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FRIEND AND TRAVELLER.

FRIEND.—Fellow Traveller, may I ask you this plain question, Do you believe in the Son of God ?

TRAVELLER.—Of course I do : does not every body in this Christian land believe in Him ? You might put that question to the Heathen or the Blacks, but surely should not put it to me.

FRIEND.—Well now, don't be offended ; but in a calm and quiet spirit listen to me. If you believe on the Son of God, then you have everlasting life ; for the word of God says, " 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." And again, " He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life " (John iii. 36). He " is passed from death unto life." He is " born of God " (1 John ii. 9). " The Spirit of God " dwells in him (Rom. viii. 9) ; for his body is the temple of the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. vi. 19). He is a partaker of the Divine Nature (2 Peter i. 4). He has peace with God by faith in the precious blood of Jesus Christ (Rom. v. 1 ; viii. 1). Old things are passed away, and all things are become new (2 Cor. v. 17). In fact he is made a new creature, being one with Jesus Christ in resurrection.

TRAVELLER.—Well, all I can say, my friend, to what you have said, is this : If this is to be a believer, I am not one ; and who is one ? Where can you find them ? I don't know.

FRIEND.—Listen ! Christ says his flock is a little flock (Luke xii. 32), and his road a narrow road

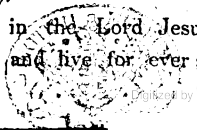
(Matt. vii. 13). And Satan's servants are a great company, and their road is a broad one; but the narrow road leads to Heaven, and the broad one to Hell; and, forgive the plainness of the question, it is love to your soul that makes me ask it, Which road are you travelling on?

TRAVELLER.—Well, that's a home question, but you do really seem to be my friend. If belief is what *you* say, then I know I am not a believer at all; and if not a believer, I must be on the broad road. To be sure, there are many others worse than I am, for I do not swear or drink. I go to my church regularly, and intend, when I am prepared, to go to the sacrament. I read my Bible on Sundays, and on week days if I am sick; but as to any happiness in religion, or delight in God's service, I have none. And as to being at peace with God, I have thought that a man could never know that in this world, and so I have rather dreaded God than loved Him: indeed, if religion is what you say, I know this,—I have been deceiving myself.

FRIEND.—That is very candid; and I do indeed feel deeply for you, and I tremble for you; for whilst it is said, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life," it no less is said, "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God *abideth* on him" (John iii. 36).

TRAVELLER.—Oh! my heart sinks down at that word, and the thoughts of ETERNITY make me tremble. My conscience tells me, and often tells me, all is not right. Oh! tell me, "what shall I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 30).

FRIEND.—"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," and live for ever; for He hath



said, "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). And, oh! remember when that poor wretched woman came to the Lord Jesus, and the Pharisee murmured at the blessed and merciful One for receiving her; oh! remember the parable He spoke:—"A certain creditor had two debtors, the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty; and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both" (Luke vii. 36—50). Thus shewing that God's character to man was **THE MERCIFUL CREDITOR**; and in virtue of the death of Jesus, who died the just for the unjust, God's golden sceptre of mercy is stretched out, and **WHOSOEVER**,—the most vile, the most wretched, the most abandoned, the most profligate,—that flees to him, will be accepted; aye, and their very coming shall cause joy in the presence of the angels of God. For God himself, as the parable of the prodigal shows us, rejoices thereat (Luke xv. 20). The most vile shall there **FIND** mercy; and be assured the most virtuous are also debtors, and they **NEED** mercy. Believe then on the Son of God, and thou shalt live for ever.

TRAVELLER.—But must not I wait until I get better, before I go to Him?

FRIEND.—No; go now: salvation is an act of free sovereign grace: "it is not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. ii. 9). "The *wages* of sin is death; but the *gift* of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ" (Rom. vi. 23). Death is **WAGES**; but life is a **GIFT**.

TRAVELLER.—But has not the believer anything to do with good works?

FRIEND.—Yes, the *believer* has; but the thing that you want is *pardon*. Mark what the Scripture says,

"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. iv. 5, 6). Being thus accepted in Christ then, by the power of the Holy Ghost, who wrought in his heart this blessed faith, he is able to do good works: and also to bring forth the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, meekness, temperance, long-suffering. He delights in good works,—he seeks to abound in them. But you see they are not the *cause* of his salvation, but the *effects* of it. He does not do good works to be pardoned; but being pardoned, he does them. He does not work *for* life, but *from* life; so, instead of living to the world, or to please himself, he lives unto God; and seeks to glorify Him in his body and his spirit which are God's.

TRAVELLER.—Well, all this is very new to me, but yet somehow it seems so true, and so right, and indeed so good, that I cannot deny it,—nay, I seem to long to believe it.

FRIEND.—I rejoice to hear you say so; and when we meet again, I believe I shall find you at HIS feet, whom to know is LIFE ETERNAL.



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