

# GOSPEL LIGHT.

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## JESUS=SAVIOUR.

“Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. i. 21).

**D**EAR FRIENDS,—Through sin man had departed from God, and come under His righteous sentence of death. “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Rom. v. 12). You and I were doomed to die, and were unable to save ourselves, being “without strength” (Rom. v. 6). But because God is Love as well as Light, He sent His Son to save us; and at His birth an angel brought good tidings—which is what the word gospel means—“To all people . . . For unto you is born . . .

### A SAVIOUR,

which is Christ the Lord” (Luke ii. 10-11).

Good tidings indeed this is to us, when we have been led to feel our need as lost, helpless sinners. He came to save us from our sins. But at what a cost to Himself! Since death was the penalty due to sinners, He must endure death in our stead. “God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. v. 8). Our natural thought is to do something

good to make God love us, but He loved us while we were yet sinners, and ungodly (v. 6), and enemies (v. 10); and Jesus died for us guilty sinners.

Thank God, He sent His "Son to be

### THE SAVIOUR

of the world" (1 John iv. 14). Jesus is *the* Saviour for all, and the only Saviour: "For there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv. 12).

I was visiting a young man, helpless from paralysis, and to comfort him quoted Psalm xxiii. 1: "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." He looked up and a happy smile lit up his face as he repeated, "MY Shepherd." Mary, too, could say, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God

### MY SAVIOUR "

(Luke i. 47).

When by faith we trust in Jesus we, too, can each one say for himself or herself, "My Saviour," and He is the joy of our hearts for time and for eternity. It is a great thing to know that there is *a* Saviour, Jesus, for lost sinners. It is well to be assured from God's Word that He is *the* Saviour, and there is no Saviour beside Him; but this will not avail for our salvation, unless by faith we can add, Jesus is *my* Saviour.

That *you* may thus know Him is the earnest desire of one who, through grace, can say to Him, "*My Saviour.*"

"Now I can call the Saviour mine,  
Though all unworthy still;  
I'm sheltered by His precious blood,  
Beyond the reach of ill."

W. H. S. F.

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## "A DARKNESS WHICH MAY BE FELT."

I HAVE been much struck lately with the darkness imposed on us in many of our cities and towns, and the lesson we may learn thereby.

While we cannot but be thankful to take any measures we can to evade the frequent attempts of our aerial enemy to destroy us, yet who can but feel the gloom and melancholy cast upon us, especially in what were particularly well-lighted places?

In the Scriptures of Truth we read of "darkness which may be felt" (Exod. x. 21), and also in the Gospels of that "outer darkness" where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. xxv. 30).

Is not God giving us to taste and feel what darkness is, so that we may be warned to

“flee from the wrath to come”: from that “outer darkness” of separation from God, shut out from His presence who “is light,” “where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched,” that we may turn to Him who offers ~~us~~ His love, His pardon, His righteousness, having given His “only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”; instead of having the bitter remorse of having refused or neglected “so great salvation”?

For nearly two thousand years He has been bearing with mankind, seeking to win their souls by His love, to which, however, multitudes have turned a deaf ear. Now He is speaking to us in another way, showing us His power and judgment. Shall we hear, and bow to Him now? Say, what shall the answer be? (See Heb. ii. 1-4.)

E. H. G.

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We have read of one who said that the only word he remembered of a certain sermon was the word “ETERNITY.” This word he could never shake off from his mind; it was a distress to him; until he knew he was saved through faith in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and had the assurance from the Scriptures of truth that he would spend ETERNITY in glory with his Saviour.

## THE SAVIOUR'S PRAYER, THE SOLDIER'S SPEAR, AND THE RENT VEIL.

FRIEND, what think you of that Saviour's love? A love that could be so at leisure in the hour of death as to think of you in the way His own words express: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34).

It was when His friends had failed Him, and His enemies had spent their rage on Him, then, even then, He prayed *for thee, for me*: "Father, forgive them."

Man had spit in his Maker's face, had crowned with thorns David's Lord and God's anointed One, had nailed Him to the tree; yet none of these things could drive Him to despair of our salvation, nor induce Him to obey their taunting cry, "*Save thyself*, and come down from the cross."

No; He had come down *to* the cross, and that in order that He might *save us*. And while His murderers sat with complacency gazing upon Him in their guilt as He hung upon the cross, His prayer ascended to God His Father on their behalf: "Father, forgive them; for *they know not* what they do."

What a construction His words put upon their doings. "*They know not*." It is so natural for us to hide the faults of a friend, or to put the best construction upon the worst

things done by those we love; but none save He *could* ever speak like this concerning His enemies. Oh, how intensely He desires our salvation! How He pities while He pleads, "Father, forgive them"! Thank God, His prayer is heard. A Saviour's love prevails, and the sinner that believes in Him is saved by His blood.

Yes; a soldier "with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John xix. 34). The Saviour could only procure the pardon for which He prayed at the cost of His own life's blood. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." He gave up His life in sacrifice to meet the holy claims of God, and

"The very spear that pierced His side  
Drew forth the blood to save."

Surely we get the Saviour's desire granted, His prayer *answered*, in that touching appeal to sinners, "Be it known unto you therefore . . . that through this Man" (Christ Jesus) "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Then we read, "The veil of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom" (Matt. xxvii. 51). This veil was intended to keep man out of God's holy presence, as the flaming sword of the cherubim kept the way

of the tree of life in the garden of Eden after Adam had been driven forth. (Gen. iii. 24.)

So long as the veil was *up*, it was a sign to the sinner that God's justice was not satisfied. But now, thank God, the veil is *down*, and it is He Himself who has taken it down. Why? Because His claims have been answered by the work of Christ. The blood of atonement has been shed, peace is made, and God has rent the veil to assure us that there is now not only *a way out* of judgment, but also *a way in* to His presence.

I remember once being on board a steamer *drifting about outside* the harbour at Aberdeen. On asking the cause of delay, I was told we were waiting for sufficient water to carry us across the bar and take us in. Presently the signal on shore was given, the steamer started, the bar was crossed, and the harbour gained.

The gospel contains better news than the signal on the shore at Aberdeen; for the bar was *taken away* when the "veil was rent," and the tide of divine grace runs so high and strong that you need only let it have its own way with you, by saying (like Rebecca of old), "I will go," when you will soon find yourself, dear reader, in that place of rest and blessedness which Christ's work (not yours) has earned, the place which God desires we should have and enjoy by simply believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

H. H.

## THE EIGHT OLD MEN.

**I**T is related of a certain libertine, a most profligate and abandoned character, that he happened once to enter a church at the time that Scripture was being read. And as the chapter proved to be the fifth of Genesis, it was not, if judged by a human standard, one of the most interesting portions of the Word of God; nor would any truly converted person have considered it to be a likely one to be used of the Spirit of God to the blessing of this wretched man's soul.

But as my reader may not have his Bible handy, I will just say that the chapter is that which begins, "This is the book of the generations of Adam," and which gives the genealogy down to Noah.

It is chiefly filled with names and ages; and one who is not convinced of the value of the whole Word of God might account it dry and unattractive, while even an evangelist might find it difficult to preach the gospel from such a scripture. Yet from all eternity had it been ordained, in the counsels of the God of grace, that this apparently mere historical record should be the means of bringing everlasting blessing to the soul of this poor, abandoned profligate.

It was one little expression occurring eight times over in the chapter that wrought this blessed result. It consisted of but three words,



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and three shorter words you would scarcely find together anywhere in your Bible. They were these : “ AND HE DIED.”

1. There are EIGHT OLD MEN spoken of in the chapter. One of them lived to be 777 years old, above ten times as old as men of full age generally live now ; but the end came, “ AND HE DIED.” That was Lamech, the son of the oldest man that ever lived, and the grandson of a man who never died at all ! But Lamech died.

2. Then another of these old men, Mahala-leel, lived to be 895 years of age ; yet we read, “ AND HE DIED.”

3. Enos, his grandfather, lived ten years longer, but “ HE DIED.”

4. His son surpassed him by five years ; this was Cainan, but he also “ DIED.” Cainan was a most remarkable man, for about 250 years before his death he could have said, what no man but he could ever say, that he was the great-grandson of a man who had *never been born* (Adam, whom God created), and that his own great-grandson had gone to heaven, but had *never died* (Enoch, whom God translated). But as I have said, “ HE DIED.”

5. Seth, the brother of Cain and Abel, lived no less than 912 years, “ AND HE DIED.”

6. Adam lived 930 years, but he had no childhood and no youth ; and it would appear that the years of his manhood were therefore

more in number than those of any man who ever lived, yet of him also it is recorded, "AND HE DIED."

Physical death had been pronounced of God to be the direct effect, both to him and to his seed, of the sin he had committed, and this chapter is full of the testimony which each death afforded of the truth of the divine verdict and the reality of the divine penalty upon man's transgression.

7. Jared, the father of Enoch, lived to be 962, "AND HE DIED."

8. But Methuselah, Enoch's son, lived to the unprecedented age of 969, lived to be nearly a thousand years old! Why, if a man were to live to such an age now, men would say he would live for ever; but God never forgets. *It is appointed unto men to die, and even Methuselah was no exception; for we read, "AND HE DIED."*

It was the reading, then, of this remarkable Scripture which was proceeding in the church, and thus eight times over fell upon the ears of this poor profligate, "AND HE DIED."

These eight old men lived on an average over nine hundred years each; but they died, every one of them, and he who listened to the brief narrative of their lives and their death felt so deeply impressed with the fact that HE ALSO MUST DIE (in other words, the Spirit of God so drove these three words eight times

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over in upon his soul) that he could never forget them or escape them.

His conscience was stirred to its depths. The ploughshare had penetrated his soul, and He who made those deep furrows did not forget to pour the oil of His richest, sweetest grace into the gaping wounds He had made.

Thus a Saviour's precious love and a Saviour's precious blood were apprehended by faith. The sinner's heart melted under the discovery of God in grace having given His Son to die on behalf of those who were on the highway to an eternal hell, and that Son of His bosom, the blessed Man Christ Jesus, having agonized under the terrible load of our sins, His life and His life's blood given for our redemption, the Just One having thus died for the unjust to bring us to God.

The blessed discovery that the work done upon the cross was so precious and so complete gave peace to his conscience; and He who did that work became thenceforth an Object, a worthy, blessed Object, for the present and eternal rest of his heart.

I will add only one thing more from that fifth chapter of Genesis. There are not only in it the eight old men who died, but there is one mentioned who left this world a comparatively young man. This was Enoch, and he is spoken of in a way in which none of the rest are. It is recorded of him that he "WALKED

WITH GOD : AND HE WAS NOT ; FOR GOD TOOK HIM.” And this is put in instead of the words “ AND HE DIED.”

He lived just 365 years (or a year of years, that is, exactly as many years as there are days in an ordinary year), but what a blessed, if a comparatively short, life was his ! HE KNEW GOD, or he never could have walked with Him ; for that implies intimacy ; and, instead of dying, God exempted him from the common penalty. And by Hebrews xi. 5, we learn that HE PLEASED GOD, and this was the distinguishing feature of his life.

Now, dear reader, if you *know* God, which is the privilege of all who come to Christ ; and if you *please* God, which is the privilege of those who have faith in Him ; then you also can, like Enoch, look forward to being translated without seeing death ; for though death is the penalty of sin and the common heritage of sinners, yet Christ has said, “ Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die.” And thus when He comes, which may be at any moment, we who have believed, and are alive and remain, shall be caught up in a blessedness even greater than Enoch’s, and we shall *see Him*, be *like Him*, and be *with Him* for ever ! This shall be the everlasting portion of all those who have believed unto salvation, and who are waiting for the Lord Jesus when He comes.

W. R.

## IMMEDIATE SALVATION.

**M**ANY persons engaged in the good work of the gospel, whose sincerity could not be doubted, believe and maintain that, if conversion be real, besides the statements of God's word as to pardon and acceptance there will be an inward feeling, sense, or token, witnessing to the genuineness of the work. The inward feeling must prove the truth of the word to them. And if they have not this inward sense of pardon and acceptance they have no right to believe that the promises apply to them.

In reply to the above statement, which, in substance, we are constantly hearing in connection with the work of the gospel, we would say, Most truly, if the work of conversion be genuine, and the FULL GOSPEL be believed, there must be a deep inward feeling of assurance as to pardon and acceptance. But the mistake lies in persons looking for the inward *sense* of forgiveness before the *word* is believed that assures them they are forgiven. It will be seen at a glance that such teaching and belief must lead the soul into endless perplexities. Of course, we speak only of earnest, anxious souls, in whom *we* believe there is divine life, although they would not believe it themselves.

Under such circumstances, when a sinner is awakened and really turned to Christ in deep earnestness about his salvation, in place of listening to the voice of Jesus through His word, which only can speak pardon and peace to a troubled soul, he anxiously looks within for some inward sense or assurance that he is a changed person, a new creature in Christ Jesus. And not feeling sure that he has undergone this change, the word of God, however plain, is not received as applicable to him; consequently, the anxious inquirer is plunged into a state of the most painful perplexity. This class of anxious souls is numerous, and some are to be found in it of a long standing. We once witnessed a soul who had been thirty years in trouble about her salvation brought into full peace through simply believing. Her joy was great when she saw it was all settled. She could now rest in peace on the authority of the word of Christ.

The grand aim of the enemy, in all this system of looking for feelings, is to get the eye of the believer, young or old, turned away from Christ and His word, and turned in upon self. And so long as he succeeds in keeping them occupied with themselves his end is gained. The poor soul is kept without peace or joy, and consequently in weakness, and so an easy prey to his wicked suggestions. Sometimes they think they can feel that all is right,

and hope springs up, accompanied with a gleam of joy; at other times they feel cold and dead, and then dark, dark clouds overshadow them.

But now let us turn to the word of God. What light and direction have we from it on this subject? Does not the Lord say plainly enough (*by His written word*, mark), that all who look to Him as the Saviour, or come to Him, hear Him, believe in Him, trust in Him, *are saved*? He never says, "may be, will be, or can be," but "*are saved*." His word meets every state of a soul that has been moved towards Him by the Holy Spirit. The word assures the coming one that He "will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). Here it is assured of acceptance. But my sins, my sins! it exclaims. Again the word replies, "Thy sins are forgiven." When Christ receives a sinner He must put away his sins. He cannot receive them. Or, as the prophet says, "And Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah vii. 19). But whose sins? The sins of all who believe in Jesus. But what is meant by "the depths of the sea"? It means they will be cast where they can never be traced. If you cast a thing into the depths of the sea you can trace it no more for ever. Thus God and faith get rid of sin. And not *some* sins, observe, but "*ALL* their sins." Thus the sinner can rejoice, through believing

God's word, that he now rests securely on the work of Christ, and that all his sins are at the bottom of the sea, sunk in the untraceable depths of the deep waters of God's everlasting forgetfulness. As it is elsewhere said, on the same subject, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17).

We have two examples of this in connection with the preaching of the apostles:—

I. That of Peter in the house of Cornelius, where, after stating the truth about Christ and His finished work, he declares, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). The same moment the gospel of Christ is believed, the sins are remitted. As the truth enters the heart, the sins are washed away. When the sinner is accepted, his sins are all cast into the depths of the sea. Nay, more, the Holy Ghost enters the heart that believes and is forgiven. And He will abide there for ever as the *seal* of all the blessings of grace *already* revealed, and as the *earnest* of all the glory that is *yet* to be revealed. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Heard, of course, not with the outward ear only, but with the ear of faith. The truth preached was received into the heart.

In connection with this testimony see also



Eph. i. 13, 14: "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were *sealed* with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the *earnest* of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." Here every promise, every blessing, is secured to the *truster in Christ*, through the indwelling of the Holy Ghost, by which believers are made *one with Christ*, and are brought into the same privileges. Oh! how many there are who are really trusting in Christ as the Saviour, and yet are in constant fear and trembling lest they should be lost at last. May God in mercy deliver them from such dreadful bondage, and bring them into the happy liberty of Christ, in whom they are pardoned, accepted, and complete for ever.

II. Our second example is that of Paul in the synagogue at Antioch (Acts xiii.) To all there assembled he preaches the gospel; not according to human thoughts and feelings, but as he had been taught it of God by the revelation of Jesus Christ. "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 that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (vv. 18-20).

This is plain enough, surely. All that believed what Paul preached were *pardoned* and *justified* there and then. And they were fully assured of it by the plain statements of the word of God. The same word that assured them that Jesus had died and risen again, assured them that they were pardoned and justified through believing in Him. Surely this is full assurance! What can give fuller assurance than the word of God? If, in place of looking to ourselves and our own feelings, or for some inward token of our acceptance, we looked to the word of God, and believed it just as God has given it, we should at once be delivered from all our doubts and fears. Full, unclouded assurance would take the place of gloomy uncertainty.

Listen, then, O tossed and troubled soul, to the very words of Scripture. They are the gracious answers of Jesus to thy anxious requests. Expect not to hear His voice from heaven; look not to thyself in anywise. The right feelings will spontaneously arise from the right truth believed. If *good* news be received, thou art made glad; if *sad* news, thou art made sorry. There must be a corresponding feeling to the news believed.

But when is this feeling produced? Just when we believe. Not before it, certainly. Oh! then, dear reader, believe the good news of the gospel, the full gospel of the grace of

**“ BE YE RECONCILED.”**

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God. A present pardon, full justification and acceptance, are assured, on the authority of Holy Scripture, to all who believe in Jesus. Look not to self, look to Jesus; look to the word of God. Go to it at all times and under all circumstances. It is the unfailing word of truth. Confide in it with unmisgiving assurance. It can never be broken. So shall thy peace be perfect, thy joy abundant, and the light of a cloudless sky shall shine on thy interest in Christ, until thou see Him face to face in the bright and sunny regions of eternal glory. (John xvii. 24; 1 John iii. 1-3).

C. H. M.

**“ BE YE RECONCILED.”**

2 COR. v. 20.

**I** WAS struck yesterday, on entering the meeting-room at D—— by the appearance of a man whom I did not remember to have seen there before. Throughout the service he listened most attentively, and when the people began to disperse I could not resist placing my hand upon his shoulder, with the inquiry, “Have *you* peace with God?”

“No,” was the reply, “I cannot say that I have.”

“Well, my friend” I said, “I am sorry for

it; but I feel sure I am right in supposing that you would wish to have it."

"I would, indeed," said he.

"Well," I said, "do you believe that you are by nature a lost sinner?"

"We are *all* that," said he, "and so, of course, I am one as much as anyone else."

"Well, then," I said, "if according to your own confession you are a lost sinner, you assuredly require a Saviour; and does not the word of God tell you that One has been provided for you, and that, if you now believe on Him, you are eternally saved?"

"Oh, but," he said, "surely it's not so easy as all that. Have not I got something to do *on my part*? Of course I believe, and always did believe, that Jesus died for me; but *I must help*."

"Oh!" I said, "and now do tell me what *could* you, a poor sinner, consciously dead in trespasses and sins, do to help?"

"I could *pray*," said he.

"Well," I replied, "prayer is very blessed in its proper place; but did you ever notice [opening my Bible] this passage in 2 Cor. v. 20, in which God is *praying you* to be reconciled? Now, will you tell me what you are praying for?"

"Why, of course, for that very thing, to be reconciled," he said.

"Oh! but," I answered, "this passage

plainly states that God, on the ground of the accomplished work of Christ, is now entreating you, and sinners like you, to be reconciled to Him. Where, then, is the wisdom of *your* asking *Him* to be reconciled to you? ”

“ Oh, but,” he said, “ I don’t believe that I could be reconciled to God without asking for it.”

“ Then,” I said, “ I have only to assure you that you are sadly mistaken. God, as the twentieth and twenty-first verses so plainly state, has *anticipated* your petition by Himself sending to ask you to be reconciled; *for* (or because) He has made Christ to be sin; and now, instead of asking, you have simply to *believe* that Christ has been made sin for you, and you are instantly reconciled to God, ‘ made the righteousness of God in Him.’ ”

“ Well,” he said, “ I never saw it in that light before. That’s quite new to me, and I’ll think over it, and come and hear you again.”

“ If the Lord permit,” I replied. And so we parted.

And now, my reader, this way of looking at *the most important question in the world* may be quite new to you also; but it is nevertheless blessedly true that, as we read in Col. i. 20, the Lord Jesus has “ made peace by the blood of His cross ”; and therefore God is now in a position, consistently with His own truth and holiness, to “ come out and entreat ”

(Luke xv. 28) poor sinners to draw near to Him. This He did *first* by His Son; *next* by those who heard Him (Heb. ii. 3), and *now* He is doing it by those whom the Holy Ghost has sent forth (Acts xiii. 4) as "ambassadors" or heralds, to declare the glad tidings, that "He hath made Him to be sin for us Who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Does not the poor blind mendicant at your door cease *his* cry of want the moment he hears your welcome voice pressing a sixpence on his acceptance? *It is what he wants.* He receives it thankfully, and goes away rejoicing.

Why should not *you*, dear praying one, pause in your petitions for a moment to listen to the voice of God praying to you to be reconciled to Him on the ground of the finished work of Christ? Why should not you, even as you read this, give thanks to Him, believing that you have redemption through His blood, "the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace"? (Eph. i. 7).

Reader, may peace with God, unchangeable as Christ is changeless (Heb. xiii. 8) be yours; but oh! remember the solemn warning: "If the word spoken by angels was steadfast, . . . how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. ii. 2, 3).

D. T. G.

## **“AND THEY SHALL SEE HIS FACE.”**

REV. xxii. 4.

**T**HE other day I was visiting a dear old woman who lives not far from me.

She is very old (over eighty, I think), very feeble, and suffering. Her breathing is so bad that she cannot lie down, or even sit upright in bed, but is obliged to lean forward with her head bowed down, wrapped up in a large shawl to keep her warm. Yet, though so ill, she is happy and peaceful.

I read to her the beautiful verses in 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18: “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” Also the first few verses of the next chapter, finishing with “Absent from the body, present with the Lord.”

Speaking to her a little of the wonderful glory which will so over-balance all our suffering down here, that God can call it “light affliction,” I went on to say what joy it would be for us when we see the Lord Jesus face to face.

Here she interrupted me, suddenly exclaim-

ing in her feeble voice, with the words panted out, "And that will be the crowning of it all."

How precious to the Lord's ear must have been those few words from the lips of His dear, suffering, aged child. Above and beyond the thought of the glory which awaited her, what *crowned* it all was the expectation of seeing His blessed face. And, oh! that this might be more true of all those who know Him, whether we are young, or old; may there be more heart-attachment to Himself, the blessed Lord Jesus, who is the altogether lovely One! There, in the very centre of all the glory of God, is our living, precious Saviour, and it is in His face that all the glory of God is shining. May each one of our hearts be more familiar with Him as He is up there, taken up with His beauty! Then shall we more enter into what the joy will be of seeing Him face to face, and being ourselves changed into His likeness, and then it will be true of us as the Scripture says, "Every man that hath this hope in Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure" (1 John iii. 3).

May each of our hearts echo the precious words of His dear suffering one, "And that will be the crowning of it all."

H. L. M.

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## **CHRIST IN JOY AND CHRIST IN SORROW.**

**V**ERY many years ago a young girl was about to be married at the British Consulate in Paris. She knew by hearsay that God welcomes and receives anyone who comes to Him through Jesus Christ; but—hitherto she had not felt the need of coming.

On the morning of the wedding day, whilst waiting in an adjoining room to be fetched in for the ceremony, she felt so full of happiness that she fell on her knees and prayed: “O God! Thou hast been so very good to me, I must thank Thee for all Thy kindness; and here and now I give myself to Thee, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

She arose from her knees with a strange sense of calm and joy, which remained for many months, until in India, sailing up the river Ganges in the first steamer that ever ruffled its waters, and in considerable danger, God Himself recalled to her those moments on her wedding day, and gave her to know His Beloved Son as her own personal Saviour, as well as her Friend.

After a time it became necessary for her to quit India for the sake of their child, leaving her husband to advance to the seat of war. To comfort his wife he told her he was going to march to Cabul and glory, and spoke of all

that he should gain thereby; adding that for her sake he would promise to read a chapter in the Testament daily till they met again. So they parted, the mother and child going to England, and the father to take part in that memorable Indian campaign.

One night the Captain, after reaching his tent, weary and hot from a long day's march, flung himself on his charpoy; then remembering his promise, he sprang up, and took his Testament, reading John iii., which came in course until he came to verse 3: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

At once he saw himself to be lost, ruined and undone. On and on he read, until he reached verse 16: "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."

Simply as a child he received the record of God, and at once rejoiced in the possession of Christ and eternal life. He knelt and thanked God for His great gift and His great love, and then proceeded to the tent of a friend, Col. H——, who was a Christian, and read with him in the Book now so dear to them both, and told him the whole story before retiring for a few hours' sleep.

That day was the last on which the Captain ever rode at the head of his troop. He wrote

to his wife : “ I shall have to finish this business, and then we will go home and live on what we have, and you shall teach me about these things, for what is rank, or wealth, or honour, compared to what we read in John iii. ? ”

Fever set in, and this was the last letter his wife ever received from him.

Two months later he was carried on a litter by his faithful soldiers into Cabul. Just outside its walls his friend, Col. H——, said : “ Now I have seen you comfortably settled, I will just go and stretch my legs, for I have not had a rest for twenty hours.”

In less than three hours he was brought back into the Captain's tent murdered ! He, poor fellow, roused himself, ordered a double coffin to be made, saying, “ We will carry it into Cabul, and there we will lie together ” ; and this took place.

His last day on earth he asked the hour—7.30—remarking, “ I shall not go before gunfire now.” As 8 o'clock approached the doctor noticed how intently he watched the tent-pole, and stooping down, caught the words : “ I shall soon be with Jesus and our Baby in glory,” and in one moment he was “ with Christ, which is far better ” than earth's most dazzling scenes. For evermore he realises the truth of the words which are written in Isaiah v. 8, 9 : “ For My thoughts are not your

thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts."

The wife was found by Christ in the moment of her joy, the husband in his time of sorrow and danger.

The wife passed away recently at a great age, to be with Christ, in whose presence the husband had long been at rest.

*February, 1910.*

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## THE SCRIPTURE READER.

**I**T may well be questioned whether any two things, ostensibly the same, could be more thoroughly and essentially different than human religiousness and Christianity according to God. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. lv. 8, 9).

A striking illustration of this came before me last summer, as I was walking with an aged brother in the Lord through the public park at D——.

The authorities had forbidden any preaching of the gospel within the park; but, as we were crossing it, we came upon a man in black cloth, with white neckerchief, who was diligently reading aloud the so-called "sermon on the mount," in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of Matthew.

We listened for a considerable time, and at length, when he paused, and seemed irresolute as to what he should do next, my companion asked him his object in reading. He gave a rambling reply, chiefly inculcating the duty of reading the Bible.

I then asked him if he would tell me how I must be saved.

As he hesitated for some time, a bystander replied that I must fast and pray. This man I afterwards found was a Roman Catholic.

Hearing that reply, the Scripture reader said that praying without fasting would do, provided we made sacrifices.

I then inquired if he would kindly tell me how many prayers I must make, and how much I must sacrifice.

But he was sure he didn't know. Of one thing, however, he was certain: he could tell me that God was always merciful to those who deserved it!

So I told him there was really no comfort whatever in that to me, for if there was one thing that I was more certain about than

another, it was that *I didn't* deserve it : what then must I do to get saved ?

He replied, there was no way but prayer and sacrifices.

Then I asked him if *he* were saved, when he said he was trying to be.

" Oh ! " said I, " I am afraid you're not able, then, to tell me ! "

So I asked the same question of one or two others in the group, and none of them could tell me.

Here the Scripture reader said, " You must *try* . "

" Does God say so ? " I asked.

" Oh, yes, " he replied.

" Well, " said I, " you appear to have the advantage of me, for you have the Word of God in your hand, and at the moment I've only got it *somewhere else* ; but if you'll just kindly show me where it says what you've been telling me, that if I *pray* I shall be saved, or if I *make sacrifices* I shall be saved, or if I *try* I shall be saved, I'm so anxious I should be right, that I will positively give you a five-pound note. "

He looked at me with astonishment, as though my offer indicated that I was an escaped lunatic ; especially as I added that I would equally pay the reward if he would only find me the place where God said He would be merciful to people *if they deserved it*.

In a short time he pitched upon Matt. v. 25, 26, being part of what he had been reading, and said that was the way to be saved.

So I asked how much he thought I owed to God if my account were all cast up; but he confessed he could not tell me.

“And must it every bit be paid<sup>1</sup> by me?” I enquired.

“Yes,” he said, “to the last farthing!”

“And what then?” said I.

“Well,” he said, “God would then show you mercy!”

“Oh, dear! oh, dear!” I said, “and not until I have paid the last farthing?”

“No,” he answered, “for He only shows mercy to those who deserve it.”

“Well,” said I, “if I owed you just five shillings, and only paid you four and eleven-pence three farthings, you wouldn’t be quite satisfied, then?”

“No,” he said, “you ought to pay the other farthing.”

“Well,” I replied, “that is quite true; and when you had compelled me to pay the last, the uttermost farthing, you would consider you were showing me *mercy*! So,” I said, “it’s as clear as possible, then, that we shall all go to hell, every one of us; for my own part, so far from being able to pay the last farthing, I have not managed yet to raise the first!”

By this time the attention of those around had become very marked, and I stood forth then plainly with the Gospel, not being aware at the time that preaching in the park was forbidden. I said I had asked one and another the solemn question how I was to be saved, and not one there could tell me. But I could assure them that by grace I was saved, and through mercy I could tell them, too, how they must be saved. I pointed to the black thundercloud approaching, and told them that, if struck by lightning as I talked to them, to breathe no more on earth, it would only be to me God's chariot of fire to take me into the presence of the Lord who loved me, and had washed me from my sins in His own blood! For a few minutes I sought to arouse their consciences to a sense of their guilt, and then presented the way of salvation according to the Word of God, so contrary to the poor wretched thoughts of men, which so belie His character and rob Him of His glory as a Saviour-God.

Nothing could more forcibly have brought out the contrast between man's religiousness and the salvation of God. Those around listened in amazement at the turn things had taken, one man striking his stick on the ground and exclaiming aloud, "That's faith."

This was the Roman Catholic I have before



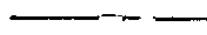
referred to. All seemed intensely interested, and the day will declare what blessing there was to souls!

May the readers of this little incident be preserved from Satan's terrible snare of human righteousness and a righteousness of works!

"To him that WORKETH NOT, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith is counted for righteousness.*" "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt CONFESS WITH THY MOUTH THE LORD JESUS, and shalt BELIEVE IN THINE HEART that God hath raised Him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*" (Rom. iv. 5; x. 6, 8, 9). "And when they had nothing to pay, *He frankly forgave them both*" (Luke vii. 42).

Precious Saviour, now and eternally be Thy name praised!

W. R.



Paradise was God's being good to good people. The Law was God's being righteous to bad people. But what we need is God *good* to *bad* people. Where shall we find this? In the Gospel. "God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8).

## “THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST”—WHAT IS IT?

I HAVE met with quite a number of persons who think that they have sinned the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. I have before me a letter from a man who has been in sore distress of soul for months, and in it he says, “I have thought so much about what a great sinner I have been; and when I was a lad I was tempted to curse God. I shall never get pardon; it is the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost. I shall never get to heaven; I cannot see the least hope for me.”

The Holy Ghost is a person, and He is God. This is very clear from what Peter says to Ananias in Acts v. 3, 4: “Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? . . . Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God,” therefore *all* sin is sin against the Holy Ghost.

The man from whose letter I have quoted, and all to whom I have ever spoken who have been troubled about this matter, confound between sin against the Holy Ghost, and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.

If you will turn to Mark iii. 22 to 30, the subject is simply and thoroughly entered into, and the difference between sin and blasphemy carefully distinguished. Enemies of Christ,

“ SIN AGAINST THE HOLY GHOST.” 35

the scribes from Jerusalem saw a wonderful power in Christ, which with all their learning and influence they had not; and not knowing the source of this power—the Holy Spirit—in Christ, they, in their jealousy and wickedness, attributed it to the devil. They said of the blessed and holy Jesus, “ He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth He out devils.” The Lord condescends to reason with them, and shows them the folly of such a wicked and blasphemous remark by asking them, “ How can Satan cast out Satan? And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.” And now having shown them the utter folly of their reasoning, He goes on to distinguish between “ sin ” against the Holy Ghost (which is forgivable), and “ blasphemy ” against the Holy Ghost (which is not forgivable).

“ Verily I say unto you, *All* sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: *because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.*”

Should any read these lines whom Satan

has tempted to believe that they have been guilty of "the unpardonable sin," I would ask them a question I have often asked those similarly troubled: "Do you believe Christ cast out devils by the power of the devil, or by the power of the Holy Ghost?"

I am sure you will give the same answer that they have all given. "*Not* by the power of the devil, but by the power of the Holy Ghost."

Then, dear friend, thank God you are not guilty of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; for blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is saying that Christ cast out devils by the power of the devil, whereas He cast them out by the power of the Holy Ghost, as He Himself says in Matt. xii. 28: "If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

God the Holy Ghost, a real divine person, is down here on the earth in God's house called Christendom, and consequently *all sin* is sin against Him. But how blessed to hear Jesus saying, "*All sins* shall be forgiven unto the sons of men." On what ground? Christ died, and God says His blood cleanseth us from *all or every* sin; and what you have to do, poor troubled soul, is to have "*faith in His blood*" (Rom. iii. 25).

H. M. H.

## WHAT THE SENTRY SAID.

**I**T has been often remarked that “truth is stranger than fiction,” which is undoubtedly correct in this respect, that God sometimes works (indeed, if we are observant we shall say, *often* works) in the accomplishment of His purposes of mercy in a way which, if not miraculous, is at least so striking in its character, as well as suitable to His ends, as to surpass the most remarkable conceptions of the human mind.

The following, which I lately read, is one of these cases.

Two British soldiers were one evening stationed as sentries at opposite ends of a long, narrow passage (termed a sallyport) leading from the rock of Gibraltar to the Spanish territory beyond. They had doubtless often heard preached the gospel of the grace of God, the glad tidings of salvation, but their hearts long remained untouched.

Each, however, had been lately reading his pocket Bible; and while one of the two was really saved, and rejoicing in God his Saviour, the other was in deepest distress under strong convictions of sin, and earnestly seeking deliverance from the load of guilt pressing upon his conscience.

Neither of the two was aware of the state of soul of the other; moreover, the character of their duties, and the distance they were apart,

forbad any communication passing between them.

On the occasion referred to one of the officers had been dining out, and was returning to his quarters in the garrison at a late hour of the night. Coming up to the sentry on the outside of the sallyport, who was the one really saved, the officer expected to be challenged as usual for the watchword in passing him.

But the man, absorbed in meditation on the glorious and blessed things that had recently been made the joy of his soul, on being roused from his midnight reverie by the officer, to the amazement of the latter exclaimed aloud, "THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST." He soon, however, recovered his self-possession, and the officer, after giving the correct watchword, passed on without remark.

But his comrade, who was anxiously seeking the Lord, and *little knew how the Lord was seeking him*, and who was sentry at the other or inner end of the sallyport (a passage singularly fitted for the conveyance of sound,) distinctly heard, during the tumultuous tossings of his troubled spirit, the words, "THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST" mysteriously borne upon the breeze at the solemn hour of midnight.

The words came home to his heart as a voice from heaven, as indeed they were; it was the

word of God winged from above. The load of guilt was removed, and those divine words, "THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST," thus brought peace to the soul of the sin-burdened soldier. HE WAS SAVED, and that FOR ETERNITY!

Dear reader, I don't want to sermonize over this striking narrative; but let me ask you to observe that it speaks of three persons: one the officer who heard of the precious blood of Christ, and passed on *unheeding* it; another, the inner sentry, who heard of it as a voice from heaven, and was *saved by it*; and the third, the outer sentry, who, out of the abundance of an overflowing heart, *spoke of it*, and was thus blessed to the salvation of his comrade.

These are representative men, and you and I may certainly find our likeness in one or other of them.

Forgive my being personal: LIKE WHICH OF THEM ARE YOU? W. R.

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Eternal condemnation must be the awful sentence of God on every soul that despises Jesus. There is not the shadow of a line of middle ground. He who is not "justified by FAITH," must be condemned for "UNBELIEF"; and condemned for ever. Oh! how one's soul is thrilled with these words as the pen writes them down! ETERNAL CONDEMNATION!

## **THE FAITHFUL SAYING.**

**T**HE fact of Christ leaving heaven and coming into this benighted and sin-stricken world to die the most humiliating of deaths, even the death of the cross, of which it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal. iii. 13), that the sinner through His death might have life, proves it beyond all question to be a "faithful saying," a saying worthy the acceptation of every sinner, as it speaks of a Saviour-God coming into the world to save sinners.

Seeing that He came upon such a blessed errand, surely none should reject or set at naught such joyous tidings. If the Lord Jesus came into the world to save sinners, which God's Word plainly declares He did, for it says, "He came to seek and to save that which was lost"; "He came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance"; what, I ask, should be more glad and welcome news to the sinner? I can tell you of nothing that is more suited to your condition, that of a guilty, ruined, and lost sinner, than a Saviour. And to reject such glad tidings of good things would be indeed

### **THE VERY HIGHEST DEGREE OF FOLLY.**

For surely it cannot be, nor is it, against the sinner's interests that God should save him from the fearful consequences and the present



## THE FAITHFUL SAYING.

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power of sin, and bring him into relationship with Himself—into the wondrous, blessed relationship of a child: a child of God; an heir of God, and joint-heir with Christ (Rom. viii.); and to all the blessedness that such a relationship involves! For it is the delight of God's heart to have the saved sinner in immediate nearness to Himself, all the distance having been for ever removed by the death of His own beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

God has extended His grace to the very chief of sinners, even to a Saul of Tarsus, who, "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem" (Acts ix. 1, 2). If the exceeding riches of God's grace could reach such an one as Saul, will it not reach you, dear reader? If it met Saul's deep need, will it not also meet yours? Blessed for ever be His holy name, it will, for there is

## NO LIMIT TO HIS GRACE.

It has already given salvation to the chief of sinners—to a Saul of Tarsus, to a woman of Samaria, to a thief on the cross, to a Philippian jailer; and offers it in like manner to you, free and unmerited, without money and without price. For in like manner as Moses

lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so has the Son of man been lifted up, "that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 14, 15).

There is no reason why any should be lost; and sure I am, there is no reason why my reader should be. For God willeth not the death of a sinner; but this is His will, "that all men should turn unto Him and live." "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v.).

God is love; and in love He devises a way in which the believing sinner can be at peace with Himself. Jesus, God's Son, has already made peace by the blood of His cross; and those who were once alienated and enemies . . . in mind by wicked works hath He now reconciled (Col. i.).

God ever acts in a way worthy of Himself. His nature is love, and He acts according to what He is, on the ground of that finished work which has glorified Him in His holy nature and character, vindicating His righteous attributes, making good His outraged majesty, and answering all the claims of divine justice, so that now His love can flow out unhinderedly to the most unworthy of creatures—to poor sinful man.

It is by grace through faith that the sinner is saved, and that faith is not of yourselves,

## THE FAITHFUL SAYING.

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it is the gift of God. It is all of God from beginning to end;

## MAN'S WORKS HAVE NO PLACE

here whatever, they can effect nothing in the salvation of the soul, for "salvation is of the Lord," and not of works, lest any man should boast (Eph. ii. 9). God is glorified, too, in the salvation of the sinner. It is His delight to have us in His own presence without a cloud. Doubtless there was joy in the heart of the prodigal son of Luke xv. through being brought into the father's house, having his standing in divine favour, being in the position of a son, and enjoying the love of a father's heart. But greater by far was the father's joy in having him there, so near to himself, in his own presence, according to all his desire. But in the condition in which he met him, he was altogether unsuited to his presence, so he is at once divested of his filthy rags, he is washed, he is clothed with a vesture that at once fits him to be in the father's house and in the father's immediate presence. The best robe is brought forth, a ring is placed upon his hand, shoes upon his feet; the fatted calf is killed, they eat and are merry; music and dancing fill the house. And why? Because he that was dead is alive again; he that was lost is found: thus it is that joy fills the house.

Oh, what a picture, poor sinner, is this of the loving heart of God going out towards you! It was nothing, surely, in us that drew forth His love, all sinful and unworthy in ourselves, *justly deserving the wrath* which the blessed Lord Jesus endured all alone during those terrible three hours of darkness. But however sinful and hell-deserving we may be, it is as such we have become

#### THE OBJECTS OF HIS SAVING MERCY;

our condition only affording an opportunity for the display of His grace, and that He might be glorified in our salvation.

The motive was in Himself. It is what He is, even love, for God is love, that led Him to give the Son of His love, His only begotten, His well-beloved Son, to die for us, "the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," to be for ever in His presence in all the acceptance of Christ Himself; "complete in Him," "accepted in the Beloved."

Do you, dear reader, desire that there should be joy at this moment in the presence of the angels of God? *You may cause such a joy.* Do you ask, "How?" I will tell you. By accepting the "faithful saying." Do you ask, "What is the faithful saying?" It is this. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners"—ungodly, helpless, ruined sinners. "For when we were yet without strength, in

## THE FAITHFUL SAYING.

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due time Christ died for the ungodly ” (Rom. v. 6). “ While we were yet sinners Christ died for us ” (Rom. v. 8). Yes, for sinners such as you and I. “ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ” (Rom. iii. 23). And if all have sinned, all need a Saviour; and God in the fulness of His grace has given us One—One who could and did meet all our need, His own Son, the Spotless Lamb, the Lamb of God’s own providing. “ 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). “ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ” (Acts xvi. 31). “ How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation ? ” (Heb. ii. 3).

Reader, do you believe?

T. G. H.

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O my fellow-sinner, be entreated; be persuaded; think on these things now. Why prefer a moment’s present gratification to eternal happiness? “ The devils,” it is said, “ believe and tremble.” Is thy heart harder than theirs? Canst thou hear of these things, and not tremble? Canst thou believe them with thy natural heart, and not tremble? This is to be more insensible than Satan. How dreadful!

## THE GOSPEL CALL.

**T**O come to Jesus, now, is not only to escape the lake of fire, is not only to be admitted into heaven, but it is to be a sharer of the nuptial glories of the Lamb, and to enjoy the intimacies of His love for ever.

The same day and hour that the soul draws near to Jesus by faith, it is graciously met by God with eternal life. Full, immediate salvation is God's blessed answer to our faith in His Son. Love delights to bless; but what so sensitive of neglect? How indignant must injured love be on that solemn day of final reckoning! With what sore judgment it will visit those who have despised its offers of pardon and salvation!

Esau sold the land of Canaan for a mess of pottage; wilt thou sell heaven for less? Judas sold the Saviour for thirty pieces of silver; and for what art thou now selling Christ, heaven, and all? Say, for what? The hope, the barest hope, of a worldly pleasure, and be that pleasure in whatever form it may, it will never realize thy hope. The pleasure of the worldling has a rapid wing, and soon passes away. But a sting remains. Thou canst not give wings to it. For a vanity, for a nothing, thou art setting aside all that is good both for time and eternity, and thereby exposing thy precious, immortal soul to ETERNAL CONDEMNATION.

Be wise, oh, be wise ! Let not Satan have thee. There is One who loves thee, and seeks thy real good ; and, comparatively speaking, *only one* ; and wilt thou not think of thy *only Friend* ? He died for thee. Hast thou ever sought an opportunity to thank Him for it ? Thy conscience says, No, never. Is this thy love to thy Friend, thy only Friend ? Come to Him now. His love still lingers, He waits for thee.

And His way is to ask no questions, but to bless every newcomer according to the love of His own heart. He will not put thee to shame with perplexing questions, but He will allow thee to hide thy guilty blushes in His own bosom. Were He only to inquire, “ Why hast thou been so long in thinking of Me ? ” shame and confusion would cover thy face ; but such a thing He never does. He will rebuke Satan, who is at thy right hand ready to resist thee. But to a poor guilty one, like Joshua in Zechariah iii., it is grace without rebuke. He stands up in the face of every foe for the sinner who has fled to Him. “ The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan ; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ? ” The enemy is rebuked, but the penitent is cleansed, clothed, and crowned, and thus brought into the presence of God, to go no more out.

And did He not vindicate the poor woman at His feet in the house of Simon ? “ I entered

into thine house; thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven " (Luke vii.).

How beautifully He stands up for her, and that in the very face of the nation's pride and self-righteousness! And mark, too, how He fills her heart with a plenary pardon, a present salvation, and perfect peace.

As thou art man, O my fellow-sinner, come to Jesus. Be encouraged. Come now. Thou seest the manner of thy reception. Thou knowest what He will say to thee. Read carefully, I pray thee, these two portions, and there learn the Lord's ways in grace with every poor, guilty soul that comes to Him. Thou hast but to let go thy hold of the world, or rather get away from the world's hold of thee. Think of Jesus. Learn to know Him. He will fill every aching void, and satisfy thy heart for ever. It is impossible to know Him without the heart being filled with joy, whatever the circumstances may be. "Acquaint thyself with Him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee" (Job xxii. 21). A. M.



## **MY AWAKENING AND QUICKENING.**

**I**N August, 1849, I completed my twenty-first year. I cannot recall a single religious impression previous to that period.

I was not grossly immoral, disposed rather to pride myself on my morality : but I was entirely godless : God was not in all my thoughts. I mingled little with men, and so knew little of the infidelity of the day, yet I was infidel at heart : I had an infidelity of my own, one of its leading features was a vapoury idea of the grandeur of man.

The first religious impression I can recall was about two months after the above date : I had caught a bad cold, and one night after I had gone to bed, the thought arose in my mind, What if this cold were to settle on my lungs, and I were to die ? I tried to shake it off, but it stuck by me for a time and made me uncomfortable, till I dropped off to sleep. In the morning I awoke better, and it was forgotten.

It was the custom of my father's house to dine early on Lord's days, after which my habit was, in summer, to spend the afternoons out on a rocky knoll, on a hill side, in the midst of a plantation of spruces, where, with a panorama before me, and but rarely interrupted, I could be alone with my thoughts and my book ; in colder weather, I spent them

by the fireside in my own room, which was in a little cottage detached from the house.

It must have been on the first or second Lord's day after my cold, that on rising from dinner, I went to a bookcase to select a book. Side by side with my favourite Shakespeare stood five duodecimo volumes of Dwight's "Theology." For years they had stared me in the face, and their title was quite familiar, but I had never dreamt of looking within, nor, I believe, had any one in the household. How they came there I never knew, but they had a mission from God. My hand was raised to take down a volume of Shakespeare, when something within whispered, 'Take that other.' I threw the thought from me, but it returned, and after a few minutes of inward strife I carried off the first volume of Dwight. The hand of God was upon me.

I sat down in my chamber, before the fire, opened the book, and began to read an argumentative discourse on the existence of God, but little fitted, one would have said, for the conversion of a soul; yet it was God's word for me.

Deistical in my thoughts I had long been, but I had never questioned the existence of God. Now, however, from a dreamy idea, He seemed to become to me all at once a living reality, a personal Being, with whom I had to do; and I soon found myself on my knees

## MY AWAKENING AND QUICKENING. 51

before Him. For what I asked I have no recollection; but I went on reading and praying from day to day: I was thoroughly awake now, and in earnest for salvation.

How many days thereafter I cannot now say, nor what the direct agency, but never shall I forget the impressions that filled my soul when it first came home to me that there was a Man in the glory of God; that the Son of the Eternal had really taken humanity upon Him, had lived, died, risen, and ascended into heaven, and sat down on the throne. It was like the rising of the sun on midnight darkness; my soul revelled for a season in the glory of the thought, whose grandeur shone out for me all the more vividly against the dark background of my previous dreams of human greatness. I now for the first time saw where the human greatness was. I believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Saviour, the Son of God. Scripture has since taught me that I must then have been born of God. (1 John v..1.)

That salvation was through Christ, and only through Him, had now become for me a certainty, but I was far as yet from seeing it *mine* in Him. I still thought that my doings, and above all my repentance, had a part to play in the matter of my personal salvation, with the application of His salvation to me. All was yet misty; and the grand effort of my

soul became to repent of the past, and to live well for the future. I wanted above all things to *feel* repentant: I thought if it were real in me, I should weep over my sins, and I tried hard (thank God, in vain) to wring tears from my tearless eyes. Had I been allowed to shed one tear, I might have rested on my repentance instead of Christ. What mercy in that which then appeared to me so sad!

I went forward at once, and partook of the weekly "sacrament," and in the course of the next week called on the bishop under whose teaching I then sat with my parents, to ask counsel of him. I was advised to go home, take a sheet of paper, write down all my sins, and repent of them! How little thought that dear man, any more than myself, how he was then helping the devil! How little he knew what that delusive counsel might have cost my soul, but for the grace, the free, sovereign grace of God!

I attempted to follow out his advice, but I had not half covered the page of foolscap before me, when the conviction of the hopelessness of the task caused me to lay down the pen, and sent me again to my knees and my efforts.

It must have been somewhere in the second or third week of my soul exercise, that, as I was kneeling one evening beside a chair, pleading for pardon, and striving after feeling,

there flashed into my soul the thought, "What am I doing? God says He forgives sins for Christ's sake, and here am I trying to wring it out of His hand by my repentance."

It was light from on high. My prayers were instantly turned into praises. My load was gone. I knew my sins were forgiven. My soul was at peace. The child looked up into his Father's face and knew his Father. I do not know whether I then used the words "Abba! Father!" but perfectly well do I recollect that the Fatherly character of God took then, and held ever after, a prominent place in my soul.

The name acquired for me then, as it has ever since retained, an inexpressible sweetness; I delighted to repeat it over and over. Night after night I went out into the open air, like a bird let loose, and in the solitude of the midnight, *skipped* and *leaped* rather than walked along the road for hours, gazing delightfully up into the starry heavens, with the thought that these were all my Father's; that He had made them all, and that He dwelt above there, and filled all things, and yet cared for and loved me! and I poured out my joyous soul in praises and prayers and thanksgivings.

Besides the Scriptures I read other books; among them I recall specially, Pike's "Early Piety"; but Dwight was my pocket com-

panion: he was in danger of becoming an idol. My first quarrel with him was when I came to his thoughts on "Assurance." He made that an *attainment*, and a rare one, a something to grow out of a long life of piety, and a watchful self-scrutiny; while I, a mere neophyte, felt it in my soul, fresh and clear and bright, from God and from His word. Christ had by that time become too precious, and His work (though still in many ways hazy) too clearly my foundation for that teaching: Dwight lost authority over me. From that day to the present, my assurance has never wavered. Much and sadly have my experiences tossed to and fro; but that was always as a rock rising above the surface of the waves: it was CHRIST.

R. H.

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## **"WHO TOUCHED ME?"**

THE CROWD;

OF IT, IN IT, OR OUT OF IT, WHICH?

"And He went with him, and a large crowd followed Him, and pressed on Him. And a certain woman who had had a flux of blood twelve years, and had suffered much under many physicians, and had spent everything she had, and had found no advantage from it, but had rather got worse, having heard con-

cerning Jesus, came in the crowd behind, and touched His clothes; for she said, If I shall but touch His clothes I shall be healed. And immediately her fountain of blood was dried up, and she knew in her body that she was cured from the scourge. And immediately Jesus, knowing in Himself the power that had gone out of Him, turning round in the crowd, said, Who has touched My clothes? And His disciples said to Him, Thou seest the crowd pressing on Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me? And He looked round to see her who had done this. But the woman, frightened and trembling, knowing what had taken place in her, came and fell down before Him, and told Him all the truth. And He said to her, Daughter, thy faith has cured thee; go in peace, and be well of thy scourge.” (Mark v. 25-34. See also Luke viii. 42-48. New Translation.)

**B**Y “the crowd” is meant *the world*, the sight-seeing, restless, seething, faith-lacking, and indifferent *world*. How vast the difference existing between it and one who seeks healing and blessing from Christ! What sympathy, think you, exists between “the crowd” and one who has become poor by spending her money on many physicians, and instead of improving becoming worse, and is found seeking to reach the Lord Jesus Christ?

A woman, however, with faith; a faith of which "the crowd" knows nothing; a faith which expressed itself thus: "If I shall touch but His clothes I shall be healed"; a faith, too, which enabled her to surmount the impediments which "the crowd" may have presented; for, pushing her way through it, she "touched His garment."

The touch of faith was efficacious, as it always is. The woman was conscious of the return of the health she so much desired. She knew it. The Lord, too, knew that faith in Him had been in exercise; as it is said: "Jesus, knowing in Himself the power that had gone out of Him, turned round in the crowd," and asks the question,

"WHO TOUCHED ME?" (Luke viii. 45).

To this the disciples reply: "Thou seest the multitude thronging Thee, and sayest Thou, Who touched Me?" appearing to be almost as ignorant as the crowd as to the vital matter of the touch of faith, or its existence.

Yes, the one who had in faith touched Him was

IN THE CROWD, THOUGH NOT OF IT.

There was nothing in common between the one and the other. Faith in Christ is an *individual* matter; and though the world, especially the religious part of it, may be



thronging Christ, and outwardly following Him, not one touches Him in faith. They feel no need of Him, see “ no beauty ” that they should desire Him, but esteem Him as “ a root out of a dry ground.”

### “ WHO TOUCHED ME ? ”

The woman, “ knowing ” in herself the blessed result of faith, though “ fearing and trembling,” came and “ fell down before Him ” (not before “ the crowd ”), and “ told Him *all the truth*.”

Thus (morally, at any rate) this believer is now

### OUT OF THE CROWD.

You will never find “ the crowd ” telling the Lord “ all the truth.” They may sometimes tell the truth to hide the truth. The world fears to tell “ all the truth ” thus. It knows not the Lord, or His grace either. Yet how many are IN it who are not OF it? How many there are who, in earlier days, touched the hem of His garment; who believed in Him, and believe in Him now; but have drifted into “ the crowd ”; and it would be difficult to know whether they are Christians or not. Sometimes they doubt themselves whether they are Christ’s or not.

To such the Lord is saying,

### “ WHO TOUCHED ME ? ”

It is plain that the woman we write of would

have been a great loser had she not come out from "the crowd."

What would she have lost?

"Peace." Had she not come out and confessed to Him, she would have been as one who had received what was stolen. The receiver of stolen property cannot be happy or at peace.

The Lord knows this, and consequently desires that the one who had placed faith in Him should acknowledge it.

This will help to explain how that persons having "touched the hem of His garment," and got into "the crowd," not confessing Him, are not in the enjoyment of peace.

Now the "frightened and trembling" one,

#### OUT OF THE CROWD,

is made to hear the assuring words, "Go in peace."

In what has been adduced, however, the *ground* of peace has not been presented or dwelt upon. It is a blessed thing to know that the ground of peace with God is the finished work of our Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross of Calvary, a work wrought *outside* ourselves. Observe, we speak of the *ground* of peace, the foundation. He "*made peace by the blood of His cross*" (Col. i. 20). "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” (Rom. iv. 25; v. 1).

It would appear that the experience of the apostle Peter respecting his deliverance from the prison, as recorded in Acts xii., provides an illustration of the position of many in the present day.

Light had shined in the prison. Yes, granted. And granted, too, that “the chains fell off from his hands,” and that he had been awakened. Yet “he wist not that it was true.” He was not sure.

This brought him to “the iron gate.” Many are here. Israel’s “iron gate” was between “Migdol and the sea.” Lazarus, though alive from the dead, was “bound hand and foot with grave clothes.” Jonah likewise, in the belly of the great fish; “pious and prayerful, but imprisoned.”

We would draw the reader’s serious attention to the fact that no efforts of ours can open “the iron gate,” remove our “grave clothes,” get through the Red Sea, or extricate ourselves from the “great fish.” “The iron gate” opens “of its own accord.” Respecting Lazarus, the disciples are employed by the Lord “to loose him, and *let him go.*” Israel were commanded to “stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.” It was He, not Israel, who divided the waters, enabling

them to pass over dryshod. So Jonah had to be brought to the end of his endeavours, and to exclaim, "Salvation is of the Lord," before He caused the fish to vomit out the prophet upon the dry land.

Ponder over the difference witnessed consequent upon these cases of deliverance. On the apostle Peter finding himself outside "the iron gate" he is assured. No longer can it be said of him that "he wist not that it was true." From a state of uncertainty he is enabled now to say, "Now I know of a surety that the Lord *hath* sent His angel, and *hath* delivered me out of the hand of Herod" (Acts xii. 11).

Lazarus, when set free, loosed and let go out of his "grave clothes," is found sitting in company with the Lord, at the same table, with life and *peace*.

The Israelites on the other side of the Red Sea, delivered from the enemy, rejoice and sing (Exod. xv.) and, observe, this is the first real song spoken of in Scripture.

Jonah, delivered from his imprisonment, is made "serviceable to the Master," malleable, and obedient, "a vessel unto honour."

There are joys and advantages known to those "out of the crowd" that those who are in it possess not, and which those who compose the crowd, and are of it never know.

W. R. C.

## “WHAT MUST I DO?”

**I**N the village of Gravelotte I sat in a peasant's house, in a chair in the corner of a window. The peasant's wife informed me that in that same chair and place, the Emperor Napoleon sat the day after he left Metz, on his way to Chalons, after he had heard that the German forces were rather nearer than he expected. For a whole afternoon he sat there and spoke not a word, but smoked his cigars and drank the black coffee which the peasant's wife could give him, and I know the question which was uppermost in his mind, and that was, *What must I do?*

Opposite this, in another small house, I entered the apartment in which King William, Bismarck, Von Moltke, and others sat, some days after, and planned that awful day's work at the quarries of Gravelotte, and the question in the King's mind was, *What must I do?*

How often in your own history have you asked this question! Did you ever meet a man who has not asked it? If you could get into the inner secrets of all you meet in the street, you would find the great majority are asking this question, *What must I do?* High and low, grave and gay, lazy and industrious, good and bad, ask this question, *What must I do?*

The boy at school, anxious to get to the top of his class, and obtain the prize, often asks

it; and when he leaves school to push his way, that is his great question.

The ship's captain in the lashing storm, with the waves threatening to engulf him, and his canvas flying in tatters, has this question often before his mind.

The doctor, baffled by the disease in his patient, puts his hand on the pulse, gathers up all possible information, and after a little meditation, resolutely says, *What must I do?*

The lawyer, anxious to bring his client successfully through, is often pondering the best arguments, obtaining fresh facts and witnesses, in answer to this question.

The merchant has his bills to meet, and you see him going hither and thither with hurried steps the day before, and the question he asks himself is, *What must I do?*

The engineer has been commissioned to lay a telegraph through the ocean, to send a canal through the desert, to bore a tunnel through the mountain; and day by day, night after night, he asks himself the question, *What must I do?*

The beggar, not knowing where to get his next meal; the king on the throne; the poorest peasant; the prime minister, all in their spheres, are, day after day, asking the same question.

Shall we look at the drunkard, after he has pawned the clothes of his wife and children,

ruined his body, careless of his soul, without a copper, and turned out by the drink-seller? He is revolving this question, *What must I do?*

So with the man of pleasure, the greedy man, the covetous man, with his lust or his gain, *What must I do* to have more?

Look at that young lady, having reached what many people think the highest point of blessing, “plenty of money, and nothing to do.” She dresses, goes to parties, undresses, dresses, and so on. As she stands miserable at the looking-glass, there is one question in her mind, and perhaps only one, and it is, *What must I do?*

Vanquished and victor, emperor and beggar, ruler and peasant, all mankind ask the question. Is it not a question peculiar to man? Does it not hint that he is dissatisfied with present attainments, and is pushing onward to something in the future? No animal improves by failure except man. The swallow’s nest in Noah’s ark was just as good as the one in the eaves of our house. Man’s longing after something better in the future finds expression in this question, *What must I do?*

We are most taken up with what concerns ourselves. It is not what must my friends do, my brother do, my neighbour do? but, *What must I do?*

This question grows in intensity in direct proportion to the amount of work to be done, and to the anxiety of the doer that it should be rightly done.

Now, my friend, in the deepest love to your higher interests, I come to a question which should interest you above all questions. You will exist for ever either in heaven or hell. It matters not though you do not believe it, for it is true.

Where will you exist for ever after you have done with this world? You and I deserve to go to hell, for we have committed one sin.

Let us now ask

#### WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?

in order that I, a sinner, may get to heaven?

SIN has to be put away. What a statement! And we are sinners, who love sin, and cannot, by nature, help loving it, and we have to do with a holy God.

SINS have to be pardoned, and we have committed them. We are the offending, and not the offended, party, and we have to do with a just God.

PEACE has to be made, and we have no power or place in the making of it. We have to do with an all-powerful, all-truthful God.

A way has to be made into God's presence, righteously hid from sinful man by the sword of His justice, by the veil that shrouds His glory.



God's majesty has to be manifested, God's righteousness has to be vindicated, God's holiness conserved, God's truth maintained, God's law magnified, and we are unrighteous, unholy, untruthful transgressors.

Not only has every barrier to be broken down, a way made, and a title established, but an entirely new nature has to be provided for the sinner, a nature that loves what a sinner used to hate, and hates what a sinner used to love; a nature native to heaven. “ *Ye must be born again* ” (John iii. 7).

Self has to be set aside, denied, and mortified, and we by nature know nothing but self.

The world has to be overcome; and we were born in it, are part of it, and we love it and its ways.

Satan has to be vanquished, and we are his servants, willing slaves, powerless beneath his allurements, weak against his wiles.

How can we, in sight of such work, ask the question, *What shall I do?* God's authority all the while is demanding that all this has to be done; and if the hardened conscience for a time forgets it, the demand is none the less imperative, the duty is none the less binding. All this has to be done; and I am a sinner who does not love God; an enemy, who cannot suggest the terms of peace; guilty, and therefore deserving wrath, and condemned already; lost, and unable to find my way; without

strength, and incapable of righting myself; DEAD (the climax of all), spiritually dead in trespasses and sins.

Let us now ask—

#### WHAT COULD I DO ?

Could I not pray ? The prayers of the wicked are an abomination to God. Could I not try to do better or repent ? What does this mean from a dead man's lips ?

But I am doing the best I can. The works of righteousness I try to perform in my own feeble, failing, faltering way. But God says that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isa. lxiv. 6); and this does not mean our bad deeds, but our good ones. All the righteous things I ever did, when looked at in the light of the work to be done, are filthy rags. Can I not hope ? If you are unsaved you are without God; and if without God you are without hope in this world. (Eph. ii. 12.) You may think you have hope, but it is a poor will-o'-the-wisp spectre and death-sparkle, alluring you to the lake of fire, not the pole-star of God, set for the guidance of His pilgrim saints.

Let us now look at the glorious good news. Carefully look at all that has to be done; leave out no jot of it, for God says it must be done, and there is no getting past it. Look at our utter inability to do anything. Take, for example, but one of the *must-be's*. “Ye

must be born again.” Confess your entire helplessness. And then you are ready to hear God’s own glorious news concerning this work.

“IT IS FINISHED” (John xix. 30).

Yes, God began it, and God ended it, and you and I have nothing to do but to trust in it, enter into the enjoyment of the fruits of what He has procured.

Look at these wonderful words. God says, “Ye *must* be born again.”

The sinner says, “What *must* I do to be saved?” (Acts xvi. 30).

God says, “The Son of Man *must* be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” If we are to sum up shortly the immeasurable work to be done, we find that there are two pillars on which the whole rests.

Our SINS have to be pardoned; our SIN has to be put away. This, as it were, settles all that stands against us.

A NEW NATURE has to be given to us, as our first is utterly unfit to enter heaven.

All who believe the gospel are entitled to say, God laid our sins on Jesus (see Isa. liii. 6). Christ “bore our sins in His own body on the tree” (1 Pet. ii. 24). He “was delivered for our offences” (Rom. iv. 25). He “gave Himself for our sins” (Gal. i. 4).

God "made Him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. v. 21).

Does all this not satisfy you?

He has been raised again (Rom. iv. 25). We are accepted in Him (Eph. i. 6). We are made partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4). We are a new creation by the power of the Holy Ghost (2 Cor. v. 17).

Is not this sufficient? Praise the Lord, it is. God laid the whole case on Christ.

Christ bore it all and settled every question.

The Holy Ghost now proclaims it to every creature, and urges all to believe His testimony. Will you cease from your thoughts of, What must I do? and ask, What has God done? Must I not believe? Yes, and with many this seems to be the hardest of all works, a sort of toll that God demands to test our sincerity!

God has done all the work; but the striving, *anxious inquirer thinks if he could only get up a tender heart, or a good feeling, or a little faith, that he would be then doing his part, paying the toll, and passing into the way of life. But God is the noblest of all givers. Do not come as a worker, but come as a sinner, and listen to one of God's answers to "What must I do to be saved?" as found in Rom. iv. 5: "To him that WORKETH NOT, but BELIEVETH on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his FAITH is counted for righteousness."*

E. F. I. G.

## **“WE HAVE ONLY TO LOOK.”**

SOME time ago a Christian was asked to visit a young man who was far gone in consumption.

He did so; and to his sorrow found that the young fellow had imbibed the infidel notions of the day. He had received them as something palatable to his natural mind, and, like many more in whom conscience is at work, tried to soothe it (for silence it he could not) by the wretched teachings of men who say in their hearts, “There is no God” (Ps. liii. 1).

But in the day of sickness the miserable “refuge of lies” (Isa. xxviii. 15, 17) was swept away from before him. What had he now to comfort him? Nothing. At the moment when he needed comfort most he found he had been following blind guides who in his extremity left him as in a great morass, wherein he struggled to get free, but he found the more he struggled the deeper he sank.

All around presented a blank and hopeless scene; not an inch of solid ground was there whereon he could put his foot for a resting-place. The heavens above were as brass (Deut. xxviii. 23); for he had systematically and determinedly given up thoughts of looking up.

But God had thoughts of mercy towards

His poor, self-willed, lost creature, and He took him up as a trophy of grace.

In such an hour, when all seemed hopeless, the Christian visitor entered his room. For a long time the invalid sternly resisted lending an ear to the messenger of mercy; but his visitor patiently, and with much gentleness, sought to win him, reading to him part of the 3rd of John, dwelling for a little on that portion where Jesus speaks of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness. Then in his heart commending the sick man to God, he left him.

Not long afterwards the Christian was gladdened by the receipt of a letter which told him that the proud heart had been subdued; that the eyes of the dying man had been opened to his true condition; that he saw he was not only bitten by the serpent, but the poison of sin had polluted his nature, so that he was nothing but sin. The ear had been opened, the heart had received, and the eye of the poor sin-bitten one looked away with a look of faith, and was healed.

Subsequently he penned the following interesting and affecting letter to a friend:

"I have had a highly profitable visit from Mr. O. In what a beautifully simple manner he appears to view our redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ! He represented Christ as the serpent lifted up in the wilderness, to

cure all those who should look upon it. Now, I am quite familiar with this typical representation of Christ; but when Mr. O. was speaking to me upon the subject my mind and soul seemed to grasp the truth, and drink it in as one would cold water when athirst. In fact, it was like the sun rising and dispelling the thick darkness which seemed, until that moment, to enwrap my soul.

“ That evening I felt such joy and comfort that I cannot describe. All the world seemed as nothing to me. I felt myself one of the happiest of mortals, and that my illness was one of the greatest of blessings that ever befel me, in its leading me to the Fountain of Righteousness. I have found great comfort ever since in contemplating Christ as the sacrifice for all sin; and that I have only to look on Him, believe, and be healed. Oh! how delightful is this.

“ This simple idea of Christ and His mission perfectly agreed with my conception of God in every other respect. I felt that all must be done by God; and that a merciful and all-loving God had certainly some simple way of drawing poor sinners to Him, quite independent of themselves. But, according to the preaching I have hitherto heard, coming unto God appeared such an overwhelming difficulty, and poor wretched man had so much to do with his own redemption, that it

appeared to me quite a hopeless task. But I have felt, or seemed to have a sort of intuitive knowledge, that man could do nothing towards his own redemption, and that it must be wholly and solely God's work, without the least share of man's own endeavour.

“How beautifully does the serpent in the wilderness illustrate this. Supposing the serpent had been lifted up in the wilderness at such a distance that it was necessary for the poor victims of the plague to climb up a high mountain or a tree to get a sight of their redeemer. Oh! how few would have been saved! And those who felt the greatest need of cure would have been unable to attain it, and would still have writhed in the dust in the greatest agonies, until death had put an end to their sufferings. But, blessed be God, this is not the case. We have no mountain or tree to climb; WE HAVE ONLY TO LOOK ON the holy and blessed Sacrifice made for our sins, and be healed. We have, as it were, only to look up from the dust in which we are grovelling, and behold our blessed Lord, who is brought to us, and lifted up for our sins.

“I think it is worthy of remark that the serpent was lifted up in the midst of the disease; they had not to go to him, but he came to them; the poor wretches had only to look on him and be healed; he was, as it were, lifted up in their very sight.”



## A POINTED QUESTION.

**I**T is said that a celebrated minister prepared and preached a course of sermons against infidelity for the purpose specially of convincing and bringing over to Christianity an intelligent infidel neighbour who was a regular attendant at his church.

Just after the close of the said series of sermons, the infidel professed to be awakened, and the preacher was anxious to know which of his sermons did the execution.

Soon after, the new convert, in relating his experience, said, "The instrument God was pleased to use for my awakening and conversion was not the preaching of those sermons against infidelity, but the simple remark of a poor, old coloured woman. In going down the steps of the church one night, seeing that the poor old woman was lame, I gave her my hand, and assisted her.

"She looked up at me with a peculiar expression of grateful pleasure, saying, 'Thank you, sir. Do you love Jesus, my blessed Saviour?'

"I was dumb. I could not answer that question.

"She said, 'Jesus, my blessed Saviour,' with so much earnest confidence, that I could not deny that she had a blessed Saviour, and felt ashamed to confess that I did not love Him.

“ I could not dismiss this subject from my mind; and the more I thought of it the clearer my convictions became that the old coloured sister had a Jesus, a blessed Saviour; and I thought of how kind a Saviour He must be to impart such joy and comfort to such poor, neglected creatures as she was; and I soon began to weep over my base ingratitude in denying and rejecting such a Saviour. I earnestly sought that Saviour, and found Him; and now I can say, ‘ I do love Jesus, my blessed Saviour.’ ”

In the simple remark of the old coloured woman there was clearness of faith, a joyous confidence that shook the foundation of the infidel's refuge of lies. It had earnestness in it. The old sister was very grateful for a small favour, and very solicitous about the soul of the kind stranger. The Holy Spirit gave the whole an appropriateness of application which knocked the underpinning out of the infidel's fort, and the walls that withstood the “ great guns ” of the preacher, tumbled down as suddenly as the walls of Jericho at the blast of the rams' horns.

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“ Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a SAVIOUR, for to give repentance . . . and forgiveness of sins ” (Acts x. 31).

## THE SHED BLOOD, AND THE BLOOD SPRINKLED.

THERE is a great difference between blood *shed*, and blood *sprinkled*. The one implies *guilt*, the other proclaims *mercy*. The shed blood of Abel *cried* for vengeance; but the blood of Jesus “*speaketh* better things than that of Abel” (Heb. xii. 24).

Now, how do I understand this, when the blood of each was *shed*?

Oh, this is a wondrous fact for the soul to lay hold of for its eternal comfort. It is the very sum of the wonderful scheme of redemption. The blood of God’s own appointed Lamb, which was *shed* by wicked hands, this very blood God takes, and *sprinkles* upon the mercy-seat, to form for poor sinners the place of safety. (Rom. iii. 24, 25.)

“His precious blood has spoken there,  
Before and on the throne;  
And His own wounds in heaven declare  
The atoning work is done.”

We are sheltered under the blood. Just as the Israelite of old took the *shed* blood of the slain lamb, and *sprinkled* it upon the lintel and upon the door posts, and was secured from the judgment which swept the land, so are we safe from wrath, beneath the shelter of the blood of Jesus. The poor sinner, pros-

trate before the mercy-seat, sees the blood sprinkled *before* it, and trusts in it. God sees the blood sprinkled *upon* the mercy-seat, and such is His estimate, such is the value He sets upon it, that the sinner is immediately "accepted in the Beloved." The blood is applied (in figure) to his conscience, and he rejoices in the sweet sense of sins forgiven, and knows he is "born of God" (1 John v. 1).

Oh, what a happy thing to be sheltered beneath the blood of Jesus; and how solemn it is to be a despiser of the blood, to be trampling it under foot, to treat it lightly, yea, it may be, to be utterly heedless about it! Darkness and death were in every house in Egypt that had not the blood sprinkled upon it (Exod. xii.). And such will be the doom of every rejecter and despiser of the blood of Jesus (Heb. ii. 1-3; 2 Thess. i. 6-9).

Will you, reader, abide the awful consequences of the *shedding* of His blood? or will you hear the voice which is now speaking to you sweet and lovely things concerning the *sprinkled* blood of Jesus? Vengeance is for the blood-*shedder*, but mercy for the blood-*sheltered*. Which is your position? His blood alone can cleanse you from all sin. This is God's remedy for the terrible nature of sin; and there is none other. If you are trusting in the blood of Jesus you are safe for time, and sheltered for eternity. Oh, the

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wondrous value of the blood of Jesus!  
(1 Peter i. 18, 19).

“ Within the holiest of all,  
Cleans'd by His precious blood,  
Before the throne we prostrate fall,  
And worship Thee, O God.”

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**“ THE ATONING WORK IS DONE.”**

**I**T is very clear that when a thing is finished nothing can be done to make it so.

When we have finished a piece of work it would be folly for another to come and attempt to complete it.

Just so is it with the Lord Jesus. His work He finished. His dying words were “It is finished” (John xix. 30).

What then was the work of Christ which He came to do? Christ's work was “to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself” (Heb. ix. 26). This work He has done. He came to suffer, “the Just for the unjust” (1 Pet. iii. 18). This He has done, once and for ever. He came to pay the wages of sin, which is death (Rom. vi. 23). This He has done to the very uttermost.

The wrath of God was upon the sinner, and Jesus came to do the will of God by bearing His wrath for us, so that we might not perish, but have everlasting life (Heb. x. 9-13).

He was forsaken of God on account of the sinner. "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" was the question of Jesus when on the cross. And what is the answer? It is that those who believe might never be forsaken; that the sinner, who by nature is at enmity against God, might have peace with God. This peace Jesus has made by His death, and now he who believes on Him is justified, and has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. v.).

The death of Christ has met all the demands of God against the sinner. His death has fully paid the wages of sin, which is death, and God is just in pardoning and in justifying the ungodly one who believes in Jesus, and by whom all who believe are justified from all things, from which by the law of Moses they could not be justified (Rom. iii. 23-26; Acts xiii. 39).

The sinner, then, has nothing to do to make the salvation of God more complete than it is. "It is finished," and it is free to all who believe in Jesus.

**THE WORK OF CHRIST IS FINISHED.**

(John xix. 30; Heb. x. 12.)

**SIN IS FINISHED.**

(Heb. ix. 26, 28.)

**CONDEMNATION IS FINISHED.**

(Rom. viii. 1, 2.)

## THE SIEGE OF SAMARIA.

(2 KINGS VI. 24.)

SAMARIA for her sins besieged was in a  
fearful strait;

Gaunt Famine stalked within her walls,  
the Foe was at her gate;

Despair had palsied all her sons, maternal  
love had flown.

Unhappy City! deeply doomed, how grievous  
was her moan!

But in the darkest of her night Hope's cheer-  
ful dawn appeared;

THE LORD on her in mercy looked, her dark  
horizon cleared:

Elisha in His Name proclaimed to her in all  
her sorrow,

That present dearth should melt away, and  
plenty flow to-morrow.

What tender pity had THE LORD for her in all  
her sins!

His erring creatures' wretchedness His deep  
compassion wins.

Ah! would that all the lesson learnt the truth  
His goodness shows;

That He has mercy for the lost, forgiveness.  
for His foes.

Four leprous men outside the walls had  
grief above the rest;

Unclean, and shunned in their complaint,  
they seemed indeed unblest;

Whichever way they looked for help, Death  
 stared them in the face,  
 And they no brighter hope could see than in  
 the Syrians' grace.

But God had good in store for them, of which  
 they ne'er conceived,  
 And unlike man His word is sure, and e'er  
 may be believed.  
 'Twas but a broken reed to trust the fierce,  
 remorseless foe;  
 But God's a Rock, and Mercy's tide from Him  
 doth freely flow.

If He had said, Where famine swayed, abund-  
 ance soon should reign;  
 Where want her withering hand had spread,  
 should rise the precious grain;  
 'Though nature's eye could not a sign of this  
 abundance see,  
 'The heavens should sooner pass away than  
 this should fail to be.

At twilight, then, these men arose, and to the  
 camp they went;  
 But not a Syrian found they there, though  
 there stood every tent;  
 The horses, too, and asses tied, but all their  
 riders fled;  
 And in the tents were victuals found, on which  
 these lepers fed.



## THE SIEGE OF SAMARIA.

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These men had never raised an arm the vic-  
 tory to gain;  
 That all the glory was THE LORD'S, and His  
 alone, 'twas plain.  
 And who the rich provision spread? 'Twas  
 His, the Victor's spoil;  
 And not a morsel or a sup the fruit of Israel's  
 toil.

The LORD of HOSTS, the MIGHTY GOD, had  
 filled the foe with fear,  
 And noise of chariots, horses, men, had made  
 the Syrians hear.  
 They thought that Israel's hireling hosts upon  
 them all had burst,  
 And fast they fled, each for his life; for fear  
 forbode the worst.

A greater than the Syrian foe hath God by  
 Christ o'erthrown,  
 In that consummate victory which Christ  
 achieved alone;  
 When He in flesh through death o'ercame,  
 and Satan brought to nought,  
 And for us sinners in His grace His great  
 Salvation wrought.

The flowing bounties of His grace, Salvation  
 for the lost,  
 Are God's providing, full and free; the death  
 of Christ the cost:

No works of man could grace produce; no  
 toil, with zealous care;  
 'Tis all of God, whose heart is Love, whose  
 glory none can share.

These men, alas! made self their aim; for  
 when well-filled with good,  
 They gold and silver sought and hid, and  
 selfish ends pursued;  
 Forgetful of the famished souls who pined for  
 want of bread,  
 While there was plenty for them all, by God  
 in mercy spread.

But He who for His glory cares, and guards  
 His gracious Name,  
 Aroused these lepers from their sin, and filled  
 their souls with shame;  
 So they at length repenting, said, "From  
 hiding let us cease,  
 This is a day of joyful news; how can we  
 hold our peace?"

As face to face in pool responds, so heart of  
 man to man,  
 And in these thoughtless, leprous men our  
 likeness we may scan.  
 But, oh! may we, who're saved by grace,  
 whose souls are well-sufficed,  
 The things of self no longer seek, but those  
 of Jesus Christ.

## THE SIEGE OF SAMARIA.

83

The joyful tidings reached at last Samaria in  
 her woe;  
 That God had gained a victory o'er her vin-  
 dictive foe;  
 That on the spoil which He had won her  
 people now might feast,  
 Her sons, her daughters, every one, the  
 greatest and the least.

God's faithful word thus came to pass; for  
 finest flour was sold,  
 And barley, at the value that the Prophet had  
 foretold;  
 While every famine-stricken soul was satis-  
 fied with bread,  
 By that same power which fainting crowds  
 in barren deserts fed.

'Twas grace, indeed, that gave the grain to  
 this unhappy race,  
 At such a price that e'en the poor the bless-  
 ing might embrace;  
 But, oh! the grace of God, in Christ, to sin-  
 ners vile and lost,  
 That gives to poor and needy souls, Salvation  
 free from cost!

Oh, yes, God calls on sinful souls, who're  
 beggars and in debt,  
 To come to Him in Jesus' Name; and none  
 denied He yet.

A rich provision, free to all, hath He in love  
 prepared;  
 That Love which in His bosom burns, and is  
 in Christ declared.

The faithless lord who doubt expressed at  
 God's unfailing word,  
 The promise, by Elisha's mouth, accounted as  
 absurd,  
 Was made to prove in his own case that God  
 is ever true;  
 When told that he should surely die, with  
 blessing full in view :

For as the people through the gate in their  
 impatience rushed  
 To reach the food, they trod on him, and he  
 to death was crushed.  
 Thus, he who dared to doubt God's word, that  
 He would food provide,  
 In judgment from His hand expired, and  
 perished in his pride.

How black the sin of unbelief ! God's witness  
 to destroy ;  
 And when He tells of life in Christ, to give  
 to Him the lie !  
 How hateful is the heart of man ! 'tis evil to  
 the core ;  
 AND HE THAT WILL NOT GOD BELIEVE, MUST  
 PERISH EVERMORE. T.

## **“ HE SAID SO.”**

**W**HEN the Emperor Napoleon the First was one day reviewing his troops, he let go the bridle of his horse, and in a moment the high-spirited animal galloped away with him.

A private in the ranks saw the danger, sprang from his place, and seized the bridle of the runaway, thus saving the limbs, and perhaps the life also, of the emperor, who said to him, “ Thank you, *captain*,” and rode on.

“ Of what regiment, sire? ” asked the soldier.

“ Of my guards,” was the reply.

Going back to his regiment, he put down his gun, and said, “ Whoever likes may take care of that,” and, walking across the review ground, joined the staff.

A general, looking round at him, said, “ What does that fellow want? ”

“ ‘ That fellow ’ is a captain of the guard,” said the man, and gave the military salute.

“ You are mad, friend! ”

“ I am not mad; I am a captain of the guard.”

“ Who said so? ”

“ He said so,” pointing to the emperor riding along.

“ I beg your pardon,” replied the general, and recognised him at once in his new office.

“ If we receive the witness of men, the wit-

ness of God is greater"; and the foregoing story is recorded for the sake of those who, while truly anxious about the salvation of their souls, have not received the "testimony of God" about "Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," and who, consequently, cannot say, "We know that His testimony is true." The Holy Ghost has convinced you of sin, and, in the depths of your souls, you own that you are "guilty before God." You may have groaned beneath the load of your guilt, watered your couch with your tears; and when, in broken accents, you have tried to pray, it may have been as though Satan were standing at your right hand to resist you. You may, too, have searched the Scriptures again and again, and frequently listened to the preaching of the gospel; and yet, when you have heard that there is full and free salvation in Christ for the very vilest sinners who believe in His name, if you had expressed the thoughts of your hearts, it would have been, in the language of a weary, heavy laden sinner we once met with: "I do not know what you mean by believing"; and who, when the finished work of Christ was again put before her, replied, "Oh, if I could believe! But I don't know how."

Now, does it seem strange to you that when the subject of our story heard the emperor call him "Captain," he should so simply and

fully take him at his word as to ask immediately of what regiment he was to be the captain? Or wonderful that, when he was called “ That fellow,” charged with being “ mad,” and deridingly asked, “ Who said so?” he should point at once to the emperor, and triumphantly reply, “ He said so ”?

“ Certainly not,” you say; “ any other mode of action on the part of the soldier would have plainly declared that he had no faith in the imperial word that had been spoken to him.”

Well, then, dear reader, how is it that when “ God, who cannot lie,” declares in His word that He “ sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins ”; that

“ The atoning work is done ”; and that He has shown His satisfaction therewith by raising Him from the dead, and setting Him at His own right hand, you do not as readily believe His testimony as the man believed the saying of the Emperor Napoleon? Ah, why? Because you have supposed that faith is *something more* than simple reliance upon the plain statements of the word of God, and you have looked for that *supposed something* in yourselves, and tried to find the ground of your confidence in your convictions of sin, or in the depth and extent of your feelings and evidences.

But this is to reverse God’s order altogether.

What evidence had the soldier that he was a captain *before* he believed it? None whatever. No gold lace adorned his clothes; he had not received a single farthing of a captain's pay; his commission even was not signed by the proper authorities. Doubtless, after he had passed through the ceremonies of the War Office, he soon wore a captain's uniform; but this *followed* his faith, not went *before* it. And so, dear reader, true faith is always followed by internal and external evidences; but until you *have believed* "the true sayings of God," you will neither possess the one nor manifest the other. But the instant you listen to "the words of eternal life," and drink in the wondrous truth that "Christ died for the ungodly," and that you are welcome to Him without self-preparation or any worthiness to plead, the full and simple belief of this precious fact will bring immediate peace to your sin-troubled soul; you will have power to silence, not only the accusations of Satan, but the ignorance of those who will seek to persuade you that it is presumption to say that you are saved; and when challenged to give "a reason of the hope that is in you," you will point heavenward and reply, "The mouth of the Lord hath spoken it."

Such, dear reader, is ever the language of faith, and oh! that from henceforth you may



believe “the faithful saying,” that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” as unhesitatingly as the man believed the word of the Emperor Napoleon! True, the daring act of the soldier well deserved the honour which was bestowed upon him; whereas, were you to receive the due reward of your deeds, you could not “escape the judgment of God”; but this should only enhance (and were it not for the pride of your hearts it would do so) “the gospel of the grace of God” in your estimation, and cause you to give a willing ear to “the joyful sound” of present and eternal salvation in and by the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the finished and accepted work of the Son of His love, God presents you a solid and an immovable rock upon which you may repose “in perfect peace,” the word which declares that it is nigh you is worthy of all your confidence. Ground your faith simply and solely thereon, and you shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end.

N.

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How happy it is to be debtors to grace! How happy to take when God is glorified in giving! When MAN is in question, it is infinitely better to *dig* than to beg; but when GOD is in question, the case is the very reverse.

## IS THE LINK ON ?

A SHORT time since, in travelling, by an express train, from Glasgow to Bradford, I met with one of those striking little incidents which so frequently prove very suggestive and instructive to the mind.

Owing to the opposition of two railway companies, our train had to travel under very high pressure in order to keep time, and every arrangement was made to avoid delay.

When we arrived at the junction from which the Bradford line branches off from the main, instead of the whole train stopping to detach the Bradford carriages, a curious contrivance had been adopted, by which, while the engine was at full speed, the Bradford carriages were in an instant detached, and the main body of the train flew on at fifty miles an hour, leaving us, after the impetus had subsided, standing on the line, as though the connecting chain had given way.

Not being aware of the arrangement we felt a little uncomfortable, and a young man, who sat opposite to me, put his head out of the carriage window, and exclaimed, "Oh! we are left behind. I see the train flying round the curve."

We could not imagine what had occurred; and, for aught we knew, some other train might come in a few moments, and dash right into us.

It was a solemn moment, and I thought it right to improve it by speaking to the young man about the immense importance of *having the link on*. I said to him, "What an awful thing it will be, my friend, to be left behind for ever, to find, when too late, that there is no link connecting our souls with Christ! May I ask you this solemn question, 'Is the link on?' "

He looked very serious, and replied, "Well, indeed, sir, I am sorry to say I have not thought so much about these weighty matters as I should."

I then went on to explain to him the simplicity of the link, that it was simply believing in the Son of God. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but *is passed* from death unto life" (John v. 24).

Here is the link, the precious, living, eternal link of faith. This link can never be snapped. No power of earth or hell can sever the believer from Christ. In Him is life, and the soul that is linked by faith to Him partakes of His life, "*hath* everlasting life." It does not say, "He shall or may have it at some future time." No; he hath it now, and can never lose it. The feeblest believer in Jesus is as safe as the blessed Saviour Himself.

Dear reader, let me ask you, as I asked my

fellow-traveller, "*Is the link on?*" What a vital question! How much hangs upon it! Your eternal destiny, your weal or woe for countless ages! In our case the suspense lasted but a few moments, for another engine came down along the Bradford line, and carried us off to our destination. But in the case of an immortal soul not linked on by faith to Christ it is a totally different matter. There is no other arrangement, no other resource, no other hope; there is nothing to fall back upon. If there is so much as the breadth of a hair separating your soul from Jesus there is no life. The carriage may be so close to the engine as that the buffers are actually touching it, but if the link be not on there is no connection; and hence, when the engine moves on, the carriage will be left behind.

So also as to the soul and Christ; there may seem to be great nearness, the buffers of mere profession may touch, but if THE LINK OF FAITH is not on there is no personal, vital connection, there is no life, no security. We live in a day of immense profession. Bibles are circulated in millions, and religious tracts in billions; and we have to thank God for it. But, oh! reader, think of the awful responsibility! Only reflect, for a moment, upon what it will be to pass into eternal fire from a scene of such accumulated privileges!

C. H. M.

## THE SIX TWENTY-POUND NOTES.

THE sun shone gaily, and the farmer sat on a low wall overlooking the quarry where a man was working. He was no doubt thinking over his last sale of farm produce, for he had not been there long before he drew out a roll of notes and examined them. They were six in number, and for £20 each.

How far in thought the farmer travelled we know not, or whether he was meditating how best to lay out his funds in seeds or stock; but he shortly turned his steps homeward. Not long had he been at his farm before he thought again of his notes, and to his chagrin discovered they were not in his possession.

Trying to recollect himself, he speedily concluded he must have forgotten to take them from the wall, where they would still be found. But he was mistaken. Not a sign of any one of them rewarded his resolute, anxious search. The notes were gone. Who could have found them? Reflecting again, he remembered whom he had seen in the quarry; and, suspecting the man, he accused him of having them. But the quarryman, instead of confessing the truth, *denied the charge with indignation!*

All the while the £120 was in his possession, for he had found and appropriated the notes. And, dear reader, though the poor farmer was nonplussed, and could do nothing but stop

payment of the notes, which he did, yet *did not God know?* Oh, how terrible it is that men, many at least, are practically *infidel* as to the very existence of God, or surely they would remember that He knoweth, and that no denial of the truth blinds His eyes to their sin! And now what did God do with this grievous transgressor, this liar, this thief? Man could do nothing, for no human eye had beheld the evil act. Satan was doubtless busy enough with the man, persuading him to stick to the lie, to face it out, and hold fast the money; hadn't he found it, and didn't he want it far more than the farmer, who had ten times the comforts he had, and perhaps, after all, would never miss it?

But *what did God do with this man?* Well, first of all He gave him ample space for repentance. For two long years He gave him this and constant mercies withal. Week after week He gave him strength to earn his bread and health to enjoy it. And this while the man kept up his character among men, and went to chapel or church, it may be, and heard the word of God preached, and the way of salvation presented. We say it may have been so; but one thing is clear, that all the while, yea, for a hundred weeks, he *hugged his sin* and his *ill-gotten treasure!*

And then God's hand was uplifted!. The quarryman rose from his bed, and went to his

work as usual that day, but it was *for the last time*. The finger of God, as it were, just touched the ground under the shadow of which he was working, and in an instant two hundred tons of rock and earth engulfed him, and the poor fellow was **BURIED ALIVE!**

A number of workmen set on to recover his body, working late and early for two whole days before he could be reached. At last the mangled corpse was disinterred, and reverent hands conveyed him to his cottage. But, alas! when friends examined his pockets, there was produced in the light of day the fearful disclosure of his guilt!

Carefully folded up and enwrapped with a piece of rag, within a steel tobacco-box, were the missing notes, the whole £120, just as they had left the farmer's hands when he sat on the wall two years before! Sad, sad revelation of unconfessed guilt! And what had he gained by it? Had he not sowed the wind, and reaped the whirlwind? "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world" (righteously even, and surely worse if unrighteously) "and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

And do you tell me, my reader, that you are guiltless of such a transgression as that of the wretched quarryman, and would not condescend to so base an act?

I freely accept your assertion. I will allow you to be amongst men both an upright and a downright man; but doth not God look for more? Doth not He look down somewhat deeper than even the tobacco-box; ah! deeper than human eyes ever penetrated? Has He not said, "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would have none of My reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you"? (Prov. i. 24-27).

Not yet, however, are fulfilled those terrible words which have gone forth from His lips because of His righteous character; but THE GOODNESS OF GOD IS LEADING THEE TO REPENTANCE to learn the efficacy of the blood of Christ for thy sins. And if thy heart be drawn by faith to that precious Saviour as thy Saviour, His own blessed Word to thee for thy present peace, and for thy eternal joy, is, "I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. vi. 2).

W. R.



## **“I NEVER SAW IT SO PLAIN BEFORE.”**

“**J** OHN,” I said to an old man I had employed to work in my garden, “do you think are you ready to meet your God?”

“I fear not, sir,” was the reply, as he leaned his hand upon his spade, and wiped his brow. “I know I must be born again, and I am afraid I cannot say I have been so.”

“Well now, John,” I answered, “I am sure you are not one of those that think they can do anything towards being born again; that they can by works, or prayers, or sorrow, qualify themselves for the new birth that they know they require.”

“Oh no, sir,” said he, “I am not so ignorant as that. I have read my Bible, and I know that the carnal mind is enmity against God, that it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, and that they that are in the flesh cannot please God; though I am a poor man now, sir, I once had a comfortable farm, and received in my time a very good education.”

“Well, John, I am very glad you see what you say you do, that man by nature is so radically bad that he can produce nothing that God can receive, and that, therefore, it is absolutely impossible that he can do anything towards being born again. And now, John, can you tell me how a man must be born again?”

for we know that unless he is so, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God " (John iii. 5).

" Well, sir, I fear I must ask you to explain it to me, for that is just the point I have often longed to know, and to which I have never yet attained."

" Well, John, I will tell you as simply and plainly as I can," and I opened my Bible at John iii. 14, 15, "and that in the words of Scripture: '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.' Now, here you have the love of God, the work of Christ, the sinner's faith, and the result attained to. God loved the world, and proved His love by the gift of His only begotten Son. Christ, as Son of Man in men's place, was lifted up upon the cross. He thus becomes the object of faith to the universe, and the promised blessing is to 'whosoever,' anybody. The moment we believe on Him we possess eternal life, or, in other words, are born again."

" Well, sir," said John, " I certainly never saw it so plain before; I had thought there was far more in it than that," and he seemed to look brighter as he spoke.

“ I NEVER SAW IT SO PLAIN BEFORE.” 99

“ No,” said I, “ there is no more than what I say, and the comparison the Lord uses makes it still more plain. You remember in Numbers xxi. how, because of the people’s sin, the Lord sent serpents to bite them, and many died of their wounds; and when they cried to the Lord, He told Moses to set a serpent of brass on a pole, and that whoever looked at it, his bites would be healed; and now, just in the same way, those who are under God’s wrath on account of their sins, have but to turn the eye to Christ, to believe on Him, and their judgment is at once removed, and they receive the gift of eternal life, that ‘ heavenly thing ’ to which the Lord alludes (v. 12); that new existence; that life in resurrection that completely takes the recipient of it beyond the reach of death, and brings him into the heavenly kingdom, the kingdom of God.”

“ Well, sir, I think I understand it now,” said John; “ I am very much obliged to you.”

I did not speak to him again for some days, preferring to wait and see whether it was really the work of God in his soul, or the natural joy that only too often the strains of grace produce; but when I did so, I could have no doubt the Lord had sealed him for His own, and from that moment he grew steadily in the things of God, and presently desired to be associated with the Lord’s people in the remembrance of Him who died for them. He

took his place amongst us, and seemed very happy in the Lord, and fully to enter into and enjoy worship "in spirit and in truth."

But ere long his health broke down. An asthmatic affection seized him, and it became evident that he was not long for this world. I scarcely remember anything more enjoyable than my visits to him, for he could not face the sharp spring winds. To seek in any way to minister to him was out of place and undesirable.

I used to sit and listen to him worshipping the Lord. His frame was wretchedly emaciated; but it seemed as if, while the body became weaker, the Holy Ghost, who had come to dwell therein, had fuller liberty, and made his unutterable groanings (Rom. viii.), by anticipation, change almost to songs of praise.

His constant theme was CHRIST, and he seemed to have the Person of the Lord most vividly before him. "Oh! the brightness of Christ!" he would say; "Oh! the brightness of Christ!"

One could almost have said he beheld literally "the glory of the Lord," from the sense he seemed to have of His beauty. He suffered much, but nothing dimmed his joy from first to last, and one morning as he lay upon his bed, he just turned to his son, who was sitting by the fire, and said gently, "James,

remember the Lord," and then passed to his rest without a struggle.

We shall meet again; but meanwhile I rejoice to think of one whom I still sometimes think I can hear saying, "Oh! the brightness of Christ!"

Dear reader, can you join your voice to his, and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him, against that day"?

D. T. G.

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## THE RIGHT SORT OF FAITH.

ON hearing that M—— H—— was ill I called on him. I found him very civil and ready to open his mind to me, and from the first a sort of hope sprang up in my heart that, although he was then a stranger to real godliness, and to the second birth which must, of necessity, precede it, he would be saved.

His disease was of a painful nature, and one about which doctors differed, but he was so struck with the faithfulness and kind treatment he received from a godly physician I sent him to in London, that although he had spoken of the unreality of much of the profession he saw around, he said, when speaking to me

about the visit, "Oh, sir, there's reality in Christ's religion; oh, yes, sir, I saw it there, you couldn't mistake that, and I thank you for sending me to him."

"I am sure," said I, "he had pleasure in doing what he did for you. But he told you that in the end it would terminate fatally, still there is the eternal state, dear M——. You cannot cease to be, and the future is of greater importance than the present life; and *what about that?*"

"Ah! sir; well, I feel troubled about that."

"Well, it is better to be told the truth than to be deceived," I said, alluding to what the physician had told him.

"Oh yes, sir, he spoke kindly to me, and said you would not like me to deceive you, and I told him I wanted to know what he really thought about the case. Ah! sir, he treated me as if I were his equal; oh! as if I were his brother; and you don't get much of that, you know, sir, in this world."

"Well, dear M——, if one of God's children would treat you so tenderly, how much more so will God Himself!"

"Ah, well, Mr. C——, I tell you just how it is with me. I know I am a sinner, and in my present state I am not fit to die. I don't mean to say that I have done anything, or been anything, worse than any other man in my station; but I know I am guilty before God,

and I know, sir, that a man must be converted or be lost.”

“ And you know you are not converted? ”

“ I do indeed, sir, I assure you.”

“ Well, hear what God says to such a one, ‘ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved ’ (Acts xvi. 31). ‘ God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life ’ (John iii. 16). God gave up His Son to stand in judgment for us, and to bear on the cross the wrath that He as a righteous God must have poured upon all. Now, since the Lord Jesus bore it all in His own spotless person, when He hung there as the Victim of God’s providing (and the fact of God raising Him from the dead is the pledge and the proof that God Himself, against whom we have sinned, is perfectly satisfied,) there is nothing for man to *do* or to *be*, who knows he is guilty, but to believe God’s testimony about it. And directly he does that, God is as righteous in clearing him of all guilt, as He will be in pouring wrath upon the finally unbelieving man. So that your eternal state hinges upon your acceptance or rejection of God’s declaration, or testimony, or word, concerning the all-sufficiency of the work of the cross. Guilty as you are before God (and you say you feel it), if you accept what God says about that

work, you are saved. You are there and then righteously cleared of all guilt by God Himself (I don't mean merely *assenting* to it as a fact, but resting on that work for a guilty one like you,) for the very reason that God, by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, says *it is enough.*"

God knew how to reach his heart, and, as it subsequently proved, His word did it. I saw him many times after that interview, and he got just where so many awakened, troubled souls get; that is, looking for fruit in themselves before simply resting on the work of the cross; and when he was told that it was simply believing what God says about Christ, and the work He wrought on the cross to meet God's claims, and pay the full price of the sinner's complete discharge, he then got occupied with faith, namely, as to whether he had the right sort of faith, and so on, instead of that which is the OBJECT OF FAITH. This was brought before him illustrated in various ways, but he still said, "I don't feel what I want to feel; I fear I don't believe aright; I fear I don't come aright; I don't seem able to love God as I ought."

I told him that the great mistake he was making was in getting occupied with himself, looking for what could only be found by *listening to what God says*. I told him it was not trying to believe; trying to come aright;



trying to get right faith; trying to love God; as none of these, nor all of them put together, would save a soul, or he would get something to trust in in himself; that nothing could deliver his soul, but simply resting in what God says about Christ's work on the cross. Having nothing to put before a poor sinner but the work of the cross, I invariably kept to it with him, quoting or reading such scriptures as show the all-sufficiency of it for the guilty, such as "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "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." "It is finished." "Be it known unto you . . . that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all who believe are justified from all things." "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." "He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God," and many other portions bearing on the same glorious truth. (John iii. 14-16; xix. 30; Acts xiii. 38, 39; 1 Cor. xv. 3; 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. iii. 18).

One day, about six months ago, I went in and found him in a prostrate state; but, pulling himself up in bed, he took my hand, and tried to speak.

He was so overjoyed, however, that like a child, he could not at first speak for the lump that was in his throat; but the tears flowed freely, and when he recovered a little he looked up, and with a bright face, while tears still filled his eyes, and stood on his cheeks, like bright sunshine in a shower of rain, he said, "Oh, sir, I'm so happy!"

"Happy are you? How is that?"

"Ah, sir, I see it all now!"

"What do you see?"

"I see as you were telling me, and as a little book I was reading after told me, that I had been occupied with *my faith*, instead of being occupied with Christ who is the OBJECT OF FAITH. I see it all. The load is all gone. I see Christ did it all, and God is satisfied, and all my sins are gone. Oh! how precious! What a work, what a Saviour!" And looking upwards, while a lovely smile played on his bright face, he said, "No fear now. I see how God is glorified. Oh, sir, 'tis wonderful! I know I'm saved, God says it; oh, yes, sir, God says it. Oh, how wonderful it is I did not see all this before, when it is all so plain! But I know what it is, I was looking *within* instead of looking to *Him*!"

I was like a little child, too, for I felt a lump growing in my throat, and I suppose we wept for joy together. I then knelt down, and praised God beside the bed I had knelt at before in prayer.

I soon went in again, and found him still very happy. He said he should like to go home, but that he believed God would keep him here a little while to speak to others. And so He did. He got about some little time telling all of God's dealings with him; and, as he said, his mouth was opened before such as at one time he would not have ventured to speak.

The first flush of *joy* subsided a bit, but *peace* he never lost.

The last time I saw him he was very bad, the pain and weariness were great indeed; but, looking up, he said he had not a doubt, for it was Christ's work, and not what he felt, that had settled the matter for ever, and he longed to be gone.

I think the last word he said to me, in answer as to whether he could still look up, was, "I long to be gone"; or, "I long to be at home."

He was pained to hear some professing Christians speak of their doubts, as if they had never yet got their eyes off self, and fixed on Christ and His work. He regarded it as dishonouring to Christ, and as weakening to

their testimony; and touchingly asked, "Why is it so, Mr. C——? I cannot understand it."

My dear, unpardoned reader, will you go on as you are to hell, when Jesus died to save sinners from it?

Troubled one, why should you listen to your own heart or Satan, or to any enemy, when the God who loves you, is telling out His heart of love to you in the death of the Lord Jesus on the cross to free you for ever?

Child of God, did you ever analyze your motives in the matter of doubting your security as a believer? Did it ever occur to you that pride may be at the bottom of it, wishing to find a little bit of self-goodness to rest in? Did it ever occur to you that your worldly walk may be the secret of it? Did you ever look at it in the light this dear and bright saint did as dishonouring to CHRIST, and a weakening of your testimony?

Whatever may be at the bottom of it, you may look from one cover of your Testament to the other, but will not find God the author of such work in you, neither will you find it Christian experience; though, alas! it is the experience of many Christians.

With God and your own soul I leave the matter, and trust the above simple narrative will be used for blessing even to you.

J. C.

## **“ AND THEN ? ”**

**I**T is told of Filippo Neri, a godly man of former days, that whilst at one of the Italian universities, a youth, whom he had known as a boy, accosted him with a face full of delight, to tell him that what he had long been wishing above all things in the world he had at length attained, that his parents had given him leave to study the law, and that he had come to the university, attracted by its fame as a school of law, and that he meant to spare no pains or labour in mastering his studies, and thoroughly accomplishing himself as a lawyer.

In this way he ran on a long time; and when at last he came to a stop, the good man, who had been listening to him with great patience and kindness, said, “ Well, and when you have got through your course of studies, what do you mean to do then ? ”

“ Then I shall take my doctor’s degree,” answered the young man.

“ And then ? ” asked Filippo Neri again.

“ And then,” continued the youth, “ I shall have a number of difficult and knotty cases to manage; shall catch people’s notice by my eloquence, my zeal, my learning, my acuteness, and gain a great reputation.”

“ And then ? ” repeated the good man.

“ And then ! ” replied the youth; “ Why, there cannot be a question I shall be promoted

to some high office or other; besides, I shall make money and grow rich."

"And then?" repeated Filippo.

"And then," pursued the young lawyer, "then I shall live comfortably and honourably, in health and dignity, and shall be able to look forward quietly to old age."

"And then?" asked the pious man.

"And then," said the youth, "and then, *then I shall die!*"

Here Filippo Neri significantly asked, "*And then?*"

Whereupon the young man made no answer, but cast down his head and went sorrowfully away. This last "And then?" had pierced his soul, and he departed almost in despair. He had met the good Filippo full of dreams of future greatness, full, alas! of what he would do for himself. It was to be "his eloquence, his zeal, his learning," that would give him all that his natural heart coveted or desired.

So absorbed was he by what appeared a hopeful and prosperous future, that he had neglected to take any thought for the eternal welfare of his soul. He could even go so far as to say, "And then I shall die"; but his conscience was aroused and alarmed when confronted with "AND THEN?" after death. Reader, have you ever thought of the solemn word, "For it is appointed unto men

once to die, but after this the judgment ” ? (Heb. ix. 27).

Never let your thoughts stop short on this side of eternity. Let them not stop at the grave, but cast them forward beyond ; and press home to your heart the searching question of Filippo Neri, “ And then ? ” Can you, dear reader, find an answer that gives peace ?

If that solemn question, when asked, finds as yet no hopeful response in your heart, turn over the leaves of your Bible, and you may read the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, “ 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 xi. 25, 26).

“ Believest thou this ? ” If thou believest with all thine heart upon Jesus the Son of God, as the only Saviour, who bled and died for you, the searching question at the head of this paper, instead of troubling you in spirit, will be a source of endless joy ; since the word of God says, “ For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God ; and *the dead in Christ* shall rise first ; THEN we which are alive and remain shall be caught up *together with them* in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so

shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17).

"AND THEN" shall we taste the fulness of that wondrous grace which will be the theme of eternal praise.

J. R.

### **"WHOSOEVER."**

A YOUNG man was greatly troubled about his soul. He knew that he was a sinner in God's sight; and so deeply did he feel this that he was often ready to lie down in despair, saying, "Is it possible that God can save such a miserable sinner?"

In the day-time he thought of hell as his justly deserved punishment, and at night he would sometimes imagine himself shut up in the pit of outer darkness. He tried to reform and live proudly on his good works; but, alas! he got nothing better, but rather grew worse.

One evening, however, he was passing a large building where a servant of the Lord was preaching. He went in.

Soon after he entered he heard the preacher call attention to the words of our blessed Lord, "that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life" (John iii. 16). "Mark," said he, "this word 'WHOSOEVER.'"

For the first time this troubled hearer began



to perceive the freeness of God's grace in the gospel, and to think there was after all some hope even for such a sinner as he was; because “ WHOSOEVER ” included him, and everyone else who trusted Christ as his Saviour.

I need not say that, by the power of the Spirit of God, the young man's heart was thus led to look wholly to Jesus for salvation, and thus he found joy and peace in believing, and has delighted in the service of the gospel for many years.

Dear reader, Have you thus simply believed in Christ? Are you trusting in Him who died on the cross to save sinners? Is His precious blood the sole ground of your peace with God?

With many others this saved young man could say :—

“ When free grace awoke me by light from  
on high,

Then legal fears shook me, I trembled to  
die.

No refuge, no safety, in self could I see :  
‘ Jehovah Tsidkenu ’ my Saviour must be.

My terrors all vanished before the sweet  
name;

My guilty fears banished, with boldness I  
came

To drink at the fountain, life-giving, and  
free,

‘ Jehovah Tsidkenu ’ is all things to me.”

But there is another "WHOSOEVER," equally general in its scope, and particular in its application. Yet, oh, how wide the contrast! "WHOSOEVER was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. xx. 15). Mark, it is "WHOSOEVER"; no matter who it is, or what plea is raised, it is "WHOSOEVER"; for God is no respecter of persons. How solemn! If a man has not Christ Jesus, the Son of God, the Giver of everlasting life, for his Saviour, how can his name be written in the book of life?

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Life through the death of Jesus,  
 Gift of eternal love,  
 Sweetly the gospel message  
 Sounds from the throne above;  
 Life for the guilty sinner,  
 Freedom for slaves of sin;  
 God's blessed "WHOSOEVER"  
 Takes every lost one in.

Washed in the blood of Jesus,  
 Clean in God's holy sight,  
 Jesus can make the vilest  
 Whiter than snow to-night.  
 Only the work of Jesus,  
 Nothing that man can do;  
 God brings His great salvation  
 Just where you are to you.

## **“CHRIST DIED FOR US.”**

**T**HE following is the substance of a recent conversation with a young man in deep concern about his soul.

He introduced himself by saying, “ I would like to speak to you by yourself. I am very anxious, very unhappy, cannot rest. I cannot see my way clear at all.”

“ Well, what a mercy ! what a mercy it is to have the conscience touched about sin, and the heart in any measure turned to God ! Can you believe that He is doing all this in love ? Are you satisfied that God loves you notwithstanding all your sins ? ”

“ That is what I want to feel, but I can't feel it. I feel that I am a great sinner. You don't know what I have been, but I can't feel as if I would be forgiven.”

“ Do you really believe that God regards you as a great sinner ? ”

“ Oh, yes, indeed I do ; I am sure of that.”

“ But, now, tell me, how are you so sure of that ? ”

“ Because I know it, I feel it. I have been a very great sinner.”

“ But is there no other way that we may know it besides feeling it ? Has not God told us in His word that we are all sinners ? ”

“ Yes, I know He has ; and I would give the world to know that I am pardoned.”

“ Oh, you need not speak about giving ; God

is not asking anything; neither is He seeking to condemn you because of your sins, but to turn your heart to Jesus. But, now, take the ground of faith as a sinner. You can only have to do with God now by faith. Know and believe that you are a sinner, not because you feel it, but because God says it. And then comes the important question, 'What is God to me, a sinner?' Now, don't look within; look to Himself; hear His word. What does it say? 'But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. v. 8). Can you receive the truth here so plainly stated, namely, that God is love to you a sinner?"

"The word says it, and we should believe it; I know that."

"But should not *you* believe it now? Will it be truer to-morrow? Does not God say He loves the sinner? and you say that's what you are. Therefore He says plainly that He loves you."

"That's what I want to believe, but I can't feel that He loves me; my sins seem so great."

"Well, that's true; but in place of looking at your sins, as you know them in yourself, look at them in the light of this verse, and you will see that it is by means of these that you know how much God loves you. It was your sins that drew forth this wondrous love, in the gift of Jesus. God loved us, Christ died for

us, ‘while we were yet sinners,’ while we were black and vile as sin could make us. Righteousness judged the sins, and love saves the sinner, through the sufferings and death of the blessed Lord Jesus. Oh, wondrous, wondrous love! But mark, this is not all. Not only has God manifested His love in giving Jesus to die for you a sinner, but the same love has followed you in all your wanderings, and followed you to this room to-night, and now He has laid His hand of love upon you, and is drawing you to His beloved Son. Oh, yield your heart to the drawings of His love. Look up! only look to Jesus! Hear Him saying to you, ‘Look unto Me, . . . and be ye saved,’ and ‘Come unto me, . . . and I will give you rest.’ Be done, then, with your feelings and reasonings about yourself. Dwell on the love of God as it has been manifested in the death of Christ for you, and let your whole soul rest on the truth of that word, ‘The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin’ (John i. 7). The moment you take your place among the ‘us’ who believe, your sins are all cleansed away. The answer of Jesus to your every anxious look and earnest desire it, ‘Thy sins which were many are all forgiven. Go in peace’ (1 John i. 7; Luke vii. 36, 50).”

“Well, I think I believe all that; I see it quite differently now. But I thought that I

ought to feel it all in myself before I could believe it was true to me. I now see I must not look to myself, but only to Jesus."

"Yes, my dear young man, the only sure way of keeping our eyes off ourselves, is to keep them fixed on Jesus."

Before closing this paper we desire to say a plain word on the perplexing subject of "feeling." We meet with it everywhere. The mistake into which so many fall is that of confounding the enjoyment of truth, when believed, with the mere feelings or impressions of their own minds. When persons say, "I can't feel that God loves me, that Christ died for me, that my sins are forgiven," we believe they simply mean, "I do not enjoy or feel the power of these blessed truths." But how can these or any other truths be enjoyed, or their power felt, until they are believed? Faith never refers to self, but always to the word of God. We meet with many who want to *feel* that they are believers, before they have believed the truth, and to *feel* that they are safe before they trust in Jesus.

Now, this is all confusion. The *truth* to be believed, mark, is *outside* of self; the *enjoyment* of it is *within*. "The Lord direct your hearts," says the apostle, "into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ" (2 Thess. iii. 5). These blessed central truths are ever the same, unchangeable, outside, and

independent of the believer ; nevertheless, they are to be enjoyed in the heart. But if we at times fail to realise their power, and to enjoy them in our hearts, they remain unchangeably the same. The object of faith is ever *outside* of self ; the enjoyment of it *within*. Our failing to enjoy the object can never lessen its value or *change its character*.

The truth as to pardon, peace, and acceptance must be received in faith before it can be enjoyed, or its power felt. The same moment that the sinner is brought to Jesus in faith the whole need of the soul is met, fully, perfectly, and for ever met. When this is believed, the soul has rest ; not, observe, in its own feelings, but in the word of Christ believed. He never says to one who comes to Him, “ I will forgive.” No, blessed be His name ; but, in plainest terms, He says, “ Son, daughter, thy sins *are* forgiven, thy faith *hath* saved thee ; go in peace ” (Mark ii. 5).

The only question now is, Can the troubled one receive it as the truth of God ? If so, the voice of Jesus has spoken peace to that soul. And if the ear is kept open only for Him its peace will be as complete and settled as the word of Christ can make it. Did Jesus ever send away a seeking soul from His presence in a state of uncertainty ? No ! never ! and He never will. His word is pledged. “ Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out ” (John

vi. 37). When He says, "Thy sins *are* forgiven," should the soul have another doubt as to the blessed fact? When He says, "Thy faith *hath* saved thee," should the slightest feeling of uncertainty remain? When He says, "Go in *peace*," should the soul go in trouble? Assuredly not! And assuredly it will not, if only it looks to Him, and not within; if only it hears His word, and listens not to the voice of its own feelings. Oh! that anxious, troubled souls would only cease from looking within, and from judging of their state before God from their own "feelings." The blessed consequences of faith in Christ are fully and plainly revealed in God's word. Let the eye of faith rest on it, and let the heart of faith count it most surely and for ever true, and then peace like a river will flow into your soul. The character of your own mind, the nature of your religious education, or your present opportunities, can in no wise affect the heart of God or the word and work of Christ. Faith's blessed and never-ending consequences the Spirit of truth declares to be, (1) *Being justified*; (2) *Having peace*; (3) *Standing in favour*; (4) *Waiting for glory*. "Therefore 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 wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Rom. v. 1, 2).

C.H.M.



## THE DAWN OF LIGHT AT EVENING TIDE.

**I**N the County of M——, and in the wildest parts of the parish of N——, shut out from every privilege, lived a poor and aged woman.

By industry she had earned and saved a scanty pittance; but, through the ill behaviour of some of the members of her family, she was obliged to resign the store destined for her support in the time of old age.

She had gone through life as if it were never to end, toiling hard, gaining little, forgetting her immortal soul, and sleeping her time away.

It pleased God to bring to my knowledge, through the medium of some of her neighbours in the valley, the wretched state of this person, and a day was fixed for the first visit.

On entering her cottage, I found her, dressed in a red cloak, sitting down and smoking a pipe. Her only companions were a child about ten years of age, and two dogs.

As far as appearances went, everything was calculated to make the heart sink in despair and the flesh tremble with fear; but those words in Ecclesiastes ix. 10 quelled all doubts: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

On conversing with her on religious subjects, I found she was indeed desolate. She

had entered her hundredth year, and had not believed in that Saviour who died that sinners might live; and as her life was closing fast, it was an overwhelming thought that she must soon be taken from this sinful world, to be lost for ever.

But He who searcheth all hearts, and knoweth what is in the mind of man, was pleased to use my visit to alarm her conscience, making her feel her guilt and danger, and leading her to see her need of Christ.

Some may ask, "But did she ever repent, and believe?"

Yes, marvellous are the ways of God. He called this aged creature out of the deepest darkness into His marvellous light; and though she could not read, her memory was good, so that she remembered all she heard.

Many months indeed passed before she got peace with God; when one morning she opened her heart, and confessed that *now* she knew what God meant by sending me to her cottage. She said that she had often wondered how I could come so often, not feeling that I loved her soul, and wished her to love Christ. The truth of the gospel so often repeated to her came home with power at last, and she became a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It pleased God to spare her three years longer, during which period the nature of the

inward change was plainly manifested. Her strength was in Him; she found that His hand was not shortened that it cannot save, nor His ear heavy that it cannot hear (Isa. lix. 1). He saved, He sanctified, He comforted her; and she departed a few months since, in her hundred and third year, rejoicing in Jesus.

And now we leave her, and would say a few words to those who perhaps think old age is time enough to believe. Do *you* think so? Perhaps before to-morrow's sunset you may be in eternity. Let me ask the question, Have you really believed in Christ? If not, "come to Jesus" without delay. Why dash away the cup of mercy, and madly dream of salvation without a Saviour? His blood was shed for sinners; and though you have so long rejected Him, He still asks you to come, saying, "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 25).

On the other hand, let no one think age a certain hindrance to salvation, but cast all your sins at the foot of the cross, seek mercy, and the door will not be closed against you.

May all who are engaged in the important work of visiting the poor be stimulated by this interesting fact; and, whatever obstacles arise to stay your progress, press forward. You are working for God, and you shall not lose your reward. Go on in His strength, and in His

own good time He will bless your efforts, however feeble. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that" (Eccles. xi. 6).

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### SALVATION FOR THE NEEDY.

An Indian and a white man were brought under conviction of sin by the same sermon. The Indian was shortly after led to rejoice in pardoning mercy. The white man was for a long time under distress of mind, and at times ready to despair; but he was at last brought also to a comfortable experience of forgiving love.

Some time after, meeting his red brother, he thus addressed him: "How is it that I should be so long under conviction, when you found comfort so soon?"

"Oh! brother," replied the Indian, "me tell you. There come along a rich prince. He propose to give you a new coat. You look at your coat, and say, 'I don't know; my coat pretty good. I think it will do a little longer.' He then offer me new coat. I look on my old blanket: I say, 'This good for nothing.' I fling it right away, and accept the beautiful garment. Just so, brother, you try to keep your own righteousness for some time; you loth to give it up: but I, poor Indian, had none; therefore, I glad at once to receive the righteousness of God, the Lord Jesus Christ."

## LIFE—PARDON—PEACE.

### LIFE.

**I**T is a solemn fact that every man, woman and child in his natural state is dead to God, alienated from the life of God, it matters not how religious a man may be, or how profane, he can have nothing to say to God in his natural state; that is why the Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, who was one of the most religious and refined men of his day, “Ye must be born again!” Now if it be asked, How can man be born again and have a new life whereby he can live before God and to God? we can thankfully say that God has not left us in ignorance, for He sent *His Son* into the world that we might *live through Him* (1 John iv. 9). When here on earth the Lord Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life” (John vi. 47). And again, “The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live” (John v. 25). Life therefore is received through faith in Him. So in answer to Nicodemus, who was puzzled as to how a new life could be given to man in his present condition, the Lord said, “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” (John iii. 14, 15. See Numbers xxi. 4-9).

That is, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of man as well as the eternal Son of God, must be lifted up upon the cross, and made a sacrifice for sin, so that God might in righteousness give eternal life to any one who believes in Him.

“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).

### PARDON.

But man is not only dead, and in need of a new life, but he is guilty, and is in need of the forgiveness of his sins. Here, again, there are no exceptions, all are guilty, “for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. iii. 23). It matters not whether it is a Jew or Gentile, man or woman, old or young, rich or poor; every mouth will be stopped, and all brought in guilty before a holy God. (See Romans iii. 19).

But, it may be asked, If God gives life, does He not also pardon sin? Indeed He does. But here again He has His own way of doing it; that is, through the death of the Lord Jesus Christ, His beloved Son. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all” (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6). “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for

the unjust, that He might bring us to God ” (1 Peter iii. 18).

This is the alone ground of forgiveness and salvation : the death of Christ, the blood-shedding of the Lamb of God. “ And without the shedding of blood is no remission ” (Heb. ix. 22).

But one may ask, How can I, a lost and guilty sinner, get the good of this, and know my sins are forgiven? The answer is this : “ To Him (Christ) give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.” Again, “ Through this Man (Christ Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses ” (Acts x. 43, xiii. 38, 39). “ The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin ” (1 John i. 7).

## PEACE.

But it is not only a fact that man is dead and guilty, but he is in his nature an enemy of God; his carnal mind is enmity against God. And this people realise, for we often hear the expression, “ You must make your peace with God ”; but alas! this is impossible with man; but what is impossible with man is possible with God.

Although it is often said, “ I hope to go to

heaven when I die," and that by unconverted people, it is well to remember that unless FIRST RECONCILED TO GOD no one could be happy there, even if it were possible to be there; an honourable peace must first be made before man can stand in the presence of God.

But here again God has anticipated the need of His creature, and the Lord Jesus has stepped in the breach, and made peace by the blood of His cross; the enmity of the heart of man was expressed by the thrust of the soldier's spear which brought forth blood and water from the Saviour's side.

How this proves man's hatred to God. What a solemn fact that, when God visited this world in love and grace as a Saviour God in the Person of His beloved Son, man deliberately cast Him out, and crucified Him.

Yet on the other hand the dying Saviour is the expression of God's love to man, "for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11); and it pleased God to bruise Him, to put Him to grief, to make His soul an offering for sin, that His holy claims against the sinner might be met, and man reconciled to God by His death. Thus upon the cross the wrath and judgment of God against the sinner was endured by His own beloved Son when He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"

Thus peace has been made to reconcile the



sinner to God. "Now then," says the apostle, "we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech by us: we pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 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. 20, 21).

Now, this righteousness of God is unto all, and upon all them that believe; as we read, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. But this was not written for his sake alone, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on God who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 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: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God (Rom. iv. 20-25; v. 1, 2).

Peace has been made, the believer has it, heaven is open to him, and he rejoices in hope of the glory of God.

This is God's salvation: LIFE, PARDON and PEACE through the death of His beloved Son. It glorifies God, and puts the believer in the light of His presence in happiness and peace for ever.

Now, one word of warning! If this salvation is rejected, neglected or despised, there

is no escaping the just judgment of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is not only exalted a Prince and a Saviour, but He is ordained to be Judge of the living and the dead.

He has been insulted, spit upon, crowned with thorns and crucified by man. Will God allow that to pass without holding the world responsible? By no means. "He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance to all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 31).

"Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen" (Rev. i. 7).

W.M.S.

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We are told that the famous actor, Garrick, was once asked by a bishop how it was that he produced far more powerful results by his fiction than the bishops could by preaching truth. The reply of the actor is full of force. "My lord," said he, "the reason is obvious: I speak fiction as though it were truth, whereas you speak truth as though it were fiction." At the same time let the reader remember that the truth is solemnly told in the Bible, and that he is responsible to listen to God's voice there.

## THE POWER OF THE SCRIPTURES.

SOME time ago I was called to visit a young woman about twenty years of age who was extremely ill, and who much wished to see me before she died. On my arrival at her father's house I found her heavily afflicted, and death appeared to be at no great distance. I sat by her bedside with the Bible in my hand, expecting to find her, as I have too often found others in similar circumstances, entirely ignorant of the gospel. I read a portion to her, and was most agreeably surprised to find that she was a believer, and well understood the Scriptures. I asked her father how she became so well acquainted with the word of God. He said he did not know; she was always reading her Bible at every opportunity, and sometimes sat up all night for that purpose. He observed she was a very dutiful daughter; he had a large family, and she, being the eldest, and very industrious, was of great service to her mother and the younger branches of the family: *the only indulgence she required was to be allowed to read the Bible when her work was done.* But he could not account for her attachment to it, and it seemed very strange to him that she should attend to it so much. I asked if she was in the habit of going to any place for worship. He said she went sometimes; but

was generally prevented from distance and the large family which she had to attend to.

None of the family knew anything of the Scriptures but herself. I visited her during the whole of her illness, from the time she sent for me until she fell asleep in Jesus. Her faith was simple, her view of the way of salvation clear. She gave me many proofs of this in the various conversations which I had with her during her sickness. And how came all this about? By grace she had been led to take up and *read the Scriptures*. Her "heart the Lord opened, that she attended to" the written word, and by *it* she had been brought to a knowledge of the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He hath sent; hereby was she filled with peace in believing, and the Bible was more precious to her than gold. Previous to her last illness she had enjoyed good health. It was in the prime of youth and vigour she had read her Bible, and learned to love it; so that she had not first to seek God in this trying moment, but found Him a present help in sickness and at the approach of death. The Bible had testified of Christ to her; she had found eternal life in Him, and the Divine promises were both great and precious to her soul.

S. M.

## THE SWALLOWS ARE GONE.

“ Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord. How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? Lo, certainly in vain made He it; the pen of the scribes is in vain. The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken; lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them? ” (Jer. viii. 7-9.)

**T**HE end of the year is near. The swallows are gone; the cold blasts of winter are come: but not one swallow is left behind. We saw them gathered together, and they were seen to fly higher as the time to depart grew nearer. No one saw them go. But they are gone to sunny lands of the south. The frost and the snow, the sleet and piercing winds of winter never reach them there. Very remarkable is this instinct of the birds. “ Yea, the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming; but My people know not the judgment of the Lord.”

Is there not a lesson for us in this instinct of the birds? It was pleasing to watch the swallows as the winter drew near; how they would

gather in companies; how they seemed to wait for the wanderers. Then they would fly high, as wanting to be gone.

We thought, Is not the Holy Spirit now gathering Christians together in little companies to Christ? Now here, now there, a wanderer coming in. Should we not fly higher? We, like the swallows, are about to leave this scene below. Already signs of this world's judgment begin to flit across its autumn sky. And now every swallow soared ready to depart, moved by one common instinct. Oh! that every Christian was seen manifestly ready to depart, moved by the Spirit of God.

But will it be with the whole Church of God as with the swallows? Yes, the Holy Ghost is already gathering them in little companies to Christ. He has revealed to them afresh, after many centuries, the heavenly Bridegroom, and the heavenly calling of the Church. He is leading their thoughts and hearts higher and higher yet. And soon, very soon, though the world will not see them go, yet every one shall be gone, not one left behind.

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the

Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 15-18).

Are not these the sober words of inspired reality ? Yes, brethren, we shall all be gone, not one be left behind : "for ever with the Lord." If the swallows are gone to more sunny shores, oh ! what will it be to be caught up away from the scenes of this world's wintry woes and judgments, and in peaceful rest enter the glory of our Lord ?

And if God never fails to take by instinct at the appointed time the stork, the crane, and the swallow, can He possibly fail at the appointed time to take the saints to meet their Lord ? Is it not sad and humbling that the Lord should have to complain, that though the swallow should know her appointed time, "My people know not the judgment of the Lord" ? Is not this as true now of Christendom as it was of Israel then ? What profound ignorance there is on this important subject ! "My people know not." Men go on dreaming of continual summer, yea, of increasing sunshine, peace, temperance, prosperity, just at the very time when the saints are about to be gone like the swallows of autumn, and the storms of this world's wintry blasts are about to take them all by surprise (1 Thess. v. 1-9).

It is incredible how utterly unaware the learned of this world are of the wintry judgments about to be poured out on the nations of

the earth. "How do ye say, We are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us?"

Never was there a day of more boasting, "We are wise." It is quite true that the word of God is in men's hands; but who believes it? The rapture of the Church before "the day of the Lord" is clearly revealed. God has said it. He has made it perfectly clear, both the departure of His saints to meet the Lord in the air, and the terrible judgments that shall follow. Has He made it clear? Yes, but, "Lo, certainly in vain made He it; the pen of the scribes is in vain." Yes, in vain hath God spoken in His word; men will not believe Him. "Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition" (Mark vii. 13).

Let us now pass on to the December of this world, before the new era of the millennial kingdom begins. "The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?"

Let us listen to these learned men, these rejecters of the word of God. "How strange this is! Those Christians we despised are all gone, like the swallows of autumn. Not one of them can be found on earth. How we laughed at, and hated, their gathering together! What fools we thought them because they would fly higher; as they said their Lord



was coming to take them. They spoke of their heavenly calling; and would have nothing to say to our earthly societies and politics. We scorned them because they would not join our various schemes for the improvement of man. We hated the thought that we were not to glory save in the cross of Christ. They gathered together, poor little despised companies, and told of the coming Saviour to the wanderers all around. No one saw them go; but they are gone. And now the world's wild, fierce, wintry blasts are blowing. Where is all our boasted wisdom? Peace is taken from the earth. All that we hear on every side is, that men are killing one another. Famine and pestilence, sword, hunger and death all around. Woe, woe to us! the winter of this world is come!"

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains . . . hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb" (Rev. vi. 15-17). Ah! we rejected the word of the Lord; but now the Christians are gone, and the great day of His wrath is come. Storm after storm has come: we seek death, and do not find it (Rev. ix. 6). Where is now our boasted wisdom? We are worshipping devils, and idols

of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood (Rev. ix. 20). And what is the end of all our politics? What strange events since the winter set in, and the Church is gone! It is not forty-two months yet since the new last head of the Roman Empire appeared. But oh, what months! The dragon has given him his power. Ten kingdoms have sprung up, and given their power to this Satanic head. When he opens his mouth it is in blasphemy. And all that dwell on earth worship him. And all that refuse are boycotted, and put to death.

It is true that all this was distinctly foretold in Scripture; but we were far too wise then to believe what God said to His servants in Revelation vi., ix., xiii., xvii. Certainly there never was such a winter as this since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be. Jesus said it would be so; but we did not believe Him (Matt. xxiv. 21).

Yes, "The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord; and what wisdom is in them?"

And now, beloved reader, as the last days of another year are fast coming to a close, where are you, and what is the condition of your soul? Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb, and ready to be gone like the swallows in the autumn? Are you following the wise men of this world, who will so soon be

ashamed and confounded? Is Christ for you the centre of attraction? Are you separated to Him, and waiting for Him from heaven?

Great is the last effort to draw Christians from Christ to join the confederacies of men. Oh! let us seek to get higher and higher. The word of God is utterly disregarded. On no account will men allow it to be Christ alone. Christ and circumcision, Christ and the world's various confederacies, or even Christ and profanity. All these things hide the coming of the Lord to take His saints. Every doctrine of human improvement denies the utter ruin of man through sin, and the fast approaching winter of divine judgment on the rejecters and despisers of the word of God.

It is solemnly true of the great men and the wise of this world, "They have rejected the word of the Lord." The mark of a Christian is, "Thou hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name" (Rev. iii. 8). Which is true of you, beloved reader? Whatever name you may bear, if you have not kept His word you are not a Christian, and will surely be left behind when the Christians depart like the swallows that are gone.

Can you for a moment admit that the instinct of a bird is more sure than the words of the Saviour? As this world's winter approaches, let us then dwell on the words of Jesus. He cannot fail to fulfil His promise.

We may not know where the swallows go ; but Jesus says to us, “ In My Father’s house are many mansions : if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself ; that where I am, there ye may be also ” (John xiv. 2, 3).

Do we hear you saying, “ Yes : Jesus says so, but our learned, wise teachers do not say so ” ? Then remember the word, “ They have rejected the word of the Lord ; and what wisdom is in them ? ”

It is a solemn fact that God by His Spirit has sent forth the midnight cry, “ Behold, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet Him ” (Matt. xxv. 6) ; and they have rejected the word of the Lord. God grant we may cease from man ; for what wisdom is in him ?

May the saints of God be now gathered together like the swallows in autumn. May we love to dwell on His sweet words of promise. Has He not gone to prepare the place ? Oh ! those scenes of radiant glory, far away from earth’s cold, wintry blasts. And will He not come to take us to Himself ? With Himself ! How soon, like Moses and Elias “ on the holy mount,” shall we be talking with Him ! Glorious reality ! Soon we shall be gone ; not one be left behind. And poor, deceived, apostate Christendom will be left to

“ become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird” (Rev. xviii. 2). But (blessed comfort!) “ the Lord knoweth them that are His,” and none shall be left behind. “ Wherefore He saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light ” (Eph. v. 14). C. S.

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### AN EXERCISE IN NUMERATION.

Count the gold and silver blossoms  
 Spring has scattered o'er the lea;  
 Count the softly sounding ripples  
 Sparkling on the summer sea;  
 Count the lightly flickering shadows  
 In the autumn forest-glade;  
 Count pale nature's scattered tear-drops  
 Icy gems by winter made;  
 Count the tiny blades that glisten  
 Early in the morning dew;  
 Count the desert-sand that stretches  
 Under noon-tide's dome of blue;  
 Count the notes that wood-birds warble  
 In the evening's fading light;  
 Count the stars that gleam and twinkle  
 O'er the firmament by night:  
 . . . . .  
 When thy counting all is done,  
 Scarce ETERNITY's begun;  
 Reader! pause! WHERE WILT THOU BE  
 DURING THINE ETERNITY?

## **“HOW CAN I APPROACH GOD?”**

**O**N returning home one Lord's day afternoon, I met a young woman who was evidently in great mental distress. She said, respectfully, yet with deep emotion, “Sir, how can I approach God?”

I replied, “What makes you so anxious about your soul?”

She said, “I have been reading the Bible this afternoon, and feel convinced, in a way I never felt before, that I am a vile, guilty sinner.”

“I am glad,” said I, “that the Holy Spirit has thus, by the written word, shown you something of your real condition as a sinner against God. You may rest assured that God loves sinners, though He hates sin; 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). Christ died upon the cross that we might live through Him; and, sinful as you feel yourself to be, and are, be assured you can only find access into God's presence through the blood of Jesus, His Son” (Heb. x. 19, 20).

A few days after, I met her again in tears, bewailing her hell-deserving condition. She said, “I know that Jesus died for sinners; but I feel that I cannot approach God.”

In this state she continued some time. It

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was clear to me that, though she talked about Jesus, yet she did not know who Jesus was. The great mystery of “ God manifested in the flesh ” had not been revealed to her. I therefore set before her many scriptures which refer to the Person of Christ, especially such as show that, though Jesus was “ made of a woman,” yet He came out from God, was sent by the Father, and was God and man in one Person. That Jesus was “ the express image ” of the invisible God, though He was found in fashion as a man. That because Jesus was man, He was a fit substitute for sinners, and able to bear our sins, and to be made a curse FOR US; and because Jesus was God, there was infinite virtue in His bloodshedding and death, and infinite power to put away sin for ever thereby; and that God, by raising Jesus from the dead, setting Him at His own right hand, and crowning Him with glory and honour, gave a public testimony that He accepted His finished work on behalf of His people (Heb. ii. 9).

“ Hence,” I added, “ the way of approach to God is through Jesus the Son of God, crucified and risen, who is now at the right hand of God; and He gives this most gracious assurance, that ‘ He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God *by Him* ’ ” (Heb. vii. 25).

I then prayed that she might be enabled,

by the Holy Ghost, to come to God by Christ.

Her whole soul seemed to cry out,

“ Give me Christ, or else I die;  
None but Christ can satisfy ! ”

When I saw her again all tears were gone, and a peaceful smile had displaced the gloom from her countenance. She said, “ I am happy now, sir ! ”

“ What makes you happy ? ” said I.

“ Oh, sir, a few mornings ago, after prayer, the words, ‘ *Your sins and iniquities will I remember no more,* ’ brought sweet comfort to my soul ; it seemed as if God spoke them to my heart.”

“ Can you really approach God ? ” said I.

“ Oh ! yes, sir, I approach God *now* without fear, through the blood of Jesus, His Son, who is at His right hand ; and my desire is to live for His glory.”

This is the substance of my conversation with this young woman, and it is related because it may meet the need of some others similarly exercised, who, knowing something of God’s holiness and their own sinfulness, are saying, “ HOW CAN I APPROACH GOD ? ”