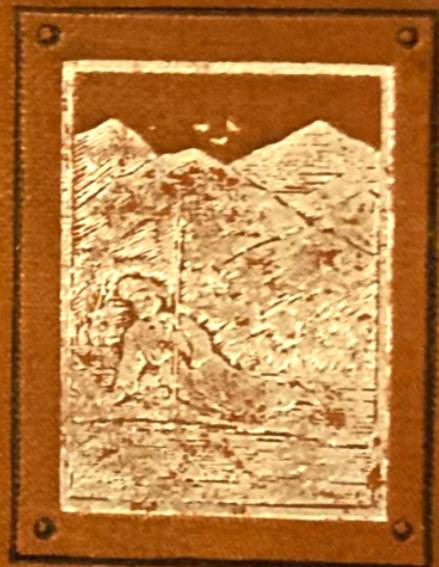


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And believe, and receive, and confess Him  
That all His salvation may know.

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BLACK MARIA ; OR, "WASHED EVER  
SO CLEAN."

---

IT was a lovely morning in the month of June, 1874, when I took a stroll into the country with some little children who were placed under my care. Feeling somewhat wearied with my walk, the sun pouring down its hot but brilliant rays, I sat down under the refreshing shade of a noble old tree, there to watch the little ones gambling in the fields, when my attention was arrested by a black woman taking a seat not far from my side. She seemed much interested watching the games of the little ones as they eagerly sought to catch the gay butterfly as it flew from one wild flower to another, till suddenly her face wore an air of sadness as she gazed on little Howard, the youngest of the group, a bright little boy of about three summers, and as she looked at him, tears filled her eyes, and she wept bitterly. I went up to her and gently placed my hand upon her shoulder ; she, raising her large dark eyes now filled with tears, apologized for this expression of her feelings, saying that this little boy had so reminded her of her own dear child she had left in India, (having come over to England to nurse the baby of a wealthy gentleman who had recently been bereaved of his wife), adding these words, and they seemed to come from a heart shrouded in sadness:—" I feel so lonely, nobody cares for me. How I wish somebody loved poor black

BLACK MARIA ; OR, " WASHED EVER SO CLEAN..

me." Looking to the Lord for a suitable word for this poor stranger, I said, " I am so glad to have met you, for I have a message for you." " Indeed," she replied " Do you say for me?" " Yes," I said " and it is from one who loves you, and so deeply does He love you that He died for you." Filled with surprise, she fixed her large expressive eyes upon me, and said she was quite sure it must be a mistake, as nobody cared for her. I assured her it was the truth, and, taking my Bible from my pocket, I read those precious words, " For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life," (Jno. iii. 16) telling her of God's love to poor sinners, " for this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. i. 15), and what wonderful miracles Jesus did. How by a word He cleansed the poor leper; saying, " Be thou clean," and opened the eyes of a blind man by simply bidding him receive his sight; and to the impotent man in a moment He restored his strength, so that he even carried his bed—in fact, He cured all who came or were brought to Him of whatsoever disease they had, and in loving tender accents He bade the heavy laden to rest their weary souls on Him, saying, " Come unto *me* all ye that labour and are heavy laden and *I* will give you rest" (Matt. ix. 28).

" Oh!" she exclaimed, " What a dear gentleman he must be, how I wish I could

BLACK MARIA ; OR, " WASHED EVER SO CLEAN."

have a peep at his face! Have you seen Him? How good He must be! Why, all over the world they must talk about Him. Where is He now?"

It was with no small amount of delight, dear reader (finding her so deeply interested), that I at once sought to answer her eager questions, telling her that God had raised Him from the dead, and that He was now seated in Heaven, and that God had sent down a message to this effect, that whosoever believeth on Him should be saved; that though their sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool; for He "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." Eagerly did she listen to this tale of divine love. I shall never forget her deep attention, every now and then lifting up her hands in astonishment, exclaiming, "Why it is better and better, everything you tell me of Him." But it was now time for me to return home; and on taking my leave of her, she looked beseechingly into my face, and asked if she might "come again and hear more about that dear good man *the sinners' lover*," so I promised to meet her there the following afternoon.

It was the Lord's Day; and as I walked to the spot, my heart was lifted up in earnest prayer that the Lord would again give the suited word.

Although it was half an hour earlier than the appointed time when I reached the spot, I found her anxiously awaiting me. Seated

## BLACK MARIA ; OR, " WASHED EVER SO CLEAN."'

together, I read to her from St. John's gospel the account of the crucifixion. The big tears rolled down her black cheeks as she heard of His agony in the Garden of Gethsemene ; and when I read about the nails piercing His hands and His feet, and quoted that verse from liii. of Isaiah, " He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth," she said in her simple way, " Miss, didn't He cry out, Oh ! how could he keep it all to Himself?" I showed her how this proved His love, in laying down His life for poor sinners, and how He shed His precious blood to wash away their sins, for " the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." This last passage, " the blood of Jesus Christ his (God's) Son cleanseth us from all sin," she repeated several times, as she said she wanted it to stick by her : precious desire !

Oh ! my dear unconverted reader, do you not want it to stick by you ? Do you not want to know it's all-cleansing power, cleansing you from all sin ? This precious passage has been blessed to thousands of souls, and why not to you ? Ponder this precious truth as she did, fixing her eyes on the ground for some moments. What a solemn silence reigned around ; nothing was heard save the doleful bell of an ancient church, announcing that another soul had passed from time into eternity ! Again we parted ; and on leaving, she said, " May the good man, *the sinner's friend and lover*, bless you and help you to tell all the people, whites and

BLACK MARIA ; OR, " WASHED EVER SO CLEAN."

blacks, of His precious blood, and great big heart for naughty everybody." Thus was grace already working in the poor black Ayah's heart. Already were the scales falling from her eyes, as the light gradually broke in upon her dark soul, and the hard and flinty heart began to melt under the power of the precious truth of God's full and free salvation, so sweetly and perfectly manifested in the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A few weeks elapsed ere I again saw Black Maria. Sitting one day in the same meadow, I heard footsteps behind me, and in a moment my black friend had grasped my hand ; her countenance was now radiant with joy ; it was the joy of a new-born soul which had drunk deeply of those living waters of which Christ says, " Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (Jno. iv. 14) ; and with a heart bursting to tell out it's deep and real joy, she said, " Oh, Miss, I am so happy, and it is all through the blood of that dear man poor Black Maria is *washed ever so clean.*" Together we wept, but they were tears of joy, as together we thanked Him who had thus plucked another brand from the burning. Many and many a precious hour since that happy day have we spent together talking of Jesus the sinner's friend. Eagerly did she embrace every opportunity to hear more about Him who had thus loved her, died for her, and shed His precious

**BLACK MARIA ; OR, " WASHED EVER SO CLEAN."**

blood to cleanse her from all sin. Earnestly did she seek to tell others of the dear Saviour she had found, for her heart had now an object worthy of her deepest affection in her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; and, like the woman at the well of Sychar, when Jesus revealed Himself to her, she, too, was ready to say with Samaria's daughter of old, " Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ ? "

Is not this the Christ, dear reader ? Suffer me to ask you, have you found Him ? Do you know this " friend of sinners ? " If not, you are yet in your sins. Ah ! you need a real Saviour, for you are a real sinner. Life is real, and it is fast ebbing away. Death is real, and it may be rapidly approaching you. Judgment is real, and the judge is at the door. Everlasting punishment is real, and how shall you then escape it ? But, I am able to add, salvation and eternal life are real, and are yours now if you, like poor Black Maria, in simple faith believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the man-lover of Calvary, the eternal Redeemer, the gracious Saviour now waiting to receive you in all your wretchedness and sin, with the guilt of many a mis-spent year, dragging you down to the depths of hell. O come to Him. Yes, weary one, weary of the world and its pleasures, they can give no rest,—Come ! Burdened one ; burdened with the load of guilt too heavy for thee to carry and nowhere to bury it.—Come ! Trembling one ; trembling lest you be not received—Come ! for He casts

BLACK MARIA ; OR, " WASHED EVER SO CLEAN."

out none! Self-righteous one, yes! even to you I say Come! your righteousness is as filthy rags; but He saith, "*Whosoever* will let him take the water of life *freely*," and "Him that cometh unto Me I will in nowise cast out." Once more permit me to say to you—Come! and, like Black Maria, you shall be "washed ever so clean."

With what delight did she now listen to the Lord's promise to come again to receive such as she to Himself, to be with Himself, to be like Himself for ever. "And He that testifieth these things saith surely I come quickly." Can you, dear reader, add, "Even so, come Lord Jesus"? The believing Ayah could, and this is the daily expectation of the believer in Jesus. Perhaps you may wish to know what the subject of my narrative is now doing. I will tell you. Having "turned to God from idols," she is serving "the living and true God," and waiting for His Son from Heaven. "And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

May the Lord bless to you, my dear unconverted reader, this little narrative of the conversion of Black Maria, and her simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and lead you in like simple, but precious faith to receive at once the message of salvation, and rest your weary soul on the same loving Saviour who has thus recently filled her with joy, that you also may be able to say, "I am so happy, and it is all through the blood of that dear Man (the Man Christ Jesus) that I am *washed ever so clean*."

H. P.

## YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD!

---

BELOVED reader, there is no mistake about the matter: "You have to meet God." Think calmly, think deeply upon this weighty and important fact; that, when you have done with this scene, with all its bustle, riches, honors, yea, everything in connection therewith "You have to meet God." Oh! let your soul be absorbed with this solemn reality! It is beyond a doubt that you have an immortal, never-dying soul; and, live throughout eternity, you must, some place or another. . Eternity, with its boundless expanse, stretches itself out before you; whilst the words come pouring into your mind, "Where shall I spend eternity?" Be not so folly-struck as to turn away from their sound, and meaning. They have but come to sound in your precious soul, the fact, that you must live for ever; yea, though you pass through the article death, it is but the spirit leaving its earthen tabernacle, only to resume it again, in the resurrection. And what then? to say nothing of the intermediate state. Eternity! *Eternity*!! ETERNITY!!!

But, has God left us in the dark, in the land of obscurity, with respect to the intermediate state, and that of eternity? He, blessed be His name, has not. Full and clear are His instructions, with respect to both. The veil has been drawn aside by the hand of One who can comprehend "eternity" as He can a moment of time. His infinite mind compre-

## YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD.

hends all. Reader, I pray of you to submit to Him who has revealed His mind in His word with respect to things now, and things of eternity. Is it not your wisdom so to act: so to do? Do you not feel culpable if you neglect them? You acknowledge God to be Creator of all, and the One who has His own moral government to sustain with respect to men, do you not? You say, of course I do; everyone acknowledges that. But again, you quite see that God is infallible, and that He has expressed His mind and will in His word: and that flowing from Himself must be infallible too? You consent to all this. Now, God is not merely gracious and kind: He is also "infinitely holy," and consequently the principles of His moral Government must be, as they are, in keeping with that holiness. This is revealed in His word, and demonstrated in all His actings. He is as essentially "holy" as He is "love." His word also abundantly sets forth the fact of man living for ever, and that death is never extinction of being, but simply the spirit leaving the body at the close of its earthly career, to await the rising again of the same.

But more, man has sinned; yes, you, dear reader, have sinned; but what of God's holiness? Can it compromise with sin? Can it pass by and not notice it? As impossible as to hide the smallest action from His gaze. Holiness cannot compromise with sin, nor pass it by. It is this fact, when viewed in the light of meeting God, and spending an eternity some.

## YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD.

where, that makes what I am saying so awfully solemn. Holiness in its essence is inflexible. Now place the fact of your having sinned, alongside of that fact, and see how it will look. Can holiness shake hands with your sin? can it tolerate it for one moment? As absolutely impossible as that the earth or the moon can fail in pursuing their various courses, and come in contact with the sun. The word of the Creator has placed them in infinite space, where they are, and they simply obey His word, in filling their specific places, and following their specific courses. It is impossible that any derangement should take place in God's glorious creation. And so with His moral government. For holiness to compromise or shake hands with sin, would be a moral derangement indeed, just as much as the departure of the earth or the moon from its orbit, would be a physical one. No; dear reader, there can be nothing of the kind. Sin and holiness must ever be estranged from each other, as light from darkness.

That being the case, how tremendous the fact, that you have got to meet God! that you have got to spend "eternity" somewhere. Never, dear friend, was there so momentous a question brought to your notice, to engage your attention, as the one before you at this moment. Place the whole of the things of time, with the doings of men in the scales, and every thing when brought together are as the small dust of the balance, compared with the momentous fact of having to meet God,

## YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD.

and of spending a never-ending eternity. Oh! that my pen could faithfully depict the solemn facts of eternity. Oh! that I could bring my reader, consciously, to its threshold; that he might be fully convinced of the facts thereof, and be stirred up with the tremendous danger in which he stands because of his sins and guilt. Thy sins and guilt, Oh! my reader, are in question, because God is infinitely holy. Thou art charged therewith, and thy soul is stained therewith. What wilt thou do in the day that is coming? How wilt thou meet the eye of the Judge? What dost thou think of the flaming sword of Judgment? Canst thou turn the point or the edge thereof, or avert its tremendous stroke? Canst thou bear the thought of hearing from the lips of a holy Judge, the awfully solemn words: "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels,"—Mat. xxv, 41. Some may mock, and others may laugh, at these facts that soon must come; but surely, beloved friend, it is far from thee to be so impelled, to be so miserably infatuated. Surely thou wilt not wreck thy frail bark upon the rocks of the "judgment to come," or engulf it in the surging billows of divine and eternal wrath!

But stay, dear reader, I have said nothing of the "Cross of Christ." What of that, you say? Ah, would that I could tell you its glories—its infinite worth—and, its ability to deliver the "believing sinner" from the judgment and wrath, due to sin; and give him a clear, and indisputable title, to enter heaven.

## YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD.

Man had sinned, and the claims of divine holiness were infinite; and nothing but an infinite sacrifice could possibly put away sin, and answer the claims of divine holiness. This, the infinite sacrifice of the blessed Son of God did on the Cross. He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. For the present, the gleaming sword of divine justice is in its scabbard. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." Wondrous thought; Wondrous gift! God is glorified with respect to sin, and man's desperate need is met as a sinner. Is not this joyful news, dear friend? Could anything be more blessed? God's message to you is that He loves you, and that He gave His dear Son to die for you; that by "believing" on Him you should not "perish," but have "everlasting life."—John iii, 16.

Let thine eyes gaze at the cross of calvary, and learn, that,—

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

God Himself provided the sacrifice; you have to repose by faith in its efficacy: in the Divine estimate of it, and know that you are, thereupon, saved by the "grace of God." God's holy eye rests upon the infinite and eternal worth of that once offered sacrifice, and it shelters every sinner found reposing in its infinite efficacy. Dost thou want a proof of the Divine appreciation of it? It is given in the fact that God has by His power and

## YOU HAVE TO MEET GOD.

glory raised up Jesus from among the dead : and now we see “Jesus,” who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. Amen. He is worthy! He is worthy!

Reader, do you believe on this once dead, and now risen and glorified Son of God? If so, you are blessed indeed. The cup of wrath was drained for you, the stroke of judgment has been endured by Another. The law has wreaked out its curse upon the head of Jesus, and the fruits of the victory gained are yours. What are those fruits? Pardon of sins.—Acts x, 43. Peace with God.—Rom. v. 1. Acceptance in the beloved.—Eph. i, 6. Relationship with God.—Gal. iii, 26. Eternal life.—John vi, 47. Divine righteousness—2 Cor. v, 21. Present communion with God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.—1 John i, 3. Restoration from failure, that which interferes with communion, after conversion.—1 John i, 9. Grace to sustain the heart under every difficulty and trial.—2 Cor. xii. 9. And, the prospect of eternal glory.—Rom. v. 2.

Dear reader, these are some of the precious fruits of that wondrous Cross, and your portion by having faith in Jesus. Oh! make sure of these untold blessings, by believing in Jesus: flowing as they do from God, the fragrant fruits of the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. To His name be everlasting praise!

E. A.

## THE TELESCOPE.

FOR THOSE WHO CANNOT SEE AFAR OFF.

---

A YOUNG man was leaving a workshop in one of our large cities to emigrate to New Zealand. His shopmates desirous of giving him a token of their friendship subscribed and bought a telescope. One of them who was a Christian was in course asked to give a donation along with the rest, but he declined, saying, "That if he gave anything it would be entirely on his private account, and not in union with them." He felt the gravity of a poor godless orphan going so far away, with few, if any, to care whether he was saved or lost—partaking of or neglecting the great salvation. He was pressed in spirit on his behalf, and after looking to the Lord in prayer, sent him a New Testament, and the following letter which is added with the earnest desire that it may be used to the opening of the eyes of some who care not to look beyond the limit of time, with its uncertainties, and scan the horizon of the eternal future, fraught with its unalterable certainties. "Unto them who do *not obey the truth*, but *obey unrighteousness*, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil;—but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good." For there is no respect of persons with God, and in His sight "There is none that doeth good, no not one." God has concluded *all* under sin and in unbelief that *He might have mercy upon all*.

In the faith of this blessed fact the letter

## THE TELESCOPE.

was written to that young man, and is repeated to you who are strangers to grace through the blindness of your heart.

“Dear J.—When your shopmates were raising money to give you a testimonial, I refused to give any for reasons best known to myself. Not that I did not feel for you leaving us, and that perhaps for ever, as a thousand dangers lie in your path, besides the uncertainty of this life, “that is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.”

I hear that they have bought a telescope to give you. The accompanying book is as a divine telescope, which if you use simply and patiently, will show you “things to come,” with unerring precision. The future events and eternal consequences, and states are plainly delineated. *Your* certain awful future unless you be wise in time. You do not know the Lord—you *must* meet Him. Like the wicked prophet, Balaam, you postpone the time. “I shall see Him, but not *now*: I shall behold Him, but not *nigh*.” Oh, dear friend, if you would see Him now, look at Him through the telescope of the word: hear what He says, and believe. You need eternal life, and you have none—you need holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, and you have none, for you were born in sin—the offspring of the man who fell and was driven out of Eden. Look through the glass at all the past history of man, he always failed. God was ever patient, showed grace, and when that was refused, sent judgment. Look at the Cross of

## THE TELESCOPE.

Calvary, see His love to ruined man. He spared not His Son, but delivered Him up for us all. You are a sinner, you need this Saviour. You are vile, and need to be purged from guilt: the precious blood of Jesus alone atones for sin.

No efforts of yours will save you, neither works, good deeds, church going, nor prayers, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone can avail.—“*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.*” Mock not His blessed word. Wisdom will laugh when your fear cometh; with the death dew on your brow there will be no room for jesting; a death hour is a poor repenting time; and it is a mean thing to turn to God *after* wasting your energies in living to your own lusts and the Devil. Look through the telescope and behold the future as described by the Prophet. “And I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them, and I saw the dead, small and great *stand before God*, and the books were opened, and another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it (perhaps you may be there with the weeds wrapped about your head), and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”—What a sight!

## THE TELESCOPE.

Turn back the telescope to another scene where a lovely One in the midst of His disciples with His face upturned to Heaven speaking to His Father asks, for all that believe in Him. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." Oh, blessed eternity for ever with the Lord; it will be yours too if you turn to Jesus, but for ever in hell will be your eternal portion if you refuse to obey the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Take one more look, then I will leave you to God and the Holy Ghost to open your eyes to "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Look far away in the long future and behold the portion of the victor through faith in the Son of God. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. 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." And he said "Write, for these are the true sayings of God."

Believe me to be your well wisher,

T.R.D.

### THREE ASPECTS OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

---

1. IT IS EVERLASTING.—“ I have loved thee with an everlasting love ” (Jer. xxxi. 3). It has no end. It had no beginning. It will continue through time, and endure throughout eternity. It found its source in God’s own heart. Its spring was there, and there its native place. “ God is Love ; ” and that which God is He was. He knows no change. He was yesterday what He is to-day, and, blessed be His name, He will be the same for ever. He ever was love, and ever will be love. His love is therefore from everlasting, dating back as far as God Himself, where, indeed, no date can be placed ; it is beyond creation, beyond time, beyond all things seen, and so it is to everlasting ! “ Having loved His own, He loved them to the end ” (Jno. xiii. 1). No boundary, no limit, no confine, no shore can arrest the sway of this immeasurable ocean. Far as the eye can reach, far as the mind can penetrate, far as imagination can wing its furthest flight—there, and infinitely beyond, is seen to stretch the grand expanse of love divine. No barrier, no hindrance, no obstacle—not Satan’s might, not man’s sin can stay the course of this glorious river. On it flows rapid, irresistible and free. Long as God shall live, shall His love continue ; unchanging as God is shall His love be found ; true as God is shall His love be proved immutable.

2. HIS LOVE IS INTENSE.—It is no pre-

### THREE ASPECTS OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

tended love, not one of "word or of tongue," it is in "deed and in truth." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." This gift proves its intensity. "God so loved." It was a love beyond degree, beyond measure, no line could fathom its living depths. It was a peculiar love, for "God commendeth His (own) love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." This is not the way of human love! A man might die for his friend—such a sacrifice is upon the page of history, but what man would die for an enemy? Such an act would transgress the laws of nature itself—would be incompatible with the nature we inherit. But such is the way of the love divine. "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love, wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins" (Eph. ii. 4, 5). Yes, "*His great love.*" Well may the Holy Ghost call it so. It was "*great,*" it was intense. Indifference is no element of that love. Each expression, each feature, each outcome is a miracle of intense affection—a prodigy of self-sacrifice. "God gave his Son"—"spared not his own Son"—"sent His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin." "Having therefore one Son, his well-beloved, He sent him." Moreover that Son came voluntarily, delighting to do His Father's will; and so we find "Christ gave himself." "I lay down my life." He "loved the Church and gave himself for it." His death was the measure of His love.

3. IT IS EFFECTUAL.—What is *grace*? It is love in exercise amid evil. Grace is the term

### THREE ASPECTS OF THE LOVE OF GOD.

assumed by divine love in dealing with objects in themselves thoroughly unworthy. Grace looks for no merit in its object, but acts in spite of demerit. In order to accomplish this, and at the same time maintain the character of God in holiness, it falls back on the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. That death is its platform. On the ground of that infinitely meritorious work grace can reign through righteousness, and, without the violation of a single attribute of God—nay, but in the most perfect maintenance of them all, can take up such an object and enrich it with every divine favour and blessing. At the cross “mercy and truth met together, righteousness and peace kissed each other.” Marvellous and magnificent condition. Wondrous concurrence of things that differ. Precious confluence of conflicting currents. Divine solution of an otherwise insoluble enigma. “The cross is the moral wonder of the universe.” There God has displayed His wisdom. There man has shown his sin. The cross is God’s master-piece, and the cross is man’s stumbling block. The cross is the climax of divine love, and the cross is the acme of human wickedness. But the cross is the channel through which grace can flow in righteousness, and justify the ungodly who believe in Jesus. Then is love *effectual*. The love of God is sweetly known by such—is “shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.” They have “known and believed” that love. They can sing in its praise, “Thy loving kindness is better than

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life." They are the conscious and happy objects of it. They are "accepted in the Beloved."

To such the love of God is *everlasting, intense, and effectual.*

J. W. S.

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## THE BASKET OF STRAWBERRIES.

MANY years since I was travelling in Cornwall from T—— to P—— It was a hot summer's day; and, before starting, I had purchased a basket of strawberries to slake my thirst on my journey. At the outskirts of the town the vehicle stopped, and a lady stepped in. She had barely taken her seat, when her eye lighting on the strawberries, she ejaculated loud enough for me to hear, "Oh, dear me, I am so sorry." On hearing her exclamation, I enquired the cause thereof, when she replied, "Because I omitted to procure some strawberries to take with me to the friend I am going to see, who is sick." I immediately said, "Pray, madam, take these," holding the strawberries to her. "I could not deprive you of them," was her reply. "I assure you, madam, you are quite welcome to them if you will accept them," I answered. "Oh, no," she said, "I cannot take them unless you allow me to pay for them," at the same time putting her hand in her pocket. "You must have them for nothing, madam, or not have them at all,"

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I rejoined. Still she hesitated; but at length, when I added, "you must have them on my terms, or not at all," she perceived my purpose was to give and not to sell, and immediately thankfully received them.

After they had become her property, I said, "The reluctancy you have shewn in receiving those strawberries is just what many a sinner shews towards God in the matter of his soul's salvation, because he wants to pay God something for it." The conversation was here stopped by her having to leave the omnibus.

A few months after the above incident took place, I was again nearing P— by a different route, which necessitated my crossing a river by a ferry-boat. The boatman was a hale old Cornishman, full sixty summers, who said to me on stepping into his boat early in the morning, by way of excusing the use of the pipe which was in his mouth, "Always have a pipe after breakfast, sir," and immediately added, "have been a teetotalter for twenty-eight years, sir." His countenance confirmed his statement that he was a temperate man. "Teetotalism is all very well for this life, my friend, but it will not save the soul," I replied. "So, I find, sir," was his ready answer. And on getting into further conversation, I soon discovered that he was in an enquiring state of mind, having been many years previously awakened to a sense of his need of a Saviour. All these years, however, he had never tasted the forgiveness of sins through the precious blood of Christ, nor the

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blessedness of peace with God. As he was slowly paddling me across the river, I sought to unfold to him the way of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and illustrated the freeness of eternal life, as God's gift to the sinner by the foregoing narrative of the basket of strawberries. I had no sooner finished than he exclaimed, "Oh, dear me, I see what I have been about these last twenty-one years, like that lady wanting to give God something for His great salvation; but I see that it is all the free gift of His love through our Lord Jesus Christ, I have nothing to do but to take it;" and he then began to rejoice, being filled with joy and peace in believing.

Nine years elapsed ere I again saw my friend, the boatman, who, having expressed his joy in again seeing me, said, "Oh, sir, I have had the peace of God flowing into my soul ever since you met me in this boat that morning; and besides which He has converted two of my sons, one of whom has gone to the Island of Bermuda to preach Christ."

Beloved reader, this incident is related if by any means your eyes may be opened to see that God is a giving God; "He so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." In the midst of a world of ruined guilty sinners, who have forfeited every claim on His mercy and favour, He was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, never judging or pronouncing a woe but

## THE BASKET OF STRAWBERRIES.

on those who dared to hinder Him in the blessing of the needy sons and daughters of Adam ; or those who with the most unmistakeable proof of the divine character of His acts of love, turned away from Him, who alone could save them from their sins.

Man is a sinner, and consequently lost,—is without God and without hope in this world, can do nothing but perish in his sins. This is true of all, whether those on the righteous side of the broad road, or the unrighteous side of it ; and, therefore, true of you, dear sinner. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. God saw this the moment man disobeyed Him, and fell a prey to the seducing power of Satan in the garden of Eden. And four thousand years of probation from the first man's disobedience to the rejection of Christ, and His being taken with wicked hands and hanged on that shameful cross of Calvary, only demonstrated how thoroughly ruined and guilty he had become. The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is the solemn declaration of this truth, how hopelessly lost and thoroughly bad you are, dear sinner, in God's sight. No exception, for all are become guilty, whether it be the privileged Jew under law, or the Gentile without law. Satan is at the bottom of all this mischief. God knows it, but you do not, dear sinner, till your eyes are opened by Him who is the Light of this world ; and Who here was in the midst of darkness, yet the darkness comprehended Him not.

Satan's business is to keep precious souls in

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darkness as to their true condition before God ; he blinds their eyes lest the light of the gospel of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ should shine upon them ; and he does not care how he succeeds whether by that which is good in itself as far as this life is concerned, like the Cornish boatman alluded to in this incident, or that which is grossly evil. Oh, that you may see that God has provided a salvation for man worthy of Himself and His glory, the cost of which none can estimate. He, moreover, is too rich to sell salvation, and man is too poor to give anything consistent with the claims of a holy, sin-hating and sin-abhorring God, or adequate to satisfy His holy requirements and demands. The thought of it, dear sinner, is monstrous. What! the Creator selling anything to the creature of His hands—to man who has disobeyed Him, and crucified His own dear Son !

No, sinner, away with such damning thoughts. God has provided a propitiation in the person and finished work of His beloved Son—that is, a way of access into His presence, by that one sacrifice for sin, which Jesus was when He offered Himself through the eternal Spirit without spot unto God, so that *Adam's fallen race* can now draw near, in the true and honest acknowledgment of what they are, as taught by the blessed Spirit, *and receive, as a gift*, without money and without price, at the hands of Jesus, the crucified, but now risen, glorified Son of Man at God's right hand, eternal life, forgiveness of sins, and eternal redemption from

## THE BASKET OF STRAWBERRIES.

sin and all its consequences, and deliverance from Satan and all the power of death.

Remember dear sinner, that what Jesus says, has done, and gives, has the stamp of eternity on it. This is what He gives now, in time, to those who believe in Him through grace; and to consummate all, in a little while; when He comes the second time, He will give eternal glory with Himself in the Father's house above, "That Paradise," of which dear Paul Gerhardt speaks—

“Of light and love, and song,  
Which the eye at last beholdeth,  
Which the heart hath loved so long.”

Do not let Satan deceive you. The consequences are tremendous; if this gift of God's love is despised you will be taken and cast with all neglectors and rejectors into that lake of fire prepared for the devil and his angels. He blinds men's eyes to their real state before God. And whatever you may be before men, if yet unsaved in God's sight, you are a needy, guilty sinner, with a forfeited life inherited from the first man. For "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Oh come at once then to Jesus, who still sits at God's right hand to give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him, even to those who simply look to Him, believe in His name, hear His voice, and trust in His precious blood which cleanseth us from all sin.

H. P.

**“ STAND WHERE THE FIRE HAS BEEN.”**

O stand where the fire has been, dear soul,  
If God's judgment has terrors for thee ;  
For o'er this world, will it surely roll,  
And no place, but that one, be free !

“ But can a sinner like me, be saved ?  
I've no right to escape the woe ;  
God's love I have scorn'd, and His threat'nings brav'd,  
I deserve but His wrath to know.”

We deserve His wrath, but He gave His Son,  
To stand in the sinner's stead,  
That the punishment due, for all we had done,  
Should fall on His Holy head.

By faith we must cling to His riven side,  
Who has borne our curse and shame ;  
And learn how His love, like a mighty tide,  
Has extinguished for us, its flame.

Then stand where the fire has been, dear soul,  
And know thou art safe, and free,  
For the precious Saviour has borne the whole  
Of the wrath, and the curse for thee.

A. de B.

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**“ WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST ?”**

(MATT. xxii, 42.)

SOLEMN indeed is the question that the Lord Jesus Christ raises here in the minds of those who surrounded Him, and tho' perchance, dear friend, you have no doubt as to who He is ; and you believe all about His holy life, and marvellous death on the cross ; yet must you stand or fall ; be saved or lost, by your answer to these searching words.

What place has Christ in your heart ; in

\* The only place of safety in a prarie fire.

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

your life, in your time? *What think ye of Him?*

God has *raised Him* from the dead; *crowned Him* at His own right hand with glory and honour. The Spirit of God delights to unfold His glories, as in those precious words: “*Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person and upholding all things by the word of his power.*” Can it be then that He who is all heaven’s object has no place in your heart? His blood can alone fit you for the presence of God; is it then possible that you have no time to yield yourself to Him who alone is worthy of your trust?

Again I press upon your conscience and heart this one all absorbing question: “*What think ye of Christ?*” Many are the questions that engross men’s minds, and make fleet time fly faster, but stay one moment, dear soul, in your carelessness, and bow your heart to such an object; such a Saviour as the Lord Jesus Christ.

“What think ye of Christ? is the test,  
To try both your state and your scheme;  
You cannot be right in the rest,  
Unless you think rightly of Him.  
As Jesus appears in your view;  
As He is belovèd or not,  
So God is disposed to you,  
And mercy or wrath is your lot.”

T. E. P.

## FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

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I want to bring under your notice, beloved reader, four portions of the Acts of the Apostles, in which occur the words, "Be it known unto you," They bring out four things which are well worth knowing. Thank God I know them, and God wants you to know them too. They contain in themselves the true secret and spring of joy down here and for all eternity by and by.

### 1. JESUS MADE LORD AND CHRIST.

Will you take your Bible and read the 2nd Chapter of the Acts of the Apostles?

There, "*Peter standing up with the eleven lifted up his voice and said, Ye men of Judea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, BE THIS KNOWN UNTO YOU, ... Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did, by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain... This Jesus hath God raised up... being by the right hand of God exalted.*

*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."* (vv. 14—36).

The consequences of the death and resurrec-

## FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

tion of Christ are stupendous. Here is a reversal of Babel; God had come down there and confused their tongues. Now Jesus has been obedient, Jesus has glorified God, Jesus has died, and the result of the blood-shedding of the Lord Jesus, and His being raised from the dead is that God can send down the Holy Ghost to teach in every language the things concerning Himself. Know this, says Peter, there was once in this world a man that honoured God, every one else has dishonoured God; but there has lived in this scene, and died out of this scene a man whose every thought, and every word, and every action was suitable to God, and glorified God, and God has now glorified this One.

But how did man treat Him whom God thus honoured? Man cast him out! Have you ever thought of this fact, God's Son has been murdered in this world? A false friend betrayed Him, a true one denied Him, and all forsook Him and fled. Pilate would have released Him, for even to the hard Roman Governor it was plain there was no fault in Him, but what did the multitude cry? "If thou let this man go thou art not *Cæsar's* friend." *Cæsar's* friends must side with *Cæsar*, and *Jesu's* friends must side with *Jesus*, and there was no one there that day to side with *Jesus*. "Away with Him, away with Him," is the cry: chief priests and scribes, the religious men and the rabble all join to swell that cry, and now thought Pilate "Cæsar is my master, and I should not like to offend *Cæsar*, I might lose my place or my

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

popularity." Ah! beloved friend many a man barter his soul rather than lose his popularity in this world.

But Pilate does not want His death—he has another resource—he brings out the poor miserable guilty Barabbas, the robber and fierce murderer, and side by side they stand—the cruel robber and murderer, and the peerless Son of God, and Pilate asks which he should release unto them. You would have said there could be no doubt as to their answer. Jesus had healed their sick, raised their dead, done good to all, and the other was a wretched murderer—they must choose Jesus. Listen, then, listen to their awful cry, "Not this man, but Barabbas!" "Not this man, but Barabbas!" And then they mock Him, and scourge Him and on that peerless head they place a crown of thorns, and they lead Him forth to die. The robber's cross, the heavy murderer's cross—prepared I doubt not for the robber, on which to expiate his crimes—was laid on Jesus, and He who had life in Himself was led forth to dark Golgotha's scenes of agony and death.

But, you will say, "Do you charge us with being the murderers of the Son of God?" No, but if still unconverted, I charge you with being partners with the world that slew Him. You may not have swelled that rabble cry, "Away with Him!" but you are indifferent to Him. You take the side of the world that did it; are you not still in the world, and of the world? Does it not own you and claim you? and does not God know full well you are not

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yet Christ's. and have never bowed the knee to Him?

Do you say, The world is different now! Is it? Carry Christ into the street and you will soon find if it is altered. A crowd will gather to listen to a German band or to see a puppet-show, and no opposition be excited, but do you get up and speak of Christ at the corner of a street, and what will you find? Presently, Policeman B, 274, comes up, and touching you on the shoulder, says, "You must move on, the thoroughfare cannot be obstructed;" or, "There is no room for this kind of thing here." Ah, no! there is no room for Christ; there is room for everything else; but I never knew the time yet when the world wanted Christ. The world does not care about God, does not want Christ. It did not want Christ in that day, and it does not care about Jesus in this day. If any one does want Jesus, I have blessed news for that one. Jesus wants you, dear friend: more, far more than you want Him, Jesus wants you!

God has exalted the one you have not cared about as yet. God reverses the action of the world. The world mocks and scourges Him; God sets Him at His own right hand. The world murders Him; God raises Him from the dead. God steps into the scene where man has done his worst,—murdered the Son of God,—and God lifts Him from the grave and puts Him on His throne till he makes His foes His footstool. Are you His foe? "I hope not" you say. Are you His friend then? "I hope so." Well, I will

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tell you one thing, if you truly are the friend of Christ you like His company, you like to be near Him. That is how I gauge my friends. My friend likes to be near me, likes to be with me. Do you say you are not His foe? Well, be honest, are you His friend then? A friend must show himself friendly. If you are not His friend, not siding with Him, you must be His foe, and it is a terrible thing to be a foe of the Lord Jesus; you will be His footstool in the day of His coming glory.

But would you not like to be a friend of this blessed Lord Jesus? If you are not His friend you are guilty of the deepest, blackest sin outside of hell,--indifference, aye, deep rooted enmity to God's blessed Son. Not merely are you a sinner, but you are a *guilty* sinner. Guilty of slighting the Lord Jesus. Peter says Do you know this? the first fact God presses is this, you have slain the Son of God, there is your guilt. And God has put Him in glory. Have you been going on wearing a garb of religiousness without having Christ? Then you are a hypocrite. Hypocrisy is pretending to be what you are not. And there is another side to it too, viz., covering up what is really there. It is hypocrisy too, if you love Him and do not own Him,—are ashamed to take His side.

Do you say "He is Lord?" "Yes." But is He your Lord? You will have to own Him Lord some day, but will you own it only when you are His footstool? Is it not better to be a friend of Christ's now, and a friend of Christ's in that day, or a foe now, and His footstool

## FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

when He comes to reign. My friend, look to it, have you only the name of a Christian, or have you Christ? Are you a real or a counterfeit christian? If you are a counterfeit one, I will carry you on a little farther; perhaps you have grey hairs and a long life of religiousness behind you, but death is before you, and when you die a long funeral procession follows you to the grave in which you are buried, and friends mourn you, and your name is recorded on your tombstone, and a list of your virtues perhaps, but what then:—there is another day coming, the day of the first resurrection, but you do not rise, and the Lord's people, all the dead and living, go up to meet Him, but you do not go up; they are for ever with Him, but you are not there. And long after there comes another day, and another resurrection, and the great white throne is set, and the Lord whom you never knew sits on that throne, and there you stand before Him and before the whole universe of God in your true character—an unveiled liar. All your robe of religiousness torn from you, and in your sins before your judge. Do you say? “This is terrible language.” The more the pity that it should apply to *you* then. It is true language, as true as terrible.

Turn now for a moment to the next thing Peter wants us to know, viz., that,—

### 2. SALVATION IS IN HIS NAME.

“BE IT KNOWN UNTO YOU *all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ*

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*of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."* Acts iv., 10-12.

Man slew Him, but God raised Him and put Him in glory. His name is down here on earth to be trusted in. And now this moment, as you read these lines, you may know the power of that name. God grant you may. Can you say, He is *my* Saviour?—can you say it honestly? Do you say "He is *a* Saviour." That will not do; it is no use to you His being *a* Saviour if He is not *your* Saviour. The moment a soul trusts in Jesus, it is *saved*. If you have come to Jesus, if you are looking to Jesus, if your soul is reposing in Jesus, salvation is your birth-right, as a sinner *now*. You may know *now* that He is your Saviour. The reason I know I am saved is, not that I knew I was among the elect, but that I knew I was among the *lost*, and He came to seek and to save the lost. He will never shake a sinner off that clings to Him, He will not shake off the feeblest soul that clings to Him.

Yes, His throne must come down ere He shakes a sinner off that trusts Him. Will you not trust Him? Will you not have salvation?

Do you say, "I see that He is exalted up there, and I see that his name is proclaimed.

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down here, and there is no salvation in any other, but is it for me?"

Let Paul answer that question as he gives us the third thing God wants us to know.

### 3. FORGIVENESS PREACHED, AND JUSTIFICATION OBTAINED THROUGH HIM.

"BE IT KNOWN UNTO YOU, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts. xiii. 38-39.)

"But," you answer, "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." Whose sins? "Whose, why everybody's of course." That is not true, you do not believe everybody is forgiven. Do you believe in the forgiveness of Paul's sins? He believed that himself. Do you believe in the forgiveness of mine? I believe that myself, thank God. But do you believe your own sins are forgiven?—it is all nothing to you if yours are not forgiven. Because Christ's blood has been shed, and He has glorified God about sin, therefore forgiveness can be preached to you. "And by Him all that believe are justified from all things." By Him, not by your tears or your prayers, or anything you can do.

God comes out and forgives, as we get in the case of the two debtors in Luke vii. "When they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both." The one owed five hundred pence, the other fifty, but neither

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could pay, and He forgives in His own style, "He frankly forgave them both." There is the action, and the style of the action—without a grudge—that is the way God forgives a sinner. Oh, taste His love just now, come to Him now, believe Him now, taste His forgiveness, and believe His word. Here is the third thing I am to know—that I am forgiven—I am justified. Praise the Lord. Do you believe on Him? Then you are to know you are forgiven and justified. All that believe are justified. Satan cannot raise a single charge. God justifies, who will condemn? Christ died for me and was condemned for me, that He might never condemn me. He will not condemn the one He has died for. Does Satan say, "Look at your sins." Ah, I say, "Look at my Saviour." Does He bring up my unworthiness? "Look at my Saviour," again I say, "He has met every charge for me and He is worthy."

Many tell me they do not feel saved, or feel forgiven; but you must know you are forgiven before you can feel forgiven; know you are justified before you can feel justified.

The last wondrous fact I bring under your notice is that,—

#### 4. THE SALVATION OF GOD IS SENT TO THE GENTILES.

"And when they had appointed him (Paul) a day, there came many to him into his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified the Kingdom of God, persuading them concerning

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Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not." His last words to them were:—

"BE IT KNOWN, THEREFORE, UNTO YOU, that the Salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." Acts. xxviii. 23-24-28. It is sweet to see how, in two or three words God sometimes heaps up the whole of the blessing He proposes to bestow on the soul. "The Salvation of God!" The moment I hear the word salvation, it brings this to my mind; if God sends me salvation, it is clear I have not got it, that need no proving; and if God sends it, it proves, too, that I need it. Salvation comes from God, that is the source. You are the recipient, and the thing sent is exactly what you need!

This was Paul's last sermon, and it was a very grand one, twelve hours' long; his whole object was to make Jesus precious to their souls; and he kept them from morning till evening, speaking of Jesus to them, and it is the very sweetest work possible. I would rather be pleading with you for Jesus, seeking to make Him precious to you, than be Ambassador from the British nation to the greatest foreign court. I will not detain you for twelve hours now, I promise you; but this I also promise you, that if you believe the word concerning Jesus you will be a saved person ere you lay down this paper. Were you steeped in sins when you took it up, you may become whiter

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

than snow ere you lay it down, through the precious blood of Jesus, God's beloved Son. Do you say, "I do not believe in sudden conversions." Well, I daresay you will be like those in the 24th verse of this chapter, "And some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not."

Why did they not believe? Because they listened to the devil's insinuation, just as you are listening to it now. There is one who believes in sudden conversions more firmly than any in the universe of God. Shall I tell you who that is? The most firm and thorough believer in sudden conversions is the devil! Perhaps you never thought of that before. I will prove it to you. Look at Luke viii. 12. "Those by the wayside are they that hear, then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." The moment you hear the word of God, you are on this platform—those by the wayside: then,—then what? Mark this. Then cometh the devil the moment they hear, lest they should believe and be saved. Was I right? Did I tell the truth just now? Ah, the devil knows full well that if you believe the message God is sending you through this paper, you will be saved on the spot. Satan knows well what the effect of the Gospel is,—hear, believe, be saved, and how quickly? Quicker than the time it takes you to read the words. The devil knows the truth of this full well; he knows the Gospel, he knows the effect, knows the power, knows the force of the Gospel far better than most,

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

even of those who preach it, and because he knows the power of the Gospel so well, he comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. He does not care what he brings in to draw the eye off Christ, or distract the soul from believing the word of God.

I know you have never thought of this before, never thought you could be saved where you sit, you have thought salvation was a long process,—something you had to do. Satan likes you to believe that; if he can possibly help it he will not let you believe God has done it all, and that you may have salvation just now through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. “Some believed, and some believed not,” and so it will always be, but the man who does not believe is an infatuated man, has not the wariness of a bird even. “How can you say that?” do you ask. Well, the psalmist says, “In vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird,” and Satan sets his net for you now and whispers to you “Do not you believe in sudden conversions, do not you take in this sort of thing, you have a good deal to do before you can be saved,” But, I say, if Satan did not believe so firmly in sudden conversion himself, he would not be so anxious to keep you from believing in the possibility of it. Oh believe the word that God has sent to you just now. He sends to you a message of salvation, and you must accept it or refuse it, and remember my friend, if you will not take God’s salvation you must take God’s damnation, for

## FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

there is no middle ground. So do not trifle with God's offer of salvation. Remember, there is no door out of hell though there is an awfully wide door into it; take care that you do not go in by that wide doorway!—procrastination:

Are you a rich man trusting in your riches? If you have not Christ what is it all worth? You are a poor man if you have not Jesus, you have more sins than sovereigns, more guilt than wealth; and when you lie in the grave and the worm feeds upon you, who has your gold then? "My posterity," you say. Yes, but who has your soul? Satan has your soul,—your soul is in hell. Whatever you have got, if you have not Jesus it is all nothing. And, Oh! tell me, would not you like to know Jesus, to possess Jesus to day? "Yes," you say, "I would willingly barter all I possess to win this salvation:" that will not do. God is too rich to *sell* salvation and you are too poor to *buy* it. It must be His own free gift, salvation is free for everybody who cares to have it.

Having glanced at the four things that God would have us know, 1st that Christ has gone to glory, God has put Him there, though man cast Him out; 2nd His name is down here on earth to be trusted in; 3rdly that by Him I am forgiven and justified; and now 4thly the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles and they will hear it; I would ask you my friend, one solemn question ere I close, Where are *you*? Do you believe the things, or do you not? And I warn you, if God sends you salvation do not you refuse it. You get salvation by accept-

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH KNOWING.

ing the Saviour. " Mine eyes have seen thy salvation " Simeon said, for he held the Saviour in his arms.

What a salvation to refuse. Will you not take it? You have nothing to do but to take what God offers. Receive Christ, and salvation is yours both now and for ever. Receive Him and you have everything in Him. Christ is like a golden casket, and in that golden casket a magnificent specimen of every precious stone that is known. The casket is gold, and I have everything in that casket. Everything is in Christ, I have life in Him, acceptance too, He is made unto me wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. Possessing Christ I all possess, I have everything in Him, and I have only to fall down and thank God. And can I lose it? Never! I shall lose eternal life the day Christ loses it, not before; for I have been accepted in Christ. He took all my sins and He is my righteousness. May you dear friend lay down this paper knowing what Christ is, that from your heart you may echo the lines of a sweet hymn:—

“ I have a glorious Saviour,  
Who died upon the tree;  
My sins He bare and suffered there,  
The wrath of God for me!”

W. T. P. W.

## DREAMS AND VISIONS.

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“I wish you would take an early opportunity of seeing Mrs. J——,” said a lady to me lately “she is in great distress about her soul and nothing gives her relief.”

The next day I walked over to the neighbouring village of M—— where Mrs. J—— lived. On knocking at the door it was opened by her husband, who told me his wife was ill in bed, but if I liked I could go and see her ; so sending one of the children to apprise her of my coming I walked up the stairs and soon found myself face to face with the person I had come to see. Her illness I discovered, was the result of intense anxiety about her condition as a sinner before God, and as she narrated to me how she had been led from a state of carelessness to one of deep concern, the tears streamed down her face and wringing her hands she begged to know what she must do. I took my bible and sought to explain to her God’s way of saving souls: how that Christ had come to give His life a ransom for many, and having once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, He had been raised from the dead and seated at God’s right hand in heaven, and that now whosoever believeth in Him receiveth remission of sins. Nothing, however, that I could say gave her rest, once or twice a gleam of light broke in

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upon her mind, but the next moment it was shrouded in darkness, so I said "now tell me Mrs. J—— what would give you peace?"

She then began to say that she had heard and read of the wonderful experience of others, how Jesus had appeared to them in dreams or visions and instantly dispelled their fears, and they had felt thenceforward they were saved. But no such thing had happened to her and she wanted it. "Oh" she exclaimed, "if I could only see the Saviour standing by my side, showing to me His five wounds, and saying to me, 'Poor sinner I died for thee,' I should be satisfied." So she was looking for a vision of that kind and would not be comforted because she had it not.

Dreams and visions are but doubtful things to base our assurance of salvation on, and so are feelings and experiences. The Scriptures do not say "he that dreameth, feeleth, or experienceth hath everlasting life," but "he that believeth on the Son" (John iii.). Do you believe in Him? Without righteousness and strength, as sinful and helpless do you trust Him who died for the ungodly. If you can sincerely say "Yes," then be it known unto you, that by Him all that believe are justified from all things (Acts xiii. 37). Not shall be but *are*. Let your mind rest for a moment on this precious statement. Consider what it means and whose authority it bears. Surely it was penned to meet your case. Not for the sake of others to the exclusion of yourself was this word given. A stranger you may ever be to dreams, visions, and ecstacies, but be assured if you are amongst

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“all that believe” you *are* justified from all things. Hesitate not to believe this divine and blessed testimony. Be no longer faithless but believing, rest on the simple word of the Lord, aught else might fail you, that never will, it abideth for ever, eternally sure.

“But there must be some great change wrought within me before I can go to Jesus and be saved” said one who was earnestly besought to decide for Christ. What change are you waiting dear soul? Are we told anywhere in Scripture to wait for a change before believing in Him? Were you sick would you tarry till your health improved ere you sought the physician? Is He not willing to receive you as you are? Indeed He is. Will you not go to Him? If you have never been before, go now as a sinner needing His Salvation, go as a weary one needing rest, and as surely as you go, so surely will you be welcomed, pardoned, and blessed by Him.

And if you thus trust yourself to Jesus, let your knowledge of salvation come from the word of God alone. Clear, simple, positive, and all sufficient are its records as to the security of the believer in Christ. He shall never perish and none shall pluck him from the shepherd's hand (John x. 28), everlasting life is his, and for him there remains no judgment. He has already passed from death unto life, and is meet for the inheritance of the saints in light (John v. 24, Col. 1, 12). Accepted in the beloved, the favour of God rests on him as on the risen and exalted Christ. “As is the heavenly such are

## HAVE YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE.

they also that are heavenly” (1 Cor. xv. 48). “And as He is so are we in this world (1 John iv.” 17). Wonderful words, but no more wonderful than true.

You tremble still to believe that this is so. Are you then afraid to receive the fulness of blessing which the simple belief of the truth would give? Why are you troubled and why do thoughts arise in your heart? Would God mislead you, or can you be wrong in trusting His word? Oh let us have faith in God; faith in the risen Christ of God; faith in the written word of God. Let us cease to look for frames or feelings, visions or dreams, and as we own Jesus as the only Saviour, so let us own the written word as the only source from whence the knowledge of Salvation comes.

W. B.

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## HAVE YOU MADE YOUR CHOICE?

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“Betwixt what?” you say. Betwixt God and Satan; betwixt Heaven and Hell; betwixt happiness and misery for ever.

“Well,” you say, “I confess I havn’t thought so much of it as I ought to have done, but there’s plenty of time.”

That is your awful mistake!

Amongst many who have made it, God gives us a most notable instance. There was one who

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vainly thought that his life consisted in the abundance of the things he possessed, (Luke xii.) His crops were large, his increase great, his barns overflowing, and his heart taken up by his goods. I doubt not thoughts of God and eternity sometimes stole over his mind, but Satan whispered, "Look at your goods—plenty of time to attend to the claims of God." He took the bait, believed the gilded lie, said to his soul, "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years ; take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry ;" but he had committed a fatal error, and ere the morning dawned, life had fled from the pampered body, and a hopeless eternity had broken on his God-rejecting soul. He had deliberately made his choice, and God had taken him at his word, for in choosing the world he had chosen the God of this world—Satan. (2 Cor. iv. 4.) But, my reader, I firmly believe this one thing about him, that he never meant to be lost ; for he says to his soul, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years." It may be he cherished the delusion thousands are cherishing to-day, of turning to God on a sick or death bed ; promising himself many years before that unwelcome time should come. How little the poor procrastinator thought that death was, as it were, waiting in an ante-room, ready to step in ! One word from God, and the dread waiter has calmly walked up to his victim, laid an icy hand upon his shoulder—it may be while he slept—and quietly retreated as he came ; leaving upon the couch whereon had lain the God-rejector, a lump of clay ; and freeing the

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soul to lift up its eyes in torment. He had made his choice—is it possible your's can be the same?

Have you made your choice?

“Well,” you say, “I hope to do so soon.” Who does not? But a word to you, your “Soon” may be God's “Too late.” Are you sure of another day?

Have you made your choice?

“Not yet, not yet,” you say.

Then another brief word, whatever it is which is keeping you back—business, house, lands, fame, family, pleasure—if you place any value upon that soul of yours which a moment may transport into an eternity of misery, cast it aside and give yourself no rest till this question of questions is settled.

I am persuaded God is asking you while you read this article, “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” and solemnly warning you that “The son of man shall come in the glory of his father with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.” (Matt. xvi. 26-27.)

“BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD, WHICH TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD.” (John 1. 29.)

R. H. G.

## HIS PRESENCE MAKES MY PARADISE.

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The circumstances in which the person was found who uttered the above words will afford the reader some idea of the surprise and joy we felt in thus discovering one who, having believed the testimony God had given of His Son, was only living to prove that the Kingdom of God was not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

In conveying my sons to their school a few miles in the country, I had many times observed, that, which to the natural eye, seemed a most pitiable object : an old man, passing threescore and ten, very feeble, kneeling on a heap of stones by the roadside, with one hand leaning on a stick, to support his weak body, and with the other using a hammer, labouring to earn the bread that perisheth. My children had often ministered to his temporal need when passing outward on the Monday and homeward on the Saturday ; but it was our privilege, and profit I trust, to be ministered unto on this occasion, by one who appeared to have nothing but poverty in and around him.

Driving as close as we could, I said to him, " My friend, have you ever heard about the Lord Jesus dying for sinners." In a moment with face beaming with heavenly joy he replied, " Yes sir, and I know that He died for me."

" Then," said I, " you are a rich man indeed ; breaking stones to-day and in the glory to-morrow."

" Yes Sir, and it may be in five minutes ; and I can say with Job, ' all the days of my

## HIS PRESENCE MAKES MY PARADISE.

appointed time will I wait, till my change come.' But He who died for me, sir, has promised that He will never leave nor forsake me, and His presence makes my paradise."

No sooner was the last word uttered, than the toil was resumed; our hearts had indeed been filled, and bidding him farewell, we drove on; not without deeply exercised souls as to the precious testimony to that never failing, never wearying grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was sustaining this "weak thing" of God's choice in all his need, and turning that which naturally could only contribute misery, into a paradise by His presence.

Returning again in a few hours, I told him how we were cheered this morning, and although I had so frequently passed him during the winter, how our eternal relationship was only now discovered by us.

Again, like the sound of a well-tuned instrument, when touched, he said "Yes sir, brethren in Christ, and we've got to do with a good Father and a kind Saviour."

God had revealed His Son in the heart of that dear old man, and Jesus had become everything to him, and the water that He had given him, was in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.

I have often challenged my soul with this question, surrounded, as I am, in the providence of God with every earthly comfort,—is the acquaintance with my blessed Saviour of such a character, that the withdrawal of all these temporal comforts from my lot, would only

## DO OR DONE.

serve to make more manifest, that “ the life I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me ?”

My dear unconverted friend, what are thy thoughts of this old man’s happiness? Thou hast not yet drawn from those living waters that had filled his soul ; thou art not yet standing in the attitude of waiting for God’s son from Heaven, and until thou hast believed in that finished work He accomplished at His first appearing, thou wilt have no joy in the contemplation of His second coming. But stop, poor sinner, God discerns that feeble desire in thy heart to return, His own spirit created that need in thy soul ; listen, O listen ! as the glad tidings of the grace of God are ringing out their closing peals with more than usual clearness to thee poor heavy laden and thirsty one, “ And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely.” Then shalt thou prove, even here, in the midst of tribulation that “ His presence makes thy paradise.”

E.P.

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## DO OR DONE.

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It is Satan’s one grand object to mar the God-wrought perfection of the plan of salvation, and to keep those who are in deep exercise about their souls’ salvation in the dark, and perplex them with everything that savours of uncertainty. Let uncertainty fill their hearts, and he knows that that will bid farewell to their enjoyment of “peace with God.” He blinds

## DO OR DONE.

their minds lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them, and they should be saved.

When he observes a soul convicted of sin, and made miserable with the thought of it, and with the fact of not being prepared to meet God, he immediately suggests something that he knows the anxious soul will grasp at, as being according to the legal condition of human nature. He immediately suggests the idea of "doing" to it. And what is Satan's "doing" to be saved? It is a thorough rejection of the revelation God has given of Himself, it is also a denial of the fact of man's absolute ruin, and that His need has been met in the cross of Christ. How important, then, for the soul to reject the foul suggestion of the enemy to "do" and be saved.

Beloved reader, are you in deep exercise of soul about your sins, and the eternity that lies beyond? But again, are you on the ground of "doing" to be saved? If so, you have given the ear to Satan's lie, and his infidel attempt to do away with God's revelation of Himself. You have listened to him who would fain hide the cross from your view, and hinder you from enjoying the precious fruits of Christ's death here. Let not his foul insinuations darken your understanding any longer: receive light from the heavenly lamp of inspiration, and it shall be your conductor as applied by the Holy Spirit, into the enjoyment of perfect peace, and the knowledge of salvation.

But if it is Satan's object to darken the under-

## DO OR DONE.

standing, and hide the glory of the cross from the soul, it is also the object of God to enlighten the mind, and lead the soul to behold all its great and deep need met in the atoning death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But alas, how often the soul lingers in the land of "doing to be saved." It is not an easy thing for man, deeply exercised about his soul's salvation, to let go every "twig" at once, to have every "prop" knocked from beneath him. But the twigs must be let go and the props must be knocked away, before the soul can be conducted into peace with God. And now the question fully rises up before our souls, as to whether it is by "doing" that the sinner is saved, or whether it is through faith in what Christ has "done" 1,800 years ago upon the Cross. Is it "do" or "done"? What beneath the sun can cast light upon this important enquiry? What can answer this immense question for the soul? Nothing but the word of God. Oh! my anxious reader, let me conduct you to this heavenly fountain of light, there to be enlightened with the light of God. "The entrance of thy words giveth light, it giveth understanding to the simple," Psalm cxix. 130. There are no uncertainties with God. His word is as a moral sun, dispelling with its bright beams every particle of darkness and uncertainty from the soul, and filling it with the most absolute certainty about salvation and eternal things. Faith receives it as the message of God, reposes in its statements, and experiences their peace-giving power.

## DO OR DONĒ.

But what does that word tell to a divinely exercised soul, one whose conscience is ploughed by the sword of the spirit? Does it say, Do your best and all will be well? Nay. Does it say, Keep the law and be ye saved? Nothing of the kind. Does it say, Mend your ways, and so be accepted with God? That with an unregenerate sinner is an utter impossibility. What then does it say? It says, O sinner, that you are verily deserving of eternal wrath, and to save you from that wrath, the due reward of your sins, Jesus the Son of God—the Divine substitute, came and died upon the cross, and “finished” a work by which the sinner can be saved eternally, and that by resting your soul by faith upon that “gloriously finished work,” you are saved. Listen to the words of the expiring Saviour: “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, He said, It is finished: and he bowed His head and gave up the ghost.” John xix. 19.

Mark well, oh my reader, it does not say that the sinner has to “do,” or that Christ is “doing”; nay, but that it is “done.” Yes, done as God would have it: done to His satisfaction and glory, and to the believing sinner’s present and eternal joy. Tell me, O my dear reader, my fellow traveller to eternity, are not those words, “IT IS FINISHED” precious words? A world of infinite blessedness is found within their compass. Eternal glory shall be your’s by simply resting upon them. Yea, present peace, pardon of your sins, eternal life, and association with Christ in the glory, shall be your’s, by

## SATAN DEFEATED.

simply believing in the "risen" Son of God who uttered those words before He expired. His resurrection being the proof that God has accepted that "work" which He "finished."

Can we not decide then, beloved friend, that it is not by "doing" that the sinner is saved, but by Christ's eternal "done"? The words "It is finished" settle that point in an absolute sense. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," are words, which clench the matter in the soul, especially when we read the verse that connects itself with that: "Therefore being justified by faith (or on the principle of faith), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" Rom. v. 1, 2.

Rest, then, dear soul, upon Christ's eternal "done," and thou shalt be saved, and then it will be your's aright to serve Him, who died for you.

E. A.

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## SATAN DEFEATED.

1 JOHN, III., 8.

God reigns in light alone,  
None may with Him compare;  
To seek the eternal throne  
How should another dare?  
Yet one bright creature of His hand  
Had fain usurped supreme command.

## SATAN DEFEATED.

An angel-host has shared  
His foul apostasy ;  
For such is hell prepared,  
But not, O man ! for thee ;  
Though, by thy fall, in Eden's bloom,  
Thy foe would have thee share his doom.

To Paradise farewell,  
To innocence an end !  
Thy pathway leads to hell,  
But God is still thy friend :  
He gives a new Foundation-stone,  
Because thou couldst not stand alone.

Look back to Calvary's tree;  
Behold how God doth give !  
The word of grace is free,  
Believe on Christ, and live.  
Refuse, and thou shalt surely dwell  
With Satan and his host in hell.

That fierce malignant band  
Now rule the darkness here,  
The word of grace withstand,  
To mark our steps are near ;  
But safe in Christ, who cannot fail,  
The weakest saint shall yet prevail.

To Paradise above  
The risen Lord, who died,  
In fulness of His love  
Will take His ransomed Bride.  
And earth, set free from sin's dark stain,  
Shall own her God's eternal reign.

ANON.

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

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The following letter was written by one who, till the age of thirty-five, served Satan well, as his own words show, and far enough his feet had strayed on the "dark mountains" of sin. The shepherd sought the wandering sheep *until* he found him, and now he lives to praise the wondrous grace and love of Him who came to seek and to save the lost—even Jesus, who saved him just because He was "not willing" that he should perish, and Who is able and willing to save you also, dear reader; if you will let Him. May the simple record of His Grace to another win your heart to trust Him, too, and to receive Him as *your* Saviour and *your* Lord.

"DEAR FRIEND,

I received your very welcome letter and was so happy to hear from you again. Many times have I sat by the sea beach and wondered as each steamer passed up to Brisbane, if there was any word from you to me in her. And I asked the Lord to let me know whether you were gone home to Him, and now your letter has come. I should have written by last mail but I wanted, by God's help, to give you an account of God's wonderful dealings with me. I thought it my duty to tell you what I had

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

been, and I prayed the Lord for strength to write it to you, and I know you will not turn from me on account of my former evil ways, but like our forgiving Lord will freely forgive me too, and help me to praise Him for His grace to such a vile sinner.

“The packets of ‘God’s Glad Tidings’ always come safely and are so useful here. Many of the men here are shepherds, going at this time of the year to different stations, these I press to take the “Glad Tidings” with them, for as the angel first proclaimed the glad tidings to shepherds at Bethlehem may not the Lord be pleased to bless these same tidings to shepherds in Australia, and many more may hear the good news through them.

“You told me once in Edinburgh that I might write and tell you anything as though I was speaking to you, I am doing that now, but if you think the story of God’s wonderful grace to me would lead any other sinner to trust Him too, will you put right any mistakes in spelling I may make before you have it printed,

“As you know, I was born in Edinbro’. I was the youngest of five children. My father I can just remember, he was a printer and died when I was very young, but my dear mother’s image is as fresh as though I had but just lost her; the little lessons and prayers she taught me I could never get rid of through all my wicked career. She was one of God’s humble servants, ever impressing on her childrens’ minds bible truths. I can remem-

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

ber how anxiously she would have me repeat my prayers after her and tell me of our Lord, how He suffered to save us. Many a time my heart has ached to think how much I have caused her to suffer through my wickedness. When I was at home last my aunt told me that my mother was ever praying for me that the Lord in His own good time would bring me home and make me one of His children. Yes, with her last breath she pleaded for me. She died in the Edinburgh Infirmary; there, where she pleaded so earnestly for me did it please the Lord to answer her dying cry, in His own time and way. All the Glory to Him

“ A few years after the death of my father I was placed in the Orphan Asylum, as my poor dear mother could do nothing with me. I would not remain at school and she had to work hard to sustain me and my sisters. I had every opportunity to learn for I was placed under a God-fearing teacher; a man whose memory is dear to me now. In after years his words often came to my mind and convicted me of my evil ways. Oh! had I been guided by him or my dear mother what miseries should I have avoided, but I was prone to evil. I would not learn, so the committee ordered me to be sent to learn a trade. Here again the Lord cared for me, for I was placed with a godly family, near Glasgow, to learn the weaving trade. My master sent me to a night-school, but I shewed such wicked temper that the teacher sent me

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

away in disgrace. My good master tried to teach me at home to no purpose. Many times I ran away, and he followed me to Edinburgh and would take me back, but after three years struggling this good man let me go my own road, writing and telling my mother he feared the Lord had given me over to follow my own evil ways. My poor mother knew where to carry her sorrows, to Him who *can* be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and earnestly she cried to the Lord by my bedside that I might be made one of His own flock.

“About this time passing down the High Street, my eldest brother saw me in company with some wicked boys, he saw enough to convince him I was getting money by some unlawful course. He said nothing to me then but sent me home, but next morning before I was awake he came into the bedroom and dragging me out of bed lashed me with the buckle end of a belt that butchers usually wear to carry their steel. My poor mother tried in vain to interfere, but he would not leave off till a neighbour came in and took me from him. I was bruised and bleeding, he no doubt meant it for my good, but such an unmerciful beating was the cause of driving me from my home altogether, for as soon as my wounds got well I turned on the streets, choosing for my companions thieves and pickpockets, and would never go near my mother's house, and if I met my sisters I avoided them. Soon I was taken before a magistrate for theft, and sentenced to some

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

months imprisonment. At the end of the time the good chaplain took me kindly by the hand and walked with me from the goal with the intention of taking me to my mother's house; but behind us some of my former companions were following, and making signs for me to come back. Satan prevailed, I broke away from the man of God and went back to my evil ways. I went on now from bad to worse, till I was taken with two more young lads in a robbery, and sentenced to seven years transportation. This was a severe blow to all my friends. My poor mother never recovered the shock, her health failed from this time. She visited me in prison, and never can I forget the expression on her dear face as she begged me to repent and to seek the Lord while He was to be found, and to promise to write to her. She parted from me confident that the Lord would answer her prayers in His own good time and way. I was very sorrowful for some time after this, but it was not godly sorrow that worketh repentance.

“ I with many others was sent to Wakefield to undergo the first period of our sentence, one of the two boys convicted with me died there, the other I never saw again.

“ In my lonely cell at Wakefield, I had every opportunity to consider my ways, and a letter I received from my poor mother, with a small lock of hair from my youngest sister, who always loved me, set me to think, I betook myself to pray, but there was no sincere cry

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

from the heart. I thought as long as I made an outward show of godliness I would be saved. I was like the foolish virgins with no oil in my vessel, I had not the grace of God in my heart. Thus I spent the first part of my sentence, and after eighteen months of separate confinement I was removed to Portland. Here I was allowed to mix with the other prisoners when at work in the quarries. Here I met with a young man from Edinburgh, a professed infidel. He laughed and sneered at all my good resolutions, and instead of avoiding him, I drank in all his wicked notions respecting the Word of God. I was ever at his side when not at work.

Oh! should these lines ever come before any young man who has left a parent's roof, take heed who you choose for a companion—if he is given to speak of God's holy Word lightly, or to ridicule or sneer at it, avoid him as you would a poisonous snake. You cannot put fire in your bosom and not be burned: sit not in the scorner's seat. By the time I was to leave Portland for a foreign country, I was hardened in wickedness. I took every opportunity to scoff at the children of God and to speak against His holy word. After three years spent at Wakefield and Portland, I, with many more, was conveyed on board the ship that was to take us to Van Diemen's Land, that young man was among the number, and now I was as bold and wicked as he. I said in my heart There is no God, and I tried to convince my mind that His Word was only a 'cunningly devised fable.'

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

“After five months we arrived at Hobart Town. Here I was sworn into the police, and put in the water police boat. Now I had my freedom again ; though not free to leave my situation or leave the country, unless I received a free pardon from government. Here I had every opportunity to cease to do evil and learn to do well, but my heart was hardened. Oh, how easily might He have cut me off as a cumberer of the ground without hope and without God ; but all glory to Him, He spared me. Oh ! should an unconverted soul read these lines, I implore you value your privileges. Go where God's grace is preached, let nothing but illness prevent you. There you will be in the way, like the little man in the Gospel, of seeing Jesus as He passes, and there He may speak to your soul.

“All my spare time after this I spent with my infidel companion, and trusted to his advice in every way. He had been well educated as far as worldly learning went, and I looked up to him. After two years, I, with two more, was recommended to the Governor for our free pardon on account of some little merit we showed in the execution of our duty, and we regained our liberty. How happy I felt, but there was no gratitude to Him who had preserved me from death, when so many had been cut off in their sins, but rarely one so wicked as I. I was now about twenty-two years of age, and there being a great demand for sailors, I chose this for my future calling. Hobart Town being a great

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

place for fitting out vessels for the sperm whaling trade, I joined one of those vessels for eighteen months. We had a mixed crew, and I was soon one of the most forward in wickedness, having no sense of shame when I dared to blaspheme that holy name. I was soon heartily tired of this whaling life, then we were paid off, and after running through my money, I determined to go in the coasting trade, and for some years I continued at this.

“I need not pain you with the details of the next fifteen years. I made two more whaling voyages, and the rest of the time was in coasters or ashore. Many a time during those years the Lord delivered me from death, two instances I will give you, and though at the time I felt no gratitude to Him for prolonging my life, and not cutting me off in my sins, yet now will I praise Him for ever, and I will tell of His wonderful mercy to others. I joined a small schooner trading between New Zealand and Tasmania, and after being some months in her, we got a cargo in Hobart Town for New Zealand. Having got all ready for sea, the crew were allowed the last night ashore, with strict orders to be on board by day-light. In the morning my messmates all went aboard, but I would not go, Rather than be persuaded to go I would risk losing the wages coming to me. I had no fault to find with the captain or mate. I was not dissatisfied with the vessel and liked my shipmates, but there was something in my mind telling me not to go. The vesse’

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sailed, taking another man in my place, and few days after the news came that the vessel was lost and all hands. But even this did not soften my heart, instead of thanking God, I put it all down to chance, little thinking that not even a sparrow can fall to the ground without His leave.

“ But again He saved me wonderfully. It was the time of the Maorie war, and I was in a barque going a whaling voyage. We were to trade among some of the South-Sea Islands. We had a large quantity of drink on board, and the captain took to drinking to such a degree till he was never sober, or on deck, at last he went out of his mind, and in this awful state he went before his Maker. We buried him on a small island, far from his loving wife and family, and the chief mate took command. He, too, took to drinking, and soon left the vessel to the care of the second mate, who was a sober, steady man. Many of the men found some means of getting at the drink, and disregarding the second mate's orders, brought it on deck and made those drink who were not inclined even. Thus we went on, till the Lord sent a storm upon us. We were driven on a lee shore, and though we let go both anchors, yet the cables were snapped asunder as threads. Some of the men went to lower one of the boats, and I, in a state of drink, was going into the boat to fend her off from the vessel's side, when I missed my footing and fell overboard. In falling I struck against some broken spar, or against the vessel's

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

side, for I lost all consciousness, and but for God's mercy to my poor soul I must have been lost.

“ When I came to my senses, I found myself lying in a Maorie hut, very much bruised and hurt on the left side. The men in bringing me to this hut had carried me through a deep stream of fresh water, and thus lying before a fire, and the clothes drying on me, I caught a cold, and have never been rid of a cough again. Still I had no gratitude to God who preserved me, and left me where there was still hope of mercy, but I was grateful to the young man who was the means of saving me at the risk of his own life. Two of my shipmates were drowned, and several severely injured. I left soon for New Zealand, to get medical aid. Arrived at Port Lyttleton, I was soon able to take a situation as cook in a gentleman's family. He was a minister of the Gospel, and I can never forget how that man of God prayed for me, and how he would tell me of the great love of Christ for sinners. But all to no purpose—I was in darkness and I hated the light—and soon I yearned to get away from this servant of God. I told him as I was not fit to go to sea I would go on a sheep station. He tried to persuade me not to go away, but I would not listen; so pressing a book into my hand, he committed me to the care of the Lord.

“ I went up the country with some shipmates, and stayed through the season, and returned to the seaport still poorly in health,

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but I thought a long sea voyage would recover me. I went to Sydney and joined a vessel going to China, but before we arrived at Shanghai I was confined to my hammock with, as I thought, cold; the Dr. ordered me to hospital there, and in a few weeks the vessel left me, as I was not fit for my work. The cough got worse, accompanied with pain in my left side. Here I read part of the book that I got in New Zealand, and it made me feel most miserable in my mind—the thought would strike me, what if it should all be true? I would cast the book aside and try to drown thought, but I found that more difficult to do there in a sick ward than in the midst of my former companions.

“After some time, the English Consul sent me, with some more invalids, aboard a mail boat going home. When I arrived at Greenock, I took the train for the little town where I had learned to weave in my boyhood. There I hoped to see those good people whom I grieved so much in my youth, but the Lord had taken them home. I went to look at the church which they tried so hard to make me attend, but all seemed changed—the minister had gone, and another taken his place—there was no one to welcome me. My former playmates were all scattered; the railway now ran through the house we had lived in. I was very much cast down, and I left for Edinburgh, hoping to find a friend there; but no, there was not the friend I looked for. I enquired of a butcher if he knew either of my brothers, who belonged to the same trade; he

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said they were both dead years since. I tried to find my aunt, with no better success. I walked down the High Street, quite broken down in health and spirits. I felt alone, with a heavy burden of guilt pressing me down. Everywhere I went there were painful recollections of my early life. Oh, dear friend, I thought there was no hope for me. I went into the infirmary, my side was so bad I had to sit up most of my time; here my mind was ever brooding over my wicked life; turn where I would, there was no peace for me. Conscience was now awake. I feared to die and meet Him whose name I had so often ridiculed.

“The Dr. examined my side, and after leaving with his students, he came back and told me to set my mind on things more lasting than this life, as he thought my time was very short. I thanked him; and now I ask the Lord to make many of our Drs. like this Christian man—faithful to the souls as well as giving medicine to the bodies of their patients. I was greatly alarmed—I dared not look up—I thought there could be no mercy for such as me. I tried to remember His word, but I could not think it meant me—though one verse of it hung on the wall opposite my bed—that verse from the 3rd of John, “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” I turned over and over in my mind, could this “whosoever” include me? but I could not see it. Then one of the young gentlemen

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going round with the students came up to me and asked me if I would like to see a friend of his. I said I would be very glad, and I have ever firmly believed that the Lord Himself sent you to me through that gentleman. You will remember what you read to me, and spoke of Jesus. It was the 14th chapter of John.\* It seemed as though the Lord were speaking to me personally. I got this word, "If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it." And though, as you know, I could not get out of bed, I cried to Him there in bed to blot out my sins for His great name's sake, and to teach me by His spirit. And the Lord heard and answered and sent His peace into my heart, instead of the dark despair; and then

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\* It was the Lord who gave the word He meant to use; all the way along I told Him how utterly weak and helpless, even frightened I felt, for it seemed so solemn a thing to be the only one to go and speak to one so close to eternity, and I would fain have waited to find one better fitted for the work, but my friend urged my going at *once*, saying he had promised I should, and that the Dr. scarcely thought his patient would last through the night. It was my first visit *alone* to the infirmary, and I had never been in one of the men's wards. I told the Lord, if He did not show me the Word He would have me read, I should not be able to find the most familiar passages. The only Word I got was the 14th of John. Once I turned away from it, it seemed scarcely a suitable portion for one in J. B.'s state of utter despair, but as I sat by that bedside, there seemed no other chapter in all the Bible, and I was constrained to turn again to it. How the Lord used it to his soul, his own words tell.

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

I felt no more fear of death and judgment, for the Lord had removed the sting from death, and taken the judgment for me.

“Here my mother had gone home to Him, praying for me to the last, and here for the first time did I pray to the Lord. Oh, should any doubting soul ever read these lines, I would beg of you to take the Lord's own word for it. He means mercy for you, no matter how great a sinner you have been; it is our unbelief only that stands in the way. Oh, then, do taste and see that He is good. The Lord Jesus would never have suffered all through His life and have died such a hard death if His power to save was to be limited. No, He says, He came to call sinners. If you have not tasted the love of Jesus yet, do not put it off till sickness overtakes you, as I did. His word says, “*Now* is the accepted time.” How many of my companions I have seen taken away suddenly without a moment's warning. Oh, do not put it off till a more convenient season. Only think what a comfort it is to know that whenever the Lord is pleased to call us we are ready to go, no matter whether in the day or the night, on land or at sea, we are as near home one way as the other. Notice the end of the child of God, how happy he is at going home. Well might covetous Balaam wish to die the death of the righteous.

“Dear friend, how well if you would only take the word of one who long tried the service of Satan, that his wages are hard, that as sure as

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holiness and happiness go together, so misery is linked with sin. There was no pleasure in the things whereof I am now ashamed, but I have found constant happiness in the love of Christ; in His peace, that the world can neither give nor take away. You go to Him, He will not refuse you; He will not turn you away empty. You may not be able to say a long prayer, or make use of big words; the Lord wants none of that; only ask Him in your own heart; He hears the least cry of faith.

“ And now, dear friend, I need tell you no more, for you are aware of all that has happened to me since the first time you came to me in Edinburgh Infirmary (more than five years since). I will only add what has struck my mind very forcibly, how wonderful are the ways of the Lord and His love. I came home to my native city after so many years a complete wreck, weary and heavy laden with sin. He sent me away clothed with the riches of His grace. May He bless these lines to some other poor weary soul, is the prayer of

Yours truly in Christ, J. B.”

To J. B.'s own account of God's ways of grace with him, I will only add that against all human hope the Lord raised him up and has kept him a bright witness for Himself for five years; using him for blessing to many souls and enabling him to speak boldly for Christ to many of his former companions in sin. For a year after his conversion he he remained in Scotland, but hemorrhage of the lungs return-

## A MOTHER'S PRAYER ANSWERED.

ing on every attempt to do anything for his livelihood, the Dr, advised his going to Australia. There he is occupied in carrying the Bible far into the bush ; if men will buy it of him, well ; if not, he leaves it with them. His faith in the word of God, that it shall not return to Him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleases, is boundless. His knowledge of the Bible as shewn in his letters is often surprising to me, remembering that five years since he did not know where to find a single passage, nor had opened it even for five-and-twenty years. But he hungered and thirsted after His word, and at each visit to him, I saw had found out some fresh beauty in it.

Often his first question was "Have you got some new subject for me to look up?"

Dark though he felt his sins had been, the blood that had cleansed them seemed of too immeasurable value for him ever to put a doubt on it.

The word that met his soul's need at first has seemed to be the key-note of his life ever since, and the Lord honours his simple faith so that, to those who know him, it is always refreshing to hear him say, or rather write, that he is "asking the Lord" about anything in which our hearts are interested.

## COMPLETE IN HIM.

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A group of earnest listeners had gathered round a dear servant of the Lord, one autumn evening, as he stood in the open air, at the head of the beautiful bay of R—, and sought to win the hearts of poor lost sinners, by telling the sweet old story of redeeming love, and that there is salvation, even for the chief of sinners, through the blood-shedding and death of the precious Saviour.

About this time the Lord had begun a work in the souls of some dear mill girls in the town.

A young woman of this class was standing near me with a very staid, earnest expression on her face. "Have you come to Jesus?" I enquired. "No! but I would like very much to come to Him." I was, of course, interested in the dear girl, and going over to a servant of the Lord among the crowd, who had much experience in dealing with souls, I requested him to speak to her.

Being of a retiring disposition, E—— told me sometime afterwards, when I got to know her better, that she was not pleased at my calling Mr. F.'s attention to her. Perhaps Satan, ever ready to make use of anything to divert the soul from the one object of the Spirit of God, the immediate acceptance of Christ, God's unspeakable gift, took advantage of the little circumstance I have mentioned, to keep her that evening from the loving Saviour. However that might be, she went away still unsaved.

E—— had been awakened to anxiety about

## COMPLETE IN HIM.

her soul some time before this during the revival in the village of Duntocher, and believed that she had been for a long time seeking the Saviour; not seeing the truth that He, the Good Shepherd, had been a much longer time seeking her—a poor, wandering sheep,—and just wanted her to stop and allow Him to pick her up, lay her on His shoulder, and carry her home rejoicing. She was like many, looking for something in herself to bring to God.

Never can a soul get rest until it ceases from the vain effort to find something in self, the thing which God has condemned on the cross, and in perfect helplessness, as a lost sinner looks right away to Jesus, believing that He accomplished the work eighteen hundred years ago on Calvary's cross, and said "It is finished." The devil could shake you about your experiences, your frames, and your feelings, for these are broken reeds to lean on. But he never can shake you on the ground of the finished work of Christ, that is a rock he cannot touch. You can lean upon that with your whole weight. Every other ground of confidence will give way, depend upon it.

“ Lord, while our souls by faith repose  
Upon Thy precious blood;  
Peace, like an even river flows,  
And mercy, like a flood.”

One day E—— was walking along the streets at the dinner hour, when she met a Christian young woman, who was a mill worker, in company with another, the wife of an Evangelist,

## COMPLETE IN HIM.

who, though he had come down to Rothesay for his health, was seeking to do a little work for his Master.

E—— was introduced to the Evangelist's wife as an anxious soul. The Lord gave the right word at the moment: "Ye are complete in Him." Ah, she saw it all now. Yes, it is all in Jesus at God's right hand. Salvation in a look to Him. No goodness in me. He is my righteousness.

It was the work of a moment; or, rather, I should say, no work at all; for at such a moment my soul is made to see when I cease to do—cease to struggle, and in perfect helplessness acknowledge that I have nothing to do, Jesus has done it all, long, long ago. I am saved. I have only to rejoice in Him, and what have I done? not so much as lifted my little finger in the matter.

E—— went on her way rejoicing, she scarcely seemed to feel the pavement beneath her feet, the load was gone. She met her sister and told her with joy that she had found the Lord at last.

But, alas! dear E—— thought a good deal of her joy, it was so very delightful that unconsciously she began to rest there. "He is our Peace," says the word, and the Lord must teach this babe in Christ that she must not be taken up with her joy or feelings in any way, but that it must be Him on whom she must rest.

Many a bitter moment, the soul has in learning that frames and experiences are no more to

## COMPLETE IN HIM.

be trusted than the shifting sands, or the ever-moving waves of the sea. Nothing but the written Word of God gives solid resting ground.

E——'s joy was gone! What was she to do? In distress, she sought her closet that Saturday night, when the rest of the family had retired, resolved that out of it she would not come until the cloud between her and her newly-found Saviour had passed away.

Again she was enabled to rest on the precious words: "Ye are complete in Him." Ah! she rested firmly now on the Word of God.

Rising from her knees in great joy, she went into the room where the family were sleeping, she awoke her mother—grasped her hand, "Oh, mother, I have found Jesus!" All the family were awake now, and sat up in bed, weeping. There was joy, also, that night, in the presence of the angels of God, over that one sinner brought to repentance.

Sitting down on a stool at the fireside, she sang a hymn of praise to Him who had loved her and washed her from her sins in His own blood.

On Lord's day morning, with joyful heart, E—— went into the morning meeting. A great work of the Lord was going on among the mill-girls. E—— told one of the two dear evangelists who were labouring there what the Lord had done for her soul. "Praise His name; He saved you just about the hour when, eighteen hundred years ago, He rose from the dead, after having put away our sins on the Cross," was his reply.

## COMPLETE IN HIM.

E—— was one who proved the reality of her conversion to God by her after life, which was a consistent one. Her mother and sisters could say: “E—— is a Christian, and lives like one.” Her mother once said to me: “This is a poor attic, but we never can forget that E—— was born again here, and that makes it seem a bright place to us.”

Beloved reader, where are you? Are you in Christ or out of Christ. If you are out of Christ, no matter what you may be—member of a church, Sunday school teacher, perhaps—amiable, moral, religious; or, on the contrary, making no profession at all; careless, godless, living in pleasure, hear what God saith about you: “He that hath the Son hath life, and he that *hath not* the Son of God *hath not* life,” but “the wrath of God abideth on him.”

Are you anxious to be saved? Do you see that Christians are the only truly happy people?—and well they may be. Their sins are gone; Jesus has made an end of them on the Cross. And what a glorious prospect they have of being for ever with that beloved, that precious Saviour, who is now to them “the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely One.” What are you waiting for? for some good feeling within you to bring to God a little conviction of sin? Are you saying: “If I could only feel I was lost.” I do advise you, most earnestly, just to believe what God’s Word says: That you are lost, and never mind whether you feel it. Give up all effort, and believe that the work is done—it is finished. C. M‘T.

## “I KEN Í SÈE IT PLAINER.”

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“SALVATION is of the Lord,” and a soul saved is God’s work, and therefore a work for *eternity*. It is a work that Satan can neither do nor undo, but a work that God delights to do, and that He will never undo. Do you believe this, poor sinner? Now listen to me for a few moments while I tell you of the free and sovereign grace of God, in the salvation of a poor sinner.

I was on my way from the railway station to the little meeting room where I was to preach, in a small fishing town in Scotland, when I was asked by a Christian man if I would go and see a poor young fellow who was dying. I at once consented to do so, having nearly an hour to spare before the time announced for my meeting. The friend who asked me to visit the young man led the way, and soon we were in his room; there, upon his bed, lay what had once been a fine young man twenty-nine years of age. That fatal deadly disease consumption had brought him thus low, its awful sweat lay heavy upon him. I saw he was fast sinking and that if he was to be saved at all, it must be *now*.

His history as a sinner is soon told. He had lived hard and fast, and had been a prodigal, to all intents and purposes. He had wasted his health and substance in riotous living; but he had spent all that he had without obtaining happiness or satisfaction, and now in all the weakness and helplessness of disease, he desired to return to the parental roof that he had so long deserted, and die under the care and nursing of those simple Christian,

“ I KEN I SEE IT PLAINER.”

praying parents. He was brought home on a Monday, on the evening of which day the friend who took me to his house first saw him. The sick man asked to have read, the Gospel narrative of the conversion of the dying thief. My friend read it, as it is given in Luke xxiii., which drew from the dying man the remark, “ That’s grand.”

On Tuesday, the day following his being brought home, I saw him, and have already told you how I found him, as to his body; now I will tell you how I found him as to his soul.

I found God had been working in him by His Spirit, and had shown him that he was a lost sinner, and that it was an awful thing to go into eternity unsaved.

His agony about his soul seemed almost to make him forget his body, and he never expressed a desire to recover. Salvation was what he longed for, but he questioned if there was salvation for such a wretch as he had been.

I opened my Bible and read to him from I. Tim. i., 15. “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.”

I then asked, “ Are you a sinner?” “ Indeed I am;” he replied. “ Then Christ came into the world to save you,” I rejoined. I then turned to Rom. v., 8, “ But God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

I again asked, “ Are you a sinner?” he replied, “ Yes, *that* I am.” “ Then Christ died for you,” I said.

“I KEN I SEE IT PLAINER.”

I then turned to a third Scripture in Luke, xv., 2, “This man receive h sinners, and eateth with them.”

One more I asked, “Are you a sinner?” “Yes,” was his earnest emphatic, reply; and turning on his elbow, he looked across the room to the friend who had brought me, and said, “I ken I see it plainer, Donald.” “But, man, you must believe it,” replied the friend.

I then went over the three Scriptures above-mentioned again, and asked him “Who did Christ come into the world to save?” “Sinners,” he replied. “And what are you?” “A sinner,” “Then Christ came into the world to save you; believe it.” “For whom did Christ die?” I asked, “For sinners,” he said, “And what are you?” “A sinner,” “Then Christ died for you; believe it.” “Whom does Christ receive?” “Sinners.” “And what are you?” “A sinner.” “Then Christ receives you, believe it, and you are saved.”

He drew a long breath and exclaimed, “I wish I could say I was saved!” “If you believe that you are a sinner, and that Christ came into the world to save you, and that He receives you, then you are saved,” I rejoined.

The blessed Spirit of God applied the word, light broke in upon him, and he was saved.

I now read a fourth Scripture, Galatians, ii., 20. “I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” “Who

“ I KEN I SEE IT PLAINER.”

does ‘*who*’ mean?” I asked; “Jesus.” “And who is ‘*me*’?” “Thomas M——” “And what is between you both?” “Love.”

He turned on his back and said “I wish I could make a little prayer to Him.” “Thomas,” I said, “He wants you to thank Him;” when he immediately said, “Lord Jesus I thank you for having loved me and received me.”

My friend and I fell on our knees and praised God for having shewn this poor prodigal that Jesus had loved him, had died for him, saved him, and received him.

When we rose up, he said, “Fetch in my mother.” We gladly did so, and in an instant mother and son were weeping with joy, as each embraced the other; the mother praising God as she heard from her own son’s lips, the cheering news “Mother He has received me!”

Prayer was answered, the prodigal was saved, and the joy of that humble room and its happy occupants, was but a faint picture of the peculiar joy that God the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and all Heaven itself were now indulging in over this returned and saved and happy prodigal.

Thomas M. was brought home to his parents on Monday, was saved on Tuesday, and on the following Thursday evening he fell asleep, without a doubt or a murmur. Glory be to God for this trophy of His grace; surely where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Should this account meet the eyes of any of Thomas M.’s companions, I would beseech them at once to be reconciled to God.

## FORGIVENESS WITHOUT CHRIST.

There are two events which may occur at any moment; the second coming of Jesus, or death; and while you are unsaved you are prepared for neither.

Oh then at once "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house," and thus be prepared for either event.

There is nothing left for you to do in the matter of your soul's salvation, for Jesus did it all, more than eighteen hundred years ago; and having done it, He said "It is finished." It is salvation first, and then works follow, to please Him who *has* saved us. We are not saved by our holiness, our good works, or our service; but we are saved to *be* holy, to *do* good works, and to *serve*.

Look now by simple faith to the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, for His word is, "Look unto me and be ye saved," and then, until He come, live and work to please Him, who has saved you.

H. M. H.

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## FORGIVENESS WITHOUT CHRIST.

ONE day I was called to visit a person, who was soon to pass out of this world. I found him coughing very much, with his head reclining on a pillow, and with all the signs of rapid consumption about him. I asked him, of course, a few sympathizing questions, and then I enquired what his hopes were for eternity? He said he felt he was very ill, and was praying to God to take him to heaven. I

## FORGIVENESS WITHOUT CHRIST.

opened at once upon the precious and all sufficient work of Christ, and asked him if he was a believer. I found him, as I thought, dull and uninterested (although I was told eventually, that there was hope in his death) and whilst pressing upon his notice the history of the brazen serpent and the bitten Israelite, with reference to his own case, his wife who was sitting by with a baby in her arms, and to whose presence I had before paid no attention, uttered a sound as if she herself had an interest in the great history of a crucified Redeemer.

Turning to her, I said, "Then do you know this truth?" She answered, "I know something of it, but you can't get it without prayer." I suppose she was struck by the way in which I kept pointing her husband to the Saviour as the object of faith. I said, "My good woman, I am not at all against prayer, but as a servant of the Lord, I am come to present Christ to the notice of your dying husband." "Ah!" she replied, "but we must pray too." I enquired if she herself was at peace. She said she had known it once, but could not say she was happy now. Before I left, I spoke gently to her in such language as this. If I were you, I would leave aside the question of anything for him to do, and just read him as occasion offers, or repeat to him a few texts, mentioning the text in John v. 24—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." I

## FORGIVENESS WITHOUT CHRIST.

was also particular in repeating, that prayer was to be just left where it was, and that she was to try to point him to an object.

Three days after I called again, and found him fast sinking. I spoke to him about Christ, and he thanked me, and perhaps was a little softened, for he said he should be glad to see me again. I saw his wife alone, and she was more decided than before upon our not being able to get salvation without asking for it. However, I repeated what I had said before with the addition that if God, as He doubtless did, hear prayer, His answer must be, to shew Christ to her husband as the only name given among men whereby must be saved. Christ, I said, was a real Saviour and to be saved we must have a positive manifestation of Himself to our souls.

She turned at once, and said "It was not the case with me, I found the pardon of my sins one day as I was walking in the garden, without seeing Christ at all." I rejoined, "Ah! my good woman, that accounts for your having lost your peace. Forgiveness of sins is not lasting unless sensibly in your own soul connected with Christ, as it always is in God's estimate." "*In whom* we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." Eph. i. 7. Instantly it came into my mind that this is the reason why so many people "fall away," as the term is. The message received is a blessed one, but it lasts only when connected with Christ, known and appreciated; otherwise it but "dureth for a while."

W. W.

JOYFUL JOE; OR,  
THE CROSS THE SETTLEMENT OF SIN.

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I WAS asked to visit a poor man who was lying ill and unsaved; and, "My daughter here, sir, will shew you where he lives," said the person who asked me to go. I soon found myself in a poor-looking room, by the bedside of a man who had evidently known hard times, and was now suffering very much from chronic bronchitis, with a terrible cough that had quite prostrated him for over nine years, and confined him to bed the greater part of that time. As a consequence, deep poverty was marked on everything within the walls of the house, for he was past work these many years; and instead of his providing for his family, his wife and two daughters had to provide for themselves and him, out of the scanty wages they earned at the factory. Still, notwithstanding this, there was an air of respectability in the house, and an evident desire to make the best of things, that brought with it a certain measure of relief, as the heart well nigh sickened at the thought of the abounding sorrow and misery—the fruit of folly, disobedience, and of sin—of the manifold forms of which but one class was typified here.

After a little introductory conversation, we soon turned to the question of his soul's eternal salvation. He was free to speak about it, poor

## JOYFUL JOE ; OR, THE CROSS

fellow, shut up there in suffering and want, with few to visit or speak to him, a stranger's face and a word of sympathy was like an angel's visit to him. He had not much fear of death : not that he saw the way exactly through it, but he was religious, and he had good thoughts of God.

"But if you were to die to-night, where would you go to?" said I to him.

"To heaven, I hope?" was his reply.

"But why do you hope to go there : many won't—in what do you differ from others, that entitles you to that hope?"

"Well, I do all I can that's good, and I try to live the best way that I can, and I believe in God, and I hope I'll go to heaven when I die."

"Yes, all very good ; but you know 'the devils believe and tremble,' and they are none the better for it."

"True," he said, rather staggered at the idea, and struck with the possibility of his ground not being altogether so firm as he had thought it was. "But," he added, after a little pause, "the devils believe and tremble ; they do not believe and serve."

"Well, and do you believe and serve?"

"I do."

"You serve God ? How long have you served God?"

"Oh, this long time!"

"How long?"

"These many years now."

## THE SETTLEMENT OF SIN.

“How many?”

“Oh, a good many—perhaps a dozen or thirteen.”

“But have you ever been converted?”

“Well, I can’t say as to that, exactly, but I have served God now these many years; that, I’m sure of.”

“But Judas Iscariot served also. The Lord Jesus chose him as an apostle; and sent him out to preach the Gospel, and to cure diseases, and do many similar things along with the other apostles; and we know that he was a traitor after all, and has gone to hell.”

“Oh, I hope not. I hope no person has gone there, nor ever will go there. That’s an awful place, and it’s an awful thing to say of anyone. I would not say that of anyone. I hope God is too good to send anyone there. Oh, no; I wouldn’t say that of anyone.”

“But do you believe there is such a place as ‘everlasting burnings.’”

After a pause, he replied, thoughtfully,

“Yes, I do; for the Book says it; and if I did not believe in ‘everlasting fire,’ I could not believe in ‘everlasting life’ for it is the same Book that tells me of the one that tells me of the other also. I must believe it.”

“Well, and if you had your deserts, which would be your proper portion, eternal life or eternal judgment?”

“Eternal judgment; I know that, if I had my deserts, for there’s not a wickeder living man in the town than I have been.”

## JOYFUL JOE; OR, THE CROSS

“And how then are you to escape it, if you deserve it? How do you expect to get to heaven?”

“Well, I just do the best I can, and pray to God, and believe, and hope He will have mercy on me when I die, and overlook my sins.”

“That He won't. He couldn't do it,” I replied.

Looking at me with a mixture of amazement, curiosity, and contempt at my ignorance, he replied in a most cynical tone, “Then there's no salvation for me.”

“No,” I calmly said, “not in that way.”

“Then how am I to get it? let me hear your way.”

“Now,” I said, “look here; suppose you owed a bill, say £10, at a place of business, and you could not pay it. And suppose there were different partners in the firm; we'll call them, for example, Mr. William, and Mr. Henry, &c. Now, if you went in one day to make known your poverty, and found Mr. William making up the books, and he said to you, ‘Well Joe, I know you are a poor man, and cannot pay the money; I will overlook your account in the book, and not charge you with it,’ would that not make you very happy? and you would come away in great peace and tell the wife that it was all right now that Mr. William had overlooked your account, and you need not pay the money?”

“I would, to be sure.”

“Now, suppose next day you met one of the

## THE SETTLEMENT OF SIN.

other partners, Mr. Henry, says, and he said, 'Joe, you owe us £10;' you would say, 'Yes, but Mr. William has overlooked the account, and I haven't to pay it. 'Oh, but,' says Mr. Henry, 'Mr. William has no power to do any such thing, he is but one of the firm, and *the firm* demands it, so get ready to pay or go to prison,' where would your peace be then?"

"I confess it would be gone in a moment."

"To be sure it would. But suppose, instead of that, Mr. William had said, 'Joe, you are poor and cannot pay; I will pay for you,' and he put his hand into his pocket, and pulled out £10, and popped it into the till for you, and said, 'There Joe, the money is paid; I will give you a receipt, and put '*paid*' to your name in the book;' would you then be afraid to meet the rest of the firm, with the receipt in your pocket?"

"No; that I would not."

"Well now Joe, God could not *overlook* your sin. His righteousness demanded the payment of the debt; but what justice demands grace provides; and in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, God has shewn how 'He can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth on Jesus.' The cross is not the *overlooking* but the *settlement of sin*. The debt is paid, and being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

" 'Bold shall I stand at that great day,  
For who aught to my charge shall lay;

## JOYFUL JOE; OR, THE CROSS

While by Thy blood absolved I am  
From sin's tremendous curse and fear.' ”

Thus I went on to tell him of the story of the cross, and as I looked up, I saw his hand stealing over the bed to get his handkerchief to wipe away the big tear-drops that were rolling down his cheeks, as he was trying to stifle his emotion, but perceiving that I had noticed him, he said in a broken voice, “ You must really excuse me, sir, for I cannot help it; but there's something in that that touches me. I havn't grit\* any this many a long year, for my heart is as hard as a stone, but somehow that touches me, and I cannot help it,” and then he fairly broke out.—“ I see it all; well I was blind, but the cross settled it, and it is not overlooked but settled. I thank God, I thank Christ, I thank you, sir. Oh, but there are many blind that do not see the way, and those that teach them are as blind themselves. No one ever told me that before, and I never heard it. Oh, I am thankful that I lived till to-day, for if I died yesterday I would have been lost, for I was on the wrong road, and many hundreds besides me, but now I see that the cross has settled it all. Thank God! Thank God! I'm not afeerd to die now,” and he sobbed right out.

The long continued burst of very intelligent praise in which he now gave expression to his emancipated feelings was most touching and blessed to listen to.

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\* Cried.

## THE SETTLEMENT OF SIN,

Not long since one of my children went with her mother to visit him, and found him in great distress, as one of his daughters was very ill, and both father and mother thought her dying. Yet he was so full of praise and joy in God that my little girl was quite struck with it, and on leaving the house said, "O, I never, never saw any one so happy as that man; I shall call him Joyful Joe," and on visiting him again on another occasion she said, "Every time I see him I feel inclined to add another Joyful to his name: so now I must call him Joyful Joyful Joyful Joe."

On speaking subsequently to the person who first asked me to visit him, she said, "Joe is converted anyway, and all in the house know it of him; his temper is quite changed."

He is still struggling on with pain and poverty, poor fellow, but his account with *the Firm* is settled, and his one desire while awaiting the Lord's time in patience, is that it may not be long till He takes him home to be with Himself for ever, where "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away."

Reader, are you, like Joe was, hoping that God will have mercy on you, and overlook your sins in the day of judgment? No; He could not, for it would really leave you still in your sins, and you and He could never thus be happy together. He has something far, far better for you than that. Infinite love has provided for

## AS AND SO.

the requirements of infinite righteousness in the cross of God's beloved Son, and the truth of this must reach your conscience and your heart through faith, if you are to have eternal life, peace with God, and boldness in the day of judgment. Every other hope is a delusion.

E. C.

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## AS AND SO.

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How much blessing do souls lose (both saint and sinner) through the lack of careful reading of the Scriptures! For instance, the sinner opens his Bible and reads, perhaps in John iii. such a word *as* we have in the last verse, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life," and he shuts his book, and goes away with the idea that it said, "He that believeth on the Son hopes to get everlasting life," whereas it says, "hath" it. Then again he reads Acts xiii. 39, "All that believe are justified from all things," and he says, if I could only feel it I would be sure I had it; but it does not say "feel," but "believe." Oh, that he would read carefully God's precious Word!

I wish now, my reader, to direct your attention to the little words AS and SO. You very rarely get one without the other;—and may the Lord bless your soul as you look at them, whether you are a saint or a sinner. See:—

## AS AND SO.

THE ENTRANCE OF SIN, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES, WITH GOD'S REMEDY: "Wherefore *as* by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Romans v. 12.; Hebrews ix. 27, 28. "And *as* it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many."—Rom. v. 18. "Therefore *as* by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life"—verse 19. "For *as* by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous"—verse 21. "That *as* sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus we have sin brought in by the first man, and death by sin, and as death is appointed to all men, so Christ has been once offered to bear the sins of many. God reveals His remedy for man's ruin, and the poor soul that trusts Christ is constituted righteous; justified, because grace is reigning through righteousness. Is the reader of these lines an anxious soul? if so, just look carefully at this, and see how the *as* meets the *so*. Is it by one offence that judgment comes? It is by one righteousness the free gift has come. Is it one man's disobedience? It is one man's obedience that meets it. Did sin reign? Grace reigns. Is it death and judgment? Christ was once

## AS AND SO.

offered. Oh, what more can the sinner need? Believe it, and live.

2. THE SOURCE AND GIVER OF LIFE AND HOW IT IS OBTAINED.—“For *as* the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.”—John v. 26. Thus we have life in the Son, then, “*As* the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will,” verse 21. Now, we get Him giving that life to whom He will, and the way a soul obtains it is, “*As* Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life,” John iii. 14, 15. When a soul obeys this scripture it is saved, and no longer a sinner but a saint; and then we get—

3. WHERE WE ARE PUT, AS SAINTS.—“For *as* we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another,” Rom. xii. 4, 5. “For *as* the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ; for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,” I Cor. xii. 12, 13. These Scriptures teach us that we are members of the body of Christ by the Holy Ghost, which is given to all who believe the gospel of salvation, (see Eph. i. 13; and moreover the Lord does not take souls away to heaven the moment they are saved, but leaves

them here to bear testimony for Him, and give expression to the truth of what they are, (see John xvii. 21); so that our blessings and privileges carry with them their responsibilities, and thus we get—

4. THE PLACE AND CHARACTER OF OUR TESTIMONY.—“*As thou hast sent me into the world, even so, have I also sent them into the world,*” John xvii. 18. Here is the place of our testimony in the world, to which we do not now belong, though in it (see verse 16). “*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him,*” Col. ii. 6. “*He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself so to walk, even as he walked,*” I. John ii. 6. This is the character of our testimony, with no less a standard for us than Christ Himself, and as we thus follow in His steps it will entail suffering, for “*they that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,*” 2 Tim. iii. 12. Then we get—

5. OUR COMFORT IN SUFFERING WHILE IN THIS PLACE OF TESTIMONY.—“*As the father hath loved me, so have I loved you, continue ye in my love,*” John xv. 9. “*As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ,*” 2 Cor. 1, 5. “*As ye are partakers of the sufferings so shall ye be also of the consolations,*” verse 7. “*As he is, so are we in this world,*” John iv. 7. How sweet to be privileged to get the same fare as the Master, and know we have the sympathy of His heart; it makes us

long for the time when we shall see Him, then we shall get—

6. OUR FINAL DELIVERANCE.—“For *as* in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive; but every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterwards they that are Christ’s at his coming,” 1 Cor. xv. 22, 23. “This same Jesus shall so come in like manner *as* ye have seen him go into heaven,” Acts, i. 11. “I will come again and receive you unto myself,” John xiv. 3. “The Lord himself shall descend from heaven,” I Thess. iv. 16, 17. “Surely I come quickly,” Rev. xxii. 20. Dear saint, does that touch a chord in your heart, and can you respond to that word and say? “Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus.”

7. THE MEASURE OF OUR ENJOYMENT OF THESE GLORIOUS TRUTHS.—“*As* thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee,” Matt. viii. 13. “According to your faith be it unto you,” ix. 29.

Now just a word or two to those who are still despising Christ, to let them see—

8. THE COMING OF THE SON OF MAN, AND THE DOOM OF THE WICKED,—“For *as* the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of Man be,” Matt. xxiv. 27. “But *as* the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be,” verse 37. “For *as* in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in

IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE OUT OF SLEEP.

marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not, till the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be," verses 38, 39. "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world: The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and them which do iniquity, and cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth," Matt. xiii. 40, 41, 42. Oh, sinner, what a doom is yours if you continue to reject Christ! "When they shall say peace and safety, sudden destruction cometh upon them" (1 Thess. v. 3). How awful! "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," Acts xvi. 31. The Lord give every one to read His own Word more carefully and prayerfully, so that we may enter now into all the blessings He has given us in Christ.

W. E.

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IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE OUT OF  
SLEEP.

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"CHOOSE ye this day whom ye will serve," Joshua xxiv. 15.

"Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Isaiah i. 18.

IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE OUT OF SLEEP.

“He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.”  
John iii. 36.

Some years ago, a preacher of the gospel was sitting in his study, thinking what chapter he should preach from the following Lord's day. He was feeling much disheartened, for the people were careless and indifferent; they were in fact “dead in trespasses and sins.” The minister earnestly besought the Lord to tell him how to arouse the people to a sense of their lost condition. While thus engaged he fell asleep, and dreamed he was in the council chamber of hell. Satan was sitting at the head of a table which was surrounded by devils.

“Which of you will go and deceive the world?” asked Satan. “I'll go,” said one. “What will you say?” “I'll tell the people there's no God.” “No, that won't do” answered Satan, “people are too religious for that now.” “I'll go,” called out another. “Well, what will you say?” “Oh, I'll tell men they need not be uneasy, there's no hell?” “Ah! no,” again answered Satan, “that won't do either, you won't do.” “I'll go,” said a third; “I'll tell them there is a God, and there is a hell; but I'll whisper, there's plenty of time yet.” “The very thing” replied Satan; “you go out and deceive the world.”

At this the earnest but sorrowful minister awoke. He knew now the lie with which Satan was deceiving and luring to sleep the people. Perhaps some of my readers are being thus deluded. “I mean to be converted some

## IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE OUT OF SLEEP.

day" you say, and you put it off for a "more convenient season," knowing not that you are being "led captive by Satan at his will." Consider this matter, I pray you. There is not "plenty of time." God never said "If you come to morrow, or by and by I will save you." No, He says "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor: vi. 2. "Oh" you say, "I go to church or chapel every Sunday, I take the sacrament, and I do the best I can." Miserable delusion! The best you can! Of what avail is your best? Who told you to do your best? Why, my friend, whoever you are, you positively cannot do one thing to save yourself. God knew that, or he would not have had to spare His Son.

"His Son, His delight, His loved one He gave,  
The wrath to endure, by suffering to save."

But God in mercy sent His Son, and He is waiting to bless you. And let me tell you this, all your church going won't save you. Why, to begin—Jesus says "They that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth," and if you are not saved, how can you worship God? Ah! my friend, this form of religion is of no avail. It is worshipping God with your lips, while your heart is far from Him, as I once heard some one say—"You are going respectably and religiously down to hell." Remember the Lord Jesus Himself said, "He that is not with me is against me."

## IT IS HIGH TIME TO AWAKE OUT OF SLEEP.

You must be saved in God's way, by believing on the Son who shed His precious blood for you ; that is the gospel, and " what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God ? " 1 Peter iv. 17. It will be " indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish," Rom. ii. 8, 9. Ah, that will indeed be a terrible awakening when it is too late. How people will reproach themselves then, when they remember that they had God's offer of mercy, of salvation, and they refused, rejected it. " Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish ; " Oh the cry of agony, the unutterable agony, that will cause them to gnash their teeth with a cry of utter despair ; and God will say then : " Because I have called, and ye refused ; I stretched out my hand and no man regarded ; I also will laugh at your calamity ; I will mock when your fear cometh ; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind ; when distress and anguish cometh upon you," Prov. i. 24, 26, 27. That is what God will do then, because His Son has been rejected ; and Satan will laugh, too, to think what fools men have been to be gulled by his lies.

But, my friend, the scene is too fearful to dwell upon,—rather would I turn you to the Lord now. The day of His long-suffering is not yet over. He still waits, " not willing that any should perish," for " God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not

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imputing their trespasses unto them; we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us. We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 19, 20, 21. See the love of God's heart. All your sins were laid on Jesus; and it is a settled peace that God gives to those who believe :

“ 'Tis everlasting peace,  
Sure as Jehovah's name ;  
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne,  
For evermore the same.’ ”

Come now, won't you believe in this blessed Son of God? Just take what God says as a young man did a short time ago. He was dying, and a great many companions went to see him. He was very unhappy. One told him to pray; to be sure and not stop praying, and God would forgive him. Another said he must repent. The poor man tried to pray—but he only got more unhappy. You see he did not take God's way. Well, one day one who loved the Lord went to see him. “ Oh,” said the young man, “ I am dying, and my sins are not forgiven—I cannot meet God.” “ Well, my friend, what have you done? ” asked this gentleman. “ Oh, sir, I've prayed a great deal, but nothing gives me peace.” “ Well, now you have used your efforts and found them useless, hear what God says : He

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that believeth on the Son hath life.' ”  
“ What ! ” cried the dying man, raising himself up in his eagerness, “ is it only to believe—only to believe—I never saw that before, and will God forgive all my sins if I only believe ? ”  
“ Yes, ” replied this gentleman, repeating the verse again, “ He that believeth on the Son hath life. ” “ Then I believe—thank God, I'm saved. ”  
Ah, this young man had been roused to the sense of his need on a dying bed ; he knew he had to meet God. So have you, reader ; are you prepared ? You ask, how are you to be prepared ? It is only to believe—

“ There is nothing to do ! for being  
born dead,  
You must needs have another to work  
in your stead :  
And Christ Jesus, in Calvary's terri-  
ble hour,  
Has done all the work in such  
marvellous power  
That, raised from the dead, He now  
offers to you,  
Even life everlasting—and nothing  
to do !  
No ! nothing to do till you're saved  
from your sins,  
When the power of doing good only  
begins ! ”

Now you see God's plan—his heart yearns over you. Will you yield yourself to Him now ? Assuredly the Lord is soon coming, for He said

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hundreds of years ago "Behold I come quickly," and he will keep his promise—"the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation," and if you believe in Him, when that terrible day of judgment comes there will be no condemnation for you, because God will look at you as accepted in His Son. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. 1. One full payment has cleared God's memory of all debt, and secured us a full discharge.

"No wrath—God's heart retaineth  
To us-ward who believe ;  
No dread in ours remaineth,  
As we His love receive ;  
Returning sons He kisses,  
And with His robe invests ;  
His perfect love dismisses  
All terror from our breasts."  
M. J. E. B.

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## THE DOCTOR'S COACHMAN.

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MOST people are ready to admit that the works of God are perfect—indeed that all His works are perfect, and yet when you speak of the work, the finished work by which He makes a sinner fit for heaven—for His own presence and for eternal glory, you continually find that this is supposed to be a work in which God has

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done a part, and also left the sinner to do a part, which he is ever trying and never able to accomplish.

It often seems strange to me, seeing that everything is so plainly written in God's word, that people can make any mistake about the way of salvation, and yet how often when you tremblingly and hopefully put the question, "Are you saved?" the reply is, "No, no one can know that until he dies—it would be great presumption to say that you are saved." If such be the answer you would give, dear reader, let me ask you, not for the sake of argument, but for the sake of your precious never-dying soul—Is it presumption to believe God's word? Is it not better to believe the word of God than the reasonings of your own evil heart?

If you are seeking by your own works to make yourself acceptable to God, you will assuredly be disappointed, and the end of it all will be the lake of fire. Perhaps you say, God is merciful, and I am doing the best I can, I am honest, I wrong no man, I attend the means of grace, I am regular in my devotions, and I think I must have as good a hope as other people have of getting to heaven at last. All this is contrary to what God has told us in his word, as you will one day find to your cost, if you do not change your mind. Do you know that if you had put to your account all the good works man has ever done, and all the prayers ever uttered, with all the tears ever shed, you would indeed be no nearer heaven than the most worthless outcast you have ever heard of; and why?

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Simply because this is not God's way of saving a sinner.

But let us look for a moment at what scripture says. I do not ask you to take man's word, because everything must be tried by the Word of God—"prove all things and hold fast that which is good." There is a very simple and beautiful narrative in the 16th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. We find Paul and Silas in prison. God sends an earthquake which opens the prison doors, and the jailor, awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, would have killed himself, supposing the prisoners to have fled ; but Paul having assured him that they were all there, he calls for a light, and, bringing out Paul and Silas, tremblingly asks this all important question, "What must I do to be saved?" The reply was not, as we all know, Be good, pray, turn over a new leaf, do good works, make yourself fit for salvation by repentance and prayer. No, it was simply this, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He did believe, and the result was he rejoiced believing in God. He looked to the Cross of Christ, and saw there, by faith, a Saviour meeting the sinner's need, bearing the judgment of God against sin. He saw the sacrifice of God's own providing—he believed God was satisfied, and he rejoiced in believing that "the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanseth us from all sin." 1 John i. 7.

Dear reader, if you are going on from day to day in the hope that you will at some future

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time be fit for salvation, I beseech you, as one who has learned the uncertainty of all things here, that you at once accept the offer of God's mercy and love; go as a helpless sinner to that Saviour who has died for you on the Cross, and accept that which in mercy is offered to sinners, the forgiveness of all your sins through the precious blood of Christ alone.

To-day only is yours, you may not see to-morrow's sun, and every day you are risking on the brink of eternity is at least a day lost, time spent away from God, and without the present enjoyment of his favour, love, and care.

Search the Scriptures, and you will find salvation always associated with the person and work of Christ, and never with your own works.

I will now tell you of a man who found peace through the work of Christ.

I was asked one winter evening to visit a poor man who was dying of consumption: he was rapidly approaching his end, and the Christian who was interested in his case, found that he was unsaved. He had been a gentleman's coachman, and, through the kindness of his master, was allowed to remain in the cottage he had for some time occupied.

I knocked at the door, and found his poor wife with three little children in deep trouble. She at once directed me to his room, and really the sight that presented itself was most distressing. His sunken eyes and hollow cheeks showed too plainly what disease was doing, and that he could not possibly live many weeks longer.

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I had been praying for him as I walked along, and asking the Lord to give me a word from Himself that would meet the poor man's need; and when I saw him my heart was deeply moved with pity, and I again looked to the Lord for guidance as to what I should say.

I talked some time of his sufferings and trials here. He told me his anxiety for his dear wife and children.

"Well," I said at last, "you cannot expect to remain here long; where will you go to when you die?"

"Oh," he said, "I have prayed the Lord to take care of my wife and children, and to prepare a place for me."

"But," I replied, "are your sins forgiven?"

"I don't know anything about that—I have prayed!" was his answer.

"Do you know," I said, "that there is no sin in heaven, and except your sins are all forgiven here, you will never go there?"

"I don't know much about religion," he replied, "for I have never had an opportunity of going to church. I have been a doctor's coachman for many years, until I came here, and I always drove the doctor out on Sundays, and for a long time I have been too ill to go anywhere."

I then told him that God loved him and desired to save him, and that by God's grace he might be saved from his sins before I left the room; and opening my Bible I read to him John iii. and Isaiah liii., impressing upon him

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the deep love of God in the gift of Jesus, and how God was satisfied with the finished work of His Christ. He was much affected by the love of God—it all seemed a new tale to him, but he was very weak and could say little, so I repeated to him again that precious verse, “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever BELIEVETH on him shall not perish but have everlasting life”—and then praying God to bless it to his soul, I left him, having first seen that he had all he needed in temporal things.

That evening some Christians met at my house, and we together laid the whole matter before that gracious God, who always hears the petitions of His children. We were not long without an answer to our prayer. Two days after this a message came that H—— would like to see me again, and in the morning I went round to his house.

As I entered I saw a change had come over the poor wife and aged mother, who were waiting for me; they seemed so much happier than before, and asked me to go up stairs at once, saying, “I should find him much happier now,” and indeed I did find it so. It was a sight I shall never forget—his face was full of joy, and stretching both his withered hands out to me he cried, “Oh, sir, you have saved me.” “Oh, no,” I said, “the Lord has done that, bless His name,” and we wept together, our hearts overflowing with love and praise to God for His great mercy.

## THE DOCTOR'S COACHMAN.

I knelt at the bedside, and thanked God for revealing His free gift to this poor sinner.

How gracious God is, and how wondrous is His love. Here was a poor fellow who three days ago was a perfect stranger to grace; who had never known God or cared for his own soul, brought at once into liberty, peace, and joy.

I inquired all about the Lord's work in his soul, and he told me that in the evening after I left him he found peace—he believed the love of God towards him a poor wretched sinner, and he had peace in believing.

I saw him several times after this. He was always happy, and though suffering much from exhaustion, he seemed to think little of it. The love of Christ, and the joy he had in the knowledge of his Saviour, kept him above his present trial; and until he put off the earthly tabernacle his confidence in the love of God never seemed to lose its brightness. He was always glad to see me, and to hear more of Him whom he was so soon going to be with for ever. He spoke to those who visited him of the sinner's need, and of God's provisions for that need; prayed continually for his dear wife and children, but always with confidence in God about them.

On one occasion shortly before his death he told me that his sufferings were very great, and that his body was so wasted away that the bones seemed to press through the skin, and the sores stuck to the sheet, but he said "I don't mind it for I shall soon be with the Lord."

## THE CHASM AND THE BRIDGE.

Within three weeks of my first visit he fell asleep in Jesus; his last breath commending his dear ones to the Father's love and care.

Thus William H—— departed to be with Christ, having counted the sufferings of this little while not worthy to be compared with the glory about to be revealed. God grant, dear reader, that your end may be like his, and that you may have the same joy and confidence as the Philipian jailer and this dear man had, and that you may rest entirely on the finished work of Christ for your salvation and live to His praise and glory.

E. C.

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## THE CHASM AND THE BRIDGE.

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Sin has put man at an infinite moral distance from God. A mighty chasm lies between them. Distance must verily lie between a holy God and a sin-stained sinner; it could not be otherwise. The holiness of God necessitates the distance—the separation. But what can span the distance, bridge the chasm, and bring the sinner to God? Oh! this is indeed a question of infinite and eternal importance. Is it not, beloved reader? No question beneath the sun can be of such importance as the one just asked. But what thinkest thou, O reader? Can'st thou span the distance, bridge the chasm, and work thyself to God? Ah, no; no creature hand, no

## THE CHASM AND THE BRIDGE.

exertion of creature power can do this. Man is impotent here. He is utterly helpless here.

Does my reader ask what can be done? Listen, and I will quote a passage of scripture: "For Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God". 1 Pet. iii. 18. Here we are let into the secret of the matter. Here we see the infinite distance spanned, the mighty chasm bridged, and the foundation of that glorious bridge laid deep, deep down in the death of God's Lamb slain on Calvary. An infinite Being alone could do this, none but the "Just One" could possibly meet and obviate the difficulty.

Substitution was called for; the Just One steps in and dies for the unjust. He dies for sins, not His own, but ours, that we might be brought to God. Reader, behold the blessedness of all this. Have you trodden that bridge by faith and been brought to God? Oh! you must be at one side of the chasm or the other; either at an infinite moral distance from God, or brought to God through faith in Jesus. If thou art not brought to God, O soul immortal, awake to thy danger, to the impending wrath! Plant thy feet upon the bridge—the bridge of substitution—and flee to God; then His arms of love shall embrace thee, His grace shall save thee, and thou art His for ever!— A. E.

## AT HOME WITH GOD.

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There's not a ray in that bright place,  
As shining in the Saviour's face,  
But lightsome shines within the heart  
Of those who find their deathless part  
With Christ in yonder blest abode,  
The purchase of His own life's blood.

'Tis ours, and there we find our home ;  
Nor storms, nor clouds, nor tempests come  
Within the haven of that rest,  
Where we as one with Him are blest :—  
The Father's Son enthroned on high,  
Who died for us on Calvary.

At home with Him in glory bright,  
Where all is love, and all is light ;  
For God is all in all above,  
And God is light, and God is love ;  
At home—sweet thought—at home with God,  
At home, through Jesu's precious blood.

Nought else could fit us for that place,  
But love divine and sovereign grace ;  
Grace that could rise above our sin ;  
Love that could love us though unclean ;  
This love and grace in Christ we see,  
That brought Him down to Calvary.

But now He's seated on the throne,  
His portion there in light our own ;  
And endless days shall bear our song,  
In light and joy and praise along,  
“To Him who saved us by His blood,  
And brought us home to dwell with God.”

E. C.

## ARE YOU READY?

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*“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them: But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man cometh.”—Mat. xv., 1—13.*

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These are the words of the Lord Jesus, and you may say “What is there involved in that?” Well, beloved friend, precious and profitable as is every word of God, whether spoken by the Lord Himself, or by any of His servants, yet there is always something very specially impressive and instructive in the words spoken by the Lord Jesus Himself. There is one simple point I want to press on you now; one thought I have before me, and it is this, that if *you* are not *ready* when Jesus comes, He

## ARE YOU READY ?

will bid *you* depart into everlasting punishment ; if you are not ready, there is nothing before you but eternal woe—eternal punishment.

“*They that were ready* went in,” those that were not ready were outside. There is nothing more simple, dear friend, but there is nothing more solemn. “*They that were ready* went in,” and oh, if the Lord came just now what joy it would be to our hearts who know Him. The voice of the archangel and the trump of God would be heard, and His own voice, the voice of the Saviour, would bid us rise up to meet Him. We should be caught up to scenes of joy and rest with Jesus. But, my friend, are *you* ready? ready to meet Jesus, ready for that trumpet’s call, ready to *go in*? “No,” you say, “I am not.” Then do not lose a moment, I entreat you, “*be ye also ready,*” be ready now.

God wants to have you as the companion of His son for all eternity. He is seeking a bride for His son, just as Eleazer goes down through the desert and tells Rebecca of all Abraham’s wealth and greatness, and that unto his son he had given all that he had. “That is,” says he, “there is a bridegroom in the far-off land, and I want a bride for him, I want a heart that is prepared to go out to meet him.” So God is seeking now hearts prepared to go out to meet Christ.

There was a going forth in early times, in the apostles’ days, there was a constant ex-

## ARE YOU READY ?

pecting the Lord's return ; but then wise and foolish all settled down and went to sleep. The wise were wrong in going to sleep, but there was this difference between them, that when the cry was made, "Behold the bridegroom cometh," the lamps of the wise were *alight*; they needed trimming, but there was oil in them, they had never *gone out*. I have no doubt the Lord is gathering out a people now to wait for His Son, and one day when the world is expecting nothing, without any warning, He will come. He will come, and we who trust Him shall go up to meet Him, and the door will be shut. "They that were ready went in with him to the marriage."

He shows the bright side first, the joy of the marriage supper. "I desire," God says, "to make you the companion of my Son in Heavenly Glory. My heart's wish is that you shall share with Christ that bright scene of eternal blessedness." "No," answers the soul. "Then," says He, "you *must* share the fate of the devil and his angels; there is no alternative."

Soul, listen, listen! *You* must be with Christ for eternity; *you* must share with Him that bright scene of glory, *or you* must share for all eternity the fallen gloomy fortunes of Satan. Which is it to be? Soul, make your choice, your eternal choice. *With Christ*, or with Satan—which?

"Oh," you say, "I should like to be with Christ of course, I have long made a profession

## ARE YOU READY ?

of Christianity.” Yes, but are you really a Christian ? Are you *ready* ? Profession is not enough ; it is the lamp without the oil in it. Who are those who had the oil ? They are those who had given their souls no rest till they had the certainty of salvation. The oil in the vessels is the Holy Ghost. They had not only “heard the word of truth, the gospel of salvation,” and trusted in the Lord Jesus, but, as Paul tells us in Ephesians i., 13—they were “sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.”

Many souls are stumbled because of this, they think they have to possess the Holy Ghost in order to believe. Not so, you believe, and then you get the Holy Ghost. It is like a man buying a number of sheep, and then marking them as his own. God buys with the blood of Christ, and marks with the Holy Ghost. The wise virgins had the oil, and if you are in earnest you will not be content without knowing you are saved ; and surely it is high time you were in downright earnest. God is in earnest in His desire to have you ; the devil is in earnest in his desire to damn you ; I am in earnest in my anxiety to see you brought to God, *you* are the only one who is careless in the matter, and it is *your soul* which is at stake for *eternity*. O, ye Heavens, look down on this awful sight—a sinner unconcerned about his eternal salvation ! God was so concerned as to send His only Son that you might not perish. The Lord Jesus was so concerned that He came, and suffered,

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and died, the just for the unjust. The evangelist is deeply concerned that you may be converted. The devil is thoroughly concerned to seek to hinder your coming to Christ. *You only are unconcerned about the matter.* Appalling spectacle! an unsaved sinner on the verge of hell, totally unconcerned.

Oh, dear soul, the day of *your* concern is coming. What concern there will be when you wake up to find there is no oil in your lamps, what earnestness, what terrible earnestness will be depicted on your face, as outside the door you stand. "*Too late!*" says God. "TOO LATE?" exclaim you. "TOO LATE" will be the echo of the arches of Heaven, resounding through earth, as then you cry, "Lord! Lord! open to me!"

Oh, be in earnest now, the Lord would have you roused to your state, you may never have another opportunity. Can you risk being among that number who are refused from His door, or hear those awful words, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire!" This is no imagery of mine. These are the Lord's own words, most solemnly true. If you are not the Lord's you must be damned. If you are not linked with Christ you must be lost. If you are not His by living faith now, there is nothing before you but one of these two things, either to knock too late *outside* that door, or to hear from His lips, "Depart from me." I have no doubt from Scripture that if the Lord comes and finds you

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unconverted, your history is over; the door will be shut, and not a solitary ray of hope will ever again fall on your benighted soul—the door will be closed for ever. NOW ONLY is *your* time—oh, be in earnest NOW.

I believe the Lord is separating His own more thoroughly now. The Lord's people are banding together more, the world and the faithful are beginning to separate more and more even now, and much of worldliness as there is among the saints of God, yet the line of demarcation between them and the world is more distinct. What a tide of blessing too has rolled over the land; what means it all? He is coming! He is coming! coming quickly too. Are you merely a professor carrying the lamp in your hand? You must have the oil too. Have you ever known what it is to be broken down under a sense of your sin? Have you ever been in earnest about your soul's salvation? Have you ever bowed in heart to Jesus? Have you ever been really converted? Are you ready to go in? Do not say, "I hope so," that will not do. It is not enough. You would not be content with a mere hope about things down here. No, it is only in the interests of their immortal souls that men are foolhardy and careless.

Do you ask, my reader, "How am I to get to Christ?" If you are in earnest you will soon find the way to Christ. "But," you say, "what do you want me to do?" I want you to take salvation from the hands of the Lord

## ARE YOU READY ?

Jesus Christ. I want your heart for Christ. I want you to bow down to Him, to love Him, to adore Him. May God turn your eye on His Son ; for remember, He is coming. The Heavens conceal Him now, but another hour and it may not be so. He may have come out, and those who are ready may have gone in, and the door may be shut, and shut on you for ever. Would you like to be outside? He wants to have you inside. He wants you to believe in His name, to believe in His love. He wants not merely to rescue you from the power of the devil, not merely to save you from hell, but to make you a sharer of the joy that is His, to taste the grace of His Father's heart, to bring you into association with Himself in the bright scene of His Heavenly home. Oh let there be reality now in your heart, do not be content any longer with being a mere professor ; perhaps your first real confession to Him may have to be, "I have been only a hypocrite, and never a real believer at all," very likely ; but believe Him simply just now, for if you are only dreaming of being a Christian some day, the time is soon coming when your dream must be rudely broken.

*"At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him."* Why midnight? The darkest time of all had come, and the dawn was near, the morning of His coming. The bright hope He gives to Christian hearts is that they shall be

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caught up to meet Him. If the Lord were to come to day, there would be enacted a scene, of which the mount of transfiguration was a lovely picture. Moses is a type of those who have passed through death; Elias a type of those who go up without dying at all, but all are together with the Lord. Again, we shall be like Enoch, translated, taken off the earth without passing through death at all. No doubt Enoch was considered a pest to society in his day, because he prophesied of coming judgment, and warned men of their ungodliness. Men do not like to hear of coming judgment, but it *is* coming.

The last time the world saw Christ, they put a reed in His right hand in bitter mockery, and then they pierced that hand with nails and fastened it to the Cross. The next time the world sees Christ, He will be holding the rod of power, wielding the sword of judgment. Will *you* meet Him in grace *now*, or risk meeting Him in judgment *then*? Would you *like* to meet Him if He came to day? "Well, no, I cannot say that I should. I would rather put it off a little longer." Quite so! that answer just shows where *you* are. *You* do not know Him. The soul that knows the Lord will always like to go to meet Him. Every child of God delights to think he shall meet and see Jesus. My Saviour is the one who loved me and died for me, and I know nothing so sweet as this simple thought, to be with the Lord Jesus. It is transcendently sweet. Whose

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company does one love best on earth? The one dearest to us of course. It is very simple; and whose company is so dear to us as His?

“*Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps; and the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.*” Their lamps had *gone out*, there was no oil in them; there had been the profession of Christ; no doubt they had been baptised, and if they lived where confirmation takes place, had been also confirmed; had been members of churches, but there had been no question of real conversion. Have you been really converted? Have *you* the oil? Have you the Holy Ghost? How do I know I have the Holy Ghost? Because I am quite sure God is my Father, and it is the Spirit of adoption that makes me cry Abba Father: the soul that is really brought to God—could you hear that one on his knees alone with God—would be heard to say, “*Father, Father.*” Do *you* look up and call Him Father? “How can I call God, Father?” you ask. By believing in Jesus you become a child. “Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” God gives the Holy Ghost to those who believe in Jesus. The moment you, as a poor sinner, take your place at the feet of Jesus, believe in Jesus, trust Jesus, have *done* with confidence in yourself, and trust Him, that moment you become a child of God, and the next thing is the gift of the Holy Ghost. You get the oil in your vessel.

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“ *But the wise answered saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you, but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.*” Why does it say *buy*? Does it contemplate the possibility that anything we could give could purchase the gift of the Holy Ghost? Not at all. “Thy money perish with thee,” Peter says to Simon Magus, when he suggests such a thought, “because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.” It is *without* money, *without* price, and still he says, “Come *buy*,” and again, “I counsel thee to *buy* of me gold,” and why is this? Because it contemplates a soul willing to pay any price; it contemplates a thorough, positive, earnest desire in the soul to get what it needs.

Friend, are *you* in earnest, again I say? Are *you* ready? You ask, “Can a soul be ready?” Yes. “But what about my sins?” Did you never hear this? “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” He settled for me the question of sin when He suffered, the just for the unjust. How do I know I am ready? Because He died for me, He bore all my sins on the cross, and met all the claims God had against me. Are my sins to be put away by what He *will do*? No, by what he *has* done. A Christian stands between the first coming of Christ and the second; between the cross and the glory. I look back to the cross and see the work all finished there, when He was offered up. If I think of my sins

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I am ready, because of what Christ has done ; our readiness consists in this, that we have believed in the One who died and rose again, and we look forward now to Him as the coming One, enjoying meantime all the fruits of His finished work.

Do you say, It is presumptuous to be sure? Well, if *God* says, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more," am I to believe God, or am I to doubt Him? "The *gift* of God is eternal life." Now what do you do with a gift from a friend, do you send it back or do you *take* it? "I take it of course," you say. Are you presumptuous to take it? I say if He speaks to me, I will believe His word. If He sends me a gift I will take it, let who will call me presumptuous. John says, "These things have I written unto you that believe in the name of the Son of God, that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life." I either believe God, or make Him a liar. I believe Him when he says I am a ruined sinner ; shall I not believe Him when He says He *gives* me eternal life? I must believe the witness *to* me, before I can get the witness *in* me—believe before I can feel. Is He not worth believing? Is He not worth trusting?

Trust Him *now*, do not delay : remember, "they that were READY went in and *the door was shut*."

But you say, "I do not like that word, 'the door was shut'." I do, because it prevents the possibility of the believer ever getting out again,

## THE SCOFFER ARRESTED.

he is *shut in with Christ* for ever. I grant you it is an awful word for those who are outside, and once more therefore ere I close, I would solemnly ask you, if the master of the house rose up this hour and shut the door, which side of the door would you be? Do not risk it longer? Do not be infatuated, do not be outside the door in that day, with only the devil's portion for eternity.

And now, dear Christian, what a glorious future is before you, to be caught up and meet the Lord in the air. It is part of the victory of the Lord Jesus that you and I need never taste death, because He has tasted it in all its bitterness and woe for us. It is part of the spoil that He has wrung from Satan, that you and I may go up to meet Him without being taken through death at all. May the Lord keep our hearts waiting more simply for Himself, and may the Lord press these words on your heart, dear unsaved one, "THEY THAT WERE READY WENT IN, AND THE DOOR WAS SHUT." Do not sleep this night without knowing that *you* are ready, for you may lay your head down on a bed of feathers and awake in a bed of fire. May the Lord have mercy on you who have no mercy on yourselves.

W. T. P. W.

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## THE SCOFFER ARRESTED.

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IN the month of July last summer, according to our usual custom, we took our stand

## THE SCOFFER ARRESTED.

at a corner of the street for the purpose of setting forth to the passers-by God's message of grace to sinners. Often had the joyful news of salvation, free, present, and eternal, sounded out on that spot, and numerous, from time to time, had been the listeners.

On the occasion to which we refer, the gospel was being simply, fully, and earnestly proclaimed, when a middle-aged man, who had made straight for where we were standing, rudely and abruptly interrupted the speaker by crying out, in a jeering manner, "Who is Jesus Christ?"

The well-known and beautiful hymn was sung:—

“There is a fountain filled with blood,  
Drawn from Emmanuel's veins;  
And sinners, washed in that blest flood,  
Lose all their guilty stains.”

and then the chorus:—

“I do believe, I will believe,  
That Jesus died for me;  
That on the cross He shed his blood,  
From sin to set me free.”

The poor man had come determined to oppose and hinder the work of God, but at the singing of the hymn seemed spell-bound and riveted to the spot. He listened and passed on.

Six months rolled by, and one of our companions, in conversation with the man's friends, learned, to his great joy, that, having come with the fixed intention of putting a stop to

## THE SCOFFER ARRESTED.

the preaching, he had been completely arrested by the words of the hymn—"I do believe, I will believe, that Jesus died for me;" and that, in spite of every effort to banish them from his mind, for a considerable time the words rang constantly in his ears. Ere long, by God's blessing, they became the true expression of his heart.

By simple faith in Jesus, as his substitute upon the cross, he "passed from death unto life;" and was "translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son."

A sudden illness laid him low, and within a few months from the time the words first struck upon his ear he was "absent from the body, present with the Lord." The short space of time before his departure was filled up with "singing for Jesus," as he called it.

Reader, can you say "He loved me; and gave himself for me;" or are you still a Christ-rejecter? You have heard the gospel, perhaps again and again, but you have not believed it, and are like "the deaf adder that stoppeth her ear; which will not hearken to the voice of charmers, charming never so wisely." You have been at times concerned about your soul, but have sought to drown conviction by indulging in the "pleasures of sin:"

Dear, unsaved one, if such is your case, heed now God's own word; believe it, and everlasting life is yours. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever believeth* on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—John iii, 16. B.

## “SUFFER ME FIRST.”

“*And a certain scribe came and said unto Him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*”

“*And another of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.—Matt. viii., 19—22.*”

“Suffer me first.” How many there are who act under the influence of these words, although they may not be saying them of or to themselves. Suffer me first—to do what? To the worlding it is, “Suffer me first” to have a little more of this world’s pleasure before I leave all and follow Him; to the ambitious man, a little more of this world’s power; to the scholar, a little more of this world’s fame; and to the miser, a little more of this world’s riches. But mark, in all of these desires, differing far from each other as they do, there is one similarity; in all, it is this world.

And oh! poor deluded one, knowest thou not that what is of this world ends in death. Whilst thou art saying, suffer me first to satiate myself with pleasure, with power, with riches, with ambition, with “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,” Satan, whispering in thine ear, “Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry,” places himself, as it were, between thee and the end

## SUFFER ME FIRST.

of the pathway thou art treading, lest thou shouldst see that the end thereof is death. With the pleasures, the fleeting, unsatisfying pleasures of the moment, he blocks up the endless vista of an eternity of misery and woe, lest haply thou shouldst shrink from it and draw back while yet there is time.

“Suffer me first” to enjoy myself, is the desire of this world. In how many cases, the fruit of that desire in the next world will be suffering, everlasting suffering. Oh, sinner, believe it. God, who cannot lie, has said it, and warned thee of it. “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish,” are His words to thee. Believe it, and turn thy back upon the deadly pleasures of this world, as the prodigal did on the husks in the far country; for unless thou turn from them, bitter, bitter, will be thine agony, bitter thy remorse. And for how long? The enjoyment is but for a span; it may be for only a few short days, or even hours; at longest for a short three-score years and ten. That is the term of enjoyment. What is the time of suffering? God tells thee it will be “for ever and ever,” Oh, turn while yet thou canst.

The door is still open, and the Father still looking for thee. With outstretched arms, and with the best robe, He is waiting to welcome thee: turn ere it be too late, ere the door be shut, and instead of the voice of a loving Father’s welcome thou hear the sentence of a righteous Judge, “Depart from me, I know you not.”

## SUFFER ME FIRST.

Give one moment to the thought : Suppose death should come to me while I am in the midst of the gratification of my desires ; while I am suffering myself first to enjoy this world's pleasures, before turning to God for the salvation which He has told me, in His Word, He is ready to give me, and which sometime I intend to accept. Think of the solemn possibility that thou mayest be cut off without one moment's warning. What will it avail thee then, that thou hadst intended to have left all? Too true are the words of one who said, "To be 'almost' saved is to be eternally lost."

"Almost" cannot avail,  
"Almost" is but to fail,  
Sad, sad, that bitter wail,  
"Almost"—but lost!

"Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation."

There is another class of persons to whom the words, "Suffer me first" may be applied :—those for whom the world has no longer any attraction ; who are tired of its baubles, and for whom its pitfalls have no snare—yet who are ever saying to themselves, "Suffer me first" to be a little better before I come to God, before I dare call Him Father ; or, Suffer me first to do a little, by giving alms to the poor, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, before I accept a free salvation ;—or, Suffer me first to doubt a little longer before I believe the truth that "He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life."

## SUFFER ME FIRST.

Oh! Satan, Satan, how powerful a weapon in thy ruthless hand, are these fatal words:—  
“Suffer me first.”

But let us look at how the Lord deals with one who, coming to Him, says, “Suffer me first to bury my father.” His reply is, “Follow thou me, and let the dead bury their dead.”

“Follow thou me.” How much is involved in these three words, yet how blessed for those who obey the command.

Reader, let me ask thee, Do these words meet thine eye, as a sinner still in thy sins? Oh, then, listen to Him as He says to thee, “Follow thou me.” Go with Him through all His life while here on earth, as it is given in God’s Word. Go with Him step by step; go with the world-rejected, the world-hated Jesus. When thou hast followed Him through all His suffering, and all His sorrow, and all His shame, and hast at last reached the foot of His Cross; whilst thou art gazing with sorrowing amazement upon His agony, and art listening to that heart-rending cry, “Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani,” *i.e.* “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” remember, oh remember, He suffered for sinners. He suffered “the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God.” He suffered in the sinner’s stead. Is not that for thee?

When thou hast grasped the thought, and thy stricken soul exclaims:—

“Oh, depth of mercy, can it be,  
His precious blood was shed for me?”

## SUFFER ME FIRST.

Then listen to His answer ; He speaks to thee and He says :—

“ I gave my life for thee.—Gal., ii. 20.  
My precious blood, I shed.—1 Pet., i., 19.  
That thou might'st ransomed be.—Eph. i., 7.  
And quickened from the dead.—Eph., ii., 1.  
I gave my life for thee,—Tit., ii., 14.  
What hast thou given for me ? ”

Oh, believe it, and now, even now, thank Him for so great a salvation. If thou believest in Him, He saves thee from an eternity of woe.

And thou, young believer in the Lord, fear not when He says to thee, “ Follow thou me.” Fear not, although the echo of His words may still be sounding in thine ear, “ Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.” Follow Him, nothing doubting, and great shall be thy reward. Follow Him along the narrow path, and faint not, though at times it may be rugged and steep ; faint not though He take thee to the lone mountain top, for He hath said, “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”

Let Him be first—first in thine affections, first in all thy desires ; and all things else shall be added unto thee. “ All things are yours ; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come ; all are yours ; and ye are Christ's ; and Christ is God's.” Thou art His now, and shalt be His through an endless eternity of bliss.

## I HAVE BURIED MY SINS.

To thee the world is now the enemy's camp ; to thee, its pleasures and its joys lie vanquished and slain. Leave them on the world's broad battlefield, and "let the dead bury their dead." Thou hast nought to do with them ; haste thee from them, and be thou found in thy place, in the ranks of the soldiers of the Cross ; so that when He shall come, thou mayest be ready to answer to the roll-call of the Captain of thy salvation.

VERITÀ.

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" I HAVE BURIED MY SINS IN THE  
WOUNDS OF JESUS."

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THEY were the words of a dying girl, who had just been carried, in great suffering, into the Workhouse, "I am quite happy, I am not afraid to die, for, I have buried all my sins in the wounds of Jesus."

She was a Roman Catholic, and in these words spoke to the priest who had come to anoint her—"I have no other trust, sir, than the blood of Christ. I know that by it all my sins are washed away ; He died for me ; He shed His blood for me, and now I am not afraid to die."

The hospital nurse, knowing something of the truth herself, curious to know where the girl had heard the glad tidings which made her so happy, asked her where she had learnt all

## I HAVE BURIED MY SINS

this. The simple story was soon told. Some time before, the doctor had been sent for to see a dying boy, near the girl's home. Knowing and rejoicing in the love of Jesus, trusting in Him for his own soul's salvation, he longed that his patient should share in his joy, by taking the same blessed One as *his* Saviour; so he told the boy of the love of Jesus, of the bright home where He is now living, and of the precious blood which has been shed, to bring poor sinners there.

The girl was in the room, though unobserved. She listened eagerly to the gospel, heard for the first time; owned herself a sinner, a lost one, and believed the sweet message of salvation which God in His love had sent her: and now, though but seventeen years of age, was leaving the world with a glad heart, because she knew that it was to be with the One who had loved her, and washed her from her sins in His own blood.

It is a sweet, touching little story, dear reader, but will it recommend to your heart the love of the Blessed One who came down from Heaven's highest height to the very lowest depths, to shed His blood for you as well as for the pauper girl? You will not thrust Him away from you; surely you could not refuse such love as that of Jesus! He is stretching forth His hand to you; that hand once torn with the cruel nail; He longs to save you; hear His loving words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden and I

## IN THE WOUNDS OF JESUS.

will give you REST.” “I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.” Do you believe in the love of Jesus? Ah! has He not dearly proved that He loves the sinner? Are you a sinner? You will not dare deny it! then listen. “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1, Tim. i 15), not the righteous, mark you, but sinners; the helpless, the vile, the lost, the dead, “dead in trespasses and sins.”

Do you feel that you have no power to come to Jesus; that your heart is cold; so that you cannot love Him; that you are heavy-laden, so heavily laden with sin that you cannot move one step towards Him? Is this your case, dear soul? Then you are the very one that Jesus came to save! read His own word, “I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners”—Matt. ix, 13. Dont try to do anything, for you are helpless, but, owning yourself lost, let Jesus save you.

Do you remember the poor man at the pool of Bethesda, in John v. who is not able to get down into the water to be healed? Does Jesus say that he must wait to get some strength in order to help somebody to put him in? No! he has owned himself powerless; so Jesus says to him, “Rise, take up thy bed and walk—and immediately the man was made whole.” “For when we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly,” Rom. v. 6. Did you ever hear of love like this? not for those who loved Him, but for those who hated—the

## I HAVE BURIED MY SINS.

ungodly whose hearts were enmity against God. Can you longer refuse to take Him as your Saviour? In grace He is offering you salvation now; but the day is coming fast when you shall meet Him as your Judge, if you reject Him as your Saviour.

Ah, poor soul! if you can withstand His love now, in the terrible day that is coming do you think you shall be able to bear His wrath? Do you think that you will bear to have your heart looked through and through by His eyes which shall be "like unto a flame of fire;" bringing to light the hidden recesses of your heart—not a spot, not a stain shall be unseen; the secret thought which none knew of, the secret sin, long since forgotten by you shall be brought back to your memory, and shewn forth, before all; there shall be no hiding, no escaping from your despair. Will you wait to know Jesus till you know Him as your Judge? if you do I am sorry for you.

Perhaps, like many others, you think that you are "making the best of both worlds;" living in pleasure while you live, and hoping to come to Christ when you are dying. I tell you, it is making the worst of both worlds. You are living without the enjoyment of the love which would brighten your life down here; which would give you light and joy in your dying hour, and for the next world, you are losing your immortal soul. God says "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation:" Be warned in time I pray you; accept the love

## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE DESERT.

which will bring you joy while you live, joy when you die, and joy through the endless ages of eternity.

If your sins are washed away now in the blood of Jesus, you can never be judged for them, because Jesus was judged, and died under the weight of them on the cross. "Be it known unto you, therefore, that through this man is preached (or proclaimed) unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe are justified from all things," Acts xiii. 38. 39. "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus," (Rom. iii. 24) is God's word, and I beseech you, as you value your immortal soul, no longer to reject the gift He is so freely offering you, even eternal life.

E. Mc.M.

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## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE DESERT.

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THERE was once a traveller going through a desert, and the burning sands and heated air made him feel thirsty, and long earnestly for a drink of pure fresh water. There were many other travellers beside himself, and following where they led, he came to several fountains at which others were eagerly drinking. He stopped at the first he came to, over which was written "Pleasure," and drank; but, oh! his thirst was only increased, the heated waters of pleasure could never satisfy a thirsty soul.

## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE DESERT.

He tried another, over which was written "Sin;" but the waters, though for the moment sweet to the taste, were afterwards exceedingly bitter. He tried another, but none could satisfy, and wearily he threw himself on the ground and exclaimed, "O! can I get no water to quench this burning thirst."

"Yes, there is a Fountain in the Desert," said a soft voice, "where all who wish can drink. Come with me and I will show it you."

Eagerly he followed his guide, who led him on until they came to a beautiful fountain, with bright clear water bubbling up, and over the fountain was written, "HO EVERYONE THAT THIRSTETH COME YE TO THE WATERS," "I WILL GIVE UNTO HIM THAT IS ATHIRST OF THE FOUNTAIN OF THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY." "LET HIM THAT IS ATHIRST COME, AND WHO-SOEVER WILL LET HIM TAKE THE WATER OF LIFE FREELY."

"And is it for *me*," said the traveller, "can I drink of it?"

"Yes," was the reply. "Look, 'WHOSOEVER WILL.' The Lord of the fountain has placed it there for just such weary, thirsty travellers as you are, and it was at great cost to Himself, for it was by His death that the living waters sprang up."

The traveller drank, his thirst was quenched, his weariness departed, and wonderingly he said, "Why do not all drink of the living waters? Why do not they leave those fountains which can never satisfy, which only make them thirst again?"

## THE FOUNTAIN IN THE DESERT.

“ Ah ! ” was the sad reply, “ because it is an enemy who has placed those fountains there. He hates our Lord and he hates the people ; but he will give them as much pleasure, amusement, and sin as they like here, and afterwards a home with himself ; a home where there is no light, no peace, no love, no rest—a home in the lake of fire ; and they will have to dwell there for ever, no respite, no end. When thousands of years have passed and thousands more have rolled away, eternity will be no nearer the end than at the beginning. It will be never-ending torment, never-ending woe. But we who have drunk of the living waters shall spend our eternity with Him who loved us ; in a home whose joys no tongue can tell, no thought imagine ; all peace, all love ; no more death or crying ; tears all wiped away ; every sorrow hushed, all light, all love, endless pleasures, endless joys.”

“ And when shall we reach that home ? ” said the traveller. “ How long have we to wander first in the desert ? ”

“ Some longer, some shorter,” was the reply. “ For some a messenger is quickly sent, others have to remain a long time.”

“ And sometimes must not the way seem long and weary ? ” he asked.

“ Yes ; ” said his guide, “ sometimes it does, indeed, seem long ; but then we have a bright hope to cheer us. The Lord of the Fountain has promised that He will come Himself soon to take away from the desert all who have drunk

## FRUIT OF HIS TOIL.

of the life-giving stream, and then, the weary journey at an end, we will be for ever at home. We expect Him every day, and that cheers us through the little while, and now, during His absence, it is His wish that we should tell others of His love and of the Fountain which He has provided, so that when He comes they may be ready to meet Him, for those who will not drink of the living waters shall spend their eternity in the lake of fire."

"And is that the case?" he said, and I sit idly here enjoying the thought of being safe myself, and utterly regardless of others. But I will not stay a moment longer; I will spend the rest of my time, while waiting my Lord's return in telling others of the Fountain in the Desert."

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Behold I freely give  
The living water; thirsty one,  
Stoop down, and drink, and live.'  
I came to Jesus and I drank  
Of that life-giving stream;  
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,  
And now I live in Him."

E. L.

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## FRUIT OF HIS TOIL.

Draw near and hear the cry  
"Finished it is."  
Behold the Saviour die—  
"Finished it is."

FRUIT OF HIS TOIL.

He came from Heaven to be  
Condemned upon the tree,  
That pardon might be free,  
    “Finished it is.”

The wrath He did endure—  
    Pardon is free—  
That He might peace secure,  
    Pardon is free.  
Now, to the weary heart,  
God can His peace impart;  
Why, anxious soul, depart?  
    Pardon is free.

Now all who do believe  
    Are safe in Him;  
Now all who Christ receive  
    Are safe in Him.  
All safe in Him on high,  
And brought to God so nigh,  
Our hearts exulting cry,  
    We're safe in Him.

Soon to behold His face,  
    When He shall come,  
And further prove His grace,  
    When He shall come.  
There in that cloudless light,  
With robes all spotless white,  
We in His love delight,  
    When He shall come.

G. W. F.

PARTICULARS OF  
DR. MACKERN'S CONVERSION.

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*Stephen's Green, Dublin, 30th March, 1875.*

DEAR BROTHER,

As I know you are wishing to get a little account of the interview and conversation which took place between our beloved brother and myself in Dublin fourteen years ago, and which the Lord, in His rich and sovereign grace, so blessedly and, I may add, unexpectedly, used for his immediate conversion, and for the joy of all our hearts who more intimately knew him, I will give an outline, as far as I remember, of the circumstances and Scriptures which God seemed to use on the occasion, to turn him from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.

Never was the change more signal and to God's glory than in the case of our dear brother. Everything about that visit was remarkable, as manifesting GOD'S purpose to save him on the spot.

When he called that evening, it was to bid us farewell ere he left for abroad. He had gone upstairs to see Mrs. W——, as I happened to be engaged with a gentleman below, and had taken his leave, and had left his love for me, as he could not wait, having to catch that evening's packet for Holyhead. Just at that moment I came out

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and met him in the hall. He was in a great hurry; but all was pre-arranged differently of God for eternity. The Lord had opened the door, and he came in, did not even sit down; was leaving for England on his way to Australia.

I asked him, "Why this sudden move?" He was slow to answer, but it opened the door of his heart and his conscience—all was disquietude and weariness within—the condition of his soul hopeless—the review of the past saddened him—the present was a burthen to him—the future, gloom and uncertainty—everything had failed to satisfy the craving of his nature for something better than he had; his books, his love of poetry, his theories about man's perfection, all had failed him. The tenderness of his heart and nature made him philanthropic, and hope against hope to lessen the wretchedness which he saw around—this failed also.

He asked me how I was so happy and in peace. He saw others the same, even in their sorrows. He knew they possessed what he had not, and yet he yearned for it; he could not find it. "Who by searching can find out God?" He looked to the world—he travelled—all was but a troubled sea. This was his state. God was working through it, to plough up the hard ground.

It was not so much any conscience as to sin, as, his nature being disappointed and unsatisfied with what he had found in man's world. He remembered the letter of the Word, and sometimes had thoughts of God. He had heard of His love. It was then I enquired why he had not followed in

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that track, instead of those suggested by the mere mind of man; referring to the Scriptures for encouragement—"Ye have ruined yourselves, but in ME is your help;" "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" But this only brought out a deeper mischief, and showed evidently the way Satan had latterly been trying, not only to shut out the light of God's truth from his troubled soul, but so to use the little he knew, as to cloud the goodness and perfection of the Creator. All was confusion and vagueness in his thoughts as to the true state and relationship of man with God, both before the fall of man and afterwards. Creation now, to his mind, was a mighty failure and a ruin, because sin, death, and misery were in it; and God was love. All this was perplexity to him and unaccountable.

Satan had thus far blinded him, and was about binding him hand and foot; but God had his name in the Lamb's Book of Life before the foundation of the world, and was allowing all this to go on, so that, when the light and grace of Christ came in, he could understand, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

What has grace to bear with in a sinner, as well as do for a sinner like one of us!

I saw there was no definite opposition in our dear brother to God or His Word; he did it "ignorantly and in unbelief." He misinterpreted Scripture to justify man and throw all the responsibility of a groaning creation on its Maker. He pitied man, and would have sympathized with him in his ruin, because there was no

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sense of man's rebellion and guilt before God, no conscience of man's broken responsibility to God, no sense of the dishonour done to God. Still, he was honest and only waiting, like one that was blind from his birth, to have the work of God's grace manifested in his being clothed and in his right mind.

This was a solemn moment we had come to. All was dark yet, but the confession of need was made; and, Oh, how gentle a sigh of contrition brings down the God of Glory to answer it in His Grace; and I looked to the Lord for the Word, the Word of life.

So we opened the Scriptures, the 3rd of Genesis, and 1st and 3rd of John, to see what man had done to God, and what God in return had done for man.

But before we went into these, I quoted the verse in Ecclesiastes, "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." This I referred to, that he might see in a few words how all his reasonings and causes of disquietude as to God, in reference to man, were unfounded.

The Lord blessed it at once; like an arrow, it arrested his conscience. Light had entered his soul. He was silent. God had reached him. He listened. Satan was standing by, disarmed, rebuked; the prey was already taken from the captor; the filthy garments were about to be removed; the vessel was near to the sanctuary. The Word of God had taken root in the ground already ploughed up—it detected his deep mistake as to

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the fall of man ; as to himself, his conscience broke down under it ; his attention and earnestness to hear were more marked than ever. My heart was encouraged, and we both seemed to be carried away by the same spirit of expectation and hope.

We now went to our chapter in Genesis. All was chaos and void till God began, " Let there be light, and there was light." Let there be life and there was life. The creation was formed perfect, as it must be from a perfect Creator. Man was perfect because made in His image. All was very good. Creation was beautiful. There was nothing wanting there—the animals, even, in subjection to Adam ; Adam in subjection to God ; and God well pleased with all, walking in the garden in the cool of the day.

Such was God's work ; the Heavens and the Earth, the display of His Creation Glory. His supremacy was there, in marking out one tree not to be eaten, so that God might be all in all in that primeval scene of His handiwork and wisdom, and man's will subject to His authority and control. God gratuitously put all this into man's hand to enjoy, and direct, under His omniscient and omnipotent goodness.

But one day was enough for the first man to *obey* God. Satan's lie took his heart from God ; the thought of being as gods, knowing good and evil, tempted him, produced a desire for independence, and thus, listening to Satan, he lost confidence in God, and failed in his responsibility as creature, and all was changed. He had left

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God, and he lost the moral image and nature in which he had been created. He chose Satan, and his nature fell into the corruption begotten of Satan. Such was man—even man made perfect, after he doubted and left God—incurring the sentence of death; and the world, lately so beautiful and lovely, now nothing but defilement and corruption. God's glory, as the Maker of it, marred, and His power, as it were, defeated—Satan looking on in triumph at the wreck.

Our dear brother saw the change, and felt the dishonour done to God. Sin was traced to Satan, and to Adam's disobedience to God's word. He felt the judgment of death was righteous, and the springs of man's moral being must be for ever polluted, as well as alienated from God. Scripture made it all plain, and every disclosure was revealing to his own soul how he stood, as born of Adam, under broken responsibility, and with a mind not subject to the will of God, and a conscience guilty.

We then turned to see what God could do with all this state of corruption and rebellion, as well as what character God would now take *towards* him. I pointed out that verse—The Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, and it should bruise his heel; the grace of God hidden then in a promised Saviour, the woman's Seed, as God's first step in the New Creation, which was now to be erected, not on the ruin of the old, but on a crucified Christ, the Seed of the woman, but, the Son of God.

We turned, then, in order to bring out more

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fully the person of Christ, as well as the work of Christ, to the chapters in John, and our brother listened to these passages from step to step. The Spirit was blowing where it listed; and He desired to trace the ways of God's dealing with the sinner; and never did a thirsty soul drink in with greater avidity the words of life. Judging from the effect on him, the Spirit seemed to be delighting to take of the things of Christ and show them to him.

Moses asked, "Show me Thy way that I may know THEE;" and this was the thirsting state of our brother, produced by the Spirit's quickening power, as we looked at the verses, "Even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have eternal life," and connected it with "The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," and then went back to the beginning of John, as to the Son of Man being God manifest in flesh, the WORD dwelling among us, full of grace and truth, and, out of His fulness, we receiving grace for grace.

There was an evident passing from the conviction of sin and abhorring of himself, as in the beginning, to greater liberty, even delight. For the first time he brightened up. The sight of the Son of Man lifted up—by faith seen in His Word—turned his heaviness into the oil of gladness. Indeed, verse by verse of that wonderful revelation, God seemed to be using, thus making His glory to pass before him with Divine power. But the ear had been first opened, the conscience

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purged, and the heart touched with that verse, "He who was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through His poverty, might become rich."

The last verse we looked at was, "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, to them that believe on His name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." And here again the simplicity of his faith was beautiful in the reception of this. He dropped himself—everything of the past lost its hold on him, in the abundant entrance which the Father vouchsafed to him, so quickly, into the new and divine relationships, which he was now entering upon, and which ever after were the secret joy of his soul. All passed before him now—sin put away for ever by the Lamb of God—a new nature given—born of God by the Word and by the Spirit—all that belonged to the old man settled for ever by the Cross—a new condition—new relationships in Christ—and a new home with the Son in the bosom of the Father; there for ever to behold the glory of the Only-Begotten, of Him, who was wounded for his transgressions, bruised for his iniquities, who, by the grace of God, tasted death for every one—and our little hymn, the 91st, in which these new affections ascribe praise to God, was ever his favourite in after days:—

"Oh what a debt I owe  
To Him who shed His blood,  
And cleansed my soul, and gave me power  
To stand before His God." &c.

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I see also, in one of his little fragments on experience, ("The Basket," No. 2, page 39); he has touched upon this:—

“Soon as my all I ventured  
On the atoning blood,  
The Holy Spirit entered,  
And I was born of God!”

Also:—

“Thanks be to God! I can look on this world, its glories, riches, pleasures, thoughts, ways, its changing fashions, as a vast wreck—where also is found my former self—my sins all met by Him who hung upon the cross. I can and do believe that God alone could and would meet this ruin Himself, and in an absolute way deliver me.”

This is a little sketch of the remarkable deliverance and salvation of our brother, now with the Lord Himself.

He took out his watch; two hours had passed like a moment to both of us. He was too late; but it was too late only for man's world and man's ways; too late for Satan any more to deceive or blind. The Spirit of the Lord had taken possession of the earthen vessel, and carried it whither he knew not—no more to rest on earth's shores, nor return to bid farewell to those he had left there. Having seen, by faith, the Lord who loved him and washed him from his sins in His own blood, he counted all things but dross and dung, that he might know Him. He pressed on steadily, conferring not with flesh and blood.

He kissed me then as he left for Kingstown,

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saying all was new ; he was no longer his own ; a debtor to mercy. His intention then was to sleep on board that night for the morning mail ; but the Angel of the Lord was with him still, and led him to the prayer-meeting at Mr. D— S—'s chapel at Kingstown, where the Lord was then working, where he remained during the meeting, and attracted the notice of Mr. S—— by his attention and anxiety, who then had some conversation with him, which caused him again to put off his intended departure by the early boat, so as to wait for the meeting at the Metropolitan Hall that morning, held by Mr. S——. Others observed him during the singing of a hymn, standing up, leaning against one of the pillars under the gallery, weeping tears of delight, of fresh felt joy, which the full heart could no longer repress, tasted in company with others there, who, like himself, were for the first time entering into the liberty of God's presence, now known as a Justifier, a Saviour God, in all the simplicity and artlessness of first love, and Whom we know he afterwards followed so faithfully and fearlessly as his Lord and Master.

I had a letter from him a week or two after, which he wished to be read at the meeting, praising and blessing God for what He had wrought by His Spirit in him during his short visit, and mentioning his desire to be at the Lord's Table, remembering Him there, and showing forth His death, till He come.

W. W.

## “THE GREAT WHITE THRONE.”

*“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away ; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life ; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it ; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them ; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. - And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”—*Rev. xx. 11—15.

BELOVED READER, everybody has got to do with the Son of God, the “Man Christ Jesus,” in one of two characters ; they must either have to do with Him now, as a Saviour, or by-and-by as a Judge, when the day of salvation is past, and the door of mercy is closed for ever.

Let me ask, ere I pass on to this solemn subject, have you come to this Jesus and found Him to be your Saviour ; the One whose precious blood has cleansed you, given you a purged conscience, saved you from that terrible doom made known to us in this Scripture, the second death—“the lake of fire”. If not, I beseech you to come to Him at once. There is no time to delay ; you must not trifle with that precious soul of yours ; you must not sport upon the very brink of that burning lake ; you do not know

## THE GREAT WHITE THRONE.

the moment Satan may give you the last push, and launch you over that awful precipice into the midst of the flames. Come to Jesus. He sits just now upon a "throne of grace," not upon a "throne of judgment," but soon He will rise, and mercy for you will be past, and judgment overtake you.

Just look for a moment inside the tabernacle where God dwelt, in the days when Israel was in the wilderness. Where was the throne then? On the mercy-seat above the ark. What was on it? What were the cherubim looking at? "Blood." Yes, blood was there to answer the claims of the throne, and God dealt with the people on the ground of the blood. Lev. xvi.

Turn to Isaiah vi. There we get the throne again, high and lifted up. But is that all? Ah, no! What else is there? An altar, telling of grace for the poor prophet who had found out he was undone. Think of it! he did not say, "Woe is me, for I'm not so good as I ought to be." No! but I am "undone." What had shown him that? The King on the throne (verse 5). What made him the ready messenger for that same king (verse 8)? The live coal from off the altar (verses 6, 7).

Now turn to Rev. iv., and see the throne again; but what is that around it? "A rainbow." What does that mean? It is the token of sure and covenant mercy to this poor sin-blighted world of ours. Oh, how blessed! Poor weary sinner, what a tale of love to you. The claims of the throne all met. Justice is satisfied,

## THE GREAT WHITE THRONE.

and God in grace preaching "peace" to you through Jesus Christ. Will you not "believe and live?"

But we must come to this other throne, and what do we find here? One enthroned for "judgment without mercy," and all the blackness and vileness of the poor sinner standing out in awful contrast to the dazzling brightness of that "great white throne." Oh, sinner, well may you tremble; the picture is black indeed, and the doom terrible, but none the less true. Yea, it is certain, for all who stand before that throne. "Reader, let me ask you, Who is this Person, from whose face the very earth and heavens fled away? Oh, you say, It is the Almighty God. Let me tell you who it is. It is a "Man." What! you say a Man? Yes, a Man. I told you at the beginning every one must have to do with God's Man, either as a Saviour or a Judge. Now turn to John v. 22—27. What do we find there? "The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son . . . because he is the Son of man." And now the Man has taken His seat to judge. Who shall be able to stand? You, poor sinner; but only until that black catalogue of hideous sins written in the books is read out against you; then you will be siezed with mighty hands and hurled from the presence of the Judge into the lake of fire.

Who stand before Him? The "dead" (not one living soul; they were raised in the first resurrection, verse 4—6); only those who have

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not passed from death unto life, John v., 24. Oh, the myriads who will stand before the Judge with the opened books! The sea has given up its dead, death and hell too, and there they stand before that great white throne, whose light only makes their blackness the more fearful. Sinner, what will you do then? You who think it manly to do your own will; you who commit sin in secret. Ah, do you remember that secret sin, done in the dark, when there was no eye to see you? You forgot the eye that never slumbers nor sleeps. "Thou God seest me;" and you prided yourself, and comforted yourself with the thought that no one saw you. The secret is locked up within your breast, and you would not for the world your dearest friend knew anything about it. "Be sure your sin will find you out." What will you look like when you stand before that throne and hear that same sin read out, sounded out in the ears of an assembled world, when you meet the one you wronged? I think I see you, poor trembling wretch, withering beneath the look of the Judge, every limb shaking; fain would you have rocks or mountains to fall upon you to hide you from His face, but there are none. They fled when He took His seat, His face made them flee away.

Unsaved soul, think, the Judge is the Man who died to save sinners; how will you face Him? No longer are His eyes of love looking upon you with tenderness and compassion, but like a flame of fire searching you through and through. No

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longer is His sweet voice saying, "Come unto me," but His voice now is like the sound of many waters, and instead of "Come," He says "Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire." Ah, will you turn round and say, O Lord, but I was a poor man on earth, I had sore work to make ends meet, and could not give much time to my soul? No excuse whatever of that sort would avail you. No. Your Judge would say to you, I know what it is to be poor. I have trod the scene before you; when I was there, they tempted me about the tribute money, and I had to ask them to show me a penny, to teach them, I had not one. Yes, "the foxes had holes, the birds of the air had nests, but the Son of man had not where to lay his head." Oh, poor sinner, He has been in every circumstance you could be placed in; He was hungry, thirsty, weary, persecuted, murdered. When you stand before Him, you will be like the man without the wedding garment, "speechless," not one excuse to offer, as you hear read out, page after page, your sins. Look, the Judge gives you one more chance; He turns to another book—the book of life. But O! there is no name of yours there. How awful! Your name not there. Take him, says the stern Judge, bind him hand and foot. Now they seize you, and, with the yell of despair rising from your lips, you are hurled into the lake of fire. What an eternity to spend "in the flames," when you might have been in glory: weeping and wailing, when you might have been "singing:" conscience and memory

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at work, telling you about the opportunities you missed, the Saviour you despised, the God you mocked, and now "the harvest is past, the summer ended," and you "damned."

O, Sinner, awake, awake, "flee from the wrath to come," "look not behind thee, tarry not in all the plain." You have no time to lose. That swift pale horse, with its grim rider, death, is close at your heels; his sword is uplifted to plunge in your bosom: speed you to the Saviour, He is waiting with outstretched arms to welcome you; hear His voice, Come; see what He offers you, Rest. Matt. xi. 28. Won't you take it from Him now? Ah, do you say I am not worthy, I do not deserve rest or anything else; I have been such a sinner; I know that very well. But did the seraphim take the live coal and touch Isaiah's lips because he was worthy? No! The light of the throne showed him he was "undone," but grace comes out to undone ones, and only such. Christ died for (not the worthy ones, but) the "ungodly," "sinners," "enemies." Rom. v. 6, 8, 10. How precious! He died for the sinner. Is that your name? Then He died for you, and Jesus Himself says, "He that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John vi. 47.

And let me tell you, If you come before the throne just now, and find yourself by its light to be a vile, undone sinner, thank God there is the blood, the altar, or the rainbow, to tell you of blessing. God's claims are all met by the blood. When you rest where God rests,

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then you are saved, and will never come before the great white throne. See John v. 24, "shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death into life." But if you do not come and find your rest in Jesus, then by-and-by you will stand before Him as your Judge, hear Him pronounce your sentence, and find yourself banished from His presence when He takes His place on the great white throne. May the Lord in His great mercy awaken you, deeply convince you of your sin and of your need of the Saviour, and bring you to Himself to find in Him all you need for time and eternity. May you come now, while it is "the accepted time," now, while it is "the day of salvation," and His shall be all the praise.

W. E.

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## TWO DEATH BEDS.

### I. WITHOUT CHRIST.

About two years ago I was staying with friends in one of the Midland Counties, and while walking one day in the garden, I met a respectably-dressed middle-aged man, of whom I knew nothing, but to whom, after a few words on ordinary topics had passed between us, I spoke about his immortal soul. He listened, willingly and respectfully enough, but I soon found he knew nothing of, and cared less for, the eternal realities I was pressing on him; and on my speaking of that great reality, the eter-

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nal punishment of the lost, of those who reject God and His Word, who despise His grace, who go on satisfied with themselves, *their* thoughts, *their* opinions, *their* theories, without even thinking of testing them by that which is the only test, *the Word of God*; and even where they find them untenable, if so tested, prefer to keep their thoughts and reject the Word of God—I say, when I spoke of *that* eternal reality, he laughed a scornful laugh, and said, “Excuse me, Sir, but I don’t believe in hell; I don’t believe there’s any such place.”

Though shocked, I was not surprised; for it is only what one finds on all sides, in the present day, either openly proclaimed or secretly believed. And I have really more respect, in one sense, for the man who (however terrible it may be) openly states his unbelief, than for the one who either conceals it, or, *professing* to believe in the reality of that place of torment, goes on practically denying it, by living for himself in this world, instead of bowing to the great truth of the Gospel, that he is a lost sinner, and accepting Him who came to seek and save the lost. The one is, in a certain sense, honest in avowing his disbelief; the other is deceiving himself and all around him. *Both end* in the same place by and by; and whether you openly deny the Word of God with your lips, or practically deny it with your life, be you the most profligate or the most moral, the end will be the “lake of fire.”

· All I could do (and all I would do in such a

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case) was to bring *that Word* to bear upon him which he denied. I read to him from Luke xvi. 23, "In hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments," and I asked him if he dared to say that the blessed One who spoke those words was saying what was false. I read to him passages from the Revelation, and other parts of the Word, in which that terrible reality is so plainly spoken of; but no, he laughed his scornful laugh, and said "*Nothing shall ever make me believe it,*"—(mark the words, dear reader). "No one has ever come back from hell to prove there is such a place," and so on. I felt I had nothing more to say. If he would not bow to the Word of God, I knew he would not, to anything I could say, so I left him with this one remark: "I pray God that, before you die, you may be brought to believe in the reality of what you now deny."

A month ago I was staying in the same place, and heard that he was dead; and the particulars of his death left on me an impression which nothing can ever efface. May God, in His infinite grace, use them for the blessing of any poor unbelieving sinner who may read this.

A Christian gentleman in the neighbourhood, hearing he was dying, went, more than once, to see him, but found him, even with death and eternity staring him in the face, persistently denying what he had already denied to me; hardened against the truth of God, apparently going into His Presence with that lie in his

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mouth. But *God would not let him*. Two days before he died, he awoke to the terrible reality that there was a hell. "*I know NOW,*" he said "*that there IS a hell, and I'M GOING THERE.*" *For those two fearful days, that was the burden of his speech. And so he died.*

Oh, beloved reader, poor unsaved sinner, pause a moment, I beseech you. Do you believe in the reality of that place of torment, from which "the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever; and they have *no rest day nor night*"? (Rev. xiv. 11). Or do you think the Word of the living God is a fable, to be accepted or not, believed or not, as you judge best? You will find your mistake out some day, and will have to bow to the reality of it. Oh that it may be before it is *too late*. Perhaps you will say, you are not a rejecter of the Word of God; that you do believe in it; that you lead a moral and religious life, doing your best, endeavouring to keep the law (obliged to admit, if you are earnest that you have broken it) and so hope to work your way to heaven. What! Christ left out? Whom do you think He came to die for? Those who do their best? Those who are satisfied with themselves? Those who float quietly down in the stream of this world's religion, "Making the best," as they say, "of this world, and hoping to get the best of the next"? No, but for the *wretched*, the *undone*, the *ruined*, the *ungodly*, (Rom. v. 6) the *lost*. (Luke xix., 10).

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Perhaps you will say, you do not leave out Christ, that you do hope to get the benefit of His death, though how, I am sure you cannot say. But think how terribly dishonouring it is to add anything to the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ; above all, to add any wretched works of your own, to get to Heaven. To profess to believe in Him who came down to save poor sinners, when nothing else could save them but His taking upon Himself death and judgment. He took that judgment, even to being forsaken of God, when He was bearing sin that was not His own; I say, to profess to believe in Him, and yet not to know the first great truth the Gospel presents, that you are not only a sinner, but a *lost* sinner,—this is darkness indeed.

Surely a *Saviour* is for the lost; and if you, unsaved reader, unforgiven sinner, moral sinner, profligate sinner, religious sinner, *lost* sinner, be you who you may and what you may, bow to that truth, and turn simply to that Saviour, giving up all but Him, you are saved, saved for ever; death will be no longer a terror to you, for you belong to Him who has conquered it; judgment no longer feared, for He has borne it for you, and borne it to the very uttermost—even to the being forsaken of His God that you might not be. Believe, and all is yours, for Christ is yours. Oh, what a real possession is Christ! Could all the possessions of this world give you one moment's peace with God or relieve your burdened

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conscience? The possession of Christ does both—nay, far more, it lifts the heart of the poor rest-seeking sinner up to Him who died that He might save him—Who breaks the sinner's heart with a sense of sin, and then pours in the healing balm of His love, that He may have that broken heart for Himself. Oh, what a reality is the possession of Christ! Is He yours, dear reader, your very own? "He that *hath the Son, hath life*; and he that hath not the Son of God, *hath not life*" (1 John v. 12). Test yourself, honestly, in the sight of God, by that one verse, have you got life? Have you got Christ? Do not think it is a phrase—it is a blessed reality, known *only* to those who have it.

### 2. WITH CHRIST.

Turn now with me, dear reader, to another scene, and, oh, what a scene—the death-bed of a saint of God—the death-bed of one who knew Christ and His love; knew the reality of both. I think, in this poor world of unrealities, there is nothing more blessed to witness than the death-bed of a child of God. By such an one I stood but lately. She was eighty years old and upward, and of those years she had known the Lord for fifty-five; and, it may be truly said, had lived for Him; and now she is passing away; departing to be with Him, which is far better. Not the shadow of a cloud at that death-bed; great weakness of body; great prostration—she cannot even move in her bed without loving

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hands to help her—the hands of those whom she has made it the object of her life to bring to Christ. By the infinite grace of God, she has seen them, one after another, brought to know Him, whom to know is life eternal. Children, grandchildren, faithful old servants, surround that bed; all safe in Christ; all eager to do some little thing to help that beloved one who is passing away from them here. Oh, how weak and helpless in body she is! She has just been moved in her bed, and is speaking—clear come the words, “Strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” No strength of her own, but how strong in Him! In the moments of her greatest weakness, of her wandering, how she always brightened up at the precious name of Jesus; at a verse repeated out of the Word of God—that which had been her food for fifty-five years. And when, for some days before she fell asleep, she no longer, except at rare intervals, recognized those who spoke to her, even the nearest and dearest, there were always two things uppermost in her mind.

It might be a son, a daughter, a grandchild, who came to her bedside—she was wandering as to natural things; but what does she say? “Are you happy in the Lord?” “Yes.” And what then? “*Don't be half-hearted for Christ.*” Yes, that was her little parting word of counsel to all, “Don't be half-hearted for Christ,” and surely we can say, she “being dead, yet speaketh;” for those words remain graven on the hearts of those who heard them; and

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may the Lord bring them home to any poor feeble one, belonging to Him, who reads them here.

And now the scene is about to close. She has been lying very quiet for a time, with closed eyes, when suddenly she opens them wide, gazing stedfastly into heaven. The glaze of death is already on them, but there is no flinching in that look. And it is the more remarkable from the fact that, for the few days previously, her eyes had never been fixed on any one object for a minute at a time; wandering restlessly from one to another, and all over the room. But now there is not even the motion of an eyelid, nothing but a fixed, steady look upward—straight upward. The look is so remarkable, and so sustained, that a daughter by her side says, “What are you looking at, darling mother?” No answer, the look still upward. Then another daughter, lying on the bed at her side, says, “You see Jesus, don’t you, mother?” Not a movement of the eye, but out comes the answer, clear and strong, “YES.” It is her last word. A few moments more, and the eyes gently close, and the spirit has fled to be with Him.

Dear reader, if the Lord tarries, and your death-bed comes, which will it be with you? Which would it be, were your death-bed to come now, to-morrow, next week? Would you have to look back on a life spent for yourself, eternity before you, and Christ not yours? Come to Him now, if you have not come yet.

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Listen to His own blessed words, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Accept that loving invitation now. Take your burdened heart and conscience to Him, and you will find rest indeed.

Surely you know you are a sinner, and surely a sinner needs a Saviour; and there is One who has been saying to you all these years, "Come unto me," "I will give you rest," and you have turned a deaf ear and a hard heart to those loving words. Oh, how solemn the words spoken by that same loving One. "Ye will *not* come to me that ye might have life." The time is coming when the door of grace will be closed; when the last one shall be gathered in; when those who belong to Christ will go to be with Him; and then, no hope for those that are left! The time is coming, and it is very near too. The cry has gone out, "Behold the bridegroom cometh;" and there are thousands of the Lord's dear ones waiting and looking for His return, Are you? To the last moment of her life, the dear saint of God of whom I have written, was looking for that; and would not have been at all surprised if He had come even the moment before she was taken to be with Him. She was constantly repeating part of her favourite hymn, "I'm waiting for Thee Lord," and it was sung over her grave by many who loved her. Reader ask yourself if you can sing it from your heart. N.

DESPISERS, REJECTERS, NEGLECTORS,  
PROFESSORS, HOPERS, WORKERS, &  
CONFESSORS.—WHICH ARE YOU?

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ARE you a “*despiser*” of salvation through Christ? if so, pause and consider, for Scripture saith:—

“Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of by the Prophets: behold, ye *despisers*, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.” Acts xiii. 41.

Are you a “*rejector*” of salvation through Christ? if so, pause and consider, for He has said:—

“He that *rejecteth* me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same *shall judge* him in the last day.” John xii. 48.

Are you a “*neglecter*” of salvation through Christ? if so, pause and consider, for Scripture saith:—

“If the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we *neglect* so great salvation.” Heb. ii. 2-3.

“The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them ..... and they *shall not escape*.” I. Thess. v. 2-3.

DESPISERS, REJECTERS, NEGLECTORS, &c.,

Are you a “*professor*” of salvation through Christ? if so, pause and consider, for Scripture saith :—

“ They *profess* that they know God : but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate. Titus i. 16.

And Christ has said :—

“ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. *Many* will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name ? and in thy name have cast out devils ? and in thy name done many wonderful works ? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you : *depart from me*, ye that work iniquity.” Mat. vii., 21, 23.

Are you a *hoper* for salvation through Christ? if so, pause and consider, for Scripture saith :—

“ Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh ..... that at that time ye were without Christ ..... having *no hope*, and without God in the world.” Eph. ii. 12. And, again ..... “ that ye sorrow not even as others which have *no hope*.” 1. Thess. iv. 13.

Are you a “*worker*” for salvation through Christ? if so, pause and consider, for Scripture saith :—

“ To him that *worketh* not, but *believeth* on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.” Rom. iv. 5. “*Not*

## WHICH ARE YOU ?

according to *our works*, but according to his own purpose and grace." II. Tim. i. 9. *Not* by works of righteousness which *we have done*, but according to his mercy he saved us." Titus iii. 5. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that *not of yourselves*; it is the gift of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast." Eph. ii. 8, 9.

Dear reader, which are *you*?

If still in one of the above classes, why not come *now* to Christ, the only Saviour, as a poor lost sinner; for, in whichever you are included, you are still in danger of dying in your sins, and perishing everlastingly; but, "if thou shalt *confess* with thy mouth the *Lord Jesus*, and shalt believe in *thine heart* that God hath raised him from the dead, *thou shalt be saved*. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth *confession* is made unto salvation." For the Scripture saith:—" *Whosoever believeth* on him shall not be ashamed." Rom. x. 9-11. " *Whosoever* shall *confess* that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." 1. John iv. 15. If you have thus truly confessed Christ unto salvation, He now saith to you:—" *Whosoever* therefore shall *confess* me before men, him will I *confess* also before my Father which is in heaven. Matt. x. 32. " *Whosoever* shall *confess* me before men, him shall the Son of man also *confess* before the angels of God." Luke xii. 8.

E. H. C.

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

(Read 2 Samuel xiii. 23, xiv.)

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

David brings back this young man, but he brings him back unrighteously without judging his sin, and the consequence was he got bold; and that is what people who do not believe in hell now are, they are bold and defy God. Absalom was a murderer. However deep might be Ammon's guilt there was no excuse for Absalom. He was a murderer; and yet you hear him saying in the end of chapter xiv, "If there be any iniquity in me." His sin had been unjudged, he had been brought back unrighteously, his conscience was hardened, and the consequence was, the moral character of the

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

throne of David was destroyed ; and where the moral character is destroyed the throne is upset, it provokes a revolt, as chapter xv tells us.

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

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

Here, the desire of his own heart makes Absalom a murderer, and he flies from the presence of

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

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

“Christ also has once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us *to God.*” Not to bring us to Heaven, nor to bring us to peace, but to bring us to God; and no soul is brought to God till it is brought to trust the blood of Christ. How the grace comes all from God's side, too! Have you been seeking to know God? God has been beforehand with you. He has been seeking you. He gave His own Son for me long before I ever had a thought about Him; and now the Cross tells me God wants to save me; and the Cross tells me God can righteously save me. Are *you* unconverted, with a weight of sins upon your conscience? God wants to bring you back to Himself. The soul of Dávid longed after Absalom; three years had Absalom been away! and how long have you been away? Twenty years? Thirty years? Threescore years? Well, I do not know your age, but this I know, that if unsaved, you have never been near Him yet. You have spent your life at a distance from God, but

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God wants to have you brought back ; God wants to have the link of relationship formed between Him and you.

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

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

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and you had better come with me," *i. e.*, he would have gone himself and taken her with him. But they had no heart to go, and you have no heart for Christ's invitation; but though your heart is all wrong, God's heart is towards you.

David's heart was towards the prodigal, but he said, "If this heart bring him back, this hand holds a sword that must be planted in his bosom as soon as he returns." Then Joab comes in through the wise woman of Tekoah, as you read, and the end of it is that David gives way and brings him back without judging his sin. But does God bring back His prodigals without judging their sin? No, no. He has judged it in the Cross of Christ.

Until the Cross where Christ suffered and bare sin, there was a barrier between man and God. Until the Cross of Christ God is behind the veil; God dwelt between the cherubim, (symbol of His righteousness); and there was a thick veil between man and God. The High Priest drew near once a year; went inside that veil, alone, with blood of others; but he came out again, and the veil remained. But when Jesus dies; when man had nailed Him to the tree; when man had done his worst—for it was man's hand that drove in those nails, it was man's hand that planted the crown of thorns upon that peerless brow, it was man's hand that plunged the spear into that blessed side—then, I say, when man had done

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

his *very worst* against God, God seizes that very moment, in His matchless, His exquisite, His infinite grace, to do His *very best* for man. Christ, in that hour of darkness, when God's righteous wrath and man's unrighteous wrath alike fell on His blessed head, does a work that enables God to come out in righteousness and in love to man, and save the vilest.

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

David's love, as we have seen, outstrips his righteousness, but when God brings back the sinner He brings him back in righteousness. The Cross of Christ tells me this, that God's grace reigns now, in the place where death reigned before, and it reigns through righteousness, not at the expense of righteousness. Instead of death falling on the guilty soul, death falls on Jesus—the death of the Cross, death in the dark shades of Golgotha—and

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

that death opens the way into God's presence for you and me.

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

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

The wise woman of Tekoah said, "We must needs die," *i.e.*, the moral of her story is, Make haste; and the moral of my story to you is *make haste*, for you may soon die, you know not how soon, and you must meet God. "Yet," she says, "doth he (God) devise means that his banished be not expelled from him." I have told you God's means. I know they find no acceptance in the eyes of man. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block and unto the Greeks foolishness," but the Cross of Christ is God's only way of salvation. Christ maintains the character of the Throne of God in righteousness, while He

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

manifests the character of the heart of God in its deep, deep love. Can you, my friend, agree with a lunatic who once thus exquisitely expressed it?

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

Blessed man! whatever else he did not know, he knew the love of God which “ passeth knowledge.”

Now there comes the contrast between the narrative and the gospel, between the King's message and God's message. The King's character breaks down; love reigns at the expense of righteousness; God's love reigns through righteousness. The King's message is “ Go, bring the young man back,” but “ let him not see my face.” What is God's message to you? “ Bring him, bring her to *Me*.” “ Christ suffered to *bring us* TO God.” Luke xv, says that while the returning prodigal was “ yet a great way off, the father saw him and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him.”

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

## THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

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

Oh! will you not turn to this One; the One in whom both love and righteousness are combined? Will you not receive Christ at once? With Him everything is yours. May you receive His grace, and taste the joy of it, and be a witness and confessor of how good is God, how perfect His way, and may you walk accordingly till the day when He shall take you up to Himself. But oh! my unsaved friend, do not you miss the day of His grace, the day of His love now, and be left to face the day of His terrible judgment.

W. T. P. W.

## FOUR THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

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“*There be four things which are little upon the earth, but they are exceeding wise: The Ants are a people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer; the Conies are but a feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks; the Locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them in bands; the Spider taketh hold with her hands, and is in kings’ palaces.*”—Prov. xxx. 24-28.

*Scoffer!* Which art thou living for—*time or eternity?*

For time, of course, what is eternity to me? Judgment, hell, and the lake of fire may do all very well for religious enthusiasts and canting hypocrites, but I don’t believe in that kind of thing, and as to the future, I’ll leave that to dreamers like yourself, and take my chance the same as other people.

Thou fool! Thou hast not even the wisdom of *the ant*, which, little though it be, practically acknowledges its own weakness, and views the future in the light of the *present moment*. Hence, believing that the winter would be *too late*, she has the good sense “to prepare her meat in the summer,” and (if thou hast only ears to hear) would teach thee the *infinite value* of the little word “*now*.” *Wilt thou be put to shame by an insect?*

*Worldling!* Which art thou living for—*time or eternity?*

What have I to do with your questions?

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

Don't bother me! Religion I hate, God I despise! The world was made for man's comfort and enjoyment, and if you moralists don't think so, I can't help that! At least, I intend to have my fling of it, so you can go your way, and I'll go mine, and I dare say I shall be as much saved as you after all.

Thou fool! Thou forgettest that thou hast a soul to be saved, and that one day thou shalt meet Him face to face "who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Alas! thou hast not even the wisdom of *the coney*, which, knowing its own feebleness, and *the infinite value of a place of safety*, sees the coming danger, and "builds her house in the rock." Safely sheltered there, and thoroughly secure from every foe, she would fain teach thee a lesson for eternity. Thou art only building for time—thy life is but a vapour after all, which "appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away." Thy building may be very fair and outwardly beautiful, but it is built upon the sand. Sooner or later it must come down, and great shall be thy fall; and amidst those floods of coming judgment, which ere long shall carry thee away, a still small voice will be heard above the terrible desolation of that awful moment, "You would not come unto me that you might have life." (John v. 40.)

*Sinner!* Which art thou living for—*time or eternity?*

Well, if you must have an answer, my motto is, "Every man for himself, and God for us all."

## FOUR THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING

But I don't see that I am any worse than other people who are for ever talking about religion! You Christians seem to me to make a great deal of unnecessary fuss about sin—in fact you talk of nothing else!

Thou fool! Alas! it is but too true that thou art living for thyself. God is nothing to thee, for He “is not in all thy thoughts”—and as to sin, thou lovest it far too well to give it up!

Thou fool! Thou hast not even the wisdom of *the locusts*, which, though, having no King, yet know *the infinite value of union*, and “go forth all of them by bands.” Thou art indeed united, but 'tis only to thy lusts and pleasures, and the only authority thou ownest is that of thine own self-will. But what is the portion of the very feeblest believer in Jesus? United by the Holy Ghost to a risen Christ at God's right hand, and through sovereign grace made “a member of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,” his sins are all forgiven, his iniquities blotted out through the blood of the Lamb; and, in company with each fellow-believer, he goes forth (in the absence of the earth-rejected King) as part of that glorious ransomed host which shall in “a little while” meet the Lord from heaven, and see the “King in his beauty.” That day, which to all such will be but the beginning of eternal glory, shall find thee still in thy sins, with judgment swift and terrible as thy sure and inevitable portion!

*Professor!* Which art thou living for—  
*time or eternity?*

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

I scarcely know, for both I expect, for I don't see why a man should not make the best of both worlds. Still I am a firm believer in religion, and think a certain amount is necessary in going through the world, and so I make it my business to be as regular an attendant at church as most people. What more do you want ?

Thou fool ! nay more, thou hypocrite ! for, lacking the wisdom of *the spider*, thou art only clinging to a hollow and barefaced profession, while she "*layeth hold with her hands.*" Thou dost indeed "outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within art full of hypocrisy and iniquity." And "what is thy hope, though thou hast gained, when God taketh away thy soul ?" "Can the rush grow up without mire ? can the flag grow without water ? Whilst it is yet in its greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God, and the hypocrite's hope shall perish."

Despise not then the lesson which the little spider would teach thee—"she layeth hold with her hands, and is in king's palaces." This is just like faith ! Faith knows the *infinite value of clinging simply to Jesus*. Faith lays hold of Christ, and has eternal life. Faith looks from the empty tomb of Jesus, up to the throne on which He sits, and knows its eternal portion is "in The King's palace." But alas ! when the feeblest believer in Christ Jesus has thus by faith "laid hold on eternal life," and

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

is safely housed in those "many mansions," where sin and death can never enter, thou, professor, wilt find thyself outside, and that, without Christ, hopeless, helpless, and not only eternally lost, but in the awful depths of a never-ending hell!

*Fellow-believer!* poor, weak, and worthless as thou truly art in thyself, yet how strong art thou in Jesus! Thou hast surely learnt, though perhaps but in a feeble measure, the *infinite value of the present moment*, which the scoffer despises; the *infinite value of a place of safety*, which the worldling laughs at; the *infinite value of union with Christ*, and all that are His, which the sinner makes nothing of; and the *infinite value of clinging only to Jesus* and His finished work, which to the professor is merely a dream of the imagination. But let me ask thee, which art thou living for—*time or eternity?* Thine own heart must give the answer; as in the rays of that heavenly glory which shine forth in the face of that living Saviour, Christ the Lord! But if all around thee be so unreal, and others are living only for time, let it be thy sweet and holy privilege to bask so fully in the sunshine of His love "who died for thee and rose again," that He may truly be the one and only object of thine heart, and let thy sole desire from henceforth be—"to me to live is Christ!"

But I have a message for thee, oh *Scoffer!* It is not yet too late for thee to be saved. Though hitherto thou hast despised the Christ

#### FOUR THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING.

of God, He still lingers over thee in deepest grace, and is even now offering thee eternal life. Delay then no longer—for to-morrow may be too late. Despise not the riches of His goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, but may the goodness of God lead thee even *now* to repentance.

*Worldling!* Thou canst not have the world and Jesus too! But God's word declares that His love to thee is so great that "he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Wilt thou not flee then at once to those arms of redeeming love, and learn the heart of God in that precious, life-giving stream which flowed from the open side of Jesus?

*Sinner!* Thou art still without Christ, and He says "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." God now bids thee look to Jesus and be saved. Thou hast nothing to do, but to believe the record of His own word "Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things." Which wilt thou choose—thy sins or Christ?

*Professor!* My parting word is for thee! There will be no secrets at the great white throne! All will be real then—"for God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil." Be honest then now! Cast away thy garment of false profession, and come, just as thou art, to Jesus. He is thy truest friend!

WEAK BUT WISE.

He will save thee this very moment! Only trust Him! It is Jesus, the Son of God, who bids thee come, and His own words are "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."  
S. T.

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WEAK BUT WISE.

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"There be four things which are little upon earth, but they are exceeding wise (margin, "made wise"). Proverbs, xxx, 24"

I.

The Ants which we tread 'neath our feet are  
but small,  
Yet they store up their food ere the winter's  
wants call;  
Oh soul! in thy sunshine, seek Christ and take  
heed,  
To win Heaven's bread in the hour of *thy need*;  
That meat is as free as the manna of yore,  
Only *take* what he offers, and hunger no more.

II.

The Conies are weak folk, and yet they are  
wise,  
The rock-shelter'd strongholds are what they  
most prize.  
Oh soul! from their wisdom a deep lesson learn,  
To The Great Rock of Ages, as sure refuge turn;

WEAK BUT WISE.

To the shade of its cleft in temptation's blasts  
fly,  
Thy GOD calls in love,—Sinner, “Why wilt  
thou die ?”

III.

The Locusts are frail things—no king to  
command,  
Yet they go forth in strength—they unite in  
one band ;\*  
Oh soul ! while *thy Head* is still absent, be firm,  
In the ranks of those servants who watch His  
return ;  
Don helm, sword, and breastplate, and stand at  
thy post,  
Ever ready to go with the Lord's waiting host.

IV.

The Spider lays hold with her web's little woof,  
In the palace of Kings, and abides in the roof ;  
Oh soul ! *thou art feeble*, yet seek to ensure,  
A home in those mansions which aye shall  
endure ;  
To the blood-sprinkled beams of the Cross of  
thy King,  
Let the tendrils of faith in sweet confidence  
cling !

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\* Marginal reading “gathered together.”

## THE WORD OF GOD.

### V.

There be four things most weakly, yet fore-  
thought's bestow'd,  
By the ONE from whose wisdom their fragile  
life flow'd ;  
Oh soul! in man's nostrils GOD placed His  
own breath,  
Would'st thou lose that great gift in the lake  
of sin's death ?  
Oh soul! thou wast born of eternity's seed,  
Would'st thou give endless life to the arch-  
serpent's greed ?

K. B. K.

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## THE WORD OF GOD.

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Two Christian friends were speaking of their Saviour, of His love, of the peace which passeth all understanding, and of the comfort given by His Word, in the presence of an unconverted person ; one whom the world looks upon as an upright, intelligent man.

Presently one of them left the room, and he remarked to the other, " I cannot understand you, you talk of the Bible as if it were true, and call it the Word of God ; now, I have read it again and again, but it only seems a mass of contradictions to me."

" I can quite believe that," was the reply, " but do you know what you are doing in making that statement ?"

## SYCHAR'S WELL.

“ I was speaking the truth.”

“ You were doing more than that, you were *proving the truth of the Bible itself*, which says, ‘ The *natural* man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, **FOR THEY ARE FOOLISHNESS UNTO HIM ;**’ and you have yet to learn the truth of those solemn words, ‘ Ye must be **BORN AGAIN** ’ before you can expect to understand the Word of God.”

T. T. O.

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### SYCHAR'S WELL ; OR, THE CAPTIVE SET FREE.

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WHEN the Lord Jesus commenced His public ministry in this world, He went into the synagogue of Nazareth where He had been brought up, and read out of the book of the prophet **Isaiah** these words, “ The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor : he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book.” Luke iv. 18, 19.

A short time after this, He was going from Judea into Galilee, and His road led through Samaria. And He knew that a little off the way, in a certain city called Sychar, there was

## SYCHAR'S WELL; OR

a poor woman, a captive of Satan, whom he by his wiles had caught, and bound, and she was groaning beneath his heavy chains.

The Lord also knew that she would come to Jacob's well at a certain hour to draw water, not the time that women usually did this. They mostly did it in the cool of the morning or the evening: but she came in the middle of the day, in the heat of the sun, when others were keeping themselves in the shade. This was because she was feeling her unhappy position, and did not wish that her neighbours even should hear her groans or see her tears; therefore she would perform this laborious task at this unpleasant hour, rather than be even in their presence.

The Lord Jesus knew all this. He had heard her sighs and seen her grief, and He knew also that the great object for which He came into the world was "to bind up the broken-hearted," and to set such poor captives free. Therefore being weary with His journey He sat on the well; and it was so ordered that His disciples were gone into the city to buy meat so that He might speak to her alone.

It was not long before she made her appearance with her water-pot on her shoulder. I can almost think I see her as she came, with a weary heavy step, her eyes looking on the ground, and feeling afraid to come near, because some one was there. But the Lord Jesus soon made her feel at home in His presence, by asking of her a drink of water. He

## THE CAPTIVE SET FREE.

knew that the surest way to gain her confidence, and remove her fears, was to ask of her a favour.

How beautiful and lovely was this? It was just like Himself. And could there be a more lovely sight than this ever witnessed, either in heaven or on earth? The Lord of glory making Himself a debtor to a poor woman for a drink of water, so that He might tell out to her, words of eternal life.

In the beginning He spoke this world into existence (John i. 3), and at that very time He was upholding all things by the word of His power (Heb. i. 3), yet seeking in the tenderest way possible to bring this poor wanderer back to God.

But she does not enter into what He is doing. Therefore she is surprised at His asking drink of her, for as yet she can only see Him to be a Jew, though such an one as she had never seen before, so kind and so gentle, and she wonders at His lowliness, and asks Him how it is He can so act, she being a woman of Samaria, a people the Jews so despised.

Then the Lord Jesus said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The Lord knew that beneath that careworn brow, there was a soul, longing for deliverance and blessing, and that if she only knew where it was to be obtained, she would apply for it at once. Therefore He said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee,

## SYCHAR'S WELL; OR

give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him."

But as yet she does not, and therefore cannot see beyond the water of the well, and thinks it is impossible for Him to get at it. And she said, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep, from whence then hast thou that living water?" and she asked Him if He was greater than their father Jacob, who gave them the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle.

Then the Lord Jesus said to her, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again. But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life."

This is true to-day; and how blessed is the portion of those who drink of this life-giving stream, because all the wells of earth will soon be dried up, and gone for ever, and not only so, but they who drink of them are continually thirsting again. They leave an aching void. But those who drink of the water which Christ giveth, will never thirst. It satisfies the soul now, and it will do so for evermore. John vi. 35.

This is what that poor woman of Samaria was longing for; though as yet she does not know what He means. But little by little the light breaks in upon her soul, and she does not doubt His word, but believes what He tells her, though she does not understand, and in her

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simplicity, she asked Him to give her this water that she might never thirst, neither come thither to draw.

Thus the Lord Jesus led her on, quietly, and patiently, step by step, to the knowledge of Himself. But He knew there was a very great barrier standing in the way of blessing, and it must be removed. It was a very tender point, but it must be touched, in order that it might be put away. She was in a wrong position; and God cannot have fellowship with iniquity, and though she was aware of this, yet the chains by which she was bound were too strong for her, so that she could not deliver herself. Therefore the Lord Jesus said, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither."

Then the whole truth came out, and she finds herself in the presence of One who knows her thoroughly, and is able to lay open her whole life before her. She then gets a little uneasy, for she sees that He cannot be any ordinary person that she is speaking with, and thinks He must be a prophet, and she begins to ask Him about worship.

This is no uncommon thing to-day. Souls burdened with sin, and not seeing the way of escape, often think they will get deliverance and blessing through worship: hence they become very zealous, and try this, and try that, they go here and go there, but it is all no good, they do not get what they want; still they go on, labouring and toiling till they come to the end of themselves, by seeing that they can do

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nothing, but are lost and undone, and then they find their all present and eternal in Christ, by believing in His name. John xx. 31.

And no doubt she had been trying again, and again, as far as she could, but it was all to no purpose, as the Lord shewed her by telling her that "God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

No one can do this while they are in their sins, and therefore unsaved. What they need is the Spirit of God dwelling in them, which all who believe receive. But while they are away from Christ, and sin unforgiven, they cannot worship God.

She seems to have understood a little of this; and owned that there was something she wanted, which was quite out of her reach. She could not tell what it was, but her hope was in One that was coming, and she said, "I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when *he is come, he will tell us all things.*"

She did not say, We know, in a vague careless way. To her it was a real, personal thing, and therefore she said, "I KNOW THAT MESSIAS COMETH." There was One coming in whom her hopes were centred, and when He was come, all would be well, for He would make everything clear and plain, and thereby meet every desire she had.

Upon her saying this, the Lord Jesus said to her, "*I that speak unto thee am he.*"

This was enough! She had no other question

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to ask, but she believed His word, and her soul was saved in a moment. The One was before her for whom she had been looking; and her chains were snapped in an instant. The bands of sin were broken, and the poor captive was set free. Clean delivered out of the hands of Satan for ever. This was what she wanted, she drank of that living water, and her thirst was quenched, her soul was satisfied, and she passed from death unto life by simply believing; according to the Lord's own word, "Verily, verily, I say unto you he that believeth on me hath everlasting life." John vi. 47.

And having got deliverance herself, she longed that others might have it also, and she ran into the city and said to the men, "Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Then they went out of the city, and came unto Him.

This is how it always is, more or less, with every new-born soul. Having received blessing themselves, their one desire is that others might have it also. This is how it was with her. She was a new creature in Christ Jesus, and so great was her joy that she lost sight of everything beside. She forgot her water-pot, and her past circumstances too; bad as they had been. The past was over and gone, and everything was new to her, and the whole desire of her soul was that her neighbours might know this same precious Saviour, and enjoy the same deliverance with herself. And she had what she wanted, for in the warmth of her love she

## SYCHAR'S WELL; OR,

told it out, and her words were with power. In the meantime His disciples prayed Him saying, "Master, eat?" But He said unto them, "I have meat to eat, that ye know not of." He had the delight of knowing that this poor woman was saved, not only from the wrath to come, but also from a life of sin down here. This gave Him a joy which nothing else could give.

He had held out to her that living water, and she had drunk, and her soul was satisfied. This was more to Him than all besides. His meat and His drink was thus to do the will of Him that sent Him, and to finish His work. This He had been doing by opening the prison to this poor bound one, and binding up her broken heart. This gave real refreshment and joy to His own soul, it was more than His necessary food. The disciples saw this, and said one to another, "Hath any man brought him ought to eat." They could not enter into what He was doing. Though He was surrounded by them, yet in His labours for God, He was quite alone, as no one understood Him. But with joy and delight, He could point them to what was going on, and add, "Say not ye there are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest: and he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal, that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth may rejoice together." And this poor woman was gone to

## THE CAPTIVE SET FREE.

try and gather some sheaves, and she went in the constraining power of love. And therefore she truly succeeded.

And not only so, but the Lord Jesus saw in her a sample of that glorious harvest which is coming; when he that reapeth will receive his wages, and the sower and the reaper will indeed rejoice together for evermore. That is the day of ingathering when the Lord Jesus will come into the clouds, to call His loved ones up to meet Him in the air, to spend an eternity with Himself, in the unsullied light of His Father's presence—washed from their sins in His own blood.

And this poor woman of Samaria will be there, one of the happiest of that happy throng. She will not only have the joy of her own blessed portion in Christ, but she will also have the unspeakable delight of knowing that she had been the means of bringing others to Him; and there they will be as her joy and crown of rejoicing, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.

And how it must have added to her happiness at the time too, in seeing others saved, and made partakers of the same joy and blessing with herself. For we read that the "Samaritans went unto him, and besought him to tarry with them. And he abode there two days, and many more believed because of his own word: and said to the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and *know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.*"

## SYCHAR'S WELL,

How very simple and beautiful was the faith given to these poor Samaritans, though the Lord Jesus did no miracle before them : neither was there anything outwardly that they could see : only the testimony of this delivered soul. They saw she was a new creature : and this gave power to her words ; and like her they saw in Him the One that was to come, the One who was led as a Lamb to slaughter, the Saviour of the world.

And when the Lord Jesus had passed through death and resurrection, then Philip went down to Samaria, and preached Christ glorified, and the blessing was very abundant (Acts vii.), thus carrying on the work which the Lord Jesus began when he was down here.

And what a glorious company from Samaria will awake and leave their graves to meet Him in the air when that happy morning comes ; the morning of the glorious resurrection, when all who receive Him now, during His absence, will be with Him, and like Him for ever. These vile bodies He will change, and fashion them like unto His glorious body. Thus we shall spend an eternity with Him, " who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father : to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

H. T.

## SOUGHT AND FOUND.

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MINNIE GRAY'S cup of earthly happiness was filled to the brim, when first the Lord spoke to her soul. Possessed of much that the world values highly, it smiled its sunniest smiles upon her, and she knew not that its favour was deceitful, and its smiles bestowed rather upon what she possessed than upon what she herself was. It all looked bright and fair to her, and she knew of nothing beyond to eclipse its brightness.

Minnie had been left an orphan at too early an age to know how great had been her loss; and the aged relative under whose care she had grown up, had but one object in life, the happiness of her charge; and this she thought to secure by giving her her own way in every thing.

It was early in the summer of 186— that, accompanied by several young friends, Minnie went one evening to a quiet looking building, half chapel, half meeting-room in shape. The whole party went at Minnie's suggestion, out of curiosity, wondering what could attract so many people to spend a bright summer's evening in, what seemed to them, so gloomy a way.

"We will just go in for a quarter of an hour and find out what the magnet is," said Minnie,

## SOUGHT AND FOUND.

“ we can sit close to the door and easily slip quietly out again ; ” and, as usual, what Minnie Gray proposed was seconded by her friends, and they entered.

Her plan, however, of sitting close to the door and slipping quietly out, was defeated ; the building was already well filled, and though the strangers were shown seats, yet they were necessarily separated, and Minnie found herself away from all her friends, and directly in front of the preacher’s desk. -

For a moment she was disposed to be amused at the novel circumstances into which she had drawn her companions, as she pictured to herself their dismay at being compelled to spend an entire evening in this manner. But soon her whole attention was fixed. First the manner, the deep toned earnestness, then the words of the preacher arrested her, and as he reasoned of “ righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come,” Minnie, like one of old, trembled. She had heard of prayers and alms ; she had never heard of righteousness and judgment after this fashion. The eye of the preacher seemed fixed on her, and she sat spell-bound. Everything else was for the moment forgotten, save the thought that this was truth, and how could she escape this terrible judgment, so near, so imminent. The fact forced itself on her soul that there was a hereafter, about which she had never yet thought, a God whose claims she had never yet recognised.

She knew nothing beyond earth and its

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delights, and suddenly eternity was unfolded before her soul's gaze.

The preacher warned the young, the gay, the careless, and such she felt she was. The terrors of the Lord made her afraid and long to flee from them. She almost asked aloud, "Preacher, is there no escape from this fearful judgment, this awful hell?" But even as the thought filled her mind, the preacher turned from God's strange work of judgment; to speak of the love of His heart; of the way of escape He himself has devised and provided, through the blood of His own Son—of Christ the open door, the way in, for the vilest, to the Father's House, the only way in for any who would enter there,—the only way to escape from the wrath to come. The preacher grew more and more enamoured of his subject, it seemed beyond measure sweet to him to speak of the attractiveness of Christ; to dwell on His altogether loveliness, to hold Him up that other eyes and other hearts might gaze on Him too, and be attracted to worship and to follow Him.

But Minnie saw no beauty in Him that she should desire Him. The 11th of Matthew had been the speaker's theme, and he closed with the touching invitation from the lips of the Saviour Himself, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But Minnie felt no weariness, no need of rest; the world had been only a fair bright scene to her, yet the words rang in her ears, as words she had heard before

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and would hear again, though they had no sweet sound for her.\*

She wanted to be sheltered from judgment, but she did not want Christ. To her Heaven seemed a dreary place to which she only cared to go in order to escape the horrors of hell, when at some time, she must die and leave the world, and that time, she hoped was far distant. To be a Christian after the preacher's fashion seemed to her such a gloomy thing; was there no resource, no middle ground between this and the fearful eternity he had pictured, and which something told her was a true picture?

Satan whispered to her that there was "Time enough; that the preacher was an enthusiast; and, that there was no need to be in such a hurry, or to be distressed and anxious." She welcomed the suggestion, and, her conscience being lulled for a moment, she turned with quick eager glance to scan the faces around her, to see if she saw in them the reflex of her own terrors, or the preacher's anxiety. In one or two of all the number could she discover any traces of either. By their books, by their very air she fancied that most were, as she expressed it "regular attendants there;" but though some were attentive, others showed signs of weariness; some were restless, some pulled out their watches and seemed impatient; little knowing they were watched by a soul

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\* Long after, she was told they had been her dying mother's last words, when she as a little child had been taken to her bedside to kiss her for the last time.

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who was measuring the truth of God by their actions.

“ Oh,” she thought, “ my case is not so desperate, it is clear others do not think all he is saying is true, or they would be as earnest as he; he is *evidently* an enthusiast, led away by the subject, there *is* time enough, I need not decide yet, I will think about it. If they all seemed as concerned, I should feel as though it were now or never.”

Still the words “ Come unto me,” “ Depart from me,” rang in her ears, and made her bright face unusually clouded, as she left the building, and her friends rallied her on her silence, till one more observant than the rest said “ Surely Minnie you are not thinking there was any truth in that man’s words.” Minnie coloured, but made answer “ Suppose, after all they are true, it is solemn for us.” There was a general exclamation, and the one who had spoken before said, with a laugh “ Fancy Minnie Gray numbered with the Methodists, what will H. say.” Satan had been on the watch to catch away the word out of her heart lest she should “ believe and be saved,” and he knew well the right shaft to use to displace the arrow of conviction that had begun to rankle there. Minnie did not answer her friend’s last remark, she too began to wonder, what would H. say, for in less than three months she was to be his wife.

For a moment, in her anxiety about the future, earth had been distanced, but now its

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hopes and joys began to crowd in again on her heart, with the thought of the one in whom they were centred, and the words that had so impressed her grew less powerful. In the stillness of the night, and alone she could not quite so easily get rid of them, but again the devil whispered "There is time enough. You are so young, do not decide now, you would have to give up so much, it *might* have to be H. for Christ;" and she listened to what he suggested to her; resolutely she put aside the words she had heard, refused the call of Him who would have drawn her by cords of love to Himself, and chose earth as her portion; her heart was too full to make room for Christ.

But He would not give her up; she refused His *call*, He stretched forth His hand, and took from her the one who had come between her soul and Himself. Scarcely two months from the night when she deliberately stifled the voice of conscience, made her choice and turned her back on Christ, and just when every thing looked brightest and fairest, in a moment all was changed. A telegraphic message with its terrible brevity was her only preparation for the sorrow that changed her whole life, and she sat stunned and bewildered. She had never dreamed of death coming to him. It was sorrow too deep for earthly comfort; and she knew not the One who alone could heal the deep wound.

An aged Christian who had known her mother in her youth, was passing through the

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town and went to see her, trusting that in her hour of distress her heart might be opened to hear of Him who is the sorrow-bearer as well as the sin-bearer. But she had wrapped herself in her grief, and refused all attempts at consolation. Not knowing what had passed between her soul and God two months before, her aged friend quoted once more to her the words "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and spoke to her of the love of Him who had uttered those words; but she listened with a shudder; she could see no love in the stroke that had made her life desolate; she knew not the heart that was yearning over her in tenderest pity, saying more beseechingly than even his aged servant could, "*Come and I will give you rest.*" She was weary enough now, but she let her very weariness and sorrow shut out Christ, and harden instead of soften. Her mother's friend left her with words of prayer and deep pity, but though his visit seemed to have no effect on her, his words were blessed to the relative with whom she lived, and who soon after went peacefully home to the Lord, leaving her charge to Him in confidence that at some time, and in some way He would bring her to Himself.

A year or two passed on, the world did its utmost to draw her back again into its charmed circle; she was still courted and caressed by it, but she was weary and restless. Then the fatal disease, consumption, that had taken from

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her both father and mother, began to manifest itself in her too. Others saw its symptoms plainly enough, but she would not believe they were anything more than the effect of long nights of wakefulness, and a cold. She did not care to live, but she feared to die, and entered into everything to shut out thought. Speaking of this some time afterwards she said "I would not *come* to Jesus, so in His love for me He *drove* me to seek the shelter of His arms."

In the autumn of 186-- her health failed considerably, and at the same time she lost almost all that she possessed, and was left with a bare pittance. Now she found out the value of the world's friendship. She could minister no longer to its pleasures ; and she found the very ones who had most flattered and courted her, were the ones who held most aloof from her now in the time of her need. A distant relative offered her a home for the time, and to her she went. Now she began to look back with agony of heart to the night when she had heard the preaching on the 11th of Matthew. She longed again to hear words like those and yet she feared to open her Bible and try to find them for they seemed to condemn her. She could not pray, and there seemed no one to whom she could turn ; she was far from the place where she had heard that servant of God, and she knew neither who he was nor anything concerning him. The weeks rolled by and her strength failed perceptibly ; the proud spirit, too, that had struggled against

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everything seemed broken at last. She felt herself a burden in the house in which she was. Minnie Gray with health and brightness and youth and beauty and money as her possessions, and Minnie Gray the fretful invalid, were two very different people to those who looked on with the world's eye, and when one day her relatives said something about the hospital, she was almost glad to be removed there and rather to accept the care of utter strangers than remain an unwelcome guest.

She had been in — Hospital some weeks when I saw her first; and then was scarcely four-and-twenty, beautiful still, but with an expression of suffering and trouble and care on her face, that made her at times look much older. I had been staying for a time in —, and had often passed the hospital, and as often felt a great desire to go in, but unless to see a patient whom you knew, and then only at regular visiting hours, no visitors were allowed in. It was a gloomy looking building outside, so gloomy that it all the more made me think as I passed, of the sorrow and suffering that must be inside. Often I told the Lord of my wish to get in and asked Him if He pleased, to open the door. I had just given up asking, when one night very late I received a message from a lady whom I knew by name only, begging me to go to this very place for her and see a dying girl, who was very anxious about her soul, as she was too ill to go herself. She sent me the name of the girl, and the

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number of the ward, and also told me that I might go at any hour, for the permission to visit her at any time, so full of sad meaning to loving hearts outside, had been sent out in this case.

When I reached the ward to which I had been directed, early the next morning, I stood for a moment just inside the door, looking round for a nurse to tell me which was the bed of the girl I had come to see, when a voice said to me from the bed close to the door "You have come to see me I know." I was astonished and asked "Is your name Ellen H——?" "No," she said, "it is not, but do not say you have not come to see me for I have been praying all night that God would send some one this morning, and when I saw you, I thought he had sent you to me." I trust that He has," I said, "and I will come back to you shortly, but I have first to find Ellen H. for I have promised to see her at once." "Do not leave me," she murmured, "it will be like every thing else, snatched from my grasp—I hoped God had sent you, and oh I am so weary." "Do you not know the one who said when He was on earth 'Come unto Me all ye that labour and are *heavy laden* and I will give you rest,' and who says the same from Heaven now?" I asked.

I was startled by the effect of my question, she trembled violently, then raised herself quickly up, and looking very eagerly at me, said, in a very excited tone "Now I am certain it is to see me you have come, for I asked God all night long,

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to send some one to me this morning who would speak to me of Jesus, and I thought if He did I should know there is really a God and that He does hear, and I have watched that door since early morning, almost since daylight, though of course I knew no one could come to the wards as early as that, to see if my prayer was answered, and when you came in just now I felt sure you were a Christian, and I found myself actually praying again that if you were the right one, you would quote those very words to me. I have not said a prayer, till last night, for five years. I did not think God would hear *me* but He must have." She was quite exhausted from the effect of speaking so rapidly and from the excitement, and I left her to recover from whatever the remembrance was that was agitating her so, and I turned to find Ellen H——.

Her bed was just at right angles to Minnie Gray's, near enough for every word spoken to the one to be distinctly heard by the other.

Death from the same disease was fast approaching this poor girl, and her mind was wandering, but all her cry was that she was *lost*, too great a sinner to be saved. Jesus would not have her. It was distressing to hear her. It seemed as though she could see something which filled her with terror. "I know I am lost," she kept crying, and then with a fearful shudder "It is awful to go to hell." For some minutes I stood irresolute, it seemed useless to attempt to speak to her, for she ap-

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peared quite unconscious of all that was taking place around, then this word came to me; "The word of God is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

I thought if it can divide between soul and spirit; enter between joints and marrow, what is to hinder its entering even here; so I sat down by the bed, and as clearly and distinctly as I could, though in a low tone, repeated these three verses again and again. "The son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's son, cleanseth us from all sin." Jesus said "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

The woman in the next bed said "It's no use talking to her, she has not been conscious since last night, and they do not expect her to be again, though indeed she has done nothing but rave about these things ever since she came in."

I knew well it must seem useless, but still with the strong conviction that God's words could find an entrance where man's could not, I still repeated them a great many times, how many I do not know. She grew quite composed and quiet, and though she never was conscious again, the look of agony and despair went away from her face, and she kept on murmuring now "to seek and to save, to seek and to save from all sin."

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She died that night so I never saw her again, but the woman in the next bed told me that just before she died she opened her eyes, and said quite clearly, "the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin," and then never spoke again.

When I returned to Minnie Gray's side, I was struck with the changed expression on her face. She did not wait for me to speak, but began eagerly "Those words were all for me that you have been repeating, I was lost and so He came to seek and to save *me*, I am full of sin, but the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin. I have come to Him this morning, and He will not cast *me* out, tell me more about Him. I was so unwilling you should leave me and go to that girl's bed, but perhaps you might not have read those very words to me. Do read me more."

I asked if she had any thing special she would like me to read? "Yes," she said, "read me the chapter where that verse is, 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.' It is the chapter the preacher spoke from that night five years ago, I have never opened a Bible since, for fear I should see the verse again, and now I long to see it." I thought she too must be wandering, as I knew nothing then of what she was referring to, and evidently she guessed my thought, for she said, "You think I do not know what I am saying, but it is not that;" and then she told me of that evening five years before, of

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the solemn preaching and how deeply it had impressed her, how she was "almost persuaded," but deliberately turned away from Christ, and yet how she could never quite get rid of what she heard that night. I read to her the 11th of Matthew, read many times the last verses at her desire. "It is rest to trust Him," she said, "but will He never let me go." We turned to John x, 28 and 29. "I see" she said "it is He who *keeps* fast hold, not we."

"What brought you here to day," she suddenly exclaimed. I told her I had been asked to come. "When?" "Late last night, about 11 o'clock." She thought for a moment, and then said, "That was just the time when I began to ask the Lord to send some one to me to day, who knew Him."

It was only little by little I learned her history. Weeks passed and I had seen her very often before she referred at all to the past, save to the night of the preaching, and what she evidently avoided I did not feel I could touch upon. I saw she was naturally proud and sensitive and very refined, and I waited till she wished to trust me. As she grew worse in bodily health her faith, and her peace too, deepened. It was never exactly *joy*, but deep, deep peace and rest, with ever, such a sense of the grace that had met her. The expression of care and trouble left her face and she looked even younger than her 24 years, almost childlike at

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times save for an expression in her eyes, that seemed to tell of calm *beyond* the storm.

Bit by bit, now a little and then a little, she told me all her past history, a few of the details of which I have given, though she never referred to it save to magnify the grace of Him who had sought her *until* He found her, who had, as she said, never let her alone until He "drove" her to rest in Himself. "He might have said to me" she once added, "that because He had called me and I had refused, had stretched out His hand and I had not regarded, that, He would laugh at my calamity, and mock when my fear came. I only deserved that, but instead, He received me, just as I was, in all my wretchedness, when I had nothing to bring Him but a wasted life, almost run out. *He* received me, when nobody else cared to. What a friend Jesus is. This ward has been like the Gate of Heaven to me. I would not change it now for my old home, and my old health and my old prospects, to be again a Christ rejector. If I could only go back five years and give Him my best. I only would like that, because I love Him. I know He wants nothing at my hands and I delight to owe every thing to Him. I think no one in Heaven will owe Him quite as much, not even the thief on the cross.

' 'Twas the same grace that spread the feast  
That sweetly *forced* me in,  
Else I had still refused to taste  
And perished in my sin,' "

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Next to her Bible there was no book she so delighted in as 'Meditations on the Song of Solomon,' she used to say it always brought Jesus Himself nearer to her, and that it reminded her of 'that evening's preaching.' I had lent it her, and she asked me to let her keep it till the last. I left before the end came, she had so wonderfully rallied, that even some hopes were entertained of her being able to go out again, but the improvement was very temporary. Two sweet letters I had from her, full of Christ, and some touching verses she had written, on our first meeting: then came a pencilled message directed by another hand—a week or two more and Minnie Gray rested with Him who had loved her and washed her from her sins in His own blood, who would not give her up till He had her by His side for ever.

"Do," she often said, "tell all those you meet who are *almost* persuaded, but who fear quite to decide for Christ, because they think, as I did, it is a gloomy thing to be a Christian, and they would have to give up so much, tell them they lose everything and gain nothing by their indecision. Tell them to belong to Jesus is the brightest thing even for this life, tell them how I drank at every cistern of this world, and always thirsted again, but at last I drank of the water that Jesus gives, and have never thirsted more, and never shall for all eternity."

## DIED SUDDENLY—AND IN HELL!

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### TO THE UNCONVERTED.

Dear Reader, I have been much saddened lately by the sudden and unexpected deaths of two or three young men among my acquaintance. Scarce a day passes but the sad announcement meets my eye in the daily paper, "At ——, died suddenly," &c., and I cannot forbear writing these few lines to you, who are young, and do not expect to die suddenly; you, who like myself, before I was converted, look forward to a tolerably long life; you, who think you have plenty of time to prepare to meet God, and are quite determined not to be lost, but *before you die* to "believe in Jesus," whatever that may mean.

But you are young and healthy, life is bright and attractive, and you have plenty of time. It is well and natural, you say, that those who are sickly and delicate should be religious, and anxious about where they are to spend eternity. *They* really have not much time to lose; and sometimes you wonder at their folly, when you see one on a sick bed, apparently soon to quit this scene; you are amazed at the interest she can take in the fashions and frivolities of this fleeting world while so rapidly hastening to another. My friend, beware! *She* may outlive *you*. It

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may be *you* whom God intends to call suddenly, without giving you time to repent of those sins you know you have committed, without your having time to put in force that phrase, which to you is like a charm “believing in Jesus.”

Well do I remember my firm determination that *before I died*, I would “believe in Jesus” and so be saved, even at the eleventh hour. Alas! how many a soul has been lost with the same good intention. You cannot come to Jesus when you *will*, come while you *may*. You think a long life lies before you with all its varied and attractive scenes, it *may* and it may *not*. It may be *you*, young, strong and healthy as you are, who may have to stand before God with no other covering than your own righteousness, your own “filthy rags”—*you*, instead of that one seemingly so near death—*you* who will stand “speechless” before God, not having on the wedding garment, which He has provided for you free of cost, “without money and without price.”

What then will be your fate?

Died suddenly—“and in hell!”

How long will you remain there?

Let the Word of God answer you—“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up *for ever and ever*.”

How long do you say? “For ever and ever.”

Oh! dear soul, if unsaved, “*flee* from the wrath to come,” and *flee now*, do not wait another day. God *promises* to save you to-

## DIED SUDDENLY—AND IN HELL!

day—to-morrow may be too late. “*Now* is the accepted time.”

Take advantage of the love and grace of God, who is waiting to receive you, and who in His mercy has drawn aside the veil which conceals the future from our gaze, and in the narrative of Lazarus and the rich man, has shown us the end of the soul, that dies, *suddenly*, unconverted.

Man puts in his paper, “Died suddenly”—God, in His book, adds a warning note for all unconverted souls—“and *in hell*,” nay, more than that—“and in hell, he lift up his eyes, *being in torments*.”

Reader, unsaved reader, be warned in time, turn *now*, lest that day come to you suddenly and unexpectedly, when you will open your eyes in hell, and spend eternity cursing your own folly. “Because I have called—and ye *refused*. I have stretched out my hand—and *no man* regarded, but ye have set at nought all my counsel,—and would none of my reproof, *I also* will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh.”

Reader, these are the words of the *living God*. Have you read the Apostle’s account of his sermon before King Agrippa? He spoke faithfully, he urged on his hearers the fact, that Jesus was the Christ; that He had died and risen from the dead, that through faith in Him they might receive the forgiveness of their sins, and, showing how all the Old Testament prophets had foretold that Christ should

## DIED SUDDENLY—AND IN HELL!

suffer, and should rise from the dead, he turns to King Agrippa, who knew the Scriptures well (almost as well as *you* do, dear Reader) and said, “King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I *know* that thou believest.”

And did Agrippa believe? He answered, as alas! too many young people do, when pressed to decide for Christ “*Almost* thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” *Almost* a Christian is *entirely* lost! There is no middle ground. Either you are “a new creature” in Christ Jesus, or you are “dead in trespasses and sins,” lying under the judgment of God. “He that hath the Son, hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life” (1 John v. 12); and the same Apostle says elsewhere, “the *wrath of God* abideth on him” (John iii. 36.)

Do you know what that last little sentence means? To *abide*, means to dwell, to remain, to continue, the wrath of God *never leaves* the soul, on whom it is abiding at the moment in which he passes from time into eternity. When one year has passed (as we speak) for there are no years in eternity, when one year has passed, and he has experienced what it is to have “the wrath of God *abiding* on him,” another begins, and another, and another, and so on *for ever*, there is no end to it; and while the mind almost refuses to grasp the thought of an *endless* eternity, the *soul* of the lost one has to endure it.

Think of this, I beseech you, before you run the risk of its being *your* lot.

## DIED SUDDENLY—AND IN HELL!

Let me tell you one case of sudden death, in which, as far as man could tell, there was no hope that the soul had passed away except to enter upon an eternity of woe. God forbid that it should be *your* lot. But put this question to your own heart, "If God took me away *this night*, whither should I go? To heaven or to hell?" One place or the other is the *eternal* home of *every soul* on this earth.

A young man left his home in the morning, accompanying his father to their place of business in a neighbouring town. The father is elderly and might well be thinking of death, and that which follows death, the judgment.

The son is young and has life before him to find peace with God. Returning late in the evening to their country home, the father stops to speak to a friend; the son pursues his way along the road, but never reaches the house. After some hours search, he is found, and his body is carried back to the home he left so strong and well in the morning. In the dusk he had stepped off the pathway, and, forgetful of a piece of water which bordered the road, but which he knew well, he had missed his footing, and fallen in.

There was no one to help and he was drowned. In the paper, next morning, appears the sad notice, "Died suddenly," A. B. son of So-and-so; and then follows his father's name, &c. That is all man knows. God supplies the end of every poor unconverted soul who dies suddenly,—"**AND IN HELL.**"

## DIED SUDDENLY—AND IN HELL!

Oh reader, be persuaded, take Jesus for your Saviour, and take Him *now*. “As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them *that believe on His name*.” God says, and His word can not pass away, that *as many as received Him* to them gave He power to become the sons of God. Have you received Christ into your heart? If not, you have neither part nor lot with the children of God, for “we are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”

No ordinances, not Baptism, nor the Lord's Supper will make you a child of God, but living faith in the Person of the Son of God, and receiving into your heart the One, who even now stands in lowly grace, and says to all —“Behold I stand at the door and knock.” Will you let Him in? Yield up your heart to Him? Be His, and His alone, and sharing His rejection now, share His throne in the day of glory.

I could multiply instances of sudden death, but to what purpose?

A hearse passes with the white hat-bands and white plumes which tell that it is the funeral of one young in years. “Ah yes,” you say, “how sad.” In the midst of life we are in death! It may be you or I to-morrow.

But, dear friend, you have no thought of its being *you*. The “you or I” means me not *you* does it not? You could not go away with that light step, after the hearse has passed on, did you really believe there was a chance of your

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standing within four-and-twenty hours in the presence of the great God “in whose sight the heavens are not clean” and “His angels He chargeth with folly.”

Oh! come to Jesus, and come *now*. Remember that solemn word addressed to all those who fully intend to be Christians “some day,” but who put it off till they have time to think about it, “How shall we escape if we neglect so *great salvation*, which at the first began to be spoken *by the Lord*.” Jesus Himself preached the Gospel whilst on earth, saying with sorrow at the same time, “Ye will not come *unto Me*, that ye might have life.” Perhaps you would have come, could you but have seen Him, and heard His gracious voice saying “Come unto me;” but oh, listen to the words now, as He speaks from heaven, “Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life *freely*.”

“There is life in a look at the Crucified One,  
There is life, at this moment, for *thee*.”

One word, before I close, of what sudden death is, to those who belong to Christ, those who have been born again, and are truly the children of God.

We read in the Scriptures of a man who was called on to die suddenly. No time for preparation, not even that ghastly eight or ten days to make his peace with God which, in this country, is allowed to the lowest criminal. He had been brought before his judges, he had made his defence, but all in vain. For the

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man who stood up boldly for the crucified Jesus of Nazareth, and charged his judges with the murder of the Son of God, there was no mercy, and no pity. "They gnashed on him with their teeth."

They were going to condemn him to death, unprepared. Was he taken by surprise? Was he unaware what his eyes would open upon, when they closed on this scene? No. "But he being full of the Holy Ghost looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and JESUS standing on the right hand of God," and said, "*I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.*" "And they stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying Lord Jesus, receive my spirit. And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he *fell asleep.*"

What a contrast! Of the Sinner, this is it—  
Died suddenly—and in hell!

Of the Saint—he saw the glory of God and *Jesus!*—and fell asleep.

Dear Reader, when you come to die be it suddenly or not, which death will be yours?

Having fallen asleep in Jesus, will you wake to see Him? or having died without Him, will you open your eyes in torments?

"And the smoke of *their torment* ascendeth up for ever and ever."

Only those who know the Lord can picture what it will be to see *Him*—Him who loved

## FAITH—NOT FEELINGS.

them, and died for them, when they did not care about Him, and never wished to know Him. What will it be to see Him and never leave Him again! To go no more out, to dwell in His blissful presence for ever and ever. For now we walk by faith,—but then *by sight*. Then shall we know even as we are known.

No longer through a glass darkly but face to face!

And the Spirit and the Bride say *Come*, and let him that heareth say *Come!* Amen. Even so, *Come* Lord Jesus.

S.W.

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## FAITH—NOT FEELINGS.

“WELL, Sir! I do believe every word you say, in fact, I believe every word in the Bible; but I don't *feel* I'm saved; and I'm not going to say I'm saved until I'm sure I am saved.”

“Neither do I FEEL that I am saved, and I have been saved for nearly five years, and never yet FELT that I was saved; and if you continue to wait until you FEEL saved, you will never be saved at all, for the Word of God never says FEEL SAVED.”

“But, Sir! the Scriptures say, we ‘*must be born again,*’ and surely I must FEEL that great change come over me. You don't mean to say

## FAITH—NOT FEELINGS.

that I could be saved and still continue as I am, miserable, and afraid to meet God?"

"No, I don't mean to say any such thing; for the moment you are saved, there will be change enough; for you will be changed from being a '*child of Satan*' to a '*child of God*' but Satan is deceiving you, by getting you to wait until you FEEL a change, and all the while you are shutting your ears to the Word of God, which brings the change 'for we are saved by grace through *faith*' (Eph. ii. 8); and 'FAITH cometh by HEARING, and hearing by the WORD OF GOD' (Rom. x. 17). You see, if you could *feel* nice and *happy* just now, you would conclude you were saved because you FELT it, and then to-morrow you might not *feel happy*, so you would have to come to the conclusion you were not saved then; thus you would make a *Saviour* of your *feelings*, and one day you would have a Saviour, and another day you would have none. Instead of BELIEVING the testimony which God has given of His Son, and KNOWING that you *have* passed from *death* unto *life* (1 John iii. 14), you are waiting for a change and remaining in misery.

"Now look here, my friend: suppose that your husband is at sea, and you are left with the little ones; that your stock of money runs out, and you have no bread; the children are hungry, and there is nothing to give them; you are sitting over the fire miserable enough at such a state of things, and want a change, but your misery does not bring the change; no

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thought of yours fills the children's hungry stomachs, and puts the glad smile where there are looks of sorrow. No! But you are startled by a loud knock at the door, and you open it, when the postman puts a letter into your hand; you look at it, you know the writing—it's your husband's: you quickly break it open, and there is an order for some money. What effect has it on you? Do you sit down and brood over your misery, and wait for a change, thinking there never was such a poor creature in the world as you are? Never! You put on your things, fly off to the post-office to secure the money, make your calls at the shops, and come back loaded with all you need, to the great joy of the children. What a change! How has it come about? Why, just through the letter; you *read it*, you *believed it*; the change came, your sorrow was gone, your heart was light, even before you got the order cashed—the letter did it all. Why, now, will you not listen to God's letter and be saved? You are a sinner, but God's letter says, 'Jesus Christ came into the world to SAVE SINNERS' (1 Tim. i. 15). And Jesus says Himself, 'He that HEARETH My Word, and BELIEVETH on Him that sent me, HATH everlasting life, and SHALL NOT come into condemnation (*Judgment*), but is passed from *death* unto life' (John v. 24).

“Moreover, the letter says, 'These things have I written unto you that BELIEVE on the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW

## FAITH—NOT FEELINGS.

(not FEEL, but KNOW) that ye HAVE eternal life' (1 John v. 13). You see, you did not FEEL the money, it was in the post-office, and you could not *feel* it; but the letter said it was there, and there for you; you *believed* it, and that made you happy; but you were happy because you KNEW it was yours; the money was not yours because you *felt happy*. Well, you did not FEEL Christ died for your sins, neither did I; but I KNOW He died for my sins; and the same letter which tells me He died for me tells me I am saved. I believe God's blessed letter, and I *feel* very happy because I *know* I am saved."

Reader! are you, like the woman, putting FEELINGS in the place of FAITH?

Perhaps you too say, you believe all the Bible, but can't *feel* you are saved. Oh, don't be occupied any longer with these things; *look away from yourself to Jesus*. God has set Him on the throne in heaven, the proof that the work is finished to the satisfaction of God; and if God is satisfied, why should you not be?

Salvation is "to him that WORKETH NOT, but BELIEVETH" (Rom. iv. 5). "He that BELIEVETH on the Son HATH everlasting life" (John iii. 36). Before you lay down this paper, believe God's letter which He in His love has sent you, declaring what has been done by Jesus Christ for sinners; and the moment you take God at His word, YOU ARE SAVED; it is not FEELINGS, but FAITH. "By grace are ye saved through *faith*" (Eph. ii. 8).

## JIM'S CONVERSION.

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A young man left his home in Scotland to seek for work in England, leaving his wife and child behind, intending to return to them a few weeks later, when work would be more easily obtained. He had a little cold before starting, which increased while travelling, and soon after his return home it was evident to everyone but himself that Consumption had begun its work and sealed him for death.

I first saw him while visiting his wife, who had been ill, and spoke seriously to him about the state of his health, but could not persuade him that it might prove more than a cold, or that there was any occasion for alarm. As time passed and brought no improvement he began to acknowledge that he was really ill, but nothing could convince him that his life was in danger. When I spoke of his state before God he readily acknowledged he was a sinner, but it seemed to cause him no uneasiness. If I spoke of death his answer was, "You need not try and frighten me, I'm not going to die yet." For some time he was able to work for an hour or two during the day, but at last I found him in bed, the bright flush on his cheek told its own tale, and sitting beside him I asked how he was.

"Not nearly so well," was his reply "I have been in bed four days, and am not a bit stronger than when I first lay down."

## JIM'S CONVERSION.

“Do you still think you may get well again?”

He hesitated a moment and then said, “After the New Year maybe I'll get round.” My heart sank, it seemed so cruel to deprive him of his last hope, though surely it were far more cruel to let him deceive himself. Yet it seemed impossible that he should expect to recover; the cough, the weakness, and the change for the worse which every day seemed to bring, spoke so plainly to everyone else.

I answered, “Oh Jim, don't look for recovery at all, you are in more danger than you think. I am not saying this to frighten you, but because I believe it to be true. It is not the danger of your *body* that troubles me, but the danger of your *soul*, though Satan seems to have succeeded in blinding your own eyes to it most completely. I have known you a long time now, and have told you again and again of the only way of salvation, but it does not seem to interest you at all. I have read to you what the Word of God says, that ‘the wages of sin is death,’ and have shown you from that Word that you are *lost, guilty, and without hope*. I have entreated you to take your place as a sinner, and accept the salvation which God in His mercy has provided for such, but with no result. You are still quite unconcerned about it. *Do you know what you have done?* You have **REJECTED** God's message of love, you have **DESPISED** His mercy. Did it never strike you that God now

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speaks through His Word, and that in rejecting it you are rejecting Him?" There was no answer, and I continued, "You are now on a bed of sickness with very little hope of recovery, and worse than that, with no hope of salvation. I can stay no longer now, but before going will read just two verses which I want you to think over," and turning to Hebrew x, 28, I pointed to and read those solemn words, "He that despised Moses law died without mercy under two or three witnesses; OF HOW MUCH SORER PUNISHMENT SHALL HE BE THOUGHT WORTHY WHO HATH TRODDEN UNDER FOOT THE SON OF GOD?"

Two days after I called again, and to my great joy, his first words were, "Can He save me now?"

"Yes Jim," I answered, "indeed He can, if you will only trust Him; but do you see what a wretch you have been, and how you have treated the One who sent His own Son to die for you? It may seem unkind to speak so plainly, but I want you to see what you have been doing. You have had message after message of mercy, but you did not care; you thought you would have plenty of time, and would not listen. No sin, however great it may seem to us, is so great in God's sight as that of rejecting His Son, and His Word says, 'He that believeth on Him is *not condemned*, but he that believeth not *is condemned already*, BECAUSE he hath not believed in the

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name of the only begotten Son of God. And THIS is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light.' This is what you have been doing till now."

"Its all true," he said, "every bit; I have spent all my life for the devil, and now that there's only the dregs left, I couldn't expect Him to save me."

"That is true enough, but in spite of all your sin, He is both able and willing to save you now, just as you are."

"But I never cared about religion at all before, and now I'm too far gone to do anything."

"God never asks you to *do* anything. He only wants you to *trust* in His Son the Lord Jesus, who bore all the punishment we deserved on the Cross. But perhaps you don't believe what His word tells us about it?"

"Yes I do," he answered, "I know the Bible is the Word of God, and believe every word of it."

"I scarcely think you do; but we will read just a few verses and you must tell me if you think they are really true."

I then read "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that doeth good, no, not one. For *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 10, 12, 20).

"These speak of man in his natural state before he is converted. Are they true?"

"Yes, I'm sure they are."

## JIM'S CONVERSION.

“ Here is another. ‘ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.’ Is that one true?”

“ Yes, I believe that too.”

“ Then you really believe on the Son of God ; you know you are a sinner, that He died for sinners, and will save all who trust Him ?”

“ Yes, I believe all that.”

“ Now we will read two more passages, and if you believe those I shall be quite satisfied. ‘ For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ ‘ He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life.’ Do you believe this, is it really true.” He hesitated, and looking rather doubtfully at the words to which I had pointed that he might see they were not *mine* but *God's*, replied, “ It says so.”

“ But is it true,” I asked.

“ Well, it looks like it, but I never walked up to it.”

“ How could you when you had nothing to walk up to? God would not expect you to walk as His child, until you knew Him as your father ; such a thing would have been impossible!”

“ But all my life has been spent in sin, I never did anything good at all.”

“ However moral and upright you may have been, it could not have made you *any more fit for salvation*. The very fact that you know

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you are a sinner and cannot help yourself, gives you a claim on the One who came to save sinners; He only came to save *the lost*. Do you think you would have more hope of salvation if you had lived a better life?"

"Of course I should."

"There you are making a very great mistake. Whatever our *actions* may be, even if *outwardly blameless*, we have a heart which God's Word says is 'deceitful above all things and desperately wicked,' (Jer. xvii. 9.) 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' 'They that are in the flesh *cannot* please God.' (Rom. viii. 7. 8.) The Lord Jesus Himself said 'No man cometh unto the Father but by ME;' (John xiv. 6.) and if we try to come in any other way, we are dishonouring Him. No prayers, no works can help to save us. Christ did all that was necessary, or His own words, 'It is FINISHED,' would not be true. Your past life cannot interfere with His power to save you, He died for sinners, and that includes *me*, and *you* too, doesn't it?"

"Yes it must, for I am one."

"Now that we have read what God's Word says about those for whom Christ died and who believe in Him, what about yourself, you say you believe, have you everlasting life?"

"Oh no," he answered, "I shouldn't like to say that."

"Then you see I was right in my thinking that you did not believe all it says. Do you remember the words in 1 John v. 10. 'He

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that believeth not God, hath made him a liar'; surely you would not like to do that?"

"But I don't feel like it."

"That is not the question, nor do I remember any verse which says we ought to have feelings before trusting to what His Word says. Faith believes what God says simply *because He says it*, and without any evidence at all; that is what you must do, before you can know what it is to have 'peace with God.' Are you going to trust Him?"

"I wish I could," was his earnest reply. Just then he asked for a drink, and seeing how little he relished the barley water given to him, I said, "Do you think you could eat a few grapes?"

"Yes," he answered, "I'm sure I could."

"Then I will go and fetch you some."

"*Thank you.*"

"Now Jim, what did you say thank you for?"

He looked a little puzzled, and then said "The grapes."

"You have no grapes yet, have you?"

"No, but then—I thought—you said you would get me some."

"So I did, but how do you know I was speaking the truth?"

"Because I know you wouldn't tell me a lie," he replied.

"Now just think of what you are doing, you are treating God, *as you would not treat me*. I am only your fellow creature, with a heart

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bad enough for anything, if He did not keep me, and yet you would not insult *me* by doubting *my* word; why do you doubt *His*?"

He made no answer, and I went for the grapes. On my returning he took them with a very grateful "Thank you."

"Ah Jim, that is how God wants you to treat Him, and you are afraid to do it. He wants you to take His precious gift and just *thank Him*. Surely nothing could be more simple."

He smiled saying, "I'll try, I think it seems clearer now."

The next day I called again. He seemed weaker, but his face wore a different expression. On my asking if he had yet believed God's Word, he replied, "Yes, I can thank Him now." I sat with him a short time, and while reading that touching parable of the prodigal son, (Luke xv.) he whispered two or three times "That's like me."

When leaving I said, "I am going to see a young soldier, who is supposed to be dying, there seems to be no hope of his recovery, and I do not know if he has yet learned to believe what God says, and to trust in the Lord Jesus; but sick people are often interested in hearing about others who are ill, would you like to send him any message?"

He thought a few moments, and then said, "You may tell him that Christ can save him, for He has saved one who never did anything for Him, and has no time to do anything now."

"May I tell him all that we have been talk-

## JIM'S CONVERSION.

ing about, and how you were afraid to believe God's word, but have trusted it now?"

"Yes," he replied, "you may tell him all about it."

From this time he sank rapidly, and seemed generally in a state of weakness almost amounting to unconsciousness. At one time his lips were seen to move and he was heard to whisper, "I shall never perish, never perish," and at another he said, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." He continued in this state till the morning he died, when his energy seemed to return. He knew the end was near, and said, "I am dying, do you think it will be long?" When his father answered "No, you will not be here long," he exclaimed, "Thank God for that, I am so glad, and thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory. Oh my blessed Jesus! Oh trust in Jesus!"

The weakness returned, and he was quiet for some time, but roused again and repeated a part of the well known hymn, "My Jesus I love Thee, I know Thou art mine." He then asked his mother to sing some hymns, which she did and all who were present joined; he kept time with his hands, his face beaming with joy, and his eyes looking upwards as if fixed on something beyond the low slanting roof under which he lay. He knew some of those present had not believed God's testimony, and just before his death he again said earnestly, "Trust in Jesus, He alone can save." After bidding good bye to each one of those around

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him, the weakness again returned and he soon passed quietly away to be "with the Lord."

Many things have been omitted which might have been added to this simple narrative, but enough has been written, dear reader, to place you under the same responsibility which rested on him, for if you never before heard of your state by nature, and the simplicity of God's plan of salvation, YOU HAVE HEARD IT NOW, and are responsible before God for your knowledge. Like Jim, you may never have looked at it in this light, you may never have thought that you were rejecting God's message of love; or a life of morality may have blinded your eyes to your danger, and helped you to think you were not so bad as others.

Would it be real love to let you go on in such self deception? Surely not. Surely your best and truest friend, is the one who shews you your danger in order to save you from it. Morality is right enough in its place, but it cannot improve the natural heart, so plainly described in the Word, as "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked," the very fact that you cannot believe this statement of God's Word to be true, but shows how completely that heart has deceived you. Whatever your own opinion on the subject, it does not affect God's truth; whatever you may have been taught, it cannot alter His Word, which "shall stand FOR EVER."

Earth's pleasures may last for a season, but those who live in them know nothing of a peace

## INSURED FOR EVER.

“which passeth all understanding,” or a “joy unspeakable and full of glory, while those who trust in Christ, have a place in the heart of One whose love “passeth knowledge.” There is no *real joy* apart from Him, but He is more than sufficient to satisfy every heart.

“Come unto ME, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST.” (Matt. xi. 28.) These are His own words.

T. T. O.

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## INSURED FOR EVER.

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I was travelling lately with a friend, a brother in the Lord, from London to the North of England, and we had taken our seats and the train was about to start, when a gentleman got into the carriage. A friend who accompanied him after having bid him farewell came back and said, “By the bye, have you got an insurance ticket?” “Oh yes,” said the gentleman, “I am insured.” My friend turned to him and said very quietly, “Are you insured for ever.” The gentleman looked up seemingly surprised, but answered, (not at all understanding what was really meant), “No, I only insure for a year at a time.” “But I,” said my friend, “am insured for ever.” Still misunderstanding, the gentleman replied, “Oh yes, I know you can do it by one payment but it costs a great deal.” My friend answered, “Yes, mine was

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done by *one payment*, and cost a great deal indeed. It cost me nothing, but it *cost God His Son.*”

I thought as I listened, How simple and how beautiful is the gospel of the grace of God. “It cost me nothing, but it cost God His Son.” Can he resist such a message of love as that? Yes, alas! the heart of man rebels against the free love of God, though that love could only find its full expression in giving up to death and judgment His own beloved Son, that the poor unlovely and unloving sinner might be saved. Now that there could be no misunderstanding what my friend meant, the gentleman at once turned away angry, and did not want to hear more. Still God may have had His own purpose and thoughts in sending him into that carriage, and the seed then sown may take root and bear fruit in due time; the bread cast then on the waters may be found after many days. May the Lord give those words that told so simply of His love a place in the conscience and heart of him to whom they were spoken. A short time afterwards I said a few words to him, but he replied that it was out of place to speak of those things in a railway carriage. Out of place to speak of Christ anywhere! I asked him if an earthly friend had done him some service of immeasurable value, to prove his great love for him, would he think it out of place to speak of him anywhere? and yet he thought it out of place to speak of The One who had left the glory of God to become a man

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and bear death and judgment for poor lost sinners. Could any earthly love bear comparison with that? But he only turned angrily away—as I should have done myself before the grace of God taught me what His love had done for a poor wretch like me—and said he did not like my conversation. Such is ever the heart of man. They “saw no beauty in Him” when He was in the world, and they see no beauty in Him now.

And now, dear reader, let me turn my friend’s simple searching question upon yourself. “Are *you* insured for ever.” Are you obliged to say No, when the “one payment” has been made, sealed in a Saviour’s blood, and that Saviour the Son of God who became a man for you? If you were going to-morrow on a railway journey, you would not hesitate to insure your life (as it is called) and by the payment of a few pence would obtain a thousand pounds for your nearest relations if you were killed. But how little do you think of those solemn words “After death the judgment.” The world will promise you a thousand pounds for your relations, if you die, upon payment of a certain sum; so that however small the sum, it costs you something, and gives you for yourself, death. God offers you eternal life without any payment at all from you. “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Yes, it is all through Him, and at what a cost! In my friend’s words “It cost God his Son.” Oh what love! what immea-

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surable love, mercy, and grace! And all may be yours by believing in Him whom man has rejected and whom God has glorified. That is what God owns and honours now, and that alone; faith in Him whom this world cast out. That indeed is to be "insured for ever," and none need wait for death to get the benefit of it. Eternal life is yours the moment you in truth believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life." (John vi. 47.)

I do not say the moment you *profess* to believe; that is a very different thing. How many professors, respectable, moral people will wake up in eternity in the lake of fire. No dear friend, "With the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness." It must be real true work, deep down in conscience and heart, bringing you into the presence of God here and now, while He is a God of grace, that you may not be brought into His presence hereafter as a God of judgment. It may break your heart to find that you are a guilty, lost, hell-deserving sinner; but the heart broken with a sense of sin is the heart into which a Saviour can pour the healing balm of His love; and is not that worth being broken-hearted for? Was not His heart broken for you? "Reproach," says that blessed One "hath broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness; and I looked for some to take pity, *but there was none*; and for comforters, *but I found none*" (Ps. lxi. 20.) Think, dear reader, if you and I had to utter such

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words as these ; how hopeless and helpless we should be, how broken-hearted, without a remedy. But faith turns to the One who has borne all for the poor sinner—sorrow, reproach, shame, spitting, death, judgment—and finds its answer there ; and rest, peace and joy fill the heart that knows His love.

Well, dear Reader, do *you* know it, and are you rejoicing in the knowledge of it, and of all that it gives?—are death and judgment things of the past to you, because He has conquered the first and borne the second. Or is death as a dark curtain to you, with a darker eternity behind?

I stood but lately by the death-bed of a dear child of God—very suffering she was too ; in health but a very short time before, and called suddenly to face the reality of death and eternity. There was not one cloud there. “Oh death” she said with all the reality of it before her “*where is thy sting?*” with an emphasis on each word as she said it—and added “I’m sure I don’t know. It is all past for me.” Is it all past for you dear Reader? past because you know Him who said even when He was a man in this poor world of death “I am the resurrection and the life.” All is settled if you know Him for your Saviour ; death and judgment are behind Him for ever. He is risen and glorified, and your life is hid with Him in God. Even here in the wilderness, you can sing the song of triumph, as did Israel of old, only with a far better title than

## I WAS AFRAID!

they, for they had but the figure, while you have the blessed reality in a risen and glorified Saviour, the Man at God's right hand. "Thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Chrst."

And what then—anything more? Yes dear child of God, to live your little span of life in the wilderness (should the Lord tarry) to the praise and glory of Him who came down into this scene of sin and sorrow and death, and died there for you.

A. P. G.

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## I WAS AFRAID!

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Solemn confession! These are the words of Adam. Why this confession—this fear? Had God become man's enemy? had He changed? Ah, no. What then had taken place? Man had given the ear to Satan's falsehood, and opened his heart to sin and unbelief. Sin had come in, and hence the estrangement of the creature from his Creator. Oh how terrible sin is! How vast the change it wrought! how terrible its devastating power! Man's being was blighted—once perfect—but now blighted and estranged from God by the introduction of sin. Awful calamity! A calamity which God alone could remedy!

Man had fallen, discovers that he is naked, sets to work to remedy his condition, and when God comes into the garden, seeks to hide from His presence. Solemn fruit of sin. God's

## I WAS AFRAID

“*Where art thou?*” brings him to the front, and discovers him to be a poor fallen, degraded, guilty, ruined sinner. Yes; sin had verily caused the blight — degradation — ruin — estrangement, and fear. And God’s “*Where art thou?*” only brought into bolder relief the fallen condition of the guilty pair, and the moral distance that sin had brought in between them and a holy God.

In vain did Adam and Eve seek a shelter behind the trees of the garden from God; and in vain did they with their “fig leaf aprons” seek to remedy their naked condition. They had done what they nor any other sinner could undo or remedy. Nothing can hide or shelter from God; and no humanly constructed coat of religiousness can possibly remedy the fallen condition of the sinner. Mark well, O my reader, what sin has done! Thou art a sinner; but dost thou feel how terrible sin is, and how unbearable it is in God’s holy sight? Art thou afraid? If not, may God’s “*Where art thou?*” search thee out, and discover to thee, where thou art, and what thou art, and cause thee to tremble because of thy sins. You must tremble sooner or later. The divine sentence is that “except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.”

What is repentance? It is the sinner taking his place in *heart and conscience* before God as a sinner acknowledging in full what he is, as did Job of old, who said, “Behold I am vile”; and as did Isaiah, who said, “Woe is me! for I am undone;” and as did Peter: “Depart from me;

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for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Here is a threefold testimony of what repentance is. It is the sinner condemning himself and justifying God. It is as the dying thief upon the cross said, "We indeed justly; but this man (Jesus) hath done nothing amiss." It is the full recognition of the righteous judgment of God upon the sinner, his ways, and his state. It is standing in the presence of God who is Light, and being discovered there; and as the light discovers, so there is the bowing of the soul in humble confession to God of all that is contrary to Him. God's very righteousness demands this of the sinner; the state of the sinner demands it; yea, the divine idea of salvation demands it. Sinner hast thou repented of thy sins and guilt? Has thine heart been broken because of what thou art before God? Dost thou see that thou art vile and undone? If so, I bless God from my heart. It is thy right place. It is the work of God to lead thee there. God labours to bring thee there. Thou canst not be saved unless thou hast taken that place of self-judgment before God.

But, having taken that place, there is the full application of the work of the cross—the death, the atoning death of God's Lamb. Yes, when the sinner sees that he is sick, he desires the divine Physician; when he sees that he is polluted, he desires the cleansing fount that can take away his pollutions. That physician is Jesus; and that cleansing fount is His precious blood—*which cleanses the believing sinner from*

## I WAS AFRAID.

*all sin.* Call in the divine Physician at once, O sick one ; and wash at once, O defiled one, in the precious blood of Jesus, and thou art whole and cleansed for ever. Then thy cry shall be “Blessed be the God of all grace, who hath made me meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light” Col. i. The healing and the cleansing must come before you can possibly be saved or give thanks, or know God as a father. Yes, the sinner, in his sins cannot possibly be admitted into the family of God, or find an entrance into heaven. Look well to it, dear friend, that you are healed and cleansed. God’s holiness must keep out of heaven all who die in their sins. “If ye believe not, ye shall die in your sins,” and “whither I go, ye cannot come” said the Saviour ; and His word is true. Sin can no more be admitted into heaven, nor the sinner in his sins, than the least bit of sin can possibly be found in connection with the character of God. Then how absolutely necessary that you should be pardoned and saved, *even now.* But, believe on the blessed Lord Jesus Christ who died for sinners on the cross, *and thou art saved for ever.* Remember that thy works, thy tears, thy prayers, can in no wise save thee. It is faith, simple faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that gets all the present and eternal results of the cross applied to the soul, which is instant and everlasting salvation, and association with Jesus in the glory of God, *for ever.*

E. A.

## THE SOWER, THE SEED, AND THE SOIL.

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*“ The seed is the word of God. These by the way side are they that hear. Then cometh the devil and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe, and be saved.*

*“ They on the rock are they which when they hear receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe and in time of temptation fall away.*

*“ And those which fell among the thorns are they which when they have heard go forth and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection.*

*“ But those on the good ground are they which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.” Luke viii. 12-15.*

The simplicity of this parable is beautiful, as its wording is divine. With what a graphic clear touch has the Lord drawn the picture of the sower and his work. The eye loves to rest upon it and trace its deep and living accuracy. There is nothing forced, nor overdrawn, but each stroke, each touch is correct. It is pencilled by absolute wisdom. It is the work of a master—one to whom all things were known, who “needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.”

Himself was the sower—the Word of God the seed—the devil and the world the hindrances. He is the sower still, although not on earth, for the prerogative of quickening

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into life is entrusted to Him. "The Son quickeneth whom He will." Again, "the last Adam is a life-giving spirit;" and again, "Thou hast given Him power over all flesh that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him."

And the word of God is still the seed—"that incorruptible seed which liveth and abideth for ever," whereby we are "born again," and this seed is scattered abroad with the diligent and persevering grace of One who "willeth not that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;" yea, "Who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth."

It is upon the reception and retention of this seed that blessing depends. Think of the unutterable value, dear readers, of the word of God. Without natural seed there could be no blade, no ear, no full corn in the ear, no harvest; and without this spiritual seed there can be no divine life, no salvation, no heaven. Think, too, of the importance of receiving that seed and keeping it, cherishing it in the soul as the producer of such fruit.

The word of God is His gospel. Now "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth to the Jew first and also to the Gentile." Its teaching is "concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by

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the resurrection from the dead," and "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." It makes God known as Saviour. It tells out, in all its living value, the necessity and worth of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ—as the One who came according to divine counsels and met the whole question of human ruin and sin; brought in righteousness for the sinner; and told out the love of God as well as His power likewise—whereby God may now "be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." Precious gospel, welcome glad tidings, sweet story of redeeming love is unfolded here. The dark dread judgment of a sin-hating God is indeed made known as falling on the Holy One who suffered on the Cross, but it is also anticipated and, for the believer, cleared for ever out of the way. The whole cup has been drained—the whole wrath has been borne—and the glory of God now shines forth in the countenance of the glorified Saviour.

Such tidings are now proclaimed far and wide. Rich the seed—wondrous the fruit; but let us mark the kind of reception given to it. The Lord supplies a four-fold illustration. First—"They by the wayside are they which hear, *then cometh the devil*, and taketh away the word out of their hearts lest they should believe and be saved." Notice, "*they hear*;" they pay outward attention; they are not altogether strangers to the word; but the devil comes and takes it out of their hearts. Their

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hearts had not received it—had not hidden it—the seed only lay on the surface and was therefore exposed. A little impression might no doubt have been made but the influence was small and easily erased. Alas that such a prize should be surrendered so readily—well did the devil know the result, “they should believe and be saved.” This he effectually hindered. They were wayside hearers—interested, but not really influenced; arrested for the moment, but nothing further; hearing only to forget.

Of this class it may be said that Felix was one. He listened to Paul reasoning of “righteousness, temperance and judgment to come”—nay he “trembled!” but answered “Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee.” And possibly King Agrippa was another. “Almost,” said he, “thou persuadest me to be a Christian;” but “the King rose up” and went aside, and his partial half-hearted persuasion left him still in the power of the devil. Solemn neglect of the word of God. Oh! to think that a man may “tremble” beneath its living power, or may be “almost persuaded” by its loving appeal, and yet refuse it a place in his heart. So it is, nevertheless, and daily we see multitudes who in like manner *hear*, but pass away from under the call of the gospel unconvinced, unawakened and undisturbed, but, alas! they fall into the hands of their watchful enemy, and the precious grain is stolen away which was intended for their eternal blessing. How often does a

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soul pass from the place when the word has been earnestly preached pricked in his conscience and "almost persuaded" to become a Christian, but soon as other scenes break upon his attention, and other duties call for his care, the word is forgotten, the call disregarded, and the devil more than gratified. The soul is left in a more guilty condition than ever.

Second, "They on the rock are they which, when they hear, receive the word with joy, and these *have no root*, which for awhile believe and in time of temptation fall away." In this case there is an advance upon the former. These receive the word with joy, and for a while believe. There are the outward marks of reality and the general symptoms of life. To the observer they appear to be actual subjects of the work of God. There are joy and belief. There is the "tasting the good word of God" and it may be a certain amount of discipleship as in those, who, offended by the word, "went back and walked no more with Jesus." John vi. 61-66.

The belief was not a divine work and the joy was not that of the Holy Ghost. Devils may believe, and feelings of joy may be only natural excitement, albeit on the other hand both belief and joy are the fruit and work of God's spirit in the quickened soul. Still their imitation may exist, and in seasons of general awakening especially so. "When religion walks in silver slippers she has many followers," says Bunyan, and when it is only a

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question of what is to be had and not one of conscience, of sin, of ruin, of the claims of holiness, of the requirements of God, then the offer is readily accepted by a professed faith and with a false joy. It is only a question of self, and the soul says, "Lord give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw"—or "Lord evermore give us this bread." But times of trial, of temptation, of persecution follow. The soul's protestations are put to the test; it finds that the word is a cause of offence and it sinks. The word was "received for the joy, and given up for the trouble." "These *have no root.*" Their show is all outward. They resemble the five foolish virgins. They turn out in the end to be but empty professors, and tarnish the name of Christianity with backsliding and apostacy. These are blots in the page of Church history. "In the time of temptation they *fall away.*"

Third, "That which fell among the thorns are they which, when they have heard, go forth and *are choked* with cares and riches and pleasures of this life and bring no fruit to perfection." A still further advance. These hear and go forth to produce fruit, but the soil is weedy and unclean, and the seed is choked. There is the semblance of fruit, yet it is not perfect. "Care" on the one hand, with its corroding depressing load—its poverty, its drudgery, its innumerable claims, and "pleasure" on the other, with its lightness, its thoughtlessness, its folly succeed in blighting

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the seed—whilst riches with their pride vote the word a burden and its calls to self-denial a plague—and therefore treat it with contempt. Anyhow, whether by cares or riches or pleasures the seed is choked and no fruit is produced. Imperfection stamps everything. “Labour not for the meat that perisheth,” said the Lord to many to whom that labour perhaps was the one all engrossing pursuit of life to the exclusion of all search for that bread which endureth unto life everlasting which He, the Son of Man, should give—whilst riches or the love of them prove equally destructive to others. Thus we read of Balaam who “loved the wages of unrighteousness,” and in a later day of Judas who sold his master for “thirty pieces of silver.” And lastly we are warned against professors of Christianity who are “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,” and from such to “turn away.”

Terrible is the effect of these thorns of care, riches and pleasures of the world in one or other of its aspects upon this precious seed. How easily is it hindered.

Fourth, “But that on the good ground are they which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience. And now we have the only case that is satisfactory—and what a redundancy of words is used by the Lord to describe it. The heart is *honest and good*,” made so, no doubt, by grace and prepared for the recep-

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tion of the word,—then the word is *kept* and fruit brought forth with *patience*. Here the devil is resisted, nor allowed to take away the seed; the soil is deep and the roots strike down; cares nor riches nor pleasure are allowed to hinder the development of the growth of the fruit, but “patient continuance in well doing” mark the quality of the work within. Plentiful fruit is the result. Thus Mary received and retained the word. She sat at Jesus feet and heard His word and in the end she anointed Him for his burial. So Paul heard effectually, counted all things loss for Christ, pressed toward the mark for the prize, finished his course with joy, and awaited his crown of righteousness.

How wonderful are the effects of the word of God. It is the most influential power on earth, it is the sword of the Spirit; it claims the attention of men; it rules their destiny; it commands their fears; it implants their joys; it sways their course; it regulates their life; it is their friend or their foe, their delight or their terror, their reprieve or their death warrant; it is despised, it is esteemed, it is thrust aside, it is cherished, it is in short the test of the spiritual state of man. Hence, when a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice and said unto Him—“Blessed is the womb that bare thee and the paps that thou hast sucked,” He said, “*Yea, RATHER blessed are they that HEAR THE WORD OF GOD AND KEEP IT.*”

J. W. S.

## SAVED AND HAPPY.

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How unhappy should I be,  
Could I not, O Father, see  
All my guilt and sin forgiven,  
And my title sure for heaven.

Could there be a question raised,  
Sad were I; yet be thou praised!  
That my title is in blood,  
Written by thy hand, O God.

Thou who gavest Thy Son to die,  
On the cross in agony,  
For my sin, and in my stead,  
Raised Him from amongst the dead.

There He lives! my sin is gone!  
Satan conquered! life is won;  
I believe it! all is mine,  
Saviour, Jesus, I am Thine!

Sad no longer can I be,  
Since Thee, Lord, in heaven I see;  
Proof my sin is all forgiven,  
And my title's sure for heaven.

A. M.

## NOT JERUSALEM, BUT JESUS!

(See 1 *Kings* viii., 41-43. And *Acts* viii., 26-40.)

In the first portion of Scripture to which I would call the Reader's attention, we have brought before us a bright moment in Israel's history. Solomon is on the throne of his father David; the Temple has been completed, and "the glory of the Lord" has filled it. Solomon is standing before "the altar of the Lord" in prayer. After having made supplication respecting the people of Israel, he prays for "the stranger that is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far country for thy name's sake (for they shall hear of thy great name, and of thy strong hand, and of thy stretched-out arm), when he shall come and pray towards this house. Hear, thou in heaven, thy dwelling place, and do according to all that the stranger calleth to thee for, that all people of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as do thy people Israel, and that they may know that this house, which I have builded, is called by thy name." This prayer of Solomon's was thus laid before the Throne of God in heaven, His dwelling-place. And although *that* house in its glory had passed away and another had taken its place, yet, in the second Scripture referred to, we get an answer to the prayer, after an interval of more than a thousand years.

## NOT JERUSALEM, BUT JESUS!

But, "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

In the 8th chapter of the 1st of Kings the prayer is uttered; and in the 8th of Acts the prayer is answered, according to the integrity of the heart of God, and the subject of it guided by the skilfulness of His hands into the way of blessing. There are three prominent persons brought before us in this latter Scripture:—

First, the Servant.

Second, the Sinner.

Third, the Saviour.

On each of these I would dwell a little. But only as they serve to illustrate one grand prominent thought, viz., God's interest in an individual soul! First, then, let us look at the Servant. Philip is a beautiful example of what a servant should be; and what I am about to add respecting Philip, is exclusively for those who have "peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ," and are thus at rest in His holy presence, for only such can truly serve. Philip was at Samaria in the midst of much blessing from the Lord, "and there was great joy in that city." He has no plans of his own, but is directly under the control of his Master in heaven. He is serving Christ in "preaching Christ." "And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise and go towards the South, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert."

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Instructions could not be more simple or decisive, "Arise and go toward the South, &c." Mark the response! "And he arose and went." A servant is responsible only to obey. He had received his instructions from the Lord, and, whatever he may leave behind him in Samaria, he could say, The Lord knows best, I will arise and go. "As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God." This is the true position for the servant, in every age and in every circumstance.

I would now call the Reader's attention to the second person, already referred to, viz., the Sinner, brought before us in the person of the Eunuch. "Behold, a man of Ethiopia, an Eunuch of great authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, was returning." This is all that is told us of the previous history of this interesting man. He had lived in a far country, surrounded by idolatry,—doubtless, he was in the midst of all that could make *this life* pleasant and easy, inasmuch as Scripture tells us, he was a man of "great authority," occupying a post of honour in the Court of the Queen of Ethiopia. But in that distant land he heard of Jehovah's "great name," of His "strong hand," and of His "stretched-out arm," and the report of "the living and the true God," had thus brought into his soul a

## NOT JERUSALEM, BUT JESUS!

yearning for that which the gods of Ethiopia could not give him. He had everything for *the present*, but had nothing *for Eternity*; and the gods of Ethiopia could not help him.

My Reader must remember that God once had a place of distinct blessing on the earth; and, notwithstanding Israel's terrible failure, until the Messiah came, and was rejected, Jerusalem was the recognised centre of earthly blessing. The Eunuch, therefore, naturally connected the blessing of Jehovah with His House at Jerusalem. But how many difficulties and obstacles had to be overcome before he could approach its sacred courts, Scripture has not told us; this much we may safely conclude: there were difficulties of no ordinary character resulting from the high office which he held, and then there was Satan opposing, in every way he could, the journey of this man from the place of Gentile darkness to the City of Jehovah's blessing. But there came a moment in the history of the Eunuch that may be truly termed the turning-point: when, in the presence of all the dangers and difficulties of the way, *he decided* to go to Jerusalem! What a sight for heaven! What an object to the ridicule of men in Ethiopia! And what an object for the hatred and power of Satan? Every movement of his heart in its longings toward Jerusalem gave its own delight to the living God. The necessary preparations for the long and wearisome journey—all, all—were watched with interest from above, with dark suspicion from beneath.

## NOT JERUSALEM, BUT JESUS!

Of the details of that journey we have no account. But this much we know : at last he neared the spot around which his hopes had centered.

Can you not, beloved Reader, imagine that stranger, from "a far country," as he approached the walls of the sacred city, delighting in the thought, that at length he had reached the haven of his desire? The record of Scripture is extremely brief respecting his visit. It merely states he "had come to Jerusalem for to worship, and was returning." And why is the record so briefly given? I will tell you: he was *too late for the blessing at Jerusalem!* "Too late," you say! "What do you mean?" I will tell you. JESUS, the Son of David, the Son of God, had been in Jerusalem before him. His sacred feet had trodden the courts of the house of the Lord; which, in the beginning of His ministry, He had fully owned as His Father's house (John ii.) But the people of Israel had refused to receive Him, "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." He brought in His own Person light into the world, and they would not have it, "because their deeds were evil." The Person of the Son of God they could not tolerate in their midst; and the unrebuked enmity of their hearts led them at last to be His "betrayers and murderers," Acts vii. 52. Outside the City of Jerusalem, in the place called Calvary, "there they crucified Him," Luke xxii. 33. But ere He left the city for the last time, He said, "O, Jerusalem. Jerusalem, thou that killest the

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prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." From this Scripture, beloved Reader, you will notice, the Lord no longer owns the temple at Jerusalem as His Father's house. He says, "*Your house* is left unto you desolate."

I would entreat the Reader to give these words his most careful attention. They demand very serious consideration, inasmuch as there is a principle of truth wrapped up in them, which professing Christianity at large has entirely lost sight of. Let me explain what I mean. God had, as I have already stated, a place of distinct blessing on the earth, the centre of which was His house at Jerusalem; but over that once favoured spot, the Son of God has written, "Desolation!"

There are two great systems around us to-day. The one is the moral system, called "the world,"—a system that has grown up by man's departure from God: over this, the Lord has written "Judgment!" (John xii. 31.) The other system is that of an earthly religion—such Judaism was, a divinely ordained system of religion, with an earthly temple and magnificent ceremonial: over this the Lord has written "Desolation!" So that, apart from creation, all around that can meet the eye of my Reader is resting under this two-fold declaration of the Son of God. You may tell me I

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am seeking to draw a dismal picture. Well, be it so; for I grant most fully, that as far as the world and worldly religion go, the prospect is as dismal as death!

Now, let us return to the Eunuch,—he has been to the “desolate house,” and was returning. Think you, beloved Reader, that God is going to allow this soul to return to Ethiopia without the blessing he had so earnestly sought; going to let him return as he came, *unfilled*? Not so; the Eunuch was an *earnest* man, and on his way home to that distant land of Ethiopia he is still in the search of that which his heart so deeply craved; he is found sitting in his chariot, reading the Scriptures. Whether he got them at Jerusalem, or had them in his possession before he left Ethiopia, Scripture does not tell us; but now that he has them, one thing is most evident, *he deeply valued them*. Not like many a Christless professor in this day, who reads a chapter only on a Sunday, and gives the greater part of his spare time during the week to the novel, or the newspaper—the Eunuch was not a man of this kind; a shower of rain will keep such people away from a gospel preaching, but the eunuch crosses a desert in the search of that which tens of thousands around treat with utter neglect. And now, on his homeward journey, he is “in the way” to get the blessing.

Here we have again brought before us, the servant, who is on the right spot, at the right moment. How beautiful are God’s ways!

## NOT JERUSALEM, BUT JESUS.

“ His every act pure blessing is,  
His path unsullied light.”

The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot.” The servant is ready: “ instant in season and out of season.” “ And Philip ran thither to him,”—on the part of the servant there is no questioning; nothing but hearty and ready obedience.

The Eunuch was reading aloud, from the fifty-third chapter of the prophet Isaiah. Philip asks. “ Understandest thou what thou readest? And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would go up and sit with him.” Philip has not left Samaria in vain; the living God well knew the need of this precious soul, and sends His servant to minister the needed blessing. Such, beloved Reader, is *His interest* in the welfare of the souls of men. (1 Timothy, ii. 4.)

“ The place of the scripture which he read was, this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. And the Eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?” My reader, could ignorance be greater? He was reading the prophecy respecting the sufferings and the humiliation of the blessed Son of God; and he knew it not. He was truly an ignorant man,

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but he was not ashamed to own it. Reality and pride do not go together; but unreality and hypocrisy are ever twin companions. Where the soul is real, ignorance is no barrier to blessing. And I do most earnestly desire to impress the soul of my Reader with the fact, *there is such a thing* as deep, divine, eternal blessing! Do you ask, where is it to be found? I answer; Not at Jerusalem, but in Jesus! “And Philip opened his mouth, and *began* at the same scripture, and preached unto him JESUS”! Here, then, we have brought before us the third person already referred to, viz:—the Saviour! And if I have drawn a dark and dismal picture of everything around, I would now seek to bring before you a bright and a blessed contrast: a glorious scene of unfading brightness; a home above, on which “desolation” never will be written; and a Person there, in whom “dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” That scene is the glory of God; that Person is Jesus, the Son of God; refused on earth by man, nailed to the accursed tree, and buried in a sepulchre. He was raised from among the dead by the glory of the Father.” (Romans iv. 6.) “He went up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him.” (1 Peter iii. 22.) It was the person of Jesus, the Son of God, that Philip thus announced to the Eunuch. He presented Him as a present resting place for his soul; and as a source of everlasting joy.

We find from Scripture, that the Eunuch, in

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truth, received Him as a Saviour; and, having owned His claims by baptism, he goes on his way, rejoicing. His back is on Jerusalem certainly; but his face is now toward the glory of God: (1. Peter v. 10.) By the instrumentality of the *servant*, this *sinner* has been directed to the *Saviour* in heaven, Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever! The Eunuch has learned from the lips of Philip, the story of the Saviour's cross and shame. "He preached unto him, Jesus." Who can tell out all that is wrapped up in that most wondrous name?

"Jesus! how much Thy name unfolds  
To every open'd ear;  
The pardon'd sinner's memory holds  
None other half so dear.  
Jesus,—the One who knew no sin;  
Made sin to make us just;  
Able art Thou our love to win,  
Worthy of all our trust."

Has He not a claim upon the confidence of your heart, beloved Reader? Who has such a claim as the One that died for you? You may exclaim, What! died for me? Yes, for you. Man in his wickedness nailed Him to the cross.

"Thy love by man so sorely tried,  
Proved stronger than the grave;  
The very spear that pierced Thy side  
Drew forth the blood to save."

It was upon the cross that God, in His love to the sinner, gave His only Son to bear the judgment that was due to sin (2 Cor. v. 21).

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And He, on His part, took the place of the willing victim, and thus “tasted death for every man” (Heb. ii. 9). And having brought glory to God in the place of judgment, He comes forth from the grave, bringing “life and incorruptibility to light through the Gospel.” He was crucified through weakness, yet He liveth by the power of God. Never was there such a display of weakness as at the cross; never was there such a display of power as at His resurrection. Reader, do you know this wondrous Person in heaven? Have you owned His claim upon you and confided to Him the keeping of your priceless soul? You *know* whether you have or not. The language of confiding faith is: “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day” (2 Tim. i. 12). I warn you against trusting aught but Christ. We are living in a day when men are busily engaged in rearing *places* attractive to the eye, and seeking to fill them with sounds that shall captivate the ear; but *on all this system of things* the Lord Jesus Christ has written “Desolation.” May you, in your heart and soul, turn away from the *places* on earth to the *Person* in heaven, and say to Him,—

“Jesus, I do trust Thee,—trust without a doubt.  
Whosoever cometh, Thou wilt not cast out.  
Faithful is Thy promise, precious is Thy blood,  
These my soul’s salvation, Thou, my Saviour,  
God.”

E. P. C.

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

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Some years since I was passing early one morning down one of the main thoroughfares of Edinburgh, when I noticed numbers of people hastening rapidly in the direction in which I was going. The cause of the unusual stir I had no need to enquire, for just then the road made a bend, and full in view was a large crowd gathered before a house on fire. Sheets of flame leapt out of the windows, and dense volumes of smoke were rolling forth from the first floor.

Technically speaking, the burning house, itself the centre of a Row, was "A 1st Flat" and, fortunately or not as the case may have been, the tenants were out at the time. For the sake of my readers who are not acquainted with the "Flat" system of building houses, I may say that the house in question and two above it entered from the street by a stair common to them all—each house having its own door opening into the stair at various levels. This being so, ingress to, or egress from flats No. 2 and 3 can only be had by passing the door of No. 1, which really answers to the drawing-room floor of an ordinary house—the ground-floor being usually, as in this case, a shop.

Drawing near the scene, I saw at a glance what was the state of matters. Neither Fire Engine, Fire Escape, Fire man nor Fire Ladder were as yet at hand, while at the open windows of flat No. 2, stood two females—an aged

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woman and her daughter. Their dishevelled state, and general attire told that from their slumber they had been awakened by the cry of "Fire," only to find the floor beneath their feet in flames—their house filled with choking smoke, and the common stairs by which they sought escape, a miniature crater through which it were hopeless to attempt to pass.

Baulked in their efforts to leave by the stairs, at the windows they now appeared in company, uttering distressing shrieks of fright, and imploring help from the populace beneath. A fearful agony was on the face of each as they cried and looked in vain for help from below. True, the help of Fire-men and Ladders had been sought, but they were long in coming. At such a time each moment seems an age!

It was a touching sight, as side by side they stood,—themselves utterly helpless,—while the devouring flame below seemed only to mock their agony, and with lurid blaze ever and anon leapt madly forth and up from the window directly beneath them, as though it would gladly devour them where they stood, or drive them back to suffocation. The breeze was fresh, and the snow white-hair of the terror-stricken mother was waving wildly in the air, a strange contrast to the black smoke and lambent flames around. Altogether it was a weird and painful sight.

Just then a cheer rang forth from the crowd, and, looking higher than the women, I saw that some kindly workmen had, by another

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

common stairs, managed to get on to the roof, carrying with them a slender rope. To fasten it round a stack of chimneys—fortunately in a direct line behind the open window—was the work of a minute or two, and then, giving the rope a coil, and a well directed fling over the eaves of the house, right down in front of the terrified and now surprised women (for they expected no help from *above*) fell, their only way of escape. Loud hurrahs greeted the providers of this way of salvation, while cries of “Lay hold of the Rope”—“Come down by the Rope” indicated plainly to the unfortunate pair what they were expected to do. A way of escape having been provided by others, they were expected, and urged at once to avail themselves of it. How right, and how simple this judgment; do you not agree with it Reader?

Quick as thought, I saw the women lay hold of the rope; but now the question arose, who should go first—in other words, who had faith to trust this slender means of safety. From where I stood I could note an altercation as to who should first avail herself of it, and some minutes I think must have elapsed—while encouraging and hastening words rose thickly from below—“Make haste”—“Don’t waste time”—“You may safely trust it” &c. &c. At length the mother gained her point; she was stout and heavy—it might not sustain her—the daughter was thin and fragile—she might safely trust it. A mother’s love, I doubt not, was under and

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

behind all—a love only eclipsed by a Saviour's. The daughter took the rope in both her hands and got on to the window-sill. The crowd held its breath. The rope was pulled on first to see if it held on above. All right. The 35 or 40 feet beneath was looked at. The rope was long enough. She is convinced of the points—it is long enough, and it is strong enough, and yet she lingers. I saw the reason why; when just about to launch away, doubts and fears evidently rose, and by the heels of her boots she clung to the raised sill. This lasted a moment, and then, with instinctive love, the mother gave her a push, and fairly forth she swung.

Descending too rapidly her hands “fired,” and, while still some distance from the ground, she let go the rope and fell. Fearing this event, some strong men had gathered underneath, and into their arms she tumbled, receiving no harm whatever. The mother, encouraged by her child's success, and learning by her fall not to be too hasty in her descent, now committed herself to the trusty rope, and hand under hand slowly coming down, was soon by her daughter's side, right thankful for the rope from above.

At the time, and since I have often thought how this scene illustrates, the state of man as a sinner, and the dealings of God with him in grace. Man has sinned, and his sin has placed him in a position of imminent danger. “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

God ” (Rom. iii. 23.) This word includes you and me, dear Reader. Further : “ The wages of sin is death ” (Rom. vi. 23.) And again, God speaks thus : “ It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment ” (Heb. ix. 27.) As to what this judgment is which overtakes the *dead*, we are left in no doubt whatever. Hear God’s testimony, “ I saw *the dead*, small and great, stand before God ; and the books were opened : and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. . . . And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Rev. xx. 12, 15.)

Here we are told the final doom of the dead. They have no life suited to God. “ Dead in sins ” delineates their time condition. “ Eternal life, the gift of God,” they cared not then to accept ; hence their eternal condition corresponds to their time state. Solemn truth ! The actions of life bring forth fruit for eternity. Read what follows : “ But the fearful (i.e., cowards—those who are afraid or ashamed to trust and confess Christ), and unbelieving (those who are avowed infidels and scoffers, though outwardly moral and well-behaved—and is it not notable that these two classes should head the list ?) and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : *which is the second death* ”

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

(Rev. xxi. 8). I know men scoff at these solemn words of God. This does not make them less real or terrible, but only manifests the folly of the human heart, which refuses to believe God's testimony as to its present guilty and godless state, and future equally godless condition for eternity, and despises the way of salvation which God in His grace has provided.

The women I have written of were in as much danger while asleep and unconscious of it, as when fully alive to their critical state. Is your case different, O unsaved Reader? Not one whit.

But perhaps you bow to God's Word, and seeing your guilt and sin, tremble in view of "judgment to come." It is well with you if so, and better still if you are willing to take God's way of salvation. He it is who alone can save. He has, so to speak, let down a rope *from above*, long and strong enough to meet any and every sinner's case, no matter how many or heavy his sins may be. Christ is God's way of escape from the lake of fire, and if you would escape the due reward of your deeds, my Friend, you must trust to Him.

"Lay hold of the rope," said the crowd, preaching a suited gospel to the women. "Lay hold of Christ," say I. "This is my beloved Son, hear Him," says God the Father. "I am the way, the truth, and the life. Come unto me," says Jesus. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. . . . He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he

## THE ROPE FROM ABOVE.

that believeth not the Son shall not see life : but the wrath of God abideth on him," says John the Baptist. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," say Paul and Silas. "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" says Peter, the fisherman. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins" says John, the Evangelist. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed" says Isaiah, the Prophet. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" says David, the Psalmist-king. What a cloud of witnesses to His worth ! He has come down to save—it has all come from His own side—and is it not strange that sinners will not trust Him ?

Dear Reader, if you still have your heels hooked on to some window sill of feelings or hesitancy, oh, let me give you the push just now that shall cause you simply and sweetly to trust the Lord Jesus.

Fear not that you will fall. He will hold you up—the rope will not break, and His grasp of you—when once you commit yourself to Him—will never unloose ; and He will land you in glory as the fruit of His work on the Cross for you.

W. T. P. W.

THE PEOPLE  
WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS  
SAW GREAT LIGHT.

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A WARNING ACCEPTED.

Some years ago a young man was one evening hurrying to catch the last train from W——. He was many miles distant from London, where he had business early the next morning. Just as he arrived at the station he heard the train come in: he ran down the steps, put his stick to the door to prevent the porter shutting it, who said, "Too late, sir," and closed the door. Bolt after bolt was fastened, every light put out—the *last* train gone. The young man knew not what to do, and while standing there the thought came into his mind with terrible force, "What if it is thus with me at last when Christ comes, if I find I am just *too late*, and see the last hope gone, and I am left in darkness for ever." The thought made him shudder; nor could he get rid of it. "But," suggested Satan, "how do you know the blood of Jesus is of any avail now? Jesus is not here to save you." In despair he threw open his Bible, and his eye rested on the 20th verse of John xvii: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." These were the words of Jesus, and they were enough. Light entered into the young man's soul; he could shut the Book, and kneel down and thank the Lord for

## THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS.

saving him, and to this day never a doubt has he had as to his acceptance.

### HEALED BY HIS STRIPES.

A poor man was dying in Paris. Several times the clergyman had been to see him, and had read prayers for the sick, and told him what a great sinner he was. But the clergyman did not know of God's love to sinners, therefore all he said only made the poor man more miserable. The visit was repeated several times, but the sick man received no comfort, but could only moan out about the weight of his sins. One Sunday morning he sent his little child to fetch the clergyman on his way from church. "It is no use for me to go," said he; "your father never seems any better." "Oh, sir," answered the child, "father said I was not to go back without you." "Well, I'll take my sermon to read to him," and he followed the child. He found the poor man almost distracted about his soul. "I've brought my sermon to read to you," said the clergyman, and he began reading the text, that beautiful one in Isaiah 53rd chapter, 5th verse: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

"Hold," called out the dying man, "read that again, sir: 'Wounded for our transgressions.' Then He was wounded for *mine*! I have it!" he exclaimed starting up; "'bruised for my ini-

## SAW GREAT LIGHT.

quities.' Why did not you tell me that before, sir? but I have it now, thank God. I am saved." That night he fell asleep in full assurance—resting on the work of Christ.

The day following, the clergyman called on a friend and asked what there was in that Scripture more than another. "Why," said his friend, who was a believer in the Lord, "this verse contains the whole Gospel. Now I pray you believe it. Can you say, 'He was wounded for *my* transgressions. The Son of God bore *my* sins in His own body on the tree'?" "I see," exclaimed the clergyman. "how blind I have been all along; knowing the Scripture with my head, and not believing it with my heart." Next Lord's Day his congregation were amazed at the intensely earnest way in which he preached; still more so when he told them that he had been a blind leader, but that now God's grace had shone into his heart, that now he was a new creature in Christ Jesus, and begged them all to trust Him as their Saviour.

### FOR WHOM DID JESUS DIE?

Not long since the Gospel was preached under a railway arch in the East-end of London; the love of Jesus to poor sinners for whom He shed His precious blood was presented. Afterwards some of the hearers were spoken to separately. Amongst them was an old man of seventy five, whose heart seemed untouched by the glorious tidings of God's salvation. On being asked if he believed in the Lord Jesus, he replied, "Do *you*

## THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS

believe all that's in the Bible?" "Oh, yes."  
"Do you believe that the sun would stand still at the bidding of man?" referring to the 10th chapter of Joshua. "Oh, yes," replied the speaker. After speaking for some time, he asked a friend to talk to him, of whom he asked the same questions; "But," said the second speaker, "I can tell you of something more wonderful." "What is that?" asked the old man in astonishment. "When the One who made the sun stand still stood still Himself at the cry of a poor blind beggar, and, more than that, He gave him his sight, and He will give you sight now, will save you now, if you will only trust Him."

Three weeks after, the gentleman who first spoke was again under the arch, and saw the old man peering about, looking at the texts of Scripture on the walls. God had, by His Spirit, been working in the old man's heart, and he could get no rest, so had come again. He was looking at the text, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The gentleman just whispered in his ear, "Christ died for sinners," when, to his astonishment, the old man jumped round, and, smiting his side, cried, "And for *me*, and for me. I see it now—for *me*." Oh, the joy of his heart to see that Jesus died for *him*! "The entrance of Thy Word giveth light," and as the light flashed on his soul, he could see himself a sinner, therefore the very one for whom Jesus died.

Let me ask you, Reader, Do *you* know

## SAW GREAT LIGHT.

yourself a sinner before God ? God says, "There is none that doeth good ; no, not one." Do not delude yourself with the thought that because you have lived a pretty good life God will save you. An old soldier of eighty-nine told me the other day that he had never done anyone any harm ; no one could say a word against him ; he always went to church on Sunday ; had a good coat to his back ; always paid his rent, and had enough money to pay for his funeral ! Think you he could plead that before God ? No, indeed ! He could stand there in no coat of his own—nothing short of God's righteousness would avail him, or you either, dear Reader, in God's presence.

## HOW BLESSING TRAVELS.

Amongst the girls of my class who came to me on the Lord's Day afternoon was a nice, bright-looking young servant. She had been brought by her sister, one who had found peace by believing. I was interested in the young girl, who always knew her Scripture and hymns so well ; but she had an anxious look on her face, which made me speak to her privately once or twice. One afternoon it was very wet, and I did not think it would be any use going out, as none of the girls would come in such weather ; but I felt I *must* go. When I arrived, there was but this young servant. Now, thought I, God has a message to this dear girl this afternoon. After we had talked a little, she told me she was very unhappy, for

## THE PEOPLE WHICH SAT IN DARKNESS.

she knew she was a great sinner, but did not know how to believe in Jesus. I read to her the word of the Lord in Isaiah, 1st chapter, 18th verse, that the Lord said, "Come now and let us reason together;" the Lord of life and glory wishing in His great love to reason with a sinner. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." I told her that it was "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to *His mercy*, he saved us." And while kneeling before the Lord, asking Him to send light into her heart, the light came, and she got up a saved soul. No mistake about it, her face *beamed*.

"Oh," she said, "while I was asking to be saved, something made me feel saved. I understand now what it is to believe." Since then her mother has been brought to the Lord. This daughter wrote to her, telling her, with a full heart, what great things the Lord had done for her, and begging her also to come to the Saviour—quoting the verse, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The letter was put by, but the mother could not get such an invitation out of her mind. One evening she felt very weary, and thought she would look at that letter again. I'm weary and heavy laden, sure enough, said she, so I think I'll just come, and she knelt down and asked God to show her how; and do you think He refused? No. His

“ MY WORD SHALL NOT RETURN UNTO ME VOID.

loving heart was rejoiced by another coming to trust Him, and He gave her the desired rest. Reader, He only *waits* to give *you all you* need. Life, joy, peace, the hope of glory, yea, Himself, and in Him we have everything. Come, then, *now*.

M. J. E. B.

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“ MY WORD SHALL *NOT* RETURN  
UNTO ME VOID.”

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This precious promise was brought forcibly to mind, when calling on a poor Christian woman, some months ago, living in a rural district in the County of Bucks.

After the first few salutations, she said, “ Oh, I must tell you my joy this week, it has so cheered me up! What good may not a little word do!”

I wondered what she could mean. She went on to tell me about a poor ragged, shoeless man who had come to her house *begging*, about seven or eight years ago. As she was giving him a piece of bread, his eye fell on a text of Scripture hung on the wall, which I had given her. “ *As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.*”

This brought from him a volley of abuse on Christians, or Methodists, as he styled them, saying, “ Ah, I see *you* are one of them,” to which she replied, “ Thank God I am, and I

“MY WORD SHALL NOT RETURN UNTO ME VOID.”

hope, my friend, when you come again, God will have changed your wicked heart, for remember His word says, ‘He that believeth shall be saved, but he that *believeth not* shall be *damned*.’”

This only made him more angry, as he went off uttering fresh oaths and imprecations against the person whom the Lord had chosen as one of His instruments of mercy in the salvation of his precious soul, although he knew it not.

Years passed on, and the circumstance was well-nigh forgotten by the family, when three days before my visit to her; a respectably dressed man appeared at her door. He entered smiling, saying, “Don’t you remember me, and my abusing you about the ‘Methodists,’—but now, praise the Lord, He has used them in blessing to my soul! Where’s your text on the wall, (it having been removed, from its soiled and torn condition,) ‘As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.’ And don’t you remember that solemn passage you said to me in parting, ‘He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.’ Oh how that word *rang* in my ears afterwards?”

For some little time they sat weeping for joy, when he proceeded to tell her how the Lord had met with him.

In some part of the country, one Sunday afternoon, he had been present at some open-air preaching, which recalled to him more vividly than ever the words of the poor woman. He went home, but could not sleep that night, and for a fortnight continued pleading with God

## FRAGMENTS.

for mercy,—*unbelief*, as he expressed it, *hindering* him from getting peace, though all the time his mind was full of the words, “He that *believeth, shall be saved.*” At last peace and joy entered his soul,—the result of believing in the Lord, who, as he said, “had given Himself for me.”

When she spoke of the contrast in his appearance to his former ragged state, he replied, “Oh, it’s that blessed One, who has done it *all,*” proving the truth of that word, “Godliness is *profitable* unto the life that now is.”

On parting with her, he put into her hand a shilling, in token of gratitude, *urging* upon her the solemn responsibility of speaking earnestly and plainly to any “cad” who might ever visit her hereafter. G. T.

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## FRAGMENTS.

### THE LANGUAGE OF THE HEART.

The *surrendered* heart.—“Wilt thou go with this man?” And she said, “I will go.” (Genesis xxiv. 58.)

The *ravished* heart.—“He is altogether lovely! —This is my beloved, and this my friend.” (Cant. v. 16.)

The *waiting* heart.—“Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (Rev. xxii. 20)

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The *Worldling’s* Motto.—“Not this man but Barabbas.” (John xviii. 40)

The *Believer’s* Motto.—“Not I, but Christ.” (Galatians ii. 20.)

## ETERNAL LIFE.

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Had'st thou the wealth of all the world,  
And all its countless treasure ;  
Could'st thou obtain the world's applause  
Could'st thou command its pleasure ;  
Thou still wert far from peace and joy,  
Wert thou still unforgiven ;  
None can be happy, though they try,  
'Till they are meet for heaven.

And Jesu's precious blood *alone*,  
Can fit the soul for glory ;  
A truth which far and wide is known,  
An oft repeated story ;  
Yet oh, 'tis true ! God's grace is free,  
Poor sinner, now believe it !  
Eternal life is offered thee,  
O haste thee to receive it !

*Eternal Life !* O ponder well  
The meaning of this sentence ;  
Let it upon thy conscience dwell,  
And lead thee to repentance ;  
No longer deem the blessed God  
As One who cannot love thee ;  
He waits to ease thee of thy load,  
O let His mercy move thee !

A. M.

## GOD'S SALVATION AND THE SCORNER'S DOOM.

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“ Then Elisha said, Hear ye the word of the Lord ; Thus saith the Lord, To-morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria. Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be ? And he said, Behold thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate : and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die ? If we say, we will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there : and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians : if they save us alive, we shall live ; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians : and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, *even* the noise of a great host : and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the uttermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold, and raiment, and went and hid it ; and came again, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well : this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace : if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us : now therefore come, that we may go and

## GOD'S SALVATION

tell the king's household. So they came and called unto the porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were. And he called the porters; and they told it to the king's house within. And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry: therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it: behold, I say, they are even as all the multitude of the Israelites that are consumed:) and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. And they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord. And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass as the man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the man of God, and said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died."—2 KINGS vii. 1-20.

“Salvation is of the Lord.” This is a word

## AND THE SCORNER'S DOOM.

uttered by Jonah before the hand of God delivered him from the belly of the great fish, but *after* Jonah had learned the lesson which the Lord meant to teach him. "Salvation is of the Lord," i.e. it is entirely of God's grace. It may meet my need, and thanks be to God, it does meet it, but the condition I am in, whether rather higher, or rather lower in no way affects the grace of God; in fact the worse a man is, the nearer he is to salvation, for then he has nothing of his own to rest upon, and cannot deceive himself with the thought that he is better than his neighbours. The King, in this chapter; is a picture of man in his pride and his religion, and the lepers are a picture of man in his filthiness without religion, and God meets both cases. Elisha is a picture of Christ, full of grace and truth; the One who meets man in his guilt, however great that guilt may be.

Samaria—Israel—had departed from God, and as the result of that departure God had brought up the King of Syria and his armies against them, and they thoroughly beleaguered the city of Samaria till the state of famine and destitution passed all description. You can imagine nothing worse than a woman boiling her own son. When God draws a picture, He draws a true picture. Man likes to draw a bright picture and to throw a veil over the dark side; God describes faithfully what man is.

In the King we see a certain measure of looking to God,—he wore sackcloth next to his flesh. Sackcloth is in scripture a well-known symbol of repentance; too proud to let

## GOD'S SALVATION

the people know he thought the finger of God was upon him, he put the sackcloth within, not without. He was like many an one now, who has a certain amount of seriousness, but would not like his neighbours to know. He did not like to own his sin, and would willingly have blamed God or His servant, for this state which was the result of Israel's sin. Though there might have been religion and formalism there was evidently no turning of heart to God, in the King, for had there been real repentance, the sackcloth I believe, would have been worn outside, not in. Moreover he blames the prophet and is determined to wreak his vengeance upon him. Man has done worse than that, man has wreaked his vengeance on the One who came to bless, who went about doing good, who healed their sick and raised their dead; Him in their bitter hatred they crucified and slew.

Elisha was a type of Jesus in being a blesser of Israel, and the King in his pride would have taken the prophet's life, and man in his sin did take the life of Jesus. Did it ever strike you what part you have had in the death of Jesus? I own your voice did not swell those awful cries "Away with Him, His blood be on us," but you have a heart that is in sympathy with those who did thus cry, for if you are not yet a child of God you are an enemy of God, for there are but two classes, children of God and enemies of God. Do you say, I am not an enemy. Are you a friend then? Are you a child? Have you been born again? Have

## AND THE SCORNER'S DOOM.

you been quickened by the Spirit? Have you eternal life?

“ Oh, no one can know ” you reply. Pardon me my friend you are wrong in that, the believer is entitled to know with absolute certainty that he is a child of God “ these things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life.” Another thing we know on divine authority, that the friendship of the world is enmity with God. It is impossible to be a friend of the world and a friend of God. “ If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him,” John says. God declares we were His enemies, “ when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son ” Do you own you have been an enemy? “ No.” Ah, you little know your own history, look back at it, have you loved Him? “ Not as much as I ought.” What an evasive answer. The fact is people do not like to be brought to this point. For this very reason, BECAUSE we were *enemies*, the gospel is preached; it comes out as a message from God to those who are away from God, “ we pray you ” Paul says, “ in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God ” 2 Cor. v. 20.

The King, in this chapter I have said is the picture of an unconverted religious man, there was the external religiousness, but within there was hatred, he wanted the life of Elisha, Elisha who had done only good to Israel, whom the moment before he had called “ my Father.”

## GOD'S SALVATION

Look on farther in man's history and see, one moment the people are hanging on the lips of Jesus, and the next they take Him to the brow of the hill to cast Him down, and why? Because He had made them know their state and they could not bear it (Luke iv.) People do not like their consciences reached. The King was angry, and I am not very sorry when I see people angry at the gospel preaching, it shows that conscience has been touched. But are you an enemy of Christ's and do not know it? Has Satan given you some sweet lullaby whereby you are lulled in false security? Oh wake up, wake up, be roused in time, be warned of the terrible danger of remaining one night longer, an *enemy* of God.

Look I beseech you at the grace of God. The messenger goes down to Elisha, and the King follows. Why was not the messenger dealt with? because grace comes in. It is a picture of man in his sin, man in his guilt; man in his hatred, confronted by grace. Now that your evil has reached its full height, now that you have shown your religion is false, and your enmity at its height, now that your sin has reached its culminating point, now God will come in and save you. Grace comes in to meet the desperate need of man's utter ruin.

Where are you if you are not a child of God? You are a *sinner*. You may be religious, so was the King, you are a religious sinner. You may be moral, you are a moral sinner. You may be educated, you are an

## AND THE SCORNER'S DOOM.

educated sinner, God says to you, "There is nothing in your heart but enmity against me, I know what *you* are, now let me tell you what *I* am." Thus saith the Lord "tomorrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel in the gate of Samaria." Grace seizes the moment when hatred has done its very worst and says "now this is the moment of Salvation." It was at the cross, when man had done his very worst in putting Jesus there, when man's sin, and man's hatred, had reached their height, that was the very moment God chose to reverse every thing, God took that moment to reveal His love and put away man's guilt. The cross was the place where good and evil, love and hatred met in mortal combat and love conquered—love gushes from His pierced side, love for God and His glory, love to the poor sinner in his sinful state, for nothing but His blood could meet that sinful state and put away his guilt. There love triumphed over sin and hatred and all the dark enmity of man's heart.

"To-morrow." Those words to the starving inhabitants of Samaria meant salvation, meant a thorough deliverance from their pitiable state. But unbelief always rejects the glad tidings of God. Dire, dark, unbelief always throws cold water on the gospel of God; "if the Lord would make windows in Heaven might this thing be" says the nobleman. "Salvation to-morrow? I do not believe it" says the lord "you tell me there is full deliverance coming to-morrow, it

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cannot be, if it were rained down from heaven it might be, in no other way could it be *in the gate of Samaria.*" But that is just the point, the whole truth, salvation comes to the very place where you are. And, dear Reader I have, better tidings for you than there were that day in Samaria, I preach, not salvation *to-morrow*, for *a shekel of silver*, but salvation *to-day*, this moment for you, where you now are, salvation without money and without price. "Be this known unto you, that through this man is preached unto you the remission of sins" for "*now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." Salvation through Jesu's blood is proclaimed to you *now*, on the ground that you are a sinner and are *lost*. He knows your true state and He offers you salvation now, without money and without price, salvation *to-day*, *salvation TO-DAY*. From the heart of God comes down the message to you as you are in your sins to-day, that the sins, the guilt, the debt, and the judgment due to man have been taken by another, paid by another—all the deep debt, and God the Holy Ghost is ready to take possession of the heart that believes God's message.

But what about the unbeliever? "Behold thou shalt see it with thine eyes but shalt not eat thereof." These are close dealings, mark them well. Oh careless scoffing soul, you who do not know Christ, do not want Christ, do not want to be converted, you may laugh now, you will not laugh in hell, depend upon this there are no scuffers in the lake of fire. It is all

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very well for you to laugh and have your sport when the evangelist proclaims the gospel but remember, "thou shalt see it with thine eyes," when too late for thee to accept of it. "Son remember" oh remember, you, even *you shall know* it is all true, when you can never have it. Thou shalt hear those sounds of heavenly music inside the gates where thou mayest *never* enter—music that thou mightest have joined in, but now *never* may. Thou shalt behold *afar off* that scene of holy divine joy and bliss of the redeemed, thou shalt see every eye fixed with ineffable joy on Christ, "thou shalt *see* it," but *afar off*, thou thyself being cast out, and degraded: cast out *for ever*, "thou shalt see it" yes *see it*, but *shalt not taste* thereof. What a withering sentence! what a terrible sentence!

He who said "to-morrow shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel," *i.e.* to-morrow shall salvation come to you, also said "thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." Each word came true; as the first, so the second, and He who spake as never man spake says "he that believeth on me shall never hunger" "he that believeth shall be saved" says also "he that believeth *not* shall be damned."

I believe the fine flour is typical of Christ, the bread of life, the bread of Heaven, given for man, Christ given for man's need. Oh despise not His grace, slight not His love, risk not the unbeliever's doom. Oh risk it not another day, another moment: go to Him,

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trust Him, let the lepers show you the way. They went out to throw themselves on unknown pity, you have only to throw yourself on the mercy of God on the compassion of God—they came to the camp of the Syrians, and found everything they needed, and nothing to hinder their taking all they needed, and if you take the place of the lepers, of an empty one, and go out to God, though you may have thought God your enemy (as they thought the Syrians their enemies, yet found all they needed, and found none to hinder their taking it too,) you will find nothing to hinder your taking salvation and the ample provision God has provided. You have nothing to do but to take it, and then to turn round and tell others, “there is plenty for you too,” enough and to spare! there is everything I need, and that others need too.

There is nothing God keeps back from those that trust Him, from those who come forth to His dear Son. Oh trust Him now, thou shalt find in Him a Saviour and a friend, a helper and a succourer, thou shalt find in Him thine all for time and for eternity, thou shalt find with me that “salvation is of the Lord.” But oh if thou art lost through thine unbelief thou shalt find it is all thine own folly, thou shalt have none to blame for it but thyself. “And so it fell out unto him for the people trod upon him in the gate and he died.” He saw it; the food, the salvation for Samaria, but *too late*, there it was; the unmistakable evidence of the

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truth of the prophet's words, but *not for him*. And, so with you, like the poor rich man in Luke xvi. you shall be able to see *afar off* what you despised, I do not say how long or how often you shall see it, but once I say, you will have one long, one fixed look at the salvation of God that might have been yours but for your own unbelief, "thou shalt see it with thine eyes but shalt not taste thereof." Oh my friend you have despised mercy long enough, despise it no longer, you have turned *from* Christ long enough, turn *to* Him now, and receive from His hands the salvation He is so willing to bestow, that He may get the glory, and your soul eternal joy.

W. T. P. W.

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## THAT'S THE BEAUTY OF IT.

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These words were uttered by an aged woman living in the Village of Little H——, in Berkshire. Not knowing that she was a true believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, I reminded her that she was nearing the end of the journey of her life, and spoke to her of that rest which lies beyond this weary world, "the rest that remains for the people of God," and how happy it is to be looking forward with joyful anticipation of it. "That's the BEAUTY of it," she quickly replied. I then went on to speak of the surpassing love of God; in that He sent His only begotten Son into this

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world to die for His enemies, and that the mighty debt which sinners owed TO GOD had been paid. Again the aged but evidently happy one emphatically said, "That's the BEAUTY of it." Then I ventured to bring before her the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and assured her that, although she had passed through seventy-seven summers and winters, yet she might never die and be carried to the grave, but "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, be changed" and "caught up to meet the Lord in the air, so be for ever (or always) with the Lord"—see 1 Cor. xv. 52; 1 Thess. iv. 17.

Previous to speaking to our aged friend, I had spoken to her daughter, who believed ABOUT Christ, but it is feared had not believed IN Him, to the saving of her soul. She was by no means an opposer of the Gospel, but she had not seen "the beauty of it." The daughter was in the dark, the mother in the light. The former reminds me of a great class of persons who assent to the truths of the Bible, and who would by no means oppose what they term "good things;" for instance, they believe there remaineth a rest for the people of God, yet they are far from knowing that it remaineth *for them*, they HOPE it does. It may be, they intuitively feel that the term "the people of God" does not apply to them. Again, how many, surely too many, there are, who profess to believe that Jesus died upon Calvary's Cross for sinners, who cannot, yea dare not, say with the Apostle Paul, "Who loved ME, and gave Him-

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self for ME." How many an unsaved sinner believes that Jesus Christ paid A mighty debt on the Cross, yet knows not *his* debt is paid, to make use of the old lady's words, they do not see "the BEAUTY of it," and surely we are right in saying that there is such a thing as "the BEAUTY of it?"

But it is an intensely individual matter to see this beauty. Truly "there is none righteous, no not one," yet God has provided Righteousness: Christ Himself; and while this Righteousness is UNTO all, yet is it only UPON ALL them that BELIEVE, (Romans iii, 10, and 22). To the poor blind man to whom Christ gave his eyesight, the question was put, "Dost THOU believe on the Son of God?" His answer—"Lord I believe," John ix. 36, 38. People generalise too much in this important matter, how often we are obliged to hear the hackneyed expression, "We know there is no other way to heaven but through Jesus Christ." And yet, those who use it are in the "way that seemeth *right* unto a MAN, but the end thereof are the ways of *death*," Proverbs xiv, 12. Paul says "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" but adds, "of whom I am chief; Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in *me* first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe in Him to life everlasting." 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.

"One thing," says David, "have I desired

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of the Lord, that will I seek after ; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life ; to behold the BEAUTY of the Lord and to inquire in His temple," Ps. xxvii. 4. If once the beauty of the Lord is known, the soul wants to know more and more of Him. Paul saw the beauty of the Lord, when he said, "but those things that were *gain* to me, those I counted *loss* for Christ," Phil. iii. 7.

With regard to the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, I daresay that the aged one I met in Little H—— is not the only believer in the Lord Jesus Christ who has not seen "the beauty of it," and yet, if the heart is true to Him, it will desire to see Him. It is but comparatively a few years since the cry has been made "Behold the Bridegroom cometh," yet numbers who are sincere believers are seemingly heedless to the command "Go YE OUT to meet Him," Matthew xxv. We often hear the expression, "there is one thing we are *sure* of, that is death." If so, why do the Scriptures say "we SHALL NOT ALL sleep (or die) but we shall all be changed, in a moment," Cor. xv, 51, 52. The Scriptures tell us, when the Lord comes, "the dead *in* Christ shall rise first, then we which are *alive* and remain, shall be CAUGHT UP together with them, *to meet the Lord in the air* so to be for ever (or always) with the Lord," 1 Thess. iv, 16, 17.

This most clearly shows that all Christians will NOT die, if so, who can be meant by those who shall be LIVING on the earth, and be "caught up" when the Lord comes in the air?

## A SOLDIER'S CONVERSION.

“ Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry,” Hebrews x. 37. Not death, but the Lord, should be the expectation of all who truly believe in Him, and “ Whosoever believeth in Him SHALL NOT PERISH, but have everlasting life,” John iii, 16.

W. R. C.

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## THE TEXT ON THE WALL; A SOLDIER'S CONVERSION.

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Having heard that you wished for a short account of my dear brother's conversion, I send you the following few particulars of the Lord's dealings with him, trusting that, when the way God took to lead an anxious soul to Christ is made known through the pages of “ Glad Tidings,” God Himself may get fresh glory in His own work, by its being the means used for the conversion of other souls also.

It is now some years since my brother gave up the post he held in ——— where he was doing exceedingly well, and enlisted as a soldier. From the time he took this step, he left off writing home. You may well imagine the terrible agony of suspense and grief this caused to my mother and to us all, and how constantly he was the subject of earnest prayer and supplication. Latterly my mother felt increasingly anxious about him, he was continually on her heart in a very special manner, and she entreated the Lord to let her know if he

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still lived; and more, she besought Him, if A—, were yet alive, not to take him away until she had some assurance as to his soul's salvation.

The Lord in His tender love and pity heard and answered her cry. A short time only elapsed when a letter came from A.'s most intimate friend in the regiment, written at his request, in order to tell us where he was, and also of his sad state of health. He had then been lying for nearly two months in the Barrack Hospital at ———, suffering from rapid consumption. My mother was confined to her bed at the time we received the letter, so I went at once to him and she followed me, as soon as she was able to leave her room.

How heart-breaking it was thus to meet the long lost son and brother, I need not tell you. He was so changed that I should scarcely have recognised him. That terrible disease had made such rapid ravages on the face and form of the one we loved, that it was evident to us, from the very first, that his days on earth were reckoned, and that the number of them could be but few indeed. Our hearts went up to the living God, to give eternal life to the one whom death was fast claiming as its prey, and His own Light, the Light of Life, lit up the darkness.

Not long after my arrival, when we were alone together, he told me that he knew he was dying, and that he was not ready to die. I asked him if he had long thought about his soul. "Not very long," he answered, adding

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that he was ashamed to say it. I spoke to him of our blessed Saviour, of His love for the sinner, of how He had done everything that was needed for his salvation, when He hung on Calvary's Cross. I told him how the three words "It is *Finished*" from the lips of the dying Saviour, were the full proof that the work was accomplished that secured the eternal salvation of every one who trusted in Jesus,—that he had only to believe in Him and he would be saved. He seemed astonished and said "Oh I think there *must be something to do.*" Once more I told him how Jesus had done it all, borne all the heavy penalty due to us, drunk the bitter cup of wrath that was ours, to its last dregs, and left us nothing but the cup of salvation. I told him that it was not needed that we should do *anything* for our souls' salvation, and that if it *were* needed we could not do it; and I took the Bible that was by his side, and read to him several passages from the 3rd Chapter of John's Gospel, and from the 1st Epistle of John; but he found no peace there, for he was looking for it in himself instead of in Christ, who is "our peace."

He was greatly disturbed by the men around him swearing and telling worldly stories, when he would fain have been quiet to think of the eternity before him, and of the concerns of his soul, so the day after my arrival we removed him to comfortable lodgings quite near to the hospital.

In spite, however, of all the love and care we

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could give him, he became rapidly weaker. So weak was he that I could only read to him just one verse from the Bible at a time, and even that was sometimes almost more than he could bear, and was often interrupted by a terrible fit of coughing: thus I could only cling to the Lord, and cry to Him to speak to him Himself, for I felt how helpless we were, and that He alone could reach His case, and must do it in His own way.

One day, after I had been some days with him, I said to him, "A— dear, are you trusting in Jesus?" "Oh yes" he replied, "Then are you saved?" I asked. "That is what I cannot say," he answered.

I told him, if he were really believing God's word, he would know he was saved, and that if he did not believe the record God gave of His Son, he was making God a liar. Still all seemed dark in his soul.

Just after this, I called on a Christian lady who had shewn great kindness to A—, to thank her for her kind attention to him, and while there I noticed in her sitting-room several texts hanging up against the wall, one of which particularly struck me. It was this—"And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." 1 John v. 11. 12.

I asked Miss S—, if she thought I could buy one similar, in the town, as I felt I should so much like to hang it up in my brother's room. She very kindly said, she would gladly give me this one, for the Lord might use it for the sal-

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vation of his soul, and together we knelt and asked the Lord to bless His own word, and to accomplish by it that for which we so earnestly longed, dear A—'s conversion. On my return to our lodgings with my treasure, I told A— I had got such a beautiful text, and that I was going to hang it up on the wall, where he could easily read it from his bed. When I had done so, to my surprise he was quite angry, and said he did not like texts on walls, it always put him in mind of the race-course.

In my heart I felt God intended to bless that word of His, and I turned round and said to my mother "The Lord says His word shall not return to Him void; *some one will* receive blessing from that text."

The next day was the Lord's Day, and as I was by A.—'s bed, attending to him, he suddenly said "M—, I am saved."

"When did you know it?" I asked joyfully and wonderingly.

"Through the night," rejoined he.

"And what was it shewed you; you are saved?"

"*The text on the wall,*" he answered. What a moment of thankfulness and rejoicing that was; now our hearts could sing praises to our God for His great Salvation!

From that Lord's Day morning until the following one, when he went to be for ever with the One who had saved him, dear A. never had a doubt or a fear, and he told out his conversion to his great friend and fellow soldier, beseeching him to accept Christ too.

## THE TEXT ON THE WALL.

The last time he ever saw this friend on earth, he pleaded with him to come to Jesus ; he told him it was so *easy* to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and so happy a thing to rest in Him.

He said it was good for him that he had been afflicted, or he might not have thought about his soul ; he owned the Lord's goodness to him in laying him on a bed of pain and sickness there to show him his *need* of a Saviour, and the Saviour who had met the need. Sweetly and pleasantly he seemed to rest in Him for those eight short days that remained.

The day before he died, we sang together for the last time on earth, " How sweet the name of Jesus sounds." At that time he appeared unconscious of everything passing round him save the mention of that precious name.

We knew now the end of the journey must be near, and so it was. A few more hours rolled away, then at a quarter past three on the Lord's Day morning, it seemed to us as though our beloved A.—. literally fell asleep in the very arms of Jesus, for there was neither sigh nor struggle, it was like an infant falling asleep on its mother's breast.

In all our sorrow we still could thank and praise Him who had dealt so tenderly with my brother and with us, who had answered the mother's yearning cry for her lost and wandering one, and enabled her to say from the depths of a full heart " This my son was dead and is alive again, he was lost and is found," knowing too that she was but faintly re-echoing on earth

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the shout of rejoicing that had rung through the Father's house above, as the wanderer was welcomed home.

I trust you will remember in prayer the one for whom my brother so longed and prayed.

M. A.

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“ PEACE UNTO YOU.”

*John* xx. 19.

The blessed words which stand at the head of this paper were spoken by the Son of God, after He had accomplished the mighty work on the ground of which peace could be pronounced. This is truly precious, because the stability of the peace is according to the value of the work by which it was made.

As it is more than likely that these lines will be read by some who are longing for peace, I shall briefly shew, first, why peace was needed; secondly, how it was made; and, thirdly, how it may be possessed.

1. PEACE NEEDED.

First, then, sin has placed man far away from God. In Eden Satan succeeded in making man doubt God's goodness, and disobey His word. Eden-blessedness was thus lost for ever, and Adam and Eve driven out from God's presence, carrying with them, alas! a sinful nature, in which dwells hatred and distrust of God. Outside of Eden, Adam becomes the ruined parent

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of a ruined family—the corrupt spring whose waters have tainted the whole human race. It is needful to press home this fact, in these days when so many are ignoring or denying man’s ruin. And, let me say, that with all God’s patient trial and cultivation of man, from Eden to the cross, his nature was not altered thereby, for during the closing hours of his trial he perpetrated the most awful deed of iniquity possible, viz., crucifying the Son of God. God does a work at the Cross by His Son, it is true, but do not let it be thought that man’s guilt is lessened thereby. Since the Cross man has been treated as *lost*, and the good news of Salvation, through Christ and His work, proclaimed to him as such. Ah, dear reader, the Cross is not what so many suppose it to be, viz., a good remedy for the flesh, but, on the contrary, the utter judgment of it. True it is that a good portion of the world has garbed itself with a fair religious cloak, but a decent exterior leaves man as internally corrupt as ever. “What think ye of Christ?” is the great question for to-day. Reader, what think *you* of Christ?

But, added to the fact that man is a ruined creature, through Adam’s sin, the Scripture declares that “*all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. iii. 23), so that every man is both guilty and lost. I admit fully that amongst men there is a difference; some being more openly corrupt than others, but I contend that *before God* all stand on one common level, and therefore all need the same

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salvation. I press too the fact, that man is as powerless to save himself, as a dead man is to walk ; and as unable to cleanse away his guilt, as an Ethiopian is to change his skin.

But more. God has been insulted by man's sin, and the peace of His throne disturbed. Who then can undertake to make reparation to God for the offence? Who offers to His throne a sufficient satisfaction?

Further, man has fallen under the power of a cruel enemy—a mighty foe, with whom he is utterly unable to cope. Yes, spite of man's boasted liberty he is a helpless captive in Satan's chain.

But God's heart has made the *first* movement towards the sinner. Think of this, dear reader ; God has moved towards you in compassion. Blessed fact ! The difficulty with so many is that they suppose that they are to be the active parties in the matter of reconciliation. But no ; God's heart is the grand starting point, and it was God's heart that Satan attacked in Eden, and a more diabolical attack there never was. So terribly is man under the power of Satan's lie, that, though the blessed Son of God came into this world to disclose God's heart and to win back man's, it was all in vain, for man nailed Him to a cross of ignominy and shame, thus refusing all the overtures of Divine love.

I have said that God's heart moved *first* towards the sinner ; but what practical expression of His love was there ? Oh, wondrous news, He gave His Son ! His own blessed thought it was, as being the only possible way

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for His glory and man's blessing. Away with the lie, the cheat, the delusion of the enemy, which is so rapidly gaining favour, and which says that because God is love He cannot and will not punish sin eternally, but either save all irrespective of repentance and faith in Christ, or else annihilate the wicked after a certain period of suffering in hell! Alas, there is no time in hell, only an awful eternity—a Godless, Christless, eternity! But more, the Son of God in obedience and love gave Himself, and at the end of His wondrous pathway here below, as man He gave Himself up to accomplish that stupendous work which has laid a secure basis to support the whole glory of God, and which thoroughly meets the awful plight in which man is, through sin. What a blessed thing to be able to proclaim this fact in such a world as this—a world of misery, anguish, decay and death!

### 2. PEACE MADE.

Just think, dear reader, of the fact that this wondrous Person—the God-man—has stood between God and the sinner, on the cross, and there accomplished—all alone for He said, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”—that work which, on the one hand, reaches in all its value to the Throne of God, and, on the other hand, right down to the sinners awful depth of ruin. Words cannot tell the value of it, but this I know, that God has put into supreme glory the blessed Man who wrought it out, and means also to bring

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everyone who believes on His Son into glory too.

He has “made peace through the blood of his cross” (Col. i. 20). He has cleared away everything that may well cause us terror. The whole wrath of God due to you, reader, if believing on Him, was emptied on His blessed head. Surely it is enough to give you peace, if you are awakened to the sense of sin, to know that God has satisfied Himself about your sin, by the death of His Son, and raised Him out of death as the token of it. Oh, it is God and His love, the Son and His work, with the Holy Ghost’s blessed and sure testimony to it, that I want to bring before you.

Have you ever stood upon the sea-shore during the raging of a storm, and watched the mighty foam-crested waves rolling into land, and then bursting with a deafening roar upon the beach, casting their spray yards high? If so, you can understand how apt is the figure employed by the Spirit of Christ, when speaking of the terrible judgment borne by Christ—“All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me” (Ps. xlii. 7). I thank God for that word “all,” for now I fear nothing, knowing that not the least drop of spray can ever touch me. But Jesus has emerged from death, the righteousness of God has been satisfied, the enemy met and vanquished, the battle fought and won by this blessed One alone—yes,

“ Alone He bare the cross,  
Alone it’s grief sustained.”

## “ PEACE UNTO YOU.”

The work finished, the blessed Victor hastens to His gathered disciples (see John xx.) and speaks peace to them. Thus, beloved reader, it is made, never to be disturbed again, for those believing in Christ and His mighty work. Do not think that the victory is a transient one, merely leaving the enemy crippled. No, peace is made *for ever*, for He has left the enemy behind in death, and his lawless footsteps shall never tread upon resurrection-ground, which is now the standing-place of the believing one, for Jesus not only said “ peace unto you,” but also breathed on them His own risen life, and this, perceive, *after* the great question of sin had been settled.

### 3. PEACE POSSESSED.

I have now spoken of how peace has been made, and, in conclusion, I will briefly shew how it may be possessed.

Many are the things that hinder the anxious one getting it. The other day I called upon a woman who wanted it, but could not succeed in obtaining it, and why? Poor thing, she was brooding over her own sinful state. She enquired if I ever doubted or feared. “Never,” I said, “Ah, but,” she rejoined, “you have not led a sinful life like me.” I saw her difficulty. Peace, for her, depended upon sinlessness, for had her life been different, good, as men say, she would have considered herself entitled to it. I put before her the work of Christ, and God’s satisfaction through it; her sins, I said, need not hinder her having peace, for God saw in Christ’s blood an answer to them all.

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How few, comparatively, are put right with God by Christ’s precious work. The effort of thousands is to put themselves right by their works. Terrible mistake!

Reader, if weighed down beneath the burden of your sins, I have words of peace for you. Jesus suffered for them on the tree. God laid them on Him, His righteousness is satisfied, and knowing the full value of His Son’s work He declares by the Holy Ghost’s testimony that He will remember them no more (Heb. x. 17). “ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” (Rom. v. 1). But there is a question other than forgiveness of sins, and a much deeper one, viz., the presence and power of indwelling sin. This is a trouble and perplexity to many, and hinders them fully enjoying the peace made by Christ’s work. They look at their own hearts and see nothing but evil, and are sadly disappointed, for they hoped to have found some remnant of good there. But suppose they discovered the good searched after, then peace would be made to rest upon it, and not upon Christ’s perfectly accomplished and perfectly accepted work. The blessed truth, dear reader, is that God has judged the root of sin—the evil nature—at the cross of His Son. In Peter iii., 18, we read, that “ Christ hath once suffered for *sins*, the just for the unjust ;” but in Rom. viii. 3, we read that God has “ condemned *sin in the flesh* ” in Christ’s sacrifice. The believer then is entitled to know that his Adam nature has been judged at the cross, as well as his sins borne away. He therefore ought to reckon

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himself “ dead to sin ” (Rom. vi. 11) in Christ’s death, and “ alive unto God ” in Christ risen.

His state before God, as a sinner, is ended by his dying with Christ, and now he is in Christ risen, his blessed and unalterable standing before God. Yes, the believer, although conscious of indwelling sin, stands before God in the perfectness of Christ. As to the incorrigibly evil nature that remains in him during his sojourn here below, God does not recognize it. He recognizes all the failure and sin of the believer consequent upon the possession of it, (though there is no excuse for a believer sinning), and if he sin, Christ advocates for him with the Father, and deals with him by His Spirit and Word, to lead him to confession, and restoration of the communion his sin has for the time interrupted. (See 1. Jno. ii, 1). “ There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” Rom. viii. 1). May you, dear reader, know this fully.

Say, do you rest only upon Christ? If so, He made peace *for* you on the cross. (Col. i. 20). He speaks peace *to* you in resurrection, (John xx. 19) and He *is* your peace in glory. (Eph. ii. 14).

T. T. E.

## THE FIVE GO TOGETHER.

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“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” John v. 24.

In this verse we have five precious things. Please to take particular notice of them:—**HEARETH, BELIEVETH, HATH, SHALL NOT, IS.** And mark, *the five go together*, you cannot have *two* and leave *three*, or *three* and leave *two*. *They go in a lump*. God says, Here, poor anxious soul, here is a bundle of blessings for you. Now, just read the verse again, and be sure you don't miss anything out of the bundle.

But I think I hear some poor, dear, anxious soul saying, “Oh, yes, Sir, I know all that; I've read that verse over and over again: but still I'm no better—it's no use going over it any more, I don't feel that I'm saved!”

“I'm very thankful, indeed, for that.”

“Thankful, Sir, because I can't say ‘I'm saved?’”

“No! but thankful you can't **FEEL** saved.

You see, you are trying to put into the bundle what God leaves out, and leaving out what God puts in. **FEELING SAVED** is not in the whole verse. “Faith cometh by hearing” (Rom. x. 17), and, in this verse, Jesus

THE FIVE GO TOGETHER.

puts HEARING first; then BELIEVING; then HATH; then SHALL NOT; then IS. You want to leave out the BELIEVING and substitute FEELING. So I am thankful, as I said before, that you don't FEEL SAVED; for if you were to get some nice *feelings* you would run away with the idea that you were saved, and if asked, 'Are you saved?' You would reply, 'Yes.' 'How do you know?' 'Well, I've felt a change, and I'm very happy.' Then the first time the dark clouds sailed across your sky your feelings would go, and then you would have lost your Saviour. Thus you would make a Saviour of your FEELINGS instead of CHRIST. Now, please don't put in what God leaves out, and don't say you know all about it, for I'm sure you don't know these five precious things that go together.

Well, look here, have you 'heard' the word?"

"Yes sir."

"And believe on him that sent Him?"

"Yes sir, I do believe."

"Well now please tell me what you believe?"

"I believe that God sent Jesus to take my place, and He died for me."

"Do you?"

"Yes I do."

"Now you are sure you do?"

"Quite sure."

"Then you have HEARD?"

"Yes, sir."

"And you BELIEVE?"

"Yes, I do."

THE FIVE GO TOGETHER.

“Then what is the third thing?”

“‘HATH everlasting life’”

“Then have you got everlasting life?”

“Ah well sir but you see that’s just what I cannot say; if I could only feel sure about that point I should be all right.”

“Well what do you think would make you feel sure?”

“I scarcely know, sir.”

“Look here, suppose you owed the rent of a house and couldn’t pay it, and I go and pay every farthing of it and bring you the receipt. What would make you sure as to the rent being paid!”

“Oh! the receipt of course.”

“Quite so, and you would FEEL happy because you KNEW your rent was paid, and should the landlord again demand the rent, you would not speak to him of your *feelings*, but produce the *receipt*. And God is holding out His receipt to you and you are shutting your eyes to it, and wanting to FEEL it, instead of reading and believing it.”

“You have HEARD?”

“Yes,”

“You BELIEVE?”

“Yes, Sir.”

“Then God says, you HAVE, not you HOPE to get. ‘HATH everlasting life’ is His word, and that is not all, you SHALL NOT come into condemnation or judgment. That has all fallen on Jesus, and the believer is in Him, and, ‘there is therefore NOW NO CONDEMNATION to them who are IN Christ Jesus.’

THE FIVE GO TOGETHER.

You will never stand before The Great White Throne to be judged for your sins, all your judgment was borne by Jesus on the Cross, and He has so settled that question, that God has raised Him from the dead. 'The man in the glory' is the proof the debt is paid, and thus you can never come into judgment, for you sins are all gone.

"But that is not all even, for we get another thing 'IS passed from *death* unto *life*.' You were in a state of death, 'dead in trespasses and sins.' (Eph. ii., 1.) But now you ARE passed from death unto life; not WILL do so by and by, but, 'IS passed.' How glorious! Quickened together, raised up together, made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. ii., 5, 6.) What a bundle of blessings, and any poor sinner, that has HEARD and BELIEVED, gets the other three also, for they all go together.

"Now anxious one, would you like the five?"

"Yes sir, I would."

"Will you take them?"

"Yes I will."

"Then here they are for you.

'HEARETH my word.' Have you heard?"

"Yes I have."

"'BELIEVETH on Him that sent me.' Do you believe?"

"Yes I do."

"'HATH everlasting life?' Have you it?"

"Yes, I see I have."

"'SHALL NOT come into condemnation.' Will you be condemned?"

IT'S JUST AS GOD SENT IT.

“No, I am sure I shall not, I see it now.”

“‘IS passed from death into life.’ Are you thus passed?”

“Yes I see I am.”

“Then you take the five in a lump?”

“I do.”

“And you are saved?”

“Yes sir.”

“When?”

“Now.”

“How do you know?”

“God says so in that verse sir.”

“And you are now perfectly satisfied with His word?”

“Yes, indeed I am.”

“Well, ‘He that believeth on him shall not be ashamed.’” Rom x., 11. W. E.

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IT'S JUST AS GOD SENT IT: DRINK  
IT UP, MAN!

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During the past autumn a Christian, in business in London, was spending his vacation in his native county of Cumberland, wandering hither and thither through some of its most beautiful scenery of hill and vale, of rock and fell, of lake and waterfall, finding relief to body and mind after a year's work in the great Metropolis. One day, while thus enjoying his holiday, and walking through a picturesque part of the country, he went on and on, the blue sky, without a cloud, above, reminding him of the verse:—

IT'S JUST AS GOD SENT IT ;

“ Not a cloud above, not a spot within ;  
*Christ* DIED, THEN I AM clean ; ”

while on either side the high hills, piling one on top of another, brought up before his mind the word, “ As the mountains are round about Jerusalem : so the LORD is round about his people, from henceforth, even for ever.” (Ps. cxxv. 2.)

At length he found out that he had lost his way, as people say, and soon feeling weary by the walk, and somewhat exhausted by the heat of the weather, he began to look about him for some house, where he might get food and rest, and also be directed into the right road back to the place whence he started. At the same time he was quite happy in the sense that he had been permitted thus to miss his road for some good purpose, and that it would be wisely overruled by Him who had numbered every hair of his head. Well, on he went till he came in sight of a farmhouse, towards which he at once bent his steps. Upon asking the kindly-looking inmates to allow him to rest awhile, and supply him with milk and bread, he was at once invited inside and made to sit down.

While the refreshment was being prepared, he looked around him, and noticed an old woman sitting in a corner, with a large Bible before her, and a big pair of spectacles on her nose, through which she was eyeing our friend with evident curiosity and interest. They interchanged the common civilities of the day,

## DRINK IT UP, MAN!

until the milk and bread were set before the traveller; upon which he bent his head to ask a blessing upon the food; and also, for a word from God for his entertainers, and specially for the old lady. She, mistaking his attitude for that of scrutinizing the milk, and his delay to be the result of doubting its sweetness, exclaimed, "Nay mon, t'milk's o'reet, it's just as God sent it, drink it up mon!"

This was an opening indeed. He assured her he did not for a moment doubt the quality of the milk, and, in return, asked her was that what she did with the "sincere milk" of the Word of God, which He had sent to her, and which she then had before her? did she simply believe it, and thus drink IT up, as her own, to live upon, and grow thereby?

"Yes; she *hoped* she did." Well, then, she KNEW, of course, that all her sins WERE forgiven, that she HAD eternal life, HAD peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and was just waiting for God's Son from heaven. (Acts xiii, 38; John v, 24; Rom. v, 1: 1 Thess. i, 10.) "Nay, *nay*, she could not say all that; she wished she could. Indeed, SHE *thought* no one could go as far as all that."

Our friend asked her to turn to the 3rd chapter of John's gospel, and lovingly pressed upon her to "drink up, JUST as *God sent* them," the 14th to 18th verses; and then other Scriptures were looked at, such as "Being justified by faith, we HAVE peace with God." "For when we were YET without strength in due time Christ died for the UNGODLY." "For God

IT'S JUST AS GOD SENT IT;

commendeth HIS love, in that while we were YET *sinner's* Christ died for us." And again, "He that believeth HATH everlasting life." And, "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may KNOW that ye *have* eternal life." While thus earnestly and affectionately begging her to take them, as from God Himself, whose word it was, the truths were brought home to her soul; and soon the old lady began to rejoice and be glad, and at the same time to wonder she should have read her Bible for so many years, and not have seen such precious and glorious truths before.

A happy time these two had together over that old Bible—our friend delighted to be thus used of God; and the dear old woman, with tears of joy chasing each other down her cheeks, thanking Him that this child and servant of His had been permitted to *lose his* way in "Jericho Vale," that she might FIND His Son to be to her "THE way, THE truth, and THE life."

And now, dear reader, let me ask you, have YOU drunk IT up, *just as God sent it*? I mean His loving, simple Word, not doctrines, or theology, but the sincere, PURE, unadulterated Word of God. Through simple faith have you been justified BY God, have you peace WITH God, do you stand IN God's favour, and rejoice in hope OF God's glory? *Peace—grace—glory*. What a threefold blessing;

Let me remind you of One who did drink up what God sent; that Blessed, Peerless One—

## DRINK IT UP, MAN!

God's beloved Son, who said, "The cup which my Father *hath* given me, shall I not drink it?"—that One, who, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst." A sponge was filled with vinegar and put upon hyssop, and PUT to His mouth, (His hands being nailed to the tree,) and when He had received it He said, "IT IS FINISHED," and because He drank that cup—the cup of God's righteous wrath against sin, as is often sung—

" Jesus the curse sustains ;  
Guilt's bitter cup He *drains* ;  
Nothing for us remains ;  
Nothing but love—"

you are invited, and I would lovingly press upon YOU—as our friend did upon the old lady, using her own words—to drink up, as God sent it, the simple Word—the loving, living words of His truth. "If any man thirst, let him come unto ME, AND DRINK." No human cistern that, no broken cistern which holds no water, but the deep, deep well of God's love; of the Father's love, as manifested in the Son; the unfathomable stream, which lies before you in that precious Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever; by Peter spoken of as the "sincere — *pure*—unadulterated—milk." Oh! drink it up NOW. God grant it, precious soul—and then with you, as with the dear old soul in "Jericho Vale," the result will be *at once—immediately—*

" Peace with a Holy God,  
Sweet peace, the fruit of faith."

## THE SALE OF SOULS.

“Joy and peace in believing,” will follow, and then praise and worship to Him who SO loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish but HAVE *everlasting* life.

It IS true—SO real—and both true and real for YOU at *this moment* if “You drink it up *just as God sent it.*” Have you done so? Will you *to-day*? To-morrow will be too late—to-morrow *never* comes.

S. V. H.

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## THE SALE OF SOULS.

“Who’ll sell, who’ll sell?” is Satan’s cry.

“Come, sell your souls, I’ll gladly buy.  
I’ll give you wealth, power, riches, fame,  
Pleasure or rank ; your price just name.”

“I’ll give you drink, wines rich and rare,  
And merry friends your joys to share,  
The laugh, the jest, the dance, the song,  
Come try them all, life won’t last long.”

Up comes a youth, in eager haste,  
He pauses not, no time he’ll waste,  
“My soul for drink to you I’ll sell ;  
I care not if my doom be hell.”

Ambition makes the next demand.

“I must have all ’neath my command ;  
A lofty place, a noted name.  
I’ll sell my soul for rank and fame.”

## THE SALE OF SOULS.

A fair young group comes next in view,  
And glittering jewels, dresses new.  
And baubles bright, and worthless toys,  
They think will best ensure their joys.

Another comes, his form looks old ;  
He eager cries, " Gold, give me gold.  
My soul may go if I have wealth,  
For it I'll barter friends and health."

Oh, what a motley group stood there,  
The old; the young, the bright, the fair,  
Selling their precious souls away  
For fleeting pleasures of a day.

And Satan laughed with direst hate,  
As one by one they sealed their fate ;  
And round each neck he placed a chain—  
At first they hardly felt the pain—

But every day he tighter press'd  
Those shackles till they knew no rest.  
Poor foolish dupes of Satan's wiles,  
How easily he them beguiles.

He thinks their souls worth nothing more  
Than glittering baubles, golden store,  
A glass of beer, a foolish toy,  
A fancied pleasure, promised joy.

But pleasures vanish, joys soon cease,  
Nor gold nor fame can give them peace ;  
And drink soon lays its victim low ;  
An early grave full oft they know.

But pause a moment, Jesus pleads.  
He sees your danger, knows your needs.

THE SALE OF SOULS.

He loves your souls, His life He gave,  
That He might purchase them and save.

“Why will ye die? Why will ye die?”  
Just listen to His loving cry—  
“Come unto Me; believe and live,  
Pardon and safety I will give.

“Such love as Mine no tongue can tell,  
'Tis great, 'tis deep, unspeakable;  
Behold Me on the cursed tree,  
Bleeding and dying there for thee.”

Choose now which offer you will take;  
Your soul, remember, is at stake;  
Make up your mind, while yet you may,  
Time hurries on, make no delay.

Jesus will give you life and peace,  
And joys which never, never cease,  
A faithful Friend, a Father's love,  
And then a home with Him above;

While Satan's joys all pass away,  
Like shadows on a summer's day,  
Leaving behind a weary heart,  
An aching void, a conscious smart.

Oh can it be, Oh can it be,  
That you will choose such misery,  
That you for dross your soul will sell,  
Then spend eternity in hell?

But listen now to Jesus' voice,  
And take Him for your heart's best choice  
Then, ransom'd, all your joy will be,  
To serve Him till His face you see.

E. L.

## THE INFIDEL'S CONVERSION.

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“The Lord gave us to see a wonderful instance of the power of His truth in bringing a soul from darkness to light in a moment. On Thursday, F—— and I were visiting with one of the Bible women in the Liberties, when our steps were directed to the room of an infidel, one from whose door the dear Bible woman had often turned with horror, determining never again to enter it, so terrible were his blasphemies. Such utter wretchedness I think I never witnessed, but *Jesus* was there, keeping watch over two of His lambs, waiting to carry them to the fold above. Two children lay on the floor on a heap of rags, and over them, with a sick baby in her arms, bent their mother wetting the dying lips of the one, and brushing the flies off the other, who was covered with sores. And there stood the infidel father, proud and defiant. Our hearts sank as we gazed upon the scene, and the devil came to suggest hard thoughts of our God. We turned to speak to the man, but he stopped us—he said it was no use, we need not tell *him* that our God was love, or that He was kind, or merciful—he did not believe it—he knew better—he did not believe in a future state—he did not believe there was a heaven—‘The children,’ he said, ‘talk of it and fancy they are going there. I would not disturb their minds, but it is not true.’ We talked long to him, we told him of the love of our God—how He had given His only Son to die for just such

## THE INFIDEL'S CONVERSION.

as *he*; but it seemed useless. He leaned his elbow on the chimney-piece and looking steadily at us, he said—and oh! there was such bitterness in his tone:—

‘Young ladies, when *I* hear of wrong and misery around me, it makes me *mad*, and I think—why if I had the power, these things should not be—and you tell me your God is *love*, and He permits it!’

“We told him that notwithstanding all his hard thoughts of God, God *did love* him, proud infidel that he was—and that He could save him that moment without his having to change himself in any way. As he *was*, God offered him salvation. He seemed arrested and astonished—we saw that the Lord was drawing near, that the warm beams of His love were already softening that heart of stone. We read him our Saviour’s own words from the end of John xii. Then the light burst fully on his soul—he exclaimed ‘In God’s name, I believe it.’ *Love* had broken him down—he buried his face in his hands and burst into tears. ‘My God,’ he said ‘My God! such love! What I’ve been! and such love to ME!’ The thought of that love seemed to fill his whole soul. ‘How wonderful! why, *I* would not give that baby of mine to suffer, not if it was to save the *universe*—and God gave His *only* Son to die for such as *I*. Five minutes ago I was as rank an infidel as there is in Dublin, but now I know His *love* .

“One thought of the words of Job, ‘I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear:

## THE INFIDEL'S CONVERSION.

*but now mine eye seeth thee.*' We thanked our God together before we parted, and was there not joy amongst the angels in heaven.?"

What I have narrated, written by another, is just the illustration of the words of the Lord Jesus Christ :—

“*Verily, verily I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.*” (John v, 25.) The hour which is spoken of by the above scripture is the present interval of time. The *dead*—those spiritually dead, those dead in trespasses and sins, those dead towards God, and every thing that is of God, those are the people here mentioned, whom Christ says “*shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.*”

Reader, I pray you pause, and ask yourself in the presence of God—Have I ever heard the voice of the Son of God? Have you accepted the salvation which God offers freely, without money and without price, to every poor needy sinner? “*God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” You have heard these words no doubt, many many times before, but have you laid hold of them with the hand of faith, and so obtained for yourself this precious gift of eternal life? God loves the sinner, and gave up His Son, *His only Son*, in order that He might open up a way by which He can receive every poor sinner who believes in Him

## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

—the Lord Jesus. Yes! God delights to save, and He *will* save; has He, dear reader, saved *you*? If not, may the Lord in His mercy open your eyes that you may see the danger you are in, and lead you to look to Him who died upon the cross for sinners, and who is now exalted at God's right hand, with *power* to give *life* unto the dead.

M. C.

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## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

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*“ This day is Salvation come to this house . . . For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.”* Luke xix, 9-10.

There is just one little word, my unconverted friend, that the Lord has laid very much on my heart, and I want to impress it on *yours*, and that word is *To-day*. If you *want* to be saved, be saved *to-day*, if you want to escape the damnation of hell, escape it *to-day*. The Lord has come to seek and to save *to-day*; He wants to save you *to-day*. Let me ask you this question, Do you want to be saved? “Oh yes,” I hear you answer, “of course I should like to be saved” *When* would you like to be saved? When? When? “When I die” you say. Let me tell you then, my friend, if this be your thought, you are doing your very best never to be saved at all. You are doing your very best to secure your own eternal ruin, for *to-day* only does God offer Salvation to you; *to-day* only is yours.

## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

To-day is a moment of priceless value, to-morrow you cannot call yours. The Lord's Gospel is *to-day*, the devil's gospel is always *to-morrow*. The Lord's word is *to-day*, for to-day you are *lost*. Perhaps you say, "I do not agree with you, I do not believe I am lost." Are you saved then? If not, what are you? The Lord has given me this message for you: Go and tell them that they are *lost*, and that I came to seek and to save them *to-day*. Oh listen to His message then to-day, for literally there lies *but a comma*, between "the acceptable year of the Lord," and "the day of vengeance of our God."

When the Lord was upon earth, and entered the synagogue, He read "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the capture, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord." (Isaiah lxi, 1-2). He stopped in the middle of the verse, and did not read "the Day of Vengeance of our God." Why? Because it was then, and it is now, the acceptable year of the Lord. But what is the next thing? *Vengeance!* Judgment is the next thing in this world's history, how soon it may set in, I know not, you know not.

God in goodness is restraining now, the wheels of the chariot of His righteous judgment, that the energy of His grace may go out. He is restraining judgment, that you may have

## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

another hour to be saved in. Oh, will you not make use of this hour wherein His grace lingers over you. Do not trifle with God, for if you are not a saved person at this moment, *God* knows you are lost; whether *you* know it or not; whether you believe it or not. Again, I say, do not trifle with God, do not sport on the very verge of eternity, on the verge of everlasting ruin. Do not risk that day of judgment, the judgment of the God whose mercy you have despised and refused. Think how the heart of Jesus yearns over you, think what He feels at your refusing His love—Jesus who came from the Paradise of God, down to the darkness and gloom of Golgotha, to save you, and yet you are utterly careless about it. Oh wake up, wake up from your fit of madness, for madness it is. What madness so great, as for a sinner to say to-morrow, when God says *to-day*!

Christ has shed His precious priceless blood for sinners, and knowing this can you be longer careless? Can you bear to turn away from such love as His? Listen to this word “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema Maranatha.” What is that? Cursed when He comes! What will it be, think for one moment, what will it be to be cursed when He comes, and to bear that curse for eternity? Will you risk it,? Will you not rather hear the Lord’s word to-day? Salvation to-day. Mercy and pardon for the penitent soul to-day, and who could remain impenitent, when He calls so lovingly?

The devil would suggest putting it off till

## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

to-morrow. *To-day*, says Christ; *to-morrow* whispers Satan. To-day Christ says, He will save you. To-morrow He may be compelled to curse you. Why to-morrow? Because to-night He may come. To-night, when all are wrapped in deepest slumber, the clouds may be parted, and the Lord descend from heaven, and those that are His will hear the sound of the trumpet, and the voice of words, and be caught up in the cloud to meet their loving and their beloved Lord in the air, and *you*, yes, *you* will be left behind. You, child of Godly parents too, you will be left, and left for ever: they gone to be with Jesus, you left behind to meet His judgment. I know, then, you will raise your hand and knock at His gate, only to hear those terrible words, "Depart!" "Depart!" "I know you not." Think of it. What will it be to hear the voice of Jesus saying to you, "Depart from me," telling you it is *too late*.

Oh! be warned in time, do not put it off: do not think you may have plenty of opportunities. "*To-day*," He says. To-day may be your sole—your solitary chance—of accepting Christ. It is real agony to the heart of the evangelist to think of seeing one he has known on earth among the number of the eternally lost in that day. For, once, *once*, I shall see you, (God grant it may not be once only), but once we shall meet, and where? At the *great white throne*. You will be there; and I shall be there, but I shall be with the Judge, and like the Judge, and you,

## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

where will you be? Oh, will you be among the impenitent, the condemned, the unwashed, the unforgiven, among those who stand clothed in their sins, before that great white throne to be judged out of the things written in the books, according to their works? Preachers say sometimes, Sinners are judged only for rejecting Christ. God does not say so. That is the deepest, darkest sin of all—the sin of despising His mercy, refusing His love—but there is more than that against you before God. In those books are recorded all your sins, every one of them; each thing put down you have done, each evil word, each evil way, each idle thought, for these you must give account in that terrible day, and this, as the aggravation of all the rest, that you heard the gospel of His grace, time after time, and rejected it. Do not, I implore you, reject it any longer. Do not refuse to listen to His voice a day more.

Jesus says, He “came to seek and to save that which was *lost*.” He treats every one as *lost* who is not already *saved* by faith in Him. This is the point from which I behold the Gospel. I am lost; but Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; therefore He came to seek and to save *me*. He came to seek and to save you, will you not let Him? Do I hear you say—I am seeking Jesus? Well, you are sure to find Him, for the Saviour-seeking sinner and the sinner-seeking Saviour are sure to meet. Whenever a soul is really anxious, the moment will come when the Gospel will fall on the ear of that one, and he or she will see

TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

Jesus and get Salvation. The soul that is anxious leaves, as it were, no stone unturned to get where it wants to get—to the feet of Jesus. Satan will always try to hinder the anxious soul; but his very devices bring out decision for Christ. Again I say, the soul that is really anxious will always get to Jesus. And where is the spot where you may meet Jesus, the Saviour? That spot, my dear friend, is the small circle of the *consciously lost*; for He came for the lost and only for the lost. Reader, if you are not lost I have no Gospel for you.

The really anxious soul will not let anything hinder him in the deep desire of his heart to see Jesus, and do not *you* let anything hinder *you*, for *to-day* He wants you. Come then to Him to-day. To-day He invites you, Answer His invitation to-day. To-day you may have Jesus, *to-day* He bids you to His feast, do not hesitate then another moment, accept His offer, be His to-day, His only, His for ever. You know you have thought of these things before, have been “almost persuaded” to come to Jesus, have meant to come some day, but you have never quite decided, you have not come out boldly for Christ, and the time has passed on, and your convictions have passed, too, in measure. And to-day you are still undecided. Oh! I intreat you, I warn you, do not remain so another day. “How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him.”

Perhaps you say, “I have plans laid for to-morrow that must be overthrown if I were to

## TO-DAY—A FAREWELL WORD.

decide for Christ to-day.” Yes, you may have your plans, but let me tell you this, your plans may be well laid for the morrow, but to night a marauder may enter your house, and rob you of them all, that grim marauder *death*. Death, the relentless thief, whose power none may resist; then what will become of all your plans, what will become of you, and your never dying soul? Let me tell you of one who had once plenty of plans, he laid his schemes well, and for years to come, he was a rich man too, and all seemed to go well with him, and in his heart he said, the future shall be as the present. But was it? No! No! listen! “*Thou fool*” says God “*this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*” Then what of his plans? what of his schemes? “In hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments.” Why in hell? Because he would not go to Heaven; because he *chose* the world instead of Christ.

Make your choice *now* my friend: let me counsel you; decide for Christ, make a thorough surrender of yourself to Christ, and what will be the result? The moment you receive the Lord Jesus Christ, that moment salvation is yours. The moment you receive in simple faith, Him who came from Heaven, and who died, and who is gone into glory, that moment you are entitled to know you have salvation. Salvation is a word that wraps up in itself all the blessings of the gospel. Be you like Simeon, take salvation the very moment you have the opportunity. The 2nd of Luke says when His parents brought the

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child Jesus, unto the Temple, Simeon received Him into his arms, and “blessed God, and said, Lord, *now* lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy *salvation*.” That is it, I get everything in Christ, pardon in Christ, eternal life in Christ, He is my righteousness too, my sanctification and my redemption likewise. Do I receive Christ? Then I receive *everything*. I get my sins forgiven, my soul saved, and I stand before God in the conscious possession of salvation, His free gift.

“Look unto me and be ye saved” says Christ. The moment a soul looks, in simple living faith, that moment it has Salvation, for it has the Saviour. Christianity is no dry set of doctrines, for the mind to take in, but it is Divine truth and blessing for man, wrapped up in the person of the Man Christ Jesus, who came down and did a work upon the cross by which all my sins are put away, and who is gone up again into the glory, Himself to draw your heart and mind to Him up there; and now the Holy Ghost has come out, and says “You trust *Him!*” And oh will not you trust Him? He is worthy of all your heart, shall He not have it?

Throughout this year, now drawing to a close, the gospel has been pressed on you again and again. You have over and over again heard it or read it, and know well what its sweet sound means. Now I can only lay upon you the solemn, the awful responsibility of rejecting Christ any longer. Will you not say, To-day—I *know* I have eternal life *because* I believe on the name of

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the Son of God. It is presumptuous to doubt, for God, has said “these things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may *know* that ye have eternal life.” It is true humility to believe God. This day, if you will decide, He will receive you; this day He will bless you; this day He will welcome you; this day He will save you; this day He will give you eternal life, pardon, peace, everything He can give you; but if you put it from you till to-morrow, to-morrow He may have only to curse you, and that for ever and ever.

The Lord give you to believe on Him *to-day*, and more, do not be ashamed to confess Jesus, do not be ashamed to own that He has saved you, and that you are His for time and for eternity.

Surely the past may suffice to have lived without Him, and the last moments of 1875 will be sweet to recall, if they mark the moment when you owned and confessed the Lord Jesus. To-day, then, harden not your heart any longer, but, since God has said, “Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation,” do you say, to day—Lord, I can believe.

“Just as I am—without one plea,  
But that Thy blood was shed for me,  
And that Thou bid’st me come to Thee,  
O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am—Thy love I own,  
Has broken every barrier down:  
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,  
O Lamb of God, I come.”

W. T. P. W.