

# The Sower

## A GOSPEL MAGAZINE

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VOL. XXIII.

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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  
Of whether they both shall be alike good.

Eccl. xi. 6.

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by a servant. It therefore took him some time before he recovered himself to answer the young man, who stood there before him, and had spoken so straight to his heart, though it was a breach of all regulation. At last he said:

“Here, young man, you look well after my horse, and you should get thanks for that; but as to what concerns religion, I want you to allow me to hold my own opinion. I hope that everybody will get to heaven according to his own faith.”

The youth stood still, and after a while replied; “Herr Rittmeister, there is only one faith and that is faith in Jesus. We do not come into this world together, and we do not go to heaven together, for one of us two will not go there.”

The Rittmeister felt that the youth was right; he was smitten in his conscience, by the truth which this simple child of God had so faithfully expressed. But he only said, “Leave me alone!” From that hour, he was inwardly unhappy. It was not now only the sorrow for his dear wife; no, in his heart had been awakened the consciousness, that he was not on the right way.

Fourteen days later he found himself inside a bank for the purpose of transacting some money matters. There he met a retired believing officer, who was known to him in former days. This friend addressed him directly with the words: “God is seeking you, and you should give up your whole life to Him.” That is remarkable, thought the Rittmeister, that here another one says exactly the same as my servant; strange, that these bigots always say the same thing!

But the old comrade went on; "My dear friend, the Lord is willing to save you."

"Why do you always say:

" 'Saved,' or 'not saved' " ? returned the Rittmeister. "I think it more humble to say; 'I am hoping on God's grace and mercy.' "

"Yes, that sounds humble, but it is pride, for it is pride, if man will not receive salvation through grace." There upon he pulled his Testament out of his pocket and spoke of eternal life, which the sinner receives by grace through believing.

"Look here," said he, "here it is written; 'He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me hath everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.' " (John 5: 24.)

"My dear friend, it does not mean that he really has everlasting life, but that he will receive it, provided that he conducts himself well on this earth."

But he was forced to confess to his great surprise, that the words actually were: hath everlasting life! Then he asked, "But if faith is the condition upon which everlasting life is received, what does faith mean? What am I to understand by it?"

On this question, the Rittmeister heard preaching as simple as that which Peter once held in the house of Cornelius the centurion.

"Listen to me," said his friend; "every one by nature is lost, and subject to judgment. Therefore, Jesus took the penalty of condemnation on Himself when He hung on the cross. In your stead He bore the judgment; in your

stead He died, that you might live. God wishes that all should be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Faith means to believe what you do not see, to trust something that is outside of yourself. You walk over a bridge, because you believe that it will support you.

Give yourself over to Jesus and trust Him, and He will never allow you out of His keeping. Give yourself over to Him; trust Him; give your heart to Him, and you have everlasting life now! "He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (1 John 5: 12; Rom. 8: 1.)

There fell from the eyes of the Rittmeister as it had been scales. God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, had also shined in his heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 4: 6.) He believed, and became, the same hour, indescribably happy. He himself tells; "I hastened home and for half an hour could do nothing but say, "Thanks and praise, Lord Jesus! Thanks and praise that I am saved. Glory to the Lord. Hallelujah!" That was on the 30th of October, 1884. What happened to the Rittmeister that day was not like a fire of straw—kindled easily but quickly burned out. No, this officer still lives for his Lord, and witnesses for Him, not only with words, but with a life given up to the Lord. His servant was right—the Lord had need of this man, He is an ambassador for the Lord, used for the blessing of many.

## LOST!—SAVED!

**I**T is recorded of the Countess of Huntington a Christian lady of many years ago—that, seeing the brother of the celebrated Whitfield looking very miserable, she enquired of him the cause of his dejection. “Ah, madam,” he replied, “I am a lost man.”

“I am very glad to hear you say you are lost,” she answered, “for ‘the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.’”

This answer, on the part of the Countess, proved to be a word in season to his soul; for he at once saw, and rejoiced in the fact, that he was the object of the Saviour’s search—since,

“All the fitness Christ requires

Is, to feel one’s need of Him.”

In Psalm xxvii. 1, we find the Psalmist saying, “The Lord is my light and my salvation.” He is my first Light, to reveal me to myself as a sinner; and then He is my Salvation, to meet my need as thus revealed.

When Saul of Tarsus was on his way to Damascus, breathing out hatred to the name of the risen Saviour, he had no idea of his need as a sinner; for he was full of “zeal, persecuting the Church,” and, “as touching the righteousness which is in the law,” he was “blameless.” (Philip. 3: 6.)

But, “blameless” as he was, he had “sinned, and come short of the glory of God.” “At mid-day,” he tells us, “I saw in the way (to Damascus) a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me.” (Acts 26: 13.) It was the very highest light from the very highest glory (“the glory of

God," Acts 7: 55). In that light Saul of Tarsus was revealed to himself as the "chief" of sinners, and became "trembling and astonished." (Acts 9: 6.)

Gazing up into the brilliancy of that glory, he beheld "that Just One" (Acts 22: 14); the One who "came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1: 15), and "died, the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God" (1 Pet. 3: 18); "Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2: 1). And, moreover, he heard "the voice of His mouth." Those same lips that had so sweetly informed the publican Zacchæus that "the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19: 10); those same lips that had uttered upon the cross the cry of anguish from the deep, dark waters of death, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" (Matt. 27: 46); proclaimed (Acts 9: 5) in the simple utterance—"I am Jesus" (see Matt. 1: 21) that there was, then and there, Salvation, yea for the "chief" of sinners.

"The Lord is my light and my Salvation,"  
"Who loved me, and gave Himself for me."  
(Gal. 2: 20.)

Have you, dear reader, ever known what it is to take the place of a lost sinner, and to claim, as your own, the lost sinner's Saviour?

"He gave me all I asked for,

And more than I can tell;

He filled my heart with rapture,

With joy unspeakable.

The loving hand of Jesus

Seemed gently laid on me;

I had for my Companion

The Man that died for me."

“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

**N**AILED up where any passer by could see and read them, these pointed words, spoken to Nicodemus nineteen centuries ago one night in Jerusalem, have been fixed as a message in broad daylight to travellers along an Australian roadway.

How long the text will remain on the tree is uncertain. Weather—wet or windy—may soon remove it, or mischievous hands tear it down; but those words uttered by Christ remain recorded in John iii. 7, and as long as the Bible lives those words will live also.

Who was Nicodemus that he should be told of the need of another birth?

He was as fair a specimen of mankind as could be found. His social position, his ability, his mental, moral, and religious culture, marked him out as no ordinary man, and yet all this left him unfit for heaven and unsaved from hell. However much refined, noble, and learned, he was by nature a child of wrath (Eph. ii. 3). But see, there are other words between the words of the text on the tree, and they explain the text. What are they?

“YE

—whoever you are; whether religious or irreligious, drunkard, good templar, or anything else—

MUST

—a positive necessity; for an ungodly sinner has nothing whereby to meet the demands of a holy God—

BE

—not only know it in theory, but as a reality, true of your own very self—



## BORN

—not merely a professor of religion, a member of some church or chapel, a moral respectable person; but born

AGAIN.” (John iii. 7),  
or bear the terrible consequences of your sins, and rejection of the Lord Jesus.

Now, there is the text and its meaning. It was said to a Jew, but it equally applies to a Gentile. It was spoken 1900 years ago; but it remains Christ’s message to men still. It was uttered to one man first; it has gone forth to millions in all parts of the habitable earth. It comes now to you. Ye must be born again.

But something else was needed. What? One to die. You have only to read John iii. 14, to see it was so. “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.” What did that mean? Christ must die. He was the Son of Man, and being lifted up meant the death of the cross. It was as necessary for Him to die as it is necessary for us to have a new life.

“Must be born again,” verse 7, “Must be lifted up,” verse 14, should be read together. The must for the sinner’s new birth. The must for the Saviour’s death. Christ had to die to bring us life eternal.

Now, how does that life come into our possession? John iii. 15 shows. “That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

Christ’s death on the cross has so infinitely and eternally satisfied God, and met all His just demands against us, that nothing is left for the sinner to do but to believe in Him.

And "whosoever" does this becomes an immediate receiver of eternal life—is born again.

Dear reader, if you have come to see your need of this precious gift, let me ask you to read John iii. 14, 15, 16. There in plainest words the remedy for your state, the provision for your need, is proclaimed. Oh read, and trust, and live!

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### STATE AND ACTIONS.

**M**Y Dear Reader,—Will you allow me to say an earnest word to you about your state and your actions? The Psalmist, speaking by the Spirit, says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5); and Paul, speaking by the same Holy Spirit, says, "And were by nature children of wrath," (Ephes. ii. 3). These verses prove beyond doubt that we are all born lost: from the King upon his throne to the meanest peasant in his hut; from the philosopher to the clown; from the millionaire to the penniless pauper; from the upper ten thousand of Belgravia to the dregs of society at Blackwall. Yes, whether it be the monarch in his palace, the monk in his cloister, or the mendicant in the streets, "there is no difference," (Rom. iii. 22); all are lost. We have not to go to hell to be lost; we are born lost. God in His mercy give you each to see it, own it, and to accept His remedy! "For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10).

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and

the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah liii. 6.)

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." (Luke xv. 24.)

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) These verses show our state.

And now a word about your sinful acts. Perhaps you think that only great sinners go to hell. Will you allow me to ask how many sins Adam committed before God drove him out of Paradise? One! only one! If God was so holy that He could not have Adam in the earthly Paradise with one sin, do you think He will let you into the heavenly Paradise if you have committed one sin? I do not charge you with being a great sinner, but I know you have been guilty of one sin at least; for God says, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

Now, as sure as God is holy, one sin, not washed away in the blood of Jesus, will keep you out of heaven just as much as one million of sins. It required the death and bloodshedding of the Lord Jesus to put away one sin, just as much as to put away one million of sins, and "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) Tears, prayers, and good works will not put away sins; there is no blood in these things.

Nothing you have done, or are doing, or ever will be able to do, will avail before God to put away your sins. "Faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25) will alone put you in immediate and everlasting possession of the forgiveness of your sins. Now what will you do? Will you trust Him who came "to seek and to save the lost," and have "faith in His blood" for the full remission of your sins? or will you go on refusing the love of God, rejecting the Christ of God, resisting the Spirit of God, and spurning the precious blood of Jesus the Son of God? Remember, if you die in your sins you will be put into your coffin in them, you will be buried and raised in them, you will stand before the great white throne in them, you will then have them fastened upon you, and have them as your everlasting companions in the lake of fire.

"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," (2 Cor. vi. 2). "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.)

May the salvation of God be yours, dear reader, prays yours affectionately in the Lord.

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### UNBELIEF: THE A1 SIN.

**I** AM astonished, and I am sure you will be, when I tell you that there are some strange people in the world who do not believe that unbelief is a sin. Strange people I must call them, because they profess to be sound in their faith in every other respect; only, to make their creed consistent, as they imagine, they deny that unbelief is sinful. I remember a young man going into a circle of friends and

ministers, who were disputing whether it was a sin in men that they did not believe the Gospel. Whilst they were discussing it, he said: "Gentlemen, am I in the presence of Christians? Are you believers in the Bible, or are you not?" They said, "We are Christians, of course." "Then," said he, "does not the Scripture say, 'Of sin, because they believe not on Me'? (John xvi. 9). And is it not the damning sin of sinners that they do not believe on Christ?"

I could not have thought that persons should be so foolhardy as to venture to assert that "it is no sin for a sinner not to believe on Christ." I thought that, however far they might wish to push their sentiments, they would not tell a lie to uphold the truth; and, in my opinion, this is what such men are really doing. Truth is a strong tower, and never requires to be buttressed with error. God's Word will stand against all man's devices. I would never invent a sophism to prove that it is no sin on the part of the ungodly not to believe, for I am sure it is, when I am taught in the Scripture that—"This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light," and when I read—"He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3: 18.)

I affirm, and the Word declares it, that unbelief is a sin. Surely, with rational and unprejudiced persons, it cannot require any reasoning to prove it. Is it not a crime and an insult to the Divinity for me, an atom, a part-

icle of dust, to dare to deny His words? Is it not the very summit of arrogance and extremity of pride for a son of Adam to say, even in his heart: "God, I doubt Thy grace; God, I doubt Thy love; God, I doubt Thy power"? Oh, sirs, believe me, could ye roll all sins into one mass—could you take murder, and blasphemy, and lust, adultery, and fornication, and everything that is vile, and unite them all into one vast globe of black corruption, they would not equal then the sin of unbelief. This is the monarch sin, the quintessence of guilt; the mixture of the venom of all crimes; the dregs of the wine of Gomorrha; it is the Al sin, the masterpiece of Satan.

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### WAS HE SUNSTRUCK?

**O**N a hot summer day in the year 1884 a man, in breathless haste, entered the consulting room of a Christian doctor in the village of Watford, in the province of Ontario, Canada. His message was speedily delivered. A young man named David, whilst employed in the construction of a large bridge in the neighborhood, had a sunstroke, and was thought to have gone crazy. As quickly as possible Dr. H—— hastened to the cottage where the patient lay. On entering the room he advanced to the bedside of the sufferer and began to examine his pulse. Opening his eyes, the "sunstruck" man looked into the doctor's face and laughingly said, "It's all right, doctor, I never was better in my life. During the last three weeks, whilst working on the bridge, I carried a heavy load, but I have lost it to-day. Some time since, God showed me I was

a lost sinner. For three weeks every bolt I struck and every nut I screwed seemed to say, 'You are going to hell. You are going to hell.' To-day, whilst at work, I saw by faith that the Son of God had borne sin's punishment and died for me, and I could not help shouting and praising Him. The men thought I was sunstruck, and brought me here."

Has the reader ever known anything of the load which this poor man was so troubled with? Has the burden of unforgiven sin ever pressed you down and led you to cry, "Who shall deliver me?" Or are your eyes blinded to the danger to which you are exposed? Many go to their work, engage in their business, enter heartily into this and that scheme, and all the time are ignorant of, or try to forget, the fact that sentence has already been passed upon them, and at any moment they may be cut down and ushered into the presence of a holy and just God! Do you believe that, at this very moment you are "condemned already?" (John 3: 18.) Perhaps you have been comparing yourself with others. You have been thinking that you are as "good" as some who make a loud profession, and have "as good a chance" of getting to heaven as they. If this is the way you think or talk, depend upon it you have never seen yourself in the presence of God. You have never measured yourself with God's measuring-line. You have never weighed yourself in God's balances. You may be "better" than many who "profess," but what of that? You have broken the law of God, and are exposed to sin's condemnation. If you are twenty years of age, and during that time only committed one sin daily in thought word,

or deed, you have committed twenty thousand sins! How are these sins to be forgiven? If not "born again," if not converted to God, you must perish eternally. There is no use in banishing or forgetting the fact; you may bury it in the cares or pleasures of life, but your doing so won't alter or affect it. Every moment you live in unbelief you are increasing your criminality; and though you may not feel the burden of unforgiven sin pressing upon you, the day is coming when, if you do not accept of God's salvation you will be crushed down to hell by its accumulated weight.

David not only discovered that he was a lost sinner; he learned likewise that the Lord Jesus loved him and died for all his crimson sins. Whenever he saw that blessed and glorious truth, he could not refrain from praising and adoring the One who had done so much for him. He was really "sunstruck"—stricken by the "Sun of Righteousness"—and knew he was ready for that glad time when He "shall arise with healing in His wings." The young man was saved with an Everlasting Salvation. Would you like to share the blessing? Look to Jesus on the Cross of Calvary, groaning and dying for you. Trifle no longer with your precious soul. The day of grace is fast ebbing to its close. Soon the last opportunity of being saved will have fled. God now beseeches you to receive as a free gift peace, pardon, and eternal life. Will you now believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved for eternity?



# THE SOWER

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## PEERLESS WORTH.

“What have I to do any more with idols? I have heard Him, and observed Him.”—  
Hosea, xiv., 8.

**H**AST thou heard Him, seen Him, known Him.

Is not thine a captured heart?

“Chief among ten thousand” own Him,  
Joyful choose the better part.

Idols once they won thee, charmed thee,  
Lovely things of time and sense;  
Gilded, thus does sin disarm thee,  
Honey’d lest thou turn thee thence.

What has stript the seeming beauty  
From the idols of the earth?  
Not the sense of right or duty,  
But the sight of peerless worth.

Not the crushing of those idols,  
With its bitter void and smart,  
But the beaming of His beauty,  
The unveiling of His heart.

Who extinguishes their taper  
Till they hail the rising sun?  
Who discards the garb of winter  
Till the summer has begun?

’Tis that look that melted Peter,  
’Tis that face that Stephen saw,  
’Tis that heart that wept with Mary,  
Can alone from idols draw—

## A SEARCH FOR ATONING BLOOD.

**I**N the spring of 1898 I was holding some gospel meetings in San Francisco, and on several occasions was able to address the Jews attending a "Mission to Israel." On one occasion, having concluded my discourse, the meeting was thrown open for discussion with any Hebrews who desired to ask questions and state difficulties, or for any who had been brought to Christ to relate their conversions. The experience of one old Jew interested me greatly, and as nearly as I can I give his remarks in his own words, though not attempting to preserve the inimitable Hebrew-English dialect.

He said: "This is Passover week among you, my Jewish brethren, and as I sat here I was thinking how you will be observing it. You will have put away all leaven from your houses; you will eat the motsh (unleavened wafers) and the roasted lamb. You will attend synagogue services, and carry out the ritual and directions of the Talmud; but you forget, my brethren, that you have everything but that which Jehovah required first of all. He did not say, 'When I see the leaven put away, or when I see you eat the motsh or the lamb, or go to the synagogue'; but His word was, 'When I see the blood, I will pass over you.' Ah, my brethren, you can substitute nothing for this. You must have blood, blood, blood!"

After a moment's pause, the patriarchal old man went on somewhat as follows: "I was born in Palestine, nearly 70 years ago. As a child I was taught to read the Law, the Psalms, and

the Prophets. I early attended the synagogue, and learned Hebrew from the rabbis. At first I believed what I was told, that ours was the true and only religion; but as I grew older and studied the law more intently, I was struck by the place the blood had in all the ceremonies outlined there, and equally struck by its utter absence in the ritual to which I was brought up. Again and again I read Exodus xii., and Leviticus xvi. and xvii., and the latter chapters especially made me tremble, as I thought of the great Day of Atonement, and the place the blood had there. Day and night one verse would ring in my ears: 'It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul!' I knew I had broken the Law. I needed atonement. Year after year, on that day, I beat my breast as I confessed my need of it; but it was to be made by blood, and there was no blood!

"In my distress, I at last opened my heart to a learned and venerable rabbi. He told me that God was angry with His people. Jerusalem was in the hands of the Gentiles, the temple was destroyed, and a Mohammedan mosque was reared up in its place. The only spot on earth where we dare shed the blood of sacrifice, in accordance with Deuteronomy xii. and Leviticus xvii. was desecrated and our nation scattered. That was why there was no blood. God had Himself closed the way to carry out the solemn service of the great Day of Atonement. Now, we must turn to the Talmud, and rest on its instructions, and trust in the mercy of God and the merits of the Fathers.

"I tried to be satisfied, but could not. Some-

thing seemed to say that the law was unaltered, even though our temple was destroyed. Nothing else but blood could atone for the soul. We dared not shed blood for atonement elsewhere than in the place the Lord had chosen. Then we were left without an atonement at all. This thought filled me with horror. In my distress I consulted other rabbis, and had but one great question, 'Where can I find the blood of atonement?'

"I was over thirty years of age when I left Palestine and came to Constantinople, with my still unanswered question ever before my mind, and my soul exceedingly troubled about my sins. One night I was walking down one of the narrow streets of that city, when I saw a sign telling of a meeting for Jews. Curiosity led me to open the door and go in. Just as I took a seat I heard a man say: 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. It was my first introduction to Christianity; but I listened breathlessly as the speaker told how God had declared that 'without the shedding of blood is no remission,' but that He had given His only begotten Son, the Lamb of God, to die, and all who trusted in His blood were forgiven all their iniquities. This was the Messiah of the fifty-third of Isaiah; this was the Sufferer of Psalm xxii.

"Ah, my brethren, I had found the blood of atonement at last. I trusted it, and now I love to read the New Testament and see how all the shadows of the law are fulfilled in Jesus. His blood has been shed for sinners."

## HAVE I THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH?

**T**HE Bible says plainly that the sinner who believes in Jesus is "justified freely. . . through faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 24-25). "But," says the enquirer, "have I the right kind of faith?" When a soul is sincerely seeking salvation, this is simply a cunning suggestion of the devil to keep the anxious one in the dark and to take the eye off Christ.

Supposing you had the "right kind of faith," of what avail would it be unless you had the right kind of Saviour to trust in? The grand truth is that Jesus Exactly Suits Us Sinners; and this is the real point at issue. Do not try to make a saviour of your faith. Look away to Jesus. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth" (Isa. xlv. 22).

In Exodus xii. the blood was applied to the door-posts by means of hyssop. Comparing this with Romans iii. 25, "through faith in His blood," we can see clearly that the hyssop is a type of faith, through which the blood of Christ is applied to the heart and conscience of the believer. What was the hyssop? It was a humble little plant "that springeth out of the wall" (1 Kings iv. 33). If the lofty cedar had been required, it might have been necessary to take a long and tedious journey to Mt. Lebanon's heights. But the hyssop was close to the seeking hand, within the reach of all.

In the same way, faith is a faculty which any one can exercise who feels his need as a sinner and desires cleansing from sin. We will now borrow an apt illustration:

Supposing your sight is defective from age

or other cause, and that you wear spectacles. You look through the glasses at the print and you can read quite well. You forget all about the glasses and think of what you are reading. By and by you begin to wonder, Have I the right kind of spectacles? You take them off and examine them. The result is that while thus occupied you cannot read a line.

My reader, forget all about your faith and look to Jesus. Think of the crucified One and say (making it a personal matter), "His own self bare my sins in His own body on the tree" (1 Peter ii. 24). Meditate on the risen One and say, "He ever liveth to make intercession for me" (Heb. vii. 25). Faith never gets occupied with itself. Look away from faith and feelings to Jesus, and keep on looking off unto Jesus.

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"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 6-8).

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"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. x. 9-10).

“OLD JOHN IS DEAD—I AM NEW JOHN”

**O**LD JOHN, the fish seller of L, was a remarkably bad character, so bad that neither God nor man could repair him. he must be made anew, or be utterly useless—lost forever.

He was known in L. as drunken John the fish seller. One night he went into a hall where the Gospel was preached. He sat dreamily listening to the preacher till overcome with sleep. At the close of the meeting he was awakened by the singing. And then the speaker came and very kindly laid his hand on the old man's shoulder.

“Please take your hand off my shoulder, a gentleman like you should not put your hand on such a greasy coat.”

“Dear old man, do you know that God loves you?”

“No, sir, you are mistaken, God doesn't love the likes o' me.”

“Do you believe the Bible is God's Book?”

“Well, yes, people say so, but I do not know much about it.”

“Well, listen to what God says to you, ‘God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Now you are in the world, don't you see what love God has for you that He gave Jesus to die to save you.” After giving him some more Scriptures, the truth went right home to his heart and he was saved.

His eyes were opened; he saw the wide arms of God's love embracing even him, and the

tears ran down his cheeks. His great load of sin was gone—Jesus loved him and died for his sins, and he was happy. He was saved, for “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name.”

John went away a new man. For God says, “If any man be in Christ he is a new creature.” Full of joy and peace, he went to his poor, squalid home. We need not describe it.

On entering, his wife and only son were in. He said, “Sall, lass, I’m saved—I have been converted.”

She did not understand him, and so said, “drunk as usual.”

After a little she said “it is time to go to bed.”

John answered, “O, but Sal, I’ve been converted, and before we go to bed we must pray.”

Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath, and was something new in John’s home. So Sal and his son got down on their knees. John, not having any religious bringing up, was puzzled to know what to say. His heart was full of joy, and he thought of how he used to express himself before he was saved, so reaching out he took his old Kilmarnock bonnet by the tassel, and swung it round his head three times saying with the warmth of his new joy, “Hurrah for Jesus!—Hurrah for Jesus!—Hurrah for Jesus!”

That was John’s first prayer, and it was from an overflowing heart, and went to the throne of God with acceptance.

The news soon spread that John was saved, and the women of L. gathered round him in



the street to buy his fish, and see what John was like.

"Sure enough there is a great change in him," said one. "He is not drunk," remarked another. "Not swearing as he used to," said a third. There was old John, with his face shining with joy, selling his fish, and preaching his little sermon. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." It came right from his heart, and although some questioned whether it would last, it was evident that John was a new man.

His son said to him one day, "Father, if you are going to stay converted, it would be well to get a better house."

The old man evidently thought it was a good idea, for shortly after he saw a fine little cottage to rent. He saw the landlord, and said, "I see you have a house to rent, sir."

"Yes, I have; who wants it?"

"I want it, sir."

"You want it; do you suppose that I would rent it to you?"

"You do not know who I am, sir."

"Oh, yes, I know who you are, you are old drunken John the fish seller."

"I thought you were mistaken, sir. Old John is dead. I am new John—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.' I have believed God, and have that everlasting life." Putting his hand in his pocket, he brought out some money, and said, "If you are afraid, sir, about the rent, I'll pay in advance."

This was enough for the landlord—John got the house, and proved the genuineness of his conversion for many years, and never got tired of telling the story of God's great love.

Reader, will you receive Jesus now, and rejoice in being saved?

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## TO-DAY, IF YOU WILL HEAR HIS VOICE.

God does not overlook sins, nor pass over our offences because it is human to transgress. God never forgoes His character. He forgives upon the ground of righteousness. It is because His own Son has borne the penalty due to sins that God forgives them. There is no forgiveness of sins apart from the blood of Jesus.

God from the eternal throne proclaims His own justice in the forgiveness of sins. He sets Christ, once crucified, before our gaze, and addresses our faith to Him.

You need not look for a new revelation in your soul, but believe the Holy Ghost's testimony, in God's word, to what Christ is to God and what He is for sinners, and if you believe you are that moment forgiven, and fit for God's presence, whiter than snow, washed in the blood of the Lamb, "forgiven all trespasses," "clean every whit." God says so.

Reader, do you believe in Christ? Are you saved?

God in tenderest love bids you now, this moment, believe and be saved.

## THE QUEEN'S TITLE TO HEAVEN.

**I**N a quiet cottage not far distant from Windsor Castle, the palace of Queen Victoria, there lived, some years ago, an aged Christian lady, who had nearly seen her hundredth year. During the greater part of her long pilgrimage she had known the Lord Jesus, and walked with Him. The Queen had heard of this aged pilgrim, and decided to visit her. Great indeed was the joy of the old lady as she looked upon the face of her earthly sovereign. She exclaimed, "What a joy and what an honor to me, that my Queen should come herself to see me!" Then she added joyfully, "But I expect a greater joy, a greater honor still, before long. I expect to see the King in His beauty." Then softly, and with much feeling, the aged saint enquired, "May I venture to ask if your majesty has such a hope?"

Calmly, Queen Victoria, the Sovereign of Great Britain and Empress of India, replied to the aged pilgrim:

"Through Jesus Christ, whose blood cleanseth from all sin, I also have such a hope!"

The aged one soon after went to be with Christ.

The queen's confession is worthy of the attention, not only of all her own subjects, but of everyone else besides; for it expresses the only way of access to the presence of a righteous God; the only title to a holy heaven. "Through Jesus Christ" must be the password, the same for sovereign and subject; "Whose blood cleanseth from all sin," the only way of remission and forgiveness.

Reader, is Christ and His blood your title? Do you expect to "see the King, and to dwell with Him eternally, on the sole and only plea that His blood has cleansed you from all your sin? There is no other title that will avail. No other plea will be accepted. The way is the same for all; the title alike for all, whether rich or poor, learned or illiterate, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Rom. 3:23-24.

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### WHAT IS MORE TERRIBLE THAN WAR?

**A**S a soldier at the front during the late Boer war, the above question was often present to my mind. It is not my intention to enlarge upon the harrowing details of a battlefield. But in order to give point to the above question, let me give you one day's experience.

About the middle of April, 1900, the Division to which I belonged was engaged with the combined forces of General Ollivier and the famous General De Wet. On the third day of the battle we were exposed to twelve hours' shrapnel fire from a long range gun four miles distant. Of all the terrible sights and sounds I ever witnessed this surpassed them all, and the horrible scene is indelibly fixed on my memory. Each shell weighs fourteen pounds and is charged with a fuse in the centre, and packed all round with a solid mass of leaden bullets. When charged and timed properly it is registered to deal out death and destruction

to every living thing within a range of ninety yards.

You may ask, What could be more terrible? Let inspiration answer. There is a day of judgment coming, not only for every Christ-rejecting soldier, but for every unconverted man and woman in the world.

Many a soldier has had marvellous escapes, and passed through the terrible death-dealing showers of shot and shell unscathed, but there is no escape for those who are Christ-rejectors. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" is the solemn question of Scripture.

Now and again we hear of men, so crushed down by remorse or driven to desperation by difficulties that they have found a questionable escape by committing suicide. What an awful day that will be when men court death and cannot find it. "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them" (Rev. ix. 6).

Moreover, after death comes the judgment. The only real way of escape is by taking God's offer of forgiveness and salvation. Take an old soldier's advice. "Flee from the wrath to come." Get transferred from the Devil's Own into the King's Own, and when the roll is called up yonder, you'll be there.

There are no special qualifications. Just own to your true name, "sinner"; take your true place before God, and He will save you.

The publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner," was used to my salvation. It is good for everybody, it is good for you. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us

from all sin'' (1 John i. 7). Again I say, ''Flee from the wrath to come.''

''The smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.'' ''They gnawed their tongues for pain.'' ''The cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.''

Well may we shudder at such quotations. Dear friend, God is love, and it was His love that told us all these things, that put up all these danger signals to prevent us going to hell; for there is a way to keep out of hell, but none to get out of it. In spite of all, thousands rush past the signals, and have found, alas! that for them an eternal hell is too true.

You have sinned. And since every sin of your life has been against God, you may rest content that God's forgiveness is the only forgiveness worth having, and further that it is the only forgiveness of sins possible.

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### WHEN PAINE WAS SILENCED.

**F**RUIT is the final test of everything. This is how the principle was applied to silence the ranting of an unbeliever. One evening Thomas Paine, the infidel, when in America, was haranguing a company of his disciples on the great mischief done to mankind by the introduction of the Bible and Christianity. When he paused, one who was present said:

''Mr. Paine, you have been in Scotland; you know there is not a more rigid set of people in the world than they are in their attachment to the Bible; it is their school-book; their churches are full of Bibles. When a young man

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leaves his father's house, his mother always, in packing his chest, puts a Bible on the top of his clothes."

He replied it was true.

The other then continued: "You have been in Spain, where the people are destitute of the Bible, and there you can hire a man for a dollar to murder his neighbor, who never gave him any offence."

Paine assented.

"You have seen the manufacturing districts of England, where not one man in fifty can read, and you have been in Ireland, where the majority never saw a Bible. Now you know it is a historical fact that in one county in England or Ireland there are many more capital convictions in six months than there are in the whole population in Scotland in twelve. Besides, this day there is not one Scotsman in the almshouse, state prison, or penitentiary of New York.

"Now, then, if the Bible were so bad a book as you represent it to be, those who used it would be the worst members of society; but the contrary is the fact, for our prisons, almshouses, and penitentiaries are filled with men and women whose ignorance or unbelief prevents them from reading the Bible."

It was now near ten o'clock at night. Paine answered not a word, but, taking a candle from the table, walked upstairs, leaving his friends and the person who had challenged him staring at one another.

## THE DELIVERER.

**D**O you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Deliverer from the wrath to come?

Ah, yes, there is wrath to come! John the Baptist spoke of it, and if Christ bare the judgment, the outpoured wrath of God against sin, it is only by faith in His work and in His person that any are delivered from the wrath still to come for the impenitent, for the Christless soul. Long after the work of the cross the Spirit of God still speaks of wrath to come. Oh! for you who are not in Christ it is to come, for you who are not washed from your sins in His blood it is to come—the wrath is to come!—the wrath is to come! Flee from it, I beseech you, flee to the outstretched arms of the Deliverer, I entreat you, but flee now! “Taste and see that the Lord is good”! Yes, taste the love that bowed Him down to Calvary; taste, I pray you, the love that made Him the willing victim in the sinner’s place, that made Him “suffer for us, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God.” That work is done, that work is complete: God is glorified in it. Every claim of God’s throne is met, and all the love of His nature, of His heart, is expressed, and the soul that comes to God through Jesus finds a full pardon, a present pardon, an eternal pardon in the grace and in the righteousness of God. Oh, look to Christ now! Look to Him now as the only refuge of your souls, as the Deliverer from the wrath to come; and it shall be yours then to wait for Him as the one who has won your heart by His all-constraining love—as the one whom you love because He first loved you.



# THE SOWER

## ECCE HOMO.

“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth” (Isa. 45:22).

**W**ILT thou, sinner, be converted?  
Christ the Lord of glory see,  
By His own denied, deserted,  
Bleeding, bound, and scourged for thee.  
Look again, O soul, behold Him  
On the cross uplifted high;  
See the precious life-blood flowing,  
See the tears that dim His eye.  
Love has pierced the heart that brake,  
Loveless sinner, for thy sake.  
Hearken till thy heart is broken,  
To His cry, so sad and sweet,  
Hearken to the hammer smiting  
Nails that pierce His hands and feet.  
See the side whence flows the fountain  
Of His love and life divine,  
Riven by a hand unthankful—  
Lo! that hand is thine.  
See the crown of thorns adorning  
God's beloved, holy Son,  
Then fall down in bitter mourning,  
Weep for that which thou hast done  
Thank Him that His heart was willing.  
So to die for love of thee;  
Thank Him for the joy that maketh  
This world's joy but gall to be.  
And till thou in heaven adore Him  
Fight for Him in knightly guise,  
Joy in shame and scorn and sorrow,  
Glorious is the prize!

## “SO MANY HYPOCRITES.”

**R**EADER, is this *your* excuse for not accepting the invitation to the gospel feast?

If so, it is a very poor one. You know some who say that they are Christians, but their conduct proves that they are hypocrites. Though members of churches and chapels, they do things which you and others, who make no such profession, would not stoop to, and you are inclined to say of all who profess to be Christians: “Nice lot! They are a pack of hypocrites.”

But surely this would be very unfair reasoning. Hypocrites are persons who profess to be what they are not. Those whom you refer to profess to be, but are not, Christians. Are we to conclude, because of this, that all who profess are hypocrites? This would be as foolish as to say that all clerks are thieves because two were convicted of stealing.

The fact that some pretend to be Christians proves that the reality must be good, as men do not counterfeit that which is worthless. Suppose, however, that real Christians are inconsistent, will that justify you in not being one? Peter surely could not have been justified in deserting the Lord because Judas was a hypocrite.

## DOES THIS INTEREST YOU?

**R**EADER, if you are not yet saved, even now you are a condemned sinner, hurrying to an eternity of darkness and despair, with the wrath of the Almighty resting upon you. “He that believeth not is condemned already” (John 3:18).

It matters not what you are—high or low, rich or poor, educated or illiterate, religious or immoral—unless you are “born again,” unless you become a new creature in Christ Jesus, you cannot see the kingdom of God. “Ye must be born again” (John 3:7).

If, however, you have been led to see your guilt and danger, and are asking the question, “Is there salvation for me?” I can assure you, on the authority of Him who cannot lie, that you may be saved as you read these lines; for He has said, “Come; for all things are now ready” (Luke 14:17); “Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Cor. 6:2); “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth” (Isaiah 45:22).

The Philippian jailor knew that he was lost, else he would not have asked what he had to do to be saved (Acts 16:30, 31). Have you ever really seen yourself to be a lost sinner? Do you say, “Of course we are all sinners”? That is very true; but some are sinners saved by grace, journeying to heaven, whilst others are lost, hastening as fast as time can carry them to unending misery.

Reader, are you saved or lost? Face the question fairly. If you know that you are lost, there is One both able and willing to save you. His mission to this world was to “seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Take the lost sinner’s place, and claim the lost sinner’s Saviour, and salvation will be yours at this present moment and through all eternity.

## ASSURANCE.

**A**RE you a Christian?"

"I am trying to be."

"Well, are you a child of God?"

"I hope so."

"Are you saved?"

"I am doing the best I can, and I hope I shall be saved at last."

"Well, this is a strange state for one to whom the truth and grace of the gospel are revealed and who belongs to the church. I am not 'trying to become a Christian,' 'hoping that I am a child of God,' or 'doing the best I can in order to get saved at last.' I was saved at the first, and became a Christian and a child of God, so that I no longer sing—

"'Tis a point I long to know,  
Oft it causes anxious thought;  
Do I love the Lord or no?  
Am I His, or am I not?"

And besides this, salvation as a state of justification and security, is a present possession and not an object of future hope (Rom. 8:24, 25)."

"Well, it seems to me a dangerous presumption to pretend to know this until the final judgment."

"But I passed judgment with Christ on the cross for my life, and have only to report my works to the Master when He comes, with the assurance that He answers for my life, and it is as safe as His. 'Because I live ye shall live also' (John 14:19). 'For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God' (Col. 3:3).

John 5:24. Guess-work on eternal life is infinite peril.

After we are raised in glorified bodies like that of the Son of God (Phil. 3:21), or thrilled into a blessed immortality at his coming (1 Cor. 15:51, 52) it will be too late to raise the question of our personal salvation. I am a partaker of the divine nature, and that cannot die (2 Pet. 1:4). We shall only meet the Master to report our services for our rewards (1 Cor. 5:10; Rev. 22:12). The judgment has not yet come; but is the personal and eternal salvation of Moses and Paul still unsettled?

“Paul, in 1 Cor. 9:27, speaks only of his services being disapproved. Distinguish between standing and character, soul and reward. Study 1 Cor. 3:12-15.”

“What do you mean by assurance?”

“The certain knowledge and abiding conviction that I am a justified and regenerated child of God. It is not of the essence of faith, but faith made perfect in blossom and fruitage. It is the ring and crown of our espousal to Christ.”

“I am sure this is very desirable.”

“Yes, it makes decided, strong, happy, active, and useful Christians. It stimulates to holiness and usefulness. It honors God by setting the seal of His truthfulness, and it is a testimony that encourages those who in so great a concern tell us that they would start if they knew they could make a sure thing of it.”

“But can this assurance be attained?”

Yes, and the joy and satisfaction of it. Revelation must be incomplete and God a hard master if we must be left all our life long under bondage of an infinite peril and fear. A rail-

road guide is of little value unless you can learn from it your true route; and a magistrate who purposed your deliverance from death and kept you in suspense would be cruel.

The word of God and the testimony of the saints warrant the statements:

1. That you may be surely saved
2. You may know it.
3. You may enjoy it.

It is strange that persons who know so assuredly that they trust and love kindred and friends, do not know that they trust and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Would a loyal wife harbor doubts as to her affection for her husband? Would a lady marry a suitor who could only say, "I am trying to love you, and hope I do love you?"

God does not simply command us to try to believe and love, but to do it.

"But how can we know it?"

1. By the warrant of the word
2. By the witness of the Spirit
3. By the bent of the life.

The Bible is a complete revelation. The book declares that we may know it. John wrote his first epistle on purpose to declare this: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).

Take your Bible and diligently study Luke 1:77; John 10:27-29; Tim. 1:12; Rom. 8:38, 39; 2 Tim. 4:18; John 6:47; Phil. 1:6; Heb. 13:5.

"Well, did John himself and the early saints enjoy this assurance?"

Certainly. John in his first brief epistle says, "we know," etc., forty times, and "we hope," "are trying," etc., not once. Others have had a similar precious experience: Abel (Heb. 11:4), Enoch (Heb. 11:5), Job (Job 19:25, 26), David (Psm. 17:15), Paul (2 Tim. 1:12). Many others knew that they were saved as well as they knew they lived.

"Certainly, then, it seems as if we ought to be able to know it."

Yes, and the apostles wrote in their epistles: "We are saved—your sins are forgiven you" (Eph. 2:8; 1 John 2:12). Paul says: "We are always confident, not always doubting" (2 Cor. 5:6-8).

"Why, then, do not all Christians attain and enjoy this assurance?"

Chiefly for four causes.

1. Physical or mental weakness, through which Satan works mischief.

Satan may get the advantage of you (2 Cor. 2:11; Jas. 4:7).

2. Ignorance of the written word and free grace of the gospel.

You may misunderstand or fall away from the knowledge of the free grace of the gospel and get entangled in legal bondage (Gal. 5:4).

Christ's finished work makes us safe. Faith makes us sure. Our walk must determine our enjoyment. When the disciples of Socrates were asked how they knew certain things they replied, "He says it."

Much more may we be assured by the word of God. "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psm. 119:89).

“I need no other argument,  
I want no other plea;  
It is enough that Jesus died,  
And that He died for me.”

3. Relying too much on frames and feelings.

Feeling is never spoken of in the New Testament in connection with the conversion of a soul. If you go by feeling instead of faith you will never be any better than “a Christian off and on” (Rom. 5:1).

Christ and His apostles never asked an anxious enquirer how he felt, but what he believed (John 9:35; Acts 8:37).

Keep to the divine order as beautifully exemplified in the conversion of the Eunuch in Acts 8.

1. Facts concerning Jesus Christ (verses 30-35).
2. Faith that led to obedience (verses 36-38).
3. Feeling and rejoicing in salvation (verse 39).

Keep in God's order of these three F's. If you reverse or change them you fail.

You might feel as deeply as Judas and be lost. The least conviction that leads you to trust in Christ results in salvation. An ounce of faith is worth a ton of feeling for salvation.

“Believe, and the feeling may come or may go;  
Believe in the word that was written to show  
That all who believe their salvation may know;  
Believe, and keep right on believing.”



4. Indulged sins of omission or commission. No backslider can have this blessing.

Some resemble the little girl who prayed, "O Lord make me good—not too good—but just good enough not to get whipped. 'Amen.'" They seem to want just enough grace to escape hell (1 John 1:7).

"Now, to make it simple and practical, tell me how you know for certain that you are saved."

Well, because I believe for certain on the Lord Jesus Christ as my divine and atoning Saviour; and because I am conscious of the exercises and graces of the new life as the fruits of this faith. God's word is my absolute warrant for salvation after I have complied with the conditions. I understand God's terms and have complied with them, and that settles it. I go by the book. I wait for no sudden or startling experience. What is written down in black and white secures and assures me. God provides salvation and I accept it. I do not try to make merit and supplement the atonement. I do not even try to believe that I am saved, but I believe on Jesus Christ and I know I am saved. I have voluntarily and heartily committed myself to Christ once for all, and as He gave Himself for me once for all. I have no self-assurance; I find nothing in my heart or life as a meritorious ground of peace, but all in the blood and finished work of Christ on Calvary.

He made peace and I accept it freely and fully. I surrender. I abandon myself to my Saviour, rest securely in His keeping and power.

and go about His business in a consecrated life.

My hopeless ruin is my recommendation and my conscious guilt is my fitness. I sing:

“A guilty, weak and helpless worm,  
On thy kind arms I fall;  
Thou art my strength and righteousness,  
My Saviour and my all.”

Here I rest. In Christ I am regarded just as righteous, innocent, pure and safe, just as truly near and dear to God as Christ is. I am one of God's sons and a fellow heir with Jesus Christ. Numerous texts make this plain to me.

I do not try to solve mysteries like Nicodemus (John 3:9), but like Abraham I believe God and it is accounted unto me for righteousness (Rom. 4:3). I do not try to wash myself like Job by any natural process (Job 9:30, 31), but God cleanses me judicially, once for all, by the precious blood of His Son, and, like David, I am whiter than snow (Psm. 51:7). Then my standing is:

“So near, so very near to God,  
I can no nearer be;  
For in the person of His Son  
I am as near as He.”

“I might sin and die instantly before confession.”

Yes, and the wages of sin is death under law, but not under grace. There is no death penalty for sin under grace, but only loss of reward. You may lose your crown, but not your life.

After paying the death penalty with Christ on the cross, no life and death judgment remains for you before the great white throne, but

a judgment seat of Christ, under grace. You are no longer on probation for your life, but for your crown.

“But what if I cannot believe?” Who is it that you cannot believe? Think of it (1 John 5:10). Awful thought! Men indeed may lie, but God’s promises are true and faithful; make yourself believe them. Beware of an evil heart of unbelief (Heb. 3:12).

“What kind of faith saves?”

The commonest and simplest kind in the world. It is not an intellectual state, but a simple act of the will.

Such faith as you would have in your physician or lawyer. Such as your little child has in you.

Faith that works by love and purifies the heart. Read St. James.

The feeblest faith in the right person saves the soul, but the strongest faith in anything else is vain.

“But what of your religious experience?”

I do not ignore this, but for every look into my poor heart I take ten looks to Christ. I do not try to evolve assurance from inner self-consciousness. I do not practice morbid and mischievous self-examination, like the girl who repeatedly pulled up a favorite plant to see if the roots were alive. When asked if I love my wife I do not think of myself or try to look into my heart, but I think of her. So be occupied with Christ if you would have your heart burn with love for Him (Luke 24:32). I am indeed conscious of an exchange of hearts, and a new supernatural life. My faith would be as vain as that of devils unless it were followed by the fruits

of the Spirit, "love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-24).

The word, the Spirit and the life all agree. I relish spiritual things. My heart is broken for sin and from sin. I not only trust Christ's work for me, but I am conscious of the Spirit's work in me (Rom. 8:16). I do not expect "a good religious experience" until I learn to live a life of faith on the Son of God (Gal. 2:20). These experiences of grace flow from a living, unquestioning faith, which is the first and mother-grace and while we make little of frames and feelings, if we are never conscious of love, joy, peace, etc., we must conclude that we have not gospel faith, or certainly we are not walking closely with God. The joy of the Lord is our strength, but faith in Christ is our salvation. Our salvation depends upon our faith, but the comforting assurance of it depends on our walk."

In conclusion, let me say that the best treatise ever written on assurance is the first epistle of John the Evangelist.

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### A SURE REFUGE.

**C**HARLES of Bala, the founder of the British and Foreign Bible Society, died in 1814. His last words were, "There is a refuge."

Thank God he had found that Refuge secure even when the hand of death was upon him. That Refuge is Christ, a blessed precious Saviour to those who trust in Him, whose blood cleanseth from all sin. Do you know that Refuge?

## CONVERSION OF SUSANNA WESLEY.

**S**HE was the wife of a clergyman; her two sons, John and Charles, were preachers of the gospel; she had been a most devoted wife and faithful mother, and brought up her family in the fear of God, reading to them the scriptures daily; and such was her desire for the welfare of others, that during her husband's absence, in one occasion she gathered the parishioners, numbering 200, to the parsonage, and read the Bible to them. Yet, notwithstanding all this, Mrs. Wesley was not herself a true Christian, for she had not been "born again." She did not have the knowledge of salvation, or the assurance of her sins forgiven, for she had never learned herself to be a guilty sinner in need of a Saviour. Her religion, like that of many, was all works, and works can never cleanse the soul from sin, or justify before God. When her two sons began to preach a full and free salvation, and tell people that they might know and be sure of having their sins forgiven, she thought they were going astray; but one day when John Wesley went to London to see his mother, she told him that she knew that God had for Christ's sake forgiven all her sins. It was through hearing one preaching from the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." Then she saw it was not her good works, her prayers, or her religion, but the atoning death of Christ alone that could procure for her forgiveness and salvation. She cast herself on that precious blood—and was saved. Then she nobly took her stand by her two honoured sons, and confessed the Lord

Jesus as her Saviour. So you see it is possible to be well-taught in the scripture, and even earnest in seeking the welfare of others, without having Christ as a personal Saviour. Have you, or do you know your need of Him as your Saviour?

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### CONDEMNED ALREADY.

**U**NBELIEVER, you have not to wait for the day of judgment to learn your condemnation. The sentence is passed already. Not executed, thank God, but passed. You are in the position of a criminal who has been tried, found guilty, and sentenced, and only awaits the day of execution.

In that position it is that God's free grace meets you with a full salvation. "God willeth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Precious words flowing forth from the loving heart of a Saviour God.

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God."

Could anything be more just? If all this wondrous grace and goodness of God be despised, if Christ be rejected, if God's salvation be refused, what we ask remains? Nothing, most surely, but eternal condemnation. Reader, how shall you escape if you neglect so great salvation?

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### A WORD TO SINNERS.

**B**UT there is a fact, and hear it, ye religious ones; hear it with joy, ye sinners: it is only "the sinner" who finds the Saviour.

The soul's deep need (convicted by the Holy Spirit) is met by Jesus the Saviour, and it is by it that he is brought into the presence of the Lord and His acquaintanceship is made. But remember, it is only by your sins that you can know Him. O have you, have you been brought before the Lord as a sinner and nothing else? Sinners alone are welcome to Him, for He himself hath spoken, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Sinners, hear the story; for you the Saviour died, and you need never perish if you believe in Him. For "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

### THE CROSS.

**O** H, the wondrous cross of Jesus!  
 Where Jehovah's will was done,  
 Where instead of thee He bruised  
 In thy stead His blessed Son.  
 God accounting, if believing,  
 All He did as done for thee;  
 Giving thus thy soul to triumph,  
 "Jesus died, and I am free!"  
 Seeing this the "grave of Jesus"  
 Will assume a different hue,  
 Thou as having died with Jesus.  
 God accounts thee buried too.  
 And as Jesus rose triumphant  
 From death's gloomy, dark abode,  
 Thou in blessed resurrection  
 Shall arise alone in God.  
 All thy sins left far behind thee.  
 Buried in the Saviour's grave,  
 Never more to be remembered,  
 Covered 'neath oblivion's wave.


Oh, the depth of God's forgiveness!  
Hearken, lost one, to its call,  
From the grave of Jesus crying,  
"Mercy, mercy's free for all!"

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### A COMMON MISTAKE.

**R**OBERT Burns died in 1835. He whispered to a friend by his bedside, "I may have but a moment to speak to you my dear —. Be a good man, be virtuous, be religious; nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to be here."

Poor Burns! Doubtless the brilliant and witty poet mourned his debauchery and evil ways, but if he thought that anything short of Christ and His blessed finished work at the cross would do for a deathbed and eternity, he made a grand mistake. He said to his friend, "Be religious." Alas! there are thousands of religious and virtuous people in this world, who are unsaved. Saul of Tarsus was the "chief of sinners," and religious. The High Priests, who condemned the Saviour to death, were religious, but unsaved. Reader, make no mistake; be sure that nothing short of conversion and a personal faith in Christ will do for a deathbed.





# THE SOWER

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## THE TWO DEBTORS.

**T**HERE was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, 'I suppose that he unto whom he forgave most.' Jesus said unto him, 'Thou has rightly judged.' '' (Luke 7:41).

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The city ways—broad paths and bye—  
She's trod with erring feet oft times;  
But now, with grief-charged heart and eye,  
In deep repentance mourns her crimes;  
Brings self and sin to Christ's own feet,  
And wins forgiveness full and sweet.

Those feet, way worn with earthly toil,  
She worships now with tear-dewed kiss;  
Her alabaster's fragrant oil  
Pours forth—and hears with wondering bliss  
Her Saviour's lips new life impart,  
"Thy sins forgiven—in peace depart!"

But he, the host beneath whose roof  
Our blest Emmanuel deign'd to rest,  
With Pharasaic pride aloof  
Had paid small welcome to his Guest;  
No kindly kiss, no unguent sweet,  
No water for His weary feet.

He'd bidden to his feast that One  
Whose wondrous fame raised deep surmise;  
Was He what He proclaimed, "God's Son,"  
Or prophet wearing earth's poor guise?  
And now the tempter's whisper came—  
"He knew not of His suppliant's shame!"

Emmanuel read the scorning doubt.

"Simon, I have a word for thee—  
Two debtors once were summon'd out,  
Both were insolvent, both set free;  
One owed five hundred (ruin's case),  
The other fifty—each met grace.

"Now say which lov'd his Lord the most—  
To which did mercy richest seem?"

With ready answer spake His host,

"He to whom most's forgiven, I deem."

Then answer'd Jesus, "True indeed:

You've judged aright—grace meets deep need."

"I entered, thine invited guest,

No water lav'd my feet's tired tread,

No greeting kiss was courteous prest,

No cooling oil-balm sooth'd my head;

This woman hath not ceas'd to pour

Tears, kisses, fragrant ointment's store.

"Behind me kneels this debtor deep—

Her sins are great—thou deem'st thine less;

She loveth much—thou see'st her weep,

And kiss my feet in fond distress;

Her heart by love's repentance riven—

Her debt is cancell'd, past, forgiven!"

Oh, erring soul! before thy God,

Like which of these dost thou appear?  
Art thou a debtor great or small?

His pardoning love thy debt can clear;  
Because Christ gave His life for thee—  
Bore all thy sins—to set thee free.

Because He paid the righteous due,

A God, defrauded, claim'd from thee;  
He took thy place—a surety true—

Met all God's wrath on Calvary's tree;  
"The utmost farthing" Jesus paid—  
Sin's long arrears on Him were laid.

So be thy debt e'en great or small,

Thy case is bankrupt—nought to pay;  
But see thy Creditor forestall

Thy ruin, in His own blest way:  
Oh! wondrous depths of love's deep sea.  
Christ's blood, as ransom, sets thee free.

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### "A STRANGE SIGHT."

**E** BENEZER Elliott, the poet, died in 1849.

His last words were, "You see a strange sight, sir—an old man unwilling to die."

How different was the apostle Paul, who wrote from prison with the near prospect of martyrdom, "Having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23). It makes all the difference whether we leave all our prospects, or are going to our best prospects. If we know heaven as our home, because our Saviour is there and our Father too, it makes a great difference. Do you know Christ as your Saviour, and is heaven already dear to you because you have eternal links there?

## FOR THE LAST TIME.

**F**OR the last time! How often do we use these words, and hear them used, till we think very little of them! And yet they are interesting and solemn words, and at times they sink deep—very deep into the heart.

I have stood by the death bed of a very dear friend, and heard him speak for the last time, smoothed his pillow for the last time, seen his eyes close for the last time, looked upon his countenance for the last time; and the thought of it makes me very sad.

I have taken leave of another beloved companion, most likely for the last time; for thousands of miles and the wide ocean are between us. I well remember the last look, and the last words, when we parted; and the recollection is a sorrowful one.

“I have seen my Edward for the last time,” said a heartbroken mother, as she passed under the gloomy archways of the county prison, where her son was confined, condemned, and on the eve of execution; “and I shall never, never have another moment of happiness; oh, that I could die for you, my son!”

“I have now invited him, I have warned him, I have urged him, I have entreated him to come to the Saviour of sinners, for the last time,” is the language of the faithful minister as he retires from the chamber of death; “and he can never hear my voice any more. My prayers cannot avail him now. He is gone far beyond the reach of my reproofs; and if he has not, before this, sought for pardon and peace with God,

through the death of His Son, he never will: for he has now heard the message of mercy for the last time."

These are painful recollections.

Yes, reader, there is a last time for everything that is done under the sun; however little you may concern yourself about it.

There will be a last time of hearing the gospel. My friend, have you yet heard it to profit? You know what I mean by the gospel; you have been told of the love of God in sending His Son to die for sinners; you have been informed of the power and the willingness of Jesus Christ to receive, pardon and bless all that come to God by Him; you have been told, and your conscience bears witness to the truth, that you are a sinner, and that in order to be saved from everlasting punishment you must repent of your sins, and go to Jesus Christ for mercy. Take care how you put off your attention to these things; there will be a last time of hearing them, and this may be nearer than you imagine. "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. 6:2.

There will be a last time of reading your Bible. You will some day read it, or perhaps you have now read it for the last time, and if you do not love its contents, and obey its commands, you must hear its Author say: "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 none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh," Prov. 1:24-26.

There will be a last time of abusing the gifts of God. My friend, how often you have already abused those gifts it is not for me to tell; but you know that you have abused them very often. He has given you many: health, reason, talents, friends, comforts. You have enjoyed these, it may be, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty years; and the whole of that time you have perhaps been abusing them. But be sure there will be a last time, a last gift, a last mercy.

And there will be a last time of mocking at God's threatenings. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil," Eccles. 7:11. And you perhaps have heard so much about the anger of God as revealed against sin, and his threatenings against sinners, that you are hardened in unbelief, and scoffingly ask, "Where is the promise of his coming? for—all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation," 2 Peter 3:4. But there will be a last time of mocking. "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," Matt. 13:41, 42.

There will be a last time of sickness. How often do we hear it said, and in all probability you have said it before now, "I was so ill, I thought I should have died." You perhaps have once and again been brought near to the grave; but you have been delivered from death, and restored again to health and strength. But you will not live for ever; every renewed disorder that has shaken your health and agitated your

mind, has brought you nearer to the last time of sickness. Are you prepared for the final result?

There will be a last day. "That day for which all other days were made" is fast hastening on; and then the books shall be opened, and the dead shall be judged out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works. And the sea will give up its dead, and death and hell will deliver up the dead that are in them, and they shall be judged every man according to his works" (Rev. 20:12, 13) and then the sentence shall go forth: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still," Rev. 22:11.

Now is the time for decision. "To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts," Heb. 4:7; but flee for mercy and refuge to the only hope set before you in the gospel: and may God grant that you may obtain mercy of the Lord in that day.

While the words, the thought, for the last time, demand the most serious consideration, the Christian can look at them as bearing a joyful aspect to him. For him there will be a last time of hearing the gospel, but he has heard it to profit, and it has been to him the power of God unto salvation. There will be to him, too, a last time of reading the Bible; and he will no longer need its direction, its cautions, its instructions, its reproofs, its warnings, or its consolations. A last time of sickness will come to him, but he can say:—

“Welcome sweet hour of full discharge,  
That sets my longing soul at large,  
Unbinds my chains, breaks up my cell,  
And gives me with my God to dwell.”

And then, for the Christian, there will be a last time of sorrow. Here he sometimes goes mourning all his days. The perplexities of the world annoy him, and embarrassments confound him, his tribulations abound; but these shall all be swallowed up in “fulness of joy.”

He will have a last time of temptation. Now he is sorely tried; the world allures him, ungodly friends entice him, and Satan desires to have him, that he may sift him as wheat. But the time is hastening on when the flesh shall lust no longer against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, when he shall be delivered from all temptations and trials that ensnare and distress him here; for in that bright world to which his footsteps are directed, the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest, Job 3:17.

There will be a last tear. Now he is often ready to say, “Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!” Jer. 9:1; and, “My tears have been my meat day and night,” Ps. 42:3. But it will not be always so with believers in Christ, “for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,” Rev. 7:17.



“Cease then, pilgrim, cease to mourn,  
Press onward to the prize;  
Soon your Saviour shall return  
Triumphant in the skies.

“Yet a season, and you know,  
Happy entrance shall be given,  
All your sorrows left below,  
And earth exchanged for heaven.”

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### THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY—AND MISSED.

**T**HE good steamer “Boston” was in readiness for departure. The word “All aboard” had been given and the gang-plank was about being drawn ashore, when a carriage was observed driving rapidly toward the boat. The occupants proved to be an elderly couple who had a few hours before received a telegram from an American city, stating that their daughter having died, would be buried the following day. This was the only route by which the sorrowing ones could reach their destination in time for the burial. They had hurriedly driven a dozen miles, reaching the boat in time, but not a moment to spare. “Hurry up,” said an officer, which they did, and might have passed safely on board, only that a pet dog which they were carrying made its escape, unfortunately attracting their attention for a moment—only a moment—but their opportunity. Captain S——, unacquainted with what was going on ashore, had given the signal “Go ahead.” The great ship moved away, and to their extreme regret the poor old couple were left behind.

My reader will doubtless remark, "How foolish to allow such a trivial thing to cause delay at such an important moment." Quite so. But, dear unconverted friend, if such painful results attach to the things of time, how terrible must be the result of delay as to the things of eternity!

"Jesus himself stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink," Jno. 7:37. His word proclaims "now is the accepted time: behold now is the day of salvation," 2 Cor. 6:2. You believe this and think you will avail yourself of the priceless gift, but some trifle hinders. Oh, be warned—Christ is coming! "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . the dead in Christ shall rise. Then we (believers) 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." Unbeliever, you will assuredly be left behind—left without hope. The day of grace past, you now await in terror the approach of Him who comes "to take vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, hasten, hasten; let not the precious opportunity slip, but seize this moment the gracious offer, "Whosoever will let him come and take of the water of life freely."

"Sinner, hear the wondrous story,  
Jesus died and rose for thee;  
God in heaven now waits to save thee,  
Now believing thou art free."

## TWO PARTS IN THE GOSPEL.

**T**HERE are clearly two parts in the gospel—one is the misery and degradation you are brought from, and the other is the wonderful position you are brought to. If you do not know the position you are brought to, you are not sure that you are brought from your lost state.

Many are truly converted, but they are thinking only of getting out of the debtor's prison. You might be set free and yet be poor and sorrowful, though owing nothing. That is not the gospel. The gospel is, not only that you are cleared of all that is against you, but that you are brought into the most unspeakable blessing in the very place of your misery, not merely when you come to heaven.

Many Christians are looking for earthly blessings. They have touched the first part of the gospel, not the other; they have not, through faith, had access into the favour of God that the believer in Christ is as Christ is; this is his position—his Saviour is his all-satisfying and delightful portion. The One who saved you from your misery is now your life and portion in the place of your former misery.

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“IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT ONE BELIEVES, IF HE IS SINCERE.”

**T**HIS is what many of the “mock-charity school” say; but let us see if it is true.

A man, feeling unwell, went to the cupboard, took by mistake a bottle of poison, drank some of the contents, and died in great agony an hour afterwards. Did his sincerity of belief

save his life?

Two young men went to skate on a pond. They sincerely believed that the ice was in good condition, but they were both drowned. Sincerity of belief did not preserve them from a watery grave.

A man's salvation or damnation depends on his belief. If he believes the lie of Satan he will eternally perish; but if he believes the truth of God, he will be eternally saved.

The scriptures are very plain on this point. (Prov. 14:12). Sincerity of belief in that way ends in everlasting woe. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36); "All that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:38, 39). But, "He that believeth not shall not see life" (John 3:36); "He that believeth not is condemned already" (John 3:18).

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## PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S MESSAGE.

**D**URING the great war between the Northern and Southern States of America, one of the invested cities of the South made overtures for conditional surrender. When these were made known to President Lincoln, he pushed the despatch from him and said, "It must be unconditional surrender: I will entertain nothing short of this." And this unconditional surrender was made, whereupon there followed peace.

In the case of the sinner, who is God's enemy, living in rebellion against His authority, there is only one way of obtaining peace, and of being reconciled to God. That is through the death of God's Son (Rom. 5:10), who died the Just

One for us, the unjust ones, "that He might bring us to God." (1 Pet. 3:18).

But in order for you to share in the benefits of that death, reader, there must be an "unconditional surrender" of human pride, worldly wisdom, self-righteousness, and religion, taking your true place before God as a sinner, an enemy, a rebel; without a single plea, without merit or commendation, falling flat on God's sovereign grace, and on the merits of Jesus Christ as the only procuring cause of your justification from sin, deliverance from wrath, and salvation. Are you willing to take such a place and say

"I take the guilty sinner's name,

The guilty sinner's Saviour claim"?

There must be no conditions attached, such as: "doing the best you can," "seeking it earnestly," "trying to live like a Christian," in order to become one, or any other pledge or promise. No; God will allow nothing to be put alongside of the work of the cross as the ground of the sinner's salvation. The blood of Christ alone can cleanse from sin's guilt. The power of Christ alone can break its power. You have only to take the sinner's place, and claim the sinner's Saviour. Only to make an unconditional surrender of yourself to the Son of God, who is Lord of all. Then you will know deliverance, salvation, and peace.

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## A CONVERSION.

**G**OOD instructions as to the contents of the Bible were mine at school. At seventeen years I was under a John the Baptist ministry; but I never knew the gospel till, at

nineteen I went abroad, full of the animal pleasures of a military life. I and my comrade spent a long and tiring day in the field at Waterloo.

Arriving late at Lens, I soon went to my bedroom. It struck me, "I will say my prayers" (it was a habit of childhood, neglected in youth). I knelt down by my bedside, but found I had forgotten what to say. I looked up, as if trying to remember, when suddenly there came on my soul a something I had never known before; it was as if someone, infinite and almighty, knowing everything, full of the deepest, tenderest interest in myself, though utterly and entirely abhorring everything in and connected with me, was making known to me that He pitied and loved myself. My eye saw no one, my ear heard no one; but I knew assuredly that the One whom I knew not, and never had met, had met me for the first time, and made me know we were together.

There was a light no sense or faculty of my own human nature ever knew; there was a presence of what seemed infinite in greatness—something altogether apart and supreme, and yet at the same time making itself known to me in a way that I, as a man, could thoroughly feel, and taste, and enjoy. The light made all light, Himself withal, but it did not destroy, for it was love itself; and I was loved individually by Him. The exquisite tenderness and fulness of that love appropriated me myself for Him, in whom it all was; while the light, from which it was inseparable in Him, discovered to me the contrast I had been to all that was light and love.

I wept for awhile on my knees, said nothing, and got into bed. The next morning's first thought was, "Get a Bible." I got one, and it was henceforward my handbook. My clergyman companion noticed this, and also the entire change of life and thought. We journeyed on together to Geneva, where there was an active persecution of the faithful going on; he went to Italy, and I found my own company; stayed with those who were suffering for Christ.

I could quite new, after fifty years' trial, adopt to myself these few lines as descriptive of that night's experience:—

"Christ, the Father's rest eternal,  
 Jesus, once looked down on me,  
 Called me by my name external,  
 And revealed Himself to me.

"With His whisper, light, life-giving,  
 Glowed in me, the dark and dead,  
 Made me live, Himself receiving,  
 Who once died for me, and bled."

## POSSIBILITIES AND IMPOSSIBILITIES.

**P**OSSIBILITIES.— 1. It is possible for the vilest sinner to be saved. The "chief of sinners" has been saved (1 Tim. 1:15). Jesus is "able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Then do not despair.

2. It is possible to be self-deceived. Jesus says, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. . . Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name cast out devils? and in thy name done

many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." (Matt. 7:21-23). "Be not deceived, God is not mocked."

3. It is possible for the most moral to be lost. To the moral Jesus says, "One thing thou lackest." "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." Christ saves—not morality.

4. It is possible to lose the soul in caring for the world. The soul is of more importance than the body—eternity than time. Prepare now for eternity, before time has fled. "Oh, that they were wise! that they understood this; that they would consider their latter end." "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36).

IMPOSSIBILITIES.—1. It is impossible to recall past time. It has gone for ever, bearing all your sins and lost opportunities of doing good with it. Use the present, knowing that you must give an account.

2. It is impossible to be forgiven after death. "The Son of Man hath power *on earth* to forgive sins." "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2).

3. It is impossible to be saved without faith in Christ. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." (John 3:36). "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."



# THE SOWER

“SAVE THYSELF.”

“Let Him save Himself if He be Christ.”—  
Luke 23:35.

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save  
sinners.”—1 Tim. 1:15.

**J**ESUS, Lord, despised, rejected—  
Man of sorrows; true thy name!  
Stricken, smitten, unprotected,  
From those scoffing words of shame.

Meekly borne amidst reviling,  
Son of God, how hard for thee!  
Cruel jest, sardonic smiling,  
“Save thyself, if Christ thou be.”

Hour of anguish, oh, how bitter!  
God-forsaken, no relief,  
Men could taunt thee—how much fitter  
Had he wept to see Thy grief!

Save thyself thou could'st; but, rather  
Than our guilt on us should lie,  
There to glorify the Father,  
Thou wouldst suffer all, and die.

Blessed Lord, 'twas love impelled thee—  
Love which thee for sinners gave!  
Love, undying love; that held thee,  
Not Thyself, but us, to save.

## PEACE.

**T**HE moment my conscience begins to work, I find that by nature I am separate from God; that my carnal mind is enmity against God: that it is not only the world that has crucified God's Son, but my sins pierced Him."

"Amidst all this turmoil and trouble, where shall I get peace? The moment I see a pierced Christ, I have that which expiates and purifies."

"Through a pierced Christ I have three witnesses that I can have to do with God. The highest act of insolence that it was possible for man to do against God, brought out the very thing that put guilt away, even the blood and water flowing from Christ's pierced side," as it is written, "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." (John 19:34.)

"In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." (2 Cor. 13:1.)

"For there are three who bear witness, the Spirit and the water and the blood: and the three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater. For this is the witness of God (which) He has witnessed concerning His Son."

"And this is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." (1 John 5:8.)

"The heart is constantly looking for God to give it a testimony about itself; but God is giv-

ing a testimony about His Son, and not about what we are; if God were to give a testimony about us, it must be about our sin and unbelief of heart. But no; and it is of great importance in this day of infidelity to see that if God gives a testimony, it is about His Son, and what He is to the sinner.

“If you believe that, you will get peace.”

“Preaching peace by Jesus Christ (He is Lord of all).” (Acts 10:36.)

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### HOW SHE GOT ETERNAL LIFE.

**I**F you were to die to-night, where would your soul be?” was the question asked by an evangelist of a young woman at the close of a Gospel meeting. Trembling with emotion, she instantly replied, “If I were dying now, I would go to hell, for I am not ‘born again.’”

Perceiving her condition, he spoke to her of God’s desire to save her, and pointed her to John 5:24: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life,” with the request that she would think upon it while he spoke to others. On returning to the place where she sat, he observed that her countenance was radiant with delight. Asking the question that he had previously proposed, with beaming face she immediately replied, “If I were dying now, I would go to heaven.” “How did the change come about?” she was asked. “Through three words in the verse: ‘hath,’ ‘shall not,’ and ‘is.’ I see I have everlasting life, according to God’s Word; I shall not come into condemnation; I

am passed from death unto life. For a fortnight I have been trying to feel saved, but now I know I am saved, according to God's Word." Not long afterwards the Lord took her to be with Himself, and on her deathbed she used to say, "Thank God for 'hath,' 'shall not,' and 'is.'"

The three "links" in the "chain" are hearing, believing, and having. Satan has, however, three counterfeit "links" in his "chain," which, alas! too many accept—"praying," "working," "perhaps you'll have." Will you believe God or Satan?

If the reader has believed what God has said against him, and now hears and believes the Gospel of God's grace, he will be able to say, with the young woman now with the Lord, "Thank God for 'hath,' 'shall not,' and 'is.'"

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It is impossible to tell either the bliss of heaven or the woe of hell. These will be experienced through eternity. One is "joy unspeakable," the other misery unutterable. Trifle not with either. "Flee from the wrath to come." "Escape for thy life." "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15).

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"I AM TRYING MY BEST."

**Y**ES," you say, "I believe all you tell me about Christ dying for sinners, and I know I am not saved yet, but I am trying my best." So are plenty more, friend, but it is weary work, and you will not be a bit better off at the end than at the beginning. "Why,

how can that be? Surely I am bound to try," you answer. Are you? Well, I'll answer you by asking you one or two questions. What did the Lord Jesus come into the world for? "Oh, to save sinners, of course." And couldn't He manage what He came to do? Was it all a failure? "How can you ask such a question? Of course it wasn't a failure." One more question, "Are you a sinner?" "Why, of course I am." Then here are two reasons why all your trying is useless. First, as a sinner, you can do nothing, however you may try, you are condemned already, and have earned the dreadful wages of sin, DEATH, and after that the JUDGMENT. Second, Christ has settled the whole terrible question of sin when He died on the cross. He has PUT AWAY SIN by the sacrifice of HIMSELF, and now, not he that tries his best, but, "He that believeth on the Son HATH Everlasting Life." (John 3:36.)

God has loved the worst and Christ has died for the ungodly, bearing their judgment in His own body on the tree.

By the DEEDS OF THE LAW there shall no flesh BE JUSTIFIED in His sight.

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### AN INCONSISTENT INFIDEL.

**S**OME years ago the writer was travelling by steamer from Sydney to Melbourne.

In giving out gospel tracts and speaking to people as to their eternal welfare, I was brought into contact with a man who said: "I am a sceptic."

We had several friendly conversations. As we were nearing the end of our journey, I happened

to say, "Where are you going to stay in Melbourne?"

He replied, "I am going to the Young Men's Christian Association for them to recommend me to a Christian home."

"But," said I, "why should you seek a Christian home?"

"Well," said he in reply, "although I am a sceptic, I like the quiet surroundings of a Christian home."

Infidelity is too often made an excuse for license. Could greater inconsistency be imagined? Why did he not go to the "Freethought Depot"?

"Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." (Deut. 32: 31).

Is the reader in danger of being carried away with infidel views? Apply the simple test of Matt. 7:20: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Christ is a real, living, personal Saviour. He saves both from the penalty and the power of sin.

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IF THOU KNEWEST THE GIFT OF  
GOD!

John 4:10.

**A** WEARY One sat at Jacob's well—He had left the land of the Pharisees. It was Jesus. He came in love to His own, to save them from their sins; but they received Him not. Weary and grieved was His tender heart as He sat, about the sixth hour, at Jacob's well.

There is a woman coming with her water-pot to the well. She is one to whom the proud Pharisee would scorn to speak. She is a despised

Samaritan, and that is not all; she is a poor wretched being, living in open sin. She little knows that she is about to meet the eye of Him who knows all that ever she did. She arrives at the well, and is astonished that Jesus, being a Jew should ask her to give Him a drink. "Jesus answered, and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."

He did not say, If thou wert not so great a sinner. He did not say, If thou wilt reform and become a holy woman, then I will give the living water. No! No! No! He let her know that He knew all that ever she had done. But there was such a depth of pity, grace, and compassion in the wondrous countenance; such tender love to the sinner in those words, that it won her heart—it converted her soul. Christ was revealed to her, and, leaving her water-pot, she went to the city so full of Christ that, forgetting her own shame, she said, "Come, see a man which told me all that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

My reader, can you meet the eye of Him who knows every thought of your heart from childhood? All that ever you did is open and naked to His eye. And can you say that you are not a sinner? How was it, think you, that there was nothing in Jesus to repel this wretched sinner? And what can those words mean, think you, "If thou knewest the gift of God," etc.? Is this the one great thing needed by a poor wretched sinner? It is; there can be no mis-

take about it, for Jesus says it. Of whatever nation my reader may be; whatever the sins you may have committed, the first thing you need is not the waters of the Ganges, or the intercession of saints, or works of amendment; no, the thing you need is to know the gift of God.

Do you ask who and what is the gift of God? The same that met that poor Samaritan sinner, Jesus the Son of God; as also it is written, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "The gift of God is eternal life." "He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life."

My reader, it is a gift, a gift, a gift; oh, if thou knewest this! Thou canst not buy it; thou canst not merit it. He that knows all that ever thou didst, all that thou art, sets before thee Jesus the crucified; Jesus the risen one; Jesus the glorified. Dost thou know Him, the gift of all gifts?

Dost thou say, "But my sins are heavy, they press me down; what must I do?" If thou knewest the gift of God? Yes, if thou hast committed every sin that has been done in this dark world, yet God's gift, "redemption through His blood" abounds above it all. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." His very business was saving just such burdened, weary, heavy-hearted sinners as thou art. Blessed be His holy name, the work is finished. May God reveal to thy soul, my reader. Christ Jesus. Change of life and holiness of life will follow. But the first thing is The gift of God.



“TURN OR BURN.”

**T**HE wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.” “God is angry with the wicked every day. If he turn not, He will whet His Sword; He hath bent His bow, and made it ready. He hath also prepared for Him the instruments of death; He ordaineth His arrows against the persecutors.” (Psa. 7:11-13.)

Forsooth, because this age is wicked, it is to have no hell; and because it is hypocritical, it would have but feigned punishment. This doctrine is so prevalent as to make even the preachers of the Gospel flinch from their duty in declaring the day of wrath.

How few there are who will solemnly tell us of the judgment to come. They preach of God's love and mercy, as they ought to do, and as God has commanded them; but of what avail is it to preach mercy unless they preach also the doom of the wicked? And how shall we hope to effect the purpose of preaching unless we warn men that if they “turn not, He will whet His sword”? I fear that in too many places the doctrine of future punishment is rejected, and laughed at as a fancy and a chimera; but the day will come when it shall be known to be a reality.

Ahab scoffed at Micaiah, when he said he should not come back alive; the men of Noah's generation laughed at the foolish old man (as they thought him), who bid them take heed for

the world should be drowned; but when they were climbing to the tree tops, and the floods were following them, did they then say that the prophecy was untrue? and when the arrow was sticking in the heart of Ahab, and he said, "Take me from the battle, for I must die," did he then think that Micaiah spoke an untruth?

And so it is now. You tell us we speak lies when we warn you of judgment to come; but in that day when your mischief shall fall on yourselves, and when destruction shall overwhelm you, will you say we were liars then? Will you then turn round and scoff, and say we spake not the truth? Rather, my hearers, the highest honour will then be given to him who was the most faithful in warning men concerning the wrath of God.

I have often trembled at the thought, that, here I am standing before you, and constantly engaged in the work of the ministry, and what if, when I die, I should be found unfaithful to your souls; how doleful will be our meeting in the world of spirits? It would be a dreadful thing if you were able to say to me in the world to come, "Sir, you flattered us; you did not tell us of the solemnities of eternity; you did not rightly dwell upon the awful wrath of God; you spoke to us feebly and faintly; you were somewhat afraid of us; you knew we could not bear to hear of eternal torment, and therefore you kept it back and never mentioned it!" Why, methinks you would look me in the face and curse me through eternity, if that should be my conduct.

So far as I know God's truth, I will endeavour to speak it, and though on my head opprobrium and scandal be poured to a ten-fold greater extent than ever, I'll hail it, and welcome it, if I may but be faithful to this unstable generation, faithful to God, and faithful to my own conscience.

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### POWER OF DIVINE TRUTH.

**A** LADY in Paris moving in the higher circles in life, of cultivated mind, and of elegant manners, but a disciple of the infidel philosophy, lost, in a fatal duel, her son, her only child; "and she was a widow." The Countess of ———, a Christian lady, sought her friend. She found the bereaved widow on her couch, cold, silent, restless, melancholy and on the verge of despair. The philosophy of this world had forsaken her. The Countess began to speak of the refuge which the soul finds in addressing itself to God in the time of trouble; to a Being so great, and good, and tender. The wretched parent turned on her a vacant stare, and said, "Did you speak of God? Who is He? Where is He? What is He? I know nothing of Him." Struck by such an awful instance of infidelity, in such circumstances, the Countess answered not; for she felt in a moment that she could do nothing to restore such a moral ruin. Her interval of silence was an interval of prayer, that God would take this mighty work into his hands; acting in this spirit, she opened her New Testament, and begged her friend to allow her to read a few passages from a book which had been useful to herself in her own recent

afflictions. She read from the Gospels. The effect upon the poor widow was of a gentle, soothing nature. No remark from either party was made on the book itself. When the Countess rose to leave her friend, she said, "I perceive that you are entirely ignorant of the only source of comfort, and I cannot impart it to you; will you give me one proof of your confidence in my affection and sympathy?" "I will." "It is, to use one short prayer, in the words I give you; and to use it as often as you feel a new accession of despair, or a fresh agony of grief,—“O Lord, enlighten thou me, that I may know thee.”"

For many days the Countess continued her visits, and read the little book; and on every successive visit to her friend, she found an increasing attention to the subject read. They rarely had any conversation on religion; for the Countess found that whenever she attempted it, she could not make herself understood. She therefore confined herself to reading, accompanied by secret prayer for the divine blessing. She was the more encouraged in her hope of success, because she was assured by her friend, that she used the short prayer constantly; and that when she did not know where to turn, or how to disengage her thoughts from the horrors of the past, she found relief in repeating the short prayer.

After these daily readings had continued for some time, the bereaved mother began to express more distinctly the effect of what she heard: "Your book told me such and such a thing yesterday: that thought has followed me ever since. I wish you would leave it with me till to-mor-

row." The Countess could not consent. She had two motives in her refusal: she hoped to increase the desire by delay; and she did not at that time wish the book to fall into the hands of an infidel sinner, who had all her life influenced the mind of this unhappy widow. She therefore told her the book had belonged to a dear friend, and was never confided to any second person. The desire to possess this wonder-working book became stronger; and the following note was sent:—"Can you not lend me your invaluable treasure for a few hours? I will not be unreasonable: it shall be returned to you soon." It was lent, and returned with the following note:—"I have been deeply affected by your generous confidence in leaving with me a book so precious to you. I dare not keep it longer; but pray let me have a Bible. It shall never leave me. It shall be my guide, my support; perhaps, one day, my consolation! O when shall I have obtained that holy joy? You shall know of it, that your heavenly charity may be rewarded. Do not leave me to myself; I seem to feel that I shall understand your object. O my God, give me strength and perseverance!"

The Bible having been delayed a few days, the following note was sent:—"Permit me, my dear ———, to remind you of your promise, to send me a Bible. Our last conversation did me much good. It went to the source of my inquietudes. I feel as if I could repose myself in God with confidence. Sometimes I feel as if I could love Him with all my soul; when I ask Him with fervency to give the illumination I so

much want. I do not, I cannot doubt, that He will communicate the light that is necessary to my feeble understanding.”

The Bible was procured and sent; after which this note was written:—“I cannot thank you sufficiently for providing me with the only occupation of which I am capable; but I cannot tell you that your present brought consolation to my wounded heart. I must acknowledge, that, after reading it, I am more deeply afflicted. I am even more sorrowful, more dejected, than before I read it. Shall I tell you why? I am led to look back upon my past life with horror: and the dreadful thought suggests itself,—‘Is it not probable that my sins brought on my child his awful catastrophe?’ O my God, was I indeed the cause of all he suffered in life and death? I can only weep abundantly. Divine grace must do all for me.”

The Countess addressed to her a letter of an encouraging nature, opening to her the fulness and freeness of the Gospel. It was thus acknowledged:—“Your letter has made me weep much; but do not repent of having written it; for the tears were the gentlest and kindest I ever shed. My heart is riveted to that one phrase,—‘able to save to the uttermost.’ I thank you. I thank you, for having shed such a drop of balm on my wounds. I want to talk with you on my sorrows, and my hopes; if you can believe that I ought to have any hope. O yes, yes; I have indeed hope, although it is mingled with sorrow! But mercy, mercy!”

Here terminates the correspondence, but not the intercourse. The Countess had an interest-

ing interview with her friend. She found that the Spirit of God had indeed begun the good work, and was gradually leading her mind into all the truth. Grief and despair on the loss of her son had given way to a strong anxiety to understand the word of God. This new study absorbed the whole soul of the mother. She said she read it incessantly, but without knowing how far she properly understood it; but when she met with a passage that she did not understand, she returned to the place where she had comprehended the sense, and continued her reading till she again encountered the difficulty; and then she uttered her first prayer, "O Lord, give me light that I may know thee." She remained at that point, without attempting to proceed, until she had obtained a knowledge of the passage: "Then," said she, "I often find more force, and beauty, and information in that which had just confounded me, than in all I had understood before." She said also, "This book is my nightly comfort, as well as my daily occupation. When I cannot sleep, I desire my female servant bring me my book, and place the candle at my pillow; and so the night becomes no more tedious and gloomy."

Attempts were made by her sister to lead back this interesting woman to the darkness and despair of the infidel philosophy, but in vain. She reads the Bible, and scarcely anything else; and lives to adorn its doctrine.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. 'Of whom I am Chief.'"

## FOUNDATIONS OR CHIMNEYS.

**W**HICH are built first? Why, how foolishly you talk. How can you build chimneys first? None but an idiot would ask that question. Ah! yes, it is plain in natural things—such as bricks and mortar—even the most ignorant can see that foundations have to be made secure and firm before anything else can be attempted; but in spiritual things how different! in that many ignore the foundations, but erect chimneys and roofs. “Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

A chimney corner where refuge is sought that is not on this foundation can bring no true protection or comfort, for the sparks and fire that are there will only enable them to lie down in sorrow.

No roof, however strong, will shelter any whose walls are not salvation, firmly resting on the Rock of Ages—Christ Jesus the Saviour.

God's call is to believe His Word. Man may stumble at that, and refuse to believe, but he never will be saved in any other way. Having hopes of salvation built on our own doings or works is like building a house on the sands.

It will not stand the blasts and floods that surround, nor cheer and comfort in the hour of death. Then something sure and certain is needed. Fancies, theories, contrivances of our own, will not soothe the dying pillow.



# THE SOWER

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## IT WAS ONLY A TOUCH.

“Somebody hath touched Me” (Luke 8:46).

**I**T was only the touch of a trembling hand  
On a hem of the robe He wore,  
But it told of a living faith in Him  
Whom saints and whom angels adore.

It was only an earnest cry for help,  
But it came from a mother's tongue  
As she spake of her child so sore distressed,  
And by evil tormented long.

It was only an urgent heart appeal,  
“Come down ere my child (doth) die;  
But it brought from the Lord of power and  
might  
A speedy and sure reply.

Art thou in the crowd who are pressing around,  
The eager, the listening throng?  
Then stretch forth the hand of faith to Him,  
And touch as He passeth along.

Not all who were thronging were healed, but she  
Who believed in His life-giving word,  
Thy Saviour is passing, He waiteth for thee,  
Believe Him, thy gracious Lord.

Believe in His wondrous love to thee,  
Believe in His power to save;  
'Twas for thee, so weary, lone and sad,  
His own precious life He gave.

## THE PROSPECTS OF A DYING SINNER.

**B**EFORE him, robed in all its terrors, stands Death, now come to summon him away.

To whom is he summoned? To that Judge from Whose sentence there is no appeal, from Whose eye there is no concealment, from Whose hand there is no escape.

Through the last agonies lies his gloomy, dreadful passage into the unseen world; his path to the bar of God. What a passage! What an interview! He, a hardened, rebellious, impious, ungrateful wretch; who has wasted all the means of salvation, prostituted his talents, squandered his time, despised his Maker, "Cru-cified afresh the Lord of Glory, and done despite unto the Spirit of Grace"; now comes before that glorious and offended God, who knows all the sins which he has committed. He is here, without an excuse to plead, without a cloak to cover his guilt. What would he now give for an interest in that atonement which he slighted, rejected and ridiculed in the present world; in that intercession, on which, while here, he never employed a thought; and in that salvation, for which, perhaps, he never uttered a prayer! The smiles of redeeming, forgiving and sanctifying love are now changed into the frowns of an angry and irreconcilable Judge. The voice of mercy sounds no more; and the hope of pardon has vanished on this side of the grave.

To the judgment succeeds the boundless vast of eternity. Live, he must; die, he cannot. But where, how, with whom, is he to live? The world of darkness, sorrow and despair is his final habitation. Sin, endless and increasing

sin, is his dreadful character; and sinners like himself are his miserable and eternal companions. Alone in the midst of millions, surrounded by enemies only, without a friend, without a comfort, without a hope; he lifts up his eyes and in deep despair takes a melancholy survey of the immense regions around him, but finds nothing to alleviate his woe, nothing to support his drooping mind, nothing to lessen the pangs of a broken heart.

In the far distant region, he sees the faint glimmering of that "Sun of Righteousness," which shall nevermore shine upon him. A feeble, dying sound of praise, the everlasting song of "The general assembly and church of the First-born," trembles on his ear, and in an agonizing manner reminds him of the blessings in which he might have shared, and which he voluntarily cast away. In dim and distant vision those heavens are seen, where multitudes of his former friends and companions dwell; friends and companions who in this world loved God, and believed in the Redeemer. Among them, perhaps, his own fond parents, who, with a thousand sighs and prayers and tears, commended him, while they tabernacled here below, to the mercy of God and to the love of their own divine Redeemer. His children also, and the wife of his bosom gone before him, have perhaps fondly waited at the gates of glory in the ardent expectation, the cheering hope, of seeing him, once so beloved, reunited to their number, and a partaker of their everlasting joy. But they have waited in vain.

The curtain now is drawn; and the amazing vast is unbosomed to the view. Nature, long

decayed, sinks under the united pressure of sickness, sorrow and despair. His eyes grow dim; his ears deaf; his heart forgets to beat; and his spirit, lingering, terrified, amazed, clings to life, and struggles to keep possession of its earthly tenement. But, hurried by an unseen, Almighty Hand, it is irresistibly launched into the unseen abyss. Alone and friendless, it ascends to God; to see all its sins set in order before its eyes. With a gloomy and dreadful account of a life spent only in sin, without a single act of piety, with no faith in Christ, and no sorrow for iniquity; it is cast out as wholly wicked and unprofitable, into the land of darkness and the shadow of death; there to wend its melancholy journey through regions of sorrow and despair, ages without end; and to take up forever the gloomy and distressing lamentation, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended; and we are not saved."

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### ETERNITY! WHAT IS IT?

**A** TTEMPTS have been made to give an idea of Eternity by supposing we might count the leaves of all earth's trees, or the grains of sand on every sea shore, allowing each one to stand for a lifetime, or for a century. But, after all, Eternity would still lie beyond! Man cannot comprehend its vastness, nor measure its extent. He may try to reason himself into the notion that he has only to do with Time, but ETERNITY is nevertheless a solemn reality which all of us shall have to meet. Let us, then, be wise, and accept God's truth concerning Eternity, with all its tremendous issues; for He

has said that "unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth," He will render "indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish"; but that "the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Reader, where and how will you spend Eternity?

## FAITH; WHAT IS IT?

**I**N reading her Greek Testament one day in the second and third chapters of the Gospel of John, a young lady came to the word "believeth," in chapter 3:15.

"Surely that word occurred in the previous chapter," she said to herself; and looking back she saw that the word "commit-himself-unto," was exactly the same in the original as the word "believe."

Thus God showed her that "believing" meant simply committing herself with all her unbelief and sin to Jesus; then her soul rested on the strength and love of her Saviour.

It is this simple "committing of ourselves" to Jesus that our great enemy tries to persuade us is difficult. The very words "faith" and "believing" are so familiar that they seem almost to have lost their first simple meaning, and to some minds seem words of vague import.

But the Lord Jesus would not offer a dim uncertain way of salvation to poor dying ones, so He says in His abounding love, "I am the way." "I, Jesus,"—who was made flesh and dwelt among men, and knows to the uttermost the poor sinner's need and weariness,—"the living, loving Saviour, am the way; commit yourselves to Me, and you are safe for eternity!"

The following true story may serve to illustrate what this committing faith is.

Some years ago a ship was wrecked on the coast of Cornwall. All on board were drowned except one sailor boy, who was washed on shore nearly dead, and who lay for weeks upon a sick bed. A young Christian man visited him, and spoke the Gospel to him.

"When your vessel was in pieces round about you," he said to the lad, "and you were sinking, if a plank had floated by you and you had been able to clutch it, and you felt it would bear your weight, you would have thanked God for that plank?"

"Yes," said the boy, and he was led to understand that the "plank" for his sinking soul was "Christ," and that he had only to commit himself to Christ, as in drowning he would to the plank.

Many years afterwards, in a distant city, the same Christian man visited a death bed. The dying person was a stranger to him.

"Is it well with your soul?" he said as he bent over him.

The dying man turned his head,—there was a smile of recognition, a grasp of the hand,—and he said, "God bless you, sir, the plank bears, the plank bears!" And he died.

Poor sinking one, do you imagine that the weight of your sin and weariness is too heavy for Jesus? It was heavy and He bore the awful weight of it, in order that you might not sink; and now He lives to present His redeemed faultless before the presence of the Father's glory.

"He sent from above, He took me, He drew me out of many waters."

## THE WORLD-EMBRACING WORD.

**M**ORE than 137 times does this world-embracing word—whosoever—occur in the sacred Scriptures, reaching out to all mankind and telling forth truths of the first importance. Here are seven:

1. None are exempt from the sweeping statement that “all have sinned,” for “therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest does the same things” (Rom. 2:1). In judging the sins of others we show a power to discriminate, which makes “sin exceeding sinful” when committed by ourselves (John 8:34).

2. None can be saved by law-keeping, for “whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10). How fruitless, then, to toil and moil in the hope of getting to heaven by being good and doing good, for “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight” (Rom. 3:20).

3. The two great facts proclaimed by the Saviour at Sychar’s well remain true to-day: (1) “Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again” (John 4:13). However deep a person may drink of the wells of the world’s pleasures and treasures, he only finds them “broken cisterns”; the spirit—the eternal part of man—longs for “the unseen and eternal,” which alone can satisfy. (2) “Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst” (John 4:14). The Water of Life which gushed forth from the Riven Rock on Calvary is the

only stream which can effectively and eternally slake the deepest longings of the soul.

4. God's great whosoever, telling of His wondrous love, embraces all: "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 3:16). But the question is—If it embraces all, how can I know that it embraces me? Let me illustrate:

John Thompson, the Cockenzie fisherman, was once preaching in one of the slum districts of Edinburgh. At the close of one of the services a lady approached him and invited him to preach in her house on the Wednesday following. To this he readily assented; but to his surprise, on looking at her card, he found the address of a residence in the west end of the city, and an indication that it was to be a drawing-room Scripture reading for residents in the neighborhood. Accustomed mostly to fishermen, hardy sons of toil, and slumdom, he wondered how he could face an aristocratic audience. After several little ideas of his own as to the method of conducting such a meeting had all appeared futile, he said, "If John 3:16 is good news for the sinful poor, it may after all be good news for the sinful rich." He went, preached, got through, and left inwardly vowing that he had delivered his "farewell drawing-room sermon to aristocrats."

Three weeks after the same lady came up the same aisle of the same hall, and began, "Mr. Thompson." Thinking it was another invitation, he was just on the point of summarily refusing, but a tremor in her voice caused him to listen. "Mr. Thompson, I want you to visit



a maid of mine dying in the infirmary, who specially asks to see you." Agreeing, he got the number of the ward, bed, etc., and set out. Readily finding the subject of his quest, he wondered why she had sent for him till she explained: "Mr. Thompson, I have something special to tell you. I was a servant in the house where you preached three weeks ago. I had been ill for many months; I felt I was going to die, and I was not ready. Oh, how I longed to know my sins forgiven, and to be right for eternity. How glad I was when I heard of the meeting to be held in the drawing-room by 'the Cockenzie fisherman.' I saw you come, cross the hall, enter the drawing-room. I heard the door closed. I felt, 'Oh, there's no hope for a poor servant-girl getting saved.' Burdened, weary, I longed for salvation; and oh, Mr. Thompson, I know it wasn't right, but what do you think I did? About the middle of the meeting I crept up to the door, put my ear to the keyhole, and heard you just then exhorting the ladies and gentlemen to put their names into God's great whosoever, and God would save them and satisfy them for evermore. That was just what I wanted, and, standing at the door, I said in my heart, 'Well, if none of those fine ladies and gentlemen put their names in, here goes, Maggie Shields puts in her name,' and right there the burden from my heart rolled away, and peace and joy filled my heart. Now, Mr. Thompson, I feel my time on earth is short, but I wanted to tell you that though I am only a poor servant-girl I can die happy, for that whosoever took me in."

Why not, like Maggie Shields, say, "God so

loved the world, therefore He must have loved me." "Whosoever believeth shall not perish, therefore if I believe I shall not perish." "Oh, wondrous whosoever, it means me."

5. Salvation can only be had through the Lord Jesus Christ, for "to Him gave all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10:43). As a personal sinner, make absolutely certain that you have a personal Saviour in the Lord Jesus Christ.

6. Salvation is free to all, for the last proclamation from heaven declares: "And whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely" (Rev. 22:17). Doubt not a moment longer; come as you are, and be saved and satisfied for eternity.

7. A solemn warning is given to all, for at the judgment of the Great White Throne "whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). Beware, oh, beware!

To sum up, whosoever bows to God's verdict on him as a sinner, whosoever accepts God's great love-gift, whosoever believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ, is saved with an everlasting salvation.

### WALKED WITH GOD.

**D**ID you ever notice, my reader, that amongst all those mentioned in the Bible, there are only three men of whom it is said, "He walked with God." In the chapter (Gen. 5) where the names of two occur, there are eleven others mentioned; but of none of

these is it said, "He walked with God." These thoughts were brought to my mind lately by a friend who had been speaking to a class of women on these three words—walked with God. She told me she had spoken to them of how beautiful a thing was a walk with God, and said that perhaps some of them had been attracted by the thought of it, or by the beauty of the life of the Lord Jesus on earth, and had tried to follow Him, or to walk so as to please God. But before you can walk, you must have life, and before anyone can walk with God, they must have life—eternal life, that He alone can give. How can anyone get life? They must be born again. But what is it to be born again? To put it very simply, it is just to receive Christ, who is the life (John 14:6). For as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name, which were born . . . of God (John 1:12-13).

My friend went on to tell these women that there might arise in some mind the thought, "How am I to receive Christ?" And she tried to illustrate this simply by the following story. A missionary in China was telling the gospel of God's salvation through Jesus to some women who had never heard it before, and she had asked the Lord to help her to speak so simply that the most ignorant might understand. Her subject was the prodigal son in Luke 15, and one woman, when she heard for the first time of the love of God and how all who came to Him through Christ, as sinners, were welcomed, opened her heart and received Him. She said afterwards, "I just said, 'Thank you, thank

you.' " And her life and walk showed how really she had received Jesus and got life through His name.

Do you, my reader, say, "Is it as simple as that?" Yes, just so simple. You may often have heard of the love of God in sending His Son into this world to die for sinners, and to seek and to save that which was lost, or it may be a comparatively new story to you. But have you ever received Him? Have you ever thanked God that He sent His Son to die for you? Now, as you hear the wondrous words, "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 3:16). Will you not, for yourself, say to God from your heart, "Thank you, thank you." This is receiving Christ, and believing on Him you will have life through His name, and then, and not till then, you will know something of what it is, through the power of His spirit, to walk with God.

### TURN TO THE LORD.

**"T**URN ye, turn ye from your evil ways, for why will ye die?" By that cross where hung the Son of God in mortal flesh, by those five wounds, and by the agonies He endured, I do implore you to look to Him and live. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so lift I up the Son of Man to you now, ye sin-bitten sinners. Though ye feel not the venom, yet look! look! look! Sinner, look, and thou art saved! By the living God, whose splendours of grace I now proclaim, and

whose splendours of wrath ye shall one day feel if ye reject His Son, look! look yonder, see the blood—it flows for you, sinner! See the hands of Jesus, they are fast nailed to the tree! See His feet there, fastened by the nails as if they would stop there till you come to Him! O sinner, look and live! Christ is preached to you. Look and live! Believe and be saved!

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### OUR GREAT WEAPON.

**T**HE Bible is our great weapon, and if we ask the native, "Is it not God's book?" the reply is: "Yes, that must be God's Word, for no white man ever knew so much about us."

Not only the blacks in Africa need conversion: there are the European immigrants. I was at a big Dutch trading house at Benguella, where thirty or forty Europeans — British, Dutch, and German — had congregated for a commercial conference. A Dutchman at the head of the table greeted me. I could see that they thought—"Here's the missionary, let us have a little amusing discussion." He said, "The Bible is not believed in now. I know all about it." (His father was a worthy minister in the Dutch Reformed Church).

I replied, "I shall be glad to prove to all of you that the Bible is true. Allow me to fetch mine." I did so, sat down at the table, and asked the man to mention what portion was untrue.

"Oh," said he, "it is so long since I left home that I don't remember. You read, and

I'll tell you. I began to read the first chapter of Romans, solemnly. By the time I had finished there were only six men left, and the man at the head of the table drew his slouched hat from under his chair and, muttering that there was a nigger calling him, stole out. There was no nigger; but that was the last of the discussion that was to prove the Bible untrue.

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### WHERE IS HAPPINESS TO BE FOUND.

**N**OT in Infidelity. Voltaire was an infidel of the most pronounced type. He wrote: "I wish I had never been born."

Not in Pleasure. Byron lived a life of pleasure if any one did. He wrote:—

"The worm, the canker, and the grief  
Are mine alone."

Not in Money. Gould, the American millionaire, had plenty of that. When dying, he said: "I suppose I am the most miserable devil on earth."

Not in Position and Fame. Beaconsfield enjoyed more than his share of both. He wrote: "Youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, old age a regret."

One and all they confirm Solomon's verdict, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." (Ecc. 2:17).

Where, then, is it to be found?

Jesus said, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you" (John 16:22). The answer is simple—

In Christ Alone.

## SAVED OR UNSAVED.

**T**HE following substance of a recent conversation gives some idea of the entanglements into which souls fall.

“What is your difficulty?”

“I think mine is unbelief.”

“But Christ died for sinners, did he not?”

“I know He died for sinners; but I’m not a true believer. Is not faith an operation of divine power? Does not God reveal the truth to a person?”

“Perfectly true. But you are responsible to believe. And, instead of believing that Christ died for you, a sinner among the rest, you are making it as though He died for true believers, and therefore not for you, because you do not know whether you are one.”

“I know I ought to be like a little child, and take God at His word; but somehow I cannot rest on it, though I know all about it, and can see how plain it is.”

“But you make God a liar, and God cannot lie. Suppose a person you knew sent you a letter to tell you something. If you had confidence in him, you would take him at his word; you would believe him, you would not say, ‘I cannot rest upon it, and I do not know whether I believe it.’ You would believe him or not. It would be one thing or the other. So now you have to believe God. ‘If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater’ (1 John 5:9). And, ‘These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God: that ye may know that ye have eternal life’ (1 John 5:13). Now do you believe on the

name of the Son of God or not? and will you believe God?"

"But—"

"No, no; no 'but.' Do you, or do you not? Now tell me. Would you be in hell if you were to die now?"

"Unbelievers will."

"Would you?"

Perfect silence. No answer; and then presently, "I understand believers can say they are saved, and I cannot."

"Dear soul, believe on the name of the Son of God, and He says eternal life is yours."

Now, dear reader, this conversation is but similar to many. Hundreds who doubtless are born of God go on often for months in this indefinite way, lacking the assured possession of eternal life through self-occupation, and hence unbelief. And yet you will find that these very persons who fail to take God at his word as to their eternal salvation, if closely pressed, believe they will never go to hell. Would God have souls remain in that state? Assuredly not. Then if it is yours, take Him at His word now.

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"The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth."—Rom. 1:16.

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Taste for yourself and you will say—

"Now none but Christ can satisfy,

None other name for me;

There's love, and light, and lasting joy,

Lord Jesus found in Thee."



# THE SOWER

## GLAD TIDINGS.

**O**H say, hast thou been to the Saviour,  
Who life everlasting will give?  
He asks nothing hard of thee, sinner,  
'Tis only to trust Him and live!

For, free as the glorious sunshine,  
Yes, free as the light, and the air,  
Is the blessed redemption of Jesus,  
Oh, what with His love may compare?

How simple God's way of salvation,  
Not "trying," or "doing one's best,"  
But, just in believing on Jesus  
The weary and sinful find rest!

" 'Tis finished," oh, word fraught with meaning,

How precious the message it tells;  
In our ears the glad music is ringing,  
Like chiming of sweet silver bells!

Proclaiming release to the captive,  
Poor slaves of the tyrant set free,  
The power of Satan was broken,  
When Jesus expired on the tree.

The Saviour has purchased thy freedom,  
But priceless the ransom He gave;  
Then trust in "the blood" all-atoning,  
Of Jesus, the "mighty to save."

## ONLY CHRIST CAN SATISFY.

**F**ROM what one sees and hears on all sides, it would appear as if with many at least, the desire for and search after pleasure is much on the increase, and great is the inventiveness of man to devise something new and attractive in the path of pleasure.

A young girl lay on her dying pillow. She had tasted of the pleasures that youthful health and life can bring. Did these satisfy her when she came to die? She then felt she must leave them behind. They were but fleeting joys, and ebbed with ebbing life. They brought no comfort when A. had to face death, eternity, God. "Read me something that will bring me comfort," was A.'s earnest appeal to a loved one near her. Her sister read to her from the Word of God—those Holy Scriptures "which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). A. was enabled, through grace, to rest on God's word, and there she found the comfort and joy for which she longed.

Here is a field where the world has done its utmost to attract and please. Almost everybody can read nowadays, and surely in that vast range of literature which reaches from the half-penny newspaper and the penny novelette to the profound works of great writers, one might expect to find something to satisfy every taste. This vast field of literature may please well while you have life before you, will it satisfy you when your dying hour comes? Or, will you then, like A., want "something that will bring you comfort?" There is but one Book which

will bring you that. It is the Bible. If you want to have its comfort in your dying hour, acquaint yourself with it now. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation (2 Cor. 6:2).

I had at one time regularly to pass one of our high-class theatres, and often curiously scanned the long queue waiting for admission, four abreast, on each side of the street. There were young and old, rich and otherwise gathered there—all in the search for pleasure. Did they find it? Did Shakespeare's choicest plays, the matinees, the best production of dramatic art, give the satisfaction that the throng was eagerly seeking? An hour's delirium of delight going out like the flicker of a candle—that was all. The soul wants truer, purer, more lasting joys than that. Many of those faces bore the expression with which one becomes almost familiar in our great cities—an expression of wearied dissatisfaction—wearied with the fruitless search for pleasure, or with the attempt to drown their misery in a whirl of gaiety.

Miss ——— had sought her joys in these things. Social attractions of every kind had allured one naturally amiable and attractive, Yet no lasting joy was there to find. Night after night would she return from the whirl of the dance and the glitter of the ballroom and flinging aside her ball dress, would spend half the night in tears and prayers for some more lasting joy. "Ask and it shall be given unto you; seek, and ye shall find" (Luke 11:9). God met her. God answered her. She found the Saviour and learned that abiding joy was

found in Christ alone. Now she goes on her way rejoicing to tell others of the Saviour who has satisfied her heart.

Do sports attract you? There is much made of sports in these days, and to the flower of our youth and manhood they are specially attractive. Young men, one like yourselves—a young athlete, lay dying. While able to enjoy his sports, he had thought little of his soul. His end was drawing near, and he was far off from God. He discovered then it was a Saviour he needed for eternity.

A lady called to see him, and spoke to him of the Saviour, who laid down His life for our sins, urging the young man to come to Christ that he might be saved. But he replied that it was too late now. She pressed on him that it was not too late, as Christ was still waiting to receive him.

“But, now, do you not think,” said the young man, “that after what my life has been, and spending all these years refusing Him, and in the services of Satan, it would be a mean thing to turn to Christ and accept Him at the last?”

“Well,” she replied, “that might be; but would it not be a far meaner thing to refuse His loving invitation?”

Dear friends, do not listen to the reasonings of your own heart, do not be led captive by the seductions of Satan. Do not put off lest it be too late, lest judgment overtake you. Christ is waiting to receive you, as He was waiting to receive the young athlete. (Acts 13:36, 39.) He will satisfy you both for time and eternity.

## A PREACHER OF THE OLD SCHOOL.

**M**ANY preachers are giving up the old ideas about the Fall and total depravity of man. People are not often plainly told now that they are guilty sinners before a holy God. The sermons of our forefathers are looked upon in many quarters as relics of the Dark Ages, only fit for the old curiosity shop. There is, however, one Preacher left of the Old School, and he speaks to-day as loudly and as clearly as ever. He is not a popular preacher, though the world is his parish and he travels over every part of the globe, and speaks in every language under the sun. He is an eloquent preacher; he often stirs feelings which no other preacher could reach, and brings tears into eyes that are little used to weeping. His arguments none have been able to refute; there is no conscience on earth that has not at some time quailed in his presence; nor is there any heart that has remained wholly unmoved by the force of his weighty appeals.

He is neither refined nor polite. Indeed, he often interrupts the public arrangements, and breaks in rudely upon the private enjoyments of life. Neither the villa, the mansion, nor the palace, daunt him by their greatness; and no court or alley is mean enough to escape his notice.

## HIS NAME IS DEATH.

You have heard many sermons from the old Preacher. Some day very soon he may have you for his text, and in your bereaved family circle and by your grave-side he may be preaching to others.

You may get rid of the Bible. You may disprove—to your own satisfaction—its histories; you may ridicule its teachings; you may despise its warnings; you may reject the Saviour of whom it speaks. You can get away from the preachers of the Gospel. You are not compelled to go to chapels or mission halls; and you can cross over to the other side of the street when you come near an open-air meeting. It is in your power to burn this, and every other such tract that comes into your possession.

But if you get rid of God's Word and God's servants, what will you do with this old Preacher? Do you hope that a few more years of scientific culture and modern thought will have such an effect upon him that his doctrines and practice will be quite changed? It is true that most preachers are more or less affected by the spirit and opinions of the age they live in, but this old Preacher has gone on in perfect indifference to the changing events and opinions of the whole world for nearly six thousand years.

The conclusion is forced upon us that there must be something wrong. We cannot think of fourteen hundred millions of graves being dug every thirty years on this planet of ours, as one whole generation after another passes down to the gates of death, without having the thought that there is something fearfully wrong.

Sin is not simply an ugly word in the Bible or on preachers' lips; it is a dark, foul reality which blights and curses the world by its presence. Nor is there any exception to the scope

of its ravages. "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." You have sinned; upon you sentence of death has passed, and very soon it will be said of you, "He is dead."

When will you die? Do you think this a foolish question? You count your money; you reckon your profits; you calculate your dividends; surely it is quite as important to number your days! Some have died—very suddenly, too—just about your age. It is possible that you may die very soon. A young man went to a friend, and asked him how long before death a man ought to be prepared for it. The reply was, "About five minutes." The young man turned away with relief, making up his mind to see life, sow his wild oats, enjoy the pleasures of the world, and then turn to God at the end of his days. "Stop," said the friend, "When are you going to die?" "I cannot tell," was the reply. "Then you had better be prepared for death now; you may not have five minutes to live."

How will you die? Sad, sad indeed, if that word comes true of you which was thrice repeated to some very respectable people a long time ago—"Ye shall die in your sins." One second after your death it will be a matter of no consequence to you whether you died in a palace or in a cellar. But your whole eternity will hang upon the state in which you die. If sin works such havoc, and sins have such fearful consequences in this world, what must they entail in the next? As men sow in this world, so they reap, but God does not definitely execute judgment upon sins in this life. "After

death the judgment." In this world you can, in a sense, avoid God. Many live "Without God in the world." But death dissolves all connection with the things of time by which God can be excluded, and beyond death you must stand before God.

The dying infidel, Charteris, said, "I would give \$150,000 to have it proved to my satisfaction that there is no such place as hell." His conscience was waking up to proclaim in that solemn hour that sins must be followed by the judgment of God.

How will you die? The holy Ghost has written a short but solemn epitaph in Heb. 10: 28. God forbid that it should ever be true of you! Here it is:—

"DIED WITHOUT MERCY."

An innocent man might plead for justice, but the sinner's only hope is mercy. The guilty one can only escape by the door of mercy. If the offender does not receive the due reward of his deeds, it must be on the ground of mercy. The transgressor can only be pardoned at the mercy-seat. Hence the penitent's cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner"; he is conscious that nothing but mercy will do for him. Your only chance is mercy. Oh! how sad, how complete, how irretrievably will be your ruin, if you die "Without mercy!"

There is another epitaph—short but blessed—in Heb. 11: 13. Look at it!

"THESE ALL DIED IN FAITH."

Yes! though the men thus spoken of lived in a dispensation of comparative darkness, yet in the starlight of types, symbols and promises



they trod the path of Faith, which is now lighted up for us by the glory which shines in the face of the seated Saviour on the throne of God, and as they lived so they died—"In faith."

God has not been indifferent to the ruin of His creature, whose sin has brought death upon him. There is no denying the fact that "The wages of sin is death," but it is equally true that "The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:23). "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John 4:9). The holy Son of God has died in love upon the cross. Yea, God commends His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The old Preacher never spoke so loudly, or in such solemn tones, as when Jesus went to Calvary to die. Divine love would bless the sinner, but divine holiness could not make light of the sin. The full penalty of guilt—the wages of sin in all its dark and dread reality—passed upon the sinless Substitute. He took our place in death and judgment, that we might have His life and His place of acceptance and favour before God.

The love of God—the work of Christ—the Spirit's strivings—all urge you to turn from the world and its delusions, which end in death, to the Son of God, whose soul-assuring words are—"He that heareth My Word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).

## THE TESTIMONY OF THE BISHOP OF LIVERPOOL REGARDING THE HEREAFTER.

**L**ET others hold their peace about hell if they will; I dare not do so. I see it plainly in Scripture, and I must speak it. (Jer. 23:28.) I fear that thousands are on the broad road that leads to it, and I would fain arouse them to a sense of the peril before them. What would you say of the man who saw his neighbour's house in danger of being burned down, and never raised the cry of "Fire"? Call it bad taste, if you like, to speak of hell. Call it charity to make things pleasant and speak smoothly, and soothe men with a constant lullaby of peace. (Jer. 6:14.) From such notions of taste and charity may I ever be delivered! My notion of charity is to warn men plainly of their danger. My notion of taste is to declare the whole counsel of God. If I never spoke of hell, I should think I had kept back something that was profitable, and shou'd look on myself as an accomplice of the devil.

Beware of new and strange doctrines about hell and the eternity of punishment. Beware of manufacturing a God of your own—a God who is all love, but not holy—a God who has a heaven for everybody, but a hell for none—a God who can allow good and bad to be side by side in time, but will make no distinction between good and bad in eternity. Such a God is an idol of your own, as really as Jupiter or the monstrous image of Juggernaut—as true an idol as was ever moulded out of brass or clay.

The hands of your own fancy and sentimentality have made him. He is not the God of the Bible, and besides the God of the Bible there is no God at all. Your heaven would be no heaven at all. A heaven containing all sorts of characters mixed together indiscriminately would be miserable discord indeed. Alas! for the eternity of such a heaven! There would be little difference between it and hell. Ah, reader, there is a hell! Take heed lest you find it out too late. (Jer. 8:20.)

Beware of being wise above that which is written. Beware of forming fanciful theories of your own, and then trying to make the Bible square with them. Beware of making selections from the Bible to suit your taste—refusing, like a spoilt child, whatever you think is bitter; seizing, like a spoilt child, whatever you think sweet. What is all this but taking Jehoiakim's penknife and cutting God's Word to pieces? (Jer. 36:23.) What does it amount to but telling God that you, a poor, short-lived worm, know what is good for you better than He? It will not do. You must take the Bible as it is. You must read it all and believe it all. You must come to the reading of it in the spirit of a little child. Dare not to say, "I believe this verse, for I like it; I receive this, for I can understand it; I refuse that, for I cannot reconcile it to my views." "Nay, but, O man, who are thou that repliest against God?" (Rom. 9:20.) By what right do you talk in this way? Surely it were better to say over every chapter in the Word, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."

Ah, reader, if men were to do this, they would never try to throw overboard the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal" (Matt. 25:46). "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isaiah 33:14.)

### THE CLOSED DOOR.

**I** REMEMBER it so well; it was one morning many years ago, when I was a very little child. I had been disobedient at breakfast time, and my father had said to me gravely and sadly, "Carrie, you must get off your chair and go and stand outside the door for five minutes."

I got down, choked back the sob that rose in my throat, and without venturing to look into my father's face, I went outside the door, and it was shut against me.

The moments seemed very long, and silent. I remember well how my tears dropped down on the mat; I was so grieved and ashamed.

The five minutes were not nearly over, but the handle of the door was partly turned, and Johnnie's curly head peeped out.

Both his arms were round my neck in a minute, and he said, "Carrie, go in, I'll be naughty instead of you"; and before I had time to say a word he had pushed me in, and shut the door.

There I stood, with my eyes on the ground, and feeling so red and so uncomfortable, not knowing whether I might go up to the table; but my father took me by the hand, and led me

to the table, and kissed me, and put me on my chair; and I knew I was forgiven just as much as if I had borne all the punishment; but oh! how I wished that Johnnie might come in.

When the five minutes were up he was called in, and then papa took us both—me, the poor little naughty child, and Johnnie, the loving brother—and folded us both in his arms, and I sobbed it all out—the repentance and love, and gratefulness—whilst we were held close to that loving heart.

And now that I look back to that little scene, it seems a very typical one. For the years went by, and I found myself outside another door, separated from the Father, sin having come between my soul and God, till I saw One who loved me come and take my place, and put me into His place of nearness, and I was forgiven for Christ's sake; and I knew the fulness and freeness of that forgiveness, for our Father drew me close to His divine Heart of Love, and there with the Lord Jesus, my Sin-Bearer, I found "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

"Payment He will not twice demand,  
First at my bleeding Saviour's hand,  
And then again at mine."

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### SELF-DECEIVED!

**I** WAS called to see a sick woman, who had been a professing Christian for years. She was well known in the place, but people had no confidence in her Christianity. She was fast failing with consumption; and they begged me to call and see her.

I went, and had a long conversation. She

told me a dream which she had when she was a girl, which made her think that her sins were forgiven. Upon that she had settled down, and no argument could move her. I tried to persuade her that there was no evidence of her conversion in that dream.

I told her plainly that her acquaintances affirmed that she had never lived a Christian life, and had never evinced a Christian temper; and I had come to try to persuade her to give up her false hope, and see if she would not now accept of Jesus Christ that she might be saved. I dealt with her as kindly as I could, and did not fail to make her understand what I meant.

She took great offence, and after I went away complained that I tried to get away her hope and distress her mind; that I was cruel to try to distress a woman as sick as she was in that way—to try to disturb the repose of her mind.

She died not long afterward. Her death has often reminded me of Dr. Nelson's book, called "The Cause and Cure of Infidelity." When this woman came to be actually dying, her eyes were opened; and before she left this world she seemed to have such a glimpse of the character of God, and of what heaven was, and of the holiness required to dwell there, that she shrieked with agony, and exclaimed that she was going to hell. In this state she died!

## MAN'S WAY AND GOD'S WAY.

## MAN'S WAY OF SALVATION.

**G** OING about to establish their own righteousness.—Rom. 10:3.

Morality.—Rom 3:10.

Almsgiving.—Luke 18:11.

Mortification.—Col. 2:23.

## GOD'S WAY OF SALVATION.

Not by works of righteousness.—Titus 3:5.

Justified by His blood.—Rom. 5:9.

Thy money perish with thee.—Acts 8:20.

To him that worketh not.—Rom. 4:5.

Doing is a deadly thing,  
Doing ends in death.

Do not mistake, much that a man does is right and proper; but if it is to be acceptable to God, it must be the outcome of spiritual life, after he has trusted in the finished work of Christ. What we do, should be the result of our having forgiveness of sin, not the means by which we obtain it.

## NO OTHER WAY.

God has one condition, and only one, on which He offers salvation to sinners. Man has not to bargain, but to accept; not to question, but to take. And oh! such terms! There are none like them in any earthly market place.

God's beloved Son was "wounded for our transgressions—bruised for our iniquities," thus becoming our substitute; hence the penalty of sin having been paid, salvation can only be obtained as a gift; for while "the wages of sin

is death, the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Therefore the call of God now is—

"Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye!

"He that hath no money, come ye!

"Buy and eat; yea, come! without money, and without price" (Is. 55).

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### THE GLASS OF WATER.

**A** NOBLEMAN about to be executed asked for a glass of water, but when it was handed to him he trembled so that he could not drink. The prince said, "Your life is safe until you have drunk that water." Taking the prince at his word, he dashed the glass to the ground. The water could not be gathered up again, so the nobleman's life was saved. This was faith; just simply receiving the words uttered, and acting upon them; the result was salvation to his body.

Exactly in the same manner is it that we have to take God's words and act upon them. Trusting God is not like a drowning man catching at straws. It is no hanging on the words of a fitful, capricious prince, but trusting the faithful word of a gracious and faithful God, who means what He says, and who says what He means; who never makes a mistake, nor draws back from His word. "If any man thirst, let him come unto ME and drink" (John 7:37).

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,

'Behold, I freely give

The living water—thirsty one,

Stoop down, and drink, and live."



# THE SOWER

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“ALL FORGIVEN.”

Jesus said: “Her sins which are many are forgiven” (Luke 7:47).

**A**LL forgiven—Jesus tells me,  
Shall I dare to doubt His word?  
He has borne the heavy burden,  
Christ, my Saviour, and my Lord.

All forgiven—Jesus bids me  
“Go in peace” since He has died,  
Bids me look at each deep woundprint  
In His hands, and feet, and side.

All forgiven—oh, the sweetness,  
And the music of His voice!  
Telling me of fullest pardon,  
Sure my heart may well rejoice.

All forgiven—secret, open  
Sins, which none but Jesus knew,  
He has cancelled, freely pardoned  
And for ever hid from view.

All forgiven—’tis my Saviour  
Speaks the words with living power,  
And His precious blood still cleanseth  
Every moment, every hour.

All forgiven—blessed knowledge,  
 None but Christ Himself can give—  
 Only Jesus—Jesus only  
 Thus could bid my dead soul live.

All forgiven—not the angels  
 Can this grace, this pardon know,  
 But for sinners, lost and guilty,  
 Christ's precious blood doth ceaseless flow.

Help me love Thee much, my Saviour,  
 For Thy wondrous love to me,  
 Love which ever passeth knowledge,  
 Love which binds my heart to Thee.

All forgiven—soon the glories,  
 Which no eye as yet hath seen,  
 Will be mine, in His own presence,  
 Gladness then where tears have been.

Once within the golden city,  
 Where no sin can ever be,  
 I shall sing the praise unending  
 Of Him who died, who lives for me.

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## THERE IS NO MIDDLE CLASS BEFORE GOD.

**T**HERE are two roads. Reader, on which  
 are you?

Wide is the gate, Broad the way, that  
 leadeth to Destruction, and many go therein.

Strait is the gate, Narrow the way, that leadeth  
 unto Life, and few there be that find it.

Dear Reader, whither are you bound?

“WHY?” OR, “IT WAS FOR ME.”

**I** WAS recently asked to go and see a poor bed-ridden man, who was thought to be nearing his end. I found him in a terrible state of bodily suffering; one leg had been amputated, and the other was slowly rotting away. He knew his time was short, and he told me he was doing his utmost to trust in the Lord Jesus. He said he believed in Him, and that He was sure he ought to be believed in by every one, but that his difficulty was that he did not and could not feel that he trusted Him sufficiently. I spoke to him of the Lord's suffering on the Cross, of His infinite love and grace, of His sacrifice of Himself, until the poor dear man wept; still he repeated again and again, “Ah! I must trust Him more. I want to put all my trust in Him. I don't trust Him enough yet to be quite safe.”

Seeing he was trying to rest on his own faith in Christ, rather than on Christ Himself, I said to him:

“Do you know why our Lord was forsaken when on the cross?”

“Oh!” said he, “He was not really forsaken; He only thought He was; He could never have been forsaken; I am sure of that.”

I read him Mark 15:34, and part of Psalm 22, and asked him if it was not a real forsaking.

“Yes,” he replied, after thinking some moments, “I now see it was. Those verses have always been a difficulty to me. I knew He had done nothing to be forsaken of God for; and the only explanation I could find was that He only thought Himself forsaken and was not

really so. Still this never satisfied me. I cannot make it out. Can you tell me why He was forsaken on the Cross?"

Feeling this was a question to be answered by God, and by God alone, and that he must really go through it with God, I replied:

"You know Jesus was the Holy One of God—that He knew no sin—that before He was born, the Holy Spirit spoke of Him as 'that holy thing which should be born' of the Virgin—that His whole life down here was not only spotless, but perfectly acceptable to God in every detail—that the voice from heaven said of Him: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'—and yet He cried on the cross: 'My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?' "

The poor dear man's attention was absorbed.

"Tell me," he said, "Oh, do tell me why? I cannot make it out—it is beyond me altogether."

It was now late, about 9 p.m., and so, after a few words of prayer to the Lord to show him, I left Him, begging him to ask God simply to show him why His beloved Son was forsaken on the Cross; and, at the same time, as He could find no cause in Him, to see if there was any cause to be found elsewhere.

The next morning when I went to see him again I found him calm, and yet filled with wondrous joy.

"Well, C——," I said, "have you found it out yet?" He did not need telling what the "it" referred to.

"Oh! yes," he said with tears, "I have indeed. The Lord showed it all to me in the night.

I could not sleep. I was in no pain, but yet I felt a sort of pain in me until He showed it all to me. I felt I must know why, and I prayed to Him to tell me, and He did. It was for me—for me! How wonderful it is! Too wonderful almost to speak of—and when I see Him, I shall see Him who was forsaken for me! What a sight it will be! And it will last for ever too!”

“And what about all your trust now?” I asked.

“Oh! don’t speak of it,” he said, covering his face with his hands. “Now, when I think of Him, and look at Him, I cannot bear to think about myself and my trust. I can never, no never, trust Him enough; and as to loving Him, well! I don’t like to call what I feel about Him ‘love,’ for His love is so wonderful, so blessed, so everlasting!”

“Then there is nothing left to try for now,” I said.

“Try!” he exclaimed. “No; nothing! I can’t try to love Him now; I can only rest in His love. And, oh! what rest it is! His wonderful, blessed, unchanging love; and I don’t deserve the least bit of it. What time and joy I’ve lost trying to deserve it! I see it all now; I was trying to deserve His love, and so I was trying to trust Him. But now, blessed be His name, I can rest in His love—rest there for ever and for ever, in His love! I can think of nothing else now, but Him and His love.”

A few weeks later, this dear man, a pauper, in receipt of parish relief, passed peacefully away from the scene of his sufferings and pov-

erty, to be with Him who had so loved him as to give Himself for him. His joy, his peace, remained ever the same—the calm, holy joy and peace of the blessed, undeserved, unwavering love of Jesus for him, a poor, vile, hell-deserving sinner! A pauper in receipt of parish relief, and yet the possessor of the only true riches!—richer than the wealthiest or most powerful sovereign, who has not for himself the simple answer to that wondrous “Why?”

Reader, can you answer for yourself as to why that Blessed One was forsaken? God made Him who knew no sin to be sin for sinners, and God always stands by what He has done. He has glorified “that same Jesus” at His own right hand in heaven; and God is about to bring Him again, and to manifest Him in glory in the very place where he was rejected, despised, spat upon, and crucified by man, and where, in the greatness of His love and His mercy toward man, God forsook Him on the cross.

“Every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him.”

Dear Reader, when you see Him, will it be to gaze upon the One who was forsaken for you, or will it be with wailing and sorrow? God says: “Every eye shall see Him”—the lost as well as the saved—those for whom He was forsaken, as well as those who pierced Him, and those who are now indifferent to Him. May God in His mercy give you no rest until you too can say, with rich though poor, happy though despised, joyful though suffering C——, “For me—it was for me!”

## NOT "FEELING," BUT "KNOWING."

**D**O you feel that you have an interest in the Saviour?" was the question asked of a simple Christian girl by one who was desirous of knowing her spiritual state. "I know that He has an interest in me, which is far better," was the girl's honest answer.

Yes, and "far better" it truly was to know that Christ had an interest in her, than to feel that she had an interest in Him. In the first place, to "know" is infinitely better than to "feel." I know God loves me, because He says it. I know that Christ has such an interest in me, a sinner, that He died for me as such.

Do you challenge the ground of my knowledge? I know these facts because one verse in God's unchangeable word assures me of both. Here it is: "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:8).

I may, or may not, feel I have an interest in Christ, but here is something infinitely better than feelings. Here are facts, which faith accepts, not because I feel them, but because God declares them. That is why I never have any doubts: there is no room for them.

Some are occupied with their feelings, and test themselves by their fluctuating condition; sometimes having assurance, at other times doubt, according as they find themselves. But the ground of a believer's peace is not his feelings or experiences, but the finished work of Christ.

Rest then, confidently rest in what has been done, for on this you may safely take your stand for eternity.

## A PROBLEM.

**A** YOUNG man, distinguished for his mathematical attainments, was fond of challenging his fellow-students to a trial of skill in solving difficult problems. One day a class-mate came into his study and, laying a folded paper before him, said: "There is a problem I wish you would help me to solve," and immediately left the room. The paper was eagerly unfolded, and there, instead of a question in mathematics, were traced the lines, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"

With a gesture of impatience he tore the paper to pieces, and turned again to his books. But in vain he tried to shake off the impressions of the solemn words he had read. The Holy Spirit pressed home his convictions of guilt and danger, so that he could find no peace till he found it in believing in Jesus. He subsequently became a preacher of the gospel he had once despised, and his first address was from the words, so eminently blessed to his soul, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36).

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A STARTLING FACT.

**T**HIS very day there are thousands of men and women within a breath of eternity, and many of them are not ready to meet God. Are you one of them? If death find you to-day, where will you be to-morrow? Pause! think! consider! "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).



## I GOT HIGH-MINDED—THAT WAS IT.

**R.W.** had to rough it in his youth. When but a child he was actually bought and sold twice. No loving mother gave him a good-night kiss, no kind father told him of Jesus. Young R. had to feel blows instead of kisses, and to hear cursings instead of loving words.

Having had such a training, the “tares” which had been sown so plentifully in his young heart sprang up and brought forth all too soon their sorrowful fruit. Early in life R. trod in sinful paths, and he was for many years a sad specimen of one led captive by Satan at his will.

Such was R. before “the grace of God that bringeth salvation” shone into his dark heart. He came to the Light, and oh, what a change it wrought in his life and walk! He enjoyed peace with God—old things had passed away, and all things were become new.

While he continued to pursue with diligence his humble occupation, he now began to testify openly of the grace that had sought and found him—yea, of that Blood that cleanseth from all sin. Gently and simply did R. speak, as he could find occasion, and the Lord owned and blessed his labours. At a time when cholera was raging, he was especially active, fearlessly at the bedside of the sick and dying, preaching peace by Jesus Christ.

Of many things R. knew but little, yet he could happily say, “One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see,” and his very imperfect education was more than compensat-

ed by the fervour of his spirit, so that believers found his company refreshing and profitable.

As years rolled on, however, a time of trial came, when the enemy of souls, ever active, sought to ensnare this devoted child of God. A most subtle trap was laid, and, sad to say, the unsuspecting R. was soon caught in the enemy's coils. Yielding to temptation, old tastes and habits revived, and he rapidly slid backwards into a path of sin and shame.

His Christian friends noticed that R. was not with them so frequently as before; then sad rumours reached their ears. One and another of them visited him, but he answered their plain questions with false excuses, and began to avoid the company of those who love our Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, at one time there was reason to hope that he had repented, for he again sought the company of his fellow Christians, and seemed brighter in spirit and happier in mind. These hopes, however, were soon dashed to the ground. R. again declined. His sorrowing friends prayed for him and visited him, but, as he refused to listen to them, they could only leave him to walk in the path he had chosen, while they continued to grieve over his fall and to entreat the Lord for him.

Truly this sheep wandered very far astray, but the Good Shepherd went unweariedly after him until He had found him.

One morning a friend told me that R. was very ill, and asked me to visit him, saying: "You will find a very great difference in him." I went, and found him lying upon his bed, pale and emaciated. Knowing what had happened,

how could I address him? My thoughts were directed to the fifty-first Psalm, which I read aloud.

This scripture seemed just suitable to R.'s case, and it gave us both liberty to speak freely. To my great joy I found that the Lord had already wrought a work of grace in his heart, surpassing all my expectations. He sorrowfully but candidly owned to what an awful extent he had gone in sin, to the great dishonour of his Lord; while, out of a softened but thankful heart, he acknowledged the loving hand that had so mercifully snatched him out of the dreadful vortex.

### SELF-SUFFICIENCY.

**O**NE of the most delusive and dangerous thoughts, and at the same time most difficult to root out of people's minds, is the idea that there is something for them to do by which they can merit or claim a right to a place in heaven.

Let it, therefore, be at once and distinctly understood, that there is no work, or suffering, or attainment expected from us by God in order to make us fit to receive His salvation. In no possible way does God require us to make ourselves meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Eternal life, with its joys untold and blessings innumerable, is in Christ Jesus alone—for by His atoning death on the cross He obtained eternal redemption for us. Hence we read: "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Good works come after salvation, not before; then only are they acceptable to God (Eph. 2: 8, 9, 10).

## EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT.

**T**HE word speaks of "unquenchable fire," of an "undying worm," of a "gulf fixed," or "abiding wrath." What, I would ask, is the meaning of such words, in the judgment of any honest, unprejudiced mind? It may be said that these are figures. Granted that the "fire," the "worm," and the "gulf" are figures, but figures of what? Of something ephemeral—something which must, sooner or later, have an end? Nay, but something which is eternal, if anything is eternal.

If we deny eternal punishment we must deny an eternal anything, inasmuch as it is the same word which is used in every instance to express the idea of endless continuance. There are about seventy passages in the Greek New Testament where the word "everlasting" occurs. It is applied, amongst many other things, to the life which believers possess and to the punishment of the wicked, as in Matt. 25:46.

Now, upon what principle can anyone attempt to take out the six or seven passages in which it applies to the punishment of the wicked and say that in all these instances it does not mean "for ever"; but that in all the rest it does? I confess this seems to be unanswerable. If the Holy Ghost and the Lord Jesus made use of a different word, when speaking of the punishment of the wicked, from what He uses when speaking of the life of believers, I grant you there might be some foundation for an objection. But no; we find the same word invariably used to express what everybody knows to be endless; and therefore if the punishment of the wicked be not end-

less, nothing is endless. We cannot consistently stop short with the question of punishment, but must go on to the denial of the very existence of God Himself.

Rest assured that as long as God lives, so will live in the pleasures at His right hand all those who have accepted His Son, for "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Rest assured also that as long as God lives, so will exist in the punishment of the lake of fire all who reject or neglect so great salvation, for "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36).

Friend, which will be your eternal destiny?

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### HOW TO GET FAITH.

**S**OME say faith is the gift of God. So is the air; but you have to breathe it. So is bread; but you have to eat it. So is water; but you have to drink it. Some are wanting a miraculous kind of feeling. That is not faith. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). That is whence faith cometh. It is not for me to sit down and wait for faith to come stealing over me with a strange sensation; but it is for me to take God at His word. And you cannot believe unless you have something to believe. So take the word as it is written, and appropriate it, and lay hold of it. In John 6:47, 48, we read: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life." There is the bread right at hand. Partake of it. I might have thousands of loaves within my home, and as many hungry men in

waiting. They might assent to the fact that the bread was there; but unless they each took a loaf and commenced eating, their hunger would not be satisfied. So Christ is the bread of heaven; and as the body feeds on the natural food, so the soul must feed on Christ. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). Believe and live.

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"I HAVEN'T FELT MY SINS ENOUGH."

**I** HEAR people say what an awful load their sins were, and what misery they were in for a long time before they got peace, and I haven't felt all that."

"What then, do you suppose that helped to save them?"

"Perhaps not, but I always thought we must feel like that about our sins before we could be saved."

"It is quite true that we must know that we are lost sinners before we can believe in Jesus as our own Saviour; for He is the Saviour of sinners and not of righteous persons. But that is a very different thing from supposing that we must undergo a certain amount of misery about our sins before He can save us. Suppose you and I were asleep in two different rooms in a burning house. You wake up, and finding out your terrible position, you throw up the window and shriek for help, but none seems near. Every moment your anguish increases, and only when you are almost frantic with despair, the fire escape appears and you are rescued. I am still sleeping on, and the

first I know of my danger is from the firemen getting in at my window and calling on me to descend by the 'escape.' Is it necessary for me to wait till I have gone through a like period of agony to yours? No, of course not. I must believe in the reality of the danger, or I will not leave my room; but if I believe that, and trust myself to the fireman's care, I shall be just as safe as though I had, in imagination, passed through all the torture of being burned alive. Just so, friend, if you are convinced that you are a lost sinner, you may at once trust in the Lord Jesus, who died for sinners; for years of misery you might feel could not add to His power to save you."

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### AN ANGRY FATHER.

**W**HEN I lived in Minneapolis, U.S.A., a child of a man deep down in sin had been converted. This greatly angered the father. One day I was holding an open-air meeting at the foot of Washington Avenue. The father thought he saw his opportunity to have revenge. He got a basket of rotten eggs, and went up on the top of an adjoining building to throw the eggs at us as we held the meeting; but as he stood on the top of the building, and was about to throw the eggs, the Spirit of God touched his heart and brought him under the deepest conviction of sin.

At the close of our meeting that night in our hall, a tall, muscular man, with a hardened face that bore the marks of long-continued sin, came to me overwhelmed with grief and asked me to pray for him. He said: "This afternoon, when

you were speaking down at the foot of Washington Avenue, I went up on the top of the building with a basket of rotten eggs to rotten-egg you, but I became overwhelmed with a sense of sin, and I have come up here to-night for you to tell me what to do to be saved." It was easy work to lead him to a knowledge of Jesus Christ as the One who had borne all his sins in His own body on the cross, and the man left the hall that night rejoicing in the knowledge of sins forgiven.

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"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53: 6).

"Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. For what is your life? It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away" (Prov. 27: 1; James 4: 14).

"The gospel of Christ . . . is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1: 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" (Jno. 3: 16).





# THE SOWER

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## “THE WONDERFUL STORY.”

**Y**OU’VE heard of a Saviour, who died once  
for you ;

But have you believed that the story was  
true ?

That “wonderful story” my mother told me,  
In the days of my youth, as I sat on her knee.  
Did a mother tell you ? If so, then maybe,  
She’s gone home to glory that Saviour to see !

But none in the glory of Jesus can share  
Except they’ve had part in His sufferings here.

’Twas love, I remember, beginning to end !

’Twas love caused the Father His own Son to  
send ;

’Twas love made Christ Jesus His Father obey ;

’Twas love caused Christ Jesus my sin-debt to  
pay.

’Twas wonderful love, that Jesus for me  
Should suffer the death that I might go free !

But now, after years, with great sorrow I see  
This story was only a story to me.

I did not believe in my heart that ’twas true ;

In love, I beseechingly question, Do you ?

Oh, do you not see that the Crucified One

Has finished the work ?—’twas once for all done ;

That when He was pierced, as He hung on the  
tree,

He poured forth His blood, poor sinner, for thee?

We're under the curse, in sin we are dead;  
But He bore the curse and died in our stead;  
We'd fain live for e'er in the glory above;  
And so we now may, through His infinite love,—  
For, as from our sin in the Saviour we hide,  
We also, in Him, in the glory abide.

Abiding for ever! Oh, why should we doubt?  
"Him that cometh to Me I'll in no wise cast out."

And so I am trusting my Lord all the day,  
Expecting ere long He will call me away,  
To share in the glory which He has prepared  
For those who with Him have His sufferings shared.

For, "Lo! I come quickly," Lord Jesus has said,  
To fashion the quick and to raise up the dead.  
And in that bright day, in faith I can see  
The King in His glory is coming for me!  
Oh, sinner, if you will your stubborn heart bow  
Before the great God, He will pardon you now;  
If you plead but the blood of the Saviour once shed,

He will bid you arise, and lift up your head  
To gaze on our Lord, with the Father in glory,  
The seal of the truth of this "wonderful story."

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### DUNCAN MATHESON,

And What John Three and Sixteen Did for Him

**A** SCOTTISH evangelist, whose labors in the Crimean war, and throughout the towns and villages of Scotland, were richly owned of God, was born at Huntly, in Aberdeenshire.

For twenty-one years he lived without God, having a religious profession but no Christ. Awakened under preaching in Edinburgh, he returned to Huntly in great soul-trouble, but still unsaved. He was converted to God, through John 3:16, while standing at the end of his father's house in Aberdeenshire, on the 10th of December, 1846. Speaking of that blessed hour, he says: “I saw that God loved me, for I was one of the world. I saw the proof of His love in the giving of His Son Jesus. I saw that ‘whosoever’ meant anybody and everybody, and therefore me—even me. I saw the result of believing—that I should not perish, but have everlasting life. I was enabled to take God at His Word. I saw no one, but Jesus only, all my redemption. My burden fell from my back—and I was saved. Yes, saved! That hour angels rejoiced over one more sinner brought to the Saviour, and new songs rang through the courts of that city to which I had now got a title, and of which I had now become an heir.” After twenty-three years of noble service for Christ, he went to be with Him to dwell in His unclouded presence, which is “far better.”

Reader—Has this wonderful verse brought any message to your soul? Have you put in your claim as one of the “whosoever’s”? You are one of the objects of God’s love. For you He gave His only Son, and if you believe in Him you shall not perish, but have everlasting life. That is God’s message to you. Say, will you receive or reject it?

Eternal life and joy or eternal death and misery is suspended on your decision.

## A DROWNING MAN.

“He drew me out of many waters.” Psa. 18: 16.”

ON a beautiful summer night we were standing on a bridge watching the moonlight reflected in the waters of a deep lake in one of the Eastern States. We stood there so long that a policeman who was guarding the bridge, looked at us so suspiciously and passed so many times near us, that we spoke to him. In a few words we explained that we were looking at the beauty of the night and were so happy in the love of Jesus, and that we did not want to throw ourselves into the water, as he had a suspicion we did. We asked him then the direct question, if he was a Christian, and he said “Yes,” and added, “It was under the waters of this lake that I decided for God.” We were interested and asked him to tell the story. He told us as follows:

“I was only about seventeen and one of the wildest boys in the country. I loved to have my own way and I had it. I loved my mother, but when she begged me to give my heart to Christ, I felt I knew better and had plenty of time.

“One day I went in bathing in this very lake. I was a good swimmer but the cramps caught me in my leg, and down I swept to the very bottom of the lake. I rose to the surface twice. Some of my friends saw me and heard my cries, but knowing I was such a good swimmer they thought I was fooling. I never can forget that third time I sank beneath these waves. I felt my last hour had come, and with the waters

surging in my ears, I began to lose consciousness and a strange thing happened. I saw before me, scene after scene of my life, seemingly painted on a white sheet. I saw an old apple tree that I remembered of having gone to when I was quite small, and having stolen some apples, in disobedience to my mother. Then I saw on the same sheet a picture of myself kneeling as I did by her side, asking forgiveness of her and God, and as that picture appeared, the other picture was rubbed out, as though it were blotted out forever.

“As these pictures were passing before me, I began to hear strange music. Oh, how sweet and heavenly it was! I felt myself sweep up—up; and I said, ‘This is heaven,’ when suddenly another picture of some sin came up before me, and pushed me down, down, down. I went with a terrible sinking sensation. The heavenly music of the angels grew fainter and fainter and fainter, and I began to hear harsh, brutal, terrible cries and oaths. A horrible medley of noise began to break upon my ears, and a light as from flames began to show itself in the darkness. I realized with a terrible despair, that I was lost! lost!! With one desperate cry, I said, ‘Oh, Jesus save me,’ and suddenly I became conscious of some one rolling, rubbing and pulling me. It was my friends, who were bringing me back to life again, but, thank God, not to the old life of sin that leads to death, but to a new life with Jesus.”

This policeman who might have been about forty-eight years of age, told us that this wonderful change happened a little over thirty years

before, and ever since he had been trying to tell others of Christ, that they might never come into "such a tight place" as he had been in.

My friend, you may perhaps this moment be under more dangerous waves than those of that lake. The habits of your lifetime are beating you down, and keeping you from being the man your own heart desires to be. The weight of drink and the waves of alcohol are dragging you down and drowning your soul. You think you could rise above it if you wanted to. Try it, and you will see that even your strong will is drowning and becoming weak and unconscious. There is only One who can draw you from these engulfing waves. He who said to an angry tempest: "Peace, be still." He will draw you out of all waters, if you will but stretch out your hand to Him. No matter how many waters, no matter how great waters, turn to Him and trust Him now.

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### FOR YOU.

**H**E has come—the Christ of God has come. He was with the Father ere the dust of the world was made. But He left His Father's home; and down to this dark world He came—sinner, for you. Wonderful love! He thought on you. His heart was set upon you—for surely your name is sinner? Ah, there is no mistake; you are the very one. 'Twas for sinners Jesus came; 'twas for sinners Jesus died. Sin had come upon the scene, and blighted God's fair creation; and the word had gone forth: "The soul that sinneth it shall die" (Ezek. 18:20). "Without shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb. 9:22). Who will go to

suffer? “Here am I,” said Christ, “send Me.” And thus it came about that He tabernacled on earth for a season, until He was taken, and by wicked hands was crucified and slain (Acts 2: 23). Yet He could say, “I lay down my life. . . no man taketh it from Me” (John 10: 17, 18). “It pleased the Lord to bruise Him” (Isa. 53: 10). Yes, He has come. He finished the work His Father gave Him to do (John 17: 4). And now the word has gone forth: “Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10: 43).

What welcome words! Sinner, hear it—the way is open, for Christ has died, yea, and is risen and seated at the right hand of God. He pleads with thee. He points you to the great sacrifice for sin—the offering up of Himself; and He asks, Will not that suffice? Dare you doubt His love? See that you refuse not Him that speaketh from heaven, for from thence He speaks as a Saviour. He speaks peace to the conscience—peace through the blood of His cross. Soon His voice will be heard in accents of judgment. O! why perish when salvation may be had without cost to you, and at once? He has once appeared on this earthly scene as Saviour; the next time He appears it will be as Judge. If you will not receive Him as your Saviour, you must meet Him as your Judge. To-day, while grace is reigning, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”

“He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” (Heb. 7: 25).

## "NOT."

**H**EARKEN, all ye who are working for salvation, to a truth written in Romans 4:5: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." So that—

It is "not" by baptism,

It is "not" by confirmation,

It is "not" by the holy communion,

It is "not" by church membership,

It is "not" by alms or charities,

It is "not" by vows or resolutions,

It is "not" by tears or penance,

It is "not" by feelings or experience,

It is, in fine, "not" by "works of righteousness which we have done" (Tit. 3:5),

that any man can be saved. "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly."

You are called on to believe on Him who justifieth the ungodly. God never justifies sin, but He does justify the sinner. He never justifies the godly, because, in truth, there are none; but He does justify the ungodly on the principle of faith. Otherwise none could be justified at all. Good works are only splendid sins.

You can be justified on the ground of absolute grace alone. You must renounce every meritorious claim, and own your personal guilt. Then your faith is reckoned as righteousness. There is no other door of hope.

Suppose that you say that we are told in Phil. 2:12 "to work out" our own salvation! Quite true; only you must remember that, in order to work out a problem, you must first



have it on your paper. “Working for” and “working out” are very different things. Our blessed Lord, when on the cross, accomplished the former; the believer, already saved, should do the latter.

Good works do not carry one particle of saving value. We are justified before God by faith alone. We are justified before men by works; but it is God who saves.

### HOW DO YOU SPELL HATH?

**W**HAT does Hath mean? Something in possession.

Does it never mean Hope or Desire?

No! Never! For it is not longing for a thing, but having got the thing itself.

Then if a person says he hath got a wife, or a house, or some money, or his life, he does not mean he intends to get or would like to have it?

No! He means that he has got, and needs not to long or strive for it.

Well then, what does God mean when He says, “He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5: 12). Also, “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life” (John 3: 36)?

It can mean nothing else than this: If I believe on Jesus as the Son of God, who died for me, I have got the Son; therefore I have now got everlasting life. It is therefore not presumption, but the certainty of faith, to believe on the word of God.

Just take Christ at His word, act on it, do what He says—this is believing, then heaven is yours.

## THE MAELSTROM.

OFF the coast of Norway, near the Loffoden Islands, is an immense whirlpool, a dreaded abyss; it is called the Maelstrom. It is produced by a fearful current, unknown elsewhere between some small islands, when it is high tide, and which sucks in and engulfs everything within its radius. A very remarkable thing in connection with it is that it looks most calm and peaceful when the danger is greatest. Those who are not accustomed to the navigation of these waters know of this whirlpool and avoid it; however, it has occurred that a vessel out of its course has unconsciously got into the suction of the water and been imperceptibly drawn on to its destruction. At the commencement a large circle is described, which becomes more and more contracted as the centre of the maelstrom is approached.

“Captain!” an old pilot shouted one day to a young officer who was crossing these parts for the first time, “we must cast anchor at once; the wind has gone down and for the last half-hour the ship has been describing a quarter of a circle.”

“Don’t you fear,” said the captain; “it is a good ship and will hold all right.”

Although very anxious, the pilot went back to his wheel, but immediately after returned, pale with terror.

“Captain!” he cried, “for heaven’s sake cast anchor until the wind rises; we are in the maelstrom! Look at that vessel which has been drawn to the centre and is now putting out signals of distress.”

“Come on, come on, quiet yourself, my good man,” said the captain in reply.

The compass indicated with increasing clearness that the good ship had been drawn into the mysterious and fatal circle. Suddenly a cry is heard; the crew had become conscious of the danger and began entreaties to the captain; every sail was spread to the wind; the ship creaked and groaned; the captain, the sailors, even the passengers, are all at work now to avoid if possible the approaching denouement of the drama. How utterly useless are all efforts now it is too late. The maelstrom had slowly but surely done its fatal work.

Look at it now, this fine ship: it spins round and round with increasing rapidity under the irresistible suction of the current. A loud cry of despair arises from the lips of the doomed company about to be engulfed; then the crash of breaking timbers; then some pieces of wreckage on the surface of the water; and all is over; the drama is consummated.

For you also, reader, the moment is approaching when the drama will be consummated. Do you not see that the world has got you in its embrace; that sin has got a cordage about you; that the abyss opens out beneath your feet? The fine ship went to its destruction in the most beautiful weather—you also may perish in the midst of prosperity; of pleasure; of an easy life, which occupies you with deceitful illusions. Not one of those engulfed by the Maelstrom came back to give a description of the awful vortex. Not one of those who have been engulfed by sin and unbelief has ever returned to give an ac-

count of the remorse, the despair, and the unutterable sufferings of those who have been drawn into the abyss from which there is no possible escape. But when you find yourself there it will be all too late. Stop! Stop! Why will ye die when ye may live, and live in safety, live with God; live and die in peace?

Christ may be your friend, your deliverer. He is able and He is willing to save you now. He desires to draw you out of the dangerous current. Go to Him—He will blot out all the past of deception and misery. He will cleanse the heart now defiled by sin. He will give you the peace you seek.

Go to Him. Go just as you are—He will receive and save you.

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## THE LONG-SUFFERING MERCY OF GOD.

**I** SHOULD like to remind every unregenerate man of the long-suffering mercy of God.

You have not loved Him, but He has blessed you. You have sometimes spoken very sad things against His Gospel, but He has not resented it. Possibly I speak to some who have even cursed His name, but He has not cursed you.

You have denied Him; and, oh! it often seems to me to be a wonderful thing that a man should lift his hand to heaven and defy God, and that God remains quiet in pitying patience. Do you think that God—the infinite God—is going to be put into a passion by such a puny thing as you are? No; He has appointed a day in which He will settle these matters with you through His Son Jesus Christ, who will judge the quick and the dead. He will not stir Himself out of

His sublime compassion for you.

But what a wonderful thing it is that He does not! Why, there are thousands of men who, if we had done a hundred-thousandth part as much evil towards them as we have done towards God, would have fallen upon us with a word and a blow; or, rather, there would not have been any word, there would have been two blows. And if it had been in their power to take our lives, they would not have hesitated.

Men could not have borne such provocation as sinners heap upon God. You have provoked Jehovah to His face, and thrust your finger into His eye.

“Nay,” say you, “how is that?”

Why, when you mock religious people—when you make jests and mirth about those who fear Him—you do this. Recollect that text: “He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of My eye.” That is an irritating thing enough, is it not? and yet you have touched the apple of Jehovah’s eye; and instead of smiting you into nothingness in return, or sending you down to hell, He has still had mercy upon you.

Let us gratefully remember this Almighty patience, and bless His name, whoever we may be.

“Lord, and am I yet alive,  
Not in torment, not in hell?  
Still doth Thy good Spirit strive—  
With the chief of sinners dwell?  
Tell it unto sinners, tell.”

## SECRET SINS.

**B**Esure your sin will find you out when you least expect it, and upset all your calculations for pleasure and profit; hidden sin, secret sin, sin done in a corner, crafty sin, unclean sin—made a whip to scourge the body and conscience of the sinner. How heavily they come down, how keenly they sting, how they lacerate the soul, how they disturb the conscience.

Secret sin! Is there such a thing? No, never! It may have been done in a corner, darkness may have covered the deed, secrecy most profound may have surrounded the whole, man may never have dreamt that it was done. But! But!! But!!! There it is! The “secret sin in the light of His countenance”; “there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known” (Matt. 10:26).

The time is coming when the Lord “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness” (1 Cor. 4:5), when, clear as a poster on the wall, will be read before angels and men the wickedness that now lies hid in a corner.

The punishment of sin is only postponed, never forgotten! and unless answered for in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, must be answered for in the person of the one who sins.

**ONLY TWO CLASSES.** Many sub-classes, no doubt, but only two in God’s sight. The difference between them is very plain. “He that believeth on Him (the Son of God) is not condemned, but he that believeth not is condemned already” (John 3:18). The former class is on the narrow road; the latter on the broad.

## SOMETHING FOR INFIDELS.

### A Tested Remedy.

**B**ISHOP KAVANAGH was one day walking, when he met a prominent physician, who offered him a seat in his carriage. The physician was an infidel, and the conversation turned upon religion.

“I am surprised,” said the doctor, “that such an intelligent man as you should believe such a fable as that.”

The bishop said, “Doctor, suppose years ago someone had recommended to you a prescription for consumption, and you had procured the prescription and taken it according to order, and had been cured of that terrible disease, what would you say of the man who would not try your prescription?”

“I would say he was a fool.”

“Twenty-five years ago,” said Kavanagh, “I tried the power of God’s grace. It made a different man of me. All these years I have preached salvation, and, wherever accepted, have never known it to fail.”

What could the doctor say to such a testimony as that? And such testimonies are what men need to turn them from the error of their ways to the personal experience of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### WHAT ALONE SATISFIES.

**A** CHRISTIAN says, “I tried every earthly fount of joy and pleasure and refreshment, but I was not satisfied until I came to Christ.” Your heart is too big for anything but God to fill it.

To-day men are feeding upon that which brings in disappointment, blight and death. Man has brought in death through sin.

God brings in life. He brings in Christ in all the fulness of His person and the blessedness of His work.

The work that saves has been done. Atonement has been made.

“It is finished, yes, indeed,

Finished every jot.

Sinner, this is all you need,

Tell me, is it not?”

Put your trust in the One who has done the work, for “There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

### GROANS!

THE chamber of death is a solemn place, a soul-subduing place. The levity of the world is hushed to silence there, and, for a moment at least, the dread realities of death are felt and entered into. It is a solemn sight to see the strong man brought down, and that once noble form wasting away under the hand of death. “The wages of sin is death.”





# THE SOWER

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## THE THREE BIDDERS:

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An Incident in the Life of Rowland Hill.

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**W**ILL you listen, kind friends, for a momen  
While a story I unfold;  
A marvellous tale, of a wonderful sale  
Of a noble lady of old:  
How hand and heart, at an auction mart,  
And soul and body, she sold.

'Twas in the broad king's highway,  
Near a century ago,  
That a preacher stood, though of noble blood,  
Telling the fallen and low  
Of a Saviour's love and a home above,  
And a peace that all might know.

All crowded round to listen;  
And they wept at the wond'rous love  
That could wash their sin and receive them in  
His spotless mansions above:  
While slow, through the crowd, a lady proud  
Her gilded chariot drove.

"Make room," cried the haughty outrider,  
"You are closing the king's highway;  
My lady is late, and their Majesties wait;  
Give way there, good people, I pray."  
The preacher heard, and his soul was stirred,  
And he cried to the rider, "Nay."

His eye like the lightning flashes;  
His voice like a trumpet rings—  
“Your, grand fête-days, and your fashions and  
ways  
Are all but perishing things.  
’Tis the king’s highway, but I hold it to-day  
In the name of the King of kings.”

Then—bending his gaze on the lady,  
And marking her soft eye fall—  
“And now in His name, a sale I proclaim,  
And bids for this fair lady call.  
Who will purchase the whole—her body and  
soul,  
Coronet, jewels, and all?

“I see already three bidders—  
The World steps up as the first:  
‘I will give her my treasures, and all the pleasures  
For which my votaries thirst;  
She shall dance through each day, more joyous  
and gay,  
With a quiet grave at the worst.’

“But out speaks the Devil boldly—  
‘The kingdoms of earth are mine,  
Fair lady, thy name, with an envied fame,  
On their brightest tablets shall shine;  
Only give me thy soul, and I’ll give thee the  
whole,  
Their glory and wealth, to be thine.’

“And pray, what hast thou to offer,  
 Thou Man of Sorrows, unknown?  
 And He gently says, ‘My blood I have shed,  
 To purchase her for mine own.  
 To conquer the grave, and her soul to save,  
 I trod the wine-press alone.

“I will give her my cross of suffering,  
 My cup of sorrow to share;  
 But with endless love, in my home above,  
 All shall be righted there;  
 She shall walk in white, in a robe of light,  
 And a radiant crown shall wear.’

“Thou hast heard the terms, fair lady,  
 That each hath offered for thee,  
 Which wilt thou choose, and which wilt thou  
 lose,  
 This life, or the life to be?  
 The fable was mine, but the choice is yet thine,  
 Sweet lady! which of the three?”

Nearer the stand of the preacher  
 The gilded chariot stole,  
 And each head was bowed, as over the crowd  
 The thundering accents roll;  
 And every word, as the lady heard,  
 Burned in her very soul.

“Pardon, good people,” she whispered,  
 As she rose from her cushioned seat.  
 Full well, they say, as the crowd made way,  
 You could hear her pulses beat;  
 And each head was bare, as the lady fair  
 Knelt at the preacher’s feet.

She took from her hands the jewels,  
The coronet from her brow;  
“Lord Jesus,” she said as she bowed her head,  
“The highest bidder art Thou;  
Thou gav’st for my sake Thy life, and I take  
Thy offer—and take it now.

“I know the world and her pleasures,  
At best they but weary and cloy;  
And the Tempter is bold, but his honors and  
gold  
Prove ever a fatal decoy;  
I long for Thy rest—Thy bid is the best;  
Lord, I accept it with joy!

“Give me Thy cup of suffering,  
Welcome, earth’s sorrow and loss,  
Let my portion be to win souls to Thee,  
Perish her glittering dross!  
I gladly lay down her coveted crown,  
Saviour, to take Thy cross.”

“Amen!” said the holy preacher;  
And the people wept aloud.  
Years have rolled on—and they all have gone  
Around that altar who bowed.  
Lady and throng have been swept along  
On the wind like a morning cloud.

But the Saviour has claimed His purchase,  
And around His radiant seat,  
A mightier throng, in an endelss song,  
The wond’rous story repeat;  
And a form more fair, is bending there,  
Laying her crown at His feet.

So, now, in eternal glory,

She rests from her cross and care;

But her spirit above, with a longing love,

Seems calling on you to share

Her endless reward, in the joy of her Lord;

Oh! will you not answer her—there?

## MY SUBSTITUTE.

**W**HEN I was a boy at school, I saw a sight I never can forget—a man tied to a cart and dragged, before the people's eyes, through the streets of my native town, his back torn and bleeding from the lash. It was a shameful punishment. For many offenses? No; for one offense. Did any of the townsmen offer to divide the lashes with him? No; he who committed the offense bore the penalty all alone. It was the penalty of a changing human law, for it was the last instance of its infliction.

When I was a student at the university, I saw another sight I never can forget—a man brought out to die. His arms were pinioned, his face was already pale as death—thousands of eager eyes were on him as he came up from the jail in sight. Did any man ask to die in his room? Did any friend come and loose the rope, and say, “Put it round my neck, I die instead”? No; he underwent the sentence of the law. For many offenses? No; for one offense. He had stolen a money parcel from a stage-coach. He broke the law at one point, and died for it. It was the penalty of a changing human law in this case also: it was the last instance of

capital punishment being inflicted for that offense.

I saw another sight—it matters not when—myself a sinner standing on the brink of ruin, deserving nought but hell. For one sin? No; for many, many sins committed against the unchanging laws of God. But again I looked, and saw Jesus, my Substitute, scourged in my stead, and dying on the cross for me. I looked, and cried, and was forgiven. And I wish to tell you of that Saviour, and see if you will not also look and live.

And how simple it all becomes when God opens the eyes. A friend, who lately came from Paris, told me of an English coachman there, a very careless old man, who had, during a severe illness, been made to feel that he was a sinner. He dared not die as he was. The preacher, whom he sent for, got tired of visiting him, having told him all he himself then knew of the way of salvation.

But one Sunday afternoon the coachman's daughter waited on the preacher, saying, "You must come once more, sir; I cannot see my father again without you."

"I can tell him nothing new," said the preacher; but I may take the sermon I have been preaching, and read it to him."

The dying man lay, as before, in anguish, thinking of his sins, and whither they must carry him. "My friend," the preacher said, "I have come to read you the sermon I have just preached. First, I shall tell you the text, 'He was wounded for our transgressions,' Isaiah 53:5. Now I shall read."

“Hold!” said the dying man, “I have it! read no more; He was wounded for my transgressions.”

Soon after he died, rejoicing in God’s salvation.

When I heard the story, I remembered the story of Archimedes running through the streets of Syracuse straight from the bath where he had found out, in bathing, the secret of testing whether the king’s crown had or had not been alloyed by the goldsmith in making it. And as he ran, he cried, “I have found it! I have found it!”

Poor philosopher, you had only found out a new principle in science! Happy coachman, you had found in Jesus Christ eternal salvation for your immortal soul! Reader, are you saved?

## GOD WILL NOT CALL FOREVER.

**G**OD calls once, twice, thrice, each time more loudly than before; He calls by His providence, by His word, by His works, very plainly and unmistakably; but He will not call forever. His Spirit will not always strive with man, yet He gives him days, times, opportunities, voices—He knocks, is knocking still. But—this will not go on forever; the time will come when the ear would hear, but it cannot; the hand would lay hold, but it cannot; the heart would receive, but it cannot; all is too late. When He would, you would not.

## TRIUMPHANT THROUGH GRACE.

**D**EATH has justly been called "the King of Terrors." It is truly such to those who know there is a heaven and a hell, and an eternity to be spent in one or the other, but who know not the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour.

For the believer, death has no terror; its sting is gone through the death of Jesus; victory is his, and death becomes but the gateway by which he passes into the presence of his triumphant Saviour. But to the unbeliever, it is the gateway that conducts beyond the reach of mercy, and leads on to judgment and the lake of fire, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched. "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment" (Mark 9: 43-44; Heb. 9:27). Unspeakably solemn, then, and dreadful, must be the thought of death to those who know these things and yet are not saved. Let me ask the reader of this little paper, how is it with you?

Are you saved? Have your sins been forgiven? Have you eternal life? Or, are you still in your sins and unsaved, with death and judgment, and the lake of fire before you?

Oh! if the latter be your condition, how can you rest for a single moment? How can you leave this question of questions unsettled? If there be such a thing as assurance, from God's own Word, of a full, present, eternal salvation, to be obtained without money and without price, and to be obtained now, how can you rest until assured that this salvation is yours? Such



assurance may be obtained and obtained now, filling the soul with perfect peace. And, oh! what peace it gives, to know that our sins have been blotted out; that we have been washed and made whiter than snow in the blood of Jesus, and that we shall never come into judgment; shall never have to account for one sin in the presence of a throne of judgment.

Would you know this peace, dear reader? Would you be able to meet the king of terrors with a smile, instead of with fear and trembling? If so let me bring you to the dying bed of one who knew this peace; who knew the saving power of the name of Jesus, and whose soul, in the very presence of death, and amid deep suffering, overflowed with a joy not of earth—“joy unspeakable and full of glory” (1 Pet. 1-8).

Dear A. H. S.— was converted at the age of thirteen, while on a sick bed, and between ten and eleven years afterwards passed triumphantly into the presence of the Lord Jesus. In this short paper it would be impossible to recount the many precious lessons he learned in the furnace of affliction, especially during the two closing years of his life, which were years of much trial and suffering. But we may sit down by his bedside and hear him tell of the peace and the joy which filled his soul and lighted up his countenance in the very presence of eternity. And, remember, as you hear his testimony, the same peace and joy may be yours, if you will receive them; “For there is no difference” (Rom. 3:22); “And whosoever will” may “take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).

On one occasion Mr. N——, a servant of the Lord, who had been reading the Scriptures to him, asked, "What would you like to have me ask the Lord for you?"

"That He will manifest Himself to me," was the reply.

Three days after, the answer to this request was given. Looking up, he said, "Oh! it's all bright above. I see the Lord Jesus standing, one hand outstretched, and He is beckoning me to come." Along with this he spoke of "a deep sense of the Lord's presence with him." And this never left him. After this he slept a few minutes, and on wakening he said, "I am still here; how disappointed I am! Now I can say with G. V. W. I was so happy, I wish I had died."

At another time he said, "The sense of what the Lord has done for me is so great, it is almost overwhelming. My peace is intense."

At one time he seemed to desire restoration to health, so as to be used in the Lord's service; but afterward he said, "I feel now that the Lord sees he can better glorify Himself in my death than in my life; and if I could choose between being raised up to perfect health, or to go home, I should choose to go home. I am longing to go."

On Lord's Day, the day before he fell asleep, he said, "This is the happiest day of my life." The next day, his last day on earth, he asked the doctor, "How long will I last?" The doctor answered, "You may last till to-morrow night." He replied, "Doctor, that is not good news to me; but that is not saying I may not

go sooner.” The doctor then said, “You look bright this morning, Mr. S——, but your pulse is very weak.” He answered, “Yes, I am bright, because I am going home. I did not ask you because I feared it, but because I am longing to go. Doctor, meet me where I am going; I will not see you here again.” That day he bade “Good-bye” to the loved ones, saying, “I am going to be with Himself,” and after a few short, faint breaths, fell asleep in Jesus.

And now, dear unsaved reader, what would you not give, if, when the body is wasted with disease, and racked with pain, and you are about to be launched into eternity, you could say like dear Albert, “*This is the happiest day of my life?*”

Would you know the secret of this happiness? It was this: He knew the Lord Jesus; he knew Him as a Saviour who loved him, and gave Himself for him, and who had washed him from his sins in His own blood; and he knew Him as One who was going to have him with Himself, an object of His love forever. “Good-bye, I am going to be with Himself,” were the words he uttered just before his happy spirit took its flight.

But, you say, I am a sinner, and I am afraid to meet the Lord Jesus. I am not fit for His presence. True; but dear Albert had been a sinner, too, just like you, for Scripture says “there is no difference,” and yet his fears were all gone. For him death had lost its sting, and judgment had no terror. I ask again, Would you know the secret? Listen, then, once more, to the dying testimony of that dear boy.

Two days before he fell asleep he repeated these lines:

“Since Thou hast borne sin’s heavy load,  
My trembling all is o’er;  
Made Thine by virtue of Thy blood,  
I’m sealed forever more.”

Then he said, “Put this verse with the first verse of the eighth chapter of Romans—‘There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus’—and you have the foundation on which I am resting, laid from all eternity, made good to us through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Here, then, was the foundation on which he was resting. Jesus had borne sin’s heavy load for him, and now his trembling was all o’er. He had believed the testimony of God to the cleansing power of Jesus’ blood, and had been sealed by the Holy Ghost and was now in Christ Jesus, beyond the reach of condemnation. He had believed the Gospel, and all was his. He had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and His atoning work had cancelled all his guilt. God had accepted him according to the value of that work, and the peerless worth of His beloved Son, just because, as a lost sinner, he had believed in Him and in His precious blood. Thus he stood before God a confessed sinner, but justified by faith, and accepted in God’s beloved Son. He knew by the word of God, which he had believed, that he was pardoned and saved, and that he was destined to be conformed to the image of the Lord Jesus, and to be His companion in glory forever. Thus we see the ground on which he stood and the secret of all

his peace and joy. His peace was founded on the atoning work of the Lord Jesus, and his joy was sustained in communion with Him in whom he had believed, to whom he was going, and with whom he now is.

Would you know the same peace? Would you drink at the same fountain of joy? Believe, then, in Jesus; believe God's testimony to His precious blood. "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Believe the message. Trust not to your works, or to your righteousness. Your works cannot save you. It is "Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:9). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5). "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness as filthy rags" (Is. 64:6). An "unclean thing" and "filthy rags" will not do for God. But He has accepted the Person of His beloved Son on behalf of all who put their trust in Him. He has raised up Jesus from the dead, and set Him on His own throne, crowned with glory and honor. This is the proof that He is satisfied with His atoning work, and that there is eternal salvation for all who believe in Him. "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." Believe the message; believe, and as surely as God is true, you are forgiven. Your sins have been borne by Another. The cup Justice had filled for you is now empty. Jesus drank it for you, and judgment is past.

And now you may say :

“Since Thou hast borne sin’s heavy load,  
My trembling all is o’er;  
Made Thine by virtue of Thy blood,  
I’m sealed forever more.”

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### THE SORE SPOT.

**W**HEN a doctor is called to see a sick person, he first questions and then examines the patient before prescribing a remedy. He tries the pulse and the temperature, he passes his hand over different parts of the body without result until his finger touches the sore spot, when there is a sudden cry, “Don’t press there, it hurts!”

Now this is exactly the way when one speaks of the necessity for the new birth. Everything else may be spoken about, without a protest being raised. There is much wickedness in the world. No doubt there is. It is important that some form of religion should be professed. Doubtless. God is good, and God is merciful. Surely. But what about being born again? Ah, that is another question. The world does not fear religious ways. It praises those who have them, those who are doing good and making themselves better. There is nothing in that to give offence, nothing to chill or check the prevailing thoughts and ideas of the natural man. But the moment that the Lord’s words are repeated, “Unless a man is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God,” the sore spot is touched, and the cry is at once raised that this is not necessary, all that is needful is the improvement and uplift of man as he is.

The people of the world do not like the thought of conversion, for however good they may appear to be, they really know at the bottom of their hearts that there is a needs be to be right with God.

There are also many church members whom this word condemns because they would like very well to be Christians if they could be so without having to pass through God's appointed way of entrance. Scripture says that man at his best estate is but vanity, but that does not suit the worldling who will tell you that man is a noble creature, having a divine intuition which has only to be developed.

No one is born a Christian or becomes such by being called one, or by baptism, or by being a communicant, or by going to church or to mass, or because of religious ways, or by being a Protestant or a Catholic; but all those who are persuaded that one or the other of these things opens heaven to them, determinedly close the ear to any repudiation of such religion, or at the thought that the religion which saves must create a new heart by the impartation of eternal life. Conversion is really repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. Conversion is not a modification or amelioration of a man's ways but a complete moral revolution. It changes the heart, the thoughts, the life, the eternal destiny of an immortal being, and this revolution is a necessity. A fallen and ruined humanity finds itself in a position just the opposite of that for which it was created. Day has become night and in the darkness man mistakes his friends for his

enemies and his enemies for his friends. He calls good evil, and evil good. He thinks he is free and he is a slave. He believes himself good and he is bad. That which is, according to God, the one thing necessary appears to him to be the one useless thing. He seeks his well-being in pleasure instead of seeking his pleasure in the ways of God. He looks upon God as his enemy instead of accepting Him as his best friend. And all that is the result of a fallen nature which man cannot by himself control—a nature which is blind, which corrupts his judgment, falsifies his will and leads to his fall.

It is necessary, then, in order that one may be saved that there should be an internal revolution. Conversion is the act by which man acknowledges his moral bankruptcy and yields himself to God for salvation. The act by which he declares his inability to change his nature and trust to God for his regeneration. The act by which a fallen creature, in a desperate state, comes to his Creator, the guilty one to his Saviour, the lost son to the Father's house. It breaks the pride of man but it saves him because God by virtue of his new birth through faith in Christ, pardons his sins and makes him a new creature.





# THE SOWER

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## A WORD FOR THE WEARY.

**M**Y spirit is sad and perplexed,  
I know not the best thing to do;  
With doubtings and fears I am vex'd,  
And Satan is harassing, too.

I've tried (how I've tried) to believe,  
Till the word on my mind is engraved;  
Can no one my sorrow relieve?  
Oh! "What must I do to be saved?"

Lord Jesus, I'm full of alarms.  
Indeed I've no hope left but Thee;  
I cast myself into Thy arms,  
O Saviour! take pity on me!

I come as a poor little child,  
With many a tremor and doubt;  
But Thy voice spreads a calm through the wild,  
Saying, "I will in no wise cast out."

No feelings will come to my aid,  
This dull heart's emotions are few;  
But I'll trust Thee, and not be afraid,  
I'm as safe as the Bible is true.

## THEN AND NOW.

IT is now twenty-nine years since I began my college life, a life which stretched out through eight years of good, hard work—four at the classics and four at medicine. During the college period and after it, and again, especially in these latter years as a teacher, I have always been most profoundly interested, as a student of human nature and of medicine, in trying to find out what ailed the world about me. Why is it, as I have grown older, that I have come to find out that there is so much misery and unhappiness in the world? Why is it that each successive generation of young men begin to run the life race that is set before them, full of vigor, of fine enthusiasm, and with a determination to accomplish great things, and then, one by one, drop back into the same indifference and the same routine as was done by those who preceded them, the fire and all the enthusiasm gone, content in the end to make a good living and to take good care of themselves?

I would say of my own life that I have both lost something and I have found something. I have lost that which I at first esteemed great, for I discovered as I went on that it was, after all, but a bubble, a glittering semblance of a jewel, evanescent and temporal. But, wondrous to relate, I have found in its place something infinitely more precious, eternal, a possession which increases in value day by day, lending a reality and a value to life in all its relations far beyond all possible anticipation of all my early years.

Let me look at my life a little more closely. What have I actually lost? I think the loss can be pretty well covered by one word which used to figure largely in our college debates and chapel speeches, a word which covered the one great qualification in a man, which marked him out for success, and that word is “ambition.” I remember well setting success in life before me as the one great desideratum, and anxiously analysing its essential elements, which seemed to resolve themselves into ability, ambition, opportunity, health, and adding various adjuvant qualities, such as judgment, memory, tact, etc. I found, by God’s grace, as I went on, that this, after all, was but a selfish scheme of living which, even if I might attain my end, was possible only for a fortunate few. I saw, too, some who were just about to take their fill of the cup of ambition snatched away by an untimely death, while others, with all the other qualifications, were restrained from grasping the prize by the hand of disease; others again (worst mockery of all), who gained all the world could offer in the way of fame or of wealth, remained, after all, most miserable and dissatisfied with life.

My first aim was, therefore, manifestly a false one. What was I then to do? Conclude that life was naught but a mockery? I thank God that when I found the emptiness of the aims of the world I also found that He was not sparing of His best gifts as I had begun to imagine. When I discovered that life and self were failures, I then found in Him more than heart could desire. Having no longer any

good thing of my own, and now content to be as one of the servants in His house, I found instead that He had a glorious robe of righteousness of His own providing, and He was willing to set the very beggars who trusted Him among the princes at the gate. The glorious grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, which God in His great mercy has offered, not to a forward intellectual few, but to all men everywhere, came as a blessed solace to one who found on all sides the vanity of setting the affections on the things of this world.

I would like to dwell on this noble theme, for I would that young men everywhere could only see that there is just one thing in the world worth making the object of our ambition, and that is to know, to love, and to serve God, and to know Him in the only way we can know anything about Him, through His Son, Jesus Christ. Christ's service is not a theory of life or a philosophy, but a life, a new principle, a new birth, a new creation. Behold, old things are passed away, and all things are made new. And this knowledge, which brings the peace this world knows nothing of, is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who calls out and leads God's people in their earthly pilgrimage.

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“What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?”

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“There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

## A TESTIMONY.

**I** THANK God that I ever came to the hall. I had heard a deal about it, but had never had the courage to come in, because I had heard that when you went in every one was trying to get you converted. However, I was induced to come in one night, taking care to sit just inside the door, so that in case anyone should make towards me I could bolt. But I sat all through the meeting; no one came near me or bothered me. This encouraged me to come again, but I did not get off so easy the second time.

A lady came to me and asked me whether all was well with my soul. I almost forget what I told her, but still in my heart I knew it was anything but well. I felt very miserable; my memory took me back to a godly mother who taught me to pray when a child. My mind was made up that night, and I shall have to thank God throughout eternity. I had been convicted of my sin, and for days suffered most intensely. However, the Holy Spirit soon led me to see that Jesus Christ was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. I can truly say that Christ to me is “Fairest among ten thousand” and the “altogether lovely.”

May God give me grace to live for His honor and His glory. Before I sit down, if there is anyone here who knows not the love of God, may I say that He who saved a poor sinner like me, is able to save you? May you all “taste and see that the Lord is good,” is the prayer of my heart. Amen.

## GOD MOVES IN A MYSTERIOUS WAY.

**I**N the year 1823, a young Russian of noble birth was accused of having taken part in a conspiracy against the Emperor Nicholas. He was arrested and thrown into prison at St. Petersburg. Being naturally hot-tempered, the injustice of the accusation exasperated the young man so much that he passed many hours in uttering oaths and imprecations on those who had ordered his arrest. At length, exhausted with passion, he flung himself on his bed of straw and maintained a rigid silence for eight days.

On the evening of the ninth day, a venerable minister of the Gospel came to see the prisoner, and wished to pray with him and for him. Mr. W—— refused to hear, therefore the good man was obliged to leave him to himself, but first he gave him a Bible, and entreated him to read it.

So soon as the door closed on his unwelcome visitor, the prisoner threw the Bible into a corner of his cell, exclaiming, "I have nothing to do with the Word of God who tolerates injustice."

The days dragged wearily along, and still the pastor's gift remained unnoticed. But there came an hour when the young man was so tired of himself that he picked up the sacred volume and opened it. The first verse which attracted his attention impressed him deeply. It was this, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."

He closed the book hastily, as if ashamed to have been moved by any words it contained. The next day he opened it again, read whole chapters through, and even learnt some verses by

heart, until he became so interested in studying the Scriptures that he watched for daylight to come, so that he could continue his research.

The Holy Spirit revealed to him by means of the written Word his state by nature. He learnt that the “heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked,” and that he was a sinner in the sight of God, and deserved everlasting punishment. The Book which spoke of the terrible consequences of sin also spoke of the grace of God and His salvation through Christ for the sinner; and in his distress the young man fell on his knees and cried in a loud voice, “O Lord, save me, or I perish! Lord, blot out my sins! Wash them away in the precious blood of Christ!”

His prayer was heard; he knew he was pardoned, and from that moment, instead of complaining of the injustice of others, he deplored his own sins, and thought of the love of Jesus. “I considered my imprisonment a great misfortune at first,” he murmured, “but I see now why God sent me here, and I bless Him for it. If I had continued to live in prosperity I might never have read this sacred Book, which, with my Father’s blessing, has brought me to the feet of Jesus.”

The prisoner was tried and condemned to death. He received his sentence calmly, and only asked to be permitted to write to his aunt and sister. The favor was granted. The letter ran thus:—

“The newspapers have informed you that I am condemned to die. Do not weep, but rather rejoice, for, thanks be to God, I do not fear

death, for 'I know whom I have believed.' The happiest moment in a Christian's life is the last for he is nearest to heaven. Death is only a passage from a world of sin and suffering to a heaven of glory, where the Lord's faithful ones are happy for ever. I shall await you in that blessed country where there is neither pain nor grief nor prison. I should like to have seen you once more this side of the grave, but that is impossible. I do not murmur. My tears fall as I write, but I am happy, and filled with peace when I think of the great hope I have in Christ. May the God who has been so near to me in my cell comfort you to the end!"

The narrator of this story was on a visit to the aunt and sister of the condemned man, to whom the latter addressed the following letter:—

"Dear Friend,—You will remember that during your last visit to my aunt you more than once spoke to me about the salvation of my soul. I was young and foolish, and refused to listen; however, Jesus has changed my hard heart. By His mercy I have been brought to the foot of the cross; and, though my sins are many, He has washed them away in His precious blood, and soon I shall be with Him forever. Comfort those I love; tell them it matters little when and how we die; be it on the scaffold or in prison, in a cottage or a palace; but to have a sure hope that we shall be saved in Christ is a matter of vital importance."

When Mr. W—— was left alone on the night before he was sentenced to die, he threw himself on his knees and commended his soul into



the keeping of his Saviour. Then he fell into a quiet sleep, which lasted some hours. Before daybreak he was awakened by voices in the corridor and the sound of footsteps coming nearer and nearer. “They are here early to conduct me to death,” he thought; and, though he was prepared, his heart beat more quickly. The door of his cell was opened, and a gentleman of noble bearing entered, whom the prisoner knew to be the emperor.

A man had been arrested for taking part in the conspiracy, and on him a letter was found which contained these words: “We have done our best to induce Mr. W—— to join us, but he refuses, and declares he will be faithful to his sovereign unto death!”

This letter had been taken to the Emperor, who came in person to release the prisoner, and said to him, with deep emotion. “Forgive my involuntary error, and accept from me in remembrance of this day the rank of General and the Castle of S——, where I hope you will enjoy many years of happiness and prosperity.”

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“There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death; and there is no discharge in that war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.”

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“As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.”

## THE FINE PAID.

A SHORT time ago there might have been seen in a third-class carriage on one of our Scotch railways, a policeman sitting with a handcuffed prisoner by his side. The man had broken the law of the land, and was going, as fast as steam could take him, to the place where he was to suffer the punishment for his evil deed.

But stop! The passengers seem greatly interested in this man's case, every one more or less feeling for him. Question after question is put to the policeman as to the cause of his conviction, and the severity of his sentence.

It seemed that he had been poaching in the River Tweed, close to the town where he lived; and having been caught and found guilty, he had been sentenced to pay fifty shillings or to suffer thirty days' imprisonment.

"Could he not pay the fine?" the passengers asked.

No; and so he must go to prison. Presently a gentleman, an entire stranger to the prisoner, and to all in the compartment, asked whether, if the fine were now paid, the prisoner could go free.

"Certainly," was the answer.

The gentleman then very kindly agreed to pay the fine. When the train stopped, the policeman with his prisoner and the gentleman left the train, the money was handed over to the authorities, the discharge was made out, the prisoner's handcuffs were taken off, and he was free. Another had done for him what he could not do for himself.

He was now free to return to his home and family; one would hope with a deep sense of the fruits of sin, and of gratitude to the one who had met the demands of the law for him.

You will say, doubtless, that this was a very kind action on the part of the gentleman. It was, but let us use it to lead us to consider the matchless love of God in sending His only Son to meet us on our journey to punishment, for Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost.

However, any illustration falls far short of the reality of this love of God to man.

This poor prisoner had no claim upon the kindness of the gentleman who had thus befriended him. But the Scripture tells us that in our case it was “when we were enemies” to God that He gave His Son to die for us. (Rom. v. 10.) There was nothing in us to prompt God to love us, yet He has loved us with this infinite love.

Dear reader, do you believe this love of God?

Do you believe that God loves the sinner?

What would you have thought if this poor man had refused to allow the gentleman to pay his fine?

Surely he would have deserved to go to prison twice over if he had refused such kindness. But how are you treating God? His grace brings salvation to you. Have you accepted His mercy?

You have sinned, you have broken His law, and, do what you will, you cannot pay the debt. As fast as time can take you, you are being hurried along to suffer the terrible, endless punishment of your sin. Is it nothing to you that

the blessed Son of God has died for sinners? What news is this for you that you may be saved? May you feel your need and own that you are a lost sinner, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself as our ransom.

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“What will ye do in the solemn day?”

“How can ye escape the damnation of hell?”

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“WE ARE ALL READY.”

**T**IME is passing rapidly, and day by day bearing its precious freight of immortal souls from the shores of time into eternity. But whither bound?

Not long since an aged one (eighty-three years) writing of himself and two remaining sisters said, “We are all three on the verge of eternity, but we are all ready.” There is only one way to obtain this assurance—and that is faith in the finished work of Christ. “The blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth from all sin” (1 John 1:7). “When I see the blood I will pass over you” (Ex, 12:13) is God’s own promise, and if trusting to the finished work alone, you may boldly say “I am ready.”

A few short weeks after the above sentence was written, two of the three had passed away. They had not left the question of their souls’ salvation to a death-bed. It would then have been too late. They were ready when the call came.

Young or old, rich or poor, it matters not—all stand on the verge of eternity, and once the dividing line is crossed, there is no return. Reader, are you ready?

## THE SINNERS OF ZION.

THE sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?” (Isa. xxxiii. 14). There is a day coming when sinners shall be afraid, and when terrors shall overtake them as a flood. They are not afraid just now; they eat and drink and make merry, as if they had no eternity to prepare for, no danger to alarm them. But it shall soon be different. What is now far off shall then be near, and sinners shall realize too late the horrors of that wrath from which they refused to flee. In the agonies of despair, when the flames are kindling round them, they will burst forth in such bitter outcries as these: “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Oh, that shriek of agony! Oh! that awful outcry of surprise and despair! Make haste, then, to escape from the devouring fire.

Sinners of every class, especially sinners in Zion, to whom these words are spoken, listen to these warning words! You are sinners in Zion, not sinners among the heathen: yet this only makes your case more awful, and your doom more inevitable. You profess to be Christians, but have never been “born again.” You do many things like God’s people—pray, read, hear, speak, observe ordinances—yet still one thing is lacking. You are not born again! Surely, then, it is time to search yourselves. It is time to be alarmed. The Judge is at the door. Your hypocrisy will not serve you then. You will be

detected and unveiled, and all your hollow pretensions to religion laid bare. The day of His coming will be a terrible one to you.

He comes with a fan in His hand, thoroughly to purge His floor—gathering the wheat into His garner, and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire. He comes with His sieve to sift you, and can you stand His sifting? He comes with His touchstone to try and detect you. He comes with His balances to weigh you—to see what is the real value of all your professions—whether, after all, you may be found wanting. He comes with His lighted candles to search you in every part. He comes with His flaming eye to penetrate at one glance your inmost soul, and to discover all its hidden abominations. With such a prospect before you, would it not be wise to take immediate alarm, and inquire whether all will be well with your souls, lest you perish at the rebuke of Him who is a consuming fire?

Why should wrath be your portion? It was the portion of Jesus once, just that it might never be yours. The pains of hell took hold on Him, just that they might never take hold of you. He was forsaken of God that you might not be forsaken. If you refuse to take Jesus as your Substitute, then you must bear that wrath in your own person—the fire which otherwise would have passed over you will descend with devouring fierceness on your heads. You must either take refuge under the wings of your Substitute, or bear the wrath eternally yourselves. Which is the wiser, safer way for a helpless sinner? Which, oh, reader! which?

## THE PRODIGAL COUNT.

I AM reminded of a conversation I had with a German Count when I was abroad in Italy.

He had been most kind in directing me as to my journey. Knowing he was about to leave, I said I had come to thank him and to express the hope that we should meet again.

“Not likely,” he replied, “at my time of life.”

“Yet, still,” I added, “I hope that some day we shall meet again.”

Looking thoughtfully, he asked, “Do you mean in heaven?”

“Yes,” I said.

“Oh! then,” rejoined he, with a sigh. “I shall never be in heaven. I am too great and too old a sinner ever to be in heaven.”

Turning to the Countess, who was near, I said, “Madam, do you believe what your husband is saying?”

Bursting into tears, she responded, “I was brought up in England—in the English Church—but have lived in every folly. We are both great sinners; and I am like one without a home—with no father. What would you do with a child who had left her fathers’ house?”

“I would read to her the fifteenth of Luke.”

“What is that?” she asked; and taking out my Bible, I read. When I came to that part where the prodigal began to be in want, the Count stopped me, saying, “Is that me?”

“Yes; and me!”

He wept when I explained how a sinner separated from God must come to be in want—be in dire necessity. He may seem to be rich,

and have need of nothing; but, not having Christ, he is wretched and miserable (as to eternal things), and poor, and blind, and naked (Rev. iii. 17).

Reading on, I came to the passage where the father is represented as running to meet his son, embracing him, saying, "This my son."

"Sir," interrupted the Count, "is that God?"

"Yes," I said; "that is God, and God is LOVE." I described to him how it was that God had never lost sight of man, though man had gone from God; how, though man had changed, God had never changed; how He, in love to us, had given His Son to die for us; and how the death of Christ enables God righteously, as well as in love, to receive and embrace the oldest and vilest of sinners.

They both wept.

Said the Count, "Let me record this chapter and those verses in my pocket book, saying, as it were, 'That prodigal is myself; that Father is God.' " With more such words, he took me by the hand, saying, "Thank you, thank you very much; yes, thank you. We shall meet again."

" Passing onward, quickly passing,,

Time its course will quickly run.

Still we hear the fond entreaty

Of the ever-gracious One —

'Come and welcome,

'Tis by Me that life is won.' "



# THE SOWER

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## WHAT THEN?

**A**FTER the joys of earth,  
After its songs of mirth,  
After its hours of light,  
After its dreams so bright—  
What then?

Only an empty name,  
Only a weary frame,  
Only a conscious smart,  
Only an aching heart.

After this empty name,  
After this weary frame,  
After this conscious smart,  
After this aching heart—  
What then?

Only a sad farewell  
To a world loved too well,  
Only a silent bed  
With the forgotten dead.

After this sad farewell  
To a world loved too well,  
After this silent bed  
With the forgotten dead—  
What then?

Oh! then—the judgment throne!  
Oh! then—the last hope—gone!  
Then, all the woes that dwell  
In an eternal HELL!

“I ALWAYS BELIEVED ON JESUS.”

**I** HAVE always believed on the Lord Jesus, and yet I cannot say that I am saved.” Depend on it, if this is what you say or think, you are completely mistaken. No one has always believed on Jesus. You may have believed a great deal about the Lord Jesus but you have never really believed on Him. You have never received His glorious gospel, or you would be saved. What about the Lord Jesus do you believe? “I believe that He died on Calvary for sinners.” Believing that won’t do you any good. Do you believe that He bled and suffered and died on account of your sins? If you did you would see that there was no reason why you should be afraid of meeting God. If you did you would know from the Word that you had eternal life, and would not come into judgment on account of your sins. No one can believe on the Lord Jesus Christ without being saved, for He has declared, “Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:43).

“All that believe are justified from all things” (Acts 13:38-39); “He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life” (John 6:47).

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**B**ELOVED reader, are you resting your soul on the finished work of Christ? Nothing else will do. Every other prop will slip from under you, but resting on Jesus, the sure foundation, you are secure. Be not deceived; do not put off the great question of your soul’s salvation. God places peace and pardon before you to-day, but not to-morrow. Oh, come, and, in coming, find rest to your soul.

## JESUS—HEAVEN.

A FELLOW Christian, known to the writer, went to a London hospital a short time since, to pay another visit to a dying man who, in health, had lived in forgetfulness of God. “You are very near to eternity now,” said the visitor; “can you tell me where you are going to spend it?”

“Heaven,” was the simple utterance of the dying man.

“I’m very glad to hear you say that; but, tell me,” continued the visitor, “upon what ground do you expect to enter heaven? What is your passport there?”

“Jesus,” was the sole reply.

“That’s right,” answered the visitor. “Cling to that name, the name of Jesus; ‘for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.’”

Yes, Jesus went down into death, and there met all the claims of Divine justice in regard to sin, “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, . . . and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Have you, my reader, as a lost, helpless, guilty sinner, bowed the knee to Jesus, and in heart, as well as by mouth, owned Him as your Saviour and your Lord?

Bow the knee now, in this day of God’s grace, and it will mean “eternal salvation” to you; but wait until the day that’s coming, and it will mean “eternal judgment.”

“Nothng in my hand I bring,  
Simply to Thyself I cling.”

## ON DIFFERENT TRACKS.

A MINISTER of the Gospel was riding on one of two railways running side by side for a mile, and then diverged, ending at points far distant from each other. Sitting with him was a clergyman of "liberal" views, who had what he supposed an unanswerable question to ask.

"You orthodox have among you regenerate souls, as you call them, who are proud and penurious, and uncomfortable to others as husbands, fathers and friends. Then, too, you have unregenerate sinners, who are amiable and genial, public spirited, and, in short, make for the present, at least, a better show than the saints. Now, I want to know the real difference between the worst Christian and the best sinner?"

Just then the other minister looked out of the car window, and saw another train moving by their side, and said:

"You see that other train?"

"Yes."

"With the same number of cars as ours?"

"Yes."

"And the two engines are alike?"

"Yes."

"Not much difference as to looks between them?"

"No."

"But, dear sir, they are running on different tracks."

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"Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

Are you on that track, reader?

## THE THREE DOORS.

**N**OTICE the three vast doors through which the hugest and most elephantine sinner that ever made the earth shake beneath the weight of his guilt may go. Here are the three doors: “whosoever”—“will”—“freely.” “Whosoever” is the first door. “Whosoever”—then what man dare have the impudence to say that he is shut out? If you say that you cannot come in under “whosoever,” I ask you how you dare narrow a word which is in itself so broad, so infinite. “Whosoever”—that must mean every man that ever lived, or ever shall live, while yet he is here and wills to come.

Well, then, the word “will.” There is nothing about character; nothing about knowledge, or feeling, nor anything else but the will: “Whosoever will.” Speak of the gate standing ajar! This looks to me like taking the door right off the hinges and carrying it away. “Whosoever will.” There is no hindrance whatever in your way. And then “freely.” God’s gifts are given without any expectation or recompense, or any requirements and conditions—“Let him take the water of life freely.” Thou hast not to bring thy good feelings, or good desires, or good works, but come and take freely what God gives you for nothing. You are not even to bring repentance and faith in order to obtain grace, but you are to come and accept the gift of God. What broad gates of mercy these are! How wide the entrance which love has prepared for coming souls! “Whosoever!” “Will!” “Freely!”

Observe how the invitation sums up the work the sinner is called upon to do. First, he is

bidden to come: "Whosoever will, let him come." Now, to come to Christ means simply for the soul to draw near to Him by trusting Him. You are not asked to bring a load with you, nor to work for Christ in order to salvation, but just to come to Him. Nothing is said about the style of coming: come running or creeping, come boldly or timidly; for if you do but come to Jesus, He will in no wise cast you out. A simple reliance upon the Lord Jesus is the one essential for eternal life.

Then the next direction is "take." "Who-soever will, let him take." That is all. That word "take" is a grand word to express the Gospel. The world's gospel is "bring": Christ's gospel is "take." Nature's gospel is "make": just change the letter and you have the gospel of grace, which is "take." There is the water, dear friends—you have not to dig a well to find it, you have only to take it. There is the bread of heaven—you have not to grind the flour or bake the loaf, you have only to take it. There is a garment woven from the top throughout, and without seam—you have not to add a fringe to it, you have only to take it. The way of salvation may be summed up in the four letters of the word "take." Do you desire Christ?—take Him. Do you want pardon?—take it. Do you need a new heart?—take it. Do you want peace on earth?—take it. Do you want heaven hereafter?—take it. That is all. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

And there is one other word which I love to dwell on, and it comes twice over: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take." It is graciously said—"Let him." It

seems to me as if the Lord Jesus Christ saw a poor soul standing thirsty at the flowing crystal fountain of His love, and Satan standing there whispering to him: “You see the sacred stream; but it flows for others. It is what you need, but you must not have it: it is not for you.” Listen! there is a voice from beyond the clouds which cries aloud: “Let him take it!” He is putting down his lip to drink—he understands it now—but there comes rushing upon him a host of his old sins like so many winged harpies, and they scream out to him: “Go back! You must not draw nigh—this fountain is not for you. This pure crystal stream must not be defiled by such leprous lips as yours.” Again there comes from the throne of love this blessed password: “Let him come, and let him take.”

“It is finished!” hath rung through earth and heaven. Therefore—

Come, and welcome, sinner, come.

“MAN WAS MADE TO MOURN.”

**O**F all the poems written by Burns, I like ‘Man was made to Mourn’ best; it has such a fine religious sentiment in it,” said an American visitor to one whom he met at the cottage on the banks of Doon, in which mementos of the poet are kept. “If man remains a sinner without God, he may well mourn, but when a man is born again and made a new creature in Christ Jesus, he is able then to rejoice evermore.” The American looked in amazement at the speaker, and evidently not desiring to continue conversation on these lines, bowed and walked away. The “religious sentiment” of Burns’ poem and the clear and ring-

ing testimony of God's Word are different. Man fallen, lost and degraded in sin, must mourn both here and hereafter if he so remains, but the Gospel of Christ is "good tidings of great joy" telling of a Saviour, a Deliverer who is able to lift fallen sinners out from their misery and set them upon a Rock, putting a new song in their mouths. Sin brings mourning and misery in its train, but Christ received by faith brings joy to the heart, and gladness to the life. Is He yours?

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### A CHRISTADELPHIAN'S CONVERSION

**J**OSEPH McILROY had been a Christadelphian for twelve years, was immersed in water for the remission of sins, and sought, by well-doing to merit the pardoning mercy of God. Though sincere in the belief that salvation was obtained through his own doings, instead of Christ's glorious atonement, he was sincerely mistaken. God's Holy Word declares that salvation is all of grace, through faith: "not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 8-9). "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 4-5).

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"The wages of sin is death."

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

"There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked."

"The triumphing of the wicked is short."



## THERE IS PRAYER AFTER DEATH.

**H**E cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame” (Luke 16:24).

What a prayer! “Have mercy on me.” You may have read of the dungeons of the Inquisition, where the vile Roman Catholic inquisitors tortured their poor victims until they died. Every cruelty that these abominable wretches could contrive was spent upon these martyrs. And the cry, “Have mercy on me,” must have rung a thousand times in their unfeeling ears. But these things had an end, and the suffering spirit passed away from human fiends to God and heaven.

But in hell the cry for mercy can never have an answer. There can be no mercy in the “damnation of hell,” no alleviation of the “everlasting fire,” and no star of hope ever illumines the “outer darkness.” “The worm never dies, the fire is not quenched.” Mercy’s bright angel can never approach the dwellings of the lost. Mercy’s hour is gone!

Oh! you unsaved sinners, sporting carelessly on the brink of hell, will nothing arouse you? I heard a preacher once say, “Some of you hardened sinners want to be taken by the heels and shaken over the pit of hell.” Would to God you would now appeal for mercy. “God be merciful to me the sinner.” Think of hell, and thank God you are out of it.

If a lost spirit could stand here for a moment, what would be his message? We can fancy the tortured soul crying to you men and women,

with despair in his eyes, "Flee from the wrath to come." "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." "Our God is a consuming fire." "God is not mocked." "Because there is wrath, beware lest He take thee away with His stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.

He prays for a drop of water to cool his tongue. He had doubtless drunk the most luscious wine on earth, and had everything that heart could wish for. Now in torment he cries for a drop of water to cool his tongue. Oh! agonizing thirst of hell that can never be allayed! There can be no drops of heavenly dew to moisten the sinner's lips in hell. To save the sinner, He who made the rivers and the streams cried upon the cross, "I thirst." He knew the desert drought of a land where God was not. He said, "My tongue cleaveth to My jaws; and Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death." But from the crucified Christ, the smitten Rock, there flows the river of eternal life to slake the thirst of one and all.

Reader, take God's salvation now. Drink of the water that He shall give you, and never thirst again. Or you will be with the rich man in eternal torment.

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### THE LIVING WATER.

**T**HE weather was cold, and a sharp frost during the night had entirely cut off the supply of water. And as I went out in the morning I found we were not the only ones inconvenienced, for most, if not all, in the neighborhood were in similar circumstances. We had not been waiting long before a man came and

opened a plug in the road, and, after fixing a standpipe, cried, “Water, water!” Very soon a number of people were gathered round, several making haste for fear they would be too late.

“How long do you stop?” I asked of the man who had turned on the water.

“Half an hour, sir,” he replied.

“But suppose after you are gone more want water, what must they do?” I asked.

“They will have to want,” he replied. “If they do not come in time they must go without.”

The time expired, and he turned off the supply and prepared to go, and, as I expected, almost before he was out of sight several came for water. “Stop!” they cried; but he went on his way unheeding their cries.

The above little incident seems to illustrate the Gospel in several ways. We found that water was indispensable — men must die without it. And as surely as it is required to sustain natural life, so surely is the “living water” needed to give spiritual and eternal life to poor lost sinners. You may think it is not so important; but be sure of this, that you can only live by taking a life-giving draught from the fountain of the water of life. Find out your need, and you will then see that there is an infinite resource in the Lord Jesus. There is enough for all.

“Millions have been supplied,  
No one was e’er denied,  
Come to that crystal tide,  
Come, sinner, come.”

Another thing I noticed was that there was nothing to pay, no charge was made, it was free;

so it is with the water of life. Jesus said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink" (John 7:37). No mention of payment; for "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17).

"The water of life is flowing,  
Freely, freely, freely."

Reader, beware that you forsake not the fountain of living waters, and hew out for yourself a cistern that can hold no water (Jer. 2:13). God invites you to drink of that living water which flowed from the cleft Rock of Ages; then you will be able to say—

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Behold, I freely give  
The living water—thirsty one,  
Stoop down, and drink, and live.'  
I came to Jesus, and I drank  
Of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
And now I live in Him."

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### "THEM WAYS."

A SMALL knot of people were assembled together and seated in the room they were accustomed to go to on Sunday evenings, waiting for one who was to address them. Something had detained him for he did not arrive, and the little company continued sitting on in expectancy. One man amongst them at last stood up—a plain man who had no pretensions to learning or aught else. He was a hard-working man, toiling for his daily bread, one who had been brought up before these days of universal education, when everyone can at all events read without difficulty. He opened his

Bible at Isaiah 53, which he read in his own way to the end. He then prayed and said a few words, as simple as they were pointed, on the chapter he had read. What his soul seemed deeply to feel was the “liberation from ‘*them* ways,’ ” as he called the ways of those who do not know Christ as their Saviour. “ ‘*Them* ways’ are not God’s ways, for **THEY** are good, blessed ways, and in them there is nothing to be liberated from, but everything to rejoice in continually.” Neither are your ways my ways (Is. 55:8). “*Them* ways” tell their own tale—they are crooked ways (Prov. 2:15) beginning in disobedience to God. The first recorded crime in the history of this world is the murder of a brother, and thenceforward the record of “*them* ways,” which God has told us of, lies through scenes of horror and darkness, revealing the awful depravity of the human heart. The Bible gives the record of it; the doctrines of the Bible. God’s grace in putting it away. Before the flood, iniquity had risen to such a height that God had to interfere in judgment, and it culminated in the cross, where men put to death the Son of God who came into such a world, only to bless—to take the burden of men’s sin upon Himself, and to die in their stead. Are “*them* ways” any better now that salvation through His death and resurrection is offered to man? Man too often despises it, and they rather would plunge the deeper into sin. “*Them* ways” are only too manifest in their awful wickedness, their misery and moral depravity, and Romans 3 gives the story of what we all are.

*God’s* ways are totally the opposite. “My

ways are not as your ways." *They* are holiness and truth, loving kindness and mercy towards men. In His ways of grace, God sent His Son to die for sinners, so as to have them righteously before Him. "By this man all that believe are justified from all things" (Acts 13:39). They are forgiven and liberated from "them ways," and having "no more conscience of sins" are set free from them, to love and serve Him.

"Himself He gave, our poor hearts to win—

Was ever love, Lord, like Thine?

From the paths of folly, and shame, and sin,  
And fill them with joys divine."

### THE WAITING ROOM.

A FEW years ago a gentleman had occasion to visit a little town in Kent. He missed the train by which he intended to return, and, finding that he had two hours to wait before another train for London should arrive, to pass the time he bought a novel, and, comfortably seating himself in the waiting room, was soon lost in his story.

Shortly after, two young men entered, and seated themselves not far from him. The elder of the two had sometime before been brought to the knowledge of the Lord, while his companion had only the day before found Christ as his Saviour, and, in glowing language, he was telling of his newly-found joy.

Quite unintentionally, the subject of our story overheard their conversation. He listened at first with the quiet smile of one who hears the ravings of an enthusiast; but the joyful earnestness of the speaker made him feel the reality of the words which he uttered, and they took a firm hold upon him.

He rose hastily and left the waiting room, but still he seemed to hear that young voice repeating its bright testimony. His heart craved rest—happiness—something certain to cling to in this world of shadows and unreality. If Christ, he thought, could give such a joy and happiness as these two lads possessed, how willingly would he surrender his fortune, his all, to be the possessor of such a treasure.

The train came up, and he left the station; but the impression which he had received remained, and for some time he was in a state of deep anguish of soul—an anguish bordering on despair. He was as one walking in a labyrinth, who cannot find the clue to the way home. How blessed it is to know that every desire of the soul, aimless and wandering as it may seem, is marked by the gracious eye of Him who never for one moment ceases in His care for the poor weary heart, which it is His purpose to fill with His own peace!

Often did that gentleman pray that he might see those young men again, whose testimony had awakened him to a sense of His distance from God and need of His grace. He had no idea who or where they were; but one afternoon, about three months after the memorable conversation which he had overheard, the thought struck him that they might belong to the place where he had seen them, and he determined to try and find them out. Taking a ticket for C——, he was soon speeding on his way, with many a misgiving lest his journey should be in vain. The train stopped at the first station, a passenger entered, and the gentleman of whom we write, glancing at him, immediately asked himself

where he had seen the face before. Yes, surely he could not be mistaken; he had already found the one he was in quest of, for his fellow-traveler was none other than the elder of the two young companions who had spoken together in the waiting room three months before.

He introduced himself, and told his tale to a willing listener, who pointed him to Jesus for pardon and peace, and told him that he was dishonoring God by trying to save himself, while he had only to believe what God said and trust in the finished work of Christ.

The train again stopped. The seeker after Christ and his companion stepped upon the platform, and there in that waiting room, where the Lord had first spoken to his soul, He spoke again, but this time the words were words of peace.

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## GOD'S CONDITIONS OF SALVATION.

**E**VERY one is a bankrupt sinner, owing to God a great debt, having nothing of his own with which to pay Him. There is no such thing with God as "liquidation by arrangement," there are no assets to divide. It is just as if a merchant owed five millions of money to his creditors, and had not got two farthings left to hand over to them. In the midst of man's extremity and need, Christ comes in and goes to the cross, God is satisfied with His own well-beloved Son and with His finished work, Christ is raised, a discharge is given, the debtor goes free.

This is salvation! This is redemption! Very simple and plain: it is God's free gift to man.