

# STEPPING-STONES

*Gospel Stories for  
Boys and Girls*

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# THE OPEN DOOR

THE widow was sad. A heavy sorrow had come unexpectedly upon her. Her only boy, Willie, fifteen years old, who was always a comfort to her and industrious and good, had disappeared. He had taken some of his things in a suit-case and had evidently run away.

Where had he gone? How could she find him? These thoughts ran through her dazed brain all day long. Someone suggested going to the police, but she had no hope there. Her trust had been for many years in her God, the God of the widow and the fatherless. She would count on Him and on the prayers of those who knew Him.

The days passed. Every time the widow went out she left the door open, so that her boy might walk straight in. God, she well knew, could easily bring him back. He who stayed the waters of the Red Sea, and prepared a fish to swallow Jonah, could bring her dear boy home again.

One evening, when she was at a Bible reading, Willie walked in. He found the door open and the lamp lit all ready for him. What a good, true mother he had! He understood the open door quite well. He did not say, "I suppose mother is expecting a friend and left the door open," nor did he say, "She must have forgotten to shut it." No; he knew that the door was never left open: it

was open now for him, and for him only. The open door meant to him an open heart, the heart of his mother, willing and ready to receive him home again.

When the Lord Jesus was here on earth He said, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John 10. 9.) So there is still an open door for boys and girls who have run away from God and want to get home to Him, for the Lord Jesus is Himself the door, open and ready to receive them. There will be joy in heaven when you step in, joy over everyone who enters through that holy door.

When the widow came home she found her boy, and you can guess the joy of that meeting, for two hearts were united again with deepened love and longing for one another.

Willie had run away to a neighbouring port on the morning of his departure and had tried day after day to get some sea-captain to take him on his ship to work his passage to another country, but in vain. One morning very early, before it was light, as he was wandering round the dock, a rough man knocked him down, took his money from his pockets and went off with his suit-case. Willie came to himself to find he had no money, no clothes and no food, so he decided to go home.

After a long day's walk, very exhausted and starvingly hungry, he found himself again in his happy home, ashamed and sorry for having caused so much alarm. The joy of his return

was soon passed round. "Have you heard the news? Willie is safely home!"

Friends and neighbours came in to shake hands and offer their welcome; tears of joy were shed and hearts were glad and full of thanksgiving to God that their prayers had been answered and that Willie was home.

It will be well worth telling you this true story if you find the open door, and come in and see the joy and the welcome that awaits you. The prodigal son (Luke 15) knew the joy of an open door and a welcome, but before he tasted the good things of his father's house again, he said: "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." Was he forgiven? He was indeed, and shown the greatest favour, and God is ready to do the same for you.

There will be a closed door. It is so solemn that it is painful to speak about it. You can have which you choose, but you must either go in at the *open* door of God's grace or find the door *closed* to you, the door of judgment.

There will be those who will say: "Lord, Lord, open to us," and the answer will be: "Verily I say unto you, I know you not." And the door will be shut for ever.

So let us beg you, who read this, to enter while the door is still open.

"Yet there is room!" Still open stands the gate,

The gate of love—it is not yet too late!

Room, room, still room, Oh, enter, enter now!

# The Book That Spoke

HIS real African name was Lukeatula, but as it is so long, we will call him Luka. He lived in the heart of Africa, and although only a boy and far from white men and civilization, he was taught to read and given a book, the Gospel of John. He was proud to possess the book. He felt it made him important and like the white men. So he took care of it and carried it about with him, but he never read it.

Perhaps the kind friend who gave it him, prayed that he might read it, and God heard his prayer ; for something happened in Luka's heart and mind. He sat down one day, quite alone, and began reading, and found out a wonderful and surprising thing, that the book *spoke*.

If you read the Gospel of John, you will find it full of speaking. Jesus, the holy Son of God, uses such expressions as "Verily, verily, I say unto you," a great many times, and "I tell you," "I speak unto you," and other similar words, for He came to make known to men glorious things, and some listened, and some turned away. Some loved to hear about God His Father, and how He (Jesus) had come to bring men home to God.

When Jesus was on earth, He spoke to men, mouth to mouth, but now that He is in heaven, He speaks in different ways. Sometimes He calls right from heaven, as He did to the

apostles Paul and Peter. (Acts 9 and 10.) Sometimes He has spoken through an angel, as He did to Peter in prison, when He sent His angel to take him out of it. He speaks, too, through His servants, through dreams and visions, but to black-skinned, curly-headed Luka, He spoke through His holy word.

Luka was amazed to find that his precious gospel *spoke* to him. This is what he said about his wonderful discovery, "I was startled the find that Christ could speak 'Chiluba.' I heard Him speak out of the printed page, and what He said was, Follow Me."

He felt as he continued reading his treasure that God was speaking to him from every page, speaking right into his mind and heart, and of course, he listened attentively to learn how to follow Jesus.

So Luka became a follower. He was like the two disciples we are told about in the first chapter of his book, John's gospel. It says: "Again the next day after John [the Baptist] stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." (John 1. 35-37.)

He became like Philip, too, for it says in the same chapter, "The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me." And did Philip follow? He did, indeed, and became

one of the twelve apostles chosen by Jesus. If you would like to know more about him, read John 14, and you will find that he asked the Lord Jesus an important question, which was given a marvellous answer. (See also John 6. 7, and 12. 21.)

It is a joy to think of the thousands since Philip lived, who have heard Jesus speak, and have followed Him. Are you one of them? If so, like Luka, you will have a rich reward, for in this same gospel Jesus said: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." (Chap. 12. 26.)

How wonderful to be honoured by God for serving Jesus, but the first thing is to follow, and then to listen and learn, so that you will serve in a way pleasing to Him.

Luka went on following, learning and listening with all his heart to the words of his wonderful book, and then as he grew to be a man, he served the Lord he followed in preaching and teaching the good news of God's love to men.

## The Most Valuable Things First

It had a very small beginning. There was not much to alarm! First a house on fire, which every one expected would soon be under control; but in a few hours the great city of Constantinople was a roaring furnace, and before the fire had ended its destructive course the greater part of the city had been reduced to ashes, and forty thousand people had lost their homes.

There was plenty of water, for the city was almost surrounded by the Bosphorus, with the Golden Horn running nearly through it, but the fire-brigade pumps refused to work, and the wind fanned the flames over the town to its ruin.

Mary was an English girl, living there with her parents. Her father had come to Constantinople to tell to all he could the good news that God loved the Turks and had sent His beloved Son to die for them, and when the fire broke out was visiting in the city.

So Mary found herself alone in the house with the servants. People all round them were terrified and trying to save themselves and their belongings. Already some had lost their lives and others had been seriously injured.

Mary had never been so frightened in her life. If only her father would come back and

tell them what to do. The flames were coming nearer and nearer and their house would soon be attacked! For the first time in her life Mary began to realise that she was not ready to meet God.

"Supposing," she thought, "that I am burned or injured, what will happen to my soul?"

She asked herself this question again and again, and going up to her room she knelt down and told God that if He would save her life *now* she would turn to Him at the first opportunity. Going downstairs again she found two strong-looking sailors from one of the British men-of-war in the harbour offering their help.

"We saw your house was in the line of fire, Miss, and the captain has given us leave to come ashore and try to save what we can. Now, Miss, the most valuable things first. You direct, and we'll work."

"The piano first and then the pictures," said Mary, greatly relieved to see these energetic fellows.

"We'll do what we can, Miss, but we shan't save the house."

They worked with a will and got out all the most valuable things, but the house and much that was in it was burnt to the ground, and so many were homeless that Mary's father was obliged to take his family back to England.

On the voyage Mary often thought of the

kind sailor's words, "The most valuable things first."

She had attended to the *least* valuable things first. Her precious soul which was to live for ever had had very little attention, but her body which would one day perish she had cared for daily.

She knew she was guilty before God. "SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS." No, she hadn't done that. So she owned it to God, and made it her great concern to attend to the most valuable things first.

For two years Mary read her Bible and prayed and tried to be better, but at the end of that time she felt she was not right with God, and she would not have liked to have died, the very thought of such a thing frightened her.

So she went to a friend, and told her of her trouble and how God had spared her life during the great fire, and what she had vowed to Him. Her friend saw where the trouble lay, and no doubt she told her that her eyes were on the wrong person; and that it is "the outside look that gives the inside peace," and "if she turned her face to the sun her shadow would fall behind her."

Who was the Sun? The Lord Jesus Christ, who had died for her to put away her sins. Where was He now? In the glory, shining in His glorious might, at the right hand of God.

Perhaps she told her that she was like the poor Israelite, bitten by serpents in the wilder-

ness. Supposing a dying girl had said then, "Mother, I'm bitten by a serpent and dying, but I'll do what I can, I'll try and crawl a little nearer to the serpent of brass, which Moses has put on the pole, perhaps if I struggle hard I may reach it and touch it and be healed."

"But, my child, listen! What did Moses say? What was God's message? '*Look*, and you shall live.' Don't try to move, but look and you *will* live."

"But, mother, it seems too easy, it can't be true!"

"God has been merciful to us, my child, and made the way of life so simple that even the babies and the helpless need not die."

"LOOK UNTO ME AND BE YE SAVED."

Mary's friend was able, with God's help, to turn her eyes in the right direction, to see what Jesus had done, not at what she had been trying to do; and she believed in her heart and confessed with her mouth that God had raised up Jesus from the dead.

I expect you would like to see Mary. She is still living and putting the most valuable things first, so that other boys and girls may do as she did, and look away from themselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, her wonderful Saviour and Friend.

# The Motor-boat

MARION and Joan spent a happy summer holiday with their parents on a house-boat at the mouth of the rivers Stour and Avon.

Marion was twelve years old and Joan was ten, and they thought living on a house-boat much nicer than being at home. For one thing, they slept in bunks, one above another, exactly like the berths on a liner, and to get into her bunk Marion had to climb the ladder fixed by the side. Then there was another ladder to climb to get on to the roof of the house-boat, and everything was done in the opposite way from home.

At home the postman and the milkman called, here Marion and Joan rowed across to the land and called at a cottage on the quay for their letters and milk and fresh water for drinking. Here, too, they had to get their own meals, for there was no one to wait on them.

They usually spent their days out on the river in a sailing boat, and did not come home till supper-time. The weather was splendid, until one afternoon they will always remember.

They were in their boat with the sail up, when a sudden gust of wind caught it, and but for the quick way their father managed the sail they would have been upset.

The wind grew more and more boisterous, and the waves came into the boat; the tide was dead against them as well as the wind,

and they could see it would be no easy task to get back to the house-boat.

Marion and Joan helped their father to row, but with all their efforts they made little progress. The waves splashed in again and again, someone kicked over the milk-can, losing nearly all the milk, and things looked very black. At last, exhausted with their efforts, they landed for tea and made the best of the little remaining milk.

Then, after a rest, they got into the boat again and rowed as hard as they could, but they still made very little progress. So up went the sail again and they tacked from side to side, but to little purpose. Then they tried both sailing and rowing, but it looked as if they would not get home till midnight! A motor-boat rushed past them, the owner smiling at their desperate efforts.

Would they get back to their house-boat before dark?

Oh, to have had a motor-launch then, or to have been taken in tow! But the motor-boat flew by before they had time to ask for help. At last, after many hours of hard work, tired out, wet, and depressed, they did get back and were soon safely in bed.

Marion's mother learnt some lessons from that afternoon's experience. Can you guess what they were?

How much better, she thought, it is to have a power, which is not your own, which will carry you against wind and wave, than to be



*Marion and Joan rowed to the land*

dependent on your own feeble efforts. Supposing, she thought, that our strength had given out, and we had been obliged to give up rowing, what would have happened?

We were like boys and girls who depend on their own efforts to conquer their evil tempers, and naughty ways, and like them we were very nearly exhausted, unhappy and depressed, fearing we should never succeed.

The man in the motor-boat could sit and smile in spite of the wind and the tide and the current! Why was that? He had a power inside his boat, outside himself, to carry him along, and was in no way dependent on his own efforts. We were taken up with our rowing and sailing, wondering if we should ever succeed, but he, happy man, was enjoying his trip and not thinking of himself at all.

And, boys and girls, this is the way to be overcomers. If you are Christians, and know that your sins are forgiven you, do not try to live in your own strength. It may seem to be easy when there is no opposition, but what will happen when the waves and wind of a strong temper rise and threaten to swamp you!

Allow the power within you, the Spirit of God, who indwells the believer, to take the helm.

The man with the motor in his launch has only to see that there is petrol enough, and to be sure there is no sand or grit or water in his engine to prevent it running. A very little

grit will stop it altogether, as many of you boys know.

So a Christian boy or girl has to see that nothing prevents the Spirit of God having full control over him or her.

The dust of foolish talking or of wrong company does much damage to our souls, and grieves the Spirit of God, and we are told: "Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. 4. 30.)

You may be sure the owner overhauled the motor-launch, and saw that it was free from dust, refilled his tank, and oiled his engine in the harbour, before venturing out. How do you start each day, I wonder?

Do you get alone in your room and ask God's help for the day, and read His word, so that fed and refreshed you can enjoy your work and your games, and instead of fighting inward temper and outward difficulties in your own strength, you are able to meet all against you with a power which is not your own. So you see, no Christian boy or girl need say, "I can't help getting into tempers," or "I can't help being careless and forgetful," for God has given you the power to overcome. "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rom. 12. 21.)

## I WILL HEAR

"JOHN, John, I want you," a mother was calling. John, however, was busy with his own interests, and didn't trouble to reply. Again his mother called, "John, John," but still there was no answer.

His mother found him, and looking sadly at him, said, "How is it, John, that you are so much deafer than the others? We must see what we can do to improve your hearing."

John's mother knew perfectly well that he had heard her call and grieved over his behaviour. There was a great difference in this family; some of the children loved their parents so much that a call was responded to very quickly, but some, like John, were selfish and lazy.

This family is a picture of the whole world. In God's sight as He looks down from heaven there are two distinct classes on this earth; those who care and even love to hear the voice of God and the voice of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and respond gladly; and those who appear quite deaf, and go on day by day doing their own wills, indifferent to God's constant calls to them.

I wonder to which class you belong! It is wonderfully encouraging to think of those of old who heard God's voice and answered Him. We know that Samuel did, but as you may

have heard much about him we will think of others not so well known.

Isaiah the prophet was one. We are told that he heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and he said in answer, "Here am I; send me." (Isa. 6.)

Jeremiah was another, for God called to him and said that He knew all about him before he was born, and had set him apart for Himself as His prophet.

Jeremiah was naturally nervous and hesitant, but he, too, answered to God's voice and was made equal to his work. God strengthened him by touching his mouth, and said, "Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." (Jer. 1. 9.) He was to be made as strong as three mighty things: a defenced city, a brazen wall, and an iron pillar.

So this timid young man, who feared that he could never speak, stood before the king and his princes and the great men in Judah, and told them what God had said as to their conduct towards Him; but, first of all, before he spoke, he had listened intently to God's voice and messages.

Amos was another called by God for a special work in Israel. He was opposed by Amaziah, an evil priest, to whom Amos said, "The LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel." (Amos 7. 15.) You see, Amos listened to God's voice, and although, as he says, he was no prophet even, only a

gatherer of wild figs, he gave the message God trusted him with, faithfully and earnestly.

Yet another was Habakkuk, who says, "I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved." (Hab. 2. 1.) He listened intently to God, in a place where he could best hear.

It is a good study to see how many faithful men there were to whom God's words and His thoughts were infinitely precious, and who carried out God's orders in spite of persecution.

Jonah heard what God told him, but, sad to say, he was not ready to do His bidding. Perhaps you can think of many others, but these few may show you what great blessing came to those who listened, heard and carried out God's messages to them.

Listen to the words of the Holy Spirit through Isaiah, "Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live." (Isa. 55. 3.) If you do this you will be able to say with the Psalmist, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for 'he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly." (Psa. 85.)

## The Solemn Picture

JANIE was nine years old, and lived happily enough with her parents and brothers and sisters, until one day, when opening a large family Bible, she saw a picture which greatly startled her. The artist had tried to paint a picture of judgment to come, when Satan first and then unbelievers will be cast into the lake of fire. It was a terrible picture and Janie looked and looked at it. She felt it must be true, as she had been told that the Bible was God's word and that every Christian believed it.

She looked long and earnestly until it became impressed on her memory. She saw the crowds of careless, pleasure-loving people amusing themselves, dancing, singing, card-playing, and acting, on the broad road and all gradually nearing their terrible end, the lake of fire. It was indeed an awful picture, and Janie thought of it in bed at night, and wondered if she too was on the broad road to destruction.

One evening her parents invited some friends in to dinner, and afterwards Janie was allowed to join them. She sat on a stool by her mother and watched the guests, and it struck her that they were just like the people in the picture in the Bible. They were laughing, dancing, card-playing, and there was no thought of God in their minds.

The little girl was really alarmed and turning her distressed face to her mother she said in a

voice of terror : " I believe we are all going to hell."

Her mother was shocked at her remark and silenced her, but was she right ?

Who are the people who are going to hell ? It is very important to find out so that you may not be in the company. Let us see what God's word says, for nothing else is reliable. " But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death." (Rev. 21. 8.)

Were these friends believers or unbelievers ? Did they love God, and had they faith in Christ ? Were they trusting in His precious blood ? They were, alas ! " the unbelieving."

So Janie was right. She could not forget the picture, but as she grew older she made up her mind to refuse to believe it. The others did not trouble about it, why should she ? she argued. But this was not so easily done, for at the bottom of her heart, in spite of her words, she knew that there was a God, and that heaven and hell were realities.

The years went on, until one day Janie, now growing up, found herself, in answer to a kind invitation, sitting with a number of fisherfolk in a hall in a seaside town. They were listening intently to a preacher who was giving them a message from God. Let us hear her own words about it. The speaker opened

the Bible and read the wonderful words of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. It was the word of the living God, and it held up to view the Son of God, as a despised and rejected and bruised Man.

Have you seen Him thus ?

"A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Word by word the wondrous message fell upon the listening crowd.

Was there a guilty, sin-laden one ?

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities."

Was there one in the company who had no peace ?

"The chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Was there a self-willed soul there ?

"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."

Groaning, distracted soul, where then are thy sins ? If already dealt with, why thine alarm ? Judgment lies *behind* thee, and not *before* thee. To the soul that shelters under Christ, the judgment is a *past* thing. What have death and hell and the lake of fire to do with such ?

This was the wonderful message, but it was not only for the sailors and the weary hard-

working women that it was given that night. Janie, amazed and half-ashamed to be seen in the company of such humble people, had drunk in the good news, and the light of the glorious glad tidings had reached right down to the innermost part of her being.

Where were her fears? Gone. Where was the darkness? Gone, too. Where were her sins and her unbelief? Gone. She had seen the Lord Jesus, seen Him as her substitute, stricken, smitten, and afflicted. What more did she need? She could now give herself wholly to Him, and He claimed her as the fruit of the travail of His soul. The picture of the judgment day no longer terrified her, for she saw clearly that Jesus had conquered death and the grave, and put away sin, and her sins by the sacrifice of Himself.

This being so, she felt she must confess to her parents what had happened. One evening when they were alone she told them that the Lord Jesus Christ was *her* Lord and that heaven would one day be her home and not hell, for she trusted Him, who had made a way into heaven for her.

Janie was indeed happy. No thoughts of judgment to come terrified her now. She could sing with others who had learned the same glorious truths :

Death and judgment are behind us,  
Grace and glory are before ;  
All the billows rolled o'er Jesus,  
There they spent their utmost power.

# The Boy who would not Listen

WHEN the Romans overcame the Britons, not many years after Christ was born into the world, it seemed a sad thing for them to be in the hands of very powerful conquerors, who treated them as they liked ; but God, who delights to bring good out of evil, allowed it in order that the heathen of these islands might hear the good news that there was a living God who dwelt in the heavens and loved His creatures, and had sent His Son to make His goodness known.

After a great deal of fighting the Romans subdued some of the British tribes and sent some of their chiefs to Rome to prove what they had done, and to shew to their own countrymen what kind of men these heathen were. Amongst those sent was a Welsh chieftain named Brian, who was in Rome whilst the Apostle Paul was in prison there.

Whether he ever met the apostle is not told, but he heard the news that had turned the world upside down, that the Son of God, even Jesus, had walked amongst men for thirty-three years, healing their diseases, and teaching them of His Father, God, and that He had died for them, and had risen again from the dead, and had been carried up into heaven in the sight of His disciples, and received into the glory at God's right hand.

When Brian came back to England he brought these wonderful tidings with him, and the good news spread over the country and into Wales and Scotland; and everywhere little companies were found who had given up their idols and heathen customs and worshipped the living God.

About the year 377 A.D. a little boy named Succath was born at a place called Bonavern, on the banks of the Clyde in Scotland. His father was a farmer, a simple-hearted Christian man. As the boy grew up his father, but still more his mother, Conchessa, told him the glad news that Brian had brought; that God lived in heaven above him, that Jesus, His Son, was also there at God's right hand, that He had been into the world and died to win men's hearts for Himself, and that He now wanted Succath's heart for His own.

But, sad to say, Succath would not listen with his heart and mind; he heard the words his mother said, but they had no effect on him at all. He only wanted to play with the boys he knew, and think his own thoughts, and go his own way, often getting up to mischief and being very naughty. This made his parents very sad, and no doubt they often said, "Oh, when will Succath give his heart to the Lord?" And day by day they taught him the scriptures—told him many things which he could not help remembering, though he did not want to in the least.

One day when he was about sixteen years

old and playing with his sisters on the sea-shore, a boat full of men pulled in, and seizing hold of Succath and his sisters carried them to the boat and rowed away with them across the sea.

The cruel man who was at the head of this mischief was an Irish chief called O'Neale, and he returned to Ireland with the three children, where he sold them to his friends. Succath was sold to a farmer, who made him look after his pigs.

Now at last he began to attend to what his parents had taught him.

"I was sixteen years old," he says, "and knew not the true God, but in that strange land the Lord opened mine eyes ; and although late, I called my sins to mind and was converted to the Lord my God, who regarded my low estate and had pity on my youth and consoled me as a father consoles his children. During the night, in the forest and on the mountains where I kept my flocks, the rain and the snow and the frosts which I endured led me to seek God."

After six years of this loneliness in slavery Succath managed to get away to France, where he found his parents, who had relations there, and had gone to see them after losing their children.

But though it was a great joy to him to be with his parents again, he often thought of the Irish folk he had lived amongst for six

years, and he decided to go back and teach them about Jesus.

He set out for Ireland with a few possessions and amongst them a big drum. On arriving in a village he would start beating his drum, and the people would follow him, wondering who this strange man was, and when he had collected a big crowd he would stop in some open place and preach to them Jesus.

In this way he held meetings every day. An Irish chief named Benignus gave himself to the Lord and helped Succath to make known the good news to his people and encouraged him in every way.

When Succath first landed in Ireland he decided he would go to Antrim and find his old master, named Milcha, and tell him what God had done for him and for men everywhere, but Milcha hearing of his coming, and no doubt thinking that he wanted to revenge himself, took his own life before he arrived.

This was a great pity, as Succath came with a heart full of God's love, forgiving all his past cruelty, even as Christ had forgiven him.

Succath, who was called Patrick by the Irish, lived and preached among them for thirty years, and numbers of men, women, boys and girls gave up their cruel customs and their false gods, and, like the Thessalonians, turned from them to serve the living and true God and to wait for His Son from heaven.

God answered the prayers of Succath's parents ; but because he would not listen to them at home, he was taken into slavery and misery, very much as the prodigal son in Luke 15, that he might know the joy of having his sins forgiven and the delight of receiving the Father's kiss, and the robe, and the ring, and be able to preach the love of God to others who had never heard such wonderful things.

## Light From Heaven

JANIE was one day sitting on the beach at Eastbourne with some friends, when a lady passed by and offered her a little paper booklet. Janie accepted it, looked at it, and when she saw that it had " something to do with religion," she hardly knew what, she tore it up in the smallest pieces and scattered them to the wind. Her friends laughed, and she thought it was the end of the matter. But was it ?

God had seen all that had taken place. He had, doubtless, heard the prayers of the lady who had given the tract, and He had blessing in store for Janie.

Some years later Janie's mother had a serious talk with her, pointing out that her life was too much given up to pleasure, and that duty must not be neglected.

Her mother, sad to say, had no love for the Lord Jesus Christ, but she believed in giving

up a certain amount of time to religion and the duties of life. She did not believe in true religion, which, as the Apostle James tells us, is to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (James I. 27.) Her mother only asked that Janie should belong to the church and be religious on Sundays; she might be spotted by the world all the week if she chose.

Janie had planned a lively winter; balls and concerts and choral practices in the evenings, and riding and hunting in the daytime, and she was very much annoyed to be obliged to be more serious.

There was nothing for it, however, but to go regularly to the vicarage for classes, and to give her mind to the matter in hand. The vicar suggested that she should read for an hour each day, either a religious book or the Bible.

"I will read the Bible, as I have never done so, and I suppose I ought to know something about it," Janie replied.

The vicar agreed, so Janie borrowed the precious book and commenced reading the New Testament.

"Is this really true?" she asked herself, as the wonder of what she read crept slowly, but deeply into her innermost soul.

"Did Jesus really come? Was He truly the Son of God? Did He really die on the cross that I and millions more need not suffer eternal damnation?"

Day by day she read on, absorbed in the marvellous theme of the four Gospels. Strange feelings came over her as she read of Jesus going about doing good, cleansing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, healing all the sick. He came in touch with, raising the dead, and in all things pleasing His God and Father. He could say, "I do always those things which please him [God]."

What a contrast, Janie thought, to herself and those around her. God opened her eyes, and poured His light from heaven into her heart, and on to His word, and she saw herself a sinner needing a Saviour. She saw in Jesus the One who could and would save her from her sins.

Humbly and yet thankfully she did as a sinful people were advised to do by the Prophet Hosea, "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips." (Hosea 14. 2.)

You will notice what we are to *take* to the Lord; not good works or pious feelings or sacrifices; just simply, like the publican we are told about in Luke 18, take *words*—words from the heart; honest, upright *words*. The publican smote his breast, and said, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

This is what Janie did. In the secret of her own room, she asked for forgiveness, and she was forgiven and received graciously by the Lord Jesus Christ, and she was able to render

to Him thanks and adoration for the rest of her days.

A new life began for her, a difficult life at first, for she was thought to be out of her mind. But really she was now in her right mind, and had become wise, as she did the best thing she had ever done, in bowing the knee to Jesus.

Have you ever done this? Have you ever taken with you words and turned to the Lord, and asked Him to forgive you and receive you? Why not do it to-day?

## THE SHIPWRECK AND ITS RESULTS

GOD sometimes has to speak very loudly to make people attend, for many are so occupied with their own affairs that they do not hear His voice unless it is an exceedingly loud one. This story will show you how God made some shipwrecked sailors hear His voice.

One very stormy day two gentlemen stood on the beach of a town on the West Coast of England, watching a small ship trying to make for safety. The lifeboat was out and not very far from the ship, which seemed to be a foreign one, but the great breakers, raging and foaming on a sandbank near by, made it almost impossible to get near it.

"I think," said one of the gentlemen,



*"Oh, look! the vessel has gone down"*

“that the lifeboat is getting round to the ship, but, oh, look! the vessel has gone down.”

This was indeed true, but not before the captain of the ship and sixteen sailors had been taken off in the lifeboat.

The two gentlemen, who saw this happen, met the day after to read the Bible with some others, when five of the rescued sailors came in, and were so interested that the next night they brought all the crew. Sixteen men rescued from death, one quite an old man and one a boy of fifteen! God had allowed them to be in desperate plight, and on the point of being drowned, so that they might think about their precious souls. Now they were in earnest and wanted to hear what God had to say to them.

I wonder if you are, or if you will have to be in great danger before you ask, “What must I do to be saved?”

The wrecked ship was Norwegian, and a Bible in that language had been washed ashore, so that the preacher read the Scriptures in English and the mate read them in Norwegian. The men could understand a little English, and no doubt the preacher did his best to help them.

He began by asking the question, “When your vessel had struck the sandbank and immense waves were rolling over the deck, suppose I had taken a loudspeaker and shouted to you, ‘I invite you to come to the shore

and you will be safe,' would that have been good news to you?"

"Oh, no, sir," they said, "that would have been useless."

"Well, when the lifeboat was a hundred yards from you, suppose its captain had said, 'There, we have done our part, now you must do yours,' would that have met the case?"

"Oh, no, sir," they said again, "that would have been quite impossible."

"One more question: when the lifeboat came up to you, did you expect that it had brought some tools to repair your ship?"

"The vessel was a total wreck," they said, "you could not mend her. Two of her masts had gone, and if we had stayed for repairs we should have gone down in her."

The preacher agreed with this, and went on to show the sailors from God's word that they were total wrecks, for that, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." He told them that the power of Satan and the waves of sin beating upon their souls were of far greater strength than those hammering their wrecked vessel. The sailors listened, and no doubt it was the beginning of a new day for some of them.

When a boy, or a girl, wakes up and finds out that he, or she, is a sinner, lost and without strength, then they begin to realise that, like the sailors, they cannot save themselves and that they are dependent on some outside power to lay hold on them and rescue them.

Most of you know that Jesus is the only One who can save your souls. He came to earth to save those children and grown-up people who want to be saved. He, the Lord Jesus, told Zacchæus that, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

If you are in need, the Lord Jesus will save you, but you must send up a signal of distress to Him, and say, like Peter, "Lord, save me!" Then He will come and take you in His embrace and forgive you and care for you until you are with Him, safe in His glorious home for ever.

Nought that I do  
Can my salvation win,  
No strivings of my own  
Can purge away my sin.  
But Jesus only, shed His blood for me  
To wash away my sin and set me free.

## SONGS OF ZION

ONE fine day John and some of his friends were walking along a country road, and were in such high spirits that they sang popular songs together. A gentleman meeting them, looked pleasantly at them and said :

"I wish, my boys, you were singing the songs of Zion," and passed on.

When John reached home he told his father what had happened, and added :

“What are the songs of Zion, Dad?”

His father looked grave and did not answer at once, and then said:

“It is to my shame, my boy, that you do not know them; we will start to-day and see if we can find out.”

That evening the family Bible was read in that home for the first time for many years. I wish I could tell you which part of the Bible John's father read. That I do not know. But I can tell you something about the songs of Zion, if you will read on.

When the children of Israel had repeatedly disobeyed God, and had hated His correction, and cast His word behind their back (Psa. 50. 17), He gave them into the hands of their enemies, the kings of the East.

They were in captivity for seventy years, and we are told that their enemies wasted them and required mirth of them, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.” But the captives wept as they thought of God's land, the temple in Jerusalem and all the joys of their homes, and you cannot weep and sing, can you? They hung their harps on the willow-trees by the river, and said they could not sing the songs of the Lord in a strange land.

Evidently, then, the songs of Zion, for Zion was where God's house, the temple, stood in Jerusalem, were the songs of the Lord. (Psa. 137.)

I hope you know some of the songs of the

Lord! The first one that the children of Israel sang was after they had crossed the Red Sea, and were safe from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. It was a song full of joy. Listen! "The Lord . . . hath triumphed gloriously : the horse and his rider hath he cast into the sea." (Exo. 15.)

Have you ever sung a song like this ? When the Lord Jesus went into the temple in Jerusalem, the children sang, "Hosanna to the Son of David." They welcomed Him and praised Him, though the chief priests and scribes were angry, and asked Jesus to stop them. Many children are praising Jesus now. They know that He is in heaven and that He listens to their songs of praise.

There are many songs of Zion in the Book of Psalms, some are called "psalms," but others are called "psalms or songs." If you search you will find some. Here is one which you can say to the Lord, if you really mean it. It is Psalm 108, and it says : "O God, my heart is fixed ; I will sing and give praise, even with my glory. . . . I will praise thee, O Lord . . . for thy mercy is great above the heavens : and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds."

I hope you can sing this song. I wonder if John did when his father had taught him a little about the songs of the Lord!

# THE LORD HEARD

SOME years ago when wireless telegraphy was in its infancy, a transport ship sailed along the eastern coast of North America.

A sailor on the look-out, surrounded by a vast stretch of ocean, suddenly heard a telephone bell sounding across the water. Startled and wondering he looked around him. Was he dreaming or only half awake, or what was the matter? The bell sounded again; that it was a telephone bell it was quite certain, but where was it, and how could there possibly be such, with nothing to be seen around but the ocean? He called one of his mates, and he, on coming up from below deck, also heard it, so they told the captain, who heard it too.

The ship was stopped, and some sailors went off to investigate. They were not long in finding a buoy with a telephone fixed to it, which belonged to a submarine in distress. This was under water, except for a few feet of the stern, and was swinging about in a most uncomfortable manner. The men were suffering from want of fresh air, having been for thirty-five hours in this unfortunate position.

The sailors returned to their ship and told what they had found, and a wireless message was sent to the United States Admiralty for help. The ship was then brought close to the submarine and a hawser fixed to grapple it

firmly until more help came. A hole was cut in the upturned stern, and fresh air was let in, and hot drinks were poured through for the exhausted men.

An American boy, named Moore, trying his home-made wireless set, picked up the transport's message. Thrilled to have received so important a communication, he sent a telephone message to the Navy Department, and was more than delighted to find that he was the first to have received the call for help.

Tugs and boats of various kinds were sent off from headquarters at once, and the hole in the stern of the submarine was soon enlarged, so that the men could get out. It must have been a joy to the sailor who first heard the telephone bell, to see twenty-seven men step out of the submarine, saved from a horrible death, and know that he had played the first part in their release.

This wonderful rescue came about because the imprisoned men sent out a cry for help by fixing the telephone bell, and because the sailor on the transport heard that bell; and also because the boy, Moore, received the wireless message and sent for powerful help.

Had the man on the look-out been deaf, the sailors in the submarine would probably have perished, for few ships passed in that direction. So we may conclude that those twenty-seven men were saved, because they *cried* for help, and because two people heard—

the sailor, the telephone bell ringing out over the water, and the boy, a wireless message from the ship.

You will agree that this is an interesting story, but there are greater wonders going on daily, even hourly, around us; for men, women and children in distress are constantly crying for help, and their cries are heard at an immeasurable distance by One, and that One, God Himself, who is willing and able to succour them.

★            ★            ★

Many, many years ago a lad lay dying of thirst under some bushes in a wilderness. His mouth was parched, his tongue swollen, and his strength quite exhausted. His mother was with him, but she would not see him die, and moved away saying, "Let me not see the death of the child."

The boy was suffering for his sins. He had a good home and a wonderful father, who feared God, and obeyed Him, but as his son grew up he mocked at his father's heir, and God told Abraham, his father, to send the naughty boy away. And now he was dying, but he remembered his father's God, the only One who could help him, and he prayed to Him, and God was gracious to him and heard his cry. The Bible tells us: "And God heard the voice of the lad."

How marvellous! God heard the voice of a naughty boy, who cared nothing for Him,

until he needed His help! And not only did God hear the voice of the lad, but an angel from heaven repeated the fact to his mother. Notice the words : " God heard the voice of the lad ; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee Hagar ? fear not ; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is." (Gen. 21. 17.)

Then God in His great mercy to this naughty boy, showed his mother where there was a well of water, and she fetched water for him, and thus he was saved from a painful death. The next thing we are told is, " And God was with the lad ; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer." This was the result of a cry to God for mercy, which God heard.

Perhaps there is a boy reading this, who, like Ishmael, the boy we have been speaking about, has been disobedient and self-willed. You need not feel you are too bad to ask God to forgive you. He will hear your prayer, if it is really a cry of sorrow for your sins. Ishmael was in desperate need, and no one but God could help him, but in spite of his naughtiness God heard him and saved him.

Do not go on without God. He will hear you and bless you. He says to you, " Call upon me in the day of trouble : I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Psa. 50. 15.)

## A FIXED HEART

WILLIAM, when a boy, used to go to a service every Sunday, because he played the cornet and enjoyed the music. This was his only reason for going, and he never listened to the sermon or prayers. He had no wish to hear that he was a sinner, and that God was calling upon him to own it, and turn to Christ for salvation.

Although he did not intend to listen to anything which might be said, he knew all the time that he was a sinner. This fact kept him in a state of restlessness and misery, for he was not happy with Christians nor with his worldly friends. One evening when with his gay companions, one of them turned suddenly on him and said, "William, why don't you decide one way or another, either to come with us and be one of us, or go with your Christian friends? You will never get anywhere as you are now."

This brought him to the point. He saw that his worldly friends felt that he was half-hearted; and so he was, for the burden of his sins was getting heavier as the days passed by.

So he pulled himself up and got alone with God, and like the tax-gatherer we are told of in Luke 18 he asked God to be merciful to him, the sinner, and forgive his neglect of Him, and his many sins. God, ever merciful and gracious and ready to pardon, forgave him,

and made William conscious of His grace in receiving him.

Then he became a witness for the Lord, farming during the day and preaching in the evening in his own country, which was Poland. God blessed him, and brought others to Himself through His faithful young servant.

There are boys and girls nowadays very much as William was. Their Christian friends and relations cannot say whether they belong to the Lord Jesus Christ or not. You may wonder, perhaps, whether a bat is a bird or an animal. It has wings and flies like a bird, but in other ways it resembles a small animal. There is an uncertainty in classing it. Perhaps you are like that, unclassified.

Some one says, "Is John a Christian?"

"Well," the answer is, "he reads his Bible and appears to pray, but he always chooses friends who certainly are not."

Is that how people speak of you? Let me beg of you to settle the question and make your choice, and let every one know that, like King David, your heart is *fixed*. "O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise," he could say. (Psa. 57. 7; 108. 1.)

We are told of King Jotham that he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. It says, "So Jotham became mighty, because he prepared [or established, or fixed] his ways before the Lord his God." (2 Chron. 27. 6.) He acted with a fixed intention, not like King Rehoboam of whom the opposite is said:

"He did evil, because he prepared [or fixed] not his heart to seek the Lord." (2 Chron. 12. 14.)

With Jotham there was no half-and-half intention, no uncertain sound in his movements. He was definitely for God, for His house, His kingdom and His glory.

Are you? If so you will be happy and make others so, and give joy to the heart of Christ, as He looks down from heaven on this earth to see those whose hearts are perfect towards Him. For He loves those who love Him and seek His interests here.

## Catherine's Bible

A FEW years ago the Lord Jesus called a schoolgirl of sixteen years old, named Catherine, home to Himself in heaven. She loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and it comforted her parents to know that she had entered into great joy, which would never be broken into by sorrow, as so often happens here on earth.

She left behind some precious things, amongst them her Bible and her diary. I wonder if you were to die, would your parents know that you were happy for ever with Jesus?

Catherine's Bible was underlined in places. A few words and sentences which had been specially loved by her were marked in this way. You can imagine how these underlined

sentences comforted her mother, for it showed her what her daughter had especially valued.

The first word that her mother noticed marked was on the first page, the first printed page, before the Bible begins, the word *Holy*. If you open your Bible at the very beginning you will read, "The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments." Catherine's mother understood why that one word *Holy* was underlined, for they had often talked about God's holy word, and how although printed like any other book, it was the living, imperishable voice of God to men.

The Bible in many schools and colleges is treated as a classic, as Shakespeare or Milton, or any great literary work ; but God's word is not like other books, nor is it the work of any *man*, but given from God's own mouth. It will live and speak and be fulfilled when every earthly book has disappeared.

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth : but the word of our God shall stand for ever." (Isa. 40. 8.) This is what the Prophet Isaiah tells us in the Old Testament, and Peter says the same in the New, "For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away : but the word of the Lord endureth for ever." (1 Peter I. 24, 25.)

Catherine knew this, and loved and honoured the holy book. Her mother turned over the pages carefully, for all that her daughter had

marked and thought and written was very precious to her in her sorrow, and she came to the Book of Psalms. In Psalm 51, at the seventh verse, she found another underlining. The verse was : "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean : wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." In the margin was written, "He has, He has." What did she mean ? Her mother knew ; she meant that He, the Lord Jesus, had washed *her*, and that *she* was whiter than snow.

Catherine's relations all knew that she belonged to the Lord Jesus, she confessed Him gladly, but there in her Bible was another witness to the fact that she belonged to the Lord, who had washed her and given her "an inheritance among them that are sanctified."

I wonder if you, who are reading this, whether boy or girl, have first believed in your heart and then confessed with your mouth the Lord Jesus ? If this is so, then should you be called away from this earth, like Catherine, you will be taken to be with Jesus, where He is, for He must have all His own to be with Him.

Every Christian child is valuable to Christ, for He has *bought* His own, and the price He paid was His own life. He laid it down for every believing boy or girl. He gave Himself for His sheep. He said Himself when on earth, "I am the good shepherd : the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." (John 10. 11.)

# REPENTANCE

WHAT is it to repent? Have you ever really thought about it. Evidently it is an important matter, for when John the Baptist came to the Jews to prepare the way of the Lord, he said, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Then when the Lord Jesus Himself came, He said the very same thing, "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4. 17.)

So it is a great matter to understand what it is to repent. There is to be regret for what has been done or left undone, a turning of our faces toward God, instead of our backs, like the Jews of old.

Perhaps you have never done anything very wicked, but you have forgotten God and never listened to the gospel, nor given your heart to the Lord Jesus. God calls you to repent and believe His message of grace and forgiveness.

Let me tell you of a man who did repent. A Christian gentleman had a soldier son. Tidings came to this father one day that his son had been wounded in battle and was not expected to live. He hurried to the hospital to see him. On arriving, he first saw the doctor and asked if his son was likely to get well.

"He cannot live more than a few days," he answered.

So it was with a very sad heart that he went

in to see his boy, for he knew that he had never repented, and that so far he had never owned he was a sinner.

Imagine how glad he must have been to hear his son say, "Oh, father, the doctor says I am dying, and I am not ready. Tell me how I can be prepared. Make it so plain that I can get hold of it."

"My son," said his father, "do you remember one day when you came home from school; you had vexed me and I rebuked you? You became very angry and used harsh language."

"Yes, father; I was thinking about that before you came, and I wanted to see you badly and ask you to forgive me again."

"Do you remember, after your anger was over, how you came in and said, 'My dear father, I am so sorry for the way I spoke to you. Will you forgive me?'"

"Yes, I remember well."

"Do you remember what I said to you as you wept?"

"Oh, yes; you said, 'I forgive you with all my heart,' and you kissed me. I shall never forget those words!"

"Did you believe me?"

"Certainly, I never doubted anything you said."

"And then, did you feel happy again?"

"Yes, father; perfectly happy."

"Well now, my son, this is the way to repent and come to Jesus. Tell Him, 'I am

so sorry,' just as you told me, and He will forgive you a thousand times more quickly than I did."

"Father, is this the way to become a Christian?"

"I don't know any other way, my dear boy."

"I can get hold of this. Oh, I am so glad you came to tell me, and have made it so plain!"

The wounded man turned his head on his pillow. He told God how sorry he was for his neglect of Him and His beloved Son. There was silence for some time, but when the father felt his son's hand laid on his, and the word, "father" spoken in tones of tenderness and joy, he knew a change had taken place.

"Father," he said again, "it is all right with me, Jesus has forgiven me. I know He has, for He says so, and I take His word for it, just as I take yours."

After a while the doctor came in. He felt the pulse of the dying man and said with surprise, "Why, you look better."

"I am better, doctor; I'm going to get well."

He did get well and lived to be the joy of his father, who had shown him what it was to repent and believe the gospel.

Have you ever done as this man did? Have you ever said to God from the bottom of your heart, "I am sorry that I have forgotten Thee,

and gone my own way and thought my own thoughts" ?

If you are genuine about this, there will be joy in heaven, for the Lord Jesus said when down here, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth." (Luke 15. 10.)

## The Blackboard and its Questions

THE head of a large girls' school did quite an unusual thing one day. Instead of taking the Scripture class in the ordinary manner, she said, "I am going to write a few questions on the blackboard, and I want you all to answer them on the papers I am giving you. No one will see them but myself."

These were some of the questions :

- (a) Who is the Lord Jesus Christ ?
- (b) Why did He come into this world ?
- (c) Has the knowledge of His coming into this world made any difference in your life ?
- (d) What is a Christian ?
- (e) Are you one ?

The girls did their best in answering, and handed their papers to the headmistress.

One girl had answered especially well. To the question, "What is a Christian ?" she

had written, "A Christian is one who seeks to follow Christ." And as the answer to, "Are you one?" she had put, "Yes, I am; I asked the Lord Jesus to take me, and I am sure He has."

Some of the answers were vague and incorrect, so at the next Scripture class, the head mistress went over the questions, as she saw by the answers that many of the pupils were not taught the knowledge of God at home.

She turned to the first question, "Who is the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"He is the Son of God, and not only the Son of God, which a great many people admit, and put their own meaning to the expression 'Son,' but He is God," she said.

"In John I we read, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.' Then the Lord Jesus is also the Saviour, for Jesus means Saviour, as we find in Matthew 1. 21, 'And thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.'"

She then turned to the Old Testament, and there read from Isaiah 9, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." There were many titles of the Lord Jesus written on the blackboard, and very possibly Revelation 19. 16, where it is said, "He hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of

lords." The Lord Jesus is seen in this chapter coming to reign and judge. He comes forth from heaven, "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."

The mistress explained that the lowly Jesus, who walked this earth and died on the cross, is the same One who will be known as King of kings and Lord of lords. He calls us all to bow our hearts to Him now, and He will love us and care for us as the Good and Great Shepherd until we are all safely with Him for ever.

All this was new to some of the pupils. I wonder if it is to you?

Jesus, the Lord Jesus Christ, asks you for your heart's allegiance. Will you give it to Him now, without delay! Then you will be able to answer the third question, and own that the coming of the Lord Jesus into this world has made a great difference in your life, for knowing Him and His love for you will have changed your whole outlook.

## “IT IS WELL”

DIANA, a little girl of nine years old, had been taught some wonderful things about God and about heaven. She knew that God had forgiven her sins for Christ's sake, and that if she left this world she would go to a better one where Jesus lives, He who had died for her sins, and brought her to God.

She loved to read the Bible, and one story she was very fond of was the account of the Shunammite, the rich woman who cared for God's servant, Elisha, and built him a room on the wall of her house. (2 Kings 4.) Although this woman was rich, she had no child, and God rewarded her for her goodness to His servant, Elisha, by giving her a son. Then one sad day, when the little boy was out in the harvest-field he was taken suddenly ill. He said to his father, "My head, my head," and the reapers carried him in to his mother and he lay on her knees for a little while and then he died.

His mother was very sad indeed, for he was her only little boy! She took him up to Elisha's room, laid him on the bed and hurried off with one of the servants to find Elisha, for she knew that he was a man of God, and the only one who could help her in her trouble.

Elisha saw her coming to him, and sent his servant Gehazi to meet her. Elisha told him to run and ask, "Is it well with thee? is it

well with thy husband? is it well with the child?”

Gehazi did so, and the rich woman answered, “ It is well.”

It seemed a strange thing to say, but the sorrowful mother knew that all that God allowed was *well*.

Diana knew this too, although she was only nine years old. She was taken ill, and as she grew worse she knew that the Lord Jesus was taking her home to Himself in heaven.

One day she said to the aunt with whom she lived, “ When I am dead, I should like Mr. Griffen to preach to the children and persuade them to love the Lord Jesus, and not to tell lies, but obey their parents and think of dying and going to heaven. I have been thinking what text I should like him to preach from—I should like 2 Kings 4. 26, ‘ It is well.’ You are the Shunammite, auntie, Mr. Griffen is the prophet, and I am the Shunammite’s child. When I am dead I daresay you will grieve, but you need not. The prophet will come to see you, and when he says, ‘ How is it with the child?’ you may say, ‘ It is well.’ I am sure it will be well with me, for I shall be in heaven and singing the praises of God and you must try and think it well too.”

When little Diana died this was done. Mr. Griffen told the children how happy she had been to go to the Lord Jesus, for she knew that He had redeemed her. She was His own, one of His jewels, and she had gone to perfect

happiness, never to have an ache again, but to enter into the presence of Jesus, to be with the One who loved her and gave Himself for her for ever.

Suppose you were to die quite soon, would your parents be able to say, "It is well with the child"? There are many little graves in the cemeteries, shewing clearly that children do die. There is no doubt about that, but it is so wonderful to know that God so loved the world, which means the people on this earth, that boys and girls as well as grown-ups might live for ever with Him.

He wants boys and girls in His home above, and says, as no one else on earth could ever say it, with so much tenderness and love, "Come unto me."

If you come to Him, which means speak to Him and give Him your heart, and "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously"; then, should you die, your friends will be able to say truthfully, "It is well with the child."

# The Trappist Monk

SOME years ago there lived in North Germany a young man who did his own will and went his own way. He had no regard for his parents' wishes, nor for order or government, and learnt to do wickedly. Satan, the god of this world, had his eye on this young man and helped him to increase in evil doing and extend *his* kingdom; so that he was more desperate and foolhardy than all his wicked companions.

But God was looking on, and He claimed the young German's soul for Himself. Karl was arrested, convicted of his sin, and trembled as he thought of a judgment to come; he ceased to do wickedly, but knew not how to do well.

He was overpowered as he thought of his awful life, and his one desire now was to atone in some way for his past sins. The question was—*how* was he to do so!

The convents he knew of in Germany were proverbial at that time for comfort and ease and good living. He felt to enter one would be but idle waste of time.

At last, after many inquiries, he heard of a convent in Sicily, where there lived an order of monks called Trappists. Here everything was most severe. Little food, long hours spent in prayer and fasting, were the order of the house. No conversation was allowed except for an hour a week, no change of clothes, no

outings, no letters. Life in fact was a scourge from morning till night.

Karl thought that if he lived a life like this his position might in some way be eased in the judgment day and possibly some of the horrors of eternal punishment be avoided. So he set out to walk the long journey of hundreds of miles on foot, begging as he went.

At last he reached the convent, worn out with his weary tramp and the exposure it entailed, and rang the gate-bell for admittance. The gate was opened by a very aged monk, so old and feeble that it was as much as he could do to open the gate at all.

"What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Oh," answered the young German, "I want to be saved, and to atone for a very wicked life by prayers and hard work and self-denial."

The old monk looked interested. "Come in," he said, "and sit down and tell me more about yourself."

He took him into a little room near the gate, where they were alone together. "Now tell me what you mean," said the old man. "I should like to hear your story."

So Karl told him his sad history and how he hoped that by spending the rest of his life in penance, he might escape some of the judgment he deserved, and ended his story by saying, "Tell me what I am to do and I will gladly do it."

"If you will do what *I* tell you," replied

the old monk, "you will go back to Germany, for there has been One down here who has done the whole work in your place before you came, and He has finished it, *so there is nothing left for you to do.*"

Karl did not know what to make of such words. "Who has done it?" he asked.

"Did you never hear of the Lord Jesus Christ?" asked the old man.

"Yes, of course I have heard of Him."

"Do you know where He is?" said the monk again.

"Yes, of course I know, He is in heaven," replied the German.

"But tell me," said the monk, looking earnestly into his face, "do you know why He is in heaven? He was not always in heaven, you know. He came here to do the work that *you* want to do yourself. He came down here to bear the punishment of your sins and He is in heaven *because the work is done*. If it were not so He would still be here, for He came to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and if anything remained to be done, He would still be here; for He undertook to do the whole work Himself, and He has gone back to heaven because He has *done* it. He said on the cross, 'It is finished.' What was finished? It was the work *you* want to do."

"And now," added the monk, "if you want to add the crowning sin to your wicked life, and do something worse than you have done before, you may stay here and cast

contempt upon the blessed, perfect work of the Son of God by taking upon yourself to do what only He could do. It may seem strange to you that I stay here where Christ is thus insulted, but I am very old and can only walk to the gate, so I must stay till the Lord calls me home. You may remain three days and I will tell you all I can about the Lord Jesus, and then go, I beseech you, and preach to your friends in Germany."

Karl did stay, and peace and joy filled his heart in believing. Then he returned and spent the rest of his life telling in private and public the blessed news of the finished work of Christ.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. 4. 5.)

Cast your deadly doing down,  
Down at Jesus' feet ;  
Stand in Him, in Him alone,  
Gloriously complete !  
"It is finished !" Yes, indeed,  
Finished every jot :  
Sinner, this is all you need ;  
Tell me, is it not ?

# WILLIAM TYNDALE

HIGH up on one of the boldest of the Cotswold Hills in Gloucestershire, England, is to be seen a monument to the memory of William Tyndale. His portrait hangs in Magdalen College, Oxford, and shews us the kind, good face of a thoughtful man, for whom we cannot be sufficiently grateful, as he translated the New Testament, and part of the Old Testament too, into English as spoken in the sixteenth century. He then printed the Testament and distributed it far and wide.

Printing had been discovered some few years before, and Tyndale saw at once how it might be used for giving the English people God's word more cheaply, for Bibles in his day were very expensive, always in Latin and written by hand, and very few of the people possessed copies. In the reign of Richard II the cost of a Bible in Latin was £41 13s. 4d., but after printing was used, the price in Henry VIII's reign was reduced to £7.

Tyndale had read the Bible in Latin, and whilst reading it he was brought to confess himself a sinner and to turn to the Lord Jesus for salvation. He realised that the Bible was the most valuable thing the world contains, and he longed that such a treasure might be in the hands of old and young, rich and poor.

"If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause that every boy that driveth the plough

shall know more of the scriptures than thou dost," he said to a monk who had no love for God's word.

This became Tyndale's absorbing thought. Here was a marvellous book, which was itself living, and shewed men how they too could live, and that for ever, in eternal happiness ; a book which told the truth about God, about men, about life and death, about another world, about sin and how it was overcome, and how to get to God even now, the most wonderful book that any boy or girl could possess, a book whose words will never pass away, because it is the word of the eternal God. "Heaven and earth," the Lord Jesus said, "shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away."

Tyndale went as a student to both the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and then became tutor to a family named Walsh. Whilst there he spoke the truth so plainly that he was obliged to flee to London, where he hoped that he would be helped with funds to print the New Testament. He met with nothing but discouragement, however, until he came to know a merchant named Humphrey Monmouth, who loved him for Christ's sake, and did all he could to help him in this great work.

In spite of his help, he found to his sorrow that it was useless for him to continue his work in England ; so gathering together his precious manuscripts he crossed the Channel and started work again at Hamburg. There

he continued for a time, but was discovered and went on to Cologne; and the same thing happening there, he went to Worms, where he was able to finish the translation.

Then the printing began, a slow and tedious process in those days, but it went through safely, and Tyndale was faced with the difficulty of getting the Testaments across to England, as they had to be hidden from the enemies of the truth. He managed to get them packed in sacks of corn, and put in with other goods, and in this way they reached London safely; and with the help of some godly merchants they were distributed in many English homes, where, as in the days of the Lord Jesus, the common people received the word gladly.

Tunstall, Bishop of London, was so angry at finding that so many of the people possessed printed Testaments in their own language that he bought up a large consignment and then burnt them publicly at St. Paul's Cross.

But in doing this he overstepped the mark, for it had the advantage of making people inquire what there was in the books that caused the Bishop to burn them, and buying them out of curiosity, and through reading them, many were blessed. Besides this, the money given for the purchase enabled Tyndale to print more.

His history has what perhaps many would call a sad ending. Whilst he was working steadily with the printing at Antwerp he was betrayed to his enemies by a supposed friend

and imprisoned in Vilvorde Castle. Whilst there in suffering and great discomfort the jailor and his daughter and other members of his family were converted.

This must have been a great joy to him in his loneliness! Some of the prisoners, too, were brought to know and believe in Jesus.

Tyndale expected death as man's reward for his efforts, but no doubt he knew the words he had translated and printed so many times : " Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried ; and ye shall have tribulation ten days : be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." (Rev. 2. 10.)

On October 6th, 1536, he was taken from prison, strangled, and his body burnt to ashes. Tyndale's last words were, " Lord, open the King of England's eyes " ; and within a year after these words a Bible in English was placed in every church in this land by the king's orders.

His life was not lived in vain, but was taken from him whilst he was doing a glorious work ; and every boy and girl who reads this and values God's word can help too to make it known.

Testaments can be bought very cheaply, and there are many homes around us where the word of God cannot be found. Would it not be a good thing for each one reading this to ask the question, " Is there anyone to whom I can give a Bible ? " and so become one of those whom God calls His messengers.

## An Offering For Sin

ISAAC was a Jewish boy living in Russia, brought up to read the Old Testament and to know God's law and His commandments and judgments. He was taught by a learned Rabbi, and all went smoothly with him as far as his outward life was concerned.

But one thing troubled him greatly. He knew that he was a sinner, and he was constantly thinking about his sins and how he could rid himself of them. His teacher told him that his father would bear them for him until he was thirteen years old, and Isaac dreaded the thought of what would happen then.

When that unhappy day arrived, he went to his parent and said, "Father, won't you bear my sins a little longer, just a month more?" But his reply was, "No, my son; you must bear them yourself now. I can do no more for you."

This was bad news, and depressed Isaac very much. He went on reading the Old Testament, and one day came upon Abraham's history, and saw how God had called him to leave his country and kindred and go to a land which He would shew him. The more Isaac thought over this, the more he felt sure that God was calling him in the same way, and at last he made up his mind to leave home and go to Germany. His parents, seeing that

his mind was made up, gave him their blessing and let him go.

He first went to Hamburg, and then crossed to England, finally settling in London. Here he met a German Jew, a Rabbi Stern, who, noticing his sad expression, said to him kindly, "Are you a Jew, my brother?" which was so feelingly expressed that Isaac opened his heart to him, and told him his history, and how he was burdened with the weight of his sins, which he had had to carry since he was thirteen years old.

Mr. Stern had himself left home and country to find rest for his soul, so took the greatest interest in Isaac. He read to him, amongst other scriptures, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and explained to him that the Messiah, as foretold in this and other scriptures, had come, and had suffered for the sins of the Jews and for all those who put their trust in Him. Isaac listened intently as Mr. Stern read through this wonderful chapter, and doubtless pointed out the following passages: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. . . . The Lord hath laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all. . . . For the transgression of my people was he stricken. . . . His soul was made an offering for sin. . . . He [Jesus] shall bear their iniquities."

No doubt Mr. Stern shewed him how many times in the chapter the words sin, transgressions, iniquities occurred, and that in

each case they were borne by the Messiah, Jesus, of whom it was said : " He shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. I. 21.)

Little by little the truth found its place in Isaac's heart. He believed the scriptures and realised that Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God, loved him, a lonely Jewish lad, and had given Himself for him. His heart was rested, the burden of his sins gone, and he wrote home to tell his father what had happened. He put it in this way :

I heard a sweet voice gently say,  
" Come unto Me and rest,  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon My breast."

He did not want to write the verse as it really reads :

I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
Come unto Me and rest ;

for he knew how his father hated that precious name ; but to give him first to understand what rest of heart was now his. Later on he told him the whole truth.

When Isaac's father read his son's first letter, he was afraid that he had come in touch with Christians, and wrote warning him to have nothing to do with Rabbi Stern ; but Isaac was so convinced that he was right that he replied telling his father his convictions.

The New Testament which his friend gave him was the key which unlocked the Old Testament and explained many things which

had puzzled him. So much so, that his next letter home was very definite : " The Messiah has come, I believe in Him," was his comment.

His parents were very angry when they found that their son had become a Christian, disowned him as a relation, and refused to have anything to do with him. But Isaac was proving the goodness of God at every turn in his path, and now he learned the truth of a verse which he had read many times : " When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

His faith and hope increased as the years went on, and he said to his friends, " Above all, why I believe in Jesus is because I feel He has silenced the yearnings of my soul." He must have meant that not only were his sins gone, but his heart was satisfied.

This is what God will do for every boy and girl who believes in Jesus. He will forgive their sins, and fill their hearts with peace and joy in believing. May God grant that no one reading this will miss such a blessing for time and eternity.

# The Blood of Jesus

WHEN Teddy was a little boy, he and his brothers and sisters often sang :

Precious, precious blood of Jesus,  
Shed on Calvary ;  
Shed for rebels, shed for sinners,  
Shed for me.

He did not know how precious that holy blood-shedding was to God, and to believers, until he grew older. Then he found out that what the hymn told him was also what the Apostle Peter said, "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ." (1 Peter 1. 18, 19.) He speaks of it as precious, just as the hymn does. And the Apostle John, too, learned its value, for he says : "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John 1. 7.)

Some years ago there lived a boy in Scotland who learnt how his sins were blotted out, and how he was cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus. His name was David, and when he left school, he went away from his happy home to learn a trade.

After a short time spent largely in going his own way and doing his own will, he had a serious accident. He was now unfit for work and was taken home where he gradually recovered.

His spirits, however, were very low, and he often cried like a child, and no one was able to comfort him. The fact was that he had sinned against God, and had given up the truths taught him at home.

He wondered constantly if God would forgive him. He knew he deserved nothing but judgment and God's anger for ever. These thoughts were in his mind day and night. He knew that he would have to give an account of himself to God, and that Jesus had said on earth that all will be raised from their graves, and that all will hear His voice and "shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." (John 5. 29.)

David knew all this, and lived in fear that he would die unforgiven for his past and be lost for ever. There was one thing, however, that David did not know. He had never realized the greatness and value in God's sight of the work of Jesus on the cross. He only thought of his sins and how he had left God out of his life.

With these gloomy thoughts in his mind, he became very depressing to the family. One day he had been praying in the woods, and came in looking full of joy.

"What has happened to David?" his sister asked.

His mother, seeing his happy face, said, "Why, David, what has made you so happy?"

"Oh, mother, he answered, "I see there is more merit in the blood of Jesus than there is guilt in my sins, so why should I fear?"

What a wonderful truth he had learned, that the work of Jesus in dying and shedding His precious blood for guilty sinners covered all his sins, and, indeed, the sin of all who by faith claim its virtue !

Do let me beg of you to think quietly for a few moments of the value of Christ's precious blood. Of course, you know about it, but has it washed you white as snow.

The dying thief, on the cross, was the first to benefit by the death of Jesus and His shed blood, and since then thousands and thousands have proved its value, and have said with the psalmist David, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Psa. 51.)

So we hope that you, too, will be able to sing, as Teddy and his brothers and sisters did :

Precious blood that has redeemed us,  
All the price is paid ;  
Perfect pardon now is offered,  
Peace is made.

## WHAT LOUISE LEARNT IN ENGLAND

DREADFUL things were happening in Europe during the years 1914-1918. A war was raging, Satan was hurrying men to destruction ; but on the other hand, God was bringing them to know something of Himself and His grace and goodness.

It is not possible to tell you now of the ways that God took to bring people to a sense of their sin and distance from Him and to accept Christ as their Saviour ; but you will like to hear of a girl of seventeen who turned to God from worshipping an idol, and that idol was *herself*.

Her name was Louise, and she lived in Belgium. She was quite small when her father died, and at seventeen years old she found herself without a mother, a lonely orphan. She had kind aunts, but she felt so unhappy and restless that she decided to come over to England to perfect herself in the language. She went to a family, where she spoke French with the children and tried to learn all the English she could as well.

On Sundays the family went to a service where the word of God was read and explained, but Louise asked to remain at home as she did not wish to go. Mrs. Erske, the lady to whom she had come, was distressed to see how ignorant of God she was, and told her that she



*"Does it matter what I do on Sundays?"*

could not have her with her children if she refused to listen to the Scriptures. But Louise did not know what the Scriptures were. She had never seen a Bible.

"Does it matter," she asked, "what I do on Sundays, if I do your bidding and try to please you the rest of the week?"

"Very much indeed," the lady replied. "This house is dedicated to God. We seek to do His commandments and to be pleasing to Him. I could not have anyone with my children who despised or slighted God's word. Sunday is the Lord's day, and we do not play games or do ordinary work; it is set apart for Him."

This was surprising to Louise, to whom one day was the same as another; but she was happy with the family and agreed to fall in with the ways of the house.

Mrs. Erske bought Louise a Bible, and explained to her that it was the only book in the world which claimed to be God's message to men; and that it was written by holy men at different times and in different places; but that although the writers actually put pen to paper, God through the Holy Spirit told them what to say.

Louise commenced at the beginning of Genesis, but she did not understand it, so Mrs. Erske read with her, beginning with Matthew's gospel.

King David tells us that, "The entrance of thy words giveth light," and as Louise read,

light poured into her heart, the very light of heaven. She had been living in a dark house all her life, but now the shutters were gradually opening and a stream of light from heaven was entering, showing her herself, an ignorant, sinful girl, and Christ a wonderful Saviour.

Everything and everyone seemed different! When Louise began reading the Gospel of Matthew she thought it an interesting story, but that it had nothing whatever to do with her; but by the time she had finished reading the four gospels she found out that she was a sinner, lost, and without any means of saving her own soul from the judgment to come. But she saw, too, that the gospels had been written for her and for every needy boy and girl.

She found out that one of the reasons why Jesus had come into this world was that He had died to put away *sin*, her *sin*, from God's sight and from her sight too, so that cleansed and forgiven she might stand before God, one of the many brought to Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. It was wonderful to her to think that God should take such an interest in a lonely girl, and she turned to Him and asked Him for Christ's sake to forgive her and make her His child, and she soon knew that her prayer was answered.

Paul writing to the Ephesians says: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were

sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. 1. 13.)

Louise *trusted*, and *believed*, and was *sealed* with the Spirit of God. What a wonderful thing to happen to a girl of seventeen! I wonder if it has happened to you?

Another life had begun for Louise! She longed to go to her sister and brother in Belgium and tell them what wonderful things she had learnt in England, but the great war was in progress and she could not get letters to or from them. So she had to wait and trust and pray, and in spite of her anxiety about her relations she was full of joy, because she had believed. She was like the disciple who came to the sepulchre of the Lord Jesus, of whom it says: "Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed."

This is what Louise did. She *saw*, by faith, Jesus a babe in the manger, and she *believed* that He was Jesus, who should save His people from their sins. She *saw* Jesus dying on the cross to put away sin, and she *believed* it was for her.

She *saw* the empty sepulchre and she *believed* that Jesus had risen from the dead.

She *saw* the disciples watching Jesus ascending to heaven and a cloud receiving Him out of their sight, and she *believed* that the same Jesus who had died, had also risen and gone into heaven.

She knew, too, that she could speak to Him there, and that having died for her, He was living for her, and for every boy and girl who puts his or her trust in Him.

I wonder if you have seen and believed. There are many boys and girls, too, who have *seen*, but they have not *believed*. Can you say, as did the Apostle Paul: "I know whom I have believed."

## TWO VISIONS

BERTIE had grown into an unhappy, irritable boy, and was becoming a sorrow to his mother and sister.

He had left school and had started life in a military college. Born to wealth and high estate, he would one day be in a position to influence the lives of his fellows; and his gentle mother, who loved all that was good and truly great, was much distressed by his selfish, rude behaviour. How could he influence others rightly when he could not control himself?

Of what use was it to be clever at books and a first-class athlete if he had not learnt to master his own evil passions? No doubt his mother often thought of this, and the words of the wisest of men: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls," and longed that

he might prove the happy side of the question, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty ; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

One Saturday afternoon, when alone with Bertie, she said to him, "I should like you to go with your sister to take the Lord's supper to-morrow"; but to her grief he replied in the short rude way he had recently adopted, "Then I just *shan't*." No more was said. His mother left the room and no doubt took the matter to God and told Him about it, and counted on His power and mercy to act for her son.

Does it not say, "Trust in him at all times ; ye people, pour out your heart before him : God is a refuge for us." (Psa. 62. 8.) This was indeed a sad time for her, but God, her God in whom she had trusted, would come in for her in His own way and time. Bertie knew how he had grieved his mother, but he was rebellious and contrary.

When they were alone again, his mother said, "Bertie, I have been thinking over your words, and I feel it would be better, in your present state, to remain at home to-morrow, and not to take the Lord's supper." Imagine her sorrow when he answered angrily, "Then I just shall."

Sunday came, and Bertie, still self-willed and careless, went off with his sister.

It was an awful thing to attempt to remember the Lord Jesus in such a spirit, but as Bertie

sat there God spoke to him and gave him to see the wonderful love of Jesus in dying for him, and something of the wickedness of his own heart ; his heart which, like yours and mine, is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" ; and he cried to God for mercy. He hardly heard the words of the speaker, for God took possession of his heart and showed him something of His own great goodness in giving His Son to die.

He showed him a sight which Bertie had never before seen—Jesus, dying on the cross for *his* sins ; Jesus, suffering untold agonies from the hand of God and man that *he*, Bertie, a sinful boy, might be brought home to God.

His soul was humbled, swept of its wrong thoughts against God, for the goodness of God had made him repentant. He had heard from his babyhood of the death of Jesus, and knew that He had suffered for the sin of the world ; but now he saw that it was for himself that Jesus had died, and he walked home saying in his heart, "The Son of God . . . who loved me and gave himself for me." A wonderful change had taken place, for he knew that God for Christ's sake had forgiven him.

A new life had begun for him, and he was not ashamed to confess it. He was happy because, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." He was free too, because Satan was no longer his master, but the Lord Jesus Christ.

As the days went on Bertie learnt many

lessons which gave him increased gladness and joy in God ; lessons which would last through eternity, for what God teaches us is *for ever*.

He was one day, as a young lieutenant, marching by the side of his men along the country roads, when God showed him another wonderful sight.

He had thought much of the cross and the sufferings of Jesus, and had realised a little what His death had meant for him ; but as he walked along thinking of verses he had been reading from his New Testament that morning, God showed him where Jesus *now* is—*not on the cross*, but at the right hand of God *in heaven*. He showed him heaven opened and Jesus at the right hand of God.

This was a fresh vision to Bertie ; and the glorious sight linked his heart with a living, exalted Saviour, who had all might and power and dominion, who would sustain him day by day in his conflict on earth. He saw that he was no longer linked with a suffering Christ on the cross, but with One who had risen and had annulled the power of Satan and of death.

Forgiveness he had ; but now his soul was filled with peace and an overflowing joy. He had learnt that Jesus was delivered for his offences, now he saw that He was raised again for his justification. (Rom. 4. 25.)

He saw too that his links were to be with heaven, not with earth, for Jesus was there, not here ; and other wonderful lessons which are too many to be told now.

Do ask yourself as you read this, Have I seen these visions? Have I seen Jesus dying on the cross for me? Have I seen Jesus, the Lord Jesus Christ, living in the glory for me? Bertie was so full of joy that afterwards he wrote the following lines :

Peace with God, for *Christ in heaven*  
Object is of faith to me ;  
Peace with God! the Lord is risen!  
Righteousness now counts me free.  
Peace with God—for *Christ's in glory*,  
God is just and God is love ;  
Jesus died to tell the story,  
Foes to bring to God above.

## THE SWEET SINGER

NOT many years ago there lived a lady named Jenny Lind, who had a most beautiful voice and sang often to thousands of charmed people. Her voice was so strong and yet so sweet, that she was considered one of the best singers in the world.

But suddenly she heard an incomparably sweeter voice, a voice from heaven, and she ceased her own singing to listen to the voice of Jesus, the Son of God. He spoke to her heart and told her that He had died for her, and was going to have her in His glorious home above for ever, and that she might have the privilege of singing to Him for the rest of her life here. She responded gladly to

His desire for her, and became His, body, soul, and spirit.

One day a friend found her by the sea with her Bible open on her knee and said : "Whatever made you give up your public singing at the very height of your fame?"

She answered simply, "When every day it made me think less of this," and Jenny touched her Bible, "and nothing at all of *that*," and she pointed to the blue sky above her, "what else could I do?"

Has any boy or girl reading this ever given up anything for such a good reason?

Jenny Lind knew the Bible and that it said, "Set your affections on things above, where Christ sitteth," and she would not let the glory of this world dim her appreciation of the world above.

She had purpose of heart to cleave to the Lord. (Acts 11. 23.) She, like Moses, refused the glitter and glow and the fame of this world and chose that better part, to sit at the feet of Christ and learn from His teaching in His word, and she had deep joy in her heart, such as no earthly applause ever gave her.

Let us all beware of anything which spoils the freshness of the Bible, or hinders our longings for what is holy and eternal. Novel reading, the pictures, a life of sport, will do this and leave the spirit of the young Christian dry, barren and unhappy. Let us refuse the evil, and choose the good, every day of our lives, until we are safely with Christ for ever.

## God's Great Mercy

GOD has spoken to us in His word of many wonderful things, which surely every boy and girl would like to know something about, such as mercy, grace, love, faith, hope, peace and joy, and many others.

It is a help in trying to understand these glorious truths, to find the first time they are spoken of in the Bible. The first time we read of love is in connection with Abraham loving Isaac, and the first time the words *mercy* and *merciful* are used is in connection with Lot, Abraham's nephew.

Lot saw a well-watered plain and decided to settle there in comfortable surroundings. He did not inquire of the Lord, and found himself very soon in trouble, and surrounded by evil men and their wicked ways.

The city, Sodom, in which he lived was so sinful that God decided to overthrow it, but before He did so He showed mercy to Lot and sent His angels to take Lot and his wife and two daughters out of it, "*the Lord being merciful unto him,*" we are told. (Gen. 19. 16.) Lot realized this and said, "Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life." (Gen. 19. 19.)

We, every one of us, need the same mercy, not to be taken out of our cities actually, but

to be forgiven our sins and taken out of the wickedness of this world and linked with Christ in heaven, and His people on earth.

Quite recently, when Europe was being overrun by revolutionaries, a lad named Emil learned what it was to be shown mercy.

He lived in a village in Central Europe with a long, unpronounceable name. One day three men who had offended the government were brought into the village to be hanged. Emil saw it all. Two of the men were quickly dealt with, but the third had a wife and seven young children and begged for mercy.

The officials present sent to headquarters some miles distant to ask if it might be granted to him. All day long the village crowd and the condemned man, and his wife and children, awaited the reply, sobbing, hoping, fearing, almost beside themselves with anguish and terror. At last the mob made way for a man with a reply. It was a glorious answer. The man was to be forgiven and released. The joy of all was great and the condemned man went home with his wife and family to enjoy a happy meal, and then a peaceful sleep; a forgiven man to whom mercy had been shown!

Emil could not sleep that night. He went over all that had happened during the day, and as he thought and thought it came to him that the man who was pardoned had asked for mercy and received it. Then his thoughts turned upon himself. He knew that he was a sinner in God's sight, and condemned, for

what does God say? "He that believeth on him [God's Son] is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3. 18.)

Emil knew that he had never believed and felt his need for mercy, so he got out of bed and on to his knees, and prayed to God to forgive him his sins, and give him faith in His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. It was a never-to-be-forgotten night for Emil, for God, "*who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins,*" gave him a sense in his heart and mind that he was forgiven. He got up and dressed to start a new day, with a new life, for God had had mercy on him.

Have you ever asked for mercy? The tax-gatherer we read about in Luke 18 did. "God be merciful to me a sinner," he said, and we are told that he went down to his house justified. He asked for mercy and it was shown him.

So did king David. He had sinned, and he knew he deserved death, but he cried to God, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness," and God did have mercy on him, and He will on you, too, if you are sincere, and want it, and *ask* for it.

David asks so beautifully, and we can, too, "Remember not the sins of my youth . . . according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O Lord." (Psa. 25. 7.)

## TINA'S DECISION

WE knew Tina when she was quite a little girl, living near to us, but she soon left our town, and for some years we heard nothing of her. One day, however, she surprised us by calling, and told us the good news that she was now a Christian.

"Of course," she said, "I always believed that Jesus was the Son of God, and that He came into the world to die for sinners. I never disbelieved it for a moment, but it is one thing to believe it as a matter of history, and quite another for the fact of His coming and living and dying down here to grip your soul and deeply affect you."

"I realised at last," Tina continued, "that each one of us must have to do with the Lord Jesus personally; that it means little, possibly nothing, to say to God, 'We are *all* miserable sinners,' but that God will accept me, if I say, meaning what I say, '*I am a sinner; Lord, save me.*'"

"Yes; that is exactly what the gospels seek to teach us," I replied. "The publican in Luke 18 smote his breast and did not even look up, he was so ashamed of himself, and he said, 'God be merciful to me a sinner,' and he went down to his house justified. He genuinely humbled himself, and God exalted him; and He will do so for every one of us in the same way. I quite agree with you that

it is a personal matter between your own soul and the Lord ; you have sinned and I have sinned, and both of us, in order to be pardoned, must get into the presence of the Lord for salvation."

"Yes ; I saw that," she continued. "It must be a definite transaction between the Lord Jesus and my own soul. I must be conscious that He has spoken to me, and know that He has forgiven me, and I know it."

"Those who came to the Lord when He was on earth had one thing in common ; there were the sick, the blind, the lame and the leper, and sin-laden people, but they were deeply conscious, one and all, of their desperate need, need which could only be met by divine power from a divine hand. They knew no man could meet their need, and so do we, do we not, Tina ?"

"Yes, indeed," Tina agreed, and continued, "Then when I knew my sins were gone I felt I mustn't just leave it at that and be thankful, but must give myself wholly to the Lord. I knew it must again be a definite act, not just thinking and hoping and praying that it might be ; and one day I gave *myself* to the Lord, and now I am His for ever."

"I am glad," I replied. "To go through this world knowing that the Lord has loved you, and will love you eternally and that you belong to Him is a wonderful thing. It says of those in the Macedonian churches that they 'first gave their own selves to the Lord, and

unto us.' (2 Cor. 8. 5.) That was certainly a definite act, and no one can serve the Lord acceptably until definitely committed to Him."

Tina went back home again to tell her parents and friends, who had no love for the Lord in their hearts, how precious He had become to her.

Is He precious to you, I wonder? If not, there is something wrong, which He will put right if you are concerned about it and ask Him.

In Psalm 86, which is said to be "a prayer of David," he says, "Unite my heart to fear thy name. I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with ALL my heart; and I will glorify thy name for evermore."

So we, the reader and the writer, can both turn to the Lord in this way; first that our *heart* may be united, not half for self and self-interest, and half for the Lord; but that our love may be entirely for Him, so that we can praise with every bit of it, and can say with David, "I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with ALL my heart."

## Rich Towards God

ANN, as we will call her, looked sad. She had been looking into her heart and had found very unpleasant things there.

"Do pray for me," she said one day, "I am so proud."

She knew that when the Lord Jesus was on earth He was the very opposite of all she was finding in herself, for He could say, "I am meek and lowly in heart," and she longed to be more like Him.

No doubt there are many boys and girls who are finding out sad things about themselves, and wondering how they can alter their hearts. They feel they are very poor, not "rich towards God." They know that their hearts are cold, and that they have not yet learnt to be "true worshippers," the kind of people whom God is seeking. (John 4. 23.) They are conscious that their praises are poor, and that they would rather read a story-book than the Bible, but in spite of this they *do* love the Lord, who gave Himself for them.

Listen to this little parable. There was once a poor man, who became poorer and poorer, and one day looking into his purse he found only coppers. He knew that he could not live long on so little. What was he to do? He was too old to work, and he would not beg.

Suddenly he remembered that he had a friend, a very rich friend, who had said that

he would be glad to help him any time he was in need. As the poor man remembered what his rich friend had promised, his face brightened and he hurried off to go to him. He told his sad tale, and soon his purse was well filled, and he returned home a happy and contented man, satisfied and hopeful, as his friend had promised more for the future.

"Well," he said to himself, "I have indeed a true friend, my father's friend, and one I can rely on for the future." His thoughts now were centred on his friend and his goodness in meeting his case, and his riches and ability to do so.

This is what we all need to do when we feel how poor we are towards God, how little our hearts give to our God and Father, who has loved us and blessed us so richly. We, too, can go to the Lord Jesus and He will give us divine riches, and fill our hearts, if we ask Him, with love to God and such a deep sense of His grace, that we shall have something to give to God.

The more we study the life of the Lord Jesus down here, the more we shall be conscious of how unlike Him we are, but at the same time we shall value more and more His holy perfect life and ways, and feel the wonder of His words. Our hearts will become so delighted with Christ that we shall constantly be thinking of Him in glory where He *now* is, and as we meditate we shall become, without even knowing it, more and more like Him.

So that the way to become more like Jesus and rich towards God, is to be constantly occupied with our Lord Jesus Christ.

“ He is worthy ” ; take it with thee,  
 This one thought to ponder o'er,  
 Till His loveliness and beauty  
 Fill thy soul yet more and more ;  
 Till thy heart o'erflow with longings,  
 Till thy lips o'erflow with praise,  
 Till Himself becomes the object  
 Of thy lips and life and ways.

## Ethel's Decision

ONE day, not very long ago, I met Ethel, and after we had known one another a little while, she told me that she was a very different person from the Ethel of six months before, and that a summer holiday had changed her whole life.

She was employed in a convalescent home, and was given a fortnight's holiday in the year, but being an orphan and having no home she went each summer with a friend to some seaside resort.

One year she and her friend decided to go to a holiday home at Brighton. When she arrived she was given a welcome and found herself in nice surroundings. The time passed pleasantly enough, though Ethel heard things at morning prayer-time which very much surprised her.

There seemed to be two classes of girls in the home. One class read and studied their Bibles, and loved going to the meetings held in the house. They were to all appearances very happy, and were often round the piano singing hymns together. The other class was always out; they did not want to be bothered with meetings, they would say. Ethel belonged to this latter class. Not being happy she and her friends spent their time trying to find happiness, whilst the other class were so happy that they loved to do as the Bible says, "Is any merry? let him sing psalms." (James 5. 13.)

Ethel's great idea was to get as much fun out of her holiday as she could. She forgot that she might die one day, and that she had no passport for another world, and that no one will ever enter heaven with *one* spot of sin. She forgot, too, if ever she knew, why she was born into the world. "For thy pleasure," we read, "they are and were created." (Rev. 4. 11.) But in spite of trying to get away from the meetings Ethel was much impressed with what she heard of the love of God, and began to think that there were good things to be had which she was missing.

She began to see what a senseless, useless life she was living, just amusing herself and doing her own will, when God's thought for her was that her sins should be forgiven, and that she should do His will, and glorify Him

in her pathway here. So she looked on the good things, much as a hungry child without a penny looks in a baker's window, longing for, and really needing food, but unable to buy the smallest bun.

But little by little God's light began to shine into her dark heart, she saw the free-giving of God, and found out that forgiveness was to be had for the asking, because the Lord Jesus had paid such a tremendous price for her salvation that there was nothing left for her to pay. It was as if a rich gentleman had come along, and seeing the hungry child looking in at the buns and bread in the window, had said, "You look starving, my child, but I have paid for everything in the shop, go in and take what you like; it is all for the hungry and I am sure you are one of them."

Just as Ethel was about to return to work a letter came from the matron where she was employed saying that she might have another week's holiday, but when she asked the superintendent if she could stay she found that her bed was booked and there was no more room. This was a disappointment, and the superintendent noticing her look, said that if she cared to share a room with two others she might stay. This she agreed to do, and found herself in good company, for both of them loved the Lord Jesus Christ, and had found peace and joy in believing on Him. The morning she was leaving, one of them said to her, "Ethel, have you ever given yourself to the Lord?"

"No," she replied.

"You know that He died to put away your sins, won't you give yourself to Him now?"

"I will," Ethel answered from the bottom of her heart, and together they knelt down while she told the Lord Jesus that, as He had given Himself for her, from that moment she would give herself to Him, to belong to Him for ever.

It says of the Macedonians that "they *first* gave their own selves to the Lord" (2 Cor. 8. 5), and this was Ethel's beginning as a child of God. She, like them, definitely gave herself to the Lord.

Later on, one Sunday evening, when she had returned to her work, she told her friends when together what she had done, so that she believed in her heart and confessed with her mouth the Lord Jesus and she was saved from judgment and made a child of God for ever.

She knew that she had changed masters, and had passed from Satan to Christ, that she had stepped over the line from darkness to light, and that from being "*dead* in trespasses and sins" she had been made, by the Spirit of God, *alive* to Him.

I wonder if you who are reading this have known such a change and can say truthfully—

I thank Thee, Lord, Thou hast revealed  
Thy grace, and what Thou art :  
And now I come, to Thee I yield  
A trusting heart.

# A Small Beginning

HOW THE COURAGE AND FAITH OF A BOY WERE  
REWARDED

ABOUT two hundred years ago a baby boy was born to a rich farmer and his wife, a Mr. and Mrs. Berridge, living in the village of Kingston in Northamptonshire. They called him John, little thinking how well-known and loved that name would one day become.

Mr. Berridge loved his cattle and his sheep and determined that John should follow this calling too. But John loved reading and books, and his father began to have doubts as to his succeeding as a farmer.

From the age of nine to fourteen he lived with an aunt at Nottingham, with whom he was a special favourite. Here he went to school, and one day returning home after lessons, he was asked by a boy who lived near if he would like to come in and hear the Bible read. John consented, but as the boy friend was constantly asking him in always with the same intention, he tried to avoid him as often as possible.

In those days, two hundred years ago, Bibles were scarce and expensive, and to possess one was much valued by those who loved God and cared to know about Him.

One day, as John was coming back from a fair, his friend waylaid him. It happened that John had no excuse ready, and to avoid offend-

ing him he went into his house again, and listened to the reading of the scripture. This time his friend prayed too.

These readings made a great impression on John, but especially his friend's prayers. He had always thought himself a *good* sort of boy, and he knew his parents and his schoolmaster thought the same; but he began to find out what a *bad* boy he must be not to care to hear God's word; for if he were really *good* he would naturally like *good* things, such as reading God's word and prayer, and at last he agreed with God's thought about himself and about others, "There is none righteous, no, not one. . . . There is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Soon after this he left Nottingham and his friend, but he used to say in after years, when he was used of God to the blessing of many, that his first impression of eternal realities dated from these readings in the house of his boy friend; and he used himself to do as his friend had done, and ask one and another of his acquaintances to come in and read the book of life with him.

The name of his boy friend is unknown on earth, but known in heaven, and perhaps one day those of us who will spend eternity with Jesus will recognise him as the boy who brought his friend to the Lord Jesus Christ.

You will remember that Andrew brought his brother Simon Peter to Jesus, and Peter in his turn, when he preached at Jerusalem after

the descent of the Holy Ghost, was used of God to add three thousand to the company already there who loved Christ.

John Berridge left school at the age of fourteen and went home to his father at Kingston to learn to be a farmer. He was always getting into trouble over his work, being constantly wrong in his estimates when judging the value of the cattle and farm-stock for market. As buying and selling would be the chief business of his life, his father saw it would be useless for him to continue; and one day he said to him in despair, "John, I find you cannot form any idea of the price of cattle, I shall have to send you to college to be a light to the Gentiles."

So John went, and learnt many things which pleased him and delighted his friends; but very little of what would last for ever and bring glory to God.

For some years he was of no use to God, and was never blessed to the salvation of men's souls; but at the age of thirty-three he began to live in earnest; and the constant language of his heart was this:

"Lord, if I am right, keep me so; if I am not right, *make* me so; and lead me to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus."

God listened to his cry, and one day as he sat musing on a text of scripture, the following words seemed to dart into his mind like a voice from heaven: Cease from thine own works; only believe.

At once he understood. He saw where he had been making a mistake for years in trying to blend the law and the gospel, and to add the righteousness of Christ to his own supposed righteousness. He began to think on the words "faith" and "believe," and found out how frequently they are used in the Bible.

Then for the first time he preached in real power and numbers were brought to God. He preached Jesus Christ and His finished work, and the country people flocked to hear him from all parts and were blessed.

There were very few preachers in England in those days and John Berridge went through the central counties of England, and even into East Anglia, riding and walking miles that men and women and boys and girls might know that God was not against them, but for them, and that His desire was that they might have life, eternal life, life abundantly, through the death of His beloved Son.

His theme was, "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter 2. 24.) He worked hard for many years, numbers being brought to God through his preaching, and at the age of seventy-seven he passed into the presence of his Lord and Saviour.

The epitaph on his grave in Everton churchyard (Bedfordshire) is well worth seeing. If any boys or girls reading this account live



*John Berridge preaching*

near they should go and read it for themselves ; it will help them to remember the boy who found out that he had *no goodness of his own*, and to remind them that John Berridge first learnt of Jesus through a boy friend.

This is the epitaph :

HERE LIE THE REMAINS OF

JOHN BERRIDGE

AN ITINERANT SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, WHO  
LOVED HIS MASTER AND HIS WORK, AND AFTER  
RUNNING ON HIS ERRANDS FOR MANY YEARS WAS  
CALLED UP TO WAIT ON HIM ABOVE

READER

ART THOU BORN AGAIN ?

NO SALVATION WITHOUT A NEW BIRTH

I WAS BORN IN SIN, FEB. 1716

REMAINED IGNORANT OF MY FALLEN STATE TILL  
1730

LIVED PROUDLY ON FAITH AND WORKS FOR  
SALVATION TILL 1754

FLED TO JESUS ALONE FOR REFUGE, 1756

FELL ASLEEP IN CHRIST, JAN. 22nd, 1793

# A Lesson in Arithmetic

WILLIE spent his life like most schoolboys. He went to school in the morning, back home at noon to dinner, then off again for the afternoon, and home to tea. The evening was spent in preparing his lessons for the next day.

Nothing very exciting ever happened. In Willie's day there were not so many football and cricket matches as there are nowadays, nor were there any motor-cycles! But one day, however, he did get a surprise. On opening his desk at school to get out his books for the day's lessons he found some one had been there before him and had written on the inside cover of his note-book the following lines :

“ The one who by *addition* grows  
And suffers no *subtraction*,  
But *multiplies* a thing he knows,  
And carries every *fraction* ;  
Who well *divides* his precious time,  
Each part *proportion* giving,  
To sure success aloft will climb,  
Interest compound receiving.”

Who ever could have written it ? It must have been one of the masters, Willie thought, for the writing was clear and well-formed, too good a hand for one of the boys.

Willie is now grown up, but he has never found out who wrote the lines, nor has he ever

seen the words anywhere again. The rhyme made a great impression on him, and he did his best to add to his knowledge, to divide his time rightly, the result being that he did well at school and became later an able and successful man.

He is still adding and multiplying, but in a different way from when at school. Let us ask him and see what sort of arithmetic he is doing now.

"Are you still doing addition, Mr. Willie?"

"Well, yes, I hope so; there is plenty to be done."

"But whatever are you adding?"

"Peter tells us to add, doesn't he? If I remember rightly he gives us seven things to add. Let us read what he says: 'And beside this . . . *add* to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity,' which means love."

"And does it say anything in the Bible about subtraction?"

"I think it does. Isn't there a verse that says, 'Hold that fast which thou *hast*, that no man take thy crown'? (Rev. 3. 11.) This was said to the Christians at Philadelphia, and the same thing was said to the Christians at Thyatira in the second chapter of Revelation. It isn't much use adding if we allow Satan to come and subtract, so the Christians in both these places

were warned to suffer no subtraction. And one of the best ways to avoid losing what we have gained from God is to multiply what we have.

"Solomon says, 'There is that *scattereth*, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty,' and the Apostle Paul prays that the Colossians may *increase* in the knowledge of God. You can light thousands of candles from one wick without dimming its light. Each one of us can increase by learning of God and making the knowledge we have known to others."

"But however do you carry every fraction, Mr. Willie?"

"That was a lesson the Lord Jesus taught His disciples when here. 'Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost,' He said to them after the miracle of the feeding of both the five thousand and the four thousand. The bread of God, which the Lord Jesus Himself had blessed, was too precious for the birds of the air to feed on, it was to be eaten by those for whom Jesus had come to die.

"Then again, to continue our arithmetic lesson, a man of God was to *divide well his precious time*. Paul tells Timothy some of the things he was to attend to; his time was to be divided in giving attendance to doctrine, to reading God's word, to exhortation, to instructing those who opposed themselves to

the truth. He was told to 'meditate upon these things.' So he had no difficulty in knowing how to divide his time.

"Peter tells us what the result of diligence will be, it gives us compound interest. He says, 'Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly* into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' Compound interest means that your capital is given back to you added to your interest. This God will certainly do when His kingdom is set up on the earth. He will never be any man's debtor and this applies just as much to boys and girls."

It is worth while to be diligent in the kingdom of God!

## THEIR COVENANT

Boys and girls who read English history, know well that the reigns of Charles II and James II were times of cruel persecution, and that those who loved our Lord Jesus Christ and His truth suffered severely. In the year 1660 Charles II came to the throne and a persecution began, which increased in the reign of James II and did not subside until the year 1688.

It was a real test to be true to the Lord in those days, for it meant loss of property and the means of living and often imprisonment

and death. But at that very time, in the year 1683, it is recorded that fifteen young girls in the village of Pentland in Scotland used to come together in secret to pray and to speak of the Lord Jesus, whom not having seen they loved. They were like those spoken of in the third chapter of Malachi, who also lived in dark days, when the widows and the fatherless were oppressed and the stranger turned aside from his right, when the offerings of God and His commandments were set aside and slighted and God was robbed of His dues.

But even in such dark, sad days, there were those who were marked by doing what was pleasing to God, and which He delighted to notice.

These faithful people were marked by three things. First of all they feared the Lord, then they thought on His name, and then it says, they "spake often one to another." (Mal. 3. 16.)

Their ways were so pleasing to the Lord, and such a contrast to the evil and disobedience around, that He owned them by *writing a book of remembrance*, and saying that they should be His jewels, His special treasures in a day to come. "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Vers. 3. 16, 17.)

The fifteen girls at Pentland did very much the same, for they were conscious what a wonderful thing it was to belong to God in a day when so few loved Him and His beloved

Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. They made a covenant too, and signed their names at the end. This is how it reads :

*This is the covenant between the Lord and us, to give up ourselves freely to Him without reserve, soul and body, heart and affection : to be His children and for Him to be our God and Father, and may it please the Holy Lord to send His gospel to our land again.*

*O Lord, give us real grace in our hearts to mend Zion's breaches, that is in such a low case this day, and make us mourn with her: for Thou hast said that they that mourn with her in the time of trouble shall rejoice when she rejoiceth.*

(Signed) *Beatrice Umpherston, aged 10 years.*  
*Janet Swan, Mabel Craig, and twelve others.*

How the Lord must have looked down from heaven upon these girls and blessed them! What joy it must have given Him, even as it does now when He sees those who honour Him, in their thoughts, their words, and their ways!

Did the Lord answer their request and send them preachers again? He did indeed, for in five years' time, James II, the cruel persecutor of God's people, fled from the country, and William and Mary were chosen as joint sovereigns. They both feared God and gave liberty to their subjects to read the Bible in their own language again, and to meet together as in former days and to choose their own preachers.

How happy and thankful the Pentland girls must have been! Each one could say, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." (Psa. 116. 1, 2.)

## Them that Honour Me

SOME years ago there lived a little girl of eight years old, named Mary Bosanquet, who seemed very much like other little girls, though really there was a great difference, not in her appearance, but in her heart.

When God looks down on this earth, He looks, as Samuel told king Saul, not at the outward appearance, but at the heart, and when He looked into Mary's heart He saw something which pleased Him greatly, a willing and obedient spirit.

Amongst the servants in Mary's home there was one who loved God and read His word, and she used to talk to her about the wonderful things which happened years ago, and also about the marvellous things which are going to happen, and she explained to Mary that the Lord Jesus, who had created the world and everyone and everything in it, lived *now* in the highest heaven and was conscious of all that was going on here. He could read the secrets of every heart, and knew all the children on

the earth who loved Him and sought to please Him. He knew their names and their schools and every single thing about them. He could see in the dark as well as in the light, nothing was unknown to Him, nothing unseen by Him.

Whenever this faithful maid had the opportunity she told Mary something about the Lord Jesus : of His life, His death and resurrection, and many other things.

Mary read the Bible for herself too, and it grew precious to her ; but she found that her parents did not love the things of God, they lived in pleasure and " God was not in all their thoughts " ; so that she soon had a very difficult time, for as she grew older she was expected to go to the theatre and to dances and places where the Lord Jesus would not be welcomed.

She realised that He might come any day to take all His own to be with Him in heaven, and she knew that He would not like to find her in the company of those who did not love Him. Besides this, she felt that to be pleasuring with those who despised Christ was really denying Him. No girl who loved her mother would be happy with those who slighted her, indeed she would not enter the homes of such people unless it were to tell them what an excellent mother she had ! And Mary felt she could not speak of her Lord in places of amusement, so did not wish to go.

No doubt she had read what the prophet said to king Jehoshaphat when he linked

himself with the wicked king Ahab : " Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord ? " (2 Chron. 19. 2.) And also what the Apostle John said by the Holy Ghost : " Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." (1 John 2. 15.) These truths laid hold of her, for she desired nothing so much as to be pleasing to the One who loved her and had given Himself for her.

When she was twenty, her father, seeing her face was set heavenward, became very vexed with her and said that she must leave home unless she promised never to persuade her brothers to become Christians, nor to speak of Christ in the house.

This was a serious thing to promise. I wonder how you would have replied! To have to leave her parents and brothers and the beautiful house and grounds, and go into lodgings alone, the very thought of which frightened her, meant suffering and loneliness, but she knew the words of Jesus : " There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren . . . for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come life everlasting." (Luke 18. 29, 30.)

Mary knew these words well, and after praying, and weeping too, for it was hard to leave those she loved, she gave her father her answer. She told him it grieved her deeply to vex him, but she would be obliged to go, as she could not promise to refuse to speak of the

Lord Jesus to her brothers or to anyone, and that now she was of age she must obey God rather than man.

It was with a very sad heart that she left home to go amongst strangers ; but she was not left alone, she delighted in the Lord, and He gave her " the desires of her heart."

Her father died soon after her decision had been made, and she was left with a great deal of his wealth, which she at once began to use for the Lord. She bought a large house and took in orphan girls, to whom she taught the good news of God's salvation, besides all that was necessary to make them useful women. After a number of years in this happy work, she married a Christian who preached the gospel faithfully and was much blessed in the district where he lived.

You will wonder perhaps why I am telling you so much of Mary's history. It is that you may realise that everyone who is true to the Lord Jesus and puts Him first, will be cared for and honoured, even if persecuted by those who do not love him. " Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."

Every boy or girl who knows about the Lord Jesus belongs to one of these two companies—those who honour Him, or those who despise Him. Ask yourself, To which company do I belong ?

# WHY JESUS DIED

WHEN Mary was at a boarding school a special time was given to the girls each morning for reading their Bibles and for prayer. A bell rang at 6.30, the waking bell, and then at seven o'clock the silence bell told the school that now they could read for fifteen minutes quietly, until the next bell. Fifteen minutes was not very long, certainly, but it is surprising how much you can think about in so short a time.

Mary tried to make the most of those few moments in order to get a little heavenly food to carry her through the day. Sometimes she looked up subjects, such as faith, love, joy, and righteousness, and traced them through Scripture as well as she could, and at other times she would go through one of the sixty-six books given to us by God as His word. She used to read through the book she had chosen, to get its general teaching and scope, and then go through it again to get more detail.

One day she looked up some of the reasons given for the death of Jesus. Mary knew that Jesus had died to put away sin, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Yes, she knew that she had been brought to God by Jesus, but there were other reasons.

She read in Romans 14. 9 that "to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

She had never thought of this as one of the

reasons for the death of Jesus, that He might be her Lord, not only her Saviour from sin, but her Lord. She, then, was to be one of the faithful subjects of His kingdom not seen by this world, but every member loved and known by the Lord Himself. As Mary read this verse, it impressed her very much, so that she prayed that she might ever be a faithful and obedient subject to the One whom she now realized was her Lord.

As she searched on, she found another reason given for the death of Jesus. In Galatians 1 she read, "Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world." From this verse Mary saw clearly that the death of Jesus, His giving Himself, cut her off from the world.

No one quite knows whether a bat is a bird or an animal, for it has wings and can fly like a bird, but most of its habits are those of smaller animals. There are people like this, no one can be sure whether they are really Christians or not, for they are in some ways like those who love the Lord Jesus, and in other ways like those who have no desire to know and follow Him.

Mary saw that Jesus had died that she might be marked off from the world and its ways, its dress, its amusements, to be entirely for the Lord Jesus, who gave Himself to deliver her from it, "this present evil world." She prayed that she might seek from henceforth to be wholly for Him: not half and half, partly for

the Lord and partly for the world, for Jesus Himself had said, "No man can serve two masters."

Then there was another important reason why Jesus died. "He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. 5. 15.)

The Lord Jesus said when down here, "I do always those things that please him [God]," and the Apostle Paul could say of Him, that "even Christ pleased not himself." So this was to be Mary's aim, to be *for Him*, for her Lord, the One who had given Himself for her, to keep her from this evil world, and give her an object to live for, even Himself.

There are a good many more reasons given for the death of Jesus. Here are a few references which you can look up and pray about, if you really want to please the Lord Jesus, who loved you and gave Himself for you: Romans 4. 25; 1 Thessalonians 5. 10; 1 Peter 2. 24; Hebrews 9. 14, 26.

You would be well advised to read one of these verses each day, meditate on it and pray about it, and you will get great good and be able to tell others, too, some of the reasons why Jesus died.

## Alone with the Lord

JULIA was the only one in her family who loved the Lord Jesus. She loved Him because He first loved her, and she would often say in her heart, like the Apostle Paul, "The Son of God . . . who loved me, and gave himself for me." This was such a joy to her that she gave herself wholly to Him, remembering that He not only died "to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself," and "to bring us to God," but that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father. (Gal. 1. 3, 4.)

Wishing to be a living answer to such love, she said good-bye to the world and its amusements and diversions and linked herself with those who sought to live "according to the will of God." But it certainly was not always easy, for she had the world and the flesh and the devil against her, and she often had to remind herself that the powers for her were greater than the powers against her. God the Father, her Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, His beloved Son, and the Holy Spirit within her were ever for her, and how great their power!

Julia had eyes to see a great many things around her, which many miss. She observed the ways of men, and as she was daily learning from her wonderful guide-book, God's holy word, she grew in knowledge as well as in grace.

One thing she had noticed was that at the balls and parties and entertainments she had formerly frequented, the ladies often left the company and refreshed themselves in various ways by washing their faces and using various scents and smelling salts, and came back again looking all the better for their efforts.

“I will try that too,” she said to herself, “I will get as often as I can alone for ‘the washing of water by the word’ of God.” (Eph. 5. 26.) “I will get alone with the Lord, if it is only for five minutes every now and again, and He will refresh my soul and tell me of His love, and remind me where He is and what He is doing, and having been comforted and encouraged, I shall be able to go on in spite of the many distractions around me.”

This became the greatest help and cheer to Julia, she constantly ran up to her own room to get alone with the Lord Jesus, and was thus not only encouraged to continue in her lonely path, but she was enabled to wear her priceless ornament, that of a meek and quiet spirit, before those who had no love for her ideas or her ways. And the Lord Jesus looked down upon her and made her conscious of His favour and His holy friendship. “Ye are my friends” the Lord Jesus said when on earth, “if ye do whatsoever I command you.” (John 15. 14.)

Julia knew that her sins were forgiven and that she would go to heaven if she died, and

also that if obedient she might be amongst that privileged company who are called "my friends," so she studied the word of God to find out what the Lord's commandments were, and was like the Bereans, of whom it is written, "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17. 11.)

If boys and girls reading this will search the Scriptures and find out for themselves what are the commandments of the Lord, they will get immense gain and become of real service to the One whom they love.

Julia found out little by little how much she had still to learn. She discovered this by reading the word of God, but she found out too how increasingly great was God's grace and His power to carry her through. If she were speaking to you she would say in prose, if not in poetry :

"He, who hath made thee nigh,  
Will draw thee nearer still ;  
He, who hath given the first supply,  
Will satisfy and fill.  
He, who hath given thee grace,  
Yet more and more will send ;  
He, who hath set thee in the race,  
Will speed thee to the end.  
He loveth always, faileth never,  
So rest on Him, to-day, for ever."

## The Cloth Wholly of Blue

"WHAT are you reading, my boy?" said a mother to her small son, as she saw him bending over his Bible.

"I am not reading, mother," he answered, "I am looking at Jesus raising up Lazarus."

How pleased the mother must have been to see that her boy noticed and meditated on the very movements and words of Jesus, not only what He said and what He did, but *how* He said and did things.

We all, young and old, are sometimes inclined to read through accounts of the doings of the Lord Jesus among men, without stopping to meditate on each word, and on each movement of His gracious acts.

Mary heard about this boy, and it made her wish to look too, so she began to read a little, and then to put down her Bible and look.

One day she looked with the eyes of her mind right back to the wilderness and saw the tabernacle which Moses had set up, and the cloud which rested on it, as light by night and a shadow from the heat during the day.

She looked again; the cloud was moving forward. She saw the Levites engaged in taking down and packing up the different parts of the tabernacle, as Moses had commanded them, and then moving forward, following the leading of the cloud.

But there was one piece of the furniture of the tabernacle which she noticed particularly. It had a different covering from the other pieces. It was carried by staves by the Kohathites and had a covering of blue. What was it? she asked herself.

Mary looked into her Bible to find out, and this was what she read: "And when the camp setteth forward, Aaron shall come, and his sons, and they shall take down the covering vail, and cover the ark of testimony with it: and shall put thereon the covering of badgers' skins, and shall spread over it a cloth wholly of blue, and shall put in the staves thereof." (Num. 4. 5, 6.) What was this then? Why, surely, the ark of testimony which Moses had made of shittim wood and covered inside and outside with gold, and in which he had put three wonderful things, the law written on the tables of stone, Aaron's rod that budded, and the pot of manna.

Mary was still looking, when in her thoughts, she heard Moses say, as the ark moved forward: "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate thee flee before thee." (Num. 10. 35.)

"Why," Mary asked herself, "was the ark covered with blue?" And then she noticed something else of the same colour, for she saw a man standing by with a fringe of blue on his garment. "More blue," she said again, "and why blue, I wonder!"

"Blue is the colour of the sky," she said to

herself, "so I suppose the fringe of blue on the man's garment, like the covering of the ark of the testimony, must be to remind the people that they were not like the nations around them, who were of the earth, earthy, but God's special people, going from the land of cruel bondage, Egypt, to the land flowing with milk and honey, to Canaan."

Then Mary looked again. Not this time into the wilderness at the ark of the testimony, but at that holy Person, who was its great anti-type. With the eyes of her mind, she saw Jesus walking, and she looked upon Him as He walked. He was the true ark of the testimony, and He carried God's law in His heart. He too was covered with blue, for He was the Man out of heaven.

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming to him, and his whole soul was filled with reverence and joy as he looked on Jesus, and called others to do the same, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God."

The Apostle John was one who looked right into heaven and saw Jesus there. John the Baptist saw Him as a lowly Man walking on the earth, but the apostle saw Him in heaven in a very different character. He saw Jesus as Judge, and as King of kings and Lord of lords. It is well to notice how many times we are told in the Book of the Revelation that John looked and saw and heard.

The Lord Jesus would have every boy and

girl who reads this to do the same, looking on Jesus as he walked here, and looking on Him in the glory, where He now is. We can all pray that we may do so, and in this way become more like Him, before we reach Him where He is.

Supreme in glory, past His pain,  
Ascended up on high,  
He calls His own to wear again  
The colour of the sky.

## Singing to the Lord

JOAN often wondered how she could please the Lord Jesus, for she loved Him because He had made His love known to her. She could not help loving Him, for He had given Himself for her, forgiven her sins, and promised her a home above in His holy company when her life on earth should be ended. It would have been surprising if she had not loved, after knowing such gracious favour.

Joan often thought how nice it would be to be grown-up, when there would be so many more ways in which she could serve the Lord, but at twelve years old there did not seem to her to be many.

She knew that to obey her parents was pleasing to the Lord (Col. 3. 20), and she tried to do so, but she felt there must be many other things she could do to show how much she loved Him.

One day she read this verse : " I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving. This also shall please the Lord better than an ox or bullock that hath horns and hoofs." (Psa. 69. 30, 31.)

Now Joan had found another way in which she could please the Lord, by praising and giving thanks. This was a new thought to her. But what could she sing? Her songs must be in harmony with the music of heaven if they were to please the Lord of heaven and earth.

Joan knew what they sang above. Listen! " And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." (Rev. 5. 11, 12.)

Christ, the Lord Jesus Christ, was the subject of heavenly music. Joan knew this and found songs of the same kind to sing down here, and enjoyed knowing that she was pleasing to the Lord in doing so.

When older, she read an account of a village, a singing village, which interested her much. Mulheim, a little German village during the 18th century, now a large town, was a spot on earth in concert with heaven. Many of the

inhabitants were partly French, having fled from persecution in their own country, and their hearts were so full of praise to God for His mercy and love to them, that they were always singing. Even the boys and girls, who went to care for the cows and sheep in the fields, took hymnbooks with them so that they could learn to sing more heavenly songs. The washerwomen sang over their tubs, the carpenters and joiners sang as they hammered and sawed, and the cobblers as they mended their shoes, not foolish songs, but hymns of praise to God.

Here are two verses, which have been translated :

Can a mother cease to care  
For the little child she bare ?  
Faithful I will be.  
Yea, Amen, My oath is given,  
Nor can aught in hell or heaven,  
Sever thee from Me.  
Thee eternally I claim,  
On My hands I find thy name,  
I, who graved it there.  
Ever in My thoughts thou art,  
Evermore within My heart,  
Evermore My care.

These people knew how God loved them and that nothing could separate them from His love, and like the Jews we read of in Nehemiah, "The wives also and the children rejoiced," as well as the men, "for God had

made them rejoice with great joy." (Neh. 12. 43.)

Even a little child can bring glory to God in this way, and can pray as David and say: "Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall show forth thy praise." (Psa. 51. 15.)

Will you pray this too? Then you will be able to join with all those who delight in Christ in singing:

And drawn to Thee in holy love,  
A song of joy we raise,  
In concert with the heavens above,  
We crown Thee with our praise.

## "The Moon which Thou hast ordained"

ONE frosty winter's evening a party of boys and girls started off for a walk to a little village in Kent, a few miles from their homes, where a lecture was to be given on the moon. Such lectures were rare in the neighbourhood and very much welcomed.

The village hall soon filled with boys and girls, all eager to see and hear. The lecturer showed them lantern slides of the mountains of the moon, mountains with mighty volcanic craters, some of them measuring many miles across and quite unlike those of our earth. Amongst the many photos was one of Tycho, the great circular mountain, and the centre of

a region in which lie hundreds of craters, one named Copernicus, having a diameter of fifty-six miles.

The lecturer told them how much smaller the moon was than our earth and that no human being could live there, because there was no atmosphere. The moon, he said, had two great things to do : to reflect the light of the sun and to control the tides.

It was all very interesting to one of the party, named Mary, for she remembered that the moon was one of the works of the Lord, the very "work of his fingers," and she wanted to know all she could about it.

She knew that David had said : "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained." (Psa. 8. 3.)

She found out from the lecture that the moon in itself was a dreary, desolate, unlovely place. "Very much like I am," thought Mary. There was no life of any kind on it, no sound, no trees, no flowers, no streams, no lakes, no seas, no rivers, no vegetation of any kind, nothing but a black-looking mountain rising out of a barren waste. But when the sun shone on it it became a thing of surpassing beauty, wonderful for shadows and lights of every shade and intensity, such as are never seen on our earth.

"Why!" thought Mary, "that is like a Christian with no goodness in himself, but beautiful when reflecting some of the glory

of Christ, the Sun of righteousness, and becoming, with others, the very light of the world, for Jesus said when here: "Ye are the light of the world." (Matt. 5. 14.)

The lecture was over all too soon, and as Mary and her friends walked home, they talked together of the wonders of the heavens, how God's glory covered them (Hab. 3. 3), and how the earth should be filled with His praise. Then their thoughts went up above the moon and the stars, right into heaven, where Jesus lives.

They thought how He had left this earth, and how His disciples watched Him go, until a cloud hid Him from their sight. He did not stay just behind the cloud, but entered into heaven itself, into the very presence of God.

This was the world into which Stephen the martyr had gazed. It opened for him, and as he died he said: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."

Mary often wondered how it was that Stephen was able to look into heaven. Then as she thought and read about him she found these words, "They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost," and "Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles," and again, "He [Stephen], being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus."

She felt sure after reading these verses that

it was by faith and the Holy Spirit within him, that he was able to look right into heaven. It is, she felt sure, the "eyes of our heart" which look up in the power of an ungrieved Spirit within us, so that the distant land with its marvellous glory and light and the Person of our Lord Jesus Christ are brought near to us.

Mary used to look into this world, and any boy and girl whose sins are forgiven and who is pleasing to the Lord and does not grieve the Holy Spirit, will be able to do so too, and can pray, as Mary often did :

Lord Jesus, make Thyself to me  
A living, bright reality.  
More precious to faith's vision keen  
Than any outward object seen ;  
More dear, more intimately nigh  
Than e'en the nearest earthly tie."