



THE STORY  
OF  
LITTLE WILLIE.



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**This lady had learnt that the Lord Jesus loved poor sinners.**

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I AM to going tell you a story; not a wonderful story, but one that I hope will interest you.

A few years ago, there was a lady living alone in one of the country towns in England. This lady had learnt, when quite a little child, that the Lord Jesus loved poor sinners, and that He had taken the punishment of sin upon Himself; and so she liked to go about and tell the men and women, and poor little children, of God's wonderful love. She knew there was a wicked spirit going about to blind their eyes and hide God's love. "The wicked spirit is called the god of this world." He hates all poor sinful

people, he is miserable himself, and wants to make them all miserable ; and he knows, that if he can hide God's love from them, the poor lost people would be lost for ever. Do you say, what is it to be lost? Well, if you left your home, and went out into the streets, and could not find your way back, you would be lost, you would feel all alone ; perhaps you would cry, and some kind friend might come to you, and say, Do not cry, little child, take my hand, I will take you safely home." But if you said, "No ; I will find my way myself," then you might wander on and on, and never get home at all.

But then, dear child, that is only to be lost in this world ; to be lost in eternity, or for ever, is to be away from God—from all who love God, in blackness and darkness, shut up with the wicked spirit, to have no one to love you, no one to comfort you, no one to speak one kind word, and never to be able to get back to God. I do not like

to think about it. Be quite sure you are not lost for ever. Come back, little wanderer, at once, and let the Good Shepherd take you up in His arms. There is a chapter in John about the Good Shepherd.

Well, the lady sometimes went up into the villages, as well as into the town, and she used to take a little basket, her bible, and little books, and walk about nearly the whole day. The poor people were very kind, and so glad to let her rest, or to give her a glass of wine made from their own grapes, or a cup of tea. There was one place called a common, a pretty green spot, with cottages here and there. It was about three or four miles from the town, a good long walk. One day she went to a pretty little cottage, to see a poor Christian. It was a pleasant little place, with a garden round it. When the visitor had rested, the poor woman told her about a little boy who was very ill with a sickness, called consumption. This poor child lived in a cottage

nearly a mile beyond. The lady was very tired, but she thought she must go and tell the child about the Good Shepherd; so she took her basket and went on and on with tired feet, until at last she came to a part of the common very damp and wet. There was a narrow path across the grass, and at the end of the path a little cottage. It was not a nice cottage, like the other one. The stone floor was almost always damp; and the small room, the poor family lived in, had three doors, the cold wind coming in on every side; damp floors, very little fire, very little food, I am afraid the children could hardly ever have been warm in that house. No wonder little Willie was dying. The lady went in and asked if she might see the sick child, and the mother said "Yes."

Dear children, have you ever been ill? If so, perhaps you have had a nice room and bright fire. But Willie's room was very wretched—no fire, few comforts could his mother provide him; and there was only



one pleasant thing in that room, and that was a very dear little face ; very thin indeed, but with such a pleasant, gentle smile, and such a sweet voice. His friend saw that he could not be long here, so she sat down and told him of the Good Shepherd, who came to seek and to save lost lambs, such as he was. You must know the poor child had only just heard of the Saviour, and hardly knew anything about Him. He was like the children in the heathen countries almost. He may have been, some time in his life, to a Sunday School. He was so weak, the lady thought it best to tell him of the love of God, without asking him any questions about himself, and then she said, "Shall I come again?" "I should like you to come again," said Willie; "I cannot talk much, but I should like you to come again."

I must tell you the poor boy was what the people called a good child. The neighbours said he was a good boy. His mother thought him a good child. But

just stop, open your bible and see what God says. (Rom. iii. and xii.) The next time Willie's friend went, she took nice things that the little boy needed. A little wine, beef tea, and nice puddings; and the poor child always seemed glad to see her, and to hear the story of the love of God. It was always, "Come again soon." At last, one day, she went and found that a kind gentleman had called, and he had asked the child questions, and found the poor boy had never learnt what sin was, and had never learnt that he was a sinner. Sin is disobeying God, doing, thinking, and saying naughty things; and 'being a sinner,' is having a heart that loves sin. That is the way we are born into the world. And God says, "The wages of sin is death." Perhaps your mother has a servant, she works for your mother, and your mother gives her wages. But we have all worked for the wicked spirit, and God says, "The wages of sin is death," and

something comes after that—judgment or punishment, that lasts for ever and ever. When the gentleman asked the boy if he was a sinner, he said “No.” He thought himself a good child. He had “never told a story,” only once remembered he had said “a few wicked words.” The servant of God who came that morning, was in the habit of riding about on horseback, that he might call at the cottages, and tell the people about the love of God. And I am sure the Good Shepherd sent him that way to see Willie. So he told the little boy’s mother to tell the lady when she came, what the child had said. Now the same Good Shepherd sent Willie’s other friend that very afternoon; and when she had heard all Willie had said, she was very sorry. She knew that if he did not know that he was a sinner, he would not let the kind Shepherd take him up in His arms, and save him. So she went into the room, and sat down, and said something like this: “Willie, I find Satan has been

making you think yourself a good child ; in a few days you will die, and when your spirit leaves the body, Satan will be able to say, 'That little child belongs to me, he trusted to himself.'" A great deal more was said about the sin of trusting in our own goodness ; the danger of dying, believing the lies of the wicked spirit, who makes children, and men, and women blind, so that they cannot see the Shepherd Saviour upon the throne, and in the glory. And when Willie's friend looked at him, his face was no longer quiet, it was quite working with fear, he saw his danger at last. There was a moment's pause, and then he said, as if he was angry, "Satan tells stories." God had said there was none good, Satan had made him think himself a good child. Well, the lady was glad to hear him say that ; now he was ready to hear of the One, who could save from Satan and death. So she told him again, that although he was a sinful child, trusting in himself, the Lord Jesus took the

wages of sin for poor sinners ; that is, the Good Shepherd, who could not sin, died, and also took the punishment of sin from God before He died upon the cross. "And the Lord Jesus lives and speaks to you," said the lady. A little wasted hand and arm lifted up, pointing upwards, and a little voice said, "From above?" "Yes, Jesus is speaking to you, and says, 'Come to me, I will in no wise cast out.' And Satan speaks to you, and tells stories. Now you must choose. Will you hear the Lord Jesus, and come to Him as a sinful child? He will make you happy for ever. Or will you believe? Choose." Again that voice said clearly and sweetly, "Jesus." It was not said carelessly, dear children. I think he had really made his choice. It was but a little confession ; but it was a confession of Jesus. Now take your bibles, and read the verses, Romans x. 9, 10, and 1 Corinthians iv. 4. Satan does not want you to have the light of the good news of the glory

of Christ, the Shepherd Saviour, shine into your hearts. Only a few more words were said. He was so tired then, it was quite enough, and his friend went into their other room, and called his little sisters around her, and told them all about God's love, in giving His best gift, His own Son, to die, that we might have life instead of death.

When the visitor went back to her own lodgings, she sent for some large texts, out of the bible, and pasted them on brown paper, with a piece of ribbon to hang them up, for she thought if they were hung by the boy's bed, he could read them. A few days passed by, the lady was ill; it was winter time, the rain was pouring down, but she thought, "I must go and see Willie once more." She sent for a little pony phaeton, and drove over to the common, the narrow pathway was more damp than ever, with melting snow and rain; and when she drew near to the cottage, some white blinds

were before the windows, for dear Willie was dead. In his little coffin he lay; the gentle face clean and white now; the bright smile gone, the sweet voice quiet; but a look of rest and peace, not to be forgotten. They had put upon him a little white dress, and laid him down to sleep, but not for ever. All that his friend heard, was, that when she had gone, he said to his mother, "He had been very wicked to say he was a good child." The mother told her also, that when dying he seemed happy; and spoke of going to heaven.

Now, I am not making up a wonderful story; so I am very careful, lest I should add one word more than he said; but it was as if God said to her, "You must trust Me about Willie."

The lady drove back to her rooms, and as she sat alone by the light of the fire, the words came, as if from heaven, "He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.) Testi-

mony means what God is saying to us now about Jesus.

God does not want many words. He only wants us to believe or receive His message about His Son. Oh! how many children are believing the wicked spirit; how often children say, "If I am good, I shall go to heaven!" Poor little things, they are listening to the wicked spirit; you do not see him, but he is going about, and he tells children they will not die, but grow up to be men and women, and yet how many children's graves there are! It is just like a great giant trying to make children blind. He does not want you to see the light. The Lord Jesus is the light, and He is the life. He is a Saviour upon the throne in glory. It is not easy for you to understand what glory means. Did you ever see the sun rising in the morning, or setting in the evening, and all the beautiful rays of light around it? You could not bear to look long. That is the glory of the sun, glory



that belongs to this world, or earthly. But Jesus, that was hung up upon the cross between two thieves, is in heavenly glory, God's glory. God was well pleased with His Son, when He died upon the cross, and He has given Him a seat on His own throne. He was upon the cross about sin. He is on the throne, because God is pleased and satisfied, and He is a Saviour for you; if you hear His voice "from above," as Willie said, you will be saved, bright and happy for ever.

"His blood cleanseth us from all sin"—will take it all away in a moment—"All sin."

He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me." He says, "Come to me," and He means children, too. Are you not tired of trying to be good? "Come and tell Him you cannot be good. He will save you from sin, He will save you from Satan, and make you happy for ever, in His own beautiful home. There will be no more crying there, no angry words, no pain,

no poverty, no sin. The Lord Jesus is coming from heaven in the clouds. Any day He may come, we may see Him. Willie, and all who trust in Jesus, will be with Him. I am waiting for Him, and so are many who love Him. Shall you be glad to see Him? Only tell Him you are not good, He will take up the poor little lost lamb into His arms, and carry you all the way safely home. There the wicked spirit cannot touch you, safe in the arms of Jesus, who, when He hath found his lost one, "layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing." (Luke xv. 5.)





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