i.e.*, every one that comes He receives; so that makes room for you."

Her eyes had a far-away look in them; as though gazing at something which was before her soul. "God says it," she said; "and I am to be like Abraham, and believe it, though it seems impossible, and God will think more of that than of all the good life I boasted in. Is that it?"

I wondered for a moment at her reference to Abraham. She saw my surprised look, and explained, "That little book you left, I read it—I read it over and over again; so much in it suits me. Abraham took his true place." Then breaking down utterly, pride, reserve, self-righteousness, everything gone, she burst into tears, and cried, "*I am* a sinner, I want to be saved, I want Jesus."

My heart was full. I could scarcely keep from crying too. It was with choking voice I

said, "He says, 'Look unto me and *be ye saved.*' *Jesus wants you.*"

"I do look. I do believe," she answered, and presently added, "The little book said that too 'Look unto me,' 'Look now.' Is that all I have to do? Is God satisfied?"

"Perfectly. You look at Jesus, God looks at Jesus. It is not your looking, though look you must; it is *Jesus* that satisfies God, the one you look at."

"Yes, yes," she murmured, "the perfect sacrifice who was delivered for *our* offences," and there was a long, long pause: I could not break it.

After a time she said, "But what about to-morrow, I have a bad temper, and I take things hardly if they go wrong."

"Shall I tell you," I said, "what a man of God said to me once, 'The first look at Christ is life, and every after look at Him is the power of living.' Do you understand?"

"I think I do," she said. "We get saved when we first look to Jesus, and while we keep on looking at Jesus, we live and talk like people who are saved, then when I feel I am getting wrong, I am just to look back to Him."

"Yes. Consider Him, and listen to Him. 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me' He says."

“Yes, I see, its to be all Jesus—all Jesus, this is rest.”

And so after years of fancied security, and a week of agony in the presence of realised danger, He made her to lie down in the green pastures, and led her beside the still waters which He Himself had provided, comforted her with His own voice and led her on by it too. Much passed between us, that in this brief space it is impossible to record, both at the time and in the months that followed, showing how deeply the word of God cut into her very soul. My visits to her were full of the deepest interest to me. She lived three months longer. For weeks neither she nor I had any thought of her dying. She seemed to gain strength, her appetite improved, and she gained flesh too, was up, and dressed, and moving about the ward half of each day, sometimes reading to the other patients, sometimes speaking a few words in her shy reserved way, of the Saviour she had found, and doing many a little act of kindness for one and another of them.

She read much of God's word, fed on it, and her soul caught the hope of the Lord's coming to fetch His people, and gloried in it. In the ward I had heard of her always from the nurses, as the most troublesome and exacting

of patients, and the patients had spoken of her as selfish, and bad tempered, and disagreeable. Now everyone was talking of the change. The nurses could not understand it, she seemed so very grateful for the smallest attention and so unwilling to give trouble; while her fellow patients were constantly speaking of the wonderful change that had come over her, and of how good and kind she was to all whom she could help. The woman in the next bed, who was a Christian, told me that all through one night—which I found was the very night of the day on which she had found Jesus—she herself had slept very little, and had heard Margaret singing in a low voice to herself, “I, the chief of sinners am, but Jesus died for me,” over and over again, “And so, Ma’am,” she said, “I thought that must be the reason of the change, that she had found out two things, herself as a sinner, and Jesus as her Saviour.”

Some weeks passed on thus, and then she suddenly broke down in health, and from that day failed rapidly. Very calm she was, and restful. It hardly seemed a surprise to her and her desire increased to see the Lord and be with Him. “How He bore with me,” she used to say; “He the Holy One bore with my pride and folly, with my looking down on me,

neighbours. When I heard you read and speak of sin, as though you had felt it, to some of the others, I wondered what very wicked things you had done, and prided myself afresh on my own, as I thought, spotless life, and all the time the Lord saw me as I was, bad altogether, bad all the way through. Oh, how bitter it was to me that first day to find out what you said was true, that I must be a sinner or I had no claim on Jesus. How sweet it is now to know that it was just for such sinners Jesus died.

‘Thousand, thousand thanks to Thee;  
Jesus, Lord for ever be.’”

I saw her the last day of her life; she had wasted then almost to a skeleton, she was propped up in bed, her breathing very hard and distressing, and large drops were trickling down her face, yet her expression was still calm and peaceful. She was too far gone for me to speak many words to her. Bending over her, I said—

“You are nearly home.”

A smile broke over her face, a sunny smile. “Near Him,” she answered; “Jesus . . . died . . . for me . . . a sinner . . . I am . . . going . . . to Him.”

“They shall see His face,” I whispered.

“One . . . verse . . . more,” she said,

and I quoted, —“ Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.”

She smiled once more—a glad smile—and looked up at me, too exhausted now to speak again.

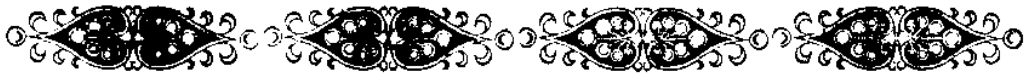
In the night-time, towards daybreak, her night ended for ever, and her morning was the sunlight of His own presence. Quietly she passed to be with Jesus, His own name the last on her lips.

“ This Man receiveth sinners.” X.



## GOD IS ALL.

“ If salvation depends upon our being or doing ought, we shall, inevitably, be lost. Thank God it does not; for the great fundamental principle of the Gospel is, that God is ALL—man is NOTHING. It is not a mixture of God and man. It is all God. The peace of the Gospel does not repose, in part, on Christ's work, and in part, on man's work; it reposes *wholly* on Christ's work, because that work is perfect—perfect for ever; and it renders all who put their trust in it as perfect as itself.”



## GOD'S THRONE, AND ITS EFFECTS.

(Read Isaiah vi., and Rev. xx., 11, 15).

**I**N both of these Scriptures you find the throne of God, but you find more than the throne, there are accompaniments to the throne, and the question which I want to put to you, my readers, is this, Which of the accompaniments to the throne of God do you mean to have to do with? You must have to say to God, you must have to do with Him who sits on the throne, whether you will or not.

In Isaiah vi. the moral effect of the throne is seen to be brought to bear on the soul now, and that is what I want to press on you. In the 20th chapter of the Revelation it is not the moral effect of the throne of God on the soul of the sinner now, but the eternal effect of that throne in judgment and execution.

You cannot but be struck with the contrast between Isaiah vi. and Revelation xx. It is the same throne, and the same Being who sits on the throne in each scene. In Isaiah you find

fire, and in the Revelation you find fire (always the expression of judgment), but in Isaiah it is fire on the altar, a beautiful type of the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Revelation there is no altar, it is the lake of fire, the final doom of the impenitent man. Take heed, my unsaved reader, lest that be *your* doom.

The throne of God you *must* have to do with, and there are two effects of it. Either you are driven by it to the altar, where you find the fire has already consumed another, and a spotless victim in your room and stead, or you are driven by it to the lake of fire, where the fire *never consumes*, but *ever engulphs* you. Either you are driven to the cross as a guilty repentant sinner, or you are driven to the lake of fire as an impenitent sinner. In Isaiah vi. the sinner is acted on and brought to see what he is as a sinner now, when he can get salvation. In the Revelation he is brought to see what he is when it is too late for the blood of Christ to save him, for the cross of Christ to ransom him, or for the arm of God to rescue him.

Revelation xx. is the dark background of Isaiah vi., and, my reader, to the Gospel tidings of God's love and grace there is also the solemn background of God's judgment; and no evangelist dare leave it out. We know who filled the throne in Isaiah vi. It was the

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Lord Jesus, as the 12th of John shows (v. 41). And who fills the throne in Revelation xx. ? It is the Lord Jesus, too. In Revelation xx. we are conducted by the Spirit of God to the last moment of time, the moment when God finally deals with man. Only the wicked dead stand before that throne. The Lord's own people have been caught up to glory with Christ. From the earliest saved person, to the last one who shall be converted before the Lord comes, all have been caught up to live with Him. The judgment of the living nations we have in Matthew xxv. Here it is the wicked dead only, from Cain to the last one who shall die in his sins, who are found before this great white throne of dazzling purity.

You may say, "I thought it was God who would judge." Quite true, but Jesus is God. "The Father judgeth no man but hath committed all judgment unto the son." Man has put down Christ ; God exalts Him. Man despises Him ; God sets Him on high. This same Jesus, whom man crucified, will be the judge of the living and the dead. Believers will quit their graves to the "resurrection of life" when the Lord comes, unbelievers will be raised to the "resurrection of judgment" (John v. 29). If a believer fall asleep, the Lord raises Him when He comes into the air, and calls him up to

be with Himself; but if, still a sinner, you die in your sins, you will be left in the grave till the thousand years are over and the great white throne is set, and then the voice that so often on earth called you and wooed you, but which you refused, that voice hear you must, and hear you shall, and that voice will call you from your grave, and then you will stand before God, with everything of time and sense gone, and you brought to have to do with Him in full view of the solemn realities of eternity. Then you must look at Him, for you cannot help it; then you must hear Him, for you cannot help it. Now you have fled from Him often, stopped your ears often, then you cannot but see and hear and face Him; and then, as the books are opened, and the book of your history is opened, you must face also the record of all your ways, forgotten by you perhaps, but kept recorded by Him.

Raised from the grave in which you have slumbered, you are called up to meet God, an unconverted sinner in your sins, and what can you say? what dare you say? The books are opened, and the dead are judged out of the things which are written in the books. Do you think you will say to God then, "I had a wicked nature, I was tempted, I had no opportunities"? Not you: every tongue will be

silent then ; you will blame yourself alone.

The book of Life will be searched, and your name will not be found written in it ; the name of the feeblest believer is written in that book, every one who has come to Christ has his name carefully recorded in the book of Life, but yours will not be there, because you never have come to Christ, never have believed in Christ, never have fled to Christ, never have trembled before the throne of God ; you have gone on in carelessness and unbelief, and there is your history written, careless and indifferent to the end, a Christless sinner : that is what the book tells of you. It may record momentary impressions, but of what good are they if you do not come to Christ ? Oh, what will be your feelings, my unconverted reader, when that book is opened, and the record comes out, " Lived for himself, (or herself), and died without Christ " ?

In that moment I find the sea giving up the dead that are in it, and death (the state the body was in), and hades (the condition of the disembodied spirit), giving up the dead that were in them, *i.e.*, death and hades are emptied as it were into the presence of God. Death is destroyed by the wicked dead all being brought to life again to meet God.

I ask you, Would you not rather meet God

now in the day of His grace? For you know well, if God cut you down to-day, there is not a link between your soul and Him. In Rev. xx., the Lord describes what must be a passage in your future history if you do not come to Christ. You may not have been worse than others, or very bad outwardly, but your sins never troubled you, nor brought you to Christ; you lived in your sins, died in your sins, came to life again in your sins, and your sins are bound on you for all eternity, and the effect of the throne of God then, is to drive you in your sins into the lake of fire for ever and ever.

I ask you, can you face that scene? Do you not tremble at the bare possibility of your being among the number who shall stand before the great white throne? Ah, it is no possibility merely, nor a probability, but an absolute certainty, that such will be your case unless you are converted and brought to God. The holy blaze of the throne of God in that day, can only drive you to the lake of fire.

But, thank God, we have not come yet to the moment of which Revelation xx. speaks.

In Isaiah vi. we have the moment of the Gospel, if I may so speak. It tells what God has for an anxious soul, for a man who is rightly affected by being brought into God's presence,

## 24      GOD'S THRONE, AND ITS EFFECTS.

who recognises a moment in his history when he saw the Lord. I ask you, Can you recognise such a moment? I do not ask you Can you recognise such a moment when you heard the gospel, or were affected by a narrative? No doubt you remember a moment when moved, or touched ; but, has there been a moment in your history when you have seen the Lord?

The prophet Isaiah had got into God's presence. Have you? You must get there by and bye. Oh ! get there now. You may say—I tremble to get there ! No doubt, but you will not tremble when you learn what that glory and light can shew you, for until I get into God's presence I do not know what the altar means and teaches.

Isaiah was just as bad before he got into God's presence as after, but he got a sight of himself in the presence of God, saw what he was, but also saw what a loving, gracious Saviour he had to do with.

The Seraphim cry “Holy, holy, holy,” and they cover their faces, as though to say, We dare not face God. And they cover their feet, as though to say, We dare not let Him look at our walk, so holy is He. They teach men this lesson, God is holy, He looks into the heart, discovers all the recesses of the soul, and they say we dare not let Him look at us, as they

cry "Holy, holy, holy!" Oh! what a sound for an unholy sinner! As the voices of these strange, these bright beings are heard, what a moment of agony is it for an unclean sinner!

There is no moment on earth like the moment when you wake up to find yourself in the presence of a holy God; when you have got out of everybody else's sight, and into God's presence, and you find He is holy, and you are unholy, unwashed, unforgiven, unblest, full of sin.

Look at the effect on the prophet, "Woe is me," he says, "for I am undone."

Have you got to this point yet? You are really as much undone now as you will be before the great white throne. What will you be there? A sinner in your sins? What are you to-day? A sinner in your sins. The only difference is, that then every bit of hope of your ever being any thing else is over, and now you have still the opportunity of coming to Christ, and being saved by Christ. Have you, my reader, ever said "Woe is me."? Is it not better far for you to say "Woe is me," than to hear the Lord say "Woe unto thee."? Is it not better to take the woe out of the lips of Christ, as it were?

What is the next thing we have? When the action of the throne had gone down deep

into this man's soul, when he had a sight of himself, and it had produced deep anxiety. "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me having a live coal in his hand." The moment the prophet was deeply anxious, those holy beings, who had made him tremble at the holiness of the Lord, were swift to show the grace of the Lord.

There is rapidity here: "*then flew.*" God is slow to judge, but swift to save! The moment the light of the throne has done its work, God says "Look at the altar." The throne of God can only alarm you, the cross of Jesus saves you. The throne can only terrify you, the altar only calms you, for the altar tells you there has been a sacrifice. The One who will fill that great white throne by and bye is the very One who was the victim here, the One who died on Calvary's cross for me and for my sins.

The throne awakens you, the cross calms you. Come unto me, the Saviour says. Do you think you have something still to do? "It is finished," are the Saviour's words. He bore the judgment that we might be blessed, in, and through, and with Himself.

The claims of the throne in righteousness, have been met by Christ in grace on the cross, the altar has consumed the victim, the fire tells

me the victim is consumed, and now that my sin has been met, I get comfort. "Lo this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged," the Seraphim said—that is by the sacrifice and death of another, the atoning work of the Saviour, my iniquity is taken away and my sin purged.

Look up then, anxious soul, and view the throne of God to-day: you there may see the Man who bore your sins on the cross, and because He is on the throne to-day, you may know that your sins are taken away, and what is the result? You are free to go and serve the Lord. "Who will go for us?" says the Lord, and the prophet's answer is "Here am I, send me."

There is a beautiful future for you. Your iniquity taken away by Jesus, and your sins purged by Jesus, what next? "Who will go for us?" says God, and the heart thus acted on by grace, responds with joy "Here am I, send me." Is this the future you will take?

You have had the throne of God presented to you, it must either drive you to Christ now, and thus you get salvation, or it must drive you to the lake of fire by and bye, and you get damnation. Which shall it be. Do you say I would have it drive me to Christ? Then decide for Him now, be His from this moment and go and serve Him.

Let this opening new month of 1879, find you a new man in Christ through faith in His name, and the happiest year you ever had on earth is most certainly before you. May it indeed be so my dear reader.

W. T. P. W.



## LEFT ALONE WITH GOD.

“To be left alone with God is the only true way of arriving at a just knowledge of ourselves and our ways. We can never get a true estimate of nature and all its actings, until we have weighed them in the balance of the Sanctuary, and then we ascertain their real worth. No matter what we may think about ourselves, nor yet what man may think about us; the great question is, What does God think about us? And the answer to this question can only be heard when we are “left alone.” Away from the world; away from self; away from all the thoughts, reasonings, imaginations, and emotions of mere nature, and “alone” with God—then, and then alone, can we get a correct judgment about ourselves.”

## “MUSTN'T I FEEL IT?”

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**H**AVE any of my readers ever thought of the worth of one soul? The salvation of one soul must have cost the blood of the Son of God as much as that of one million of souls, and yet how many there are, who, being saved themselves, never ask, “Is my neighbour, is my friend saved too?” Let me tell you of one who sought to win a soul.

Carry E. was a dear old woman, and at the time of which I am writing, was much brightened up in soul. Some gospel meetings were being held in her village, and saved herself, and rejoicing in it, she was most anxious that her children and her friends should share the blessing. One son in particular called forth her earnest prayers. He had been invited to the meetings and had attended one. Shortly after it I went to see old Carry. After praising the Lord for what He had done for some around us, we spoke of her son Sam.

“You see, Miss, last Monday was the revel at Merton, and I thought to myself, my son will go over there with his wife if I don't try and stop him, and then maybe it will put all thought of his poor soul out of his head; so I put on my

bonnet and I went down. When I got there Sam was standing at the door with his hat and coat on ready to go out. He did not seem half to like seeing me, and by and bye he said, 'Be you going to stop, mother? I wish you'd come another night.' So I told him how we might not be here another night, and that I could not often come so far, and presently he doffed his hat and coat and stayed there till it were time for me to go, near upon nine. Then I said, 'Be you coming up to the meeting to-morrow night, Sam?' 'I don't know, mother, maybe I shall.' 'Do, my son,' I said, and I told him how I wanted him to hear the good words, and he consented." And Sam came, and his earnest face told a tale of what was passing within, and his mother's care and his mother's prayers had their reward.

A few days later I went to Sam's cottage. It was a sultry summer afternoon, I can see it all now! There he sat, a black, unwashed collier, the water standing in a pan beside him ready for washing, the tea laid on the table—both untouched. Outside in the lane lounged a group of his compeers, among whom he had generally been foremost; they were unheeded this afternoon; Sam was otherwise employed, for an open Bible lay on the table before him. How glad my heart felt! and if I was glad,

what must have been the joy in heaven? Think of it, Christian! "*joy in heaven!*" the unceasing joy of that blessed place intensified, while Father, Son and Holy Ghost are occupied with *one* poor sinner turning from his sins to Christ. Do you know anything of fellowship with that joy? Do you know that you are "allowed of God to be *put in trust* with the gospel"? Have you been faithful in your stewardship?

After words of greeting had passed, (and I must tell you that previously that cottage door had been wont to be shut somewhat hastily when any one who loved the Lord was seen approaching,) I asked Sam what he was reading. "Well, Miss, it's just this; I'm looking to see if Mr. M.'s words be true, and if I can be saved by believing what the Book says." I found that Sam *wanted* to be saved. And oh, dear reader, if you have an actual *want* or *need* in your heart, be sure it will be satisfied; "He satisfieth the *longing* soul." The devil never created the desire to be saved in any soul, but God who put it there will most surely satisfy it. Sam had found out that he was a sinner: he had been gay, careless, and wicked, and he felt the burden of sin. Together we turned to some passages of Scripture. John iii. 16, 18 were the first we looked at, and I showed him that God had done everything for sinners, and that *believing* it is

now our part. "Whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish." "He that *believeth* on him is not condemned."

"Yes, Miss, I see, but mustn't I *feel* it?"

"Look at the verses we have just read, Sam, and see if there is a word about feelings; no; and look at John v. 24, that is very clear, 'He that heareth my word, and *believeth* (not *fee*leth) on him that sent me, *hath everlasting life*.' Will *you* take God at His word?"

"Yes, Miss, I should like to."

"Well, look at one more verse, Acts xiii. 38, 39, '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, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.' This you are to *know*, not to *feel*, and by it all who *believe* (not all who *feel*), are justified. It is plain, is it not that, according to these verses we have read, you are justified and have everlasting life by believing what God says? Is that true of you?"

"Yes, it is, if the Book is true, and I do believe it is."

And Sam took God at His word that very hour; he believed, and he knew he had eternal life, not because he felt it, but because God said so, for, as Sam has often told me since, he

had no “feeling” then, but yet he could and did thank God that he was saved, because the Bible said so, apart from any doings of his own.

We often read accounts of persons who are saved on their death-beds by believing in the Lord Jesus, and opposers of the truth sometimes say they would like to see a man saved in such an easy way, (as they call it,) live and go on in his belief. Well, here is such a man; he is young and strong, and he is alive as I write this. Not long ago he was speaking of the Lord's grace to him that summer afternoon, and telling me how his mates often troubled him about his religion, and even about feeling and falling away. “Ah!” he said, “people wouldn't talk so much about falling away if they'd look at the Lord. Seems to me, Miss, that what I do want is to keep just as close to Him as I can, that's the safest place.” And when later we were speaking of a woman with a bad temper, he said, “I never used to think about my temper, nor care if I lost it, but now if I do, it do give me bitter times after.”

Having a new nature, he was aware of the old one, and found its trouble. Sam is changed—there is no mistake about it—he is not found even among the old set of men, but he is learning to be separate for Christ's sake. When sorely tempted the other day to join in a quarrel,

he went instead into the house, and taking up his Bible, he opened it, and his eyes fell on the words, "Blessed are the peacemakers." God knows how to use His own word. "Is not my word like a hammer?" "It is quick and powerful," and while it can break the rock in pieces, it can pour oil on troubled waters as nothing else can. Read, and use God's Word and you will find it to be so.

Dear unconverted reader, what are you waiting for? Have you faith, or are you looking for feelings? Feelings change, but Jesus does not, nor does the Bible. Do not expect a fresh revelation to meet your particular case, or that God will do a new thing for you. No! God *has* done all, for Jesus said, "It is finished!" when, 1800 years ago, God laid on Him the sins of those who believe. Thank God, those who credit this have joy and peace, but it is *in believing*, and not before. Let me entreat you not to excuse yourself for not being saved by waiting for feeling. Can you feel what you do not possess? Can a wife feel like a wife till she is one? No more than you can feel like a child of God till you are one; and even when you *are* one, feelings will not prove it, but this Word of God will, and on it, on the work of Christ told out in its pages, you may stake your soul, for it "*liveth and abideth for*

“WE MUST NEEDS DIE.”

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*ever, and this is the word which, by the gospel is preached unto you.”*

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

H. L. H.

“WE MUST NEEDS DIE.”



ASTRIKING instance of the truth of these words, was forced on the attention of a family living in the village of C.

It was a bright day in the month of October, when a household party, including the servants, were met together for family prayer. There were some dozen souls in all, and in the course of reading the chapter (2 Sam. xiv.), the above quoted words came in.

My friend, I would pause and ask you, have you considered the words? “*We must needs die.*” It may be, that you, like the one of whom I now write, will read them for the last time; see to it then, I beseech you, let death come how or when it may.

Slowly the words were read, the chapter was ended, and after the prayer the party dispersed to fulfil their various duties. But one in that

little group had joined for the last time in those family prayers, and the following morning at the same time, and on the same occasion, her seat was empty.

Not twelve hours later, and confusion reigned in the house. “What is the matter?” I asked of a terrified servant standing near. “M. H. has been taken ill,” was the answer.

It was indeed true. She was standing busy at her work as usual, when she suddenly complained of great pain in her head, and in a few minutes she was unconscious. Only two more hours elapsed, and with no return of consciousness she was gone. Oh! happy was it for that woman, thus suddenly called, that she had long since come to the Lord Jesus as a lost sinner, and had found Him to be her precious Saviour, and more than this, she had shown to her fellow servants, and to all who knew her, that she was truly a changed person.

Dear reader, as an inmate of the house where this occurred, and as one who could not but feel deeply the solemnity of such a circumstance, I would plead with you. Oh, think no more of a death-bed conversion. That were only madness and folly; had the one of whom I write trusted to this, I shudder to think where her soul would now be. To her, sudden death was but sudden glory, but I fear that

with some of my readers, sudden death might be sudden gloom, and that for ever. Come *now* to that Saviour, in whom she trusted, and then were you to be called as she was, without any warning, to face the realities of eternity, you could meet your Lord and Saviour with joy.

Christ's word to you to-day is "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out" (John vi., 39); but the time is fast approaching when the Saviour shall descend from heaven with a shout, and all those who know and love Him, shall be caught up to meet Him in the air to be for ever with Him. Joyful, blessed time for them! But will *you* be there? If you would be, this day decide for Christ. Come as you are, and you will find Him a precious Saviour,—but *come at once*, for—

"The Saviour soon will rise  
And close the open door,  
Then all who have *refused to come*  
Will hear of grace no more."

E. C. R.

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THE blessed fact that "The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" is the conclusive proof that man is already lost. Being lost, I am not in despair, but filled with joy, as I find I am just the one Jesus came for, as He said "The Son of Man is come to *seek* and to *save* that which was lost."

## THE SEEKING, SAVING, AND SATISFYING ONE.

“The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” (Luke xix. 10.)

“He satisfieth.” (Ps. cvii. 9.)

**D**OUBTLESS the lovely story of the woman of Samaria, is a well known one to those who are in any measure familiar with the pages of their Bibles. And perhaps none of the Gospel narratives—the fifteenth of Luke excepted — has moved so many hearts, and touched so many consciences, telling out as it does, the matchless grace of Him, “who though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor:” and, though Lord of all, and owning the cattle upon a thousand hills, yet, “made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant.” (Phil. ii. 7.) Who trod this scene, hungry and thirsty, wearied in body oftentimes—a man amongst men—“in all points tempted” like unto us; exempting Himself from none of the circumstances of the poorest life on earth—and here, as we see, making Himself dependent upon the courtesy of a poor woman for a drink of water. (John iv. 7.)

We cannot go into details, but it is interest-

ing to see how He reveals Himself to her in the threefold character, which we find at the heading of this paper, viz., as the Seeking, Saving, and Satisfying One.

Have you ever thought of the Lord in this character, my reader ;—as One who is SEEKING SINNERS? This poor woman thought very little about it, and cared very little about it, as she drew near that well to fetch her supply of water. And not for a moment did it enter her mind, that the wearied, toil-worn Man, whom she saw seated upon the well-side, was there waiting for her. But so it was. And He is waiting for you, unsaved reader, though you may not know it, nor care about it—“waiting to be gracious” to you—seeking to touch your conscience, and attract your heart, and draw you to Himself.

Tell me, are you going to resist Him? Ah! God grant you may not! This is just a lovely picture of how He seeks sinners. He was in Judæa, and on His way to Galilee, but we read “He must needs go through Samaria.” Why “needs”? Because there was a lost soul there, and he was seeking it. What was bodily fatigue, in the presence of the need of a never-dying soul?

“He must needs go through Samaria,” that He might seek one wandering in the paths of

sin ; that He might save one soul from the bondage of Satan ; that He might satisfy one heart, that had tried the world, and found it unsatisfying. "He much needs go through Samaria," because she was there, and He was the seeking One.

Others we hear of, who, as it were, crossed His path, and sought His aid, like blind Bartimeus ; but this one was still at a distance from Him. Like the prodigal, she was still in the "far country," feeding on the husks of sin. Like the stray sheep, she was wandering about aimless and objectless, and so, as the Good Shepherd, He "must needs" go after her. His eye is upon her ; His heart yearns over her, and His feet follow His heart to the place where she is. The road might be rough ; the way long ; the object of the journey an unworthy one. But His love rises above all the difficulties in its burning desire to save this soul. And so in patient and unwearied grace He waits for her beside the well.

Tell me, has His love for sinners grown less intense since this, think you ? Listen to His own words—"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it ;" "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." And down under the dark and terrible "waves

and billows" of God's righteous judgment of sin, He went a willing victim—a spotless sacrifice—the Lamb of God, who "came into the world to save sinners," (1 Tim. i. 15.) undeterred by the horrors of Calvary, the power of Satan, or the malice of men; drinking to its very dregs the cup of God's wrath against sin; that believing sinners might have the cup of eternal blessing put into their hands. As that little hymn so simply expresses it,—

"He knew how wicked men had been,  
And knew that God must punish sin;  
So out of pity Jesus said  
'I'll bear the punishment instead.'"

Ah, and we may say too "out of *love!*" As Paul said, and it is the privilege of each redeemed one to say, "*He loved me, and gave Himself for me!*" and this too at the very time when Saul, afterwards called Paul, (Acts xiii.) was going right against the very dearest interests of this blessed One. And you, dear reader, may either be careless and indifferent to Him, like the woman at the well; or an open opposer and rejecter, like Saul of Tarsus; but over one as the other, His heart of love is as anxiously yearning now, as it was then; and even by this little paper, which you are reading, He is seeking to win your confidence, and give you to know that "gift of God" which is "eternal life" through Him.

But while He seeks to attract the heart, He would also touch the conscience. And so we find Him saying to this woman, "Go call thy husband, and come hither." He brings her sins to remembrance, and reveals to her the fact that she stands in the presence of One who knows everything about her. And He knows everything about you and me, beloved reader. We may cover up our sins, and conceal them from one another, but we can hide nothing from God. "All things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do." And better, far better, be willing to have them all out with Him now, while He can deal with them in grace, than be *forced* to have them exposed before the "great white throne," when the day of grace will be forever gone by.

Well, this woman confesses her sin; or rather, bows to His statement of it. And, then there rises in her long sin-hardened soul, the Spirit-taught yearning for a Deliverer, the Messiah, the Saviour. She is prepared for the sweet and wonderful revelation to fall for the first time upon her ears, never afterward to be forgotten, "I THAT SPEAK UNTO THEE, AM HE!"

Do you know Him thus? Not merely as *a* Saviour, but as *your* Saviour? Nothing short

of this will save you. There must be a divine living link between your soul and Him, else you will be lost for ever. Have you got this link? Have you had an interview like hers? Have you had a personal dealing, a face to face talk with the Lord Jesus Christ about your sins? You need not fear to do so, for already He knows all about them, and the moment you take your place before Him, *as a sinner*, He will reveal Himself to you as a Saviour, the saving One, the One who "came into the world to save sinners."

But if you are a nice, upright, moral, church-going person, one in whose character there can be found no flaw, whose society is courted by the scientific men of the day; whose presence graces the assemblages of rank and fashion; perhaps you would not like to subscribe to this title—to take your place amongst, and become one of that vast number, who are the recipients of God's gifts, and whose only claim upon Him for salvation, is that they have come to Him as lost, ruined, needy sinners? Well, if you will not take your place with them—if you are calculating upon your good works—your moral, perhaps religious life, *meriting* salvation—upon your prayers, or your penances, or your charities, qualifying you for the presence of God, oh,

beware ; for God's salvation, and God's Saviour, will never be had on these terms !

“Not the righteous ;

*Sinners* Jesus came to save !”

“God hath concluded all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all.” There is “no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God,” and the question now is, will you own God's verdict to be true ; and as a ruined, wretched sinner, like this woman of Samaria, accept God's “gift,” which is “eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Rom. vi. 23.)

One word as to the little verse at the heading of this paper. “He satisfieth.” In a scene of dissatisfaction and disappointment, what a blessed thing for a heart to know One, of whom it can be said “He satisfieth.” So with this poor woman. Sought and saved, she is now to be satisfied, and by the revelation of Himself ; “I that speak unto thee, am He !” He so absorbs her heart, that she neglects, or forgets, the object of her visit to the well, and speeds forth the happy bearer of glad tidings to the city of Samaria. “Come see a man,” is her eager entreaty, “which told me all things that ever I did.” What a confession for her to make. She not only forgets her “waterpot ;” but she forgets *herself*. The Seeking and Saving, has now become the Satisfying One to

her ; and she is willing that the dark catalogue of her sins should be recalled and read, if thereby sinners should be drawn to believe in Him, as " the Saviour of the world."

Oh ! do you know anything of this ? The wonderful rest, and satisfaction of heart which is to be found in the presence of Christ, and to be found nowhere else ? Turn whither you will, you will never find so loving, so tender, so patient a heart as the heart of Jesus, the heart of GOD, revealed in, and by, His Son. Many an earthly friend would have been wearied long ago, with your resistance and distrust, but He follows you still. He waits for you still. He wants you still, with a deep, changeless, unswerving love—a love that knows no weariness, and never grows cold,—the only real and changeless thing in this fading and unreal world. On earth, as we have seen, He walked far and waited long to seek and to satisfy one poor sinner. But oh, He went to the cross, and down into *death*, to save you. God grant you may accept His salvation, and know the joy of being satisfied now and for ever with Him.

" No hope of rest in aught beside,  
No beauty, Lord, we see ;  
But like Samaria's daughter, seek,  
And find our all in Thee."

A. S. O.

## FOUR GREAT IMPOSSIBILITIES.

(Hebrews vi., 13-20.)



HERE are four great *impossibilities* in Scripture, the first of which is contained in the passage which stands at the head of this paper. I shall, at the outset, dwell upon it for a little, not exactly in its own connection in Heb. vi.—that we shall have at the close—but simply the solemn fact stated. I allude to the expression in the 18th verse,—“IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE.”

### IMPOSSIBILITY, No. 1.

It is a very common remark that “all things are possible with God,”—that “God can do anything,” and the statement has the authority of the Lord Jesus Himself, but I need not say the Lord did not mean thereby to contradict the passage before us, and to imply that the holy God could either utter or act a lie. If that were possible, then He would not be God at all: He would be reduced to what you and I are; so, whilst one would earnestly press the *love* and *grace* of God in dealing with the sinner, still it is most important that we should maintain the *holiness*, *righteousness*, and *truth* of His character, in all

## FOUR GREAT IMPOSSIBILITIES.

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their strict integrity. God is one who "*can by no means* clear the guilty." God is of "purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and *cannot look upon sin.*" "God is LIGHT, and in Him is *no darkness at all.*" Remember, I beseech you, that GOD IS LIGHT. How often one hears that precious passage quoted—GOD IS LOVE, and how seldom comparatively its counterpart; but the very epistle (1 John) that contains the glorious announcement—GOD IS LOVE—opens by the "message" from heaven that GOD IS LIGHT. Now why is it that people like to think of God's LOVE, and do not feel happy in the reflection that God is LIGHT? Because light detects darkness—because it is a most unpleasant thing for the guilty sinner to be revealed in all the searching brilliancy of His holy presence.

You hear people say, "I hope to go to heaven;" but let me ask, Do you hope to be in the LIGHT? "God is LIGHT, and in Him is NO DARKNESS AT ALL," whereas man is SIN, and in him is *nothing but darkness*. That is what you are, my unsaved reader,—the very opposite of what God is. Do you really hope to go to heaven? Could you find any happiness there? None whatever. *Heaven would be perfectly intolerable to you, if you are not consciously fit for the dazzling LIGHT of God's own glory.*

But to return. If it be *impossible* for God to *utter* a lie, how much more impossible to *act* a lie! Deeply, deeply as He yearns over the lost, mightily as He longs for the deliverance and blessing of those held captive by sin and Satan, yet God cannot depart in the smallest degree from what He is in Himself, nor act inconsistently with His nature as a holy God to accomplish these blessed ends. He may not exercise His grace to belie His justice; He will not be merciful at the expense of holiness; He cannot express His love in a way inconsistent with truth; He refuses to sacrifice the dignity and majesty of His throne to satisfy the deep desires of His heart.

Now, you may not like to have this truth pressed upon you, but if you were converted to God you would *delight* in it, because I don't know anything that gives a soul more real rest than the blessed fact that he has been saved not only by grace, but through righteousness.

A man once said to me, when I sought to put the Gospel before him, "I don't understand all this. Is not God able to do anything? and if He loves me, why cannot He save me at once, without all this incessant talk about Christ, and the Cross, and the Blood?"

"Ah," I replied, "you imagine that God can do anything; but you are wrong, He

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*cannot.* It is *impossible* for God to lie; and were He to save you without the Cross, He would *be acting a lie*. It would be the very opposite of justice. Justice must punish sin."

Oh! if people were only to think of this a little more, they would not talk so lightly about their sins. How universally we hear it said, "I know I am very bad, but I do the best I can, and trust in the mercy of God, and I hope to be saved in the end." It is all a *delusion*. If you want to know the certain road to everlasting hell, that is the road!

Let us analyse it. What is the *best* that *you* can do? "Man in his *best state* is altogether *vanity*;" all his "righteousnesses are as filthy rags;" and as to trusting in the mercy of God, man's idea of the mercy of God is the hope that God will think as little of his sins as he does himself. But no; God's holiness demands the punishment of sin. And His love as well as His holiness require that the sinner shall be made absolutely fit for the glory of God—as fit as the Lord Jesus is Himself—if he is ever to be there.

## IMPOSSIBILITY, No. 2.

Now let us look at the second impossibility. The first concerned *God*, the second concerns the *Sinner*. We shall find it in Hebrews xi., 6,

“*But without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God.*” Connect that verse with another in Romans viii., 7, “The carnal mind is *enmity* against God, for it is *not subject* to the law of God, neither indeed *can* be. So then they that are in the flesh CANNOT PLEASE GOD.”

We have been seeing that there is in God's *nature* that which prevents His coming down to man, except in righteousness. Now we turn to what a *sinner* is by *nature*, and we find it is *impossible* for him to please God. They that are in the flesh (in contrast to those who are “in Christ” (verse 1), and “in the Spirit,” verse 9) *cannot please God.*” What a dreadful position to be in! But is it not true of my unconverted reader? Do you love God? No; you love pleasures, amusement, anything, everything but Him. Why is this? “Because the carnal mind *is enmity against God.*” That is what man's heart is made of morally—and “God is Love.” God and man then are opposites. “For it is not subject to the law of God?” Must not you plead guilty to that indictment also? Not subject, “neither indeed *can* be!” What terrible material we are made of! No wonder the apostle finishes up this terrible picture with the sweeping statement, “They that are in the flesh *cannot please God.*”

You may do the best you can, attend your place of worship regularly, read the Bible, say prayers, give charity, be honest and straightforward in your business, and so forth, but remember that all the time, unless you have been converted to God, and are saved through the Lord Jesus Christ, you are not pleasing God. You must be "born again" before it is possible to please God. Oh! how it takes the very ground from under us, and lays us low before Him.

You are perhaps putting your works, your prayers, your good conduct in the place of Christ. You have to put them in the dust and learn that they are nothing but filthy rags. You may be zealously seeking God in this way, but it is the wrong way. It is the very mistake the apostle, in the 10th chap. of Romans, accuses Israel of. "They have a *zeal* for God," he says, "but *not* according to knowledge, for they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

Now I ask you, dear reader, have you ever honestly gone down before God and told Him that you are nothing but a thoroughly lost, vile

sinner? If not, you have not submitted yourself to the righteousness of God, for that is what His testimony declares you to be, in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd chapters of Romans. I don't think there are many moments in the history of a soul more blessed than the moment when he so thoroughly submits himself to God's righteousness as to acknowledge that he is perfectly LOST, because the more fully a person knows his utterly worthless position in this world, the more thoroughly he is able to appreciate the cleansing power of Christ's most precious blood.

Now we have looked at the two sides—God and man. We have seen how IMPOSSIBLE it is for God to surrender one tittle of His righteousness, and how IMPOSSIBLE it is for man to leave his sinful state. God and man *fixed* at the very antipodes from one another. How, then, is the mighty distance that separates them to be bridged over? How are two such opposite beings to be brought together in peace and blessedness? How was God to maintain His holiness, righteousness, and truth in the judgment of sin, and yet give expression to His love, that longed to have poor guilty ones with Himself in glory?

That was the mighty problem that had to be solved! The profoundest human intellect

might well stand aghast at its immensity, and confess its helpless impotence. It remains for God Himself to devise means by which His banished be not expelled from Him, means which glorify all His attributes, and at the same time give a channel for His boundless love to flow. God can now be *just*, and the justifier of the poor ungodly sinner that believes in Jesus.

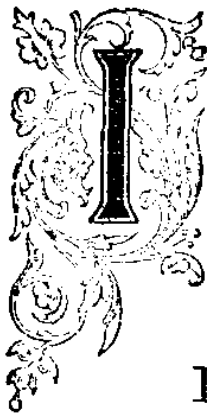
Let me illustrate a little what I mean. A man is tried for murder. The jury is sworn, the evidence is heard, and the verdict of "*guilty*" is recorded. The judge, instead of sentencing the prisoner to death, addresses him thus: "You have been clearly proved to be guilty of this murder, but I pity you, and herewith I pardon your offence—you are discharged." Would not that be a piece of gross injustice? Would it not be an outrage upon even *human* ideas of righteousness? Undoubtedly such a judge would be pronounced by public opinion to be a disgrace to the judicial bench. But though man is shocked at the bare idea of a human judge acting in such a way, yet he expects God, "the Judge of all the earth," to deal with him after that very manner! Surely you are not going to saddle God with a character that you would not tolerate in a human being! How, then, is God

to pardon, bless, and save in a righteous way the man who is thoroughly guilty and lost?

This question our third Impossibility will answer.

*(To be concluded in our next.)*

### MRS. G.'S CONVERSION.



I was twelve years ago, my dear, when I lost my husband. No, I didn't lose him, he is not lost, though if I had died an hour before him, I was *lost for ever*. But the Lord spared me. He opened my eyes.

One afternoon my husband and I were sitting together before tea in this little room. He was talking about the Lord, and was grieving over me, as he had often done before.

"Isn't it a dreadful thing, my dear," said he, "for me to be in heaven, and you to be in hell?"

"Sure I'm not going to hell," said I.

"Indeed you are, my dear, indeed you are; there's nothing in the world to stop you, nothing to prevent it, indeed you'll surely go there."

"Sure you're always threatening the devil on me," said I; "but he'll not get hold of me, for he'll not have me at all."

"Indeed then, he will my dear, indeed he will, what is there to prevent it?"

"And won't you go to hell too?" said I.

"No, my dear, for Jesus has died for me—my sins are all gone in His precious blood."

"And then he began to sing a favourite hymn:—

"There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Immanuel's veins," &c.

"And isn't that for me as well as you," said I, after listening a while.

"Indeed it is," said he.

"And won't this blood wash my sins away?"

"It will, my dear."

"Sure," said I, "the thief that went slander-  
ing and denying the Lord on the cross, when  
he said, 'Remember me,' didn't the Lord say  
'To-day shalt thou be with be in Paradise?'"

"He did."

"And won't He take me there too?" said I.

"He will if you trust *in Him*," said he.

"Sure then, I do," said I, "with all my heart."

"Are you *sure* of that?"

"Quite sure, *sartain* sure," said I.

"Praise the Lord," said he, "then we shan't  
be parted after all. Oh! then I'll be glad when  
I see you coming after me."

"May be I'll be there before yourself."

"Oh no, you won't," said he, "I'm going first."

"My husband was not very well, but there

was nothing serious that we knew of. He was standing up by the window, looking across towards the hall, when he said 'What is that light, my dear?' "

"What light?" said I, "I see no light."

"Yes, there's a great light over there."

"May be it's the lamps in the hall," said I, "I'll go and see."

"So I went to the door, but could see nothing, and I began to feel uneasy. When I got back into the room, he turned round, called me by my christian name, 'Mary,' and then died, without another word.

"That's twelve years ago, and since then, when I first knew the Lord, He has never let me want for anything. I haven't got to the height of the apostle who could say 'I know how to suffer need,' for the Lord hasn't tried my faith so far as that. May be it wouldn't stand that. He knows what we can bear."

"All the twelve years I haven't known twelve minutes' want, and that's only a minute for each year. I've lost my sight, but as I sit all alone (no I'm never alone), I think of that Blessed One from the manger to the cross, where I see Him, ah no! it isn't, for He's off the cross, and it's in the glory I see Him now."

A. T. S.

## “ TWO DIED FOR ME.”

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HE 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 1800 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 forward. '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!*—he died for me! Did I not tell you true, *two died for me?*"

## "TWO DIED FOR ME."

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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 these words to tell me He had forgiven me. So I went down on my knees again and thanked Him. Of cause 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 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 being good, 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 by blood, and my eternal 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 our own. For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."

X.



## FOUR GREAT IMPOSSIBILITIES.

(Hebrews vi., 13-20.)

(Continued from page 54.)

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WE have already had pointed out two great Impossibilities — “IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE,” and “*without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God.*” Let us now look at  
IMPOSSIBILITY, No. 3.

Turn to Matthew xxvi., and let us read a solemn passage about the Lord Himself, verse 36, “Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death; tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, *Oh my Father, IF IT BE POSSIBLE, let this cup pass from me!* nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.”

Between God, in all His unsullied holiness, and the sinner, in all his unmitigated badness, *Christ has come!* Jesus, the holy spotless

One, has come, as sent by the Father, into this wretched world. The One upon whom heaven opened, and to whom the Father's voice was addressed, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased!" He who could Himself say, "I do always those things which please him."

The One, who from the moment He was laid in Bethlehem's manger until He died on Calvary cross, never once did His own will; whose life went up, without one single imperfection, as a sweet savour to His Father! Such is the Person—Divine, yet human—who has undertaken the glorious work by which God could stoop in righteousness from the illimitable height of His glory, to the miserable depth of human degradation, and pick up, and bless, and save, and make fit for that glory the very vilest, most polluted sinner.

See Him, as the shameful, yet most glorious close of His wondrous history drew near, on the Mount of Transfiguration, encircled with the brightness of heavenly glory. Again the well-known voice is heard, "*This is my beloved Son; hear him.*" But even in the midst of that bright scene, what subject lay nearest to His heart? "They spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem." And then He descends from the dazzling

splendour, and glory, and favour of that moment, to encounter all the shame, and wrath, and darkness of the Cross. But here, in the garden, on the way to it, He is at once accosted with this grand question that has been before us. How is God's glory to be maintained, and the sinner who has outraged Him to be saved?

He retires from His disciples with a heavy heart; and oh, dear reader, just consider the solemn gravity of the question brought before the soul of the Lord Jesus at that moment. There was a cup that night put before Him, and what did it contain?

Collect all your sins from the moment of your birth until now. Gather together all the vile things you have thought, said, and done that you would not dare to reveal to your bosom friend. Horrible sight! What do you deserve therefore? The infinite wrath of God. The Lord is here, in presence of your sinful self and sins, and the cup is filled with the wrath of God, which you have merited. He knew what the drinking of it would entail—the absolute forsaking of God. And now He must decide the question—whether He should go from that garden straight into the glory of God, from whence He came, and escape the Cross, leaving us poor sinners to perish; or

should He drink the cup, suffer the death, endure the wrath of God, and have us with Him in glory for ever? How wonderful the moment! Could Jesus have gone into heaven without dying on the cross? Most assuredly. But what then about you and me? We should have been justly damned in hell for ever!

“Father,” He prays, “*if it be possible*, let this cup pass from me.” If there be one way by which I can have these sinners with me in heaven, without drinking this cup, let it pass from me. But NO, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE. If the sinner was to be saved in consistency with God’s holiness, righteousness, and truth, Jesus must die. He shrinks from it—shrinks from being forsaken of God. It was His perfection as man to do so. But soon the conflict is over, His love and obedience have won the day, and we hear Him say, “The cup which my Father hath given me—shall I not drink it?” and bearing His cross, He ascends the mount, and in tenderest, infinite, adorable love, dies under the judgment of God. Ever blessed be His name!

And thus the mighty distance between God and the sinner is bridged over, and the boundless river of His love is free to flow down to the lost. Atonement has been made, sin has been judged, and God’s holy character has

been vindicated! Turn, then, from your miserable self-righteousness, to the agonies of the cross, and there behold the blessed work which enables God to save you the moment you fling every human crutch away, and believe in Jesus. Do not be afraid to bring all your sins into the light. "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's son cleanseth us from all sin." The wrath of God has come down upon and been exhausted by Jesus, so that there is no more wrath for you to suffer, if you are only a poor sinner that rests alone on Christ's finished work.

Say, like the dying man in Dublin, some years ago, when asked how he could venture to meet God after His wicked life. "*God is glorified about my sins in the cross of Jesus; God is satisfied, so am I.*" "What?" said his unconverted friends to him, "*your sins forgiven! you going to heaven that have lived such a life!*" "Yes," he calmly replied, "*God is glorified, God is satisfied, so am I.*"

But how has God *shown* His satisfaction? This brings us to

#### IMPOSSIBILITY No. 4.

See Acts ii. 23. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain; *whom God hath raised up,*

having loosed the pains of death because IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE that he should be holden of it."

Here is the grand truth of resurrection following upon the truth of His death. As it was IMPOSSIBLE for the Lord Jesus to escape the cross if sin was to be atoned for, so was it IMPOSSIBLE that He should remain in the tomb now that sin has been perfectly expiated. If you want to know the value of the cross in God's eyes, you will never know it except in resurrection. Do you ask whether you may be perfectly sure that God is satisfied with the blood of Jesus as having made complete atonement for your sins? Behold the man that bore them at the right hand of the majesty on high! And how did He get there? *God* raised Him from the dead. Who put the pains of death upon Him? *God*. Who "loosed the pains of death" from Him? The same *God*. And why? Because God's holy nature was satisfied—yea, glorified by the death of Jesus on the cross for sin—and therefore "it was NOT POSSIBLE" that the grave should hold Him. My reader, it would have been an act of unrighteousness—I speak with reverence—it would have been an act of unrighteousness on the part of God if He had left Jesus in the tomb after He had fully atoned for sin! *Impossible* that He should remain

there, and now the prayer of the Lord Jesus, who glorified the Father upon the earth, and finished the work which He gave Him to do, is answered—"Glorify thou me with the glory which I had with thee before the world was;" and *we look up to heaven to behold that "visage that was marred more than any man's"* radiant with the glory of God, the *proof that God is satisfied, and that you and I who believe are saved.* "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." *If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as having made full and complete atonement to God for your sins, YOU ARE SAVED.* You have not to *feel* that you are saved, you have to *believe* it. You *could not feel* it until you know upon the authority of God's *Word* that you *have* eternal life.

I said I would return to that 6th of Hebrews at the close, just to show how this statement "It is impossible for God to lie" comes in in its own connection.

1st. We have seen—how *impossible* it is for God to come down to man's level.

2nd. How *impossible* it is for man to reach up to God's.

3rd. How *impossible* it was for the Lord Jesus to escape death, if God and man were to be brought together again.

4th. How *impossible* it was for God to leave

that blessed One in death when atonement for sin had been made. And now in conclusion, let us see how blessedly this 6th of Hebrews confirms it all for our souls. God comes in by His *word*, and His oath to make good to you and me the results of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ—so that we may be delivered from every doubt and fear, and know what true settled peace with God really means.

God makes a promise to Abraham and afterwards He swears by Himself to its accomplishment (compare Gen. xv. with Gen. xxii.)—"wherein *God* willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability (unchangeableness) of His counsel, *confirmed* it by an oath—that by *two* immutable things (God's word and God's oath) in which IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE, we might have *strong consolation*, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."

When Abraham was given the promise that his seed should be as the stars of heaven—what did he do? Did he try to *feel* it? Did he look into himself for some experience, or happy feelings to give him assurance of it? No. "*He considered not his own body* now dead, nor yet the deadness of Sarah's womb—he *staggered not* at the promise of God through

unbelief—but was strong in faith giving glory to God, and being *fully persuaded* that what He had promised He was able to perform” (Rom. iv.) Abraham had absolutely nothing but the word of God to assure him of his blessing. He relied upon the veracity of God! And, my reader, *you* have nothing *less*; do you want anything *more*? Had Abraham “considered his own body,” his feelings, his experience, his walk, he would most assuredly have concluded that such a thing could never be. Now, my friend, cease considering your own heart or your feelings. All is gloomy in that direction. There is no solid resting-ground in self, nothing but shifting sands, but “consider Him”—look off unto Jesus at God’s right hand, who is there, *because He has put away* the believer’s sins, and stake your soul’s security upon the most reliable of all things—God’s blessed *Word*. “Verily, verily, I say unto you he that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life.”

“Oh,” you say, “I *do* believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as my Saviour.” Then you *have* everlasting life, God says so, and IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR GOD TO LIE—and the simple question is whether you are going to make God a LIAR. “He that believeth not God hath made him *a liar*, because he believeth

not the record that God gave of his Son—and this is the record that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life, is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.” Now mark the next verse: “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.*”

From this it must be apparent that the way you are to KNOW that you HAVE eternal life, is not by *feelings*, but by believing the things that are written. And so our passage in Heb. vi. says, “That by two immutable things in which it was IMPOSSIBLE for God to lie, we might have STRONG CONSOLATION who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.” Could we have a better haven of rest? and could we obtain a firmer anchorage? Faith rests upon the word of God and gets strong consolation from it, and hope both sure and steadfast casts its anchor inside the veil, and looks out for the return of the coming One to take us where He has Himself gone before.

CHRIST, GOD'S TEST FOR MAN.

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"Hope has dropped her anchor, found her rest  
In the calm sure haven of His breast;  
Love esteems it heaven to abide

At His side."

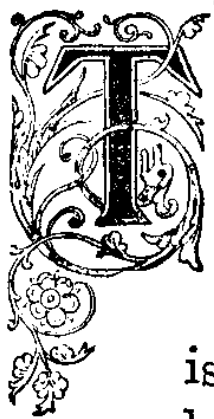
Then, dear believer, yield yourself into His  
loving hands, and believe that in doing so you  
are giving true delight to the heart of God.

J. C. T.



CHRIST, GOD'S TEST FOR MAN.

"To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into  
the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.  
Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice."—  
John xviii.



THE Scripture before you, my reader,  
is the trial of the Lord Jesus Christ.  
There never was a trial in this  
world like the trial of Jesus, and  
what I want you to see is, that it  
is not Christ who is really on trial  
here, but the world, and therefore you!

The moment Christ comes in, all in His  
presence are on trial, for *He* is God's test, and  
God's touchstone, for the heart of man. God  
knows if *you*, my reader, are among those who  
know Him, and who love Him. Blessed for  
you if you are! Happy for you if you are!

Awful your state if you are not! For mark what he says here, "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice"; and I ask you, Have *you* heard His voice? Is His voice familiar to you? The voice of Jesus, the voice of the Saviour. Do you know that voice? You know the voice of the one you love best in this world, but tell me, Do you know the voice of Jesus? Blessed indeed is the one who knows His voice, the voice of the Son of God!

It is a *real* thing to hear His voice, no phantasy, no mere imagining of the mind, of which preachers can talk, or writers pen, but the most wonderful thing the soul can know in its earthly history—the moment when first penetrates to the recesses of the heart, the voice of the Son of God! And why? Because it marks a new era in the career; because it is the moment of blessing, of life, the moment that links your soul with God. And if you have not heard His voice, where are you? Unblessed, unwashed, unpardoned, dead in sins, and exposed to the judgment of God; and how soon that judgment may fall on you, God only knows—you cannot tell.

You are on trial now for eternity, for the moment Christ is brought in, you must either declare yourself for Him, or you must take sides against Him. It was so in that judgmen

hall that day; *not* Christ who was on trial, but every other man there—*for*, or *against* the Son of God?

I grant that you were not in that judgment hall, but which side do you take to-day? *For*, or *against* the Son of God? There is no middle ground—"He that is not with me, is against me, said the Lord Jesus."

Look at the majesty, and the tenderness, the Godhead and the humanity of the blessed Jesus, in this chapter! They come out against Him with swords and staves, but they go backward and fall to the ground when He declares Himself. Here His Godhead comes out, for who was Jesus of Nazareth? JEHOVAH! The I AM! The self-existing One. Only for one moment does He display His power though. The next, we hear Him saying, "If ye seek me, let these go their way." Ah, what tenderness in that man, the God-man, Christ Jesus. This little company was gathered round Him, and there was the blood-thirsty crowd. Methinks I see Him sweep that crowd aside, and leave a pathway free for His own to go through; even though He may weep as He sees them one and all forsake Him and fly. Yes, forsake Him and fly in His hour of sorrow, though they had all declared they loved Him, and one, at any rate, had declared he was ready to go to prison and to death for Him!

"If ye seek me, let these go their way." How touching! They sought Him that day only to kill Him; but do you seek Jesus to-day? Then you shall find Him. No needy soul ever sought Him in vain.

They sought Him only to crucify Him; but, oh, will not you seek Him to exalt Him in your heart, as your Lord, and your Saviour? And does not this win your heart? Did you ever think of it, that the Son of God consented to be a *bound captive, scorned, spit upon, scourged, tasting the bitterness of death* itself, that He might offer you freedom, glory, and eternal life?

Do they smite the blessed Jesus? He bears it patiently. Do they ask Him of His disciples and His doctrine; He will tell them of His doctrine, but not one word of His disciples. He says as it were, You may do as you will with me, but you must not touch mine. What a Saviour He is! Pilate asks Him: "Art thou a King?" This stranger, had as retinue but a dozen fishermen! How little Christ cares for what you and I care for; you and I love power naturally, but look at Christ. Hear His answer "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

The fact was this, God was not known till Christ came, and man did not know himself either, and the Lord did not come into this world to assert Kingly rights; the only crown He got was a crown of thorns; the only exaltation man gave Him, was putting Him on that cross of wood. He came to testify of the truth! The truth was never known, save in the person of Jesus.

Until you have Christ you have the truth about nothing, but when you have Christ, you have the truth about everything, for He is the truth about God, and the truth about man, the truth about righteousness, the truth about sin, the truth about grace, and the truth about judgment, the truth about the second man, and the first man, and more, He is the truth about Satan also, *i.e.*, He makes plain and clear what the object of Satan is,—the object of the enemy of souls, who is the enemy of Christ likewise.

If I think of God, Christ is the truth about Him. Man has misjudged God, but Christ has brought out the whole truth about Him,—what the heart of God is. In the garden of Eden, Satan instilled distrust of God into the heart of the woman, and the consequence was the fall, and all the misery in this world to-day is the consequence of that lie instilled

into the heart of Eve. Christ's answer to all is, God has one Son, and He loves man well enough to give that one Son for him.

But God is not only love, He is *light*, and this Christ brings out. The cross of Christ shows my guilty condition, my state as a sinner, and the work of atonement that was needed to take me out of that state. The sin that would have taken me into death, took Christ there, and therefore there is perfect deliverance for me if I trust Him. You have your own thoughts about God, but did you ever think He would submit to be bound and struck, and spit upon in Pilate's hall? You never did. You thought of Him as an angry judge, who would punish your sins, but you never thought of Him as you see Him in this scene. If you want to know God you must look at Christ!

Pilate asks, "What is truth?" Christ does not answer, for Pilate does not want to know. He turns on his heel in haughty greatness, (alas! it was miserable littleness), and does not wait for an answer. The answer was in the person of the blessed Man who stood bound before Him.

Such was our state of ruin that nothing but that cross, to which the blessed Lord walked in self-sacrifice and devotedness, could

deliver us. He must endure that cross if He would take up the case of man, or glorify God about sin. From the third to the sixth hour on that cross it was sunlight, the perfection of the second man coming out, He prayed for His murderers, He pardoned the robber, He commended His mother to the care of the disciple who loved Him. Beautiful charming expression of moral loveliness! From the sixth hour to the ninth hour the awful dark ruin of the first man came out. Christ must go into death or you and I could not be saved. He is the truth about man. Do your worst against this blessed One, He will do His best for you. Taunt and despise Him, He will only love and save you! What sustained the heart of Christ in those unparalleled hours of darkness and woe? The mighty energy of His love, and His devotedness to God.

He wanted God's character to be cleared, His throne vindicated, your soul saved, death annulled, Satan defeated, and the grave robbed of its victory. In all this His love sustained Him then! Have you tasted His mighty love? Oh, taste it and see how great, how ineffable it is.

He dies, and there is the wonderful word left for you, if you care to hear it, "It is finished!" The work of redemption was finished. He

came to bear witness to the truth that so great was our sin, that nothing but His death could deliver you and me.

In the cross you get the truth about holiness, and about love. God will not pass by sin, but He loves the sinner; the cross of the Son of God answers every question that God could raise, or that Satan could suggest.

“Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” Have you heard His voice? The blessed peace-giving voice of the Son of God? That voice, crying, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” and again, crying, “It is finished” addresses you. The work is complete He came to do, and your deliverance perfected.

Oh, listen to His voice. Hear the truth and delight in it. Let your faith go up to the throne of God, where sits to-day, crowned with glory, the One who died on Calvary's tree, and who cries to you now, “Come unto me.” Listen, and hear His voice, and get eternal life, for the hour *now is* when “the dead” dead in sins, “shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.”

W. T. P. W.



## PEACE.

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“**T**HERE are many who would shrink from the idea of deliberately and avowedly calling in question the efficacy of the blood of Christ, who, nevertheless, have not settled peace. Such persons profess to be quite assured of the sufficiency of the blood, *if only they* were sure of an interest therein, *if only* they had the right kind of faith.

There are many precious souls in this unhappy condition. They are occupied with their interest and their faith, instead of with Christ's blood, and God's Word. In other words, they are looking at self, instead of out at Christ. This is not faith, and, as a consequence, they have not peace.

We are ever prone to look at something in, or connected with ourselves, as necessary, in order to make up, with the blood of Christ, the groundwork of our peace. There is a sad lack of clearness and soundness on this vital point, as is evident from the doubts and fears with which so many of the people of God are afflicted.

We are apt to regard the fruits of the Spirit

*in* us, rather than the work of Christ *for* us, as the foundation of peace. The Holy Ghost is never set forth in Scripture as being that on which our peace reposes.

The Holy Ghost did not make peace, but Christ did. The Holy Ghost is not said to be our peace, but Christ is. God did not send preaching peace by the Holy Ghost, but by Jesus Christ. It is the blood of Christ which gives peace, imparts perfect justification, divine righteousness, purges the conscience, brings us into the holiest of all, justifies God in receiving the believing sinner, and constitutes our title to all the dignities, the joys, and the glories of heaven.

The Holy Ghost reveals, makes us to know, enjoy, and feed upon Christ; He bears witness to Christ; He takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us. He is the power of communion, the seal, the witness, the earnest, the unction. In short, His blessed operations are absolutely essential. Without Him we can neither see, hear, know, feel, experience, enjoy, nor exhibit aught of Christ. This is plain; yet notwithstanding all this, the work of the Spirit is not the ground of peace. He never teaches a soul to lean on His work for peace in the presence of God. His office is to speak of Christ."

W. T. P. W.

## PROFESSION; OR, THE OIL-LESS LAMP.

Matt. xxv.

**W**HAT makes this parable of the Lord so exceedingly striking and solemn is that it contemplates that which we ourselves are really in at this present moment, that is, that we in this world at this moment are between the midnight hour, between the cry that went forth, and the moment when the Bridegroom comes.

We are not waiting to come up to the midnight hour. The midnight hour *has passed*, because the cry has already gone forth.

Every professing Christian, whether intelligently or not, believes in the coming of the Lord at some time. Some believe death is the coming of the Lord, some that the judgment is the coming of the Lord, (so it is in one sense,) but all look for His coming in some way or other. It is not that people deny that He is coming, but this is what is in their minds, "He will not come to-night, He will not come just now," that is, they say He delays it. They put aside the solemnity of the momentary expectation of it.

May I ask you, who are unsaved, Do *you* believe He might come at any moment? or

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have you said in your heart, My Lord delays His coming? The effect in a man's mind of deferring the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is, that he settles down into the enjoyment of the things of this world, eats, drinks, and is drunken, and the Lord of that servant comes in an hour when he is not expecting Him, and appoints him his portion with the hypocrites. The Lord save you from the doom of that one. The Lord save you from settling down and saying, "I will take my fill of this world, have all its pleasures, drink of all its streams of enjoyment," for Satan puts into those streams a lulling drug of intoxicating power, and the end of it all, is "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth."

In this parable we have two sets of virgins, but mark the difference; five were wise, and five foolish. What a character—*foolish*. It was not that they had not this coming of Christ before them, they all went forth to meet the Bridegroom, but here was the difference; the foolish had their lamps, that was *profession*, and I can quite conceive how clean and bright those lamps were, but they took no oil in them. The wise took oil not only in their lamps, but in their vessels with their lamps.

What is the meaning of the oil which the wise have, but the foolish have not? The oil

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is the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His," and hence if you have not this oil you do not belong to Christ. People will tell you they are Christians as much as you, wish to serve Christ as much as you, can see no difference. The difference between the virgins was, not that both did not expect the Bridegroom, but the foolish had no oil, and if you have no oil, you will burn like a piece of wick, give a bright glare perhaps for a moment, and *then, go out*, for you have not that which sustains the light, you have not the oil, *your soul is not saved, you have not yet the forgiveness of sins, you do not belong to Christ.*

Oh, I ask you, Have you this oil? Can you say? I know my sins are all forgiven, are all forgotten; I know that at God's right hand to-day is seated *my Saviour*. Do you know what it is to have the present pardon of your sins through the finished work of Christ? and the Holy Ghost, the oil, in your heart?

Look at the 5th verse. It is an immensely solemn fact that at first they had all turned their back on everything, and, foolish and wise alike, went out to meet the Bridegroom. But the Bridegroom delayed His coming, and they all lost the hope of His coming. That is exactly what happened in the history of Chris-

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tianity. The hope of the Lord's coming was lost, and the Church instead of being out watching for Him, as it were, turned in somewhere carnally to sleep.

"But at midnight"—you know what midnight is, the dead of the night, when all nature is at rest,—at midnight then, a cry came forth, Who did this cry come from? From God. "Behold the Bridegroom!" That was the cry, not "behold the Bridegroom cometh." It is not so much His coming as Himself. Every thought was turned on the Bridegroom. Look at the effect of the cry—"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps," the wise had been to sleep as well as the foolish, but the wise had the oil, though they were not using it, and herein is the difference, the foolish had no oil! They were professors merely. What is the good of profession if you have not Christ? What is the good of sending hundreds of pounds to convert the heathen, if you are not converted yourself? What is the use of taking the sacrament if your own soul is not saved?

The foolish virgins say to the wise, "Give us of your oil for our lamps are *going out*." That is, on the eve of going out, the wick gave a flame, but the flame was unfed, it was going out. How could the wise give of their oil? I

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cannot give you the Holy Ghost. I may speak of Christ to you, tell you the wondrous tale of the cross, and of how willing He is to receive you, but I cannot give you Christ.

Oh, if I could but take you to some of the deathbeds of your own town, and show you how people quit this world who have not Christ! If you could only see the throes of agony, the terror, the remorse; conscience enough awakened to know that heaven is a reality, that hell is a reality, that eternity is a reality, and the salvation of the soul is a reality! Could you but hear their agonized cry, "Here am I on the verge of eternity, and I have no Saviour, no peace, no forgiveness, no pardon, no security, nothing to cling to," and could you see them clinging even to a poor human being who is a Christian, you would not put off your salvation till a deathbed!

What do the wise virgins answer? "Go ye rather to them that sell and buy for yourselves." This is very solemn. What do the foolish do? Do they say then? "We can do without," No! no! *They go to buy!* Too late! Too late!! They went to buy too late! They did not say, We will take a leap in the dark, and we will do as well as others without oil. No! no! They realized the necessity of it, they said, "We must have it, we cannot do without

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it," but they went to buy *too late*. "While they went to buy the Bridegroom came. They slept while they might have had it freely ; said, "To-morrow shall be as to-day," said, "I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." What does God say? "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." Oh, how many of the wise men of this world does God count fools ! And how many of those whom men count fools, does God count wise ? Men count a man a fool who turns his back on the wisdom of this world, and says, I will put my trust in that One who died on Calvary's cross. My confidence is in the Lord, the one who was nailed to the tree here, He is *my Saviour, my Lord*.

Now look at the state of these foolish virgins. They went to buy, they did the right thing *too late* ! What comes after this is fearfully solemn ! The Lord impress the solemnity of it on your heart ; "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut." Who were the ready ones ? Those who had the oil. Who had the oil ? Those who were saved, who had the forgiveness of their sins, who trusted in their Saviour. Are *you* one of these ? Are *you* ready ? Can you say ? "Come what may, I have no fear ; I am ready."

We have seen doubtless even down here,

what that readiness means. One has seen how, when death came it was not a beginning to think then of Christ, pardon and forgiveness, but only peace, only rest.

It is not the time to begin to think of Christ when the poor body is racked with pain, when there is weary, restless tossing on a bed of sickness, when the mind has no power to think, and the body is torn with agony ; it is the time then to *prove* Him, to feel what the comfort is of the everlasting arms underneath one, to know that death is not a policeman that hands me to judgment, but a friend that ushers me into the presence of the Lord. But if you do not die and the Lord comes, what then ? You will be left behind to receive the devil's man—antichrist. You *would not* have God's man, and now you *cannot*, for the door is *shut*.

If the Lord Jesus Christ were to come to-night, I ask you, would it close the door for you ? You know it would. The Lord is coming for His people, and you know that you are not one of His people. Have you not despised the idea of being a Christian, and do you not know that the very thought of anything out of this world is terrible to you ? You like the world, you like its attractions, you like its follies, and you do not like religion. You *think* it is a gloomy depressing thing, a thing that makes a

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man hang his head like a bulrush ; that by having to do with Christ you would lose everything and gain nothing.

The Lord gives your conscience this sum to work out, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Let your conscience work it out in the presence of God.

If you get every thing this world can give you, I will show you a picture of your future, if the Lord does not come first, you will have to be stretched on a death-bed, *and it will be a Christless death-bed*, and you will be wound in a shroud, *but it will be a Christless shroud* ; and you will sleep a long long sleep, *and it will be a Christless sleep*, and you will be put in a *Christless coffin*, and will be buried in a *Christless grave*, and you will come out of that grave to stand before the judgment seat, *Christless still*, and from that judgment seat you must pass into a *Christless eternity*.

As you lived without Christ, you will die without Christ ; as you would not have Christ here, you must spend eternity without Him, in the lake of fire, and all for what ? A few passing trumpery pleasures of this world.

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us." How awfully solemn, that there will be people who will come

and knock at that closed door, saying, "Let us in," "Give us a place," who will only have this answer, "Too late, I never knew you."

Now that same voice says to the vilest, "Come," to the most worthless, "Come," but then He will say, not to the vilest, nor to the most worthless, but to the respectable moral Christless professors, "Depart, I never knew you." Which of these words are you going to hear said to you? If you do not listen to the word "*Come,*" you *must* listen to the word "Depart."

You will see Him once face to face ; "Every eye shall see Him," Will you see Him now as a Saviour face to face, or will you see Him as a judge then? See Him you must as a judge if you will not see Him as a Saviour. If you *will not* receive life from Him, you *must* receive judgment, for you must give an account to Him of everything, even of this warning word to you. Either it will increase your responsibility, and send you deeper in the depths of eternal damnation, or you will be brought face to face with Him who waits to be gracious.

There will not be a soul in the lake of fire, who will not say "I am here because I deserved it ; I chose the world, I preferred it, I turned my back on Christ. He called, and I refused His call ; I sold my soul to Satan, he offered me

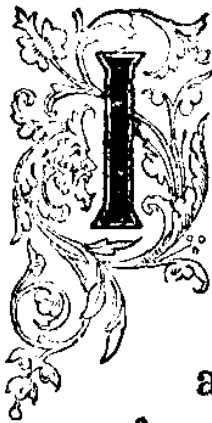
what I thought a costly gift, and I sold my soul for it; I deserve my fate."

Do not let this be your bitter cry, for you may have the blessing at this very moment. Will you not have it now? Will you not *now* close with that blessed Saviour? Will you not this moment take Him as *your* Saviour, fall down at Jesus' feet, and worship Him?



### "MUST."

John iii., 7, 14.



IN the conversation the Lord Jesus had with Nicodemus, as related in this chapter, the latter is puzzled and astounded by the words of Jesus—"Ye *must* be born again," and "except a man be born again (or from above) he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus reasoned from a natural point of view; consequently he regarded the thing as utterly impossible, and asks the question, "How can these things be?" The Lord's reply to him was, "Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things?" as if, in surprise, that occupying such a position, he should

display so much ignorance on this vital subject. Because, as a Jew, and an intelligent Rabbi, Nicodemus ought to have understood what was referred to by the Lord; he should have known the Old Testament scriptures sufficiently well to be aware that before the Jews could inherit or dwell in the land promised by God to their fathers, they must be sprinkled with water, and a new spirit and a new heart be put into them by the operation of God's Spirit, as stated in Ezekiel xxxvi. 25-27. This promised earthly portion to Israel is what the Lord referred to in verse 12, when He said, "If I have told you *earthly things*, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?"

Whatever good qualities a person may possess, however amiable or lovely in themselves, it is human nature still, which has not the least pulsation towards God, nor one particle of love for Him, therefore cannot be acceptable to Him. Man's own will has been in exercise (and this is sin), and has led him away from God, and to such a distance, that no effort of his own, however praiseworthy or humiliating (as penances and the like), can ever bring him one step back to God. Why? Because man, in his natural state, is utterly impotent and *lost*. Nothing can put away his

sins, bring him nigh to God, or fit him for God's presence but the blood of Jesus. Hence the importance of that little word “must.” If a man is to enter into heaven at all, and wishes to be saved, it is necessary—yea, he must have a nature altogether different from what he has; it must be according to God, and this is what is meant by being “born again,” or from above.

And until this transition takes place—this “new birth”—the sinner cannot have one holy, heavenly desire, or anything at all suitable to God.

Neither can the sinner accomplish this mighty and important change in himself by any work or effort of his own, for the words “must be born again” do not mean in a legal sense; and though it is a thing insisted on, yet it is brought about by the quickening power and operation of God's Spirit, and that alone. And here comes in the application of these words, “that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit,” in contrast to the statement, “that which is born of the flesh is flesh.”

The new life thus imparted to the sinner is of a divine order, and consequently is a holy nature, a new creation, therefore suitable to God, having also aspirations and desires after Him, and is able to enjoy the things of God.

But it may be important to remark here, in connection with the truth of being “born again,” that the old Adam nature—that which is “born of the flesh”—still remains “flesh.” *It* has not undergone any change for the better, but continues unaltered, being past all remedy, and at the cross of Christ was judged and made an end of. Man in the flesh *there* ceased to be recognised by God, being “crucified with Christ,” and “buried with Him.”

Then in the 14th verse another most solemn fact is mentioned by the Lord to Nicodemus. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up.” By this emphatic statement, we learn that the cross of Christ was a positive absolute necessity. Nothing but that could meet the claims of God’s holiness, or the need of lost, wretched man. There was no other way of salvation, and no other person than the holy Son of God, as Son of man, could take the sinner’s place upon that cross, bear his sins, and the judgment due to those sins; and nothing else but the blood of Jesus could cleanse them away, so that they are gone for ever; there is no virtue or efficacy in any other sacrifice. For we get it mentioned clearly in Heb. ix.: “without shedding of blood there is no remission,” so also in chap. x. it says, “for it is

not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats could take away sins;" but, another scripture tells us, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from *all* sin" (1 John i. 7).

Therefore, we find, that if lost hell-deserving sinners were to be saved at all, it became *necessary* that Jesus the Son of God, as the willing victim, should die. This was God's plan and way of salvation for us sinners.

It was not possible for an angel from heaven, nor for the best man that was ever born, to become the propitiation for sin, and the substitute of those who believe. Why? Because God's righteous and holy claims could only be met and satisfied by a perfect work, to be carried out and finished, sin atoned for, and the penalty, or wages of sin paid, by a holy, sinless, spotless, perfect man. Where was such an one to be found? Not in poor death-stricken, sinful world. So God, in love, sent His own Son, "in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. ii. 8). No other person than Jesus could have accomplished this. "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).

The effect, then, of the wondrous cross of Christ is, that while it delivers me from the wrath to come, it introduces me into everlasting glory; it brings me out of that moral darkness, in which we all are by nature, into "marvellous light." It delivers me from Satan's power, and brings me to God; it settles once and for ever the question of my sins (while it sets forth what those sins deserve); it makes an end of me in the flesh before God, and, as a believer, it links me with Christ in glory, gives me eternal life, and makes me a son, a child of God. Such are the stupendous results of that cross on which "the Son of man" had to be "lifted up," and where He glorified God about sin.

"The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness, but unto us who are saved it is the power of God" (1 Cor. i. 18).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you (Jesus says), he that believeth on me HATH everlasting life" (John vi. 47).

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

S. J. L.



## CHRIST IS ALL.

“He (Christ) died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.” (2 Cor. v. 15).

**H**OW little, alas! this text is heeded, or we should see more living to the glory of God, instead of merely living a life of self-pleasing. “Even Christ pleased not himself” (Rom. xv. 3). He, “being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8). Yes, dear reader, “*even the death of the cross.*” Have you ever thought what a death that was? of the agony Jesus suffered for *you*?

“For Christ also once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” And shall He not do so? Shall all His terrible sufferings for you be in vain? Oh! no, dear reader. *Come to Jesus now.* Do not put it off like Felix, to a more “convenient

season" (Acts xxiv. 25). *To-morrow* may be *too late*. "Ye know not what shall be on the morrow; for what is your life? It is even a vapour, which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (James iv. 14). The Lord is waiting, "that he may be gracious unto you" (Isaiah xxx. 18). Only think! that God should be waiting for *you*.

When the prodigal son, in the parable, "came to himself," he said, "how many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants'" (Luke xv. 17, 18, 19); and then we read that "when he was yet a *great way off*, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him;" and then notice, that the son did not say, "make me as one of thy hired servants." No, dear reader; he saw how loving and forgiving his father was, and ready to receive him just as if nothing had happened, and just in the same way is your loving Father in heaven waiting to receive you. "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). Now, dear reader, if you—like the prodigal son—have thought that by seeking your own pleasure, and living without God, you could find happiness, you are grievously mistaken. You have not yet "come to yourself." True life is "in Christ." Come now through Him to God, who is waiting to receive you, and you will know the unspeakable joy of having your sins forgiven. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

"Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," says the Saviour.

"Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow  
That a time could ever be  
When I let the Saviour's pity  
Plead in vain, and proudly answered,  
All of self, and none of Thee.  
Yet he found me; I beheld Him  
Bleeding on the accursed tree;  
Heard Him pray, 'Forgive them, Father,  
And my wistful heart said faintly,  
'Some of self, and some of Thee.'  
Day by day His tender mercy,  
Healing, helping, full and free,  
Sweet and strong, and, ah! so patient,  
Brought me lower, while I whispered,  
'Less of self, and more of Thee.'  
Higher than the highest heavens,  
Deeper than the deepest sea,  
Lord, Thy love at last hath conquered.  
Grant me now my heart's desire—  
'None of self, and all of Thee.'"

A. C. B.

“YES ;”

OR, SAVED AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

*(From the French).*

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THE following narrative, illustrative of God's faithfulness in answering the prayers of His children, will, we trust, be of interest to Christian parents, and encourage them not to grow weary in presenting their children before the Lord. It is also, at the same time, an appeal to you, dear unconverted reader; it is yet another call to you from God to count no longer on your health, your strength, your youth, but to turn now to that God of grace who willeth not that any should perish, but rather that all should come to repentance.

I had been summoned as a friend and physician to the bedside of a young girl, who, a few days before, was, to all appearance, in the possession of the most robust health. I was struck, the moment I saw her, by the prostrate and extremely weak state to which in so short a time she had been reduced. The gravity of the symptoms which manifested themselves aroused fears on my part that the disease must prove fatal, and these were only too strongly

confirmed by the opinion of other doctors who were successively called in.

The patient was a young girl who, by her many amiable qualities, had endeared herself both to her family and to her friends. Brought up by Christian parents, she had the knowledge of the truth revealed in the Word of God. Her father had fallen asleep in Jesus, and she knew that he was with the Lord. She was aware also that her mother's greatest desire was for the conversion of her children, and that this was her constant prayer to God. But if asked how it was with her soul, an embarrassed smile would be her only reply; and it was evident that though she listened to the Word of God with a certain degree of respect, it was from no real sense of need that she did so.

How many souls there are who remain thus cold and indifferent to that which is most precious and most important, the ineffable love of God in giving His Son, that sinners might obtain eternal salvation! Are you among this number, dear reader? The heart is by nature careless about the things of God. They are foolishness to it; and indeed it is impossible that it should be otherwise. But grace surmounts every obstacle, and breaks down every barrier. And of its power our young friend was an example.

The Sunday before her illness she had been present at a gospel meeting which her mother usually attended. Some there remembered afterwards the marked attention with which she had listened to words which spoke of the frailty of life, that vapour which appears for a little moment and then vanishes away, that flesh which is as grass, and its glory as the flower of grass. Yet she was far from thinking that, like a flower soon to be gathered, she was ere long to become a striking proof of these divine truths.

From the first day of her illness, I felt greatly led to remind her of what she had recently heard. She listened to my words, and the Lord, who was evidently working in this soul, hitherto careless of salvation, gave her to feel her helplessness and misery, and the need she had of a Saviour. Still, the result of the work going on in her soul might have remained unknown to us, and the great day of eternity alone have revealed what the Lord had done for our young friend, had He not been graciously pleased to comfort the poor mother, and her friends, by giving them the precious assurance that this soul belonged to Himself.

The advance of the disease was so rapid that by the evening of the fifth day the mother had lost all hope of preserving her child, and

thought of nothing else but the salvation of her soul. At midnight I was called for. I found her weeping and praying, no longer for her daughter's recovery, but for her conversion, and some testimony to comfort and rejoice her heart; and in this I joined her. Shortly after midnight, the alarming symptoms seemed to abate, and the condition of the sufferer became more satisfactory. The faint hope, however, that thus sprung up in our hearts was destined to be but of short duration; but our last prayers were granted.

The disease, in attacking the nervous system, had reduced the patient to a state of almost complete lethargy, but it had pleased God to preserve her consciousness. She was thus able to listen to the truths presented to her; the Lord's touching appeals reached her heart, and, deeply impressed by the love of Jesus, by faith she embraced Him as her Saviour. From that moment, the expression of her countenance was a reflection of the joy of heaven, telling us of close communion with the God whose love she was tasting.

The Lord Jesus can finish very quickly the work He has begun. How long did it take to accomplish it in the heart of the poor thief hanging on a cross at His side? And I seemed to hear Him say to this dying one too, "This day

shalt thou be with me in paradise." Dear reader, if at this moment you were struck down in death, could these words be addressed to you? Do you rejoice in the happy assurance that you will go to be with the Lord at whatever hour He comes?

The last moment on earth for the young sufferer was fast approaching, but each look, though already fading, spoke neither of anguish, nor of the fear of death, nor of careless indifference, but of peace, of joy itself. I see even now some incredulous ones smiling, and refusing to believe that in presence of Death such feelings could be possible. Let such listen then to the solemn testimony that fell from the lips of one who stood on the brink of eternity, at the portals of that unknown world at which they tremble, but which for her shone with the brightness of Christ.

For some hours no word had escaped her; her limbs were motionless; her face and breathing alone betokened that life was not extinct. "Are you safe, are you happy and at rest?" we asked her. "Yes," she replied, with an energy of which before she had seemed altogether incapable. It was God responding to our prayers. That "Yes," so emphatic, we received from Him, and it remains for ever graven on our hearts. It was the last word

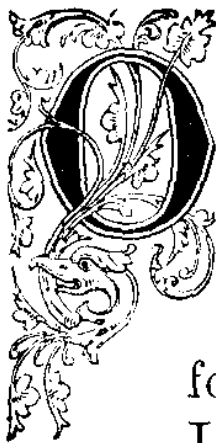
she uttered. Several times, still hearing a passage of scripture repeated, or the verse of a hymn sung softly, she endeavoured to show that she joined in spirit, though her lips could give no sign. And soon she passed away for ever from this earthly dwelling which is but a tent; absent from the body, she was present with the Lord, till the breaking of the resurrection morn.

Dear reader, whether you are young and strong, rich, surrounded by friends, beloved by your parents, a bright future before you; or whether poor, and lonely, and without support; Death is pursuing you! at each moment his footsteps draw nearer! soon his hand may be upon you! Do you ever think of it? Would you not possess this assurance, this peace, this joy, which, at her last hour on earth, filled the heart of this young sufferer? If the question were put to you (and I put it to you now),—Are you safe, are you happy?—could you answer by a firm, true, and solemn "Yes"? If you have not peace with God, and the assurance of salvation, no longer put off the time, but come now to Jesus, to Him who has made peace by the blood of His cross, and who, by His death and rising, enables all who believe in Him to look fearlessly and with joy beyond the tomb, by faith to behold His

face in glory, and hear Him saying, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (John v. 25, 26.) P.



### A CHILD'S DREAM.



ONE day, when nearly eight years old, I called my brother a fool in play, and immediately that text, (Matt. v. 22), flashed into my mind, "Whosoever shall say, thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

I had been reading it only a few days before with my mother, and so remembered it well. From that time I always felt it was no matter what I did, for I had committed the sin that would send me to hell come what would. I continued in this dreadful state about six months, when one night I had a most awful dream.

"I thought I was standing all alone on a great dark mountain peak. Opposite to me was another, equally high, but all surrounded with the brightest and most beautiful light I ever saw. I felt that *God* was there.

Between the two peaks lay a deep, deep gulph or precipice, horribly dark and black. I felt it was the judgment day, and there was I, a little child only eight years old, waiting to be judged. I heard a voice pronouncing some sentence upon me as I stood there shivering with fright. I did not fully understand what was said, but I knew I was being sent to hell. In a moment I felt myself rolling over and over down the awful steep.

“Never, never, shall I forget the awfully helpless, hopeless sense of being lost that came over me at that moment. Even now, in writing it, I recall again that dreadful feeling of utter despair. But while I was thus rolling ever more rapidly down to that black and bottomless gulph, I saw a man coming right out from the bright light that I could still see far away up on the other mountain. He came slowly and deliberately straight to me, and without an effort, stopped my downward career. I looked up bewildered, but still with a sense of relief, into his face as he stood beside me. He said to me, ‘Fear not, I have settled it all;’ and then he took my hand, and I remember perfectly the feeling I had of a little child surrounded by by danger, clinging to a grown person. I did not know what he would do with me nor what

it all meant, but I felt I could trust him, I had confidence. He took me with perfect ease across the gulph right up towards the top of the other mountain that was surrounded with the light out of which I had seen him come, which grew brighter and brighter as we neared it. He then seemed to take me right into it, and immediately I felt I was in a presence I could not see.

“As I stood there, half in confidence, half in doubt, I heard my deliverer say, ‘I have answered for this child, I have suffered in her stead.’ Never can I describe the joy, the relief, the peace that flooded my soul as I heard those words, for I understood their meaning, I knew I was saved and that I owed all to my deliverer. I was full of happiness, and in the midst of it all I awoke. The impression of that dream never left me, although I did not tell it for years after, and I have to thank God for it, for, together with the reading of His word, it was the cause of my conversion.”

R.

BELOVED READER,—I publish the above true record of a remarkable dream because it so clearly sets forth the gospel. We do not wait for the judgment day to hear the sentence, for “He that believeth NOT is condemned ALREADY,” and every day as it passes is another

nearer destruction. But One, mighty to save, has come forth from *the light*, and, at an infinite cost to Himself, stands by our side and says, "*Fear not! I have settled it all!*" Will you hear these glad tidings of great joy, that this day there is a Saviour *for you*? And will you believe in Him who suffered and bled on the cross that He might be able to come and speak peace to you? Will you place your hand by faith in His at this moment, and *trust* HIM wholly like that little child of eight. "Who-soever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." Jesus alone can take the sinner by the hand right into God's own presence, and there say, "I have answered for this soul, I have suffered in its stead." May the Lord lead you to trust yourself wholly without reserve or doubt to Himself, and to the value of His finished work.

A. T. S.



### FRAGMENT.

Some one said once, "For every look you give at self, give Christ ten looks." I say, "Give Christ the eleventh also, for peace and joy alone spring from steady occupation of heart with Him."

## LIFE AND LIBERTY.

John xi.

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HERE are three positions in this scripture in which we find Lazarus, and I use them as an illustration of the three conditions in which a soul may be found here on earth.

First then, Lazarus was *dead*.

Secondly. He was *alive*, but he was *bound*.

Thirdly. The word came forth, "*Loose him, and let him go,*" *i.e.*, he got liberty.

In this present day, we find souls in all these conditions, *dead*, *alive without liberty*, and *having both life and liberty*, and I ask you, my reader, under which of these three classes will you range yourself? Have you life and liberty? Do you know that you are the Lord's? Are you a child of God, redeemed, saved, and waiting for the coming again of the Lord Jesus?

"No," perhaps you answer, "I cannot say that: I am very miserable."

Well, perhaps you are like Lazarus, alive, but with the grave clothes still on. Or do you answer, "I never thought about my soul at

all." It is clear then, where you are. You are *dead*—dead in trespasses and sins.

The story of Lazarus brings out what man is, in the flesh down here, and what Christ is as meeting man's need.

First, the tidings came, "Lord, he whom thou lovest is *sick*," and Jesus did not move.

It was not merely disease that He is going to have to do with now, but the question of *death*. Many think they are not quite right, who are loth to own that they are *dead* in trespasses and sins. "But I am not dead," you say.

Not yet, but stop a bit, and death must come. You are a sinner, and if you do not know redemption, death has a *claim* on you, death will take you, yea, death must absolutely absorb for ever.

What is the lake of fire? The second death, not annihilation, not ceasing to feel. Death is only a relative change. In the first death, man goes out of *man's* sight, but does not cease to exist. In the second death, he goes out of God's sight for ever, yet exists. How awful!

People do not like to own they are *lost*, and so they do not get to know they are *saved*, they will not own they are *dead*, and so they do not come to Jesus to *get life*.

"Lazarus is *dead*;" not sick merely, and

you, if you have not Christ, are dead too. I grant you that no cold tomb may surround you. No stone may cover your grave, but the seed that brings forth death as its fruit is already germinating in you, and the fruit will follow.

You may be in life and health to-day, and ere a week has run its course, may be a cold and stiffened corpse, and the ghastly work of corruption already commenced, and why? Because you are a sinner.

Unless I have heard the voice of the Son of God, I am *dead*. Have you heard His voice yet? "They that hear shall live."

You may answer, "I have listened to the gospel preaching." I did not ask you that. I ask you yourself personally, my reader, Have you heard the voice of the Son of God? If not, there is no life in you; the seed of death is there, and soon death will claim its prey. Eternal life is not in you. You think man is only sick: he is *dead*, says Christ, his probation is over, there is nothing in man that is fit for God.

Are you anxious and troubled, my reader? Depend upon it then, the voice of the Lord has been heard in your heart, and perhaps that is the first thing He has told you, that you are dead. Here is the charm of the gospel, that the Son of God comes out to His enemies,

comes out to those who had no thought for Him, comes out to those who had no pulse of life for God in them. It is His own blessed grace alone that can meet man's case. Your case is too bad for any one but Christ. Nothing but God's own mighty remedy can meet man's state, and what is that remedy? The cross of Christ.

Let us look at Him entering into man's case. He stands before the sepulchre; it is man in death, and God in life standing there face to face. Man is powerless, everything is gone when death comes in.

Did it ever strike you, the Lord never allowed death in His presence. The moment Christ is brought into the presence of death, that moment death is conquered by life. He is the Prince of life and glory.

"I am the resurrection and the life," He says to Martha—He says the same to every dead sinner now. "Does death claim you?" says Christ. "I am the resurrection and the life." "Ah," you say, "but He is not here now." No, but it is to a risen Saviour in glory I would turn your eyes now; One who has been into death, on account of sin, and come up out of it. It is to a living Saviour that God calls you. On the throne of God to-day there is a living Saviour, and what does He say to you?

“I am alive, but I have been dead, I died for you; believest thou this?” Oh! can you not trust Him? He came down to meet man in death, and to give him life. It needed more faith on Martha’s part to believe it, than it does on yours, for He had not *proved* it then as He has now. Do you believe that Jesus has gone into death and plucked out its sting; that He has risen superior to death and the grave, and now offers you in resurrection glory eternal life—the fruit of His death?

Martha thought her brother’s case too bad for Jesus. “By this time he stinketh,” she says. The Lord had raised the damsel who was just dead, with the word of His mouth; He had raised the widow’s son going to the grave; but in this case, Lazarus had been *four days dead*. Is the case too bad for the Lord of life and glory? Not so; he is superior to death in every form.

“Take *ye* away the stone,” He says. He lets us come in and share with Him in the blessed work of rolling away the stone of unbelief that covers poor dead sinners. Oh, how the devil loves to get the stones there, and sealed too—loves to say the case is too bad for Christ.

The moment Jesus speaks, everything is made right. “Lazarus, come forth,” He says,

and the dead man was face to face with the living Saviour, a word from Him having given him life. I ask you, my reader, Has the hour come in your history yet, when you, a dead sinner, have come face to face with the Lord of life and glory? If so, you have got life from Him, for He never lets death be in His presence. Do you know why Jesus died before the two thieves? Because death could not be permitted in His presence.

“Lazarus, come forth!” Jesus said, and he came forth; but though alive, he was *bound* with the grave clothes. Yet he obeyed the Lord notwithstanding the grave clothes. And to you Jesus says “Come—come unto me.” Will you obey?

What are the grave clothes that people have now-a-days? Doubts and fears. A soul says “I feel I am sinful, and I have not peace, and I am not sure that I am converted.” The Lord says, “Loose him, and let him go.” There are no captives in Christ’s camp, but the captives of love. Doubts and fears do well enough for the devil’s kingdom, but they are not indigenous to Christ’s. Doubts and fears cannot be where love reigns supreme. The devil has no right to hold you if you belong to Jesus. “Loose him, and let him go,” said Jesus of Lazarus, and I can fancy some one

stretching forward and taking out those stitches and pins. And what is the first act think you of the one alive from the dead? He looks at Jesus—right at Jesus. Oh, may you, my reader, if still bound, get your grave clothes taken off, and get a full sight of the face of Jesus. For whom did He die? For *me*, I say. He went into the grave for *me*,—came up out of it for *me*. When I know this, I am let go, I am taken out of the place I was in as a sinner, set free; what to do, where to go? In the 12th chapter, I find where Lazarus goes, to the side of Jesus—into the company of the One who had given him life. If I am free I will keep close by Jesus, he says; being let go, he keeps fast by Jesus: and in Acts we read of the apostles, that “Being let go, they went to their own company.”

Lazarus goes in, and sits down to feast with Jesus, that is the illustration of Christian position, a man alive from the dead and sitting down with Christ. Our title is to be where Christ is the moment He has saved us. Lazarus here then illustrates the Christian's position. Martha illustrates the Christian's practice, I may say, service, and Mary illustrates the Christian's worship, occupied with Christ. I might call it the Christian's pleasure, to delight himself in Christ.

Now, my reader, in closing, I ask you again, Which are you like? Lazarus dead, or Lazarus risen and alive, but bound; or are you like Lazarus set free, and let go to keep company with Christ henceforward?

The Lord grant you may be able to answer from your very heart, "I was dead, but Jesus the Lord, has given me life, and set me free, and now being set free, I will go nowhere but with Him, go with no one but Himself who has set me free at such a cost."

W. T. P. W.



## WHAT GOD SAYS.



WHEN walking along a lane in the country some time ago to visit some cottagers, I saw an old woman sitting on the bank making iron-holders. Though longing to speak to her about her soul, my courage failed me as I passed, and she did not speak as I had hoped she would, but after going a little way, I turned back and spoke to

her about her work; she gave me a respectful answer, and I went on to ask if she were saved.

“No,” she replied, but that was the very thing that was troubling her, and had been for a long time; she had asked many people, and one told her one thing and one another, but no one could tell her how she might be sure that she was saved. At a place she had passed just before, she had been to the minister, as she thought surely he would know all about such things, but he told her to pray, and to do the best she could, and so on, but this did not satisfy her, and she was more miserable than ever.

I said to her, “The best thing we can do is to see what God says about it,” and sitting down beside her, we opened our Testaments together, for she had a little one that she always carried in her tin can. We read in John iii., “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. 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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.”

We talked together of God's love, and the way in which He had provided a Saviour, His own Son, who had gone to the Cross, and borne the wrath due to her sins, borne it *all*, and glorified God so perfectly about it, that God had raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand, up there in the glory, for poor sinners to look unto and be saved. Then we went on to read "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."

She sat quietly drinking it in for some time, and then I shall never forget her look as she put her dear old hands together, and lifting her eyes to heaven, said slowly, "I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, I have everlasting life. I've got what I wanted, now I can go on my way rejoicing."

We could then thank God together for His love to us, and long we sat talking about that precious Saviour; what He is now doing as the High Priest who is passed into the heavens, bearing our names ever before God on His breast, and sustaining us down here in the wilderness through all the weakness and sorrow of the way, and of the blessed hope before us of His coming to take us to Himself

It was a happy time for us both under that

hedge. When we parted, she wanted to give me some of her iron-holders. I gave her my address on an old envelope, and about six months after she called to see me on her way to her parish, a long way off. She said she wanted to see me once again, and to tell me she had never lost her peace since, but had been quite happy, and was looking forward to her rest with Him who had saved her.

Perhaps you, dear reader, like this old woman, are longing to *know* that you are saved? Well, then, like her, you must look and see what God says about it, and when God speaks, don't doubt what He says. People find it much easier to believe what God says about other people, than what He says about themselves. Are *you* a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ? Then, dear friend, God says, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life;" and He also says, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall *not* pass away."

But it may be, the one who is reading this is careless about these things. Well, then, may God arouse you! For the word of God also says, "He that believeth not the Son *shall not* see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." Ah! it is a very real thing to have God's *wrath* abiding upon you. Perhaps you say, as I heard a gentleman in the train once say, "I don't

like all this talking about believing;" then I say to you, as it was said to him, "It is not a question of what *you like*, but of what God says." And oh! that you may awake to the reality of these things, while Christ is waiting in grace, for by-and-by He will have risen up and shut to the door; and what an awakening it will be, then, to find it is too late! the Saviour become the Judge!

"Behold, now is the accepted time, behold, now is the day of salvation."

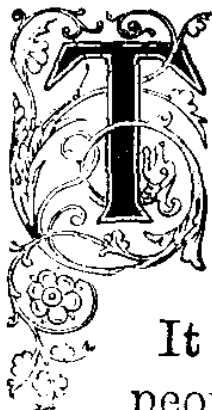
M. A. D.



## THE THREE CUPS.

### THE CUP OF THE WICKED.

"Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire, and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; *this shall be the portion of their cup.*"  
Ps. xi, 6.



HERE is nothing so definite and plain as the Word of God; and I would appeal to you, dear reader, as to the solemn, and none less certain fact, in the above verse.

It clearly defines a certain class of people, and plainly states that a certain

portion will be theirs. This is put in the figure of a cup: the cup of the wicked. God, acting in righteousness towards such, must necessarily fill their cup with judgment. Mark how expressive are the words of the Psalmist, "He shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible (or burning) tempest." No mitigation—no word here of mercy, nor of blessing. The character of God demands that every rejecter of Christ must have such a portion, and the all-important question for you and me dear friend is, Do I belong to this company? or shall such a portion be mine? And this not merely for time—but for *eternity*. You, dear reader, whoever you may be, will shrink from such a doom. Satan, and your own heart, will be too ready to tell you—that you are not of this company. A religious training, moral influences, good society, and many other things may seem to separate you from the openly wicked. Or again, you say, *once* I was such; I was known as a drunkard, a blasphemer, and mixed up with all that is bad. Now I have given up these things—signed the pledge, it may be; become moral, upright, and religious; surely, such a portion can never fill *my* cup?

Much there is in all this, to be thankful for—but I want you to read one verse with me

in the last book of the Bible ; where God, as it were, winds up the destinies of men.

In Revelation, chap. xxi., verse 8, we read “But the *fearful*, and *unbelieving*, 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.” How striking the similarity between this verse, and the one already quoted from Psalm xi. ; but *this* gives more details, and defines more emphatically, who shall have the solemn part of which it speaks. Now, heading the list are two classes of people, and I tremble, dear friend, lest *you* should belong to one of these—namely, “the fearful and unbelieving.” Alas, how many good, amiable, and even religious people come under this head, and what if *you* are amongst them.

Psalm ix., 17 verse, declares that “the wicked shall be turned into hell”—but beware, dear reader, Oh beware, lest, *unbelieving*, your portion shall be the same as theirs, and your eternity spent with them. What sin so great and heinous before God as unbelief ! Jesus says of the Holy Ghost, in John xvi., “He shall reprove the world of *sin*, because they believe not on me.” Again he says in Mark xvi., “He that believeth not shall be damned.” I

need not stay to explain what is implied in belief or unbelief—you can scarcely be a stranger to what is meant—but what I do plead, is, that the claims of Christ, as well as His love may have a place in your heart—that your eternal portion may be settled *now*, as it must be in time—that you may weigh *now* solemnly—the consequences of being amongst the wicked, so that you through mercy may escape their awful and righteous doom in the lake of fire, where their cup shall never be drained. “Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”

‘ Stop, poor sinner, stop and think  
Before you farther go ;  
O can you sport upon the brink  
Of everlasting woe ?”

## II.—THE CUP OF SUFFERING.

“ Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I wilt, but as thou wilt.” Matt. xxvi, 39.

After having spoken of the awful portion that must fill your cup for eternity, if a Christ-rejecter—surely, dear reader, you will be the more willing to hear of another cup; one that speaks of suffering, of substitution—of judgment borne—of guilt atoned for by One Who was, and is, spotless as God Himself. Love brought Him down—the eternal Son of God—

the Saviour of the world—matchless love led Him on through this scene to Calvary, Love divine sustained Him in that awful hour when He, the spotless victim, made an atonement for sin, when *He* took the cup filled with suffering and death. Oh, miracle of grace! to see the Saviour thus: to hear that cry, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” while He bore His righteous judgment; while He suffered, not for Himself, but for others. This, dear friend, is the way God has met man’s need. He has said, “Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.” And this is found in the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. “Neither is there salvation in any other.” Say will you not *now*, even now, turn to this Saviour and trust in Him? His work avails for the chief of sinners. He came into the world to save such. Will you not then whilst owning what you deserve, thankfully believe in this perfect provision for all your need? Thus, you will escape the judgment, and be saved from the wrath to come that must fill the cup of the wicked, and all the blessings that Christ’s finished work secures—namely, pardon, salvation, peace, joy, glory—all will be yours through faith in Him.

“Jesus the curse sustains,  
Guilt’s bitter cup he drains.

## THE THREE CUPS.

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Nothing for us remains,  
Nothing but love."

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## III.—THE CUP OF SALVATION.

"What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord." Ps. cxvi. 12-13.

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Thrice happy the soul that follows the Psalmist's example in the above verse. The latter has such a sense of the Lord's goodness that his heart gladly responds to it, in these words, "I will take the cup of salvation."

Here again we have the figure of a cup—only this time it is filled—not with judgment, not with the sufferings of atonement, but with the blessed and certain result of Christ having accomplished the work—having drained the cup of suffering even to the dregs. Peter tells us that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." To be brought to God in all the value of Christ's sacrifice, this, dear friend, is salvation.

If left to myself, the cup of the wicked *must* be my portion, but in wondrous love the Saviour God has acted for me.

"He took the guilty culprit's place,  
And suffered in his stead.  
For man, O miracle of grace,  
For man the Saviour bled."

So the hymn expresses it, and such is the testimony of God's own word. Romans v. 6, declares that "When we were yet without strength, in due time *Christ died for the ungodly.*" The cup of suffering is put, as it were, into the Saviour's hands, and we know how He finished the work, and how God raised Him from the dead, the living proof that the work was done; and God was satisfied. What then is left for you, what else *can* you do, but "take the cup of salvation?" If *David* spoke of benefits—think, oh think of Calvary—of that unspeakable gift—of that atoning work of the Saviour's love; and tell me, dear friend, are you not constrained to take, what God Himself has provided, and so wants you to have—"the cup of salvation." O be *real*, in view of the judgment to come, and the perfect grace now displayed, and take—just *now*—what you so need, as the hymn puts it:

"Take salvation,  
Take it now, and happy be."

Then shall you rejoice; then, and not till then, can you look back to sins put away—to death and judgment *behind* you; then can you look forward without the fear of having to drink the cup of the wicked, but with the certainty of glory with Christ your deliverer. Then too you will learn that He Himself who

## SUNDOWN.

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so loves you is even now and *for ever* the Portion of your cup (Ps. xvi. 5), so that you are constrained to say in the language of the twenty-third psalm, "My cup runneth over."

T. E. P.



## SUNDOWN.

**T**HE day had run its course, and was fading into that hour of decline, which those that do business in deep waters call "*Sundown*," when two sailors sat conversing on general topics, by the fair coast of Belize, in the British Honduras.

One, Thomas E—, was a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ; and the other, John C—, was as yet unconverted, but not regardless of his soul and its eternal concerns.

The scene before them was a fair one; sinking to rest in the west, flooding the landscape with such glories of red, purple, and golden light as is only to be seen in the tropics—the setting sun was gradually disappearing beneath the distant outline of horizon. Thomas said suddenly to his companion, "Is not that grand

beyond description; if it is so beautiful this side of heaven, what must it be on the other side?"

John started, and appeared much surprised at the remark; he hardly knew what to say; at last replied, "I have no idea!"

"No more can I approach it in idea," replied his friend.

"What made you ask me that question then?" queried John.

"Ah!" replied the other, "I have been thinking much about it myself, and I shall know *one day*, perhaps *very shortly*."

John said he did not think any one *could* know anything about such subjects until after death.

"Of a verity they can, for we find the account of new heavens and a new earth in the scriptures," gently responded Thomas, and then he spoke earnestly to the listener about his soul, and asked him if he was a Christian.

"Of course I am, we are *all that*," came the evasive answer.

"No!" firmly repeated Thomas, "No! not unless we have had our sins washed away in the precious blood of Christ; not unless we are believers and followers of the Lord Jesus, —*we are not Christians except we belong to Christ*,—we are eternally lost." He then went

on to speak of the love of God in giving His only Son to die for us, so that all who believe in Him, "should not perish, but have everlasting life;" *be saved*, and that at once, then and there eternally saved. But John could not comprehend it, he thought he must do something to pave his way to Christ; something to *reconcile God*, and win His forgiveness, for he was, and had been such a great sinner.

Thomas told him, No! that was an error, it was he, *himself*, a wretched, hard-hearted, ignorant sinner that had to be reconciled to God, for God was a God of love and pity, yearning to save him,—it was for such as him, that Christ had died, yea, rose again—His death had met God's justice, for He had died in *his stead*; His resurrection was God's acknowledgment that the debt was paid, and the work of substitution accepted and well pleasing in the Father's eyes: *it was a finished work*; Jesus came to *seek* and to *save* the lost, and died to make peace by the blood of His cross,—and if John were lost it was himself alone who was responsible.

For some time both sat silent, and Thomas lifted up his heart in earnest pleadings to the FATHER for his friend, that HE would draw this precious soul to Himself. The Holy Spirit was pleased to apply the word affectionately

spoken, with power to John's conscience, who still remained silent; whilst the other poured out his soul in prayer to the Lord that He would open his eyes; and a speedy answer was vouchsafed, for John suddenly exclaimed, "I think I see it all now! *Christ died that I might live!* and I can have eternal life *now*, for the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses me from all sin!" he turned his countenance, lively with emotion, towards his friend, who could scarcely speak for joy, and at first found no words to express his delight and happiness at witnessing the dawn of a new birth in his shipmate's heart. Then with earnest words Thomas still spoke on, of the freeness of that salvation, and the beseeching tenderness of God coming down to meet the sinner's need, and deliver him from the power of sin, judgment and *the law*—which could only *condemn, not heal*; how Christ by one offering of Himself to God, had forever perfected them that are sanctified (Heb. x. 12-14): and how the believer *is sanctified*, or set apart at once when he takes his place as helpless and lost, and accepts Christ. Finally they rejoiced together; and the two shipmates became close friends, spending every spare moment talking over the word of God.

Since that hour, the Lord has been graciously pleased to sustain John in bearing a testimony

for Him amid the taunts and scoffings of some of his former companions ; but his consolation in Christ has been greater than Satan's malice.

When Thomas —— told me this anecdote, he informed me, that when he was drafted from England to the Bermudas, he left behind him a loving wife who was also a fellow pilgrim to the better land, and the separation had been a bitter pang to them ; but both Mary and he, could now see the Lord's hand in sending him to the West Indies, as He had John's precious soul to be won, and Thomas was to be the instrument to do it.

That prayerful conversation at *Sundown*, on the distant waters of the tropics, witnessed the entrance of the light of God's salvation into a soul, which we trust will rejoice with us in the presence of the Lord, in the New Jerusalem, the city which has "*no need of the sun, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.*" (Rev. xxi. 23.)

K. B. K.



## AND YET BE LOST?

**W**HAT! do you mean to say that I may be respectable, and obliging, and yet be lost?"

"Yes; and yet be lost."

"What! religious, amiable, courteous, and yet be lost?"

"Yes; and yet be lost."

"What! be devoted to my Church, the cause, and subscribe well; and yet be lost?"

"Yes; and yet be lost."

"What! be a preacher, eloquent, successful; and yet be lost?"

"Yes; and yet be lost."

"What! fast, deny myself, do penance; and yet be lost?"

"Yes; and yet be eternally lost; shut out from God for ever."

"But what more can I do than I have done?"

"Listen! You can stop making God a liar; for who has required these things at your hand?"

"Making God a liar! I do not intend doing that."

"That may be very true, but you are, nevertheless. Again, I ask, who has required these things at your hand? Who?"

"But does not God require us to be good, and do good, before He will save us?"

“Where does God say in the gospel (which is His message to you) that you have to be good, and do good, before He will save you? Where?”

“But—God won't take us into heaven—He won't receive us just as we are.”

“Pray, dear friend, what book have you been studying on this most important question?”

“Why, of course, the Bible, for there is no other to turn too.”

“I grant you there is no other book that can enlighten a poor sinner on this important subject but the Bible; but where does it say that God won't receive a sinner just as he is?”

“Well, I don't know just where it is, but I have always been under the impression that we must be good, and do good, before God will receive us.”

“My dear friend, all that I can say is, you never got it from the Bible, and I am bold to say, all this time you have been contradicting God, and therefore making Him a liar. He says one thing, and you say another. But let us turn to the Scriptures.

“In the first place, for whom did Christ die? Was it good people? What answer do the Scriptures give to this important question? They say, He died for the *ungodly*, for *sinner*s, for the *guilty*, yea, for His *enemies*, and that He came ‘to seek and to save that which was

*lost.* 'Are you such ?'

"Yes."

"Then He died for you."

"But, then have I not to do something to help save myself ?

"Yes ; you have got to cease acting the hypocrite, and own to God just what you are, and in heart and conscience take your place before Him accordingly."

"But, will He accept me just as I am, in all my sins and vileness ?"

"If He does not, He will never accept you ; for how can you remove the moral stains from your soul, when it is written, 'Without shedding of blood, there is no remission,' and, again, 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul ?'" (Heb. ix. 22 ; Lev. xvii. 11).

"But what says the Scripture on this subject, as to how a poor unclean sinner (and we are all that, for there is no difference) is received by God ?

"Look at the glorious 15th of Luke, and what do we find there ? Why Christ's enemies are charging Him with what was His glory, and what He left heaven for to do. They were saying, 'This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.' See whom the blessed Jesus, the Son of God, received—sinners. Is that your name ?"

“ Why, yes : to be sure I am a sinner ; I feel that to be so.”

“ Then He will receive you, if you will only be warned against the ‘ leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy ’ ; that is, pretending to be what you are not. Repentance is the full recognition, and confession of the fact, that you are a sinner, and that to God, who knows all—the judgment, too, of *yourself*, not merely of what you have done.

“ But to proceed with Luke xv. It was the ‘ lost sheep ’ that the shepherd went after. It was not the sheep seeking the shepherd, but the shepherd seeking the lost sheep. And how glad and happy he was to get it back to his bosom ! Jesus is the Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep ; and what joy it gives His heart to find and save a lost sheep—a lost sinner.

“ Again, the woman with the light seeking the piece of silver, but represents the Holy Ghost with the word detecting, convicting, and quickening the poor lost, dead sinner. And what joy it gives Him thus to do !

“ Lastly, we have the prodigal in his rags, degradation, filth and misery, (solemn picture of the sinner,) received by the father with a heart of overflowing love and compassion ; who as he embraced him, kissed him, and pressed

him to his bosom, said to his servants, 'Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again: he was lost and is found; and they began to be merry.' And when will the joy stop? Never!

"Thus we have in this wondrous chapter, the united joy of the ever-blessed Trinity, in receiving and saving completely and eternally a poor, lost, hell-deserving sinner. We have also in what condition he was received. True, it was as a repentant one, (for that God demands, Acts xvii. 30,) but in all his misery, degradation, and helplessness.

Thus we see from the word of God, that He receives sinners, just as they are, simply because they cannot better their condition, and He is bent upon saving them. And it is easily to be seen, how the reversing of this order, is simply making God a liar, and in many, many instances, it is 'the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy' (Luke xii. 1-3).

May God bless these few lines to the reader, is the writer's earnest prayer. Read Luke vii. 36-50. Works follow as a consequence of, salvation, but never precede it.

E. A.

## THE KING AND THE JAILOR.

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HERE are two scenes, dear reader, which I wish to bring before you,—scenes of similarity, and of contrast. Both took place at night;—one in a palace with its monarch; the other in a prison with its jailor.

Danl. v., describes the former, and Acts xvi., the latter.

### THE KING

had given a banquet to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before them; when, at the same moment, there was an invading army laying siege to the city. The royal but impious company heeded not the enemy's attack, and added to their guilt by drinking to idols from vessels hitherto used for holy purposes in the temple of God. Suddenly the gay and thoughtless throng are aghast; dismay seizes upon them at the mysterious appearance of the fingers of a man's handwriting upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace, and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Instantly his gaze is rivetted; his face, just now flushed with wine, has become deadly pale; his knees smite one against the other; his

whole frame shakes with agony, and his mind is filled with alarm and consternation. Terror-stricken, he calls aloud to his wise men to read and interpret the writing, with the promise that he who did so, "should be clothed with scarlet, have a chain of gold about his neck, and become the third ruler in the kingdom."

But offers, rewards, and promises are of no avail, "for they *could not* read the writing, nor make known to the king the interpretation thereof." *Of course they could not!* How can unconverted men, be they ever so wise or learned, interpret the writing of the finger of God? However, "there was a man in whom was the *spirit of the holy Gods*," and from him we learn the inscription and its meaning. "And this is the writing that was written; *Menc, mene, tekel upharsin*; and this is the interpretation of the thing, *Mene*,—God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it." How solemn! How startling! "*God* hath numbered." At once the profane king is introduced to God Himself, whose glory he had insulted and despised, and who was now sounding the death knell upon Belshazzar and his proud kingdom.

You, my friend, may not boast of royal blood, having a throne for your seat, a crown for your head, with wealth and forces at your

command; but as a sinner you have lived, and gone on without God, shutting Him out of your calculations, transactions, and thoughts. What place has He had in your heart and mind, your pleasure or business, sorrows or joys, at home or abroad? Let conscience reply, and it will bear witness to the truth of the scripture. "God is not in all your thoughts." What a word for thee is this: "*Mene*—God hath numbered!" Numbered what? you ask. Your years, months, weeks, days, hours, and minutes. He knows how soon the last breath will be drawn, the heart take its last beat, the pulse its final throb, and the black curtain of death fall upon the stage of your history; when thy reign of vanity, worldliness, sin, and rejection of Christ, will not only be numbered, but finished;—finished for time, but begin in eternity—Where?

"*Tekel*,—thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." How definite and personal, "THOU!" Not another, be it friend or foe, near or distant, parent, husband, wife or child. There is no plural nor wholesale term here. It is coming straight to the person and the point. This is how God speaks. Harken to His servant's message to the king of Moab: "I have a message from God unto *thee*,"—and his word to David

when he had sinned: "*Thou art the man!*" How many object to this close and personal dealing! They prefer being addressed in general, or with a crowd. Is it so with thee, beloved reader? Hast *thou* never had to do with God individually and alone? If not, O! have to say to Him now, as you read this paper, for face Him you *must*, and that for *yourself*, either for salvation now through the blood of the cross, or for damnation hereafter at the great white throne.

Remember it says, "*Thou art weighed,*" not "*shalt be,*" but "*art.*" The weighing day is over; the balances have been hefted; man has been tried, and proved guilty, "*weighed and found wanting.*" The scales have been lifted and the result obtained;—"All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." How conclusive! Yet some would fain persuade themselves that the day of judgment will be the time for weighing their good deeds (so-called) in one scale, and their bad ones in the other, and the turn of the scale decide for heaven or hell. Blinding delusion of Satan! and flat contradiction of the word of God, which declares that every mouth is stopped, "*and all the world become guilty before him,*" whether Jew or Gentile, king or cottager, moral or degraded, fool or philosopher; none are excepted from the sweeping statement.

Job, in his pride, said: "Let me be weighed in an *even* balance." So he was, and then said: "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." He was "weighed in the balances and found wanting."

"Israel is a merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand." (Hosea xii. 7). Not so are those in the hand of "the righteous Lord who loveth righteousness;" His are true and righteous altogether; and in them, poor Christless worldling, thou hast been "weighed and found wanting." No amount of praying, weeping, hymn-singing, reformation, or morality can make up the deficiency; all put together are lighter than vanity in the question of the soul's salvation. Your pressing, immediate, and everlasting need is Christ: possess Him, and you have everything; without Him, you are wanting here, and will be to all eternity where wants are never met.

And now the fatal blow is struck for boastful, rich, and wicked Babylon. "*Peres*" pronounces the doom of the Chaldean king and his monarchy. "*Peres*;—thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians." He was now to be handed over to his enemies, to become the prey of his merciless adversary. Is this to find its antitype in thee? Thy years numbered and finished, weighed and found

wanting; are you to be delivered into the hands of your wily and malicious foe,—that old serpent the devil and Satan, to be his dupe and victim in the depths of an everlasting hell? Beware lest it be so! With rapid succession these things followed in the train of this royal worldling, “Numbered and finished, weighed and wanting, divided and given.”

Is he humbled at the message? Does he bow in the dust before this thrilling warning from the throne of God? Does he sue for pardon or peace? Does the cry for mercy come up from his sin-stained heart? Alas! no, and the inevitable result followed, for “He that being often reproveth, hardeneth his neck shall SUDDENLY BE DESTROYED, and that WITHOUT REMEDY.” “And in that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans slain.” Oh! what a night was that, never to be forgotten; when the bold rejecter of God and His messages was borne by the swift hand of death from the splendours of his magnificent palace, into the blackness of darkness for ever.

#### THE JAILOR.

From that night scene in the imperial palace, turn your thoughts to a prison in Macedonia, and a picture of bright contrast will meet your eye. Hark! what is that? Sounds of praise to gods of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone?

No; but prayer and songs of praise to the *living God*, from two men whose backs are bruised and bleeding, in the darkest dungeon the building affords. As their voices rise, their fellow prisoners are awakened in the dead stillness of the night by such strains as they never heard before. A few minutes more, and there is the rumbling of a great earthquake; the prison is shaken to its foundations, and staggers like a drunken man; the cell doors are thrown open; the felons' shackles drop off, and the consternation and alarm is as great here as at Belshazzar's feast.

The jailor, who had been fast asleep, suddenly awakes, and supposing that the prisoners had escaped, drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, when he hears a voice saying, "Do thyself no harm, for we are all here." Who was it that spoke? The same that wrote upon the wall in Dan. v., though using His servants' lips. But who could know that he was on the point of committing suicide, all alone and in the midnight darkness? The omniscient God, to whom the darkness and the light are both alike. "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight, for *all things are naked and open unto the eyes of Him* with whom we have to do." Adam hiding among the trees; Achan and Gehazi

with their raiment and money, gotten by stealth, are striking instances of it. David says: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, and whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up to heaven thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." This the jailor too has discovered. Being arrested by the power of the Holy Ghost, terror-stricken he "called for a light, and sprang in and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, saying, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

There is a man thoroughly laid hold of and in earnest. He not only trembles, as Belshazzar did, but he goes further; he *falls down* a self-judged, repentant, enquiring soul. Do you see, my reader, any analogy between the two men at this juncture? They both tremble because God has broken in upon the darkness of their guilty souls. But here the king stopped; he had convictions, but stifled and drowned them. How many are like him! May be you are one whom, in times past, the Spirit of God has aroused to a sense of your true state as a perishing sinner; one who has had the

light of eternity flung across your Christless path, ploughing up your conscience, and showing your sins, long forgotten, of secret and public, of thought, and word, and deed ; and you have seen that to die as you are is to be lost for ever in the lake of fire, and yet you have resisted Him, and stifled His blessed influences in pleasure, or drowned them in gambling, drink, society, and the like. Not so the jailor. He is convicted, and owns it ; is lost, and feels it ; is guilty, and expresses it ; and the instant that he asks, " What must I do to be saved ? " the blessed answer is borne to his trembling soul : " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." Gladly and at once he welcomes the joyful tidings, and that night rejoiced in the salvation of God. How quickly these things followed — one moment he is fast asleep in his sins, the next he is trembling because convinced of his utter ruin, and, the same night, rejoicing, believing in God. Yes, that night salvation was his. " But how sudden ! " you remark. True ; but, thank God, not more sudden than real. It was not flippant tongue-talk and lip-confession, but a real work of God the Spirit.

Are you willing to accept a present salvation ? How long did it take the bitten Israelite to look at the brazen serpent ? Or how long for

the dying thief to gaze at his crucified Lord? So quickly, dear unsaved reader, you may pass from death unto life through faith in the blessed Son of God.

The foregoing was the substance of an address given at the M—— Hall, one Lord's-day evening in the spring of last year; many were present, the meeting was drawing to a close, the destiny of immortal souls seemed trembling in the balance. The speaker, feeling the solemnity of the moment, expressed his belief that this was the last time that some present would hear the Gospel; the preaching was over, and the audience dispersed. The following Friday, a man working at a brewery in the town fell into a boiling hot beer-vat, from the effects of which he died the same night. The next day, another, walking down one of the main thoroughfares, broke a blood-vessel, and, in a few hours, passed beyond the reach of time. Both were at the meeting referred to; may the judgment-seat reveal that they had departed "to be with Christ." Has this no voice to thee? Hear you not that verse: "Beware, lest he take thee away with his stroke, then a great ransom cannot deliver thee." Ere you put this pamphlet down, the Bridegroom may have returned, the door of salvation have closed, and the day of grace

have passed away for ever. Let me urge you then, beloved friend, to *immediate* decision for Christ. Look not at difficulties; neither friends nor associations can stand surety in the day of fast-approaching judgment. Oh! be warned, and let the uncertainty of life, the brevity of time, the nearness of Christ's second coming, and the horrors of everlasting companionship with the devil and his angels, constrain you NOW to say,

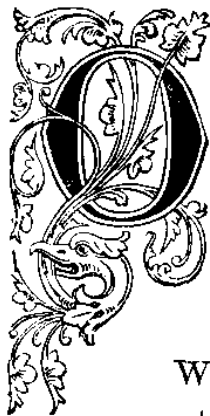
“My heart is fixed, eternal God,  
Fixed on Thee,  
And my immortal choice is made,  
CHRIST for me.”

Whose portion will you have, the King's or the Jailor's? With whom will you spend eternity, the prison-keeper or Belshazzar?

A. M.



“NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME, AND  
NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION.”



N Lord's Day, the 24th day of March, 1878, on arriving home from the morning meeting, I found a message had been left requesting me to visit a friend who, it was believed, was in a dying state, and had that morning asked to

see me. It was the dying man's wife who had called. I had known them both for some years, and had lived near them for some months about four years previously. I was sometimes in his company for the course of a day together, being engaged at that time in the same occupation. At such seasons, and as I had opportunity, I spoke to him of eternity, and of the need of our souls as poor sinners, and as often as we conversed on the subject of salvation, so did he, like many others, alas, turn the subject.

Change of residence and occupation had made my knowledge of A. G. become less, having only an occasional passing word as we met in the street. His decline of health was very apparent for the last two years, and on one occasion he requested me to call at his home to see him. This was early in the winter of 1877. I waited an opportunity, and went, looking to the Lord to give me a suited word to meet the need of his state of soul. He was very weak, and appeared to be glad to see me, and spoke of his failing health, saying he could do nothing now but sit and read, and think over the past.

Again I tried to bring before him the realities of eternity, going over again the old, old story of Jesus and His love, as told out in the

wondrous tale of the cross. He said he could not see how it was possible for any to be sure of being saved. He knew some spoke, as I did, of having peace and joy in believing, and of the certainty of their being saved, but it was not for him. Feeling that my poor friend yet needed the new birth, I spoke to him in a simple way, begging him not to trust to his own understanding, or to look for feelings in himself, but simply to accept the testimony of a holy God about himself, and the glorious testimony of a loving God about His own blessed Son. Being convinced that God's message to him in particular was "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," I pressed it on him, and praying the Lord would bless His own precious word to his soul, I left.

Soon after, I saw him again, when his state of soul was still about the same, and his bodily health no better. On the Lord's day referred to, having been requested to attend the Sunday School that afternoon, I said, in reply to my wife, "I want to be at school this afternoon, and I think I'll go, and after tea I can go to see A. G.;" but on her repeating the earnest tones in which A. G.'s wife spoke, and adding that she thought, from her manner, this visit was of the very first importance, as soon as

dinner was over I left the house for my friend's.

I found a girl of about thirteen years of age, his daughter, and himself the only occupants of the house. She requested me to walk upstairs to where her father lay. He at once recognised me, saying, "Oh, Mr. W., if you had been with me these weeks I have been in this room, I should have been nearer heaven than I am." I endeavoured to speak to him of his need of the Saviour, more than any man's help, as vain is the help of man. "Ah," he said, "but you could have spoken to me of what you know and enjoy of the Saviour's love." I replied it might be the Lord had sent me now as a channel through which He would speak peace to his now anxious soul. Relying upon the Lord, I endeavoured simply to speak a few words to him of the work of Christ; how the blessed Lord Jesus, the holy spotless Lamb of God, had died on the cross to meet his, and every poor sinner's deepest need, and not merely our need as such, but had met all the righteous claims of a holy God on account of our sin, and the sins of all who believe. I read with him the 41st, 42nd, and 43rd verses of the 23rd chapter of Luke, and also the 14th, 15th, and 16th verses of the 3rd chapter of John.

After a pause he said, as well as he could

speak for want of breath, that two of his near relatives were christians and gospel preachers. One of them was expected to come to see him on the morrow, if he lived till then, and he would be glad if I would come and bring some others to meet the expected visitor there, and (I give his own words) "we can have a good old-fashioned ranters' prayer meeting, and my soul will perhaps catch the spirit of it." It was evident that the enemy of souls was doing his best to occupy my poor friend's mind with anything that would hinder him simply believing God's word, and being made a bright trophy of God's grace through faith. Again, I endeavoured to show him it was not excitement he needed to meet his case, but Christ Jesus, and He only could speak peace to his soul. I engaged in prayer to God that He might, in His grace and love, reveal by the Spirit's power "Jesus," in all the precious saving power of His name to this poor dying sinner, and give him at this critical moment to have simple faith in the Saviour, like the dying thief on the cross, and as in his case, so now, to speak peace to his soul.

He seemed much affected, and earnestly ejaculated "Lord grant it"—"Amen." I noticed, on rising from my knees, a visible change in him. I said, "Can you trust Jesus

now?" He answered, "I do believe in Him." "That He died for *you*?" "Yes," he answered. His mind seemed now to wander. I helped him to sit up in his bed, at his request; he then said, "I must go," and attempted to get out of bed; finding he could not do so, he said, "I suppose I must lay down again then." These were his last words; I had sent the child for her mother, but, before either returned, his spirit had fled, whither is only known to the searcher of hearts; but if the words "I do believe in Him," was the expression of heart-faith, I shall soon meet him again on the cloud when the Lord shall descend, and all His redeemed shall ascend and meet in the air, and so we shall be for ever with the Lord.

Dear reader, I have narrated the above in the prayerful hope that your precious soul (if still unsaved) may be led to think of the terrible consequences of living and dying without Christ, without hope, in spite of all the privileges, opportunities, and invitations presented to you in the blessed Gospel of God's grace. Only a little while at the longest and you will be brought, as A. G. was, to face the realities of eternity; it became a reality to him at the twelfth hour, may it become a reality to every reader *now*, for "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation," and may the

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question put by the Apostle in the 2nd chapter of Hebrews, 3rd verse, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" sink deep down, in all its searching power, into the heart, and produce a desire which can be satisfied by the same divine power and love that creates it. Again I entreat you to take your true place as a lost sinner in the presence of God, and listen to His gracious words, "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" (Rom. x., 9). "To Him (Jesus Christ) give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x., 43).

D. W.

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 DONE AND SAID.

(John iv. 46-54)

**W**HAT has made this courtier travel a journey of about 25 miles? Something urgent it must be that has brought him from Capernaum beside the lake to Cana. He has left a loved son behind him at the point of death. But why leave the

son at the last? why has he not stayed to receive his last words? The nobleman has "heard" of Jesus; and "faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. x. 17.) So with his heart no doubt big with love for his son, he has yet left him to go to the Lord Jesus, certain that He alone can meet his need. Oh, how full of anxiety must he have been, as he came to that Blessed One. Was it in vain? No! Jesus did something, and Jesus said something. What was it that He *did*? He, though so far off, at once removed the fever from the dying son.

But, as we notice the distressed looks of the father, we say to ourselves, Does not that sorrowful courtier need something more? Does he not need to *know* that his son is no longer dying? Yes, and the Lord Jesus does not leave him in uncertainty. How is the centurion to know, so that he may be happy? Jesus *said* something, as well as *did* something? It was what Jesus *did* that healed the son; it was what Jesus *said* that enabled the father to *know* it. Had you asked him that day, "How do you know that your son is recovering?" what could he have answered? He could not have said, "I see it," for the son was far away. Nor would his reply have been, "I feel it," for we do not get the certainty of what

is happening at a distance, by feeling it.

But how then did the centurion know it, if neither by sight nor feelings? His simple answer might have been, "I know it, because HE said it." And who is the HE? Ah, I see; it depends on the Person, Who it is that speaks the word of authority. The courtier did not need to think of his faith. Did he say, "I wonder if I have the right sort of faith?" No—it was a question of the Person. Could he simply trust the One who had said, "Thy son liveth." Yes, he could.

Reader, if you are anxious about your soul's salvation, has this story no voice for you? Have you expected to know it by your feelings? They change like the wind. You must rest on the solid word of God, which does not change. For the actual salvation of the ungodly, something has been *done*. Christ has died on the cross, finished the work, and been raised from the dead, by the glory of the Father. God now in righteousness proclaims through Christ the forgiveness of sins to each who believes. You need also to *know* that your sins are forgiven. This can be known by something *said*, not by some good thoughts or feelings in yourself. God has *said*, "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Acts xiii. 38. "These things have I written to you that

believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life " (1 John v. 13). Can you trust the Person who declares this, or would you rather trust your own heart? "He that trusteth his own heart is a fool." (Prov. xxviii. 26.)

The courtier believes the word spoken, and goes leisurely to his home, instead of hurrying to get back the same night, for it was only the seventh hour, (one o'clock) when Jesus spoke to him. His servants did not meet him till the next day. Perhaps they have been thinking what a surprise they have got for him. But no, he does not seem surprised. He has one question ;—" *When* did he begin to amend ?" Ah, it was the very same hour when Jesus said the good news to him. "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Anxious reader, it is by what the Lord Jesus has *done*, that you must get salvation ; it is by what God has *said* in His own Word, that you can have the *knowledge* of salvation.

J. P. R.



“GO THY WAY FOR THIS TIME.”

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IT had been a time of real blessing to many souls at B——, the good news had been simply and faithfully preached, and many had received it.

One evening in particular, while the preacher dwelt much on the solemn words of poor Felix to Paul, in Acts xxiv., “Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee,” many felt the power of the truth, and confessed it to have been a season of unusual solemnity. Shortly afterwards, after the preaching one Lord’s day evening, a sister in the Lord asked me to accompany her to the house of her sister who was dying, and whom she feared was not a believer. When we reached the sick chamber, where the poor emaciated sufferer lay, the husband, who with five or six of their children surrounded the bed weeping, said to me, “Will you pray, sir?” Before speaking to him, I addressed myself to the dying wife, whose moans and expressions of anguish were most painful to witness, and

soon found that all reason had fled, and that she was far beyond hearing or understanding anything, in fact, death had already laid his cold hand upon her, and she had but a very brief span of suffering here, *but what about the eternal future ?*

I turned to the poor weeping husband, and said, " My dear man, what can I pray for now for her ? Tell me, what about her soul ; has she received the truth of God about His Son ? when did she speak last, and what did she say ? " Her sister, who had asked me to see her, said, " At four o'clock she spoke last to me, I asked her, Are you trusting in Jesus, dear sister ; is your soul saved ? " and she replied, "*Don't trouble me now, I have enough to do to bear my pain.*" These were apparently the last words she had spoken. I found on further enquiry, that she had been one of the hearers at the gospel preaching the evening alluded to, when the last words of Felix to Paul had rung with solemn import in many ears and hearts, that she had been apparently much impressed, and that she was then laid aside, and had not been out since.

I turned again to the husband and said, " You ask me to pray ; my earnest prayer to God is, that neither you nor one of your children may ever be found in the state of your poor wife

here." To Him who reads the secrets of every heart we left it, but with the solemn conviction that she had said to Him, "Go thy way," "Depart from me, I desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job. xxi. 14).

Soon after our visit she died; another among the many solemn instances of hearing the word, trembling at it, and nevertheless saying, "Don't trouble me now," "Go thy way for this time." *Her* convenient season never came. Reader, has your convenient season come? Are you rejoicing in the last words of the dying Saviour—"It is finished," and knowing that His finished work has made you meet for heaven? Or are you still where Felix was, and his last words yours still? "Go thy way for this time." Take heed in time, trifle not longer with your immortal soul, the language of the trifler will get its answer. "Depart from us, *we* desire not the knowledge of *thy* ways," is the sinner's words to Christ now, but His words in "that day" will be to such—"Depart from *me* all ye workers of iniquity, *I* know *you* not" (Luke xiii.27; Matt. xxv. 12).

*Now*, is your convenient season; it may be your last; your to-morrow may be the lake of fire!

W. R. H.

## “WHEN HE DIED ON THE CROSS.”

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**T**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 farm-house, 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 12 or 13 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 school-house, some three miles distant. The word of God was

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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 negative 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 3rd of John was my theme, and I noticed the intense eagerness with which the 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

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wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life," shewed 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 shewn to be anyone, everyone—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

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Lord, so leaving her I quickened my steps, and was soon along side 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 forever. You and your sister have got the knowledge of that

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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.

## PAUL AND FELIX.

ACTS xxiv.



WE HAVE in this chapter two men of totally distinct characters, as different as it is possible for two men to be, and the difference is this—one was a real true christian and the other was not—one had his face turned towards heaven and the other had not—and *one lived in the light of eternity*—and the other did not—one had hold of God and the other knew nothing about Him—and the ends of the roads these two men were travelling are totally opposite. “What fruit had ye then in the things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is *death?*”; that is the end of the road Felix was on. “But now being made free from sin and become servants to God ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end *everlasting life*”—that is the end of Paul’s road. What is the end of a worldly man’s road? *Death!* What is the end of a christian’s road? *Everlasting life!* What a difference! There might be much along the way in which both were alike—both sinners. Paul indeed was a much more violent opposer of Christ than Felix, for Felix was,

just like many a man, not troubling himself much about these matters. He hoped to get a good place bye and bye no doubt, as you hope ; but at the end of the chapter I see Felix where he was at the beginning, an utterly unconverted man, without the fear of God before his eyes.

You have three things in the case of each—their faith, their hope, and their practice. The faith, hope, and practice of a christian man ; and the faith, hope, and practice of a worldly man. Look at Paul, and hear him speak for himself ; you see him a prisoner at the bar, and the greatest barrister of the time brought down to oppose him ; and first he brings two great falsehoods against him, falsehoods that he cannot prove too, but then what is this that he says ? “ A ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.” Ah, Paul would never deny that, what does that mean ? That meant a man to whom Christ was everything, a man before whose soul Christ shone out as the only one worth knowing, or possessing, or serving. God’s beloved Son was this despised Nazarene—the one totally rejected and opposed by man, the one of whom the world said, “ Away with him ! Away with him ” The one of whom they said, “ Not this man,” when Pilate was anxious to let him off, not willing to have the blood of one whom he knew to be innocent

upon him, though he had not courage to face that surging heaving mass of murderers. Pilate was a coward, but he thought he had a back door of escape. He must let off one at that feast, he would let off Jesus. He had two prisoners, a murderer and the Lord, and the two are put together, and Pilate asks which he should release for them. Could there be a moment's doubt? Would you think there could be any hesitation? Ah! hear their answer. With one voice they cry, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" With one common consent the world expressed its judgment. They preferred a *Murderer* to a *Saviour*.

Do you say, "But we in our day have nothing to do with that deed"? Tell me then, have you identified yourself with this murdered man? or do you still identify yourself with the world that slew Him? You must take your place with Him or against Him; there is no middle place, you are identified with Him or His murderers. If never before, do not be ashamed now to take your place among the despised crowd of the Nazarenes. Rather, ten thousand times rather, would I take my place with Paul at the bar, a prisoner for Jesus, than with the man on the bench who sat to judge him. Paul says, "This I confess, that after the way that they

call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets."

Now look at his faith, "Believing all things, &c." Simple unfeigned faith in the Word of God. Here is Paul's confession of faith, "I believe every Word of God." Oh but, you say, "I believe that too." Tell me then, do you believe "the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all"? Do you believe the Lord has made by His death on the cross a way of escape for *you*? Do you believe that He was "Wounded for our transgressions"? Can you say, "For *my* transgressions"? Do you believe that "By his stripes we are healed"? Are *you* healed? People often say to me, "I do believe the Scriptures." Well do you believe this now, "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 everlasting life"? I mean has your soul laid hold of it? Have you yielded to the Lord the obedience of faith? Have you got everlasting life? "I have a good hope," you say. I do not believe it! You have no hope if you have not faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith puts out its hand and grasps what the love of God gives, and the love of God gives salvation and a Saviour, and eternal life.

Faith says, "What love provides I will lay hold of, what God says I will believe." Do you say "*It is presumption.*" Is it presumption to believe the Word of God? Because I have a pattern man here and he simply believes what God says.

Paul says, "I believe every word that God has spoken." A christian is one who credits God's Word. "Oh," you say, "I thought a Christian was one who believes on Christ." So he is, I reply, but the Word of God always brings Christ to you, it always presents Christ, it is all about Christ.

Turn a moment to look at Felix' faith. Now I will show you your faith, you who are unconverted. Look at the 24th and 25th verses, "When he heard Paul he said, Go thy way, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." His faith was in a convenient season, "Go thy way," he says, and 'Go thy way,' says every unbelieving heart. People do not like to hear of these things, they get weary of them. Oh man, man, how weary you will get of hell by and bye. Oh Christless soul what would you give then for one Gospel note, for one more offer of Christ and pardon, for one more Gospel preaching, one word to tell how to escape from that endless misery, though now, you say, to one who would speak to you of Christ, "Go

thy way" ? Oh man, you are going your way straight to the lake of fire.

Oh! sinner, will God make light of sin? God puts you in the scale, and takes your measure, and you are lost. As Paul reasoned of righteousness, Felix trembled. He knew he had no righteousness, and there is something more. Temperance, keeping the body under, and more still, judgment to come. If you refuse the Gospel there is judgment to come. You tremble like Felix. You wish to put from you the thought that the lake of fire, with all its untold agony, lies before you, and you are unprepared to face it. You say "It will not do for me to be converted now, it would spoil all my prospects in life. I am young and the world is before me, let me have more time, and when I have a convenient season I will think of these things." Ah! what then, what then, when will your convenient season be? Here is the faith of a worldly man. His faith was in a convenient season, but listen, *it never came! it never came!*

Your faith, oh man, is in a convenient season that never comes, the only convenient season that I know is *now*. I entreat you come to the Lord now, just now. Come to Jesus I implore you this very day. Shall your faith be only in a convenient season? "*Now* is the

accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Now is the time to come to Christ, to believe on Christ and to be saved. It is true you may tremble, but do not mistake trembling for faith; do *not* put it off, do not say I will think about it. Oh soul, Christless soul, do not put it off till a convenient season. Come now! Come now, I beseech you, turn to the Lord this moment. Can you be certain if you put it off one more night, but that the hand of God may take you away, and through a long, a dark, a terrible, a never ending eternity, you will rue your terrible folly.

Now, dear reader, we will look at the *hope* of these two men. *Paul's* hope is toward God. His faith is in the Word of God, his hope is toward God. Though they put me to death, he says, there is a resurrection of the just—a resurrection of the just when the Lord comes, a resurrection of the unjust, at the end of the millenium; a resurrection of the just to go to be for ever with the Lord, a resurrection of the unjust to go to the lake of fire. After lying long in their graves they rise, to hear His voice say, "Depart from me." Oh soul, Christless soul, that must be *your* future, will you risk it?

The hatred of the Jews was roused against Paul, because he preached that Jesus had risen out from *among* the dead, and that

all who believed would be raised out from among the dead too, to be with Him; and those who did not believe would be left behind. The wicked will be raised in their turn, but only to be condemned and cast into the lake of fire. Oh! I ask again, will you risk this? Can you risk it? then you are the most infatuated soul I know; there lies before you only a place in the terrible regions of the lost.

Do you say, "I have a hope," so had Felix. What was his hope? His faith was in a convenient season that never came! His hope was in money that he never got! And your hope is in a salvation that you may *never get*! You hope to have your feet planted in heaven and you *never may*! Because you have not Christ, you have not faith.

How did Felix act? He left an innocent man unrighteously imprisoned, for the sake of gain. This is a worldly man! his faith was not in God, his hope was not in God, his practise was not according to God. Do you see in this a full length portrait of yourself? Or are you like Paul? Listen to his practice, "Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence, both toward God and toward men." He sought from one year's end to the other, to keep a conscience happy with God, and happy with man. A good conscience. What gives a

good conscience before God? The blood of Jesus. What maintains a good conscience? A godly, subject, consistent walk.

I know of no greater contrast than this faith, hope, and practice of a christian and a worldly man, a godly and an ungodly man. And now tell me which will you choose? Whose faith, whose hope, whose practice will you follow? Oh, I ask you, if you had the whole mint full of money what good would it do you? Thou must pass, oh soul, into eternity, and thy gold thou must leave behind thee, but thy sins thou must carry with thee to the judgment-seat! where thou canst only hear the voice that would save thee now, say to thee then, Depart! Oh take a distinct, decided line of action for Christ, let everyone know you love the Lord and He loves you, that your soul is governed, and your actions controlled by Him. The Lord grant that if you have never turned before, you may be warned by the picture of this godless man, and that your heart may be charmed by the magnificent picture of this godly one, for it is a real thing to be a christian, and may you know what it is, to be a real, true, devoted, decided follower of the Lord Jesus.

W. T. P. W.

## “ALMOST PERSUADED.”

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“Almost persuaded,” now to believe ;  
“Almost persuaded,” Christ to receive,  
Seems now some soul to say !  
“Go Spirit, go Thy way,  
Some more convenient day.  
On Thee I’ll call.”

“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” Acts xxvi. 28.

“Behold *now* is the accepted time ; behold *now* is the day of salvation.” 2 Cor. vi. 2.

“**A**LMOST persuaded!” What solemn words for any man to utter ; yet they were uttered once, and in principle they are being uttered day by day, by the hundreds who throng the churches and chapels of our land. My reader, “Are *you* a Christian? Have you got your sins forgiven? Have you got eternal life?” You say, “No.” Then literally you are only “almost persuaded.” You go to a meeting, you hear a solemn warning, or it may be a loving invitation given in God’s name ; you realize for a few moments, the tremendous importance of having salvation—the urgent necessity of fleeing from the wrath to come. You are interested—aroused—convicted, but alas! *not converted*, though

you leave the place with the full intention of having the matter settled between you and God. But Satan is ready to catch away the good seed which has been sown. You find an invitation on your return home, to a ball—a concert—theatricals—next week. You feel you must accept it,—you cannot yet give up the “friendship of the world,” though you know that it is “enmity with God.” Oh! poor soul! poor soul! How all heaven mourns over your indecision! God warning; and you indifferent.—Christ pleading; and you unaffected.—The Holy Ghost striving; and you resisting. What will the end be? the end so near—so close at hand.

“Almost persuaded!” Harvest is past.

“Almost persuaded!” Doom comes at last.

“I have my business to attend to,—my family to look after; I have no time to think of these things,” was the reply of a well-to-do tradesman, to whom I was saying a few words about Christ. Ah! he had time to settle his accounts—time to visit the public-house—time to go to the theatre; but, no time to think about Christ—no time to thank God for the gift of His Son—no time to look eternity in the face.

Is it so with you? Oh! beware. There was another man, of whom we are told, that

as Paul reasoned before him of "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come," he was so deeply affected that "he trembled;" but what did he say: "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee" (Acts xxiv. 25). And so Paul, the aged prisoner, was led back to his dark damp dungeon; and Felix returned to his life of luxury and pleasure, and the "convenient season," so far as we know, never arrived. And if you are only "almost persuaded" to-day, and death were to lay its relentless grasp upon you to-night; let me warn you, you would be altogether LOST. If you die, only "almost" saved; it is to be altogether *lost*. Lost for eternity.

Very urgent was Eliezer's entreaty: "Send me away, that I may go unto my Master." (Gen. xxiv. 56.) His Master's was a message which admitted of no delay—no indecision. The answer must *at once* be given. And so the damsel was called, and the question was put: "Wilt thou go with this man?" And direct and definite came the ready response: "*I will go.*" There was no hesitation—no indecision—no demand for delay, from the one whose heart had been sought for Isaac. Her whole future was, as it were, staked upon the reply to that question. Hence it was one, she felt,

not to be trifled with. All the joy of union with Isaac,—all the glory and honour of connection with him, might be forfeited by an undecided reply. And so we find, that friends and relations, who would have hindered the ready (they may have thought rash) acceptance of the message, saying: "Let the damsel abide with us a few days, at the least ten," are unheeded. And promptly and confidently she decides to go!

These are just two pages out of the life-histories of two persons, written for our admonition by the Spirit of God. In the one case we see a man "*almost*," in the other, a woman *altogether* "*persuaded*." In the one we see a man unsatisfied, and yet undecided to become a Christian. In the other, a woman satisfied, and decided to go to Isaac (type of Christ in resurrection).

Only a page out of two life-histories; short, but Oh! how solemn. Only a servant delivering a message; by two persons to be so differently received. Only a moment; when unknown to each, the turning-point in life's road is reached, and the goal is fixed for eternity!

And thus it is going on all around us day by day. The *many* in the churches and chapels, "*almost persuaded*"—the *few*, fully decided

for Christ. *Which are you?* Oh! if undecided up to this moment, we plead with you to be so no longer! How sad we think it, a noble vessel to be lost within sight of home. How solemn as well as sorrowful if you should be lost within sight of heaven! "Almost persuaded" to be a Christian—"almost persuaded" to be saved—

"Almost! *but lost!*"

God places a period of time before you. He says, "Now is the accepted time;" nay more, He says, "Now is the day of salvation." Beware of saying, "To-morrow," when God says, "To-day." Beware of saying, "By-and-by," when He says, "Now."

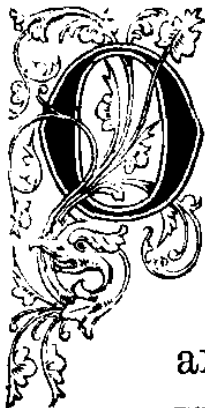
"Almost persuaded!" Come, come to-day;

"Almost persuaded!" Turn not away.

Jesus invites you here, angels are ling'ring near,  
Prayers rise from heart's so dear; Oh! wand'rer come.

A. S. O.

## SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.



F all the strong holds of sin, the most difficult, by far, to be pulled down, is that of self-righteousness. It is the most subtle and the proudest. It is common to all. There are many sins into which, as individuals, we may not have fallen; many pro-

clivities to which we may not lean. But in all of us, by nature, is hidden the principle of self-righteousness, as the terrible heirloom of our fallen parents.

In the garden of Eden Adam was innocent, but when he fell the first thing he did was to establish his own righteousness, he “made himself an apron.” That is, he felt that he could not bear exposure—could not tolerate the eye of God; but, instead of crying for mercy, he endeavoured to conceal his fall by an apron of fig leaves. This is the first instance of self-righteousness—I do not follow out the history of Adam.

Shortly afterwards we find Cain and Abel engaged in their various offerings. That of Cain lacked the token of self-condemnation—death—and God therefore had no respect either to Cain or to his offering. But if it lacked the token of self-judgment it abounded in the spirit of self-righteousness. Costly, luxuriant and beautiful it may have been—but it indicated rather Cain’s good estimation of himself, than what was due to God. The character of the offering expresses the state of the offerer—and just as the “fruits of the ground,” offered in life and beauty, denied the principle of sin, and consequently, *death*, so

the offering of Cain was the expression of his own merit. It was the positive denial of his fallen state before God—and his offering, spite of its costliness, was therefore hateful to Him. In Cain, as in his father, we see the workings of self-righteousness, although, doubtless, more fully developed. Hence the pride of his heart displayed itself in the murder of his brother, and “wherefore slew he him? because his own works (that costly offering) were evil and his brother’s righteous.” Here then, in these earliest days, we find two notable instances of that sin which has only developed as years and dispensations have rolled round.

Now let us pass on to Job. Granted that there was “none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feared God and eschewed evil” still, from the sequel of his history, it is plain that he had much to learn, both his own natural badness, and also of the patience of God. No doubt he had life before he is introduced to our notice, yet between life and peace there exists a vast difference. Life—that is the first work of the Spirit of God in the soul, instead of carrying peace, may and generally does, bring the very opposite. And Job had life—was a quickened soul, but was at the same time, sadly ignorant of *himself*. The crucible of trial into which he

was put brought out the real state of his soul—He said “I am clean without transgression, innocent; neither is there iniquity in me.” (ch. xxxiii. 9.) Self-righteousness of a truth! Could a man go further in denying his state before God? Impossible; and yet presently we hear him say “Mine eye seeth THEE wherefore I abhor MYSELF.” (xlii. 5, 6.)

The lesson was now learned. Job had looked into the mirror and had seen himself as he had never done; not only so, but he had also seen the Lord. This was enough. It produced repentance. But there is an immense difference between saying “I abhor myself” and “I am clean without transgression.” This is full-blown self-righteousness, that the very essence of true and divinely-wrought repentance.

Let us now turn to the pages of the New Testament for further illustration of our theme.

Many pictures of this principle are drawn by the hand of the Master—drawn with faithful accuracy. There stands the proud Pharisee in the temple—disdaining his brother Publican—and saying—“God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican; I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess.”

Quite so! Your opinion of "other men" is as low as your opinion of yourself is high! Most eloquent in your description of the sins you have avoided—silent, at the same time, as to those of which you are guilty; loud in the declaration of your good works, but not a word as to deeds of omission; once you mention God, five times you speak of yourself. O proud Pharisee! you are only one of a class, a sample of an immense community.

And then there is the "elder brother"—let us listen to his language—"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." Enough, enough, Job over again—"neither transgressed I at any time." Could a man with a grain of conscience speak thus? Elder son, loveless brother, stranger to the joys of the Father's house, detestable impersonation of pride and self-righteousness, your merriment is not that of the Father, your friends are not those of the Father, your place is outside the house of the Father, and your end, it may be, is seen in that of the rich man whose care for his brethren was only awakened when he sought that they should not go to his place of torment.

And then there are the "five foolish virgins,"

as like the wise as they could possibly be outwardly—on the same road, about the same business, clad in the same kind of dress, cherishing the same hopes—but, and this made all the difference, they lacked the *oil*. This was the one distinguishing mark. And what availed the lamp, or the snowy garments when the oil was wanting? “And the door was shut”—shut upon them; and the Bridegroom said, “I know you not.” Their profession was unmistakeable, but it was one of self-righteousness.

These instances are presented by the Lord in the way of parables—His favourite way of illustrating truth—yet there are cases of actual occurrence disclosed to us.

Let us look at one where self-righteousness seems to reach its very climax. The scene is intensely solemn. The Son of Man comes and all His angels with Him. Before Him are gathered all nations. He passes sentence upon them according to their treatment of His “brethren.” To those who have befriended such in their time of distress He awards eternal life—to those who, on the other hand, have failed so to act He passes the sentence of everlasting punishment. But notice, unabashed by the display of glory around them, and stout in self-vindication, the wicked make

answer "When saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" Oh! daring spirit of self-righteousness—does not even the solemnity of this awful tribunal strike thee with terror and break thee down? No! Then, what will? The terrors of Hell? Nay, no power in Heaven, on earth, or in Hell but one can make thee yield, and that is the power of *love*. There is such a power as "the omnipotence of loving-kindness," at least, so said one of earth's great ones. True even that power may be resisted. "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost," said Stephen to those who had been exhorted to "save themselves." The ear and heart may be closed—for man is responsible, and is dealt with by God as such—yet "love" is the only all-subduing power, and he who resists the wooings of love wilfully closes the door of mercy against himself.

Let this be remembered that in God's sight "*there is none righteous, no not one.*"

And any claim to righteousness must, therefore, be groundless, just as all human ideas of righteousness must necessarily be wrong. The first step on the right road is the discovery of my own unrighteousness; and the confession of this leads to blessing. The endeavour to establish my own righteousness is insubjec-

tion to God—it is rebellion of the worst kind, as we have seen in Cain. The acknowledgment of guilt is, on the other hand, the first act of faith, as in Abel, and the means of justification. This exalts God and really honours man—that denies God, therefore dishonours man.

My reader, the Cross speaks of two things—the love of God and the absolute unrighteousness of man. Had man been righteous, or could he by any means of his own obtain righteousness, there would have been no need of the death of Christ. But “without *shedding of blood* is no remission;” again “the Son of Man *must* be lifted up.” Hence there is no blessing but through the cross, and, hence too, human righteousness does not exist. Yet notice, *at the cross* God displays His righteousness (Rom. iii.), and, with adoring gratitude be it said, thereby justifies him that believeth in Jesus. Think of this mighty truth—that God is just and a justifier! Oh! What issues meet at the Cross! What a point of contact for God and man. There God is glorified and the sinner who believes is saved!—Yes indeed, but to refuse the Cross is to offer terrible affront to God—it is to despise all that love could do.

Reader can you do this?

J. W. S.

## "ONE THING I KNOW."

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"One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."  
John x. 25.

**A**S we live in a day when profession abounds on every hand it is well for us to challenge ourselves whether we *know* as a divine reality that we "*have* passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.) Living in a so-called Christian land, most *profess* to be sinners, and most *profess* to believe in Jesus. In the 9th Chap. of John we read of a man who was blind from his birth—a true picture of *every* unsaved soul—blind. Blind from his or her birth, and needing to have the eyes opened, as to the things of God, as much as the man in the chapter alluded to, who was blind to the things of the world.

Dear reader, have you had *your* eyes opened? Do not say I do not know. This man not only had his eyes opened but he *knew* it. The blessed Lord Jesus came down into this world to recover sight to the blind (Luke iv. 18.) and He not only came to *do* it but He *did* it. As He is passing by He sees a man blind from his birth (v. i.) In the graciousness of what He

ever was—and is—He acts. “He came to *seek* and to *save* that which was *lost*.” (Luke xix. 10.) He sees one who needs Himself in all that He was in Himself, and all that He could do, and it immediately draws forth His gracious loving heart to meet the one who thus needed Him.

Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. (Heb. xiii. 8.) He has never changed, and dear unsaved reader you can count as much upon His loving gracious heart to day to meet you in all your need, as when he was down here, and met the need of all who came to Him to get their need met. No one but Jesus—the Saviour—could give sight to the blind, and no one but Jesus can meet you in your deep need as a ruined, lost, hell-deserving sinner.

Jesus anoints the eyes of the blind man and sends him to Siloam's pool to wash. He does exactly as he is bid—he trusts implicitly the word of the one who thus sends him and he gets immediate relief. To get relief from Jesus you must come in contact with Jesus. Directly the sinner and Jesus come together there is immediate blessing. The woman in Mark v. 27. who had not been able to get relief from any physician although she had tried many and spent her all—not only hears *about* Jesus, but comes *to* Jesus and *touches* Jesus, and she got

immediate blessing, and like the man in John ix., *knew* it. May you dear reader, if you have not, as yet, come to Jesus, know what it is to come to Him who is yearning over you, desirous to bless you. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. Acts 16. 31.

The change in the man who had been born blind was so apparent that every one recognized it. Fellow believer on the Lord Jesus, we can rejoice that Himself "bear our sins in his own body on the tree;" (1 Pet. ii. 24.) that God laid *all* our sins upon Him; (Isa. liii. 6.) that we have been "brought to God;" (1 Pet. iii. 18.) that *all* our sins are *forgiven* (Col. ii. 13.) *forgotten* (Heb. x. 17.) that "we are *accepted in the beloved*." (Eph. i. 6.) But are we so living Christ that all our friends and acquaintances, and the world generally, can take knowledge that we have been with Jesus. (Acts iv. 13.) Let us challenge ourselves as to this in the presence of God.

This man had not only received blessing *from* Christ, but testified to *it* and to *Him*. True, he was not at all clear as to the Person, but according to his knowledge—which at first was limited—he *confessed* Christ. The change was so marvellous, as we were saying before, that it was apparent to those who knew him before

his eyes were opened. The *neighbours* began to talk about it and to reason about it. So great was the change, that some began to question whether he was the man or not; but he assures them that he *is* the person who *was* blind but *now* sees. He is brought to the *Pharisees* and they cannot agree—as to the blessed Person who wrought the miracle. The *Jews* would not believe the testimony of the man himself without a witness, and ascribe the name “sinner” to the spotless, holy, Son of God, as in the previous chapter v. 48. they said he had a devil. Such is man, and man too, under great privileges.

Is it not a privilege to live in a christian land? And yet with all its boasted privileges how few, in comparison, know what it is to be divinely and everlastingly saved because of the precious blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus Christ, which cleanseth from *all* sin; (1 John i. 7.) and how few of these are confessing Christ in living Him, as well as telling others about Him.

Are you, my reader *saved*? or let us ask you another question; Are you condemning those who say they *are* saved? There is no credit due to the one who is saved. He is saved by *grace*, *not* of works (Eph. ii. 8.) Then why condemn him? He is precious to Christ: take care! Let us warn you to “flee from the wrath to

come," (Matt. iii. 7.) In condemning the one who by grace can say "*I am saved*," you are condemning Christ, and God's word says that every knee shall bow to Him, and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 10-11.)

This man, however, only knew the work of Christ, but not the Person of Christ. Many know the work of Christ, which has put away their sins, and fitted them for the presence of a holy God, but is this the place God would have us stop at? No! assuredly not. That is only the commencement. God's word not only reveals a blessed precious work but a real living adorable Person. One who has not only died for the sinner, and who loves to save on account of what He has done, but who lives at the right hand of God for the believer.

We have been writing a little about the work of Christ as wrought in a man down here. Let us look a little deeper, and seek to find the Person; we get *both* in this chapter. When the man was asked who did it and how, (in v. 9.) he answers "*A man.*" Yes, He was truly a man—"the man Christ Jesus"; but faith recognizes something deeper than this. He gets more light as he goes on. He gets a deeper revelation of "*Himself*" He says to the Pharisees (v. 17.) "*He is a prophet.*" Now a

prophet in the New Testament does not always, or exclusively mean one who foretells future events. The woman in John iv. tells the blessed Lord Himself, "Sir I perceive that thou art a prophet" (v. 19.) What brought this from her? The simple fact that she found herself in the presence of God Himself. So in our chapter. The man recognized God at work, and it brings forth his blessed answer to those who knew Him not "He is a prophet." Further down (v. 33.) he says He is "*of God.*" Those who ought to have been teachers, are taught; they resent, and they cast him out, who *confesses*, and *stands* for Christ. How blessed it is to read such a verse as the 35th, where we find that Jesus hears. Yes beloved, tried believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, not only have we got His heart, His shoulder, and His hand, but His ear. He is ever at our side—may we know how to use Him. This man is cast out for confessing Christ and now he learns Christ in His very highest character—as Son of God. (v. 35, 36.)

Do you know Jesus as your saviour? Are you confessing Christ? Are you a worshipper? The Father is seeking worshippers John iv. 13. You cannot worship until the question of your sins is settled. It may have the *appearance* of worship but it is not *intelligent* worship.

Are you a *purged* worshipper, according to Heb. x.?

What a change has come over this man In the beginning of our chapter in rags, a beggar, blind, destitute, possessing nothing for this life or eternity, now at the feet of Jesus, a worshipper, sight restored, a thorough wonder to all around, yet cast out because He now belonged to Christ. This man *knew* all this for himself, and confessed it. "*One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*" Reader, dost thou know it, for thyself? If so praise God, and seek to live for Christ. E. G.



### FRAGMENT.

Christ has entered heaven "by his own blood" (Heb. ix. 12). This was after He "suffered for sins;" since "without shedding of blood is no remission." But His blood procures remission for every one whose sins He bore. The witness of this is the fact that He who bore my sins is in heaven without them. They must be gone because He is in glory. If gone from Him, then also from me, and His blood is my title to be where he is. The knowledge of this gives peace and assurance to the soul.

W. T. P. W.

## THE LEPER AND THE BIRDS.

LEV. xiii. xiv.



HERE is a very simple lesson to be learnt from this interesting portion of the Old Testament, namely, there was a way by which a leper could be cleansed; it was God's way, and there was no way but God's way, so that the leper who did not take God's way did not get the cleansing. Applying this to the New Testament times, there is a way now by which the sinner can be cleansed from his sins, and only one way, God's way; and the soul who does not take God's way cannot know this cleansing.

The leper is the very type of the sinner, for leprosy was what put a man outside of God's presence in Israel, and it is sin that puts and keeps a man out of the presence of God now.

You will notice in Leviticus, it is the priest, not the leper, who judges the man's case. And who is the priest a type of? *Christ*. The priest judges the case, he pronounces the man a leper, and Christ pronounces you a lost sinner, unless you are one who is born of God,

who has tasted the Lord's grace, who knows that he is forgiven.

The priest pronounces the man unclean, and his clothes were to be rent, and his head uncovered, *i.e.*, the thing was to be made patent; there was no covering up, no hypocrisy, and he was to cry "unclean," that is, there was to be self-judgment; he owned himself defiled, unfit for man's presence, and unfit for God's. He was to dwell alone, without the camp. Can you think of anything so pitiable? defiled, undone, cast out, alone, and covered with disease.

The Lord makes the man take his place outside. He makes the line of demarcation very strong. There is no mingling of the clean with the unclean. And this is true now. Are you saved, my reader? Are you washed? Are you born of God? If not, God sees you *lost*. May you wake up to recognise your true state, and then you will feel your need of a Saviour. May He make you take your place as an unclean sinner before the Lord; when you take that place, the day of your cleansing draws nigh. In the cleansing of the leper (Lev. xiv.), we have an unfolding of the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 4, "Then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed, two birds alive and clean,

and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop." Why two birds? Because one bird would not do, for one must die. Man's guilt can only be met by death; but then there is the glorious truth, not of death only, but of resurrection; not merely of a dead, but a risen and a living Saviour. The bird flying away with the blood of the slain bird upon it is, I doubt not, a type of Christ in resurrection bearing on His person the marks of His passion.

Mark, the birds were to be *clean*. Jesus was the absolutely spotless man, on whom death had no claim, the one who was *not* under the sentence of death, giving Himself up to meet the claim of death, for those who were under its sentence, and whom death could claim.

The cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop, take in the whole range of man in nature. The cedar, with its height and beauty, is the significant symbol of what is lofty, and grand, and beautiful in nature. It is sweet smelling too, a fragrant wood.

Scarlet is earthly glory, symbolises man's glory, and particularly Jewish, kingly, or earthly glory, what man delights in, whatever is imposing in nature, whatever is bright and glorious. But what is the hyssop? We read in Scripture, "Solomon spake of trees, from

the cedar tree that is in Lebanon, *even unto* the hyssop that groweth out of the wall ; " that is, the cedar is at the one end, and the hyssop is at the other. The hyssop is the mean, contemptible thing. And is there not what is great, and noble, and sublime in man—man in nature even ? There is ! And is there not what is bright, and daring, and brilliant, and attractive ? Surely. And is there not also what is base and mean, and contemptible, filthy, and ignoble ? We must admit this too. And what about all three ; the grand, the bright, the base. All must go down, down into death. The cross of Christ puts an end to *man* ; man in his loftiness, and man in his baseness alike come to an end there.

The bird that was killed was to be killed in an earthen vessel over running water, or "living water." I have no doubt the *earthen* vessel gives us the figure of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ which brought Him down in *human* form, and the running, or "living water" is the energy of the Holy Ghost, in virtue of which Christ without spot offered Himself to God.

I have, then, in the birds, the earthen vessel, and the living water, that marvellous display of divine grace, Christ becoming a man and going down into death for us. And oh !

my reader, have you ever thought of what it was for Christ to suffer? He must *needs* suffer. Why? Because there is no way of life for a sinner, except through the suffering and death of the Saviour; no redemption, except by the blood of the Redeemer. The blood of Jesus meets all the claims of God in righteousness, and meets, too, all the needs of the sinner's conscience.

The living bird, the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop, are dipped in the blood of the slain bird, go down into death, and the next thing I find is the leper sprinkled.

What went down? The bird, the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop. What came up? The bird. Who died on the cross? Jesus! What did He bear on the cross? Sins! Whose? *Mine*. I look back at that atoning cross, and see the Saviour bearing my sins, dying for me. *I died* then with Christ. I see the cedar, the scarlet, and the hyssop, all there on His cross. He died in my place. Death could not claim Christ. He died for one whom it *could* claim. Death could claim us, because of sin. "The wages of sin is death."

Death now, then, has no further claim over me, for the believer died with Christ. Substitution has been effected; and in the death

of the substitute, the sinner ceases to exist before God.

All that belonged to me by nature went down into death when Christ *died*. Who came up? Only Christ, a risen Christ.

If God *could* see a believer's sins now, where must He see them? On Christ, for He "himself *bare* our sins in His own body on the tree." Does He bear them on the throne of God to-day? Nay, nay, there is no sin in glory, and Christ, who bare my sins, is there, therefore my sins must be gone.

Had you seen that living bird flying away, you would have seen the marks of blood upon it; and if we look into the glory, what do we see? "A Lamb as it had been slain." You will see in endless glory, by-and-by, the marks of the Saviour's suffering for you, for me. The hand that was pierced, and the side from which flowed that precious blood which has cleansed my every sin. And can I have a doubt? No! never, never. Has not Christ died for sin? Is He not in the glory without sin? Then what have you to do? Only to come to Him, and trust Him.

Do you believe Jesus *can* save you? "Yes," you say. Then, perhaps, you are like the poor leper in Mark i. You doubt his willingness. Jesus *touched* that poor defiled man.

It was the finger of God that was on him, and it is the finger of God that touches the sinner's guilty conscience, and His own voice says, "I will, be thou clean."

Jesus spake, and that man was clean; and if you draw near to Him, hear His word, trust Him simply, what is the consequence? You go away cleansed. He delights to make clean the one who simply trusts Him.

How did the leper in Israel know he was clean? The priest told him so. How did the man in Mark i. know he was clean? Jesus told him so. We are not to know we are clean from our experiences, but from the Word of the Living God.

When the leper was cleansed in Israel, the priest took of the blood, and put it on the right ear, the right thumb, and the right toe of the cleansed, and on that blood he put the oil (Lev. xiv. 14, 17).

The oil is the figure of the Holy Ghost. It was placed *upon* the blood. You must have the blood first. There must be a coming to Christ, confidence in Him, before there is the seal of the Holy Ghost.

When a man is clean the Lord does look for that which that blood typified, that is, *separation to God*, consecration. That ear, that hand, those feet, belong to Christ. The believer be-

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longs to Christ out and 'out. There is to be entire consecration.

The man is first set apart by blood, then by the Holy Ghost, which is power, then the oil is poured on his head (Lev. xiv. 18.) in blessing. The sinner is cleansed by Christ's blood, anointed with His Spirit, and now his whole life is just to be one of consecration to Him, one constant desire to walk so as to please the Lord.

W. T. P. W.



## A WORD IN SEASON, HOW GOOD IT IS.



HOW were you first brought to know the Lord? I asked one day of a young woman, who was in great bodily suffering, and with no prospect of recovery.

"It was a godly man's prayer for me that first touched my heart, and made me think," was the answer she made; and then went on to say:—"I was living as servant in a clergy-

man's house, and though I went into prayers morning and evening, and thought it quite right and proper, I never thought about my soul or its eternal welfare—never prayed for myself. After a time another clergyman came to stay with my master and mistress, and the first morning he was there, and each morning while he stayed, he took morning prayers, and, before closing, he prayed for my master and my mistress, and then for *me*. Many clergymen had stayed there before, and I was used to hearing my master and mistress prayed for, but to my knowledge I had never been prayed for in my life before, and he prayed for me as though he really wanted me to be blessed and saved.

“I went about my work as usual, but I could not forget it. It seemed so strange that anyone should do for me what I had never done for myself—ask for my salvation. Next morning it was the same; again that man of God prayed for me. How I listened to every word! He seemed to think the Lord was interested even in *me*, and I wondered if he could be right. It evidently struck my master, for at evening prayers he, too, prayed for me; he had never done so before, nor did he after that visit of the clergyman's. Three days passed so, and now I was terribly anxious to know

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how I could be saved. Now I was crying to God to let me see how I might be saved. I did not like to speak to my master or mistress, still less to their stranger-guest, and I longed for Sunday and church-time.

“The strange clergyman occupied my master’s pulpit. I listened eagerly for every word of the sermon. The text was, ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ He showed our lost condition by nature, God’s great love, the work of Christ by which we can be saved, and the simplicity of what our part is—we have nothing to do but to believe it all, and trust the blood of Jesus. He spoke of salvation as God’s gift, which we must have as a gift, or not at all. I saw then how I might be saved, but I was not sure if I trusted enough in Jesus, if I believed aright, and I came home still miserable.

“I was putting the tea on the table, when the clergyman who had preached came into the dining-room. Perhaps he noticed that I had been crying; I do not know; but he asked me, very kindly, if I had understood the sermon. I said, ‘Yes.’ Then he asked me, ‘Have you this gift of everlasting life?’ and I said, ‘I am afraid I have not.’ ‘Do you want to have it?’ he asked; and now I could not keep back the

tears any more: 'I want it more than anything!' I said; 'I would give everything to know I had it.' 'Come into the study with me,' he said. I said something about my work, but he said, 'I will speak to your mistress:' and I followed him into the study. He prayed first very earnestly, asking the Lord to open my eyes, to show me how simple a thing it is to trust Jesus. And then he read me two or three Scriptures, such as, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out;' and showed me it is the One we come to who saves, the One we believe in who *gives* everlasting life, and not the greatness of our faith, the strength of our belief, that gains it for us, that God delights to give it to every soul who wants it.

"I left the study, knowing that God had given it to me, and ever since then I have never had a doubt. It is five years since, and I have had sickness and sorrow, but the Lord has been with me in it all; and oh! I shall bless Him for ever and ever, that He put it into His servant's heart to pray for me, only the servant of the house, whom he had never seen before. But for that I might now be dying without Christ."—"Sow ye beside *all waters*."

## THE ANCHOR OF THE SOUL.

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LET my reader, be he saved or lost, imagine himself in the presence of a man past the prime of manhood, yet not so enfeebled by age as to render him incapable of work, were it not for an aggravated case of palsy which shook from head to foot that once strong and muscular frame.

There he lay, from morning to night, a helpless, impotent sinner, who had never heard that command, "Rise up and walk;" nor had the pleasant music for a distressed conscience of "thy sins are forgiven thee" ever reached his ear. To such an one the virtue, the power, the fulness of the Gospel were all new, so with the more delight did I preach to him "Jesus and the resurrection."

An intimation from a friend that I was coming to see him led him to expect me, so on my arrival the express end of my visit was explained.

"Well, Mr. P., has the soul found the desired rest?"

"Sir," he replied, "that is just what I want."

Ah! the sound of that word was one which

found no echo in that empty heart, and the huge drops, which fell from his eyes almost in streams, were the best expression of what was passing in the soul.

The anxious look, the fixedness of the eyes as they met mine, and the distraction of mind, all betokened *a man in earnest*, and, as he would at times say, "seeking the way." Yes, all was darkness, both around and within, but daylight was about to dawn; sorrow filled his heart, but soon would joy succeed.

There was no need to dwell lengthily on his state as a sinner, this first lesson had long been learnt, nor were his thoughts of sin other than any child of God would wish to see: the usual cry of a mere living religionist, of a walking epitome of profession without Christ, of shadow without substance, found no place here; sin with its dreary accompaniments was the only tenant of that woful heart; he was a *sinner*, in darkness and misery, bearing a weighty load, and would have given his all to know the relief of its removal.

Week after week I visited him, but still no deliverance. At last the light seemed entering, and one could watch the gradual change of countenance as the rays penetrated those dark chambers, forcibly bringing to mind the chaos and confusion, described in the opening book of

God's word, preceding that sublime fiat, "Let there be light, and there was light."

Two verses, above others, in the much-prized gospel by St. John, were, as he expressed it, the sheet anchor of his soul, viz., iii. 36, vi. 44. The Father was drawing him, and oh how fondly! Yes, and drawing to no other than the Son.

Reader, if you close your ear, if you defraud God of His right, Christ of His Lordship, the Holy Ghost of His joy, let me assure you, God will call another, for an object is before Him, and gain His end He will. But, thanks be to God, here was one not proving disobedient to the heavenly vision, and nothing would effectually hinder his response, for a godly earnestness characterised his search of a Saviour.

" 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.' Do you believe this?" I asked.

The dear aged one (as though I had thought him very incredulous) summed up all his mental energy and strongly resented such a question.

"Stay my friend, your confidence in God, His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, and His Word, is not so much what I question, as in *that which flows* as a consequence of believing. Look at it again."

"I believe in every Scripture, in every *Word* of God."

I took him to task. "Now, Mr. P., you have owned your sins before God, have accepted His Son, the Saviour of sinners, and, as though you were the only being in this world, have confessed that the Saviour is for you and you for Him."

"Yes," he replied. "Now read carefully the other part of that verse, 'Hath everlasting life.' You, as a lost sinner, but, on the other hand, as a believer in Christ Jesus, *have* everlasting life. Do you believe this?"

"Oh the thought is too great! It cannot be true! I that have never merited it, that never for a moment laboured for it, that hardly ever thought of my God, and still less thought to serve Him, that he should act thus is too good a thought for me!" These were his words.

"A *gift* is not a *reward*," said I, "were salvation or eternal life a reward, how then would the Giver receive all the glory? this would not be grace, nor the spontaneous gift of God."

This was enough; the work was accomplished; faith was growing strong, giving glory to God. At last he was resting wholly on the Word, everlasting life was his, God's free gift to him.

Remember, I beseech you, my reader, that if you are anxious, have really turned to that

long rejected Saviour, God declares it to be a fact concerning *you*, that you have eternal life. Do you doubt it? Then you call in question the truth, His truth! Come brace up the loins of your mind! In malice be a babe, but in understanding be a man. Will God deceive you? Then he has in marvellous grace written for you and me. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."

E. J. G.



## GOD'S GLAD TIDING'S; HOW HAVE YOU RECEIVED THEM?

"For our gospel came not unto you in *word only*, but also in *power*, and in the *Holy Ghost*, and in much *assurance*" (1 Thess. 1. 5).

**S**O wrote the Apostle Paul to his beloved Thessalonians; and in these days, the question at the head of this paper has become the all-important one. We do not ask, "Have you *heard* the gospel?" To the vast majority, if not all, of those whose eyes scan these lines it is a superfluous enquiry.

We are persuaded, dear friends, that you have heard it preached by many men, and in different ways, scores, aye, hundreds of times;

## HOW HAVE YOU RECEIVED THEM? 213

but this is the very ground we now desire to occupy in asking you, "Where do you stand before God, as those *who have so often heard* the glad tidings of his grace to poor sinners?" Has the gospel come to *you* in *word only*, or also in *power*, and in the *Holy Ghost*, and in *much assurance*. In other words, often as you have heard it, have you ever *once received it* in your inmost soul as God's message of love and mercy for you and to you, as that which exactly suits you, a poor, helpless, needy, guilty sinner; and having *believed it*, are you enabled to say that you *have everlasting life*, that you *are saved*, that your sins *have been forgiven*, that you *are* made meet for heaven and *have been* brought to God?

Be not deceived, my reader. You may have been all that is moral, upright, amiable, and even religious, and yet never have received God's salvation. You may be to this hour a Bible-reader, a church-goer, an alms-giver, even a regular communicant at the Lord's table, and yet unsaved. After the door of mercy has been closed many will come and knock, saying, "Lord, Lord open unto us; we have *eaten and drunk in thy presence*, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are, depart from me all ye workers of iniquity" (Luke xiii. 25-27).

Alas! too many are putting their trust in things, which (right enough in their own place for those *who have received Christ*) are simply a blind and a delusion to them, for they are putting them *in place of Christ*.

But what are the glad tidings of God? Who are they for? How are they received? And what effect is produced by their reception?

The gospel is God's power unto salvation to every one that believeth (Rom. i. 16). In it God's righteousness is revealed. The love of God, too, is fully told out. In a word, while in the law God was not made known, in the gospel all His heart is fully manifested. To the poor, needy sinner in his sins, conscious that he wants a title to heaven, and also the putting away of all his sins, it comes and gives both. It makes known how the sins are put far away, while the sinner is brought near; it delivers me from hell and fits me for heaven; it abolishes death and brings in life; it removes the fear of judgment, and causes me to rejoice in hope of glory; it breaks the chains of Satan's slavery, and makes me the Lord's free man; it turns me from doing my own will, and I become the slave of Jesus Christ; I am brought to God, made a child of God, an heir of God, joint-heir with Christ; sealed and indwelt by the

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Holy Ghost, I am united to Christ; as He is, so am I in this world.

Tell me, my reader, is it not good news that brings me the possession of all this; and much more, when I am not deserving of anything but the endless flames of the lake of fire? Yea, for such alone is the glad tidings of the grace of God intended. The salvation of God is for the *lost*. Pardon for *rebels*; everlasting life for the death-deserving; heaven for the *hell-deserving*. Peace has been made for those who were *enemies*. Access to God provided for those who were *far off*. Only take your place as ruined, guilty, and undone, and every blessing is offered to you unconditionally. Nor need the sinner fear anything from the thought of God's holiness and righteousness. The gospel fully meets every necessity. Yes, its very foundation stands on the righteousness of God. Wondrous thought! Grace reigns *through righteousness*. God is just, and yet the Justifier.

Do you ask, How has this been accomplished? Harken to His own blessed word, which declares "How that Christ died *for our* sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3-4). "For he hath made him to be sin

for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him " (2 Cor. v. 21). " For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God " (1 Peter iii. 18). " Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification " (Rom. iv. 25). Thus does the Spirit of God bring before us the blessed work of Christ in making an atonement for sin by His death on the cross, and God's acceptance of that work, and the expression of His delight in it, proved by His raising His Son from the dead ! And the blessed results of that work must be, and are, commensurate with its perfectness, and God-glorifying character ! It has accomplished two things : sins have been put far away, and the sinner brought near to God.

This double effect of Christ's work is beautifully illustrated by the scape-goat of Leviticus xvi., and the live bird let loose of Leviticus xiv. On the head of the former all the sins of the people were confessed, and it was then led away and let go into a wilderness, a land not inhabited. The latter, after being plunged into the blood of the slain bird, was let loose in the open field, and as it mounted up and disappeared in the distance above, it carried the blood up. Lovely type of sins

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carried away into the land of God's forgetfulness, and of the blood, which was shed to put them away, borne by Him who shed it Himself in resurrection into the very presence of God on high, where it has been sprinkled, as it were, in seven-fold perfection "before and on the throne." Both are put together in Heb. x.: "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (ver. 17). "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus" (ver. 19).

Do you ask, "How is all this blessedness made good to *me*, how may I *know* it is all *my own*?" God says, "*Only believe.*" "By him, all that *believe* are justified from *all things*,"—cleared from every charge of sin; "Being justified by *faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by *faith* into this grace (favour) wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "He that *believeth* on the Son hath everlasting life." "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.*"

Thus, dear reader, you are authorised, the moment you believe on, and put all your trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work, to *know* you *have* eternal life, that your sins are

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all gone, that you have peace with God, access into His favour, and joy in hope of His glory. Blessed gospel! May you receive it now, and may the effect produced upon you be as distinctly manifested as in the case of the Thessalonian converts of old. Of them it could be said: "Ye turned to God from idols, to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for his son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come." Thus shall it be seen and known that the gospel has come to you not in word only, but also in *power*, and in the *Holy Ghost*, and in *much assurance*.

H. P. A. G.



## CONVICTION, REPENTANCE, PARDON.

**I**N 2 Samuel xii. we have the above three important things brought out, each in their own individual importance. Yet the three form but one chain of three links. Their importance, as connected with every individual soul of man, cannot be overstated.

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David had sinned a great sin. He had slain Uriah with the sword of the children of Ammon, and had taken his wife to be his wife. The thing was offensive and displeasing to God, but as yet David was blind to the awfulness of his sin. He was hardened, no doubt, through the deceitfulness of sin, and perhaps had well-nigh banished from his mind the fearful crime that lay at his door.

In this we have a picture of man—the natural man. His life is one of independence of God, consequently of sin. Sin is lawlessness, or independence of God, and this is what characterises the natural man. He sins, but forgets it; and if now and again his conscience condemn, he excuses himself, and succeeds in relieving his conscience. He says, “I am not so much to blame; I am not so bad as my neighbour; and God is merciful.” And by such excuses and false reasoning, he quiets his conscience, and puts it to sleep again.

No doubt David, the fallen king, had to resort to such means to quiet his conscience, and by what we read in the word of God, one is disposed to think that he had well-nigh succeeded, for when Nathan the prophet came to him with his parable of the rich man robbing the poor man of his only lamb, he grew angry, and said, “As the Lord liveth, the man that hath

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done this thing shall surely die." Righteous enough in dealing with others, as he supposed. how little prepared was he to be confronted by the prophet of the Lord, and charged with the sin referred to in the parable; and how little prepared was he for the utterance of those words of divine conviction: "*Thou art the man.*"

Thus it is with the gospel, while people may be excusing themselves and condemning their neighbours, it thunders in their consciences, and says to each individual, "*Thou art the man.*" Individually we have to do with God, and the gospel, used by the Holy Ghost, brings individual conviction. It stands before each one and says, "*Thou art the man.*"

My reader, are you unconvicted? If so, the gospel of God says to you to-day, "*Thou art the man.*" But you say, I am moral; still "*Thou art the man.*" You say, I am religious and thoroughly temperate; but "*Thou art the man.*" "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" and "*Thou art the man,*" The law of God says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." You have broken the law, and therefore "*Thou art the man.*" It also says, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." You have sinned, therefore "*Thou*

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*art the man.*" It is no question of your neighbour, or of any one but yourself, for "*Thou art the man.*" You stand before God a proved guilty soul. I beg of you, therefore, to appropriate the words of Nathan to David: "*Thou art the man.*"

Those four words—" *Thou art the man!*"—did a work in David's conscience, a work that produced the deepest repentance. Those words were but God's arrow, which buried itself deep in his conscience, and prostrated him in deep humiliation of soul before God. Hear the language of his broken heart, "I have sinned against the Lord," and again, "I acknowledge my transgression; and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest" (Psalm li. 3, 4.) Truly divine conviction led to true repentance in this case. David is brought face to face with God; it is not merely a matter between him and Uriah; *but he had sinned against the Lord.* Here is what sin is: it is against the Lord. He is the Governor of the Universe, and it is against Him. David said, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." "Against the Lord"—"against thee"—is what the soul

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feels and confesses when divinely convicted. There may be sins against our fellow-man, but they are traced up to their true meaning, viz., rebellion against the authority of God. It is against the Lord.

My reader, God commands all men everywhere to repent. Have you owned his claims, believed His word about your sins, and breathed the confession of true repentance? God demands repentance: the soul's acknowledgment of its guilt and rebellion against the authority of God. Conversion is no mere sentimental thing; ah, no, it is heart work about the authority of God, about one's sins against him, and turning to Him in true repentance of soul. It is not merely turning over a new leaf, joining the Church, and being zealous for the cause. No, my friend, you may have done all this, and be lost for ever. You may have done all this without your heart and conscience feeling your sins, and owning in repentance that it is against the Lord you have sinned. The Lord Jesus said to the religious Pharisees, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke xiii. 3).

David took the ground of one guilty, and confessed his sins to the Lord, and the God of all grace was there to meet him with pardon. David said unto Nathan, "I have sinned

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against the Lord ;” and Nathan said unto David, “The Lord also hath put away thy sin ; thou shalt not die.” God was there in grace to meet the sinner as soon as there was repentance and confession. He against whom the sin was committed was the One, and the only One, that could put it away, and He did. “The Lord hath put away thy sin.”

It is so now. God, the God of all grace, meets the returning and repentant sinner with pardon and salvation. Jesus, the Son of God, has died for sinners ; and now God is able in righteousness, to pardon and justify the ungodly who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

What a pardon that must be that comes from God to us as the fruit of the precious blood of His dear Son ? “Without shedding of blood there is no remission.” But blood has been shed, even the blood of the spotless Son of God ; now God is free, in righteousness, to pardon and save for ever all who believe from their hearts on the Lord Jesus Christ. “To Him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth on Him shall receive remission of sins ” (Acts x. 43).

Oh, my dear reader, how unspeakably blessed is all this ! We have not to labour on, as if it were by our toil we were to obtain forgiveness of sins ; ah, no, the work is all done. “It is

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finished," cried the dying Saviour. And now in brightest glory He sits, the object for faith to rest on, and the Saviour of all who put their trust in Him. Do you know Him as the object for your faith? Do you know Him as your Saviour? Do you know Him as the One who *has* saved *you*? Think of his sufferings and death—of His shed blood. Can you say that, through His precious blood, your sins are forgiven and gone for ever?—appropriating that beautiful text to yourself: "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

If so, right happy are you; and who has such cause for happiness as you? Surely none. Oh, then, forgiven sinner, fellow-Christian, and fellow-heir of glory, seek now to walk so as to honour and glorify Him who has done so much for you. Let these words be thy motto: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me;" therefore, "For to me to live is Christ" (Gal. ii. 20; Phil. i. 21).

E. A.



## THE DANGER OF DELAY.

 HE will never be any better in this world. The doctor says she is going fast."

"Does she know her real condition?" I asked.

"Oh! no; the doctor says it would only hasten her death to tell her. We must be bright and cheerful when with her, and let her think that she will get well. It is all we can do now for her, poor child!"

"But, surely," said I, "you will not let her die without giving her some warning of her approaching end?"

"She has thoroughly made up her mind that she will so far recover as to live for some years, and we will not damp her spirits; no, she must not be told her end is so near."

"Can I go up stairs to her?" I said.

"Yes; she will be glad to see you."

Reader, if you have any thought about your soul's future, namely, that heaven or hell must be its eternal portion, you will understand what passed through my mind as I went to that sick-room.

What about her soul?—that precious soul! Must she die, I thought, without some knowledge of her condition? No, I will speak to her, and convey some idea to her mind that she may not get better.

Adie was a young relative of mine, one whom I dearly loved. But a few months before her illness she had left her childhood's home a happy bride, and now had been brought back to it, a shattered wreck of her former self, to die! A severe cold had settled upon her lungs, and consumption was doing its rapid work.

She had written to me a few weeks previous to my present visit, telling me of her illness, and I, being at that time unable to go and see her, had written her a long letter in which I had sought to put before her God's way of salvation, even Jesus.

I had received no answer to my earnest appeal, and now I fondly hoped to hear from her own lips that she was indeed a true believer in the Lord Jesus.

I gently opened the door of her room, and was soon seated by her side, gazing upon her altered face. She seemed to understand my look, for with assumed cheerfulness, she said, "Do you think I have altered much?"

"Yes, dear," I replied, "I did not expect to

see you looking so ill, but perhaps you are not so well this evening?"

"Indeed," she said, "I am very much better than when I came here a few weeks ago, so you must not, please, persuade me differently. It was only this morning that Dr. — told me I was certainly stronger, and he hoped very soon I should be able to return to my own home." Silently I prayed that God would enable me to speak to her faithfully of her soul's condition. My heart yearned over her, and inwardly I wished I could die for her. When I addressed her again, it was to speak of her husband. "He must miss you sadly, dear Adie?"

"Indeed he does," she answered, "and, oh, we were so happy together. We so well suited each other. I wish I had never seen that wretched place where I caught this cold; it has altered everything for us."

"No doubt God had a purpose in allowing you to catch cold," I said, "He is too wise to err, too good to be unkind."

"Perhaps so," she said, "but then we cannot make sad things seem pleasant."

"My dear Adie, if you only knew the tender sympathy of Jesus, you would not talk thus. You know that sorrow is no strange thing to me, but I tell you I would not have been

without one drop of it, for in the darkest hour I have found Him to be enough to fill my heart with peace and rest. Tell me now, has your illness led you to think of a region where all is fair and unchanging—I mean Heaven?”

A tear was hastily wiped away as she rather abruptly replied, “Oh! of course the thought does sometimes come, and more especially it did when I was so very ill, but I cannot think of anything mournful for long, there have been enough sad scenes in our family of late, I must be cheerful for my husband’s sake. I am sure I try every means to get better, and then there will be brighter days for us. It is so good of my husband to let me be here where I can have milder air and better nursing than he could get for me at home.” So she talked, and I saw only too plainly that God’s Son, the blessed Jesus, had found no place in her heart. “Adie,” I said, “I do not want to tire you, but I do want you to consider this all-important question—Is your soul saved? Are you resting on Christ and His finished work?”

“Well,” she answered, “we cannot be converted all at once; Mr.—, the minister of the church where my husband and I attended, has often said that conversion is a progressive work. We cannot give up old habits in a moment of time. I am sure Mr. — was

master of his subject, and a reliable authority."

"Providing," I interrupted, "that he gave you the word of God as his authority."

"Well," she said, "I'm sure he is a good man; I would rather believe his word than many others. Really, the services were most simple. I never did like High Church; but these services were all that could be wished."

"Adie, dear, do not weary yourself," I said, "about the difference between ministers and churches, but put your trust in Christ, for the Bible declares that He is the alone way through which a poor sinner can be saved."

"I do not think," she said "that I am worse than other people, that you should speak to me so. I am sure I regularly attended church, when well enough, and God knows that I am unable to go now. As to believing in Christ, why, of course I do; I have said it many times in the beautiful church prayers. It is useless telling me that belief in Christ will save me, but I trust that when my time comes to die I shall be prepared for the change."

I entreated her to bow to God's word, to own Him as true, to let God act as His heart wanted to—to save her from never-ending woe, to trust the blood of Jesus. But all seemed useless, and I parted from her, although with an aching heart.

That was my last opportunity of presenting Christ to her. During my following visits others were present with her, and she appeared to have no desire to converse with me. I looked around her room in vain for a Bible or tract, nothing but light frivolous reading surrounded her, and on my last visit a novel was hastily covered by her to escape observation.

Soon, very soon after, I received the sad news of her death. I could not describe to you the feelings of my heart on that sad occasion. With two others of her Christian friends I stood around her coffin to have one last look at that pale face. Then our tears broke forth.

"Ah," said one, "if we only knew she was saved."

"How did she die?" I asked.

"Very quietly," was the answer; "only two or three hours before her death, she walked across her room, and chatted brightly to her husband about soon going to their home."

"Did she show no sign of fear?" I said.

"No," was the response, "there was no time; she was suffocated, only a look and she was gone."

"She died so easily," said another, "that I trust she has gone to heaven."

"To rest our hopes upon an easy death," I exclaimed, "is but a miserable delusion of

Satan. Our only authority is the Bible, and that states most clearly the way whereby we may be saved. Had poor Adie given any evidence that she was trusting Christ, we should not be standing here sorrowing without hope. We can do nothing for her now; we must leave her to God."

Sadly and silently we left her room, and went and told Jesus.

Unconverted reader, I have written the foregoing account of my young relative, with the hope that it may be used of God to arouse you, ere it be too late, not to neglect His great salvation.

Believe on the Lord Jesus now, and you shall be saved. But do not put it off till you are laid upon a dying bed, or Satan may deceive you as he did poor Adie, and then the time of mercy will be past for you, and never-dying misery will be your fearful portion.

"*Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation" (Cor. vi. 2).

You may be outwardly moral, amiable, and even a professor of religion, but all this will not save your precious immortal soul. Do not, as poor Adie did, think that you are no worse than others, or that a little religion will suffice for God. Search the Scriptures; they will tell you that He looks not at the outward appearance,

but at the heart. "*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*" (Rom. iii. 23).

And is it not, dear reader, terribly sad to despise God's wondrous love? Have you thought of His love? Have you considered what it cost Him to send His only Son down to this dark world? Perhaps you have not thought of this. Think now; Who was it that was nailed upon Calvary's cross? It was God's only Son. Why was He there? As the bearer of sin, of your sin if you believe Him. The blood shed upon that cross cleanseth from all sin! That precious blood tells out the love of God to the perishing sinner.

But, woe to those who despise that Blood! God will never forget the work of His Son. He thinks much of it. It satisfied all His righteous claims against the sinner, and gives the believer eternal life and eternal happiness. Alas! my reader, if you are without Christ, you are in a fearful position. Though you possess health and all that this world can give, you are still poor if you cannot say—

"In pining sickness or in health,  
Christ for me;  
In deepest poverty or wealth,  
Christ for me;  
And in that all-important day,  
When I the summons shall obey,  
And pass from this dark world away,  
Christ for me."

Whoever you may be, delay no longer. Come to Jesus now; leave everything that keeps you in darkness, and bow to God's word, so that to you the Lord Jesus may never have to say, "Depart from me, I know you not."

E. E. S.



## THE LOVE OF GOD, AND THE WORK OF CHRIST.

"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.

**T**HERE is, I believe, a preparedness of heart that makes this precious Scripture fall with sweetness and rest upon some ears. And by this preparedness of heart, I mean a felt *need*. What is the use of coming to those who are going on calmly and quietly, caring for none of these things, and saying to them, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life?" They care nothing for it.

It is to them just as though, on a calm summer's day, when the sun is shining and all around looking fair, I were to take out a lifeboat to a ship in full sail, going merrily with the breeze, and beseech the crew to avail themselves of the lifeboat. What do they care for the lifeboat? they think far more of their own fine vessel, they laugh to scorn my offers. But if the sky darkens, the wind rises boisterously, the waves grow bigger and bigger, and, on some unseen rock the vessel springs a leak and begins to fill, if all skill, all energy is hopeless, and only a watery grave is before them, what will the crew think of the offer of the lifeboat then? Will they despise, will they reject it? No! no! How thankfully they avail themselves of it, each one only too anxiously awaiting his turn to go in her and be saved.

And thus it is with the safety God has provided, the eternal security He offers. When a man finds out for the first time that he is a lost sinner, that hell is before him, when his sins come crowding in upon him, and seem ready to sink him lower and lower; then when he has found out that he is lost, if you come and tell him the message that comes from the heart of God Himself, it is good news for him.

It is a wonderful thing then for him to see

that God has shown His heart perfectly for him to look at, and to find only love there ; love for the poor guilty sinner, though hatred of his sin.

It is not a question of the number of sins that you have committed that renders you lost, but the fact that you are a sinner before God.

How many sins did Adam commit for God to turn him out of Paradise? And if God would not let Adam stay in Paradise, because he had committed one sin, do you think He will let you into heaven, if you have even one sin on you? He will not !

If you have only one sin upon you, the Lord must have come down from heaven and died to put away that one sin, before you could go into heaven. You could not get rid of that one sin by any effort of your own. And if it be a " faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*," what is the good of your trying to make yourself a saint first? It is no good. God has tried man in every way, and has found no good in man. If you have not found out that you are lost, you are not in a condition to be saved.

People do not believe they are lost. They do not like to own it. A man will call himself

a miserable sinner; but you go and tell him he is a miserable sinner, and see what he will say to you?

If a man really believed he were lost, do you think he would go on in his sins and refuse the Saviour? No, no. If a man really believed it, he would be down on his knees crying for mercy.

I ask you, my reader, has the Spirit of God ever so worked in your heart, that you have found out, in the presence of God, that you are lost? If not, I warn you, you will find it out some day; and if you do not find it out now when there is a Saviour, you must find it out when there is no longer a Saviour, but only a judge.

When men find out that they are lost, what a happy thing it is to tell them of a Saviour who came to seek and to save them; to tell them that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

When I see the world as the object of God's love, I am filled with wonder and exclaim, "What a world for God to love, a world that hunted Him who was the expression of that love out of it; that would not have Him in it at any price, when He came in lowly grace, doing good to all!"

The Lord Jesus came into man's world to show man what God is. If there was a lame man in His path, He caused him to leap; if there was a blind man, He gave him sight; if there was a deaf man, he opened his ears; if there was a dead man, He raised him to life again. He was life in the midst of death; and yet man hunted Him out of his world, and so now He has gone back into His own world of light and glory, and flung wide open the gates of that world, saying, "Though you would not have me in your world, yet I will have you in my world, and none shall turn you out of it!"

Such is the love of the heart of God! Christ has gone back to the Father now, the *first-begotten* from the dead. If I look at the life *coming down*, it is "the *only begotten* of the Father." If I look at the life *going up*, when He has got you and me, it is "*the first-begotten* from the dead." Christ is the first fruits, afterwards we that are Christ's—we that have been begotten again.

It is almost past talking about, this love coming down. Look at the Lord's gracious dealings with this man Nicodemus in our chapter, He takes him on step by step, puts the axe to the root of that religious tree, and says, Nicodemus, you must be born again. Then takes him on, and explains His meaning, takes him

to a picture book, as it were, and shows him the camp of Israel in the wilderness ; shows him it was a look that gave life to those who were bitten by the fiery serpents, a look at the lifted up brazen serpent ; shows him, too, that the Son of Man must be lifted up for the eye of faith to look at Him.

But first there is the Father's love. Not only must the Son be lifted up, but He was lifted up in consequence of the Father's love who gave His Son.

Man says, "If I could only love God !" You are all wrong my friend, it is God who loves you ! You are trying to force love out of your heart for God ; you will never melt your heart in that way. The only way of melting your heart is believing the love of God for you. He gave His Son. The Father gave His only Son.

It was God that thought of you, and God who has done the whole thing Himself, all that is necessary for your salvation. It was God's will and Christ's work, and now we have the Holy Ghost's witness to it.

As water rises to its own level, so the love of God comes down to this world of sinners and takes hold of them, and then carries them up till it finds a resting-place for them where it started from—in the very heart of God.

“Whom he predestinated,” there is the love of God in eternity, “them he also *called*; and whom He called, them he also justified,” that are in time; “and whom He justified, them He also glorified,” that is in eternity again. It starts this beautiful circle in eternity, with God’s foreknowledge and predestination, and ends in glory with Himself in eternity again.

What a relief it is to turn from men’s trying to work their way back to God, to the simplicity of God’s gospel, that “God so *loved* the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* (that is, anybody that likes) believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

This love of God addresses itself to everybody and says, Anybody that likes may have, not only the negative thing—sins forgiven, but the positive thing—*eternal life*.

I love to turn my eyes to that cross of God’s beloved Son and say, There is every claim of God against me met entirely, by the precious blood of Jesus, the One He Himself provided to meet those claims.

Has your eye, my reader, ever turned to Calvary. Many a time your eye has turned in on yourself. How many times have you looked around, like the man in the 73rd Psalm, and seen the wicked prospering instead of the

righteous. But have you ever looked up like the man in the 63rd Psalm, and been satisfied.

You have looked within and found sin, you have looked around and found confusion, but have you ever looked up and seen that man up there, the God-man Christ Jesus, seated on the throne of glory.

I see Him on the cross, and I know He bore my sins there. I see Him in the grave, where man sealed His tomb and set a watch in order to keep Him in. Poor wretched man, this is your heart, and what a heart! They rolled a great stone to the mouth of the grave, to try to keep him in the bowels of the earth, if they could!

I love to follow Him on three days after, and see that great stone rolled away. That He might get out? Far be the thought; but that they might look in, those poor trembling disciples, that you and I might look in and see an empty grave. Yes, there is an empty grave, and an empty cross, and a *filled throne*, and the One who had my sins upon Him on the cross is in glory now without them. Where are they, then? God says, "As far as the east is from the west, so far have I removed their transgressions from them."

Can my sins be brought back on Christ?


They cannot! Can they be brought back on me, then? *Impossible!*

You think something *will* be done if you believe. No, nothing *will* be done, if you believe; something *has been* done, and there remains no more to do, God is telling you about what has been done now. "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe *are justified.*" All that *believe.* Scripture does not say a word about feelings. It is he that *believeth.* Every one who trusts to his feelings makes a mistake, like Isaac, the first we hear of who trusted to his feelings. He *felt*, and thought it was his son Esau, and it was Jacob.

Have you ever thanked God for what He has done for you. You may have thanked him for daily mercies, but have you ever gone down on your knees and said from a full heart, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!" If you never have done so before, the Lord give you, my reader, as you lay down this paper, to bend to His love now, while He still offers it to you so fully, so freely, before the day when bend to him you *must*, not then to His love, not to the voice of tender beseeching as now, but to the voice of His wrath, for when the great day of His wrath is come, who shall be able to stand?

W. T. P. W.

## 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 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 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 cast-away."

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 vile 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 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 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 words:

"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 could'nt 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 you say any more about that; you make too much of what we did, but we see what you mean sir, its 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 the 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."*



## WHAT DEATH DOES.



O the believer who must pass through it, death is only leaving that which is mortal; it no longer bears the terror of God's judgment, nor that of the power of Satan. Christ has gone into it, and borne it, and taken it away totally and for ever. Nor that only,—He has taken its source away. It was sin which sharpened and envenomed that sting. It was the law which, presenting to the conscience exact righteousness and the judgment of God that required the accomplishment of that law, and pronounced a curse on those who failed in it,—it was the law which gave sin its force to the conscience, and made death doubly formidable.

But Christ was made sin, and bore the curse of the law, being made a curse for His own who were under the law; and thus, while glorifying God perfectly with regard to sin, and to the law in its most absolute requirements, He has completely delivered us from the one and the other, and, at the same time, from the power of death, out of which He came victorious. All that death can do to us, is to take us out of the scene in which it exercises

its power, to bring us into that in which it has none. . . . Instead of fearing death, we render thanks to Him who has given us the victory by Jesus.

J. N. D.



"JESUS CHRIST IS LORD."

Phil. ii. 8-11.

"Jesus Christ is Lord ;"

Once I could not see,  
Cared not for that blessed word,  
Would not bend my knee.  
Now let heart and voice  
Tell it all abroad ;  
Grace hath made me to rejoice,  
Owning Him as Lord.

"Jesus Christ is Lord ;"

Hear it, earth and heaven ;  
Name o'er every other name  
God to Him hath given.  
Once He stooped to die,  
Bearing sin's award ;  
Therefore now exalted high,  
All must own Him Lord.

"Jesus Christ is Lord ;"

Sinner, hear it now ;  
Soon before His judgment throne  
Every knee shall bow.  
Once He died for all ;  
Trust His faithful word ;  
Own as at His feet you fall  
"Jesus Christ is Lord."

ANON.

## BROUGHT BACK TO GOD.

**W**HO shall tell the mischief which has been done in the world, the dishonour done to God and His Christ, the misery brought to many of His dear children, and the ruin to souls by a false gospel? The following instance is but the sample of too many:—

An earnest Christian lady, perhaps still living, once mentioned to a brother in Christ the case of a man in her "district" in London, in whom she was greatly interested—an infidel shoemaker.

On going to see him, the visitor found that the man had (as usual) "many and weighty difficulties" against the inspiration of the Scriptures.

"Well, what are they?" asked his visitor. "Let us have them one by one." And so they were presented. The result so far may be anticipated by those that know the power, the exact (because divine) consistency, the marvellous *adaptedness* of the Bible to meet every "difficulty."

The infidel was not one of those who

make pretensions to the intellectual superiority so loudly claimed by his class, and he advanced his "objections" with the air of one who distrusted them himself, acknowledging at last that he had got them all out of a book, which he produced from under his work-bench, and which was found, and proved to him, to be like all works of the kind,—full of misrepresentation, falsehood, and statements founded on gross ignorance.

Instead of struggling to maintain his ground, the man seemed to find relief, and even gratification, in the demolition of the infidel author's false "facts" and reasonings, and at the close of the interview, begged his visitor to come again as soon as possible.

He did so, and then the truth came out. The man was not really what he seemed, viz., an infidel. "Why then, did he pretend to be?" you will ask; well, you shall hear.

He had once been a village Sunday-school teacher, and *a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ!*

He told his visitor, with tears in his eyes, that he still remembered the happy hours he had spent in his earlier days, surrounded by his class, or leading his little flock to the chapel he attended. But in an evil hour he came to London to lodge with, and work for an ungodly master.

He was but a young man then, just out of his apprenticeship, and his master compelled him to work on the Lord's Day. To resist his master's unjust and ungodly demands would, he knew, cost him his situation, and as a stranger in London, he thought there would be nothing before him but destitution.

"I hadn't faith, sir," he said. "I couldn't trust the Lord. And so," he continued, "I did as master wanted me to, though I was miserable, and did it with a bad conscience. I felt I was sinning against light and knowledge; yet I went on with it."

One day I went to hear a preacher, and he told us that *if a believer fell into sin, he was lost*, and would surely be damned, unless he could "repent and believe the gospel" all over again, the same as he did at the first. And if he *couldn't* feel the same sorrow for sin, the same groaning and tears he had once gone through, it was a proof that God had given him up and left him for ever.

Such were some of the statements which this so-called minister of the gospel of the *grace* of God made in this poor man's hearing, and now mark the result.

"I went home that night, sir, and tried hard to rouse up the same feeling of repentance I had when I was first converted, but I couldn't

do it anyhow, and I believed God had left me to myself. I was afraid to go to sleep, and sat on my bed with my back to the wall to keep myself awake, for I thought if I fell asleep I should open my eyes in hell. For three weeks I went on in this manner, only getting a little sleep when I was sitting among the men in the shop, for somehow I felt safer there, though I don't know why I should. That's all the sleep I got for three weeks, and what I went through, night after night, I can never tell you."

Just think of that, dear reader, think what this poor young man must have suffered during those three terrible weeks, alone all night in his chamber, in darkness, weariness, solitude, and despair! It must have been (as he expressed it) "a foretaste of hell," indeed! And this was one of the fruits of a false gospel; yet only one, for more followed.

"I felt the Bible was against me, sir, and so I tried to give up the Bible and make myself an infidel" (the true secret of all forms of infidelity and atheism, although from widely different causes).

"The men helped me on in it, for most of them were infidels, and took it by turns to read books of that sort, while the others did the work for him that read, as they do in other shops. But, somehow, I couldn't quite fall in

with it, though I tried hard to, and have been trying ever since; and that's a good many years ago now. I think I had nearly got to it when you came the other day. I told that lady as has called on me so often, that I was an infidel and didn't want to read her tracts. My wife read's 'em; but what's the use of 'em to a man who knows the Bible is against him, and that God has given him up?"

The poor fellow asked this question with a calmness that would have astounded his visitor, but that he reflected it was, and had been, the settled conviction of many years, for he was middle-aged now, and it was when a young man that a false gospel had turned him aside.

If there were any feeling at all expressed in the poor man's manner, it was not one of *dread*, he had gone through all that; it was not despair, he had made up his mind to all consequences long since; it was rather a feeling of *indignation against God* for having given him up.

Again I say, think of that; think of the dishonour done to God by a false gospel. "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," represented by a false gospel as having less pity, less compassion than you or I, dear reader, would have had on a poor young man, little more than a boy, helpless in the toils of the adversary.

The visitor's first business, of course, was to show this poor fellow, that believers are NOT UNDER LAW BUT UNDER GRACE. "We are dead to the law by the body of Christ;" that just as a man, sentenced to be "hanged by the neck until he is dead," and executed by the law under which he was sentenced, is for ever freed from the law, so the believer having already suffered the full penalty of the law, in the Person of his precious substitute, is for ever freed from the law that had condemned him; that therefore he, even *he* who had so grievously gone astray from his God, from his loving Father—gone unto "a far country," spent all that he had, and fed on the husks of infidelity, had not the condemnation of a judge to fear; but had a Father's heart to come back to, a Father who had missed him, and loved him still through all his sinful wanderings.

The poor man left off work, leaned his worn face on his elbow, and listened in wonder, wonder at himself, his blindness, his folly, his iniquity in so fearfully misjudging the God of all grace; and when his visitor went on to show him further, that he that believeth "HATH everlasting life, and SHALL NOT come into condemnation, but IS passed from death unto life," that "neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present,

nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from THE LOVE OF GOD which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ; ” the man was overwhelmed, and the visitor retreated and left him with God.

On calling again next morning, he found his friend rejoicing in the Lord. “ I didn’t do another stitch after you left, sir, and I didn’t sleep all night. My joy was so great, that my wife thought I was beside myself.”

From that time he made it his business, as soon as his day’s work was done, to go in the evening among his shopmates and former infidel companions, and talk to them as the Lord enabled him. In this way God was glorified, His word exalted, His Christ magnified, and not a little work cut out for the shoemaker’s visitor. He got introduced to places (‘ shops ’ as they were called), where perhaps twenty men sat round the room at work, with, as is commonly the case in such manufactories, one man, who was looked up to as a leader, and able to meet any “ parson ” who might have the temerity to intrude.

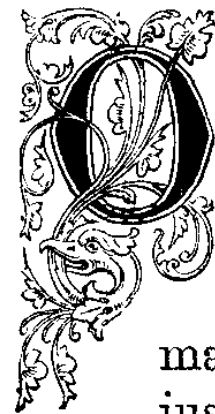
The dear man’s simple testimony stirred up the adversary of course, but God owned it.

To destroy that which had almost destroyed him was the shoemaker’s delight—to tell of Christ, his privilege and his joy.

Nor did he confine his labours to infidels. Every door in his locality was opened to the district visitor above mentioned, and she found her way wonderfully smoothed by his honest testimony and earnest but quiet zeal. One thing he told his friend was very touching. It was that all through the weary years in which he *tried* to forget God, to ignore the truth of His word, to blind his own eyes, and to become an infidel, there was one passage of Scripture (probably that used at his conversion) which never left him, and always hindered him from becoming *quite* a sceptic. He could not shake it off; it was in his ear, and in his heart when that heart was at its hardest. It was Christ that followed him in all his wanderings, as the Rock followed Israel in the wilderness, its sweet waters ever telling as they flowed of a love that knows no weariness; the Spirit of Christ evermore whispering in his ear the word that at the first had brought him to God. He had misjudged Him most bitterly, but He would not let him go: His love still followed, nay, "went before to search out a resting-place" for him, and found it at last, in spite of all the evil done in his soul by A FALSE GOSPEL.

J. L. K.

THREE DIFFERENT CHARACTERS ;  
OR, THOUGHTS FROM  
LUKE xviii. 9-14, and PHIL. iii. 1-11.



IN thinking over the Scriptures which I have before me, three very different characters rise before my mind's eye. (1) The self-righteous, or self-justified man. (2) The self-empty man. (3) The Christ-righteous, or God-justified man ; and I seem to see each of them looking in a different direction. The *first* is looking around at others. The *second* is looking within at himself. The *third* is looking up at Christ in glory. I will glance at them in this order.

The first, or self-justified man, we are told in Luke xviii. 9, "trusted in himself that he was righteous and despised others." That is, he compares himself with other professors of the same creed as himself, and he finds to his own intense satisfaction that he is much better than most of them. He looks around, it may be, at those attending the same "place of worship," and sees "extortioners, unjust, and adulterers," and he thanks God that he is not like them (nor

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even like that bad man in the next pew to him, v. 11), nay more, he is actually religious—"I fast twice in the week," and benevolent—"I give tithes of all that I possess," v. 12.

Now, unsaved reader, is not this something like what passes through your mind as time after time you enter your "place of worship," and look around at others in the congregation?

Know, O vain man, that God now judges men not by a merely moral code, nor by his relations to his neighbour, but God is testing everything, by that blessed Man who was rejected and despised by the religious of the earth (see Matt. xxvii. 20, 41, 43; and 1 Cor. ii. 8), and was hanged on a tree, but is now raised to God's right hand by the glory of his power. Tell me, Can any righteousness of your own give you a link with that blessed God-man?

The next character before me is the *self-emptying man*. The man who, like the publican, has learned that the "extortion, knavery, and adultery" are not in others but in himself, in that breast of his which he beat again and again in agony. He cares not to look around on "others," and he dares not "lift up his eyes to heaven." There he stands afar off, for he knows he has no right to draw nigh to God—crying for *mercy* (or propitiation), for *righteousness* would condemn him to hell as a sinner.

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This is real repentance. A man taking his right place before God. Surely a fit case for "the balm of Gilead," as it is written in Luke v. 31, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." A worthy case for "justification freely by God's *grace* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (or mercy-seat, which the publican cried for) through faith in his blood" (Rom. iii. 24-25). How blessed it is to see that it is our sins which fit us for the pardoning mercy of God.

But now I come to the third character. The Christ-righteous, or God-justified man of Phil. iii. 7-11. The man who has seen Christ in glory as the One who has been raised from the dead by the power and righteousness of God for his justification, and he has peace with God by faith in the God who raised Christ. Peace as certain and unalterable as Christ's place at the right hand of God. And now he trusts in Christ, and despises himself. This is the man who can look up, for he has found perfection in Christ risen and glorified, and nothing good in himself.

The God-justified man has despaired of himself. He has come to the same conclusion about himself that God did 1800 years

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ago, when He condemned sin in the person of Christ on the cross. And he has learned that there is nothing before God now, but Christ risen from the dead, and his whole ambition is to know more of that blessed One in whom he is "complete" (Col. ii. 10).

Oh! my reader, what a change is this from what he was before. Once he used to say, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I *more*" (Phil. iii.4), but now he calls himself the *chief* of sinners. What has brought about this great change in his soul? How is it that the most righteous man has become the chief of sinners? It is in this way—He has not only been born again, but revolutionised by a sight of Christ in glory (read carefully Acts ix. 1-20), and he has learned that that blessed One who has had no place at all in his heart or in his religion—because there was "no room" for Him (Luke ii. 7)—is the very One who is the centre of all God's affections, thoughts, and counsels.

But now let us listen to the inspired utterances of the Christ-righteous man.

"But what things were gain to me (self-righteousness) those I have counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suf-

ferred the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may have Christ for my gain (or win Christ) and be found in him. Not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, (Phil. iii. 7). He desires to have nothing but Christ for his present and eternal portion. Oh, my readers, may you know the blessedness of this, for His Name's sake !

ANON.



## THE HEART OF GOD AND THE HEART OF MAN.

**W**HAT do you think of my heart ?" said a lady, who was supposed to be suffering from heart-disease, to her medical man.

"I think that your heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," was the prompt rejoinder, much to the patient's amazement ; for she had not expected to hear God's verdict on the heart

of man, and the doctor's opinion of her body would have been more palatable.

Truly, indeed, is it added, "Who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9). The natural heart does not like to have to condemn itself and bow to God's word; to give itself up as totally, irremediably, and hopelessly bad. Such sweeping condemnation as—"The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores" (Isa. i. 6), offends; but, reader! have you not proved, that "he that trusteth in his own heart is a fool"? If so, you will be glad to let the Lord search your heart by the light of His word, knowing "that there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed," and that the entrance of His word "giveth light."

Man's heart was not long in declaring itself. Eve's heart left to itself—losing confidence in God's—was soon deceived; and before the flood, all that God could say of man was, that "his wickedness was great," and that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Gen. vi. 5). Judgment followed, for God was not then dealing with man on the ground of grace; the cross had not yet caused "mercy and truth to meet

together, righteousness and peace to kiss each other."

All through God's word we have sad pictures of man's heart; it was "fully set . . . to do evil" (Eccles. viii. 11); it broke down under every trial, and on every occasion. But, oh! how terribly it declared itself when—

"The Father sent the Son  
A ruined world to save;  
Man meted to the sinless One—  
The cross: the grave."

Grace could not move that heart of stone. Take your Bible, and read what the Holy Ghost has recorded, by the pen of man, of the Lord's life on earth; of His death, "by wicked hands crucified and slain;" and see if you can rise up and argue, that there is *any* good in man! Wicked hearts plotted, and the Son of God was betrayed and murdered. And when Stephen brought it home to their consciences, "cut to the heart," they stoned him to death (Acts vii.).

But if the cross fully exposed *man's* heart—your heart and mine, my reader—how it caused *God's* heart to shine out in contrast! Did judgment follow, as before? No; for sin was atoned for by Christ's death and blood-shedding, and God's righteousness declared, so that the love and grace that were in His heart were free

to act towards guilty man. He could now "justify freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24).

How unweariedly he carried out His own purposes! He *declared* His love to the world by sending His only begotten Son into it (John iii. 16)—that "great love wherewith He loved us." He "*manifested*" it towards us, by sending Him to be "the propitiation for our sins" (1 John. iv. 19); and now from the glory "God *commendeth* his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

Man's heart was indeed bent on its own destruction, but God—when man had done his worst—turned that "worst" into blessing. "Love is strong as death." God's love has its source in His own changeless heart, for "God is love" (1 John. iv. 6).

Oh! reader, if you have ever had *your* heart broken under the burden of your sins—under the sense of what your sinful nature is in the presence of God—you have known the blessed relief of finding out what *His heart* is toward you—"longsuffering, not willing that any should perish" (2 Pet. iii. 9). "A broken and a contrite heart, he will not despise." But if the "God of this world"—Satan—is blinding your eyes

to your real condition, may the veil be torn away in time, and not, too late, in eternity!

I do not deny that there is amiable and unamiable human nature! This the Lord Himself recognised; looking on the rich young man He "loved him." But it would not, nevertheless, ensure an entrance into the "kingdom of God" (Mark x.). Amiability pleases man; it makes the possessor pass easily with his fellows, and through life, but it will not do for God. "They that are in the flesh *cannot* please God" (Rom. viii. 8). And the name of Christ raises the bitterest hatred often from the most agreeable people. For "the carnal mind is *enmity* against God." These amiable people are like "a potsherd covered with silver dross." "Burning lips and a wicked heart are like a potsherd covered with silver dross" (Prov. xxvi. 23). The "potsherd" is continually showing itself, even to man. "But out of the *heart*," the Lord said, "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts; these are the things which defile a man" (Matt. xv.) "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? *not one*" (Job xiv. 4).

Ah, dear reader, you must learn like Nicodemus, that God will not deal with the old man; He has judged *that* at the cross. "Ye must be BORN AGAIN" (John iii.)

“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” *There* is the means of entrance for you! The word of God, of which “water” is a figure must reach the evil of your nature, and deal with your conscience, laying it open in God’s presence. You must be “born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the *word of God*, which liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Pet. i. 23). “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Received by faith in the power of the Spirit of God, it produces a new nature, capable of delighting in God, with new desires, and new affections. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit.” The two cannot be mingled; they are distinct in their origin.

Oh! how thoroughly God knows us, in and out, as we do not know ourselves. May you, dear reader, take *His* estimate of your heart, and let Him lead you to delight in what *His* heart finds rest and satisfaction in, even in CHRIST. What a heart is *there*! Try it as we do, it cannot be weakened or grow cold; and our poor empty hearts cannot be satisfied elsewhere. “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” Solomon failed to find anything but “vanity” under the sun.

"Thou hast made us for Thyself," said Augustine, "and the heart never resteth till it findeth rest in Thee." Do we not find it so every day? Then "trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding."

Do not, I beseech you, be among those who "despise" the goodness and forbearance of God; and, with a "hard and impenitent heart, treasure up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath" (Rom. ii. 4).

"My son, give *me* thine heart." He cares to have it, even as it is. W. E.



## "I WILL GIVE" AND "LET HIM TAKE."

GOD'S FREE GRACE, AND MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 17.



IN Revelation xxi. 6, we read, "I will *give* to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." And in the 17th verse of the next chapter we read again, "Whosoever will, let him *take* the water of life freely." These are the two last gospel statements in Scripture. Let me ask

you for a few minutes, to give your undivided attention to them, dear reader.

In the first of these Scriptures, God announces Himself as a giver. He never takes away. He delights in giving, and here He offers a gift worthy of Himself. He says, “I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”

Mark these three words, “*I will give.*”

A gift is something quite independent of the one who receives. All he has to do is to take what is given, and enjoy it.

Nothing delights a giver more than to see the one he wishes to benefit rejoicing in his gift, not questioning or measuring the love that bestows it. It is not to supply a superficial need God gives. Ah! no. We were lost, dead in sins; and that we might have life, God gave us what was more precious to Him than anything else. Having one Son, His well-beloved, He gave Him to die; He spared not His own Son for us, the One who was equal with God came to lay down His life. Thus we see the preciousness of the gift and the depth of the love of the giver.

You could not take, unless God gave; but when He gives, you are bound to take. And the Lord Jesus gives us, poor lost sinners, the very life He himself possesses, He says, “Because

I live ye shall live also." Christ, the Life eternal, that was with the Father from everlasting, was manifested in this world for us. But for Him man never could have known what God the Father is.

Christ was the perfect expression to man of God, by Him was seen the great love of God, that God is Love.

By Him also was made known that God is Light, that there is no darkness at all in Him.

This, then, is the gift that God announces in this Scripture He will bestow. The fountain is Christ the Lord, through whom the water of life eternal truly flows to lost, ruined, thirsty man.

God gives to us individually. He says, "I will give to *him* that is athirst." As elsewhere, our Lord says, "If any man thirst, let *him* come unto me and drink," and "*him* that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." So here, the gift of eternal life is individually bestowed, the water of the fountain of life is offered separately to every lost soul. And why is this? Ah! there is a deep reason. It is individually we have to do with God in time, it is individually we shall all appear before Him in eternity. And so I must personally accept, or personally deliberately reject, the salvation He offers through Christ. He accounts me as

responsible before Him. Only those who have done so can tell how blessed it is to drink of the fountain of life, to accept God's gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord, in simple believing faith. But oh! what will the rejecter of God's now freely offered gift have to say for himself, when he appears face to face in the day of judgment before the One whose salvation he has neglected and despised?

And as the life God gives through Christ is life in His presence for ever to the believer, so the complete opposite must result to those who believe not. To hold otherwise, to try to persuade oneself this is not the case, as alas! so many do in this day, is completely to lay aside the plain declaration of the revelation of God, and to yield oneself to the power of the evil one. It is futile, indeed, to endeavour to measure and estimate the value and benefit of the work of the cross. This can never be done, because the One who suffered there was divine; the doom it saves from, therefore, must be as endless as the heaven, which the work of the cross leads into.

It is to those who are athirst God gives. To be lost is the only recommendation the sinner needs with the Saviour. "Not those

who are whole need a physician, but those who are sick." The Lord Jesus "came not to call the righteous, but sinners"—came to seek and save the lost. Oh! the blessedness of experiencing the thirst that none but God can satisfy. Many indeed feel thirst, but go else where than to the fountain of life to quench their thirst.

"Whom have we Lord, but thee,  
Soul thirst to satisfy?  
Exhaustless spring! The waters free,  
All other streams are dry."

Finally, the gift is free: both these Scriptures close with the same word FREELY. "God always gives as God," without money and without price; every one who thirsts is called to come to the waters; by grace are we saved through faith, and even this is not of ourselves, *it is the gift of God*; not of works, lest any man should boast. God does not bargain with man about the gift of eternal life. He gives it freely to him: greater and lesser debtors, each and all, having nothing to pay or to give, are frankly forgiven by Him. It is this that magnifies the great grace of the Lord, and shows His love divine, fathomless and without motive, to the lost sinner.

The sinner must be nothing, that the Saviour may be everything. And never, during any

after period of his time-state down here, or of his eternal existence hereafter, does man bring more glory to the Lord, than when he comes in believing faith, a weary, heavy-laden, sin-sick, *lost* soul, to the One who is a just God and a Saviour.

The other Scripture we are thinking of, is the seventeenth verse of the next chapter, “ Whosoever will, let him *take* the water of life freely.” The Book of the Revelation is by no means gospel in its character. But God delights in salvation: and in these, the last closing words in the last book of His revealed mind, He, as it were, turns aside and utters, once for all, the last divine command and invitation from God to man, “ Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” The word “ whosoever ” shows all are included. The remedy is equal to the disease; the supply is equal to the need. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God; the whole world is brought in guilty before him; every lost son of Adam needs atonement for the soul, redemption for the body, and to be reconciled to God. And so the word is “ whosoever will,” “ whosoever ” leaves me without excuse.

Mark the three next words which follow: “ whosoever will, *let him take.*” This is man's

side of the question of salvation, his responsibility.

In the first Scripture we were considering God's boundless grace when He says, "*I will give :*" but here He addresses man as responsible and says, "*let him take.*" I am responsible before the Lord to take the salvation He so freely gives. What a thought ! And it is this truth which will constitute the unending misery, the accusing conscience of those of whom our Lord said, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life" (John v. 40). "Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand and no man regarded, I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh ; then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer ; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil" (Prov. i. 33).

Christ "gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. ii. 6), not one was left out ; for "the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter iii. 9). Now God beseeches you to be reconciled to Him. What a thought ! *God beseeches you.* But he will not always do so. The day will come when He will no longer

charge you to take the water of life, when it will be no longer optional with you to do so. You are free to take it now, then you will not be.

A day will come when this earth beneath our feet—rich and beautiful as it now is, and even then will be—and the heavens above our heads, will pass away with a great noise from the presence of one who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and in whose sight the heavens are not clean (Job xv. 15).

The Apostle John of this says, "I saw a great white throne" (the throne showing judgment, long delayed but come at last, white, purity), "and Him that sat on it, from whose face the heaven and the earth fled away, and there was found no place for them. And 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 the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged, every man according to their works, and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire; this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of

life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 11-15). This is the last scene in which this earth, and those who are on it will take part. This will close God's forbearance with the earth. It was ruined by departure from Him; and though long ages have rolled by of His love and grace since then, yet now when he sits in judgment, both heaven and earth flee away from before His face, all evil is judged finally, and for ever.

See, oh! unconverted soul, the end of this world which you now allow to possess your heart. But what of those who are on it?

The whole lost human race from Adam, great and small, then appear before the Judge. How do they appear? As dead, dead though out of their graves. Oh! awful, unspeakably fearful reality, "*I saw the dead stand before God*" (dead though in His presence), "and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books," still dead though in judgment.

Then every action and event of the past life of each will reappear and be judged. Oh! how will every thought of your heart, and action of your life stand the burning light of that great white throne. Men speak of events as past and gone. There is nothing past and gone. All will then reappear. Long, long

before the blessed and holy resurrection of those who are Christ's has taken place (ver. 6).

*You need never be amongst that number* who stand before the great white throne in that day. For in the very same Scripture which records these fearful coming realities, God says to you to-day, "I will give to him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Oh! take His gift, and take it *now*. For the time is short, the time is at hand when the Lord will come quickly, and then the day of grace will be over, and the unjust and the righteous, the filthy and the holy, will be let remain as they are (Rev. xxii. 10, 11, 12).

Therefore heaven and earth are called to record against you this day, that life and death, blessing and cursing, have been set before you, therefore CHOOSE LIFE (Deut. xxx. 19). "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Let him drink, and live for ever.

R. B.



FRIEND, WHERE WILL YOU SPEND  
ETERNITY?

## DOING OR RECEIVING.

Luke xviii. 9, to end.



HERE is one thought in this passage of the greatest moment, which I desire, by the Spirit of God, to press home on your heart, dear reader. There are four men brought before you in the chapter; two of them knew the thing I am about to press on you and two did not; two failed to see it and missed the blessing.

The Lord Jesus said when on earth, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Blessed word! and yet if I had only that word I might think that I had something to bring to God, but Hebrews says, "The less is blessed of the better." If you have something to bring to God, who will get the more blessed place of giving? You! But who is to get the more blessed place? You or God? No! no! you and I must take the place of having nothing to bring, and must therefore be receivers.

The Holy Ghost shows us here, that though there is to be blessing for man, it is only on

this ground, that he takes the place of the *receiver*.

The first man that we have before us in our passage takes the place of a righteous man, and where is there a righteous person? The Holy Ghost says, "There is none righteous, no, not one!" Grace may justify you, but you could not justify yourself.

The Lord brings out these two characters, because they give us a picture of the heart of a man who does not know what he is as a sinner, and the heart of one who does.

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself: God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." What is the burden of this man's prayer? I, I, I, nothing but I. He is a thorough egotist, but it is what every one is till God opens his eyes and shows him what he is in himself. He is the picture of self-complacency; he does not want blessing, he has no consciousness of need in his soul. He was a sinner all the time, but thoroughly self-righteous.

Are you thinking you are not as other men, my reader? I find Scripture says, "As in water face answers to face, so the heart of man to man." It is perfectly possible some may not

have gone the lengths of others, but the Lord says, "There is none righteous, no, not one!" and I must own, if I am honest, that there are in me principles of evil that would carry me to the lengths that any one has gone, if it were not for the restraining grace of Christ, and for the circumstances by which He has surrounded me.

Do you think that you are better than your neighbours? When a man gets to learn what he is before God, he can only say what the poor publican says here, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He stood afar off, for he knew he had no right to draw near to God; and when he caught a glimpse of heaven's light, he could not lift up his eyes, for he knew that light could only convict—could only condemn him; he could "not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to *me* a sinner." This man is intensely individual; he says, "to *me* a sinner," not as people say, "We are all sinners." He is conscious of his guilt, and not seeking to cover it up; with an overwhelming sense of sin on his conscience, he can only put up this prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

He knew that righteousness could only condemn him, truth must condemn him; and therefore he says, It is mercy I want, mercy I need.

The Pharisee wanted nothing. He did everything himself, gave everything, gave tithes, fasted, and yet all the time was on the very brink of hell, a sinner in his sins; and if you are like him, another day may find you in it; and then, what will you find out? That you are exactly like other men!

God will always condemn a man who justifies himself, and justify the man who condemns himself. Are you a man who has any need in your soul, who desires to hear words whereby you may be saved? If you are going to have blessing, you must have it on this principle, that you are going to humble yourself and let the Lord exalt you. If you condemn yourself, He will justify you. If you are going to be in the kingdom of God, what must you be? A little child! In the camp of Israel, the smallest child was nearest to the manna and could most easily reach it. The principle is, you must go down. It is the confidence of a child that is the most attractive to you, and the Lord says you must be as a little child. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein;" and even though you do get the kingdom of God, how do you get it? As a *receiver*, not as a giver of anything for it.

Now we have another man presented to us.

„A certain ruler asked him saying, Good master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" Christ talks about receiving; and here comes this man all bustle and fuss and says, "What shall I *do*?" He comes to the Lord and calls him "Good master." Earnest he was, and a remarkable man too, for when Jesus beheld him He loved him, so Mark x. tells us. There was something about this man that moved the heart of the Lord.

This man has for the moment waked up in his soul the thought that there is something beyond time. I ask you, have you no thought of where you will be when this scene that occupies you so now will have passed away?

Christ always takes up people on the ground they come on; He says, "Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, that is God." The Lord gave the ruler here the opportunity of saying to him, "But you are God." But he missed seeing the Divine Person of this one whom he recognised as a teacher; yes, he lacked one thing, Christ had not been received, Christ had not been believed in.

The Lord says to him, "Sell all that thou hast and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come follow me." Why did the Lord tell him to do this? Because he took up the ground of lov-

ing his neighbour as himself, and he was very rich yet. Had he loved his neighbour as himself he could not have been, for the law claimed that he should divide it with his neighbour. To love my neighbour as myself is to divide what I have with my neighbour till I have nothing left to divide.

Do you think the Lord wanted him to infer by this, that he was going to get eternal life by selling all that he had? Not at all; but He tested him by this, tested his heart to see if he were thoroughly in earnest. If he had been thoroughly earnest he would have said, "Let it all go, I would rob myself of every earthly possession to get this wonderful prize, eternal life."

For a moment he put the things in the balance. In the one scale all his wealth, in the other scale poverty, and Christ's company, and discipleship; the pondrous weight of his earthly treasure weighs down the scale, he is sorrowful for a moment, and then he turns his back on Christ and eternal life and goes away, and we never hear of his returning again.

Look at the contrast in Bartimeus. What said the ruler, "*What shall I do?*" What says Christ to this poor blind beggar? "*What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?*" "Lord, that I may *receive* my sight," he replies. Ah! Bartimeus, you are in the right way. The

rich man goes away sorrowful, and gets nothing; the poor, blind beggar gets all he needs, and follows Jesus in the way. You must receive, God must be the Giver, and you must be the receiver if you are to have eternal life; Christ Jesus Himself is eternal life, who has loved us and died for us, and is now at the right hand of God in heaven.


Have you owned your ruined state as a sinner and bowed to the Lord Jesus Christ yet? Have you received Him yet—Christ for yourself, Christ for your Saviour? He wants to bless you, wants to save you, will not you let Him have His own way? “To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” To believe on His name is to receive Him. He has died on earth to put your sins away; He is in heaven now, bow down to Him, He is waiting for you to come to Him, waiting for you to confess His name.

If you have never received Him before, receive Him now; if you have never confessed Him before, confess Him now, let Him have the joy of hearing you own Him; by and bye He will own you before His Father and before the holy angels. “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” are his own words.

W. T. P. W.

## “ WHY CAN'T YOU RECEIVE CHRIST ? ”

“ As many as received him, to them gave he power (right or privilege) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name ; which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God ” (John i. 12-13).

OME few years ago, whilst staying at the town of N—— in Berks, I drove out one Saturday morning with a Christian friend, a farmer, to a small hamlet, named W——, where his farm lay.

Entering the old farmhouse, which was inhabited by the shepherd, his wife, and daughter, I found the latter sitting upon a couch at work; and, taking a chair by her side, entered into conversation with her. She told me that for some years past she had been suffering from paralysis in both legs, which quite prevented her from moving about ; so, after sympathising with her in her affliction, I sought to point out to her that the Lord had a wise purpose in all He did, for He tells us that He doth not afflict willingly (or from His heart), nor grieve the children of men, and that in putting His

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hand upon her thus, it was to lead her to think of Himself, and of her future (Lament. iii. 33). She had evidently considered the question of her salvation, having been spoken to by others on the subject, but appeared quite blind as to the blessed simplicity of the Gospel; her thought seeming to be similar to that which we so often meet with on all hands, that as she was a sinner, she must try and be better, do the best she could, pray for mercy, and hope that God would forgive her sins.

I sought earnestly to show her the folly of trusting in anything that she could do, in any form or shape whatever, that God had declared the whole world to be guilty (Rom. iii. 19), that all had sinned and come short of His glory (Rom. iii. 23), and that, therefore, it was too late to talk about being better, but that He had shown His pity, compassion, and love, by giving up His own Son, Jesus Christ, to die for sinners on the cross (1 Tim. i. 15), and that He had raised Him from the dead for the justification of all who believe on His name (Rom. iv. 23-25); and then, further, showed her that as He had finished the work and glorified God, there was nothing left for her to do, but then and there, as a poor lost sinner, to believe on Him, and that God would forgive all her sins at once, and she would thus have peace.

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It seemed to be quite a new thought to her, that she could do nothing whatever, but that Christ had done all, and that therefore there was nothing left for her to do (John xvii. 4 ; xix. 30). Forgiveness on such easy terms seemed to her, as it has to many more, too good to be true ; but blessed be the God of all grace, they are His terms, and those only by which a sinner can be saved ; and well it is so, for surely if it depended on us and our wretched doings, not one would reach the glories of yon bright scene. Oh ! that many, many more would all their useless doings cease, take God at His Word, and believe on Him who has done all, yes, *all*, long, long ago, as the little hymn we so often sing so simply and blessedly sets it forth :

" Nothing either great or small,  
Nothing, sinner, no ;  
Jesus did it, did it all,  
Long, long ago."

After a few more minutes conversation, during which my friend came in, and also assured her of the simple and precious truths of the Gospel, we parted.

On the following Tuesday, a message came to me from the poor afflicted one, asking me to call and see her again, as she was so

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wretched, and so anxious about her soul, that she could scarcely eat or sleep. I went over in the afternoon, but circumstances compelled me to make but a very brief visit, but through the mercy of God, it was time enough. Again sitting down by her side, I found her in a deeply anxious state.

“ *I want peace,*” she said “ *I want peace.*” Turning to the Scriptures, I read to her, amongst other passages, the precious words in Rom. iv. 25; v. 1, “ Who 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;*” and asked her simply, “ *Why can't you receive Christ?* ”

The words went home; the Spirit of God applied them with power to her soul; she saw that Christ was one who met all her need, that He had done all, she could rest in Him, and peace, sweet peace, was the result; old things had passed away, behold all things had become new. She was now a new creature in Christ Jesus, a child of God, an heir of glory (2 Cor. v. 17; Rom. viii. 15-17).

My friend again coming into the room, we knelt down and praised the Lord together for His mercy to her, and then departed.

Not long after I received the following letter,

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which speaks for itself of the great change that God in His grace had wrought in her soul.

W— —, 24th Nov., 1875.

"MY DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,— I hope you will excuse the liberty I have taken, being so far beneath you. I have such peace through the blood of Christ, I cannot help writing to thank you, for you taught me the truth of God. He has plucked me as a brand from the burning. May the Lord bless you in all you do; and wherever you may speak a word, may the Lord open the heart to receive it, may the Holy Spirit lead you wherever there is a poor heavy laden sinner as I; for none taught me as you taught me, nor could I see myself such a sinner till then. 'Why can't you receive Christ?' these words seemed to pierce my heart. I thank you for teaching me: I thank God for sending you, I thank and praise the precious Saviour that died to make my peace with God; through faith that peace is my peace.

I have settled peace with God, for He who is our peace is changeless; for then are we happy when our eye and heart are only fixed upon the blessed Lord and His finished work on the cross. It is a blessing to be able through God's grace to lift up our heart to Him, "whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice

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with joy unspeakable and full of glory.” I long to be with them that love my Precious Saviour: how I long to see my parents resting on the finished work of Christ, and all the world besides; but the Lord's time is the best. Hoping this may find you well, if it is the Lord's will, with many thanks for the book; I like it much, and all kindness; I remain your affectionate sister in Christ.”

H—H—,

Beloved reader, how is it with *your* soul? Can *you*, through the grace of God, speak with the same confidence? Can *you* say, I have settled peace with God? Can *you* say, “He has plucked me as a brand from the burning”? If not, let me intreat you not to delay the settlement of so deeply important a question as the salvation of your soul; let me warn you to flee to Christ as the only refuge from the wrath of God, so soon to be poured out upon all, whoever they be, who shall then be found *without Him*. He, and He alone, can save you; and He it is who bids you come to *Him*; He says to all, “Come;” high, low, rich, and poor, “Come;” moral or immoral, honest or dishonest, religious or irreligious, despisers, rejecters, neglecters, professors, hoppers, workers, sceptics, infidels, “Come;” “Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37).

All are included in that one precious Gospel word, "*Whosoever*," you and everybody; and He bids you come "*now*"; for *now* is God's time, to-morrow may be too late. "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

Does my reader say, "But, how am I to come?" I reply, Why, just as you are, without one plea, as a poor lost sinner. Come, believing. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved (Acts xvi. 30-31). Believe now, and peace in your soul will be the blessed result. "Being justified by faith, we *have* peace with God" (Rom. iv. 25). "Christ made peace through the blood of His cross" (Col. i. 20). Believe, and Christ is your peace for ever. "*Why can't you receive Christ?*" E. H. C.



## GATES SHUT OR GATES OPEN.



THROUGH the gloom and fog of a London night in November we hurry; one train has been already missed, shall we again be so unfortunate? Straining our eyes through the mist, we can dimly discern, by the lighted clock over London Bridge station, that

our train is due. We reach the station, we see the ticket-collector at his post, we even see the gates open—and then, e'er we can reach them, they are closed: we are *almost* in time, but *too late*! No one relents, no one re-opens them, we are *shut out*!

Another November night in the country—cold, wet, and getting on for midnight. We are driving home in the darkness through the quiet villages we know so well, till we see a light before us, a light in the lodge window! and as we near it, we find the gates open: a few steps further and opened doors cast a broad light over us as we alight, tired, wet, and hungry, to find ourselves *at home*. The gates are open, we are welcomed, *shut in*!

Down to the gates of death were hastening two crucified side by side and One “in the midst.” Two were dying for their own sins: One was dying “the just for the unjust.” “He knew no sin.” But a few short minutes before the two had been railing on their companion; now one of them says, “We indeed justly; we receive the due reward of our deeds; this Man hath done nothing amiss.” And this unjust one suffering justly says to the Saviour, “Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom.” List to the reply, “Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be

with me in Paradise." A few more solemn hours and the gates of death are passed by all. Then to one of them, the unjust and unrepenting railer, the door of Paradise is shut, but the "gates of hell" stand wide open, and he enters in at the "wide gate" to be "where their worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched." He had walked in the broad road, he had turned away from a Saviour, his end was destruction.

But how will the once unjust, but now *justified* man pass through the gates of Paradise? He will go in company with the just One, his Saviour and Redeemer; and mark *His* reception: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in." "By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption." Through those gates was welcomed the Christ, the king of glory, and also through those gates passed the *first* of His blood-bought train. "The Lord shut him in."

Yet once again there is a picture; the city, the holy Jerusalem, descending from heaven, having the glory of God, and arrayed in all the splendours of a millennial day. Walls and twelve gates of pearl are there, but gates that "shall not be shut at all by day;" *never shut*, for

there is "no night there." And yet inside those walls and gates is one company, and outside another. *Inside* are "His servants" who "see His face," whose "names are written in the Lamb's book of life." *Outside* are all who defile, or who work abomination, or who make a lie; those who are not "written in the Lamb's book of life."

Reader, *now* is your time for choosing between gates open or gates shut, inside or outside. The moment that unjust and dying man turned his eyes in faith on a Saviour, that moment he was made ready for Paradise; and the moment you look to Jesus you *are* "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;" "by grace you *are* saved;" and the gates of heaven are as wide open to you as they were to that dying thief. Christ's death opened the way, for "He suffered for sins, to bring us to God." But if you do not choose now, it may happen to you to be *almost*, but *not quite* in time; for "when once the master of the house has risen up and shut to the door," it will be in vain to remonstrate. Think how pleasant to arrive at an earthly home and find gates open and a welcome! Think how much more it is blessed to know that Christ has already entered the Father's house and prepared a place for His own, and to have the certainty of being

for ever with Him in that holy city, where they need no candle, neither light of the sun. The only ones who "may enter in through the gates into the city" are those who have washed their robes; and *now* Jesus says, "*I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved.*"

H. L. H.



### FOR THE LAST TIME.



**I**T was Thomas P.'s happy service of love to attend at the door of a large meeting-room in which the Gospel is preached, and where he had himself, some four years previously, been aroused to the sense of his own need as a sinner. Having subsequently found peace through the precious blood of Christ, it was T. P.'s desire to bring others to the knowledge of the same blessed Saviour; and this not only by his hearty services as door-keeper on the Lord's day, but in his calling as a sailor he would earnestly seek the blessing of any yet unsaved mate. A weekly engagement on board a cutter which carried the mail to the French port of St. M.

took him from his home in the island of G. every Monday till Friday, when he was joyfully welcomed back by his wife and four little ones.

T. P. was at his usual post the eve of Lord's day, Jan. 12, 1879; but as his well-known form stood at the door, how little he and others thought it was for the last time! Before going to the meeting, he sang in his humble home the hymn beginning,—

“His be the victor's name;”

and another after his return, beginning—

“Glory unto Jesus be.”

This was a special favourite with him: and often might his cheerful voice be heard singing the last verse:—

“Ye who love Him cease to mourn,  
Patient wait His sure return;  
For His saints with Him shall reign,  
Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.”

The next Sunday afternoon, many hundreds were following the sailor's remains to their last earthly resting place, while his happy spirit was with the Lord for ever.

Thomas P.'s captain was a godly man, and there were others on board the “Reindeer” who knew and loved the Saviour, indeed they were named in derision, “The sanctified crew.” In the cabin were hung words of Scripture, and the well-known hymn, “Rock of Ages;”

and in that little retreat, T. P. and his pious captain used to read the word of God together.

On Monday, Jan. 13, some delay occurred in the usual hour of sailing; and at midnight the vessel was still off the coast of G., while a fog rendered it dangerous to proceed. But it was a good boat, and the passage well known; and spite of warning they ventured onward. Rumours and anxious fears soon succeeded; and it was not long before the truth was known that the Reindeer had been wrecked, and the five bodies of the captain and crew picked up on the shore of the neighbouring island of J. None lived to tell the tale; but the boat's clock having stopped at 2 A.M., and the captain's watch at 5.15, suggested that there was probably this interval ere all hope of safety was at an end. The efforts made to preserve the mail bag and money entrusted to the captain, showed how mindful they had been of their charge, even in such circumstances of danger; while the swelled hands and many bruises told of the vain grasp at a last hope, of the violence with which the bodies had been dashed among the rocks, and how impossible it had been to reach the land. But the Lord was watching over His own, and took them away from the storms of this life to be with Himself at rest for ever.

It was a memorable day in the island of G. when those five bodies were brought back for interment, each one being conveyed to the place where he had been wont to meet with others and hear the word of God. Thomas P. was the last to be buried, being borne to the grave by some of his Christian friends on the afternoon of Lord's day, Jan. 19. "His be the victor's name" was one of the hymns sung at the well-filled meeting-room, and "For ever with the Lord," beside the open grave, where the word of life was also preached in the hearing of many. The Lord grant that His own voice of warning and mercy may yet be heard by those who cannot forget the wreck of the Reindeer. There were some who had intended to go by that very trip, and who through one circumstance or another were kept back from a watery grave. To such there is indeed a special voice; while to each and all the truth applies, that for everything in this world there must be a *last time*. When that handsome little cutter left her accustomed port on the Monday evening, how little the admiring spectators thought it would be for the last time! And warnings have been multiplied around us even since that sad event, pressing upon the heart the present value of that gracious word, which we would fain sound in the hearing of thou.

sands who are hurrying on to everlasting perdition; "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). And to those who know the Lord, and desire to fulfil any little service to Him, is there not also a seasonable word brought to remembrance? "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccles. ix. 10). It may be for the last time. Our Lord and Master says, "Behold I come quickly" (Rev. xxii. 7-12). G.

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### THE TWO GOVERNORS.

"And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves" (Luke xxiii. 12).



WE know not why, or for how long these rulers were at enmity with each other. "Hating one another" is what Titus iii. 3 declares is common to fallen man.

It was no new thing in the world's history for kings even to be opposed. But, dear friend, what strikes one in the verse quoted, is the strangely solemn way in which

“Pilate and Herod were made friends together.” What marks this day so specially? It is this! The Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed “Son of God” and “Son of man,” “the Saviour of the world,” has been taken, and bound, and led to the high priest as one deserving to die; so thought man. Thence He is led to Pilate the governor of Judea; Pilate, puzzled and perplexed by such a strange prisoner, sends Him to Herod; who, coming out in his true character, mocks Jesus and sets Him at nought.

Now mark the words: “the *same* day Pilate and Herod were made friends.” Let us weigh such a statement and see what is involved in it. The very day on which Jesus was delivered up to be crucified, these rulers were made friends. How startling, and yet plain the truth is. They shake hands at the expense of the Saviour, the Son of God. Little indeed did they know of what solemn import this action was—or of all that that *same day* would bring forth. Yes, my reader, they agreed to make up their differences, to be at peace with each other, at the very moment when man’s hatred was showing itself out against that spotless victim—when that cry was on his lips, “Away with him; away with him; crucify him.” What a moment for friendships to be made; when even the

Jews and the Romans sink their enmity that it might all be spent against Christ.

Now, friend, what of you and me? Is it not still the fact, that men are agreed to keep Christ out; to give Him no place? This, too, at a time when the story of the cross is all told out and man left without excuse. Are not human friendships made and kept up while Jesus is still a stranger and an outcast? Does not that verse apply in principle. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." Surely it does; and I put it to you, reader, as to myself; how are we living and acting with such a Scripture before us? Are we courting the world; or keeping up some earthly friendship, while keeping Christ out all the time. Ah, friend, let us be in earnest; let us be real before God as to how we are treating Christ, His beloved Son.

How many are kept from deciding for Christ by the thought, What would such an one think? or by the ties of friendships formed in this world. How often the laugh of a companion, or the fear of the world's "cold shoulder," are used by Satan to prevent souls saying—"Christ for me." Is not all this, Pilate and Herod over again; and that, too, in a day when we have their sad example before us, and the good news of the Gospel all made known. Some friendship formed at Christ's expense shall we say

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again? How solemn! And what must God's judgment be on those who are guilty of such sin as this--the rejection of His Son? What numbers of people put off believing, because of some sin indulged in, some pleasure enjoyed, some prospect looked forward to! How frequently have such become solemn warnings to us by being called suddenly into eternity. Oh, my reader, that you might be decided for Christ *now*, that the facts of His *love* so unbounded; His *death* so powerful to atone for sin; His *blood* so precious to cleanse; His *work* so infinite to save; *His person* so *altogether lovely*, might bow you wholly in His adorable presence as we together exclaim,

"Go, worthless world, I cry, with all that's thine,  
Go, I my Saviour's am, and He is mine."

T. E. P.



## INFIDELITY AND THE LOVE OF GOD.



IN the year 1867 there lived in the S. W. suburb of London a gentleman, who was an infidel as well as a man of learning, and used to write for different periodicals, address public meetings, &c. About twelve months before his death he was invited,

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with others of London belonging to the rifle corps, to visit Belgium. He did so; and while there was taken ill, but was much noticed by the king, who had him cared for and attended by his own physician. At length he returned home, and this illness terminated in death.

One of his family, feeling much concerned for her father's eternal interest, invited Christian neighbours to visit him, but the hard infidel heart rejected their counsel and prayers with insulting language. After this, she came to the writer of this paper and requested him to see her parent, whom all the family felt would not live long, adding, "*Do not be afraid* if he should swear at you, and bid you leave the room, as he did Mr. — the other day; but I don't think he will do so to *you*, somehow I have faith to believe he will listen to what *you* say; oh, do go."

On my first visit he ordered his rifle to be brought, and explained its merits, saying much about his own importance, and stated that when a speaker failed to interest a large public meeting, he had been requested by nobility to stand up, and he had at once secured attention, and the meeting passed off well. I then said, alluding to himself, "*Affliction* is the common lot of man, and is the fruit of sin." He was then assured that God is love, that He loves

the sinner, which was proved in the gift of His only, well-beloved Son, who died the just for us the unjust, that He might bring us to God. As I was requested not to talk much to him on my first visit, I shook hands, and going out of the room turned round and said in a loud voice, "*The Lord bless you!*" my heart being lifted up in earnest entreaty for the poor, dear man. He replied, "I thank you for your kindness ; come again soon."

In a few days I again visited him, much prayer for his conversion having been offered during the interval, and I found that the Holy Ghost had commenced a work in his soul, which was carried on with power during the two or three weeks he remained on earth. As soon as I entered his room, he arose from his arm-chair in his dressing gown (the poor fellow was an immense size, caused by dropsy) and embraced me in the strongest terms of affection ; kissing my forehead, patting me on my cheek, embracing me with both arms, asking me to excuse it, saying, "You won't mind it ; we are both fathers, and in years." It was done in love for the good news brought to him on my first visit, that GOD IS LOVE, which he was constantly dwelling on. I was enabled through grace to direct him to portions of the Word suited to meet his case.

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Two or three days after I sent a few lines, principally quotations from the word of God, which had thoroughly broken down the once boasting infidel, the man of learning and ability, and filled him with the love of God in Christ. This he placed under his pillow, and would have it read to all his infidel friends who came to see him. My daughters called one day after, to whom he said, if he were raised up again, the remainder of his life should be spent in making known the love of God which he had so lately discovered; if it were possible, he would have it written on every leaf of every tree.

He sent a message to me, saying, "Do come again soon; tell your father I want to hear MORE about these things." He continued rejoicing, and in a few days his spirit was absent from his poor suffering body and present with the Lord.

Such was God's grace to the infidel. Should this meet the eye of an infidel, the Lord may convince him that his principles will not stand the test of a dying hour, and that God has an eternal weight of glory to bestow on all those who believe in Jesus to the saving of the soul.

J. T.

## HOW I FOUND THE LORD.

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It is now almost three years since two of my sisters were converted to the Lord.

They had just left school, and were in the midst of the pleasures of the world. One day a friend asked them, as a favour, to go and hear the Gospel preached, and they went; and on that same evening the Lord blessed His word to the salvation of their souls. Ever since that day they had again and again entreated all of us to go with them to hear the Gospel, and had often told us of the Saviour's love for us, and that He was not willing that we should perish, but that we should accept His free gift of everlasting life.

But none of us took much notice of what they said, and often we laughed at them. Constantly, too, they talked to me when alone, but I never heeded what they said, and told them I had enough religion on Sundays without having it on week days.

I went on in this way, rejecting Christ, for

about two years and a half more, and then I began to think about eternity; and I knew that if I died I was sure to be lost for ever. I could not put the thought of it from me, and it made me wretched, though I did not tell anyone I was unhappy. I continued in this miserable state for about seven weeks, when I went to hear the Gospel. I listened attentively the whole time, but did not feel any benefit until afterwards, when a friend of my sister's spoke to me, and among other texts he quoted, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). I had heard it before, but it never came home to me as then. I thought, Jesus says so, it must be true. I took Him at His word, believed that He would not cast me out, came to Him, and went home saved and rejoicing.

My youngest sister was saved a month afterwards.

And now, in the space of two and a half years, the Lord has been pleased to draw to Himself seven out of a family of eight. I used to think it was hard to believe, but it is as simple as possible; just simply trust Jesus. Come to Jesus while it is time; don't put it off. You may never see to-morrow, and what an awful thing to die unsaved. Come now, for "Behold, now is the accepted time! behold

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now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2). Believe God and you are saved, for He says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. xxii. 17). "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi. 47). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts xvi. 31). Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). G. F. de C.



## WHAT IS RESERVED FOR YOU? \*



BELOVED reader, I ask your attention to a few thoughts suggested to me by the question at the head of this paper.

Can you appropriate these words in 1 Peter i. 3-5? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath begot-

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\* The writer of this article, a young man, well known to the Editor of "God's Glad Tidings," was called home to be with the Lord very soon after he had penned it. May its warning appeals be blessed of God to many young men.

ten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Have you been begotten unto a lively hope? Or the same thing—Are you born again? Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour? Can you say, My Saviour? looking forward to that time when we who believe shall enjoy the now reserved inheritance. These are solemn questions, and if you cannot answer them with an honest Yes, oh think what is reserved for you! If you are not yet "born again of the incorruptible seed of the word of God," you are in a dreadful condition, and in the most dangerous position outside of hell.

Now I want you, before you read a bit further, to answer this question to yourself: Am I born again? If you are not, there is no middle state now; you are unsaved, away from God.

There is no middle state in eternity. If you die thus, there is nothing for you but the unmitigated wrath of God. Oh! the unutterable anguish of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire which is NOT quenched."

But, perhaps you say, you are not going to put me on the same platform with drunkards, and thieves, and such like. No, my dear reader, I wont do it, but the word of God does. It matters not how respectable outwardly you may be in the sight of men; if you are not born again, you are on the same platform with the most profane. Now if you have not applied to yourself what the word of God says about man as fallen, corrupt, undone, and ruined, you will not believe the above statement. But listen to the unerring word of God: "There is *none* righteous, no, not one" (Rom. iii. 10). Again, in verses 22, 23, we have the righteousness of God offered to all; "For there is no *difference*, for all have sinned and *come short* of the glory of God." You have *come short* of God's standard.

To give an illustration of what has been said: suppose in the place where you dwell, notice is given that a recruiting sergeant is coming to get men to be Life Guards, but none will be received unless they are six feet. Before he comes, those who wish to be Life Guards begin and measure themselves. Well, there is one taller than all the rest; but when the sergeant comes, he does not come up to the standard six feet, by one inch. So you see he would be just as ineligible

as the one who was six inches less, Now, my dear reader, this is what plenty of people are doing as regards spiritual things. They are measuring themselves by standards of their own making; and taking for granted they will not be lost at the last, having never learned this solemn truth,—that every soul is responsible to learn that it is lost at the first.

Now what God wants you to do is simply to believe what He says about you as a sinner, and then you will be sure to appreciate what He says about Christ as the Saviour, the One who took the sinner's place on the cross—who bore what he deserved, who declared before He died, "IT IS FINISHED." What was finished? The work of redemption. God has been satisfied and glorified about the question of sin, because the infinite wrath of God was poured out upon the Spotless Victim as He hung on the cross a sacrifice for sin. But the cross is vacant, the tomb is empty, and now amidst the glories of the throne of God, sits Jesus, the One who can save you, and not only can, but is willing and waiting to save all on the ground of what He *did* on the cross. Oh! look to Him now and be saved. If you do not, you will perish, and that for ever. Oh! consider what your condition is now if you reject Christ—"With-

out Christ, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12). Consider, too, what is RESERVED for you if you remain Christless. If you die, your soul will go to hell. And finally you will be in the lake of fire, "Prepared for the devil and his angels,"—not for man.

On the other hand, consider what you get *now* if you accept Christ. You get forgiveness of sins, and are justified from all things. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the *forgiveness of sins*, and by him all who believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). Eternal life is received. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Peace with God is known. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God." All this we have now, and far more. And oh! the blessedness of being like and with Christ in the glory of God, who may come at any moment and take His blood-bought people home. Reader, which is your portion?

OLIVER S.



## THE CONVERSION OF H. B.



“ I had taken a cold, and was seized with violent bleeding at the nose, a cough and fever setting in, which threw me on a bed of sickness. Kind friends visited me, and read to me of the *love* of God in sending *His Son* to die for sinners. I saw myself a sinner, and thought to myself, ‘Can this be love to *me*?’ My heart was touched!

“One night as I lay on my bed thinking of God’s love, and the great and mighty sacrifice of His own Son going down into death for *me* a *great sinner*, I became very anxious, and after much distress of mind I fell asleep, weary and troubled. I dreamt that God called me. I seemed to see a beautiful light, and I went towards it. Oh! it was ‘above the brightness of the sun;’ and as I drew near I still seemed to hear a voice saying, ‘Come, only come!’ I seemed to go on and on, and then I became dazzled and confused by the great light. As I stood still wanting to go on, but filled with awe, and fearing to do so, Jesus Himself appeared beside me. I *knew* it was *He*—Himself.

I said to Him, 'I want to ask God to forgive my sins.' He took me by the hand and said, 'No man cometh unto the Father *but by me.*' I looked and saw in His hand the print of the nail, and I knew it all! that it was He who had died for *me*, and rose again; that that pure, spotless One had been nailed to the 'accursed tree' for *me*; then I saw that 'He bore *my* sins in His own body on the tree,' and that *I* was now free from the load.

"So I awoke with a cry of joy, and my wife was surprised and asked, 'What is the matter?' 'Oh!' I said, 'I am so full of *joy*, Jesus has put all my sins away, and I am saved.' God's blessed book has ever since been my meat and drink, my joy, my best companion through four years of great bodily suffering. I am now only waiting for His Son from heaven, but it may be that our Father may see fit to let me fall 'asleep in Jesus,' and it will be all joy to be 'absent from the body, present *with the Lord.*'"

I visited H. B. frequently for over three years, and I never knew him express a doubt, or his faith the least bit shake. As his body grew weaker the life of Christ shone out so much the more brightly, and when I visited him I could often say,—"*It is good for me to be here,*" going home strengthened and refreshed for

my own little trials. Oh! his was a bright testimony, indeed! The last week of his life seemed just to be lingering between life and death. He had always a smile and welcome for me when I went in; and when he could scarcely speak, would point to a chair near him for me, and would try so hard to speak of Jesus, often interrupted by a terrible cough which continued to the very last. I saw him one Sunday afternoon for the last time. When I went in, he smiled and said, "Almost home." Several young men came in to see him, and seemed deeply impressed by the *reality* of his conversion. He remained quite sensible until the last, falling asleep in Jesus on Tuesday.

His greatest, and indeed *only* anxiety seemed to be about his wife. He was not *sure* that she was resting in Jesus. The last Sunday I saw him I was speaking to a young man about the two natures, and the life of Christ in him, which he did not see clearly, though he thought he was "born again." H. B. heard me, and raising himself up said, "Yes, Christ *in you* the hope of glory" (Col. i. 27), and sank back exhausted. These were the last words I ever heard him speak, except "Good-bye," very feebly.

How beautiful it is to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." E. F. P.

## THE HEART'S QUESTION; MAN'S ANSWER AND GOD'S.

“**S**IRS, what must I do to be saved?”  
Such is the question that necessarily arises in the heart of one who has found out he is lost, and in danger of the lake of fire. Now we will hear man speak first, and see what answer he returns to the heart's question, and if he can lead that heart to rest. For if he cannot lead the heart to *assurance* and *rest*, and God in His answer can, then surely the anxious soul will turn a deaf ear to all that man has to say, will believe what God says, and thus “set to his seal that God is true.”

First let man answer the question, and you will find in his answers what you may hear almost every day, if you put the question.

“Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

“Well, do the best you can of course.”

“But what do you mean by the best I can?”

“Why, go to church, take the sacrament, say your prayers, ask God to forgive you your sins, and try not to commit any more.”

"But suppose I should commit more, which I am almost sure to do, what am I to do then?"

"Oh! go back and ask God to forgive you again."

"Then will all this church-going, sacrament-taking, prayer-saying, and forgiveness-asking pay all my old debt, blot out my past sins, and make me sure that I am saved?"

"With the help of Jesus Christ it will."

"Then am I to understand that if I do all this, and it should not prove enough, that Jesus Christ will come in and make up the rest of it?"

"Yes."

"But when shall I know that I am saved?"

"Oh! when you die, of course."

"But I want to be sure about it now! for I might make a mistake and find myself all wrong at last."

"Oh, but you can't be that. There's no man sure about that on this earth. I've heard of some who say they *are* sure about it, but I confess I don't believe them, for there's no man that doesn't sin every day, and I'm quite convinced you can't be sure about that in this world."

"Then what ever shall I do? Here are all my sins staring me in the face; I have no

peace night or day. I don't think any one has sinned like I have, and besides I've been trying for long to do my best and all you have been telling me, still I have no peace, and now I am sick and tired of it, and just inclined to give it all up; it's no use, I have not got peace through it, and certainly I am afraid to meet God."

"Well, well, you know we're all sinners, but one doesn't need to give way like that, God is a *merciful God*."

"Yes! that is all true enough, but He is *just* as well, and I have sinned, and my sins are staring me in the face, and I want to be saved from the wrath I so richly deserve."

"Well, I'm sure you can't know you're saved here, so you must just continue to do the best you can, and hope in the mercy of God; that's what I'm doing."

"Well, really, you seem so very easy about the matter that I fear you have never had your sins pressed upon your conscience like me. I must seek advice somewhere else. 'Oh, wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?'"

Let us now hear God's answer to your heart's question.

Man started with *you* and told *you* to do. God starts with *Himself*, and tells you what

*he did.* "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).

You were the sinner, a part of the world—God was the One who loved you. You *needed* a Saviour—Jesus *is* that Saviour. You should have died because of your sins. Jesus came, and died for sins. You "MUST be born again" (John iii. 7). "The Son of man MUST be lifted up" (iii. 14).

Just think of the picture the Lord reminds Nicodemus of in that chapter. The people had sinned, and were dying from the bite of the serpents. Moses prayed for them after they had confessed their sin, and God told Moses to make a brazen serpent, and put it on a pole, and that *whosoever looked should live* (Numb. xxi. 8). Now what had a bitten person to do to live? Only to look.

Well, see the simplicity of it. You have sinned, and death is the consequence. How are you to be saved? God says "You *must* be born again." Then, the "Son of Man *must* be lifted up." Is there love enough in the heart of God to give Him? Yes. He has given Him. He has been "lifted up, that WHOSOEVER BELIEVETH in Him should not perish but have eternal life." What did the

bitten one do in the wilderness? He looked. What have you to do to get *eternal life*? Look, in other words, *believe*.

"But I do believe," says the anxious soul.

Well, when does a soul get eternal life?

"When it believes."

Then you say you believe?

"Yes, I am sure I do."

And you are really looking?

"Yes, I am."

Then does not God say Eternal life is yours?

"Yes, but is that all?"

Do you find any more then? The people looked to the serpent and lived. Sinners look, or believe in the lifted up Son of Man, and they live.

Ah! God's way is the best. He loved sinners, and gave His Son. Jesus "died the just for the unjust." The soul that believes in that blessed Jesus can look back to the cross and see Him bearing all his sins; he looks into the grave and finds it empty. He looks up to the throne and finds it occupied; and can say: Now I know my sins are gone, for on yonder throne sits the man without them, who had them on the cross.

Thank God, says the believer, my sins are not *overlooked*, but put away at the cross, and *God is satisfied*, and so am I. Then the Holy

Spirit comes and takes up His abode in the believer's body. He is filled with *joy* and *peace in believing* (Rom xv. 13), seeks to walk worthy of the Lord, and longs for the Lord Himself to come to take him to the Father's house (John xiv. 3).

Just look at one thing more. God has sent a letter to make you *sure* that you have eternal life. Man says, You cannot be sure. God says, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may *KNOW* (not *feel*, but *know*) that ye *HAVE* (not *HOPE* to get, but *ye have*) eternal life" (1 John v. 13). How blessed! how simple! how sweet! how it removes the doubts, and questions, and gives the heart assurance and rest.

The Lord help the reader, if anxious, to listen to God's answer, not man's. "Let God be true, and every man a liar" (Rom. iii. 4).

W. E.



## THE LAST OPPORTUNITY.



FEW months since, I went to a small village in company with a friend, and began distributing a few gospel tracts, also inviting people to come and hear the glad tidings of the grace of God.

We had not gone far before my attention was attracted to a man standing by a gate leading to a cottage; he was looking very ill, and I felt I must speak to him, and try and find out if he knew Jesus Christ as his Saviour. But, alas! I found that this dear man was a stranger to Jesus, and to His finished work. I then asked him what he thought he had to do to be saved?

“Well,” said he “I think I must repent and pray.”

I said, “But where in God’s word are we told to repent and pray and we shall be saved? If that is what we have to do, how can we know when we have repented and prayed sufficiently to satisfy a holy God?”

He could not tell what to say to this, and I spoke to him then of Jesus, the Son of God,

of how He left the glory of His Father's throne, and came down into this world, to seek and to save the lost, and how He, the Son of God, by shedding His precious blood, had met the righteous claims of God against the sinner; and having borne our sins in His own body upon the tree, God had raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in glory, and thus had opened unto sinners a way into the glory of God. I told him if he rested on the finished work of this blessed Jesus he would be saved. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." We then parted for the time.

Later in the evening, after the gospel preaching, my friend and I went to visit him in his home, and this was our last meeting on earth. We found him sitting in an arm-chair by the fire. His wife was with him. Evidently, he was much worse than when we had previously seen him. Once more I sought to press Jesus on his acceptance as the only way whereby he could be saved, and to show him from God's word his true condition in the sight of God as a guilty sinner, with no power to help himself. "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the ungodly"

(Romans v. 6). I spoke of the love God had toward us in giving His only Son to die for us, of how Jesus by His death had opened a way of escape from the wrath of God, and that by believing in Him he would be saved.

But, alas! all these blessed glad tidings appeared to him as idle tales. Still I pressed on him the word of the living God, and the consequences of rejecting Jesus and His invitations to come to Him, pointing out the shortness and uncertainty of life, more especially in his own weak state of health, and that this might be the last opportunity he would have on earth of hearing of the blessed Jesus and His willingness to save him. Again I entreated him to come to Jesus, to rest on nothing of his own, but on Jesus only. "Salvation is offered you to-day," I said; "this present time is yours, to-morrow may not be yours, therefore why refuse to come to Him; this opportunity may be the last God may ever give you; and if you neglect it and are lost, it will be lost for ever."

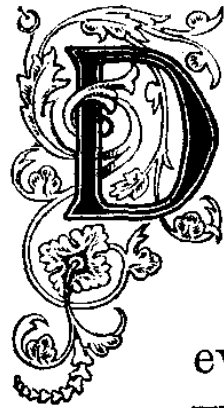
We now bade him farewell, and, as far as we know, an eternal farewell. On calling the day after, we found the spirit had returned to God who gave it. He had risen from his bed in the morning no worse than on the previous evening, apparently; but while dressing, he

fell back into his chair, and without a word his immortal soul had taken its flight. I cannot say what transpired that night between himself and God; all I can say is that his wife said he did not say anything to her about his soul's salvation.

And now, dear reader, a word to you before I close these few lines, which have recorded facts. Is your soul saved? If it be not, you are in quite as much danger as was this poor man. If you are not washed in the blood of Christ, you are lost; but what blessed news it is to tell that Jesus, God's beloved Son, came to seek and to save the lost. You have still the opportunity of receiving salvation from Him, of bowing to Him as your Saviour. I earnestly entreat you, then, come to Jesus just as you are. He will receive you, for His word is—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Do not put it off till a more convenient season. This may be thy *last opportunity*. Hear His own words, "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 on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

R. B.

## 1879. A CLOSING APPEAL.



DEAR unsaved reader, I feel constrained to make one last closing appeal to you, ere this year of grace has rolled away. Soon will its days have fled, and its hours have forever passed. I say its *days* and *hours* will have gone for ever ; they can never return ; but not so its *deeds*.

Forget not, that for this year's acts you must give account to God. "So then *every one of us* shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. xiv. 12). "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ ; that *every one* may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10).

When this year came in, it found you in your natural state, in your sins, an unbeliever in the Lord Jesus Christ. As its days have quickly fled, what has it witnessed among other things ? If "*God's Glad Tidings*" has been month by month put into your hands, or read in your hearing, this year has witnessed the manner of treatment you have accorded to the Gospel

statements, earnest appeals, and narrative of the conversion of others, with which its pages have teemed. What has been the effect? Are you still unsaved, unmoved, unconcerned as to the salvation of your soul? Alas! alas! Yet why should it be so? Have not others been blessed through its pages? Yes, thanks be to God, many, but not you.

No doubt you have been at times interested, perhaps even concerned; a tear may have fallen, a sigh been heaved, a resolution to decide for Christ soon come to, as the Spirit of God has touched your conscience; and then, alas, you have relapsed into your old, dead, careless state of unbelief and unconcern.

How long is this to go on? Will God always wait for you? Can you treat His Son, His salvation, His Spirit's pleadings ever with this careless indifference? No; surely not. 1879 will soon have run its course. So will you yours. "The coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (Jas. v. 8). Verily! He is even at the door. Everything proclaims His near advent.

Should He come now, as you read these lines, what must your fate be? "The blackness of darkness for ever." You have no light, no life, no peace, no pardon, no fitness for God's presence. You are uncleansed, un-

washed, unsaved, unforgiven, unblessed. Nay, more, you are impenitent, unconcerned, and unperturbed in your lost estate. How could you meet the Lord? Only with horror and fear. Could you rise to meet Him in the air? Not so. It is "His own" alone He will take up, and you are not among them. You would be left to the judgment and the doom your folly and unbelief have courted. What a doom! AN ETERNAL HELL.

Be not deceived! "Eternal life" is a reality. So is judgment. "Eternal judgment" are God's own words, and this can only be the final doom of the soul that passes from time into eternity in its sins, and Christless.

Oh! precious soul, pass not hence so, I beseech you. "Yet there is room;" yet all may be forgiven. Do be roused to your need and danger. Do believe the plain statements of the word of God as to your state, and His remedy for that condition, through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Turn to God now—as you are, in your sins. He loves you; He will welcome you. "Christ has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," so that the work which entitles you to draw near to God is accomplished. "Sins" cannot now be a barrier to your access to God, for Christ

has "suffered" for them. Your will is the only obstacle. Is not that a dreadful thing? Your will (not your sins, for they can be blotted out) standing in the way of your salvation. If that be the only obstacle—and it is—had you not better clear it away at once? Surely.

Just go thoroughly down before God at once, own you are a ruined, lost sinner; make a clean breast of your life and sins; cast yourself simply on Jesus, and you will be saved, most surely. "Him that cometh unto me, I will in *no wise* cast out," are His own words.

What a blessed thing to end the year with Christ, though you began it without Him! If you now believe simply in Jesus, how will you end it? Saved! *saved!* yes, thank God, SAVED! "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou shalt be saved,*" is the divine testimony to a troubled sinner. "He that believeth not *shall be damned,*" is the solemn witness of our Lord Christ to a careless sinner.

O let the days of thy carelessness be for ever over; and now, truly turning to the Lord, begin to live for Him. Farewell, my friend. "*The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee PEACE.*"

W. T. P. W.