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Stories  
About  
God's Free Gift*  
by Alex. Marshall

J. H. Hall

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# TRUE STORIES ABOUT GOD'S FREE GIFT

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## THE CHICAGO GAS JETS

“**D**OES God love bad boys that hit their little sisters?” is a question I have often put to children. In most cases I have received the prompt reply, “No, sir.” “What kind of persons does God love?” was my next question. At once the answer was given, “Good people, sir.” It is to be feared many men and women, as well as boys and girls, have the same idea. Mothers teach their children when they are naughty that God does not love them, and the little ones believe it. I remember reading in a Canadian school-book used in the province of Ontario the amazing statement: “If you are bad God will not love you, and you will not go to heaven when you die.”

Although it is true that sinners dying in their sins will not go to heaven, it is false that God does not love them. Christ did not die to extort a pardon for us from an unforgiving God. On the contrary, His sin-atonement death is the *manifestation* and the *proof* of God's love to us. “Herein is love, *not that we loved God, but that He loved us*, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

The late Mr. D. L. Moody had a clear apprehension of this glorious Gospel truth. Knowing that sinners were alienated from God through ignorance of His character, he sought in his preaching to show the unsaved that God loved them. That this grand fact should be impressed on

those who attended his church in Chicago, he had the words "God is love" in gas jets over the pulpit.

One night a poor prodigal was passing along the street, and looking in at the open door he saw the words, "God is love" in letters of fire. As he walked away he said to himself, "God is love? No; God is not love. God does not love me, for I am a poor, miserable sinner. If God was love, He would love me. God is not love." The Holy Spirit so kept pressing the truth of the words upon the man's mind and heart that he returned to the church and entered the building. He heard very little of the sermon, but the words, "God is love," stared him in the face, and burned into his soul. Mr. Moody found him at the close of the service completely broken down and weeping like a child. When the servant of Christ had heard his story, he told him that *in spite of his sins God loved him*. As the poor fellow listened to the "glad and glorious Gospel"; how that God loved him, and was even then pressing on his acceptance peace, pardon, and eternal life as free gifts on the ground of Christ's death, he took Him at His word, and went on his way rejoicing.

The reader, it may be, knows in his heart that he is lost, guilty, and helpless, and desires forgiveness, but thinks that God does not love him. If so, it is a terrible mistake. God hates your sins with a perfect hatred, but he loves yourself with a perfect love. He loves you more tenderly than your nearest and dearest friend.

"His is love beyond a mother's:  
O how He loves!"

How strong and intense is a mother's love! "He that loveth not knoweth not God, FOR GOD IS LOVE" (1 John 4:8).

You don't love God BECAUSE YOU DON'T KNOW HIM. Notwithstanding all that you have done and been, He loves



you. This is true, whether you believe it or not. A holy and sin-hating God actually loves you. Think of this. "This is life eternal, that *they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent*" (John 17:3). If you want to know how much He loves you, gaze on that suffering One hanging on Calvary's Cross. Why does He groan and bleed and die? Hearken to the Divine answer: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Can you longer doubt His love to you?

God so loved you as to give His only begotten Son, that you might not perish, but have everlasting life. Why not now believe in Him who loved you and gave Himself for you? Peace, forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life are treasured up in Christ for your acceptance. "Whosoever believeth in Him" is God's simple condition. The moment you believe on Christ, that very moment your sins are pardoned, your soul is saved, and you are a member of the body of Christ. Give up all attempts to *merit* the favour of God. Salvation is all of grace from first to last. "And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace" (Rom. 11:6). Procrastinate no longer. Believe in God's love to you—not your love to Him; believe His glorious Gospel, and you will pass from death into life, from darkness into light, know your sins forgiven, and be able to say, "We love Him because He first loved us."



## KEEPING OR BEING KEPT?

"**I** AM not wanting something I have to keep: I want something that will keep me." Such were the words spoken to a lady in a tent in the city of Lynn, Mass., by a man who had been the slave of drink. She had dealt

with him at the close of the address, and, on knowing his weakness, urged him to sign the pledge.

A friend of mine, on hearing his reply to the zealous temperance worker, opened his Bible and showed him from the Scriptures God's "easy, artless, unencumbered plan" of salvation.

Specially did he dwell on the fact that he must first receive Christ as his Saviour in order to overcome the drink habit. Many imagine that salvation is like a temperance pledge—something that they have to keep. God is at this moment *beseeking* the unsaved reader to accept of the Lord Jesus by believing the good news regarding the work accomplished by Christ on Calvary.

You are not to "prepare" yourself in order to become a Christian. You are to take no "pledge" and make no "vows." As you are and *where you are*, you are entreated to accept of God's "unspeakable gift." Give up waiting to "feel" or "realize" something as a preparation for pardon. Rest your weary soul on Him who did it all and paid it all, and you will, in God-given strength, be enabled to renounce whatever displeases Him.

The moment that you believe on Christ, who loved you and give Himself for you, you obtain eternal life to start with (John 3:36; 6:47), power to overcome sin to go on with, and glory to end with; and He who saves guilty sinners is the very same Jesus who declares: "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand" (John 10:28). "I hold, and am held," is a good motto for a Christian. Don't, however, be afraid of the *holding on*. He will keep all who put their trust in Him.

## FROZEN TO DEATH ON THE PRAIRIE

SEVERAL years ago a woman with a child was travelling by rail in North Dakota. A fierce blizzard was raging as she neared her destination. Not being certain about her station, a commercial traveller assured her that he knew the neighborhood thoroughly, and would make it his business to see that she was set down at the right place. She accepted his testimony, and seemed to be at rest. At a certain point she was told that the next station was hers. On the stoppage of the train the "commercial" assisted her in getting out, then the train sped onwards.

Not long after this the conductor announced the next stop, which was the one the woman had named. "I put her off at the last station," said the "commercial." "That stop was a water tank, and no one lives within miles of it," exclaimed the conductor. The train was backed, but the woman and child were not to be found. Alas! they had gone out into the storm and were lost on the pathless prairie. Searchers found them later in the snow, but the mother was frozen to death. The woman perished through accepting wrong advice. The commercial traveler doubtless meant well, but as a result of the acceptance of his advice a mother perished. Though sincere in his belief, he was *sincerely mistaken*.

There is ONE, and ONLY ONE, way to heaven. Many, however, don't believe it. They declare that there are many ways, and that if a man is sincere in his beliefs, and acts up to it, he is sure to turn up in heaven! What a delusion! The woman sincerely believed that she had reached her station in North Dakota, but her sincerity did not take her to her proper destination. She felt convinced that she was near to her home and friends, but she was

mistaken, and perished. When she stepped off the train, little did she imagine that she would be overpowered by the blizzard and frozen to death. People of the mock charity school foolishly suppose that if one is SINCERE IN HIS BELIEF AND LIVES UP TO HIS PROFESSION he will eventually get to heaven. But such a theory is an utter delusion. The more "sincere" a person is, the more serious it is for him if he is travelling on the wrong road. Sincerity on the wrong road to an earthly or a heavenly home won't help anybody to get there. Where do you stand at this moment? Are you on the broad or the narrow way? Which?

"OH, I HAVE MY OWN WAY OF THINKING," says one. If your way is God's way you are all right, but if not you are all wrong. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord." "Oh, but I am conscientious, and if I walk up to the light I have, surely I shall get to heaven." You may be thoroughly conscientious and yet be sincerely mistaken. Conscience is like a clock; it has to be properly regulated to give the correct time. If it is regulated by a wrong standard it cannot be depended on. Paul was "conscientious," yet he persecuted the Church of God. The Jews about whom the Apostle Paul writes in his epistle to the Romans were exceedingly "conscientious." They had a "zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Romans 10:2-4). They had plenty of zeal, but it was not according to knowledge. Whilst ignorant of the righteousness of God, which is unto all and upon all them that believe, they sought to establish a righteousness of their own. They attempted to obtain salvation on the ground of *their doings*,



instead of on the ground of the *finished work of Christ*, and perished in their sins! Many are earnestly, zealously, and sincerely trying to reach heaven by their own excellencies, instead of through the Saviour's merits. Yet God declares that salvation is "not of works, lest any man should boast."

However sincere, conscientious, earnest or zealous a person may be, heaven can never be secured as the reward of creature merit. The Lord Jesus says: "I am *the Way*, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but *by Me*" (John 14:6). Christ is *the way*, and the *only* way to God. It is only through Him, by faith in His glorious atonement, that eternal life is secured. Our works, prayers, baptism, church goings, or sacramental observances, are valueless in God's reckoning as a way of approach to Him. The Lord Jesus "once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter 3:18). He gave *Himself* as a ransom to save us from eternal woe. He is able and willing to save you at this moment. Believe on Him who groaned, and bled, and died on Calvary to deliver you from everlasting shame and misery. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47). Believe and live now.



## FOUR GREAT DISCOVERIES

**A** CHRISTIAN woman in the city of Boston, Massachusetts, had an infidel husband who scoffed and sneered at her beliefs. Like many of the so-called "infidels" of these days, he declared that he had no faith in the Bible or its teachings. There was, however, deep down in his heart a secret misgiving as to the truth of his infidel theories.

When Mr. D. L. Moody began his evangelistic campaign in the Tabernacle in Boston, Mrs. Graham invited her husband to attend the services. Her entreaties and pleadings seemed fruitless. Being fond of music, and hearing the people speaking so much of Mr. Sankey's beautiful singing, he decided to go and hear for himself. He was much impressed with what he heard. The Spirit of God was striving with him. Night after night he attended the services. One evening his wife was agreeably surprised to find him reading the Bible. He admitted that he had gone to the Tabernacle to hear Mr. Sankey's singing. When asked what he thought of Mr. Moody's address, he replied, "I did not take much stock in the sermon, but" laying his hand on the Bible,

"IF THAT BOOK IS TRUE, I'M A SINNER."

Mrs. Graham, who had been earnestly praying for her husband's conversion, praised God and took courage. The truth had shattered her husband's infidel stronghold, and the light was revealing to him the darkness of his soul.

Has the reader learned that he is a "sinner" or has he been occupied with the failures and inconsistencies of professing Christians? Many who are careful observers of the faults of religious professors have never seen themselves in the light of God's unsullied holiness and inflexible righteousness.

Next night Mr. Graham was again at the service, and on reaching home he said to his wife,

"IF THAT BOOK IS TRUE, I AM A LOST SINNER,

and see no hope of my salvation." This was certainly a more advanced stage of conviction. Formerly he believed he was a *sinner*; now he declares that he is a "*lost sinner*." Has the reader yet learned that he is a "*lost sinner*"?

Many who admit that they are "sinners" in a general way, will not admit that they are *lost* sinners. Scripture assures us that in God's sight there are but two classes of persons—LOST SINNERS and SAVED SINNERS. To which of these classes do *you* belong? It is needless to say that you are *neutral*—neither the one nor the other. There is no neutrality here. Some assert that they are "not very good" and "not very bad," and call themselves "middling people." There are, however, no such people in Heaven's reckoning. "He that is not with Me," said the Saviour, "is against Me."

Lost or saved? Converted or unconverted? Born once or born twice? Which? If you have not been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, if you have not accepted Christ as your Saviour, you are, even as you read these lines, "lost." Thank God that you are not hopelessly or eternally lost.

Mr. Graham confessed that he was "lost," and acknowledged that he saw no hope of salvation. Though he did not *then* know it, there was a way of salvation for him and for every other sinner. "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10); therefore He has come to seek and to save you.

Next night, on his return from the meeting, he remarked to his wife,

"IF THAT BOOK IS TRUE, I MAY BE SAVED."

Light had begun to dawn into his soul. He had seen that, though he was a sinner, God loved him and wished to save him. Unsaved, unsanctified, unforgiven soul, there is now a free, full, and present salvation for you. God's Word declares that "now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). You don't need to "wait" until you have deeper convictions of sin. It is quite unnecessary, and in fact sinful, to delay in order to fit yourself to accept

of God's free gift of forgiveness and eternal life. God is *now* beseeching you to be reconciled to Him.

Finally, Mr. Graham returned from the Tabernacle, and with his accustomed formula said,

"IF THAT BOOK IS TRUE, I AM A SAVED MAN,

for the Lord Jesus died for sinners, and I have taken Him to be my Saviour."

Thank God, Christ died for "sinners," for the "ungodly," for *you*. Through His sufferings and death salvation is brought within your reach. It is close to you, closer than the lines you are now reading. If you doubt it, hearken to the words of your best and dearest Friend: "The Word is nigh thee, even in *thy mouth, and in thy heart*: that is, the Word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, *and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved*" (Rom. 10:8, 9).



## A RAILROAD CONVERSATION

**M**R. JAMES PARKER, a New York merchant, an earnest and devoted Christian known to us, tells of an interesting conversation which he had with a gentleman in a sleeping-car of a railway train. As Mr. Parker was meditating, previous to going to sleep, a fellow-traveler asked him a number of questions. After conversing for a time, Mr. Parker inquired where his new acquaintance came from. "Cortlandt," was the reply. "Have you any churches in Cortlandt?" In a hesitating way he said there were, adding that he was a member of one of them, and a leader of the choir. Mr. Parker then

said to the stranger, "Perhaps you can answer a question that has often arisen in my mind, that is, WHAT SHALL I DO IN ORDER TO GET TO HEAVEN?" The reply given was this: "Do as near right as you know how, and love your neighbor as yourself, and you will be all right." "I am very sorry that you said that," was Mr. Parker's reply. "Why?" inquired his fellow-passenger. "Because that shuts me out." "Shuts *you* out!" "Yes, shuts me out." Looking at Mr. Parker, the stranger said, "You don't look like a very bad fellow." "Perhaps I don't, but I know that I have not done as near right as I know how; I know that, and if that is the condition upon which I am to get into Heaven, I am shut out, and shut out for eternity." "But," he said, "you know that all you have to do is to read the Bible and join the church, and it will be all right. You need not despair about that. It will be all right." Mr. Parker then inquired where he got his information from. "Are you a Christian?" "Yes." "Do you get it from your Bible then?" "Yes." "In what part of the Bible do you find that whosoever does right, as near as he knows how, will get into Heaven?" "It runs all through it." "Then it won't be difficult to give me just one passage for it." "I don't know exactly where the passages are, but that is the thought of it, you know. It is there; that is the whole thought of it." "If it is the whole thought of it, and you must get your thoughts from the words, where are the words?" But the church member and choir leader did not know.

"Let me tell *you* something," said Mr. Parker. "I have read the Bible, but I have not read it in the way you have. I read in the 6th chapter of Genesis that God saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that *every imagination* of the thoughts of his heart was *only evil continually*. I read that it repented God that He made man,

he was so bad." Then portions from other scriptures regarding man's state were quoted. From Jeremiah it was shown that man's heart is "deceitful above all things, and *desperately wicked*." Verses of the New Testament Scriptures were next quoted. God in speaking of both Jew and Gentile declares that "there is none righteous, no, *not one*: there is none that doeth good, no, not one. All have *sinned* and come short of the glory of God" (see Rom. 3). Mr. Parker then said to his fellow-traveller, "You profess to be a Christian, and in the face of all these scriptures you tell one that asks you the road to Heaven that he must do as near right as he knows how. Don't you see that God's Word speaks most pointedly and plainly that man's *nature*, man's *condition*, and man's *deeds* are corrupt? And as God says, 'By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that *all* have sinned.' No! no! man is a sinner in the sight of God. He cannot do 'as near right as he knows how,' and his sins have put him at a distance and have separated him from God."

This choir leader's way of getting to Heaven is an exceedingly popular one. Though expressed in various ways, the thought is the same. It is salvation by man's doings, instead of Christ's death. Heaven is to be gained according to this popular theory by what *we do*, and not by what *Christ did for us*. Hence we are told, "if a man does the best he can he is sure to reach Heaven." "If one does as much good as he can, and as little harm as possible, he will be all right at last." "If a man is sincere in his beliefs, and acts up to them, God is bound to save him." Those who hold such ideas seem to ignore the fact that *no one* has done his "best"; that *no one* has "done as near right as he knows how."

God's Word declares that we are all sinners; that "the wages of sin is death," and all have earned the wages.



Future good conduct cannot atone for past disobedience. There is no use imagining that salvation can be obtained on the ground of anything that we have done or may do. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law" (Gal. 3:10). Who among the sons of men has always been what he should have been, and always done what he should have done? Which of us dare say that we love God with all our hearts? Not one. God in His Word tells us that He has brought in the whole world "guilty" (Rom. 3:19).

The good news contained in the Gospel of the grace of God reveals the blessed fact that salvation may be obtained by any one on the ground of Christ's atonement. The Lord Jesus was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:20, 21). Because of what He did for us on the Cross of Calvary God is pressing a full salvation as a free gift on your acceptance. But works, prayers, and religious observances cannot purchase God's pardoning mercy. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that *worketh not*, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:4, 5). Cease all attempts to procure salvation by human effort. When the Jews asked Christ, "What shall we *do* that we may work the works of God?" He replied, "This is the work of God, that ye *believe* on Him whom He hath sent" (John 6:28, 29). By believing on Him who loved you and gave Himself for you, you will be saved (Acts 16:31), justified (Acts 13:39), and become the possessor of eternal life (John 6:47). There are but two religions on earth today—the religion of two letters, *DO*, and the religion of four letters, *DONE*. "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. 2:8, 9).

## WHAT CHANGED THE GAMBLER?

**F**RANK SHERMAN was born of Christian parents in the city of Baltimore, Maryland. On reaching manhood he became engrossed with the world, doing his utmost to banish from his mind thoughts of God, Judgment, and Eternity. After his marriage he became greatly addicted to drinking and gambling. Year by year he sank deeper in sin and degradation. His course of conduct so affected his wife's health that she died broken-hearted. Again and again he tried to "turn over a new leaf" in his life's history, but the new one was soon as black as the old. Conscious that he was a bond slave of sin and Satan, unable to resist temptation, he left Baltimore for Kentucky, and determined to make a fresh start. But his resolutions were like piecrust, made to be broken.

And twenty-five years ago on a Sunday morning he sat in front of a hotel at Bowling, Kentucky, depressed and disheartened. He had been gambling, and lost all his money, excepting seventeen dollars. As he reviewed the past and thought of his innumerable failures he decided to leave Kentucky, and see if he could not do better in Denver, Colorado. In the midst of his reflections the wind blew a piece of paper close to the spot where he was sitting. On picking it up he saw it was part of a tract with the Saviour's gracious invitation: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Many a time he had heard the Scripture quoted, but alas! he had never gone to Christ to obtain the inestimable gift. Many who have been acquainted from childhood with the passage have heard sermons on it, and can even repeat it correctly, know nothing whatever of the rest spoken of by the Saviour. Sherman revolved the blessed words in his mind. "*No mere man* spoke such words," he soliloquized.

"Yes, Christ *alone* can give me rest, and no one needs it more than myself."

As he recalled the happy days of childhood, as he thought of his mother's prayers and pleadings, of his Sunday-school teacher's words of counsel and warning, and of his folly and infatuation, he was overwhelmed with shame and confusion. But what was meant by coming to Christ? He thought of the Lord's sufferings, His crucifixion and death on Calvary. Whilst thus occupied what he had often heard in his home at Baltimore regarding Christ's atonement for sin came before him in the power of the Holy Spirit. He saw that Christ had paid sin's penalty by His blood, and through coming to Him by faith he was a pardoned and saved sinner. What a merciful and wondrous deliverance!

The Lord Jesus speaks to *you*, O unsaved fellow-sinner, and calls on you to come to Him and find rest to your soul. Come to Him as you are with your burdens. Is it the burden of unforgiven sin that presses on your guilty conscience? Then come, and it will be removed. Is it the burden of an uncanceled sentence? Come and you will be justified instead of condemned. Is it the burden of approaching judgment? Come and you won't come into judgment (John 5:24). Whatever your load is, however long you may have borne it, come. "But," says one, "you don't mean that I am to come to Jesus *in my sins*?" Most certainly. If you don't come to Him in your sins, how are you going to get rid of them? "If Jesus were in the room," says another, "I would come to Him at once." But He is close to you at this moment, nearer than anyone else. True He is in heaven, but He is also on earth, and today He speaks to you, and says, "Come unto ME, and I will give you rest." "How am I to come?" is perhaps the inquiry of some troubled one. It is not a physical movement;

you don't need to take one step from where you stand or sit. Come to Him in spirit. How do you go to that beloved one in far-off Australia? "In thought." Exactly. In the same way come to Jesus. Come to Him in thought, and gaze on Him bleeding, groaning, and dying for all your crimson sins. When you understand what His death has accomplished; how that every barrier has been removed; that God can righteously pardon the wickedest sinner alive, and longs to do so; that every one who comes to, or believes in, Christ obtains the immediate forgiveness of all his sins, you cannot help trusting Him. Frank Sherman by faith came to Christ and obtained rest of conscience and peace to his weary heart. And why may not you? Why not now "come" to the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be able to sing truthfully—

"I came to Jesus as I was,  
Weary and worn and sad;  
I found in Him a resting place,  
And He has made me glad."

Sherman, on obtaining peace with God, immediately changed his plans, and instead of proceeding to Denver took a ticket to Baltimore. He received a most cordial welcome from his beloved mother and sister, who had been praying for his conversion for years. Great was the joy in the home over the returning prodigal.

The story of his conversion was furnished to me by Mr. F. H. Jacobs, Superintendent of Fulton Street Prayer Meeting, New York. Mr. Jacobs told me that Sherman took out of his pocket the portion of the tract with the life-giving words upon it and showed it to him.

Perhaps you have often joined in the lines—

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,  
'Come unto Me, and rest:  
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down  
Thy head upon My breast.' "

Come now and obtain rest, peace, and joy to your soul.  
Don't think about the *coming*. Don't say you would like  
to come in the right way. Come as you are. Don't try to  
improve yourself ere you come.

"It is only to come, not coming  
And bringing a goodly gift;  
Not coming in mended garments  
That tell of reforming thrift.

Not coming with holy motives,  
Not coming a certain way,  
But coming, COMING TO JESUS  
Because He has said I may.

For it is not gifts nor garments,  
Nor motive, nor plea, nor how—  
It is coming to Jesus, Who saves me,  
Coming to Jesus now."

..❖..

## THE SURPRISE PARDON

**O**VER forty years ago, a young man in Massachusetts, in a fit of drunkenness, went home and set his house on fire, his brother perishing in the flames. Next day he surrendered himself to the police, and made a full and frank confession. Afterwards he

was tried and condemned to be imprisoned for life in the Massachusetts state prison. Some years since, a festival was held in the prison, to which all the prisoners were invited. The chaplain conducted the devotions, after which the warden gave an address, closing by saying that it was customary on such occasions for the governor of the state to grant a pardon to one of the prisoners. All eyes were fixed on the speaker, and all ears listened attentively. In a clear voice the warden said: "This time the governor pardons George Hunnewell, who will please step out." From the body of the chapel a pale, careworn man rose, and, looking at the speaker, exclaimed,

"ME, SIR—ME?"

adding, "Is there no other George Hunnewell but me?" "You, George," said the warden, "and no one else." Then hearty cheers burst from the lips of the prisoners as they expressed pleasure and sympathy with George in his good fortune. The glad tidings completely overcame the prisoner, and he fell back on his seat, sobbing aloud at the prospect of escaping from the place in which he had been confined for twenty long years.

There are other prisoners than those who are confined within the prison walls of American or British prisons. Scripture represents the condition of the unsaved as "condemned already" (John 3:18), because they don't believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. This world is their condemned cell, and numbers are groaning and sighing for deliverance. The Scriptures reveal the glorious fact that God is *beseeking* unpardoned, unforgiven souls to accept of a full, free, and present salvation. The prison doors are open, and the captives are exhorted to enter into liberty. To some this appears to be "too good news to be true." They know that they are guilty and need the mercy of God. They be-



lieve that Christ came into the world to save sinners, yet they continue unsaved. They are aware that multitudes of the worst and vilest have been forgiven, but they are not quite sure (they say) that God will forgive them.

They assert that they have been such "great" sinners that they fear there is no mercy for them. Some affirm that they have committed the "unpardonable sin"; others that they are "Gospel-hardened," and not a few that they have "sinned away the day of grace." All such are completely mistaken. There is forgiveness for all, for God wishes all men to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4). The Gospel was commanded to be preached to "every creature" (Mark 16:15), and therefore to you.

THOUGH THERE IS A HELL FOR EVERY SINNER OUT OF  
CHRIST, THERE IS A CHRIST FOR EVERY SINNER  
OUT OF HELL

*"Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."*

Is the reader convinced that he is lost and guilty? Is he willing to take the condemned sinner's place and accept of salvation on God's terms? If so, hearken to His way of salvation: *"Whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins"* (Acts 10:43). You are a "sinner," and Christ died for "sinners." You are "ungodly," and Christ died for the "ungodly." Neglect salvation no longer, and never dare to say that it is not for you. Accept of it now from the pierced hand of the Saviour, and thank Him for it. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).

## LOST IN THE WHIRLPOOL RAPIDS

CAPTAIN WEBB, the famous swimmer, accomplished the feat of swimming across the English Channel, a distance of 25 miles. After viewing the Whirlpool Rapids of Niagara, he declared that he would swim through them. Some said he was a hero, but more sensible people affirmed that he was a fool.

"It's all luck, and the end—I don't think about that; I'm going to take my chance," was the answer he gave to those who expostulated with him. At four o'clock on the afternoon of July 24th, 1883, in the presence of hundreds of spectators who loudly cheered him, he leaped into the whirling torrent and swam for a short distance. But the eddying waters were too powerful for the strong swimmer, and he was swept like a log into the rapids, and was speedily lost to view. For miles down the Niagara river men searched for the body, but it was not found till four days afterwards, a mile and a half below Lewiston, New York.

"How foolish!" said some. "How mad to risk his life for fame!" said others. True, perfectly true; yet numbers in these days nearer home than the Niagara Rapids are risking the loss of their precious souls through the desire to obtain wealth, honour, fame, glory, and the applause of their fellow-men! And though this is an every-day occurrence, the newspapers do not chronicle the fact. Most people admit that the soul is more valuable than the body. They accept the statement that the body is the husk and the soul the kernel; the body is the casket and the soul the costly gem. When Captain Webb was told that he ran a terrible risk in attempting to swim the rapids he replied that he did not think about the end. Many of the unsaved are trying to forget "the end" of the road that

they are treading. It is a delusion to say that "death ends all," for God tells us in His Word that "It is appointed unto men once to die, but *after this the judgment*" (Heb. 9:27). "What shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God?" (1 Pet. 4:17) is a question that should be pondered by the reader.

Captain Webb said he was "going to take his chance." Many in these days, when told that unless they are "born again," "converted," or "saved," they CANNOT see the kingdom of God (John 3:3), declare that they will "take their chance." There is no "chance" in the matter. There are but the two classes in God's sight—converted and unconverted, saved and unsaved. "Ye MUST be born again" (John 3:7), or never enter heaven. "He that believeth not the SON SHALL NOT SEE LIFE, but the wrath of God *abideth on him*" (John 3:36). Can anything be plainer? Continue neglecting or despising the salvation of God and your eternal destiny will be in the pit of woe. "Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:15). Why should you perish in your sins when God, at an infinite cost, has provided salvation for you AS A FREE GIFT? Why not be reconciled to God through faith in Christ? Why not now, as you read these lines, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved for time and eternity? (Acts 16:31). If, however, you procrastinate and are cut down in your sins, you will remember that you were warned of wrath and judgment, and pointed to Christ, the sinner's refuge. The awful thought will then be realized that you despised Christ, and no one is to blame but yourself.

## A DOCTOR'S VERDICT

A NUMBER of persons were waiting their turn in a doctor's office. As they sat talking together, a chatty little man remarked that he did not know why he was there. True he had a sort of numbness in the tongue and occasional depression of spirits, but he did not think that there was anything seriously wrong with him. His wife, he said, insisted upon him seeing the doctor, and he was there. By and by his time came, and he was seated alongside the physician. A considerable time elapsed ere he reappeared. And how changed! Pale and trembling with excitement he staggered toward the outside door. As he was about to open it, he turned to the doctor and said,

"Is THERE No HOPE, DOCTOR?"

"No remedy has been found for your disease," was the physician's calm reply. Then there was a short pause, broken by the patient asking, "Did you say two months, doctor?"

"Yes, two months." As he was passing out, the kind-hearted physician offered him a glass of water.

"No, no," was the reply, "I have no time. Only two months to prepare for death!" and he left.

One who heard the conversation remarked to a friend of mine, "I watched that man, and in two months he was dead."

The man's disease was incurable by human skill. How terribly disappointed the poor fellow must have been when the doctor told him the naked truth. He believed the physician's testimony that he was a dying man, and left determined to prepare for death. If the reader is unsaved, he is the victim of a

## FAR WORSE DISEASE

than that which afflicted the American. "The worst of all diseases is light compared with sin." It is a *universal* disease, for it is found in every country, people, and nation. Some diseases are limited to certain climates and lands, but this disease is found in every part of the globe where a human being dwells.

It is a *loathsome* disease. Who can understand or estimate its loathsomeness in *God's sight*? It is that abominable thing which He hates. His estimate and man's estimate of it are vastly different. "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (Luke 16:15).

It is an *incurable* disease. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (Jas. 1:15). "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). It destroys body and soul, and all who profess to be able to cure, cleanse, or pardon it are but quacks. There is only One who can purge the soul from its defilement, and that is the "Great Physician," the Lord Jesus Christ.

If the reader were told that in two months, two weeks, two days, or two hours, he would be called into eternity, is he ready?

The true Christian is not afraid of meeting God. His confidence, however, is not based on his works for Christ, but upon *Christ's atoning work for him*.

## ONLY TWO MONTHS TO PREPARE!

The dying man refused the glass of water on account of the shortness of time he had to get ready for death.

Your time may be far shorter than his. You may be counting on a lease of life, and may be laying your plans for years to come. How do you know that you will be

alive in two months? Before tomorrow's sunrise you may be gone, and where will your soul be? Were you "cut down" tonight, and your lifeless body found in the morning, where would you spend eternity?

"He that being often REPROVED hardeneth his neck, shall SUDDENLY be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. 29:1).

Believe on Him who took the guilty sinner's place, and suffered in our stead, and you will have pardon, cleansing, and eternal life (John 6:47).

"How oft of thy danger and guilt He hath told thee;  
How oft still the message of mercy doth send!  
Haste, haste while He waits in His arms to enfold thee,  
The harvest is passing, the summer will end."



## A MOTHER'S LOVE

**A** BOSTON paper tells a thrilling story of a mother's wondrous love. A poor old woman, with ragged and travel-stained garments, had been frequently observed in the poorest parts of Boston, in quest of some object. Now she lingers at the "saloon" doors, earnestly peering into the faces of the frequenters as they enter and leave. Again, she is seen in the hospital wards by the side of the patients' beds, eagerly scanning their features. She has been noticed in the police courts edging her way as close to the railings as she could get, shading her eyes with her wrinkled hands, anxiously gazing at each prisoner as he was brought in for trial. When the culprits had come and gone, she was at times overheard saying, "He ain't there; well, I'm glad of that."



Police officers, hospital nurses, and bartenders have oft-times wondered who the old woman was searching for, but she did not give the desired information.

One evening, she took a hospital nurse into her confidence. On being asked whom she had been so diligently seeking, the old lady lowered her voice, and said, "I'll tell *you*. I don't often tell any one, but I'll tell *you*. I'm looking for my son, but he ain't here. I'd know him as soon as I see him. I'm sure I would, but he ain't here."

Wiping the tears from her eyes, she proceeded: "I ain't seen him for 20 years, but I'd know him. I'm his own mother, you see. Oh! I'd know him if I could *only* see him. No, it ain't no use to give his name; it ain't the same one when he was my baby and innocent."

Again the tears ran down her wrinkled checks. "Yes, he got into trouble. He wasn't bad at heart; but he got led away,—and—and—and—and into the state prison. I didn't know it until lately. But it don't make no difference with me, cause I'm his own mother; and if I could only find him, and tell him he's got two friends left—me and God; we'll stand right by him. I have a kind of feeling that I won't be able to keep up the hunt much longer, and he may drift in here, and if he should, and you come across him, won't you tell him how his old mother looked, and looked, for him?"

"But you haven't told me his name," said the nurse.

"Oh! so I haven't. I s'pose I must. Well, he calls himself——"; she whispered a name into the nurse's ear, and added, "Tell him that me and God was his best friends still. I'll soon be gone, but tell him that God was always his friend."

After she had unburdened her mind, she went out into the streets to search for her prodigal son. Before morning, she was brought back by two policemen, who had found

her sick and delirious. She lived but a few hours, and just before she died, she slowly and sadly said, "Well, I didn't find him, not in 20 years; but you tell him, if he comes here, that I *tried* hard to find him, and, tell him that I couldn't forget my boy, and that God has not forgotten him."

Yet the love of that mother is faint and feeble compared with God's great love to you. Jehovah has asked, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?" and the Divine reply is as follows: "Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee" (Isa. 49:15).

"Oh! if the tenderest mother were possessed  
Of all the love within her single breast  
Of all the mothers since the world began,  
'TIS NOTHING TO THE LOVE OF GOD TO MAN."

However great a sinner you have been, or however wicked you are, GOD LOVES YOU. Though you have forgotten Him, days and months without number, and wandered in paths of sin or crime, He longs to bless and save you. Though you have sinned against love and light; though you have deliberately and persistently broken His laws, and trampled His commands under your feet, He desires to blot out the past, and make you His own.

If you doubt that God loves you even now, turn your eye to Calvary's Cross. There you can see the height and depth, the length and breadth of God's "unmeasured wealth of love." "For God so loved the world, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The Lord Jesus is seeking to save you. Ever since you were ushered into being, He has sought to have you for

Himself. He has "looked, and looked, and looked" from heaven upon you, and with surpassing love has borne with your folly and infatuation, and sought to win you to Himself. And you have closed your ears to His words of entreaty and warning! You have resisted His Spirit, and neglected His great salvation!

The dying words of the poor old woman, "Tell him that I couldn't forget my boy, and that God hasn't forgotten him," are grandly sublime. The reader may have lost an affectionate mother, but he has a true friend in the Lord Jesus. He is the Friend that loveth *at all times*. He waits to pardon and justify you from all things. He desires to reason with you! How gracious and condescending! And all because He loves you! Why not then receive Him, and be saved for eternity (John 1:12)? Why not accept of His "great salvation" (Heb. 2:3) by believing on Him who bore sin's penalty, and died to save you from the miseries and gloom of a lost eternity?

"To him that WORKETH NOT, but BELIEVETH ON HIM THAT JUSTIFIETH THE UNGODLY, HIS FAITH IS COUNTED FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Romans 4:5).

"From heaven His eye is downward bent,  
Still ranging to and fro:  
Wher'er in this wide wilderness,  
There roams a child of woe:  
And when the rebel chooses wrath,  
God wails his hapless lot;  
Deep breathings from His heart of love,  
I would, but ye would not."

## “ONE HUNDRED WAYS TO HEAVEN”

SUCH was the title—as near as I can remember—of a book which I picked up in a bookseller's “shop” in Chicago a quarter of a century ago. I looked over it, and saw that an enterprising American had interviewed leaders of the principal sects, denominations, societies, missions, and associations in that great and important commercial centre as to their beliefs about the way of salvation. It was wonderful the different opinions that were expressed by the representatives of the various divisions of Christendom. As I was personally acquainted with the publisher of the book, I said to him that I should be pleased to see every copy of it destroyed.

There is one and ONLY ONE way to heaven. The Lord Jesus declares, “I am *the* way, and *the* truth, and *the* life: no man cometh unto the Father but by Me” (John 14:6). On another occasion He said: “I am *the* door, by Me if any man enter in he shall be saved” (John 10:9). Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the only way of access by which a sinner can enter into the presence of a holy God. Before Christ's death thousands of lambs and bullocks were slain; rivers of sacrificial blood flowed, but not till He exclaimed, “It is finished,” and gave up His Spirit was the veil of the temple rent from the top to the bottom. That veil kept Jewish worshippers at a distance from God; now, the veil is removed, and we may enter into “the holiest” through the precious Blood of Christ. The Lord Jesus by the propitiation He offered to God at the cross can save the guiltiest sinner out of hell. Of what use are the *opinions* of men as to *the* way of salvation when God has told it to us so clearly in His own blessed Word? Has He not said that “God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not

perish, but have everlasting life"? Believe on His beloved Son the Lord Jesus, who settled once for all the *sin question* when He gave Himself a ransom for us.



## "MAY A CHRISTIAN SIN AS HE PLEASES?"

SUCH is the question that is often asked of preachers of the Gospel. What will one like to do who has been plucked as a brand from the everlasting burning? Surely his desire will be to please the One who shed His precious blood to save him from the lake of fire! "If any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*; *old things* are passed away; behold, all things are becoming *new*" (2 Cor. 5:17). "The things I once hated, now I love; and the things I once loved, now I hate," is the testimony of every new-born Christian. At conversion a man obtains a new life and a new nature. But he has still "the flesh" in him. As to his standing before God, he is "in the Spirit," although he has not got rid of the old nature. The "flesh" has to be kept under. It is like "Jack-in-the-box," and pops up when we least expect it. But we should keep it down. Feed the new man and starve the old. We have reason to expect a change in the lives of those who profess to be "born again." "By their *fruits* ye shall know them," is a divine principle. "If a man love Me," said the Lord Jesus, "he will keep My words" (John 14:23). "By this we know that we are the children of God, *when we love God, and keep His commandments*" (1 John 5:2). There are numbers in these days who are passing for "backsliders." With many of such it is to be feared that they never *foreslid*. One who never "foreslid" cannot be said to have backslidden. Thou-

sands have been converted by *man* who were never converted by *God*. Numbers testify that they "professed," "held on," "fell away," and "lost their religion," etc. It is sadly true that genuine Christians have backslidden. Many, however, who pass as believers "got *religion*," as it is phrased, instead of Christ. What a terrible thing to be deceived by Satan with a counterfeit conversion!

Where does the reader stand? Converted by man or by God? Which? Those who are born of the Holy Spirit are not saved because of their "penitential sorrow," "giving up of sins," or "crying to God for mercy." They are saved solely and wholly through believing on Christ, who paid the ransom for their deliverance. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John 3:36). Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ now and be saved. Whom God takes up, He never gives up.