

# GOSPEL GLEANINGS

A

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

—

VOLUME VII.

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London

T. WESTON, 53 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

1907

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# GOSPEL GLEANINGS.

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## THE PASSOVER.

EXODUS. XII.

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**T**HE children of Israel were in bondage, and the deliverance for which they had cried was now about to be accomplished. Pharaoh had refused to listen to the voice of God speaking to him through His servants Moses and Aaron, and judgment was now about to be inflicted upon the land of Egypt. Pharaoh and those who surrounded his throne, were determined not to let the children of Israel escape out of the land of Egypt, but God had a purpose stronger than Pharaoh's, and He resolved that they should escape, and that Pharaoh himself should acquiesce in that escape. We read therefore of successive judgments being poured out upon the land, but apparently to no purpose. Pharaoh's heart grew harder and his determination became if possible more fixed. God then having seen all these judgments fail, now prepared a severer one, which should pierce every heart; and therefore succeed where all else besides had failed in arousing Pharaoh to submission and a sense of duty.

Death had visited the land and robbed it of its treasures, but now it is to come closer and visit their homes. Moses and Aaron had been forewarned of the solemn event that was about to happen, and were instructed how to act. Each family was bidden to take a lamb and kill it, and to sprinkle the blood upon the two side posts, and on the upper door-post of their houses (vers. 2—7), and it was added, "None of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning" (ver. 22). Thus were all to be under the shelter of the blood. "And it came to pass that at midnight, the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on his throne, unto the first-born of the captive that [was] in the dungeon; and all the first-born of cattle." One wild shriek went up from every Egyptian home that night, and the sun arose upon a land filled with sorrow, and lamentation, and mourning. But in the midst of this havoc there was one great exception—the children of Israel were spared, and the reason of their being spared was their personal acceptance of, and interest in, the shed blood of the lamb they had slain.

But this was not all. The lamb whose shed blood, sprinkled on the door-posts, sheltered them from the solemn judgment which fell upon the Egyptians, served for them as a feast within.

Hence the command—"They shall eat the flesh

in that night roast with fire, and unleavened bread, [and] with bitter [herbs] they shall eat it" (ver. 8). Now let us turn to the New Testament, and we shall see what a beautiful type this is of the Saviour who shed His precious blood upon the cross of Calvary. "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened [bread] of sincerity and truth" (I Cor. v. 7, 8).

My dear reader, Have you fled for refuge, and found shelter under the precious blood, which can alone protect you from the storm which soon will burst upon a guilty world? If so, it is your happy privilege, not only to know that you are safe, that you are cleansed from every sin, but to have your heart filled with joy and peace, through believing.

How appropriate the exhortation, "Therefore let us keep the feast." Brought into the light, it is now ours to enjoy fellowship "with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ" (I John i. 3).

And when we gather together around the table of the Lord, to partake of the memorials of His death, what a feast it is to our souls; and how sweet to look forward to that happy moment, when the Lord whom we love shall gather to Himself all who are His.

Well may we sing—

“Glory unto Jesus be  
From the curse who set us free,  
All our sins on Him were laid,  
He the ransom fully paid.

All that blessed work is done,  
God's well pleasèd with His Son ;  
He has raised Him from the dead,  
Set Him over all as Head.

This we know and cease to mourn,  
Patient wait His sure return ;  
For His saints with Him shall reign,  
Come Lord Jesus, yea, Amen.”

J. H.

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## “UNDERSTANDEST THOU WHAT THOU READEST?”

ACTS VIII. 30.

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**S**OME time since, an opportunity was given me to tell out God's glad tidings in the city of Worcester. In our meetings there we realised the power and presence of the Lord. His people were edified, and many weary burdened sinners were led to believe that Christ had borne their “sins in his own body on the tree,” long ago.

My service in Worcester ended, I started for Bemerton, a village near Salisbury. The only other occupants of the compartment that I entered, were a gentleman and his wife who sat opposite to me. According to my usual custom when

travelling, I took out my Bible that I might "cull refreshment by the way." I was pondering over the wonderful love of the God who gave His only begotten Son to die for the sin of the world, when a stern, authoritative voice broke in upon my musing, with the question that was asked centuries ago by one who held a commission from Christ Himself to preach the gospel to every creature, "Understandest thou what thou readest?"

My fellow-traveller's manner in asking this question might have startled a more timid man than myself, but by the help of the same Holy Spirit who had enabled Philip to open up the Scripture to the Ethiopian eunuch I looked him boldly in the face and answered, "Yes, sir."

"Well," said he, "you are the first man in England who has told me that."

"Of what others have told you, sir," said I, "I know nothing, but this I know, that the question which you asked me was a fitting one for Philip to put to the eunuch, who had been to Jerusalem to worship, and who was returning no better for his visit to the city which had murdered its rightful King. The eunuch confessed that he could not understand Isaiah's prophecy unless some man interpreted it for him; so Philip preached to him 'Jesus.' The eunuch believed, was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing."

"Now, sir," I continued, "I *know* Christ



as my Saviour, God as my Father, heaven as my home; and the One who has loved me unto death, my Lord and Master, has given me eternal life, and has assured me that I shall never perish; God has justified me freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. I am going to be with Him and to be like Him for ever. All this I *understand* through faith."

While I was speaking, my hearer's piercing eyes had been fixed upon my face. When I stopped to draw breath, he quietly remarked, "Are you sure that what you call faith may not in reality be simply imagination?"

"Sir," I replied, "I do not imagine that you are in this compartment, for I can see you. That is a simple fact, but not more simple than the statement made by the apostle Paul to the Ephesians (Eph. ii. 8); 'For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.' Grace and faith belong to God, and that which belongs to Him is eternal and divine. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His word will remain. Grace and faith are the gifts of God to the believer. There is no room for imagination here."

There was a look of interest in my companion's face, and I should like to have continued the conversation, but the train had now reached Salisbury, and I was obliged to alight. I offered my friend

a gospel booklet, which he accepted with the remark, "Well, at any rate you have given me God's word for what you have said." The train bore him away as I offered up a silent prayer to the One in Whose service I was engaged, that I might meet again my questioner in heaven.

Dear young believer, people may try to puzzle and baffle you with all sorts of questions, but you can boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not fear." "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." Having taken the "helmet of salvation," let us take also the "sword of the Spirit," which is the word of God. So Jesus in the wilderness overcame Satan with the word of God, and has left us an example that we should follow His steps.

W.B.

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## GOD'S INCOMPARABLE LOVE.

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**H**UMAN love of whatever degree or kind yearns for and insists upon an object which it believes to be worthy of it. But it is one of the distinguishing characteristics of divine love that its object affords no originating impulse whatever. For "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). It is well to lay the thought of

man's real condition much upon our hearts ; since it were comparatively a small matter to point out that the ephemeral creature, man, was unable to show any excellence capable of exciting the love of One so far removed from him as his Almighty Creator. Indeed, reasoning from this thought alone, some have falsely concluded that it is incredible, and even impossible, for God to entertain even the slightest regard for man upon earth. Nevertheless, the astonishing truth, exceeding all human conception, and revealed, not in nature but in scripture, is that, though man is in a desperate state of irreconcilable hatred and antagonism to everything divine, God loves him in spite of all.

Neither is this a matter of speculative theory, but an actual fact, bearing the highest credentials. God's love has been manifested. It is no longer a secret of the divine bosom ; for its display was perfect and sufficient, being in and by the person of the Only-begotten Son of God, Who came tabernacling in flesh as the only competent exponent of that love. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (1 John iv. 9).

Moreover God has been pleased to allow His love to be tested and proved. And the proof He has given is that which ranks as most convincing

in man's estimation. For the fullest possible attestation of one's love is to lay down one's life. No sacrifice can exceed this. "Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath, will he give for his life" (Job ii. 4). But Christ laid down His life, as He said, "I lay down My life for the sheep" (John x. 15). Among men, however; it is barely conceivable that such an extreme sacrifice could be made for any but a friend or benefactor. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John xv. 13). "For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 7, 8). Thus, blessed be His name, God has abounded above the thoughts as well as the sin and bitter enmity of His creatures, and bestowed His Son both as the propitiation for our sins and as the incomparable witness of His incomparable love (1 John iv. 9, 10).

Have *you* ever known and believed that God is love? Is not the proof sufficient? God calls you to look at Christ and Calvary, and not around you, for the exhibition of His love. The world is full of the fruits of sin; yet physical pain, mental anguish, and universal sorrow do not deny the goodness of God, but proclaim the evil of man. And though the Son of God came from heaven to

stem the overflowing tide of woe, men still give credence to the devil's lie, rather than to God's truth that He is love. But let it not be forgotten that those who continue to resist this super-eminent love will assuredly add to the weight of their everlasting condemnation. W J. H.

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**“BEHOLD, NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME ;  
BEHOLD, NOW IS THE DAY OF  
SALVATION.”**

2 COR. VI. 2.

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“**W**ISDOM hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens; she crieth upon the highest places of the city. Whoso is simple, let him turn in hither; as for him that wanteth understanding, she saith to him, Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled” (Prov. ix, 1—5). God in His sovereign grace has spread the feast, and now the sinner is invited to come and partake of His bounty.

The perfect wisdom of God is set forth in the Lord Jesus Christ. “In him was life; and the life,” who of God is made to “the believer ‘wisdom,’

was the light of men ;” and “ as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”

But how sad to think that such is the darkness of the natural heart, that though “ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, . . . the world knew him not.” The light is come into the world and makes manifest man’s real condition in the sight of God ; and because of this, men hate the light, and love the darkness. Man, until his eyes have been opened thinks well of himself, and likes to be thought well of by his fellow men. If I go into a dark room with the light of a taper, I may not detect anything amiss ; but let me look in when the sun is shining, and then, what a change ! The light of the sun at once reveals the dust and cobwebs, and confusion, that had remained undiscerned by the light of the taper. Yet men love their taper ; they love to “ compass themselves about with sparks, and to walk in the sparks that they have kindled.”

But now the truth has been told. Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil. “ For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds should be reprovèd ” (John iii. 20). “ Now they have no cloak for their sin ” (John xv. 22). The cross of Christ is the measure of man’s guilt and of God’s rich mercy. “ God was in Christ recon-

ciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them" (2 Cor. v. 19). "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John i. 14).

But man had no heart for Christ; Jews and Gentiles alike joined hands in rejecting Him. "Not this man, but Barabbas (now Barabbas was a robber)," such was man's choice in preference to the Lord of glory. But, blessed be God, sovereign grace has triumphed over man's sin, for "where sin abounded grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. v. 20, 21). God has been glorified in His Son, by the work of redemption forever completed through His death on the cross.

"The new and living way  
 Stands open now to heaven;  
 Thence, where the blood is seen alway,  
 God's gift is given.  
 The river of His grace,  
 Through righteousness supplied,  
 Is flowing o'er the barren place  
 Where Jesus died."

The victory has been won over all that sin could do in Satan's last stronghold. God has raised His Son from the dead, and through Him, as Paul declared at Antioch in Pisidia, "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him,

all that believed are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39).

Fellow traveller to eternity, let me inquire of you, "Do you know for yourself this redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of your sins?" If not, beware lest you become a neglecter of this great salvation. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 2, 3). You do not *intend* to be lost. Oh, no! "Let me die the death of the righteous," perhaps you say; but like one of old you want a more convenient season! You have some other object that fills your heart. Various are the objects that Satan dangles before men to call them away from Christ and His proffered blessing. A diamond, or gold, or silver mine, is Satan's bait to thousands, and though there may be hundreds of miles of desert to negotiate before the goal is reached, yet, if a wealthy mine is discovered, no obstacle is too great to overcome. Men, in hundreds, pack up their belongings and away. Alas! only in too many instances to die of thirst, or disease, before the goal is reached. But oh, dear reader, hearken to Wisdom's voice e'er it be too late. She saith, "Wisdom is more precious than *rubies*; and all



the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her." "My fruit is better than *gold*, yea, than fine gold, and my revenue than choice *silver*." "Whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord. But he that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul : all they that hate me love death" (Prov. iii. 15 ; viii. 19, 35, 36). Perhaps a successful political career is what offers itself before me ; and if I become a Christian this might interfere with my success in the world ! But again I plead, hearken to wisdom's voice, "Come, eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled" (Prov. ix. 5). "*Behold, now is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.*"

Some few years ago, I was lying ill in one of the many large hospitals, with typhoid fever. It was the first time I had ever seen the inside of a hospital ward. I had indeed seen little of sickness, and everything seemed strange. One bright day in January; a ship sailed into Sydney harbour with two young men on board, in the last stages of consumption. They had been ordered to Australia by the doctors, with the hope of arresting the disease, but all in vain.

Well, these young men were taken from the ship, and brought into the ward where I lay. Their names I never knew. One, a very dark young man, was placed at the north end of the

ward, while the other, a young doctor, lay in a bed by my side, at the southern end.

There, dear reader, a picture met my gaze which I never can forget. What a troubled anxious look was on the face of that dark young man! He seemed to have awakened to the fact that he was standing on the brink of eternity, but all unprepared to appear in the presence of a holy God. He fixed his eyes on me and raising his head he leaned towards me, as though he wished to speak, though why I cannot say, for we were strangers to each other. By-and-by the clergyman was sent for in haste, and brought in to him. But whether he was the profferer of "peace by the blood of Christ's cross" to that troubled soul, I never knew. Soon, very soon, the dying man passed into eternity, where God's glad tidings can never reach a soul.

But now let us turn to the young doctor. He too was in the last stages of consumption with only a few days to live in this world; but oh, the joy that beamed in his face told of the peace that reigned within. What do you think, dear reader, was the secret of this peace and joy that filled his soul? Was it that he was any better naturally, in the sight of God than the other? Nay, but like Abraham of old, he believed on "him that justifieth the ungodly. He could therefore joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. He knew that every question

between him and God had been righteously and eternally settled, 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. 21). Thus to the one, as people say, death was the king of terrors; to the young doctor, it was "absent from the body" to be "present with the Lord." Oh, dear reader, I beseech you, flee from the wrath to come. The foolish woman may suggest "Stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant," but the veil has been lifted, and the reality brought to light,—*"her guests are in the depths of hell."* *"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."*

"The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness. But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 22—24). "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 iii. 36).

"Then linger not in all the plain;  
Flee for thy life, the mountain gain;  
Look not behind, make no delay;  
Oh! speed thee, speed thee on thy way.

Poor, lost, benighted soul, art thou  
Willing to find salvation now?  
There yet is hope, hear mercy's call:  
Truth, life, light, way, in Christ is all."

## LOVE'S DILEMMA.

DANIEL VI.

**K**ING Darius seems to have taken great pains to maintain to its full his dignity and majesty, and the appointment of one hundred and twenty princes was no doubt a means to this end, which men, then or now, would generally approve. That God however, should have rights of His own, is quite another matter in which the proud heart of the natural man is not ready to acquiesce. Yet so it will be, the day is coming in which Psalm viii. 1 will be fulfilled: "O Jehovah our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth." Above the one hundred and twenty princes, Darius had one he thought to set over the whole realm; one of whom it is written, an excellent spirit was in him," bringing before us the One "Who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour," and of Whom indeed it is true, "Thou madest Him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands, Thou hast put all things under His feet" (Ps. viii. 6), but verily more than "sheep and oxen," for 1 Corinthians xv. affirms, in connection with the same, that, such is the magnitude of His dominion, only "He is excepted which did put all things under Him."

Now to bring Daniel to death, was the object of conspirators who were forced to own "neither was

there any error or fault found in him," but they little thought their efforts to do so would end in their own ruin for time and for eternity. The only way in which it could be accomplished was through Daniel's piety, his abiding in the fear of God ; and so they request of the king to make a royal statute and a firm decree that no petition should be asked of any God or man for thirty days save of the king himself, and that anyone transgressing should be cast into the den of lions, or as we may say, brought under the power of judgment.

This reminds us of one that is to come, "that man of sin . . . the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God" (2 Thess. ii. 3, 4) ; and, awful fact ! we are told also of those who will be deceived by him, in the chapter last quoted (even, it may be, gospel hearers, but rejecters, or neglecters, of to-day) "because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved ; and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness" (vers. 10—12). The foolish king signs the decree, one would hope without comprehending the awful sin he was committing ; but sin must ever be judged according to God's thoughts, not man's.

Daniel, unperturbed, knowing all about it, went on his usual course of petitioning the living and true God, with his windows open towards Jerusalem, three times a day. The schemers having accomplished their purpose, are not slow to press upon the king his decree, its immutability, and the contravention thereof by his favourite, though in a most offensive way, and one not altogether true, he "regardeth not thee, O king". In Matt. xxvi. we have Judas covenanting with the chief priests to deliver the Lord Jesus to them for thirty pieces of silver; and in that same chapter we have the One who could say, "I was cast upon Thee from the womb," making a petition in view of the cross, with its awful realities, enough to move any heart, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Well might Darius be sore displeased with himself and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, knowing the excellent servant he had been; but the wonder is concerning us, rebel sinners, that it could be written, as it is (John iii. 16), "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." With all his labouring to the going down of the sun, it seems never to have occurred to Darius to show his love for a worthy man, and to maintain at the same

time his truth and majesty, by going into the den of lions himself, instead of Daniel. We read, however, of the Lord Jesus that He, "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"(Heb. i. 3). To think that the very God against Whom we sinned should, in the person of His Son, go into our place of death and judgment, surpasses all our thoughts; and yet it is true for every believer, for it is written, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Into the den, however, Daniel must go, and it must be sealed with the signet of the king and his lords; only the king sought to comfort him. But of the adorable Saviour it is written, "I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but found none." (Psalm lxix. 20) He was alone in His sorrow.

Now, my reader, if king Darius' authority had to be maintained at such a cost as this, let me remind you it is written, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me, every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." Bow then to God you must, sooner or later. He, however, graciously prefaces this (see Isaiah xlv. 22, 23), by "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." Have you done this?

The lions' mouths were shut for Daniel ; he was brought out of the den and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. It was otherwise, however, with the Lord Jesus He "poured out His soul unto death ; He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isaiah liii. 12). "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). The turn now comes for Daniel's detractors to be cast into the den, and lo, what a change ! the lions had the mastery of them, and brake all their bones in pieces or ever they came at the bottom of the den.

My reader, if you meet the judgment in your own person, you will be eternally lost ; the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ is the proof to the believer that all his sins are gone, and that he is for ever justified ; but if you will not trust Him, He must be your Judge, for a greater than Darius has decreed in a word more durable than "the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not," "the times of this ignorance God winked at, *but now commandeth all men everywhere* to repent, because He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man



whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead" (Acts xvii. 30, 31). W.N.T.

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### " MY HEART IS SO HARD ! "

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**M**ANY years ago it pleased God to visit the town of H., and the surrounding villages, with a time of general awakening. It bore no resemblance to those seasons of fitful and forced excitement, resulting from laborious efforts in what are called "special services," which are too often mistaken for revivals, in the present day. It was a time in which the awakening and converting power of God's Holy Spirit was like "showers upon the grass," or "a dew from the Lord, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men" (Micah v. 7). The preaching of the gospel was attended by crowds who had not been wont to attend it ; seriousness sat on every countenance while listening to the word ; old and young, men, women and children, were impressed with the importance of eternal things ; and numbers, among whom many have fallen asleep, but the greater part continue to this day, were "turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

One of the converts in this time of blessing was Sarah A., a married woman of middle age, humble

circumstances, and no education ; but a person of stronger mind than many, whose advantages were greater than her's. How she was first led to consider her fallen state, and solemn prospects for eternity, I do not at this distance of time remember ; but her convictions and distress were so deep and long continued, as to leave an impression which no lapse of time could erase. Regular in her attendance on the preached word, and diligent in searching the scriptures, she cried earnestly to God for mercy, and was always ready to listen to any Christian, who would converse with her on the solemn question of how she was to be saved. For months her distress continued, amounting sometimes almost to agony ; and nothing that was addressed to her seemed to afford the least relief. Her case became the subject of frequent and anxious conference among those who were labouring for the Lord ; and often did they unite in prayer on her behalf : but still deliverance was delayed.

The constant burden of Sarah A.'s complaint was the hardness of her heart. " My heart is so hard," she would say ; " I see what a sinner I have been, but I cannot *feel* it. I believe all you tell me, but though my sins stare me in the face, I cannot shed a tear ; my heart is as hard as a stone. What is to become of me, poor, wretched, hardened sinner that I am ! " Often and often

was she told, that we are not justified by *feeling*, but by *faith*; that even faith justifies only as it receives Christ, and trusts in Him, in whom all the saving virtue dwells; while she, on the other hand, was trying to make a Saviour of the softened, tender feelings after which she craved. I remember saying to her, "Hard-hearted as you are, it was for such as you that Jesus died. Come to Him as you are. Bring your hard heart to Him. Behold the Lamb of God. One believing look to Jesus will do more to soften your heart, than poring over your sins and impenitence will do in a year. You wish for penitential feelings as a warrant for looking to Jesus, and trusting in His precious blood; but, depend upon it, if ever you have such feelings as you desire, they will be the effect of beholding Him by faith—of believing God's record of His Son." But all seemed to be in vain. While actually holding up before her the love of God in the gift of Jesus, and the love of Jesus in dying on the cross for His very foes, her attention would be fixed, and the hope awakened in one's breast that she was drinking in the good news. But no sooner did the sounds cease, than she would reply, with such a look of settled despondency, "It is all true, but I can *feel* nothing; my heart is as hard as a stone!"

One day, when we had almost become accustomed to her despairing looks and accents, we

were all startled by hearing that Sarah A. was rejoicing in the Lord. No time was lost in visiting her, to hear from herself how this change had come to pass. Its reality was apparent in her countenance, and in her whole demeanour. Her account was as follows :

“Last night was a dreadful night. Lying awake, and thinking of my sins, wondering how it was I could neither feel them nor get rid of them, it seemed to me that God was quite giving me up to the hardness of my heart, and that there was nothing for me but the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched. What a night have I had ! Towards morning, I got upon my knees, and began to cry to God. How long I continued I cannot tell ; but what the Bible says about God so loving the world as to give His Son, and about Jesus dying on the cross, came to my mind, and somehow I got thinking of His love, and I could think of nothing else. Before I was aware of it my heart melted, and I found myself weeping to think of what Jesus had suffered for my sins. My tears flowed so fast, and yet they were not so much tears of sorrow as of joy. My load was gone, and I could only praise my Saviour, and weep before Him, that He should have died for such a wretch as me. What love ! to die upon the cross for such a wretch as me !”

Such was her account ; and, as she gave it, she,

who had never shed a tear when bemoaning the hardness of her heart, wept profusely as she dwelt upon the love of Christ, exclaiming, again and again, "O the precious blood of Christ! That precious blood! It even avails for me!"

The change was as abiding as it was evident. It is many years now since the writer, from change of residence, lost sight of Sarah A.; but as long as he had the opportunity either of observing her, or hearing of her, she was rejoicing in Christ, and enabled, amidst much outward trial, to adorn the doctrine of God her Saviour.

Dear reader, are you, like this poor woman, looking into yourself for some softening of heart, some deeper sense of sin, before you trust your soul to Jesus? May you learn by her case, that the only way to have your hard heart softened, is to look to Jesus as you are. "Behold the Lamb of God!" It was for sinners such as you that His blood was shed; and His "blood cleanseth us from all sin."

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## GOD'S MERCY IS MAN'S RESOURCE.

PSALM V.

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"**I** ADMIT that I am a sinner, I know that I have sinned; but I cannot understand what you mean by saying that I am a *lost* sinner—a *ruined* sinner. I am not lost! I am not ruined! as you say."

“ Well, I know that you are not *finally* lost, or you would not be here. Bless God for that mercy. But if you are not *lost*, you can have nothing to do with the Saviour ; for He has come ‘ to seek and to save that which was lost.’ And if you are not *dead in sins*, what do you want with Christ ? He is the eternal life of God to dead souls. You can have nothing to say to Him whatever, until you have learnt, that you are a poor lost sinner, ‘ dead in trespasses and sins.’ ‘ He that believeth on him, is not condemned ; but *he that believeth not is condemned already*, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil . . . 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 iii.).

“ Quite so ; but we are not to take these words literally.”

Such was the language of one who thought he had examined the subject carefully, and had come to a right conclusion. But, alas ! how often are man’s conclusions at utter variance with the word of God, even on the most vital subjects.

He was quite sincere, I have no doubt : but more is wanted than sincerity. He did not understand the scriptural meaning of the expression,

“lost,” as applied to his own condition. And many, doubtless, are in precisely the same state of mind, though they may not be aware of it, or express it so boldly.

This foundation truth is plainly taught all through the scriptures, from Adam downwards. The first announcement of it was made in the garden of Eden, when the Lord said to Adam, “Where art thou?” Man was now lost, and God, in grace, was seeking him.

But in the third chapter of the epistle to the Romans, we have the summing up of the whole of the evidence, by the Spirit of truth, as to man’s real condition and character, and solemn judgment is given thereon. “There is none righteous ; no, not one. There is none that understandeth ; there is none that seeketh after God.....there is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law ; *that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*”

Hence, the gospel addresses man as a lost sinner, and only as such. It speaks of divine love going out to seek the LOST sheep—searching for the LOST piece of silver—and embracing, with an affection that knows no change, the LOST prodigal son. And oh, wondrous truth ! none but once-lost children ever know, or ever taste, the

sweetness of this unchanging love. It is only on the neck of the lost-one found that the father falls,—embraces, and kisses his son (Luke xv.). The elder brother was a stranger to all this kind of affection, joy and gladness. But it is the only sort that will ever break our hearts.

In the Psalm at the head of this paper, these truths are blessedly brought out, namely, that man is wholly ruined in himself; but in the mercy of God he has an unfailing resource.

Three things are here stated as to man. 1. He is “foolish.” 2. A “worker of iniquity.” 3. “Deceitful.” Take the first only for the present. “The foolish shall not stand in thy sight.” Oh! who could say, in the searching light of this word, “I am not lost! I am not ruined!” Who can say, they have never been foolish? “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child.” And, “The *thought* of foolishness is sin” (Prov. xxii. 15; xxiv. 9). Oh! where is the son or daughter of Adam who is not condemned by this scripture? “The *thought* of foolishness is *sin*.” Well may we say with the Psalmist, “Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified” (Ps. cxliii. 2).

When, as a divinely convicted sinner, I read such words as these, I may well ask, How am I to come near to God, who cannot look upon sin? The answer is as clear and simple as the gospel can



make it. "As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of *thy mercy*" (ver. 7). Here is the answer. It speaks of mercy, the mercy of God ; and that is infinite. Through grace, I turn to Him in the name of Jesus. Now I see that, ruined as I am in myself, GOD IS FOR ME. It is not in the multitude of my good works, good feelings, or sincere endeavours ; no ; it is only "in the multitude of *thy mercy*." This is lost man's only hope. He can only enter by the door of mercy, and that door, blessed be God, stands wide open, night and day, for the chief of sinners. Divine mercy has laid the foundation of his approach to God, in the person and work of Jesus ; and has come down to all his need as a helpless sinner.

Nor is this all. There is far more. "Lead me, O Lord, in **THY** righteousness, because of mine enemies" (ver. 8). No righteousness of our own would do, either in the presence of God, or in the presence of enemies. But God, in infinite mercy, has not only come down to the depths of my ruin, and met all my need there : but He has raised me up out of it all, and set me in the condition of divine and everlasting righteousness in His own presence. So that every enemy is silenced, and silenced for ever. Christ is my righteousness. Having purged our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, He has gone up to the Father as the righteous One

—“Jesus Christ the righteous.” This is a deeply blessed truth. The righteousness in which the believer stands before God is Christ Himself. He is “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS,” “Who of God is made unto us.....righteousness.” And we are “become the righteousness of God *in Him*.” God must have righteousness. No sinner ever stood, or can stand, in His holy presence, except in His righteousness. This righteousness is revealed to faith in the gospel. The law *required* righteousness, the gospel *provides* it. It is *now* made known—manifested. Those who have faith in Jesus have the righteousness of God. “Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe ; for there is no difference ” (Rom. iii. 22).

This settles every question, removes every fear, and shuts the mouth of every enemy. Christ has answered to God for all that we are, and for all that we have done, as sinners ; and as our risen, living Head, He is in the presence of God for us, and we are there, always there, *in Him*. My foolishness cannot stand in God’s presence, but His righteousness can. “And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.”

But there is more than even this. Being the subject of divine mercy, which has come down to such a depth, and being clothed in divine righteousness, which brings me up to such a height, I

have got to walk down here amid the thorns and briars of the wilderness.

What do I want for this? "Make THY way straight before my face" (ver. 8). This makes all plain. There is no doubt, no darkness, no uncertainty, in God's way. Oh! for a single eye, a body full of light, and a straight path.

Is there, can there be, anything more for the once lost soul that has been brought to the "Father of mercies" through faith in Jesus? Oh yes, blessed be His name, there is. He accompanies the child of mercy with the joy, favour, blessing, and protection of His presence all his journey through. "But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice; let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee. For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield" (vers. 11, 12).

Such are mercy's boundless stores for every poor bankrupt sinner who believes in Jesus, and rests in Him alone.

He feeds on the riches of divine mercy.

He is clothed in divine righteousness.

He walks in divinely made paths.

He is refreshed and strengthened with divine joy.

He basks in the sunshine of divine blessing.

He reposes behind the shield of divine favour.

## “I WAS ON THE WRONG TRACK.”

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THE person from whose lips I heard the above words, was a worn-out old man of above seventy years.

Disease was making rapid inroads on his frame, each day found him growing weaker and weaker, so that evidently he had not long to live. He had been a quiet, inoffensive man, whose character had been remarkably good for sobriety, steadiness and industry; but I soon discovered that however much he had been noted for these qualities in his life-time, they could not satisfy his conscience, or afford him true peace when he came to die.

I found him in bed, in a sick and helpless condition, and the conversation that then took place was somewhat to the following effect:—

“Well, S——,” I said, “I see that you are exceedingly ill and worn out, but what about your soul? Are you certain that all is right for the future? Have you peace with God?”

He replied in two words, “I’m busy.”

“Busy,” I repeated, “at what? or about what?”

You are praying, I suppose, to get your sins taken away, and to have your soul saved?"

He assented.

"Ah! S——," I said, "you are making a sad mistake—one which hundreds have fallen into. You are putting prayer in the place of Christ. You are looking to, and leaning on, your prayers, instead of the blood of the Lord Jesus. Now, this is not God's way, and He ought to know a great deal better than you or anyone else. His plan for saving lost and ruined sinners is very different from the plan you are adopting. It is by Christ that a sinner is saved, and not by prayers or by works. The Lord Jesus Himself finished salvation on the cross. By His death and resurrection, He has accomplished *all* that was needed to save the very vilest of the vile. God loved sinners, but He could not endure their sins. Indeed, He so loved them, as to send His only-begotten Son, who, by the shedding of His own blood, made propitiation for sins, so that now the God of all grace shows a full salvation for your soul through the blood of Jesus, and proclaims free mercy to you, not through your earnest prayers, but in the name of Jesus. If you prayed with the greatest earnestness for a life-time, you could not wash away your sins, nor have settled peace. Oh, no! peace has been made by His blood, and peace, perfect peace, of conscience comes to us through faith in His

blood. You do not gain this by your prayers or tears, your strivings or sincere efforts. Christ has done the whole work. He did it alone, but He did it for us; and now He is exalted at God's right hand as a Prince and a Saviour. His precious blood cleanses from all sin, and furnishes the sinner with a sure resting-place; so sure that, although the earth should crumble to pieces, and the heavens above dissolve, all is well with the soul that trusts in the blood of the Lamb. Remember, God does not say that you shall be forgiven through your prayers, but He proffers a full and eternal forgiveness to all who believe in Jesus. Now, S——, that is God's way. Do you see it?"

The old man raised his head slightly from his pillow and faintly exclaimed, "Oh, I see it now! *I was on the wrong track!* I was in error."

"And do you," I asked, "understand now that peace has been made by the blood of Jesus, and can you get rest *there?*"

"Yes," he replied again, and, "*I was on the wrong track!*"

A few days afterwards I called to see him again. His strength was almost gone, his voice greatly affected, and his outward man completely prostrated by illness; but his mind was now quite composed. His own expression was a very simple but intelligent one: "I have rest now in

the blood of the Lamb." On being asked if the thought of the sins of a life-time did not disturb his soul, he answered, "I have no fear now, I can trust the Lord Jesus." It was remarked that the blood was the true foundation of the believer's peace and never could fail. He assented to this, and added, "Oh! I was in error; but now I have seen my error. I, many a time, thought that I had something to do, and that it was hard to be certain, but now I see that Christ has done all."

His sole dependence and confidence were now placed in the blood of the Lamb. There was no doubt, no hesitation, no misgiving. He had got away for ever from the darkness of his own reasonings into the light of divine truth, where a risen Christ is the grand object for the soul.

I saw him several times afterwards: but in a few days he fell asleep through Jesus, bearing unequivocal testimony to the value of the blood of Christ in cleansing him from all sin.

May many souls, through the blessing of God, be eternally profited by this interesting case of conversion!

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## THE TOUCH OF FAITH.

LUKE VIII. 43—48.

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**C**HRIST Himself is the only source of life and blessedness to the soul. "He that hath the Son hath life." Outside of Christ, apart from

Him, there is no eternal life for the soul. "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (1 John v. 11). He is the fountain, and faith leads to Him. There must be personal contact, by faith, on the part of the dead sinner, with the living Saviour. There is no life without it. "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit" (1 Cor. vi. 17). It may be only the hem of His garment that is touched, but it must be touched by faith, and this touch of faith brings immediate, eternal, life to the soul (see Matt. ix. ; Mark v. ; Luke vii.).

The multitude thronged Jesus, and pressed Him; but no heavenly virtue flowed from Him to them. There was no action of faith in the curious crowd. It was neither faith nor felt need that brought them there. But the moment that the finger of faith touched the border of His garment, Jesus said, "Somebody hath touched me, for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him, before all the people, for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed IMMEDIATELY. And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." This is the Lord's gracious and kindly way with every sinner that comes to Him in faith. He *immediately*



and *perfectly* meets all their need. She came in the right way, namely, the way of faith. She believed that her case was utterly hopeless, save in His hands. She "had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse." What a true picture of the sinner's sad condition. Thus she came to Jesus under a deep sense of, not only her need, poverty, and helplessness, but the utter worthlessness of all human aid. Every creature-resource had failed her, and every spring was dried up, save the everlasting fountain of redeeming love. And with all her unrelieved distress, she came in faith to Jesus, "For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole." Precious faith! and she was not disappointed. But was ever one that came by faith to Him? Not one! "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37).

And now, mark, dear reader, the wondrous grace that shines in His tender words to this troubled woman. He first calls her "daughter," as much as to say, we are now intimately connected; we are kindred, of one family, one Father, one hope, one home. "For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Heb. ii. 11; Rom. viii. 35).

Then He says to her, "Be of good comfort." Take, enjoy all the comfort that springs from being made whole in body, and from being a child of God "by faith in Christ Jesus." Oh! what a source of comfort these words are, as coming from the lips of Jesus! What a deep springing-well of never-ending bliss!

He then adds, "Thy faith hath made thee whole." Faith brings the soul to Christ, the true Physician. He only has the "balm of Gilead." He only can recover the health of the daughter of His people (Jer. viii. 22). But how gracious of the Lord to say, "Thy *faith* hath made thee whole," when He Himself had done it all! Yes, but there is a deep practical truth in this. The healing virtue was in Him, but *faith* was the divine way of putting her in possession of it. The unsearchable riches of Christ are thrown open to faith; every spring of healing virtue in the Saviour opens to its touch; it unlocks the whole treasury of God. Christ has indeed done all the work. The great work of atonement, propitiation, redemption by blood, was assuredly accomplished on the cross, and finished there for ever. But a man is not *saved*, he does not possess *salvation*, until he believes in Christ and rests on the work accomplished at Calvary. Hence, the great doctrine of all scripture on this point is, that we are "*justified by faith.*" "To him give all the prophets witness,

that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts x. 43). Faith receives Christ, and links the soul with Him who is the fountain of all blessing. But no blessing is received until He is received, by faith, through the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, by means of the truth of the gospel. The poor woman only "*grew worse*" until she came to Jesus. And so must every son and daughter of Adam. There is no spiritual life, health, or blessing, save in Him. The soul must perish that has no connection with Him. She was in the very circumstances of death when she stretched forth the hand of living faith. The connecting link between the sinner and the Saviour is *faith in Him*. Hence the unspeakable importance of the question, "DOST THOU BELIEVE ON THE SON OF GOD." Forgiveness, justification, salvation, and peace, are now ours when, resting on Christ's accomplished redemption, we can answer in His presence, "LORD, I BELIEVE" (John ix. 35—38). "In whom we have redemption...the forgiveness of sins." "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace" (Col. i. 14; John i. 16).

He concludes with "Go in peace." All is settled now, and settled for ever, so that in virtue of His cross we can now say, "Being justified

by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

The fountain of her disease had been dried up. God deals with sin, root and branch. She had a solid ground of peace in the precious words of Jesus. Nothing more was required for her assurance than His own words of sweetest grace. "Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace." Oh! how full, comprehensive, and pointed they are! Nothing seems to be left out that is needed to give a soul real joy, good comfort, perfect rest, and settled peace.

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## "AND HAVE I NOTHING TO DO?"

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**T**HE title of this paper, was the significant and repeated exclamation of a poor dying woman. And were it not for the benefit of others, there would be no good reason for publishing it. But her case is not a rare one. Go where we may, we shall find many in the same condition. And the simple story of God's ways in grace with her soul may be made a blessing to many. The Lord, in His abundant mercy, grant that it may!

Self-deception is a fearful thing, and not uncommon. Surely we should ever seek to deliver

precious souls from it, by plain and faithful dealing, in dependence on God.

The subject of this narrative had reached her seventieth year. She was now very near her journey's end, but still ignorant of the way of salvation.

After a few general inquiries, and learning a little as to the real state of her soul, I asked her plainly, in something like the following words,

“Have you any hope of recovering from this illness?”

“Oh no, sir. I am an old woman, and I have been a hard-working woman all my life. I can never be better in this world.”

“Are you thinking much about the *next* as you lie there?”

“Oh yes, sir; that is just what I am doing. I pray nearly all night and all day.”

“I am glad to hear that. But tell me, what do you chiefly pray for?”

“I pray to the Almighty, that He would pardon my sins. I know I have a great many.”

“Are you very anxious to know whether they are all forgiven or not?”

“Indeed I am, sir. I have nothing else now to think about, but to pray to the Almighty that He would pardon me.”

“And do you believe He will?”

“Oh yes. I am sure a great many of my sins

have been pardoned, since I began to pray; but I know they are not all pardoned yet; and I keep praying to Him."

"Well, it is surely a right thing for us poor creatures to pray to God, who only can help us. But it would be quite wrong to make a *Saviour* of our prayers. Christ is the *only* Saviour from sin. You must have a great many to pray about. The sins of seventy long years! What a number you must have committed in that time! And remember, you will have to answer to God about every one of them, unless another does it for you. Now, tell me this, Do you really expect that *your own prayers will satisfy God*, for having neglected Him, and sinned against Him, seventy years?"

"Oh no, sir. I know the Saviour died for our sins, and we have the promise, that if we ask we shall receive. But we must ask."

"Just so; that is so far true. But how long do you think you will have to pray yet, before they are all forgiven? . . . Do not the Scriptures positively teach us, that if we are resting on the death of Christ for pardon, and not on our own prayers, we are forgiven already? When God forgives a sinner, He does it all at once. Not by halves, surely! Whenever we trust, by faith, in the death of Jesus, we are fully and freely forgiven, and it is ours to know it. God does every thing perfectly."

The poor woman was sadly in the dark on this important point, but most attentive to what was said, and deeply interested, although not in great trouble about her soul.

After reading to her some passages from the Scriptures, her mind was evidently turned to the word of God, and became fixed on *it*. Especially on such portions as Acts xiii. 26—39; where the apostle is proving that the death and resurrection of Christ is the only ground of pardon, and that God freely forgives those who truly believe on His Son.

“AND HAVE I NOTHING TO DO?” she exclaimed in the most earnest manner.

“No, dear woman, nothing to do; only to believe. The blessed Jesus has done it all. He has done all the work of our salvation. He did every thing that God demanded, and now, God asks nothing from us, only to believe and rejoice in the perfect, finished work of His beloved Son. The word of God expressly says, that it is through faith in the Lord Jesus we are pardoned, and not through our own prayers or doings of any sort. ‘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.’ Here, you see, the apostle stands up, in the midst

of a congregation of Jews, at Antioch, and proclaims a full and free pardon to all, without exception. Now, all in that assembly, who believed the glad tidings, were *immediately forgiven and justified*. And they knew that they were so, by the plain word of God; therefore they could take the comfort of it at once.

“Now, mark this, the apostle does not say one word about *doing*; he only speaks about *believing*. All who believed what he preached about ‘Jesus and the resurrection,’ were, the same moment, forgiven, justified, and eternally saved. And now, if *you* believe the same good news, and trust only in the risen and glorified Jesus, you will be completely forgiven and saved all at once. Just where you are; and you will not require to wait till to-morrow. It will be true *just now*. God declares Himself to ‘be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus’” (Rom. iii. 26).

The simplicity of the gospel evidently stumbled her for the moment, and again she exclaimed, with wonder and amazement, “And have I nothing to do?”

“The apostle says, ‘AND BY HIM ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED.’ Is not that enough? We must not say anything different from the apostle. These are God’s own words by the lips of His servant. Oh, then, think no more about your prayers or doings, as a means of



pardon. Believe God's word—praise Him for His mercy, and pray that you may be kept 'looking unto Jesus.' Place all your confidence in Him, and in the work which He accomplished for poor helpless sinners on the cross. His blood alone "cleanseth from all sin." The very instant you believe "the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation," you are washed in the blood of Jesus, clothed in the righteousness of God, and fitted for heaven. The heavy load of your seventy years' transgressions will be entirely removed, and you will find relief and rest to your weary heart in Him."

Before leaving, I could bless God for the state of her mind. She was now deeply exercised. Her conscience appeared to be in the light of God's word. As I turned round to say a parting word, with my hand on the handle of the door, she once more repeated, with deep emotion, "And have I nothing to do?"

These were the last words I heard her utter. A few days after this she fell asleep in Jesus, giving evidence to those who visited her, that she was not now counting on her prayers for acceptance before God, but on the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Saviour of the chief of sinners, whose precious blood cleanseth us from ALL sin (1 John i. 7). "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his

faith is counted for righteousness." "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood" (Rom. iv. 5 ; iii. 24, 25). What can be plainer, or more conclusive? May you, my dear reader, receive now this divine testimony, and give thanks to God for His unspeakable gift of the Lord Jesus.



## "WHERE SIN ABOUNDED, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND."

ROMANS V. 20.



**T**HE path of life is not with roses spread,  
Nor can it be, for sin is here ;  
The lie of Satan, our first parents led  
To walk with sorrow, and with fear.

Here thorns and thistles thickly now abound,  
Sad proof of man's ignoble fall ;  
Here, too, diseases sore, and death are found,  
And sorrow, which is known to all.

But God's rich sovereign mercy now abounds,  
To reach man in his desperate need ;  
The glorious gospel of His grace now sounds  
Aloud, to all who will give heed.

Thrice happy they who hear the Saviour's call,  
"Ye heavy-laden sinners come !  
Come unto Me, and I will give you all  
You need. Delay no longer ; come !"

## ETERNITY.

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**E**TERNITY! Eternity! How long art thou, Eternity!  
 And yet to thee Time hastes away,  
 Like as the war-horse to the fray,  
 Or swift as couriers homeward go,  
 Or ship to port, or shaft from bow.  
 Ponder, O man, Eternity!

\* \* \*

Eternity! Eternity! How long art thou, Eternity!  
 A circle infinite art thou,  
 Thy centre an eternal Now,  
 Never we name thy outward bound,  
 For never end therein is found.  
 Ponder, O man, Eternity!

\* \* \*

Eternity! Eternity! How long art thou, Eternity!  
 As long as God is God, so long  
 Endure the pains of sin and wrong,  
 So long the joys of heaven remain;  
 O lasting joy! O lasting pain!  
 Ponder, O man, Eternity!

\* \* \*

Eternity! Eternity! How long art thou, Eternity!  
 How terrible art thou in woe!  
 How fair where joys for ever glow!  
 God's goodness sheddeth gladness here,  
 His justice there wakes bitter fear.  
 Ponder, O man, Eternity!

\* \* \*

Eternity! Eternity! How long art thou, Eternity!  
 Lo, I, Eternity, warn thee  
 O man, that oft thou think on me;  
 The sinner's punishment and pain!  
 To those who love their God, rich gain!  
 Ponder, O man, Eternity!

## HOPING AND HAVING.

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THERE is a vast difference between *hoping* for salvation, and actually having it. Many never seem to get beyond the former, though it is their privilege to enjoy the latter. Wherever the gospel in its divine fulness is received, it proves itself to be "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. i. 16). Its language is, "This day is salvation come to this house" (Luke xix. 9). It "gives knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins" (Luke i. 77). In every case in which the gospel is really laid hold of, it imparts peace and gladness. When the Ethiopian eunuch received it through the preaching of Philip, "he went on his way rejoicing" (Acts viii. 39). The Philippian jailer "rejoiced, believing in God with all his house" (Acts xvi. 34). "Being justified by faith, *we have* peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). It could not be the gospel of our salvation—God's good news, were it to leave one in doubt. How could God send glad tidings to people, to leave them in doubt? Impossible. When God speaks, His word must impart a certainty equal to itself. If a truthful person tells us a thing, we feel certainty; and our certainty will be in proportion to the truthfulness of the witness.

Were we to be uncertain we should simply be calling in question his veracity ; or at least, we imply that his word is not sufficient to satisfy us. Now, "if we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater : for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself : he that believeth not God hath made him a liar ; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son" (I John v. 9—11).

And, be it carefully observed, the gospel does not seek to "persuade men" to believe something about themselves. It does not call upon me to believe that I am a Christian. It is a mistake to suppose that the great subject of gospel testimony is any thing about oneself. It is something about Christ. It is something that God tells me about His Son ; and when I, by grace, believe it, it turns my misery into bliss, and gives me life and righteousness, peace and joy, rest and satisfaction. I am called to look away from self altogether, straight to Jesus. The object which God presents is His Son ; there is no uncertainty there. The One who presents the object is God ; there is no uncertainty there. My authority is the word of God ; there is no uncertainty there. The moment a man looks at

himself, for the ground of his confidence or peace, he is all astray. He is plunged in doubt and confusion. What we really want is to keep close to the word—close to Christ—close to the sacrifice. This will take us out of self, and fill us with a divine object in whom we can find all we need. The devil can never shake the confidence of one who has once got thoroughly settled in the gospel of Christ. There may be conflict, trial, exercise, difficulty, depression, sorrow, and the like ; but nothing can ever shake the peace that is really founded upon the word of God. It is eternal and divine. It partakes of the character of that word on which it is founded, and of the sacrifice of which that word bears witness. “The worshippers *once purged* should have had *no more conscience of sins*” (Heb. x. 2). This is plain. To be “once purged” settles everything. “He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but *is clean every whit*” (John xiii. 10). “Now *ye are clean* through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John xv. 3).

Some there are, who seem to think that the only result of the sacrifice of Christ is to put us into a *salvable* state, that is, a state in which salvation is possible. The idea of being *saved*—of knowing salvation—of being assured that we *are* saved, is, in the opinion of such persons, the very height of presumption—the essence of spiritual

pride—a setting up for being holier than one's neighbours—a being righteous overmuch. This, however, is a great mistake—a mistake arising from not seeing the true ground of salvation, and the true authority for knowing that we are saved. The former we have in the blood of Christ ; and the latter, in the word of God. Self has nought to do with either the one or the other. God declares unto us “ glad tidings.” He tells us of salvation through the name of Jesus, of perfect remission of sins through the blood of the cross. Now, the question is, can God's word give certainty ? If He sends us glad tidings, ought they not to be believed ? And, if believed, should they not make us glad ? How could God's glad tidings leave the believing soul in doubt ? Where doubt exists, God's word is not believed—the fulness of Christ is not seen—the value of the blood is not apprehended. Self, self, self is the object before the mind, and hence, there is no peace, no joy, no happiness, no holiness. The soul that is dwelling in the gloomy region of doubt can neither be holy nor happy.

Dear reader, let me entreat you not to be satisfied with *hoping* for salvation. Stop not short of *having* it. Adam knew himself covered, when God clothed him (Gen. iii.). Noah knew he was safe when the Lord shut him in (Gen. vii. 16). The Israelite knew he was safe with the blood on

the door post (Exod. xii.). The manslayer knew he was safe when he entered the city of refuge (Numb. xxxvi.). Rahab knew she was safe, under the cover of the scarlet line (Josh. ii.). Thus it is, in every case where God's remedy is revealed and His word believed, there is certainty and peace. It is no longer hoping, but having. It is worthy of God and His word, to give settled peace to the heart that trusts in Him. It would not be like Him to leave any soul in doubt and uncertainty. I am called to possess all the assurance which God's word is capable of imparting.

May the Lord grant, to the anxious reader, simple confidence in the divine testimony to the value of the blood of His own dear Son.

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### “ LOOSE HIM, AND LET HIM GO.”

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**T**HERE are many divinely quickened souls who need to know the power of these commanding words, “Loose him, and let him go” (John xi. 44). They have been quickened out of a state of death, by the life-giving voice of the Son of God, but they “come forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes,” and their faces “bound about with a napkin.” That is to say, they have not, as yet, been able to shake off the trammels of their former condition, to go on their way in the liberty wherewith Christ makes His



people free. That they have received divine life, is manifest from the very struggles, fluctuations, and conflicts of which they complain. Those that are "dead" know nothing of such things. So long as Lazarus lay in the silent tomb, in the cold grasp of death, he never felt his grave-clothes to be any hindrance to movement, or his napkin to be any hindrance to vision. All was dark, cold, and lifeless; and the grave-clothes were the suited trappings of such a condition. A man whose hands and feet were fast bound in the fetters of death, could not possibly feel any inconvenience from grave-clothes; and one whose eyes were fast sealed by the stern hand of death, could not feel any inconvenience from a napkin.

Thus it is with the unconverted, the unregenerate, the unawakened. They are "dead" morally, spiritually "dead." Their feet are fast bound in the fetters of death; but they know it not. Their hands are confined by the handcuffs of death; but they feel it not. Their eyes are covered by the dark napkin of death; but they perceive it not. They are dead. The robes of death are around them—the grave-clothes are upon them and suit their condition.

But, then, in some way or another, the persons for whom I write this paper, have been acted upon by the mighty, quickening voice of the Son of God—"the Resurrection and the Life." A

verse of scripture, a sermon, a lecture, a tract, a hymn, a prayer, some passing event, has proved, to them, a life-giving voice. It has sounded upon their ears, it has fallen upon their hearts, it has penetrated to the very depths of their being. They are aroused, they know not how. They awake up, they know not why. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth : so is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 8). The life is there, in all its reality. The new birth has taken place. The new nature has been communicated. Those who are standing by, who know what life is, see the movements, the struggles, the heavings and workings of life ; but, as yet, the grave-clothes and napkin are there. I believe there are many in this condition—many quickened—many born, who know not the privileges which attach to their birth, or the source and object of the life which has been communicated to them. In a word, they need that the voice which has already said, "Lazarus, come forth," should, also, say, "Loose him, and let him go." They have been *quickened* ; they need to be *emancipated*.

Let us take an example or two from the word of God. The prodigal was quickened before he was emancipated. "I will arise and go to my father," was the utterance of the new life—the

aspiration of the new nature. When he spoke thus, he was full of doubt and uncertainty as to the mode in which the father would receive him. He was full of legality—full of the thought of servitude instead of the thought of sonship. The new life was there, but, as yet, it was connected with numerous doubts and fears within, and the rags of his former condition were upon him. He had been acted upon by a life-giving voice, and he only needed to be emancipated. The new nature having been imparted, moved toward the source from which it had sprung ; but, as yet, its movement was cramped, as it were, by the grave-clothes, and its vision impeded by the napkin.

Now, who would think of maintaining the monstrous idea, that the prodigal ought to have continued in his rags—to have persisted in his doubts, fears, and uncertainty ? Who would assert that for the rest of his days, Lazarus ought to have worn his grave-clothes and napkin, in order to prove that he was a living man ? It will be said that the father's embrace dispelled the prodigal's fears, for how could he fear in the arms of paternal love ? But was it not the father also, who commanded the rags to be displaced by "the best robe ?" And, then, as to Lazarus, it may be urged that the voice that had quickened and raised him, commanded him to be loosed and let go. Exactly so ; and is it not just the same in

reference to any one who has received eternal life by believing in the name of the Son of God? Truly so. He should, no longer, wear the rags of the "far country," nor the trappings of the grave. His hands and feet should be unbound, so that he may serve the Lord Christ, and run in the way of His commandments. His face, too, should be uncovered—the napkin should be removed—so that he may gaze upon the One whose voice has quickened him.

But, let us take another example. In the seventh chapter of Romans, we have a striking case of a quickened soul, not yet emancipated. Here, we see the earnest struggles of the new life—the fervent breathings of the new nature. Here we find one who can say, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," and yet he has to say, "I am carnal, sold under sin." Now, the emancipated soul is not "*sold*," but "*bought*"—"redeemed with the precious blood of Christ"—"ransomed from the power of the grave"—"delivered from going down to the pit." Again, we find this quickened soul confessing, "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." This is a condition of perpetual defeat, whereas the Christian can say, "we are more than *conquerors*" (see Rom. viii. 37). Lastly, we hear this quickened soul exclaiming, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body

of death?" But the believer in Christ's full redemption, instead of being a "*wretched man*," seeking for deliverance, is really a *happy man*, rejoicing in being fully and eternally delivered.

In short, the seventh chapter of Romans which has been so sadly misunderstood, is a simple picture of a soul divinely quickened, but, not yet divinely emancipated—a soul not yet able to say, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus *hath made me free* from the law of sin and death" (Rom. viii. 2). It is one who has been acted upon by the authoritative word, "Lazarus, come forth," but of whom it has yet to be said, "Loose him, and let him go." In other words, there is life, but not liberty. There is sufficient light to see the wretched condition of "the old man," but not sufficient to see the position of the new—there is the just perception of the spirituality of the law, without the knowledge of deliverance from its condemning power. Should any rest satisfied with such a condition? Is this the true believer's proper standing? Assuredly not. As well might we maintain that Lazarus ought to have been quite satisfied to go on, all his days, "bound hand and foot, with grave-clothes, and his face bound about with a napkin." This would never do. The Lord does not do His work by halves, either as to soul or body. He never says, "Come forth," without adding, "Loose him, and let him go." He

could never leave *His* people in bondage—"sold under sin." How could He? Were He to do so, would it not argue either that He could not, or would not deliver them? If he were to leave His people in doubt, would it not argue that His word was not sufficient to give certainty? Assuredly. But who would assert this? None that know the love of His heart—the value of His sacrifice—the authority of His word.

And, be it remembered, that it is the self-same voice that quickens and emancipates—that gives life and liberty—that delivers from the dominion of death, and leads forth into the liberty of life. It is well to see this. The life and the liberty are connected, as coming from the same source. The life which now the believer has is not old Adam-life improved, but a new and divine life imparted; and the liberty in which the believer walks is not liberty for the old Adam to fulfil his horrible lusts, but liberty for the new man to walk with God and tread in the holy footprints of Christ. How does he get this life and liberty? By the word of God, received by faith, through the power of the Holy Ghost. The same voice that quickened Lazarus quickens the soul. And where is this voice heard? "In the word of the truth of the gospel." The soul that believes on the name of the Son of God has received new life. What life? The resurrection life of Christ.

The simple word of the gospel is the seed by which this new life is produced. And what does this gospel, this message of glad tidings, declare? That Christ died and rose again—that He appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself—that He is gone into heaven—that He has, by Himself, purged our sins—that He has met every claim, every demand, every objector—that Justice is satisfied—the conscience purged—the enemy confounded. This gives life and liberty—new life—divine liberty. It carries the soul entirely out of the old creation and all its belongings, and introduces it into the new creation with all its privileges, joys and glories. The death of Christ delivers the believer from the old Adam condition in which he was born naturally; and His resurrection introduces him into the new and heavenly position in which he is born again spiritually.

Oh! how ardently do I long that precious souls may fully enter into what is here written. I write for quickened souls who are not yet emancipated—who have life, but not liberty—who have “come forth,” but are not yet “loosed and let go.” There are many such.

Let me remind you that the whole work is done—the sacrifice completed and accepted—the ransom paid. Christ has made peace. God is well pleased. The Holy Ghost bears witness. The word of God is plain. Where, then, is the found-

ation for a doubt? The righteousness of God is "to him that worketh *not* but *believeth*." If you had to procure this righteousness by any work of yours, then, Rom. iv. 5 would not be true. Again, "to him that WORKETH NOT, BUT BELIEVETH ON HIM that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." It will not suffer the weight of a feather of human doings or feelings, or anything of man, to be thrown into the scales, in order to make Christ's sacrifice more perfect than it is. And His death and resurrection, is the only foundation and all-sufficient resting-place for your present, personal and perfect salvation.

May the Lord, the Spirit, emancipate precious souls from the grave-clothes in which they are entangled! May many hear and understand those thrilling accents, "LOOSE HIM, AND LET HIM GO!"

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## FULL ASSURANCE

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**I**T is frequently asserted that an assurance of salvation cannot be known in this world, but if the word of God is prayerfully perused, ample testimony will be found that God not only intends those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to be sure of the possession of salvation, but also to enjoy it, so as not to have the slightest misgiving in the heart. It is a common thing when putting the question, "Are you saved?" to



meet with the response, "I hope so! I trust it will be all right in the end!" Now this is not assurance, but the opposite of it; and such uncertainty can never yield happiness to the heart, but must fill the mind with anxiety as to whether after all it really will come right at the end. It is always well when this hope is expressed, to tender the further query, "On what do you base your hopes?" To this question one but rarely gets an intelligent reply, for the simple reason that such souls know little of the testimony of the word of God, as to the basis upon which salvation can become the possession of all who have repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, my dear reader, should you be in this uncertain condition of soul, why should you remain so any longer? Is there not full testimony in the word of God to the fact that the moment a soul, in true repentance, believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, and rests upon His finished work on the cross that put away his sins, he is eternally saved, and made once and for ever a child of God?

For instance, if the reader, will take his Bible and turn up the oft-quoted verse in John v. (24), he will find sufficient there upon which to stake his soul both for time and eternity. Further, they are words uttered by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose heart's desire was to give expression to an utter-

ance that would dispel all doubts and misgivings in the minds of those anxious for the assurance of the safety of their immortal souls. He had come from heaven to earth for the express purpose of securing, by His death, an eternal salvation for guilty man, and to this end was on His way to Golgotha where the mighty work was to be wrought. The awful stroke of divine judgment due to us was to be borne by Him the sinless One. At that cross the rod of Jehovah was raised, and it fell, not upon the sinner who justly deserved it, but, upon the sinner's Substitute who was none other than the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God.

God could not pass over sin, He must judge it. But having now poured out His judgment on His Own blessed Son, who, on the cross, was "made sin for us" who believe, He is righteous now in justifying the simplest soul who in faith looks to the great Sin-bearer, the stricken Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. "He is my divine Substitute." It is all due to Him and to the eternal value and divine efficacy of His own blood that was there shed, and which alone avails for the remission of sins. By His death He has liberated all that believe from the thralldom and doom of sin. Now He lives again exalted to God's right hand, the divine pledge to every soul that life eternal and salvation have

been secured by His death and resurrection. He is there in glory, and as the sure and certain guarantee that all His own who now believe shall be in glory too with Him. He is our life, our peace, our hope. The result of simple faith in the atoning work and cleansing blood of Christ is, that death and judgment are behind, grace and glory on before, and eternal life in Him the enjoyed portion now.

Does not the Lord make this plain in verse 24 of John v.? Here are His words, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment; but is passed from death unto life." Can you doubt your eternal safety after this? See also John x. 28-30.

Before laying down my pen, let me turn you to one more scripture, Col. iii. 3, 4. If you are a believer, God has hidden your life (which you have now received as the gift of God) with Christ in Himself. It is as safe and secure as He can make it. Let go your doubts and uncertainties, and pass on through life, fully assured on the authority of God's word that you now possess this free and wondrous gift; and are no longer an outcast "but a son," with the Spirit of God's Son sent forth into your heart; "and if a son an heir also through God" (Gal. iv. 7).

## THE EVE OF THE BATTLE OF ST. VINCENT.

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**I**T is the month of February 1797, and the neighbourhood of Capè St. Vincent. A few hours, or days at the most, and the great naval battle shall be fought; meanwhile we are on board a noble English frigate, under Captain Cockburn, and must join our companions if possible.

Alas! she has been sighted by the enemy, and down come their swiftest ships in pursuit. To fly from the tremendous odds, of course; to get away safely if possible, every stitch of available canvas is spread; and away she flies like a thing of life, while decks are cleared, guns run out, and all made ready for conflict, if it must be.

But hark! above the bustle and the noise, the shout of officers and the hurried response, the cry rings out, "Man overboard!" Yes, sure enough, in all the scurry and confusion, he has missed his footing, and there he is: you can see him struggling in the water—can hear his cry—ah,

only faintly, for as we dash along, each moment widens the distance between us with fearful rapidity. Poor fellow, had it been any other time, when we had leisure, we would try to save him: but now—no, we cannot risk three hundred and fifty lives to save one. Poor fellow! we repeat it, yes, every one on board, but that is all.

“Man overboard!” Did I say every one on board? I am wrong. The cry has reached the captain, and hark! another rings out, “Wear ship!” Instant the word, instant the obedience; before we know where we are, and almost throwing us down as she turns, our gallant ship is round; and swiftly as she cut the waves in her eager flight, she seems to cut them more quickly now, as back, back she goes—back in the teeth of the astonished Spaniards, who fain must give her passage-way, lest she run them down, and in their astonishment can hardly return the broadside she pours on them: back to the despairing drowning man, eagerly picked up and tenderly cared for: back to Sir John Jarvis, and to share the laurels in the ensuing battle! Three cheers for Captain Cockburn!

Ah, my friend, you join in the cheering; you admire the pluck of the gallant officer who would even risk life and vessel to save one British tar, and in doing so not only saved that life, but

defeated the enemy's purpose: and you shudder at the thought of that poor fellow struggling with death, with enemies all round him and aware of the immense difficulty of his rescue, which he must have regarded as hopeless: but, dear friend, have you realised yourself in a like, nay worse, condition? Around you are the waters of death; a few moments it may be, and they shall engulf you, as they have many a friend and neighbour of late: and close at hand are the vast powers of sin and Satan to prevent your rescue.

Is there *none* to pity you? No hand that can save? Ah, if you realise your condition, let me tell you of One, the only One who has the *power*, as well as the only One who has the *heart* to do so. It is Jesus. He knows your lost estate, and in order to save you He has come from heaven, He has gone to Calvary's cross, and there met all the power of Satan, all the weight of sin, all the wrath of God against sin. He has met it all, and having gained the victory, having paid the debt, having borne all the wrath and satisfied the heart of God as well as the claims of God, He is risen from the dead, and now exalted, a Prince and a Saviour, He extends His hand, once nailed to the cross for sin, to you. He waits to lift you up from the depths of sin and death to His own place in resurrection-life and glory. Can you refuse His offer? Can you turn from His blood-bought

salvation, and continue as you are, in momentary danger of death, and after death the judgment, and after the judgment the everlasting burnings of the eternal lake of fire? Dare you continue another instant? Nay, yield to Jesus. Resign your dying self and helpless all into His almighty hands and you shall find a Saviour and a welcome to which Captain Cockburn and his charge are unworthy of compare. Aye, and you shall join in that coming day of victory, when, as King of kings and Lord of lords, the once murdered Man of Calvary shall take unto Him His great power, and reign.

T.



## THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

LUKE XVIII. 9—14.

**W**E are all, by nature, very unwilling to look our true condition straight in the face. We do not like to hear the whole truth about *self*. We are disposed to dabble upon the surface. We shrink from penetrating the depths. We fear to reach the bottom of our condition. We would fain make out that we are not quite so bad as we really are. In a word, man is ignorant of himself, and he has no desire to be otherwise. This, if he

did but know it, is a serious loss to him. For a man to think otherwise of himself than that he is a *lost* sinner, is a most melancholy mistake, for that is precisely what he is. He is, in himself, hopelessly lost. He may be amiable, moral, upright, and even religious, as men say; but he is lost! He was born thus. He came into this world a poor, helpless, naked, needy, worthless, lost thing, so far as his natural condition is concerned. This is what he was—this is what he is, by nature.

Such being the truth as to man, how strange that any should be found “trusting in themselves that they are righteous!” Yet thus it has been, in every age. Thus it is, now; and thus it will be. Thus it was with the pharisee, in the parable before us. Let us look at his case.

“Two men went up to the temple to pray; the one a pharisee, and the other a publican.” The truth of God reduces every thing to its simplest possible elements. It here puts aside the distinctions which prevail amongst men. Hence it speaks, here, of “*two men*”—two sons of fallen Adam—two sinners. Before God there was no difference in their natural condition. They were both “*lost*.” True, one was a lost pharisee, and the other a lost publican; but they were both lost. The word of God declares, “there is no difference;” and that, too, upon a double ground. Firstly, “for all have sinned” (Rom. iii. 23);



secondly, "for the same Lord is rich unto all that call upon him" (Rom. x. 12). The mind is apt to get confused by the endless distinctions, names, grades, and shades of character, which obtain around us. They are all to be reduced to "two," namely, those who trust in *self* and those who trust in *Christ*. Thus it stands. The writer and the reader of these lines stand represented, at this moment, by one of the two; and the sooner the true state of the case is made known to the heart and conscience, the better.

Now, there is one feature of character which invariably marks the self-trusters, and it is this: they have only a one-sided view of their condition. This feature is very prominent in the picture before us—a picture be it remembered, drawn by the pencil of the Master Himself. "The pharisee stood and prayed thus *with himself*, God, I thank Thee," observe, it was "with himself." Pharisaism knows nothing of communion. There is an icy individuality about it. Its platform is self-constructed, and as a consequence, self-occupied. There is no room upon it for any one but self. And let us ask, For what does the pharisee thank God? Is it for the ten thousand mercies of His liberal hand? Is it for the knowledge of redemption through the visitation of the day-spring from on high? Is it for His long-suffering goodness toward a poor unworthy

sinner? Alas, no; the pharisee knows nothing of such grounds of thanksgiving. He says, "I thank Thee that *I*." He does not say, "I thank Thee that *Thou*." It was "I" and not "Thou," with him. The true ground of thanksgiving is that the soul has made some gladsome discovery about God—that it has drunk in some precious revelation of His nature and character—that it has received the soul-saving knowledge of redemption by the blood of the Lamb. But the pharisee knows not, wants not, seeks not aught of this kind.

For what, then, does a pharisee thank God? He says, "I thank Thee that I am not." How strange! He does not say, "I thank Thee that *I am*." He had never looked at or thought of what he was. Had his eyes ever been opened to see what he was, he could no longer be a self-truster. Self-knowledge destroys self-confidence. There is nothing in a man's nature, condition, or character, for which he could presume to give thanks, if only he could see himself as God sees him. It may be all very well so long as a man is merely looking at what he is not; but only let him be brought to see what he is, and the entire scene will be changed.

Now, we shall find that when God deals with the soul, He reveals what a man is, and not what he is not. When the brightness of Jehovah's

glory shone upon the prophet Isaiah, what did it reveal? Was it what he was not? No; but what he was; and hence, we do not find Isaiah saying, "I thank Thee that I am not as other men." Quite the opposite. He says, "Woe is *me*, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." How did he learn this? Surely not by looking at his neighbours. This would never have revealed his positive condition. How, then, did he learn what he was? "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts" (Isa. vi. 1—5). Thus it was with Job, when he said, "Now mine eye seeth *Thee*: wherefore I abhor myself" (Job xlii. 5, 6). Thus it was with Peter, when "he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 8). He does not say, "I thank Thee that I am not as bad as James or John." Men never say or think these things, when they find themselves in the presence of God. Job could boast himself when "God's candle shined upon his head;" but he abhorred himself when God shined into his *heart*. (Comp. Job xxix. with chap. xlii.)

Thus it is that God's truth ever acts on the heart and conscience. It reveals what a man is. Thus it will be before "the great white throne" when "the books" will be "opened." Men will not be occupied with what they are *not*, but what they *are*. Nothing can be more worthless than to

be looking at my negative condition. I may proceed to any imaginable length, saying, "I am *not* this—I am *not* that—I am *not* the other ;" for, after all, the question must be asked and answered, "WHAT AM I?" I am, assuredly, something ; and it is with that something, whatever it is, that God must deal, either in *grace* now, or in *judgment*, by and by—either to meet it with the blood of the Lamb, at this moment, or consign it to the lake of fire, for ever. True, I may not be "as other men ;" but it is very evident I am not what I ought to be ; and hence, if I trust in myself, I am trusting in that which is what it ought not to be, and I must perish eternally. So long as I am merely comparing myself with "other men" I may have some ground for boasting, for there is not a criminal who could not find another criminal whom he might think more guilty than himself. The question, however, is not, Are there others worse than I? but, Am I what I ought to be? Reader, have you ever retired into the solitude of the presence of the Almighty and there put the question, pointedly, and solemnly, of your own heart, "WHAT AM I?" If not, do it, *now*, I beseech you. Depend upon it, if you put this question, honestly, you will get back, from the depths of your moral being, this one reply—"A LOST SINNER!" And what does a lost sinner want? Salvation.

Not a half-salvation—not a hope of salvation—not a doubtful salvation ; but a full, free, present, personal, perfect, and everlasting salvation. This is what the sinner needs—this is what the gospel reveals.

Let us now turn to the publican. “And the publican standing *afar off*.” This was taking his proper place, as a sinner. “Ye who sometime were *far off*” (Eph. ii. 13). He felt he had no right, in himself, to “draw nigh.” He knew the truth as to his positive condition. He was not occupied with what he was not. “He would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven.” So far from thinking he had any right to be in heaven, he would not even dare to look toward it. “But smote upon his *breast*,” as much as to say, “*Here*—deep in this bosom of mine, lies the source of all the evil, the root of the malady, the ancient seat of my sore disease.” “He smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to *me* a sinner.” We have already remarked that there is an *icy* individuality about pharisaism. We have now to remark that there is an *intense* individuality about true conviction. This shines in the publican’s act of “smiting on his breast ;” and it sounds in the little word “*me*.”

And what was the result? “This man went down to his house justified rather than the other : for every one that exalteth himself shall be

abased : and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." And now that Christ has died on the cross, the Just for the unjust, what is now the message to every poor sinner? Listen to the glorious news, "Through this man (Jesus) is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins : and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 38, 39). Such is the infinite value of the sacrifice of Christ, that all who put their trust in it, are looked at by God, as perfectly righteous. Being a perfect work, it makes all who confide in it perfect, likewise. The sacrifices under the law could not make any one perfect as to his conscience, because they were not themselves perfect ; but Christ's sacrifice is perfect, and therefore it can and does give a perfectly purged conscience (Heb. ix. and x.).

Hence, therefore, any one professing to depend upon Christ, and yet not having peace, who is not perfectly justified, is denying the value of Christ's blood. This is the true state of the case. Has Christ finished His work, or has He not? Has He made purification for sins by the sacrifice of Himself? Has He left part of His work undone? Has he left something to be added thereto? Is there not a divine atonement in His blood? Has not Jehovah declared, "I HAVE FOUND A RANSOM?" To these inquiries the word of God

affords but one reply. The reason why people do not see the simplicity of God's way of salvation, is that they are occupied with what they are not, rather than with what they are. It is as I am that God meets me, in the cross. He has made provision for all the guilt that He Himself knows to be upon me, and all the sin that He knows to be in me. The belief of this must give settled peace. The more I grow in the knowledge of the extent and depth of my guilt and ruin, the more I grow in the knowledge of the extent and depth of the atonement. I never can see my guilt as God sees it ; but He has put it away according to His own sense of it, and He tells me He has done so, and when I believe this I have peace. "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

Reader, to which of the two do you now belong? Are you trusting in yourself that you are righteous? or are you divinely "justified" by simple faith in the precious blood of Christ? Which? Oh! which? Remember, if you see yourself to be a lost sinner, and that your trust is in the blood, you are as justified as that blood can make you. The question no longer is, What kind of a sinner are you? but what kind of a Saviour is Jesus? May God give you to see this!



## THE REALITY OF SIN.

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**I**F the word of God is to be accepted in connection with man's characteristics by nature, we shall find that no place whatever is given to the trend of human thought that has emanated from certain quarters in the professing church, during the last few months; and, that our only safe course is to accept His word as our guide need scarcely be insisted upon, for it goes without saying.

We have been told that the fall of man is a myth, and that every human soul is constantly crying out after God. But how can these assertions stand in the light of God's revealed truth? Investigation will prove that they are in direct conflict with the divine testimony of God's holy oracles, and have their origin in the sinful depths of the corrupt heart of man. It needs no second thought to come to a decision as to whether we should lend our ear to the voice of divine truth, or open them to the reception of that which denies it! Let us then, dear reader, glean a little from those sacred pages, as to the reality of sin, its nature in God's sight, and its inevitable doom, with the constant prayer that grace may be given us to withstand all such efforts to shake our confidence in holy scripture.

Can I do better than refer you first of all to the sweeping testimony with regard to sin, contained



in the Epistle to the Romans? Here we read, "Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (v. 12), "The wages of sin is death" (vi. 23). Unpalatable as this may be to those unwilling to bow to such a testimony, it is nevertheless the declared truth of God, whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity. The indisputable testimony of the word of God is that all men by nature, are sinners and children of wrath (Rom. v. 19; Eph. ii. 3), as well as by practice, since all have sinned (Rom. iii. 23). Such are lost, and exposed to the righteous sentence of death as sin's wages. And as to whether man in his sinful nature yearns after God, just take a step or two backwards in the same Epistle, and read, amongst other condemning assertions, "There is none that seeketh after God" (iii. 11). The inevitable conclusion, then, is that sin, in all its awful reality, has alienated man's heart from God (see also Eph. iv. 18), and exposed him, if left to himself, to the lake of fire, as sin's just deserts. This, dear reader, is the unanswerable truth of God, and the first step to blessing is subjection to it, in spite of the humiliation it inflicts upon those of whom it is true. Men, in the sinful pride of their hearts, might rise up, and profess to have made discoveries that set aside these old-fashioned truths, but let God be true, though every man be found a liar.

By these scriptures we see that not only is sin a reality, but sin's doom is a reality, which might well humble all in the dust, and lead to the earnest soul-cry, "What must I do to be saved?" And this cry will be intensified in its reality when it is borne in mind that the One who makes known this truth is in His nature perfectly holy, and perfectly righteous, and that sin can never be allowed for one moment to stand in His presence. "God is light and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5). It is this that is forgotten, or entirely ignored, by those who so audaciously venture the denial of the truth so plainly made known in God's holy word. But if sin be real, as indeed it is, and sin's judgment also real, blessed be God His perfect remedy for sin is real likewise; for it is provided in the divine Person of His own blessed Son. In contemplating the sad spectacle of the onward march to the pit of destruction of sin's unhappy captives, He opens His lips to peal forth the thrilling announcement, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24). That ransom has been found in the Lord Jesus Christ, who surrendered Himself to God upon the cross, as a perfect sacrifice, to make atonement for sin, and to put it away. Death was demanded as the price of the sinner's redemption; that ransom was given when the spotless Lamb of God poured out His soul

unto death. God in perfect righteousness has accepted the death of Christ as the divine answer to every requirement of His holy nature in the judgment of our sins, and of sin (our evil nature), for every poor sinner whose faith rests in that all-atonement, perfect, finished work. In the light of this divinely-provided ransom, there falls upon our anxious ears those sweet, fear-allaying words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). None need perish, though "all have sinned," and do come short of God's glory. For He justifies freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and, being just, He is the justifier of all that believe in Jesus (Rom. iii. 23—26).

Oh! how can puny men resent the truth of God with regard to the horrors of sin, and its lamentable consequences, in the face of the full provision that a Saviour-God has made for the penitent sinner!

My reader, be persuaded to treat as worthless, every utterance, from whatever source, that depreciates the value of the inspired word of God, for all such efforts are aimed at Him, of whom it is written, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). "The scripture cannot be broken" (John x. 35), and "the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isa. xl. 8).

## THE LAMP AND THE TICKET.

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THESE is something solemn and suggestive in seeing the guard of a train enter your carriage, at night, for the purpose of examining the passengers' tickets. He has in his hand a very brilliant lamp, which he brings to bear upon each ticket, in order that nothing false may escape him. His object is not to examine the countenance, the dress, or the luggage, but simply the *ticket*. The appearance and circumstances of passengers may differ widely; but the object of the guard is to examine into the genuineness of the title on which each one holds his seat in the carriage. To this one point he directs his attention; on this he concentrates all the light which his well polished reflector can throw out. This is very solemn and very suggestive to a thoughtful mind.

If it should happen that some impostor, some one without a ticket, or some one with a spurious ticket, has found his way into the carriage, such an one will, assuredly, dread the approach of the

brilliant lamp, he will seek to avoid its concentrated beams. He will seek to skulk into a corner, or hide under a seat, or in some way or another shirk its dreaded scrutiny. But in vain. That penetrating light illuminates every corner, makes everything manifest, detects every impostor.

On the other hand, the honest man who holds in his hand a genuine ticket, shrinks not from the light, yea, he rather courts it, and delights in its brilliance, inasmuch as the brighter it is, the more fully and speedily it makes manifest his unquestionable title to be where he is. "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God" (John iii. 20, 21). A false title cannot stand the light; but a true one is thereby made manifest.

The application of this is at once plain and instructive. We must possess a title so divinely clear and genuine that it will stand the strictest scrutiny of "the light." All must be brought to that light, sooner or later. The lamp of God must shine upon every one's title; and when our title is sure, we delight in having it examined. If we are building on our efforts after righteousness, or our struggles after holiness; upon our strivings, our doings, or our feelings; upon ordinances, upon

creeds, or upon churches ; if our title is furnished by any of these things, or by all of them put together, it will be proved to be spurious when that bright lamp of divine holiness is brought to bear upon it. No title can be admitted as genuine save that which is furnished by "*the blood of the Lamb.*" This is *the* grand, the only, the all-sufficient title. Some build upon their morality, some upon their charity, some upon their religion, some upon their experience, some upon their appropriation, application or realisation, some upon the remarkable circumstances of their conversion. None of these will do. We must get to the very end of all these things, and take Christ as our *only* title. As in the days of the flood, there was but one solitary object to be seen floating over the wild watery waste, and that object was the ark, the *only* place of safety ; so, now that this world is under judgment, the *only* place of safety is *in Christ*. It was not the ark *and* something else ; but the ark alone. It is not Christ *and* something else ; but Christ alone. If, in the most hidden corner of the heart, we are adding the weight of a feather to Christ, we must get rid of that feather, before we can taste of true gospel peace. We must turn the scale upside down, and empty out the very dust of our own righteousness, and put Christ and Christ alone in the place of all. Then shall we have peace—

settled peace, profound peace, eternal peace—a peace which nothing can ever disturb.

Why is it so many complain of a lack of settled peace? Because they have not come to the end of self and the world and made Christ their all. Depend upon it, reader, this is the secret of the matter. Can Christ not give settled peace? To be sure He can, if He is trusted. But He is not trusted, so long as something else, no matter what, is added to Him. If a man has not settled peace, it is because he has not accepted Christ alone as his peace, for assuredly Christ is a settled peace to all who really have Him. It is easy to profess to have Him, and at the same time to have fifty things as well. How can there be settled peace when this is the case? Impossible. As well might Noah have expected to be safe with one foot in the ark and the other on some floating carcass.

And, be it well remembered, it is *heart-work* we are speaking of. It is not head-work, or lip-work, creed-work, or sect-work. It is to have Christ in the heart, and nought in the heart but Christ. This is the true title—this the true rest. To all who have this title, this rest, “there is not a cloud above, not a spot within.” There are no fears, no doubts, no misgivings, no inward shrinkings, no hidden anxieties, no vague hopes, no shadowy expectations. All is as sure and solid as

Christ Himself. Heart and flesh may fail; earth and all its belongings may pass away; but Christ is a rock, and all who build on Him partake of His eternal stability.

Reader, what say you now to these things? Are you ready to have your ticket examined by the light of the lamp? Is your ticket genuine? Is your heart—your inmost heart—deeply and thoroughly assured that *all is well*? Have you a single misgiving as to your personal safety? Be honest. Get the matter settled now. If you have so much as a single doubt, it is because you are not wholly done with self and occupied with Christ. Take Christ as your whole, your only, title, and then you will enjoy perfect repose. Hundreds fail in this. They learn their lesson superficially. They get a partial view of their own ruin, and a partial view of Christ. They are then propped up, sustained and carried forward, by ordinances, meetings, religiousness, christian friends, active employment—all good enough things in their right place; but when some crisis comes, heavy illness, or the near approach of death, the soul is filled with horror. It finds itself in deep waters, where the floods overflow it; in a region of cloudiness and gloom, where neither sun nor stars appear. Then at last it is forced to lay hold on Christ in reality, as its *whole* salvation, and unutterable peace is the result.



Hence the importance of *beginning* right—of “digging *deep*,” and finding “*the Rock*.” Many believers make a goal of the starting post, and as a consequence, they are superficial and fluctuating all their journey through. Occasional gleams of sunshine, it may be, break through their ordinary gloom. While reading a good gospel tract, or hearkening to a good gospel sermon, they are lifted up, and think

“They can read their title clear  
To mansions in the skies.”

But ere long they experience the heavings and tossings of indwelling sin, and begin to doubt if they were ever really converted at all; they think they have been deceiving themselves all along, and that hell will be their portion at the end. All this is the result of not getting thoroughly done with self, and making Christ their Alpha and their Omega in everything. Yes; it must be *in everything*. It is not in one thing, or two things, or three things; but in everything. It is not at this stage, or the other stage, but all the journey through. Christ must be ALL—self NOTHING. Let this lesson be thoroughly learnt, and then my reader will be able to understand and appreciate the familiar, yet solemn and suggestive illustration of “*the lamp and the ticket*.”

## UNDER OR ABOVE THE SUN.

## I.—UNDER THE SUN.

“**V**ANITY of vanities, saith the preacher; vanity of vanities; all is vanity.” Such is the world-wide sermon of Solomon, the son of David, king in Jerusalem, the record of whose glory, fame and splendour, has spread to the ends of the earth. Yes; no less than two and thirty times, in the Book of Ecclesiastes, does the wisest of men call attention to all the vain things, and the multitude of strange inequalities that exist under the sun; and seven times over does he declare, with no uncertain sound, that all that is to be found there is but vanity and vexation of spirit. This was no mere expression of opinion, but the practical experience of one who was permitted of God to reach the very zenith of worldly ambition.

Let us listen then for a moment to the solemn words of the preacher; “The eye is not satisfied with seeing; nor the ear filled with hearing . . . I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven . . . I have seen all the works that are **DONE UNDER THE SUN**; and behold, *all is vanity and vexation of spirit*. That

which is crooked cannot be made straight ; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered . . . I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth ; therefore enjoy pleasure ; and behold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, it is mad ; and of mirth, what doeth it? . . . I made me great works ; I builded me houses ; I planted me vineyards. I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits . . . I got me servants and maidens ; and had servants born in my house ; also I had great possessions of great and small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me. I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings, and of the provinces ; I gat me men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem ; also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired, I kept not from them ; I withheld not my heart from any joy ; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour ; and this was my portion of all my labour. Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do ; and behold, **ALL WAS VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT** ; and there was no profit under the sun" (chaps. i., ii.).

Such is the inspired summing up of a life where

pleasure, riches, fame, and earthly glory reached their very highest point, but left the heart barren and unsatisfied. Such too, if the truth be told, must be the inevitable conclusion of all of Adam's race, who, in their tiny measure, have sought for joy or satisfaction, under the sun.

“ All earth's pleasures fade and wither,  
Christ alone abides ;  
And the ocean of God's favour,  
Knows no changing tides.”

How then, it may be asked, can lasting peace and happiness be ever known, or tasted under the sun ? and the answer to such a question can only be found at the cross where Jesus died. It was there that the flood-gates of divine love met all the need and ruin of man ; and Calvary's altar has for ever satisfied every righteous claim of the throne of God. Beneath the awful storm of judgment, bowed the blessed head of the divine Sin-bearer ; and, though reproach was breaking His heart, yet amid sorrow and anguish that none but He could tell, did His prayer go up to heaven itself, “ Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.” Here only can the weary-hearted find rest : and on this righteous foundation, God can, and does freely justify every believer by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. “ It is finished,” was the dying Victor's cry ; and in virtue of His stupendous victory, the

heavens are opened now. The eye of faith looks no longer at anything under the sun, where vanity and vexation of spirit, still hold sway ; but gaze upward to the throne of God, there to find in Jesus Himself a never-ending object of delight, who alone can fill and satisfy the heart.

## 2 —ABOVE THE SUN.

**Y**ES, above the sun, in the paradise of God ; yea, "far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named," there sits upon the Father's throne the man Christ Jesus, in all the glory of accomplished redemption. In answer to His finished work, God raised Him from among the dead ; and the mighty Captain of our salvation, having made peace by the blood of His cross, is crowned and glorified above the sun. Light from the glory of God now shines in the face of the lowly Nazarene, and with joy of heart the believer sings, "He is our peace."

Not only so, but amidst the wreck and ruin of all under the sun, Paul takes up the strain in his celebrated sermon at Antioch, announcing the glad tidings of a full and free salvation in those memorable words, "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."

Does the reader of these lines long to taste the sweetness of God's pardoning grace? Then look above the sun, and remember,

" Faith always looks away from self,  
To Jesus on the throne,  
And says, Because He's there, I know  
That all my sins are gone."

If all under the sun is stamped with sorrow, sin and death, all above the sun is bright with the love and glory of God, for the risen Christ is there and He Himself is the believer's life. Therefore, adds the beloved apostle, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above; not on things on the earth, for ye are dead; and your life is hid with Christ in God."

But not only are peace, forgiveness and eternal life ours in Him who has delivered us from the wrath to come, but even now, that risen Christ is our righteousness too; hence, none can challenge our title to eternal salvation. He who, sent of God, came down in love to be the propitiation for our sins, has gone back to heaven in righteousness; and hence none can condemn those whom God hath justified. "For he [God] hath made him [Christ] who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that

we might become the righteousness of God in him."

How perfect and complete then is the believer's salvation; all found, as it is, in a living Christ above the sun. Reader, what is He to thee? If still unsaved, and proving every day that all under the sun must, of necessity, be vanity and vexation of spirit, I pray thee listen once more to the voice of Jesus, as it rings out from yonder glory: "Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh; for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven." "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

S.T.

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## REMEMBER!

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**T**HOUGH God's honoured apostle to the Gentiles honestly asserts, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. iii. 13, 14),

yet we find him challenging the memory of the Ephesian saints, bidding them gaze back in the past, to recollect where they were when met with by the grace of God. He says, "Wherefore remember . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 11, 12). Such an exhortation proves that it was not detrimental to them to recall the past, for since they had become the objects of divine grace, it rather tended to enhance and magnify the wisdom and love that had thought of them when in their hopeless plight, and had wrought in such a way as to accomplish a perfect and full deliverance, worthy of the One through Whom they were ultimately made nigh. When they turned back and remembered their former condition, how sweet and thrilling to their hearts it must have been to find him adding, "But now in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (ver. 13). Such remembrances as this produce no sadness of heart, for the soul has been set at rest by the knowledge of God in His relationship of Father, and of the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as a Saviour.

There can be no misgivings with regard to the past, for God says, "Their sins and iniquities will



I remember no more" (Heb. x. 17), neither can there be any anxiety in contemplating the future, for, speaking of the everlasting life which the believer has in Christ, the same divinely-inspired apostle says, "Your life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. iii. 3).

It is refreshing to the soul to recall to mind the moment when it was first flooded with divine light, and when the sound of the gospel was first understood as bringing a message of pardon and deliverance; and if memory has a place when the saints of God are together with Christ in eternal glory, will it be less refreshing and sweet then to exercise it in recalling to mind the intense joy that was known when the heart first went out in responsive, grateful love to Him who loved His own even unto death, proving it by the surrender of His life upon the altar as a perfect sacrifice for sin?

But, my dear reader, it is not only the redeemed whose memory is called into exercise with regard to the past; for we read of one bidden to remember when he had completely passed beyond the reach of all hope. You will read of him in Luke xvi. He had lived a life of ease and luxury, selfishly concentrating his thoughts upon his own pleasure, forgetful of the privilege within his reach of ministering to the happiness and comfort of those not occupying the same station in life as him-

self. But this was not all. It was a far more lamentable fact that he had systematically shut God out of his life, as well as shunned the inevitable and endless eternity that lay before him, at the very commencement of which he must give an account of himself to God. So concentrated were his thoughts upon this life, that poor Lazarus was ignored and left to languish at his gate in his suffering and starvation, desiring a meal, if only of the crumbs beneath the table. But the rich man "died, and [what is not said of Lazarus] was buried; and in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." He cried for mercy, but there was none for him. He had allowed to pass for ever the time when mercy could be dispensed to him, and it was now too late.

It was at this stage that he meets with the challenge, "Son, remember!" Oh! what a remembrance this must have been to him! What remorse must have flooded his inmost soul, as, in response to this exhortation, he reviewed his many squandered opportunities! There was no consolation in such a remembrance. It bespoke the utmost hopelessness that a human soul could ever experience. Salvation's day had been let slip. Mercy had been trifled with; time had been considered at the expense of eternity.

Oh! my reader, are you not willing to be warned by the sad experience of this unhappy, benighted

individual? When once the threshold between time and eternity has been crossed without the eternal interests of the soul being considered, it is for ever too late.

How mad must be the folly of those who resent in life that sovereign grace which invites to a real living Saviour who is for ever worthy of the heart's adoration and worship. Is my reader among Christ's ransomed saints, who find intense joy in contemplating what their desperate need was when God in His sovereign grace met with them, and brought them to Himself through the blood of Christ? or are you, through your own neglect and folly, exposing yourself to the sad, sad remembrance in eternity, which was the portion of the man we have considered, who though rich in this world's goods, was poverty itself in the light of eternity? I beseech you to get alone with God and answer this question in the light of His own presence. "TO-DAY if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." "Behold, NOW is the day of SALVATION."

W.G.



## THE BAD HALF-CROWN.

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A FEW months ago, while waiting for my ticket in a country railway office, I observed a half-crown nailed to the counter. The young man who was giving out the tickets, also attracted my attention. He seemed a sharp youth, and had an air of importance about him, becoming the responsibilities of his office. With his hand raised to the ticket department, and the finger ready to pounce upon the right one, he shouted, "First or second, sir?"

Being the last one that was then waiting, I thought I should like to have a few words with our young friend about the half-crown, so I said to him as I was picking up my change, "What is this you have got nailed to the counter, my boy?"

"A half-crown, sir."

"But why have you it nailed to the counter?"

"Because it is a bad one, sir."

"So you were determined it should go no further. But now, tell me, does it remind you of anything very serious?"

“I don't know” (looking very straight at me and paying great attention).

“Well, I'll tell you, my boy, what it has brought to my mind—that will be the end of all hypocrites, they will at last be nailed down under the awful judgment of God. And they will never be able to get away from it. Now, you look at that half-crown. A nail driven through it, fixed to the one spot, and exposed to public condemnation. Every one sees that it is a detected hypocrite, and exhibited there as a warning to others.

“Now mark, such will be the end of all who make a profession of religion, but who have not Christ in their hearts. Like that half-crown, they may deceive many for a time, but they cannot deceive God. Can they? Oh, no! That half-crown may have passed through a good many hands before it was detected, but at last it fell into the hands of a judge who knew that it was not real, and so condemned it, and would let it go no further. And now, you remember this, God will at last ring, as it were, every professor on His counter—His judgment-seat; and every one that is counterfeit, not real, will then be detected, condemned, and nailed to the place of judgment for ever; so that every time you throw down a ticket and look on this bad half-crown, you are reminded of the awful end of those who are not right in heart with God.”

This last sentence was evidently more than our young friend could comfortably bear, for he immediately exclaimed, with his usual sharpness, "I'LL HAVE IT TAKEN UP." After a few words of warning as to the certainty of coming judgment, we parted.

Finding we had to wait a little for the train, a friend who was with me, and who had listened to the conversation, returned to the office for a platform ticket; and without saying a word to the lad, he merely gave him a playful look, pointing to the half-crown, when the youth again said in a very determined tone, "I'll have it taken up."

How like, thought I, to the natural heart. "I'll have it taken up." It had been nailed there for the purpose of warning others against passing bad money, lest they might be detected and brought to judgment. But as soon as it was made to bear as a warning for his own conscience before God, he immediately declared that he would have it removed. Rather than be reminded of the fearful end of those who have not Christ as their righteousness, he would silence the testimony by removing the witness. But ah! what a poor, self-deceiving way this is of getting rid of a present difficulty. The future trouble remains. Yet, alas! how constantly this is done, both by young and old.

I observed that the bad half-crown had a shining

face like the good ones, and outwardly it had the same stamp upon it. But at heart it was bad, there was no silver there. Only base metal. It was a hypocrite—a mere professor. It pretended to be what it was not. It had a fair outward appearance, but no reality in heart. I observed, further, that the nail of judgment pierced both the head and the heart. Mournful illustration of the seat of the thoughts—the understanding—the will—the desires—the affections and passions, being penetrated with the iron rod of God's sore displeasure. Oh! is such in very deed the end of the mere formalist? Unquestionably; and of all Christless, graceless, souls. The righteousness of God must judge evil. But I also further thought, will the wicked at last be fixed to one place? The doomed half-crown could not move a hair's breadth. How monotonous—how ignominious! Affixed to one spot, a public spectacle. Labelled, "A once shining professor, but now a detected, dishonoured, doomed, deceiver." But oh! thought I, shall it be thus at last with all who have no true interest in Christ, professors or not professors? Most assuredly. The word of truth has gone forth from the lips of Him who cannot change. It stands recorded in the statute book of heaven. And thus it runs, and may my reader mark it well. "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 iii. 36).

The scriptures are plain and absolute. God is righteous, and He can approve of nothing less righteous than Himself. He is the only true God, and can accept of nothing less true than Himself. He has but one standard, and Christ alone is up to His measure. Nothing will pass as current at the judgment-seat that has not the name of Christ stamped upon it. The sinner can only be received, approved, and justified in the worthiness of Christ. He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man can come unto the Father but by Him. He is the door, the only way of entrance into the Father's house.

When the sinner draws near to God *now*, in the faith of his own worthlessness, and the worthiness of Christ, he is accepted. "Accepted in the beloved." And Christ is ready to receive all that come to Him. He casts out none. Oh! then, unpardoned, unsaved sinners, whether you have made a profession or not, at once, with your whole heart, turn to Jesus, in the full assurance of His pardoning love. Be assured that He is waiting, ready to receive you. Oh, doubt Him not—believe Him—trust Him. He is able—He is willing—to save the chief of sinners. Oh, at once without delay, flee to the arms of Jesus. Flee from your evil habits, and from the awful doom



of outer darkness. As a lost sinner, take refuge in Him who was nailed to the cross for sinners—for you—and yet, as another has said,

“*Sins* they were, not *nails*, which held Him, Sinner, there He died for thee.”

He wore a crown of thorns, emblem of the curse of sin, that you might wear a crown of glory—fruit of grace divine. His side was pierced with a soldier’s spear, that you might find a resting place in His heart for ever. He bore the judgment of God against sin, that you might enjoy an eternal weight of glory. Oh, then, be careless no longer—slight the Saviour of sinners no longer. Believe in Him, according to the word of God. But, oh! see that you believe *now*. Can you lie down to sleep another night, with all your sins upon your soul? Surely not. Look to Jesus, and your eyes shall be enlightened, your burden removed. “To him give all the prophets witness, that *through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins*” (Acts x. 43).

(*Extracted.*)

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## CHRIST’S FINISHED WORK.

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How loathsome to the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, must be the many doctrines abroad to-day, that depreciate the value of that stupendous work, which Christ Himself has de-

clared is a finished work. Indeed, many professed leaders in Christendom even go to the extent of denying the existence of such a work at all, and mock at the very idea of the Biblical testimony to the everlasting efficacy of it. One's very soul resents the horrible suggestions emanating from the lips of those who stand professedly in the place of leading others to an understanding of divine truths; and one wonders sometimes how puny, sinful men can dare to challenge the divinely inspired utterances of those holy men of old who wrote and spoke as they were moved by the Spirit of God. But more painful still it is to find the words of Christ Himself sneered at, and treated as so much chaff, for it should silence every human tongue in connection with the atoning work of Christ, that the blessed Son of God, before delivering up His Spirit to His Father, should utter forth with a loud voice, those thrice-blessed words, "It is finished." And as sure as those words were uttered by Him, so absolutely sure is it, that He effected a work for the glory of God in the judgment of sin, and for our everlasting redemption, and deliverance from the consequences of sin, for all who believe in Him.

Let us remove our shoes from our feet, and reverently listen to the breathings of His heart to His Father, when viewing that work as accomplished: "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have

finished the work which thou gavest me to do" (John xvii. 4). He had said, "Lo, I come : in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Ps. xl. 7, 8) : and here in this scene He was found in fashion as a man, that He might humble Himself, and become obedient unto death, even the death of the cross (see Phil. ii.).

Men scoffingly say, that it is all nonsense to suppose that the death of one meant the deliverance of many, but the reader has but to take his Bible and read from the Epistle to the Hebrews, how that the Lord Jesus Christ became a partaker of human flesh, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil ; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. It is quite true that no creature (however exalted) can atone for another's sins. But what if the One who died upon the cross is "God over all, blessed for evermore" ! Surely the death of *such an One* who became man that He might die for men, is of *infinite* value before God and above all the souls that have ever lived.

But this is not all that the God-awakened soul sees in the work of Christ ; it was not merely that He died in substitution for the repentant sinner, though that is a truth, the divine preciousness of which cannot possibly be over-estimated, but He

died unto sin, sacrificing Himself to God, pouring out His own life's blood, that God may be glorified. We never dare shun the fact that God's honour had been slighted by man, who had become alienated in heart and conscience from Him through sin, and that at all cost He must be vindicated as a sin-intolerating God; for God must be ever true to His own nature, two important attributes of which are holiness and perfect righteousness. All that of which God was robbed by the first man, who was of the earth and sinful, has been recovered and everlastingly established by the Second man, the Lord from heaven, when He, in obedience to His Father's will, suffered the just penalty of His creatures' guilt, responding thereby to the righteous requirements of the throne of God. This He did, when it was undeniably proved that man was without strength, without God, and without hope in the world, this condition being the inevitable result of the presence and allowance of sin.

Thus then, the work of Christ had its results for God, as well as for man. God's holy requirements must be met, ere the flood-gates of His mercy could be thrown open to admit that wondrous stream to flow down to thirsty hearts in this scene. This has all been accomplished by Christ's finished work, so that God can now be just and the Justifier of all who believe in Jesus.

Further, the word of God asserts that without the shedding of blood is no remission, but when the Lamb of God accomplished that work, His blood was shed, and God has in consequence been enabled in righteousness to set Him forth a mercys-seat through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins (see Rom. iii.). Death is the wages of sin, and that wage must either be the portion of the guilty culprit, or of One who was provided by God to stand in his place, and suffer in his stead. Here it is that the blessed truth of the gospel comes in, for a Days-man has stepped into the breach, and by that one-finished atoning work, met the righteous claims of the throne of God, and brought glory to Him, and provided an everlasting salvation for all who come unto God by Him, and none can approach Him any other way. He says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The reader will find it asserted, "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (1 Tim. ii. 5, 6).

Now, my dear reader, I trust you have read the foregoing with an unprejudiced mind, ready to bow to it as the revealed truth of God. If you are in any wise anxious with regard to your soul's eternal interests, it will not pay you to lend your ear

to the wicked, soul-deluding, teachings that are increasing on every hand; but your safest course is to look up these various scriptures, with the earnest desire going up from your heart to God, that He would give you a spiritual understanding; and that responding to His grace, you might become eternally blessed and saved through Christ's perfect atoning death. Thus will your heart enjoy the power of those everlastingly precious words, "The blood of Jesus Christ [God's Son] cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). May God grant it for Christ's sake!

W.G.

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## THE GERMAN SQUIRE.

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WE once heard of a case which interested us exceedingly, and we are anxious to lay it before our readers, in the hope that God the Holy Ghost may use it in the conversion of some precious soul. We can merely undertake to give the substance of the narrative, without vouching for the perfect accuracy of details.

This squire seems to have belonged to a class of persons who affect to despise the word of God, and, as a consequence, to hate the name of Jesus. Being visited on one occasion by a christian pastor, he charged him, on no account to name

the name of *Jesus* while under his roof. The pastor assented, and spoke only of *God*, as displayed in creation. He dwelt upon the exhibition of power and wisdom in the works of God, and having done so, he took his leave.

Being invited by the squire to repeat his visit, the pastor did so, and spoke of God in His righteousness; in His holiness; in His majesty; in His hatred of sin; and again took his leave. Here the squire's conscience was reached. The arrow of the Almighty penetrated the joints of the harness in which his infidel system had encased him. He was a convicted sinner. The flimsy cobwebs of rationalism gave way before the stern realities of his personal guilt and the holiness of God. The proud, self-sufficient sceptic became a humble, broken-hearted penitent.

When the pastor called again, he found the squire in a state of intense mental anguish. He felt the weight of God's claims bearing down upon his conscience, and his own utter incompetency to meet them. God, as seen in creation and providence, was at a vast distance from him. There was a great gulf between, which he could not bridge. He was wretched, and in the depth of his wretchedness he asked the pastor if he could not give him any relief.

"No," said he, "I can do nothing for you; you have strictly forbidden me to name the only One

who can do you any good, or afford you any comfort."

This was a moment of profound interest in the spiritual history of the squire. The entire superstructure of rationalism, scepticism, and infidelity had given way. He beheld it all as a mass of ruins, and himself a ruin in the midst of ruins. Neither creation nor providence could furnish a resting place for his poor burdened heart and guilty conscience. He had, under the blinding power of a senseless infidelity, sedulously excluded from his thoughts "the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," even the precious, peerless, powerful name of Jesus, the only medium through which the beams of divine glory can pour themselves, in beautiful harmony and consistency, upon the soul of the sinner—the only ground whereon "God can be just and the justifier" of the most ungodly sinner that believeth. He had built up a system for himself in which the name of Christ had no place. The materials of this system had been furnished, not by revelation, but by rationalism, the most dreary of all *isms*. He had, under the ensnaring influence of a proud intellectualism, entrenched himself behind what he vainly imagined to be the impregnable bulwarks of infidelity. He had tried to erect a platform of his own whereon to meet God; but now he found out his grand mistake.



Christ is the *only* platform on which a holy God and a guilty sinner can meet; but he had shut out Christ. He would not have Him. His motto in reference to Christ was, "Oh, breathe not His name."

What a moment! The poor squire was really miserable. He knew not what to do. There was a link missing, and he knew not where to find it. An object was needed which his infidel system could not supply. A holy God! How could he meet Him? A righteous God! How could he stand before Him? A sin-hating God! How could he ever approach him? What was to be done? It was indeed a moment of intense interest—a solemn crisis—a season never to be forgotten. He earnestly begged the pastor to *go on, to tell him all, to keep nothing back*. The door of his heart, which had for so long a time been secured by the strong bolts of infidelity, was now flung open. His conscience was fully reached. The plough had done its work, and the pastor had but to enter with the seed-basket and sow the seeds of a full and free gospel in the deep furrows of a convicted soul. In a word, he preached Christ—that long rejected, much hated name. He showed the squire that the atoning sacrifice of the Son of God was the only thing that could put away sin, and justify God in receiving the sinner. He showed him that in the cross of Christ,

“mercy and truth had met together, righteousness and peace had kissed each other;” that all the divine attributes were gloriously harmonised, that sin was judged and God glorified, that in the death of Christ all the claims of God, and all the claims of conscience had been perfectly met for the soul that took its stand on that infinite work on the cross.

This was enough. The squire found rest for his troubled soul. He believed the record and was made happy in believing. The bridge had been presented to him, and he instantly availed himself of it, to pass across that otherwise impassable gulf that separated him from God. He saw in Christ the One who fills up every point between the throne of God and the deepest depths of a sinner’s moral ruin. He found his *all* in that very name which he had so strictly forbidden to be named beneath his roof.

May the Lord use this narrative of the German squire to the bringing of many souls to Christ now!

(*Extracted.*)

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“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts x. 43).

## PERISHABLE AND IMPERISHABLE.

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**H**E counts the stars! unnumbered to our ken,  
 And past our comprehension, mighty, vast;  
 Yet by Him numbered, named, and ordered, ere  
 At His command this solid earth stood fast.  
 Then they rejoiced, and each succeeding age  
 Has heard them night by night the story tell,  
 Of their Creator's glory,—uttering praise  
 To Him who made them, and doth all things  
 well.

Yet they shall perish! mighty worlds of flame,—  
 His fingers fashioned them, and by His word  
 They sprang at once to being. That same word  
 Upholds them, but it hath declared their doom.  
 They perish!

And He counts the hairs  
 So tiny and so brittle of His people's heads,  
 So great His care, so infinite His love,  
 Nothing too small for Him who rules the worlds,  
 If it concerneth them for whom He died.  
 "Not one shall perish." Not the tiniest part  
 Of that redeemed by blood,—not e'en one hair!  
 Laid in the grave, it shall restored be,  
 Transformed to His image; and when stars,  
 And sun, and moon, 'mid heavens wrapped in  
 flame,  
 Shall pass away, each ransomed saint shall shine  
 In His surpassing glory evermore.

T.



## THE SURE FOUNDATION.

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A FEW days ago I was wanting to get over a wide, muddy ditch, across which an old tree had fallen. I thought it was just the very thing, so I started crawling along the tree on my hands and knees. When I got to the centre of the ditch, the old tree began to go to pieces ; and as I snatched at this piece, then at that, it kept giving way, and, for the moment, I saw a good prospect of getting smothered in mud. The fact was, the whole tree was *rotten*.

When I recovered my feet again, I said to a friend standing by, "This shows the need of a good foundation." "Yes," said he, "you don't want a better proof than that."

My mind turned to something else ; and I thought, if it is needful to get a firm footing in such a simple thing as that, how unwise it would be to be indifferent to what we are resting on for our *eternal* safety. There are two kinds of foundations spoken of in God's word : one is a "rock," and the other "sand." Upon one of these foundations we are building at the present time. God has laid a "foundation stone ;" and that Stone is His well beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, the "Rock of Ages." He is a "tried stone," a "sure foundation," and none who trust in Him will ever be confounded. He came

from heaven to earth to procure salvation for lost and ruined man. And this He has done righteously. Every thing has been done in a manner worthy of Himself, thereby bringing the greatest glory to God, and untold blessings to guilty man. When here on earth, Satan aimed all his subtle craft and wiles, and his malignant hate, at Him, but all in vain. Men showed their envy and spite against Him from the outset of His path here: and last of all murdered Him. When standing in the sinner's stead, He endured the wrath of God against sin. He did not swerve one hair's breadth from the purpose for which He came. He was not rebellious nor turned away back. He gave His back to the smiters, and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. He endured the cross, despising the shame. Yea, He has indeed done all things well, and not till He had uttered those golden words, "It is finished," did He lay down His life.

Dear reader, He is indeed a "tried stone:" One Who has endured, yea, and made full atonement, silencing every charge, for all who put their trust in Him. He has been down into death and the grave, destroying their power, and has risen the mighty Conquerer over all. Yea, a Prince and a Saviour; Leader and Captain of Salvation. Now this is the Person you are called upon to bow to and trust; this is the "sure foundation"

which will never give way. For time and for eternity He is ever "the same." He is "alive for evermore," and "changeth not." Every claim of God's holiness is met, and every foe that stood in the way has been overcome; and this all-glorious mighty Victor has gone up far above all principalities, and powers, having a Name above every name.

God Himself sends a message to you: it is a message of mercy, yet one of solemn warning. If you have not already repented of your sins, and put your trust in the Lord Jesus, you are still a lost sinner and guilty before Him. But He offers you eternal forgiveness on the above conditions—that is, "repentance toward Himself and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Be sure it is on "Christ the solid Rock" you are standing; everything else is sinking "sand." If you are trusting to your good deeds, ordinances and ceremonies, or anything else, however good in itself, it is "sand" after all, and will at last land you in hopeless despair. If you are resting on anything short of Christ Himself, you will find your foundation is even worse than my old *rotten tree*. Be wise, my friend, and, if never before, get down at once on your knees, owning your sins and guilt to God, and thankfully accept the rich provision, and "sure foundation," which *He* has provided.

## IMPOSSIBLE AND POSSIBLE.

(LUKE XVIII. 18—27, and XIX. 1—10)

THESE two scriptures present a striking and instructive contrast between a rich ruler and a rich publican or tax-gatherer—a contrast between man's *impossible* and God's *possible*—a contrast illustrating, most forcibly, the truth that, though man is neither willing nor able to get up to God, yet God is both willing and able to come down to man—a contrast, proving, most clearly, that, though the sinner is unable to do the necessary work, and unwilling to pay the necessary price for “eternal life,” yet God can *give* that life without price and without labour. Such is the interesting lesson set before us in these two narratives. Let us ponder it for a few moments.

In the person of the rich ruler, we have a member of a very numerous class. He was evidently one who would fain “make the best of both worlds.” He stood on legal ground, and was governed by a worldly principle. His history suggests and answers two questions which have been put and answered thousands of times over, in the history of the human family, namely, “What must I *do*?” and “What must I *give*?” To the first question the answer must be, that God's claim cannot be less than *the whole law*; and as to

the price which should be given for eternal life, what less could God possibly demand than *all* that a man has? God could not accept of anything less than a perfect obedience; and if eternal life is worth anything, it is worth all. The whole law must be fulfilled, if heaven is to be reached by *doing*; and we could never expect to get heaven at a lower price than the full surrender of earth. If the question be, "What am I to do?" the answer is, "All that God requires." If the question is, "How much am I to give?" the answer is, "All that you have." Nothing less will ever do. Not a tittle less than the whole law—not a fraction less than all your possessions. It would be the very height of absurdity to expect eternal life upon any lower terms. If you want to *work* your way to heaven, you must do "all that is written in the book of the law." And if you want to *pay* your way to heaven, how could you possibly expect to get there for less than all that you possess on earth? Surely these are man's "impossibilities!"

How then does the Lord answer the rich ruler? He answers the *man*, not his *question*. He answers with His penetrating gaze upon the moral condition of the inquirer. He lays out the work for a legalist; and He lays down the price for a bargainer. And, be it noted, there is an intimate connection between the two things. If the ruler had really been able to do



the work, as he vainly imagined, he would have been willing to pay the price. The two things would, most assuredly, go together. But inasmuch as there has never been a single member of Adam's fallen family who was able to do the prescribed work, so neither has there ever been one who was willing to pay the stipulated price. And, moreover, when once a man becomes convinced, by God's Holy Spirit, of his natural unwillingness and inability, he never thinks of asking such a question as, "What must I *do* to inherit eternal life," for he knows quite well that unless eternal life be a free gift, he can never have it at all.

However, the ruler had not reached the ground of divine conviction when he stood in the presence of Christ with his legal inquiry. We must bear in mind that our blessed Lord is dealing, not with a convicted sinner, or an anxious inquirer, but with a legalist and bargainer—not with one whose all-engrossing desire was to reach heaven, but with one who wanted to hold heaven and earth at the same time—that is, "to make the best of both worlds." This makes all clear. Christ did not mean to teach that heaven could be reached by works, or bought with money; but He did, most strikingly, make manifest that even if it could be so, yet man would neither do the work nor pay the price. He proved, in the case of the

ruler, that when heaven was offered to the human heart, on the reasonable terms of some earthly possessions, the human heart deliberately refused to pay the price. We are not taught that heaven is to be sold ; but we are taught that even though it were to be sold for a few thousands, man would not pay the amount.

Let us now turn to the case of Zacchæus, the rich taxgatherer of Jericho, whose history so strikingly proves that "the things which are impossible with men, are possible with God." The rich ruler was told to do and to give : the rich taxgatherer was saved without being told to do or give anything. Why was this? Because the ruler took the ground of a legalist ; whereas the tax-gatherer took the ground of a lost sinner, looking for Jesus. Now, while it is utterly impossible for a legalist to get to God, it is indeed possible for God to get to a lost sinner. This is beautifully exemplified in the narrative of Zacchæus.

"And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And behold, there was a man named Zacchæus, which was chief among the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was ; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way."

Here, then, we have before us, God's "possible." Zacchæus, as he took his place in the sycamore tree, stood before the eye of Jesus as one of those whom the Father was drawing to Him ; and it mattered not, in the smallest degree, what he was—rich or poor, publican or sinner—Christ fixed His eye upon him, and said, "Zacchæus, make haste and come down ; for to-day I must abide at thy house." "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). True, Zacchæus was "rich." He belonged to that class of whom Christ said, "How hardly shall they . . . enter the kingdom." But what of that ? The Lord Jesus beheld in him an object of God's eternal counsels, and a subject of the Father's drawings. He connected the act of climbing the sycamore tree with the divine purpose which was formed before the foundation of the world, and He proceeded to act in pursuance thereof by publishing the glad tidings of a free salvation in the ears of the wealthy tax-gatherer of Jericho. Beholders might "murmur ;" Zacchæus, too, might recount his honest and earnest efforts in the way of alms-giving and restitution ; but Christ was true to the object which had brought Him from heaven, and that object was "salvation." "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham. For the

Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

What a contrast then is God's "possible"! If Zacchæus had been called upon to keep the commandments, or to sell all that he had in order to inherit eternal life, he would have found it as hard as the rich ruler. It is *impossible* for any one, ruler, publican, or else, to get to heaven by a pathway of works. There is but one way to heaven and that way is marked from the throne of God down to the lost sinner by the footprints of love divine; and it is marked upward from the lost sinner to the throne of God by the sprinkled blood of the Lamb. It is all well enough, and very beautiful, to give to the poor, and make restitution for any injury done to one's neighbour; but these things can never purchase salvation, for it is not be purchased by any thing; and, even though it were the case of the ruler, proves that man would not pay the price. Salvation is as free as the air we breath, for this simple reason, that it has been *brought* to all by "the *grace* of God." "This day is salvation come to this house."

It is a *present* salvation. "This day." Dear unsaved reader, you need not wait till to-morrow to be saved. The great fact on which salvation depends was accomplished, over eighteen hundred

years ago, on the cross. All is finished. Jesus "appeared for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself." "He suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." If in simple faith you rest upon this mighty work of redemption thus effected on the cross, salvation is yours now and for ever. You have no need to go hither or thither, to do this or that, but believing and resting on God's testimony of His Son, to know that you are saved.

It is a *perfect* salvation. "This day is salvation *come*." It is not coming; it is not on the way; it is actually "come." It was wrought out by Christ, for us, and is as perfect as He could make it. It demands nothing from the sinner. It is brought, in all its divine fulness and completeness, to his door, and his only title to it is that he is "lost." It is only a lost sinner that needs salvation, and nothing but a perfect salvation would do for one who is utterly lost. It is not merely help I want, but full salvation. Many will say they hope to be saved "by the help of God." This is a mistake. There is a wide difference between God's helping me to be saved and His saving me altogether. In the former case, I co-operate; but in the latter case, God does all.

Finally, it is a *personal* salvation. "This day is salvation come to *this* house." It is important

to see this clearly. We are very apt to generalize in reference to the matter of salvation. Many there are who say, "We are all sinners; and we know that Jesus died for *all*;" but yet they have never made it a personal matter. They have never been brought to say from the depth of a broken heart "I am lost; but Jesus loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." The devils believe that Jesus died for sinners, and it avails them nothing. The awakened soul is to believe that Jesus died for him—that a full, free, eternal salvation has come to *him*—that *his* sins were laid on Jesus, and that He bore them in His own body on the tree, and put them away out of God's view for ever. Of what value is salvation if it be not for me? If I cannot make it my own, it avails me nothing. But, blessed be God, it is for me, if I take the place of a lost sinner. "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Hence we see that the sinner has not to wait till to-morrow in order to be saved; he has not to add anything to the salvation which grace brings him; and he is not to raise so much as a single question as to the fact that salvation applies to him, for the very moment he takes the ground of a lost sinner, the salvation of God applies itself to him as truly as the air is intended for all who have lungs to breathe, or the sunbeams for all who

have eyes to see. Does any one ever think of questioning whether atmosphere and sunlight are intended for him? Surely not, while reason holds its seat. Well, then, neither should the poor conscience-smitten sinner entertain a single doubt as to the precious truth that God's salvation is not only a present, and a perfect, but also a personal salvation.

“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.” Ask a man to give up some ruling lust, some darling pleasure, in order to be saved. He will tell you, it is “impossible.” But let that man be brought to see himself as lost—let him take his place as a ruined, guilty, hell-deserving sinner, and he receives a full, an unconditional, and an eternal salvation through the blood of the Lamb. Let a man come as a doer, and what less could he be told to do than “the whole law?” Let a man come as a buyer, and what less could he be told to give, than “all that he has?” But let a man come as a lost sinner, and he gets eternal life as a *gift*, and eternal salvation without money and without price.

And, now, one word in conclusion. Are we to suppose, for a moment, that Zacchæus ceased to give alms when he had gotten salvation? Nay, it was only then he learnt to give them upon the true ground. It is only as saved that a man can do anything right. Till he finds Christ he is but

ploughing the rock. He may be very earnest : he may do many things in order to be saved ; but it is only when a full and all-sufficient Christ is laid hold of by faith, that good works can be performed or good fruit produced. *Extracted.*

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“ I NEVER KNEW YOU ! ”

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THE scripture in Matthew vii. from which the above title is taken, forms a very solemn warning to any who are trying to brave eternity with a knowledge of the mere letter of divine truths, without the inward personal knowledge of that blessed Saviour who is the centre and theme of all such truths.

Those to whom these words of our chapter were addressed, knew enough Biblical truth to address Him as Lord, and boasted that they had prophesied in His name, yea, in His name had cast out demons, and done many wonderful works. All this the Lord does not deny, but meets them with the solemn and emphatic assertion, “ I never knew you ! ”

From this we learn that it is not enough to have acquaintance with scripture. There needs something more than this. The heart and conscience must be reached, and the soul brought to a personal knowledge of the Son of God, as Lord and Saviour.



How many in these days of boasted profession, are hastening on to swell the ranks of that unhappy, benighted company, who will find themselves outside that door which the master of the house will soon rise up and shut. How many will be astonished to find themselves refused admittance by Him whose adorable name they had taken upon their lips! But, alas, they are shut out, and *for ever!*

In the light of all this, dear reader, does it not become us to learn from the word of God the deep need of His salvation which can only be by the true knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? Not only is He Saviour, but Lord, and knows all that are His. He does not say, "You never knew me!" but, "I never knew you!" In John x. we read, "My sheep hear my voice; and I know them, and they follow me!" The first thing here is that His sheep hear His voice; not so the mere professor. What then does the voice of Jesus say? It certainly sounds out man's need of Him as the Saviour who came to seek and save the lost. For this is now man's proved condition, *lost!* away from God. The selfwill that has led man astray, and alienated his heart from God is laid bare. But the Saviour's voice is heard entreating the labouring and heavy laden to turn to Him for that rest unobtainable elsewhere.

Hear again the wonderful words of the good

Shepherd, telling of the Father's love and desire for poor guilty man in all his wretchedness and need. Those who then heard the Shepherd's voice were His sheep, who found in Him the answer to their need. Of these, He says, "And I know them!" Never can a heart respond to His love and grace without His knowing it, for to turn to Him in sincerity, in the confession of our deep, deep want, is to find in Him the fulness of grace and truth, and to receive of His fulness, and grace upon grace. "To as many as received Him gave He privilege to become children of God—to them that believed on His name." And this means a new birth and life eternal to once-dead sinners: "which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent" (John i. 12, 13; xvii. 3).

The knowledge of the Father and the Son is a divine reality, and insures a place inside the door with Christ throughout eternity. He knows every heart that has been touched by His grace, and when He comes for His own, not one such will be left behind. In a day when almost everybody makes a religious profession of some sort or another, how comforting to the sincere believer to remember that it is written, "The Lord know-

eth them that are his!" The last clause of the scripture referred to in John x. says, "and they follow me." This is the inevitable consequence of truly knowing the Lord Jesus and being known of Him; and it is the real absence of this knowledge that is surely found in those who have a form of godliness but deny its power. Though the name of Christ may be glibly professed, and sacred truths flippantly spoken of, yet at heart the world is loved, and its glittering pleasures sought after which can never satisfy. But a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ finds his joy and delight in following Him, and looks without dread for His coming, in fulfilment of His gracious promise to receive His own unto Himself. To such the words can never be said, "I never knew you!"

Oh, my dear reader, the writer's earnest desire is to awaken you to the urgent necessity of having to do with God *now* in view of an eternity that is rapidly drawing near. Are you endeavouring to satisfy yourself with profession only, thereby exposing yourself to the sad doom of hearing His terrible announcement, "I never knew you?" If so, may the God of all grace arouse you to flee to Jesus from the coming wrath, ere that door is for ever closed! May God grant it for Christ's sake, Amen.

*From "The Shipwrecked Mariner"*

## OLD PETER.

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PETER was an old sailor. A vessel in which he once shipped was struck by lightning, and one of his shipmates was killed. It made him think, he said, of the judgment day. He went to his locker, and took out his Bible. "I want to find the Pilot that can weather me through that storm," said Peter, "it's scarry business, shipmates, to find us on a lee shore there, with the rocks of our sins right 'longside, and hell yawning not far off."

Peter took to his Bible. He did not make much headway until he came into port, and went straight to a preaching place, which he did when he was off duty.

"I want to find the good Pilot," said Peter to the preacher after service.

"The great Captain of your salvation, Jesus Christ," said the preacher, "He's here, He's nigh to every poor sinner that calls upon Him."

"I'm one of 'em," said Peter, the tears streaming down his sunburnt cheeks, "and I want to ship in His service. I am pretty near waterlogged in my sins, I ha'n't any chart, compass, or anchor, and I'm drifting to perdition. I want the Pilot that went to the fishing smack on Galilee, and

said to the skipper when he was well nigh sinking, 'It is I, be not afraid.' How shall I get at him?"

"Well friend, the fact is that He came to get at you, as it says in 1 Tim. i. 15. 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' and again, 'The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost' (Luke xix. 10). Now if you answer to this description of 'sinner' and 'lost' you are welcome to Him, and, coming to Him all your need is met. Jesus said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out' (John vi. 37). So coming, your sins will be gone, for 'the blood of Jesus Christ His [God's] Son cleanseth us from all sin' (1 John i. 7), and God will have nothing against you, for Christ 'has made peace through the blood of His cross'" (Col. i. 20).

Peter and the preacher knelt down to pray, for the people had gone, and Peter cried mightily unto the Lord, "Save me, Lord, or I perish," was the burden of his prayer, and he rose up a believer.

From that time Peter was a new man. His shipmates saw that he was indeed the old weather beaten tar he was before, but there was a change in the man. Instead of the swearing, drinking, reckless, spending old Peter, he was sober, humble, and anxious to have everybody else ship in the same service that he had.

“Don’t put it off,” he used to say. Testament in hand, he is talking to an old sailor.

“I must take time to think of it,” says he.

“To think of what?” cried old Peter, “whether you are a sinner? You know you are. Whether you’ll be lost if you die as you are? You know you will. Whether the Lord Jesus can save you? You know He can. Breakers are ahead, your anchors wont hold you. *Don’t put it off.*”

“I am not so bad as you think; I am not so bad as others,” says another.

“But you are bad enough,” cries old Peter, “the best sinner on earth is too bad for heaven. One sin ruined Adam. You are drifting, you know where. Your keel will soon ground on the rocks. Would that you would cry out now, ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ A storm is brewing. Hail the great Pilot. *Don’t put it off.*”

Old Peter loved the young people. “Bless God that you are young,” he used to say. “‘They that seek me early shall find me.’ The great Captain of our salvation loves the young. Ship in His service, boys. ‘Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not,’ then your rudder never will snap; you’ll never drag your anchors; the devil’s craft will never run into you. Ship in God’s service, boys, and *don’t put it off.*”

## HE GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR “ME.”

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NOT long since I received a letter, on the back of which the sender had written these words, “The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for ———.” He did not finish the sentence, but I am glad to tell you that before it reached me, some one with a pencil had filled it in with that little word “me.” I thought it was grand. I wonder if my reader could have truthfully written the same little word.

We often hear people talking like this: “I shall stand as good a chance as others;” “I shall come in with the rest,” and such like expressions. But it is the greatest folly to risk eternity on such an unsound footing. 'Tis as individuals every one of us must have to do with God. As the little verse says :

“I with God must have to do, for myself an answer find ;  
None can help me then, ah no, none however good and  
kind.”

It is “Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.” “Ye must be born again.” “Be reconciled to God.” To you is preached “the forgiveness of sins.” You are invited to “take the water of life

freely." Yes, my friend, it is to you God has taken all the trouble to send the word of His salvation. He in His love to you has sent His well-beloved Son to this scene of sin, suffering and death, that you might be saved. And in order to bring it about, He must be "led as a lamb to the slaughter;" He must go to Calvary; He must be lifted up on the cross; and that you might be spared, God spared not His own Son. What greater proof of God's love to you could you have? Moreover the Son of God has finished the work He came to do; He has made full satisfaction to God. God is well pleased with the work of His Son; so much so, that He has raised Him from the dead, and given Him glory. He has set Him at His own right hand and crowned Him with glory and honour. Yea, He is ascended up far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named. And God has decreed that in the power of His Name (the Name of Jesus) your knees and mine, yea, every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess Him Lord. God alone knows the full value of the atoning work of His Son; its merits have laid a foundation whereby He can righteously proclaim in His word a free pardon of all the sins of every one who believes in His Son. And this He now does, and offers the priceless gift of eternal life in His Son.



Reader, God has sent this message to you, and you are accountable to Him as to how you treat it. Paul could say, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief." The Son of God "loved me and gave Himself for me." Peter cried, "Lord, save me." The publican said, "God be merciful to me, the sinner." The dying thief, "Lord, remember me." The Philippian jailor, "What must I do to be saved?" There is abundance to shew us that it is an entirely individual matter. Every one, in true repentance toward God, like the poor prodigal in Luke xv., must return to Him in truth and say, "I have sinned against heaven and before thee"—like David of old, "against thee, thee only have I sinned and done evil in thy sight." And each one must believe the testimony God has given of His Son. We need to know Jesus as our own personal Saviour. Like Mary of old who could say, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Like Mary Magdalene who could say, "They have taken away my Lord." Like Thomas, say, "My Lord and my God."

Oh, trifle not with this Saviour whom God has provided at such a cost for you. He is a sure foundation stone, tried, elect, and precious, in Whom is eternal salvation for all who put their trust in Him. But He is, to those who are disobedient, a stone [of] stumbling and a rock of

offence, and will surely be their Judge ere long.

Rest not till, with the person who wrote on the letter, *you* can truthfully say "He gave Himself a ransom for 'me.'" W.C.



## GLADNESS OF HEART.

WHEN God puts gladness in the heart, who can take it out? How different is this, however, to what passes current as such in the world to-day; or to what is commonly called happiness, by young and old alike, in this pleasure-loving age! Games and amusements of all kinds are generally spoken of as happiness by most people, whether in this or other lands; but (it need scarcely be said) they yield no lasting joy! and scripture emphatically declares that "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Behind every earthly pleasure there lurks the sting of death; but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and whoso trusteth in the Lord, happy is he." It is from the lips of the sweet psalmist of Israel that the words ring in our ears, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased" (Psalm iv. 7); thus showing that the gladness God gives is infinitely better than mere

worldly prosperity ; but, in Psalm ix. 2, he goes still further and expresses his delight in God Himself, in these words, "I will be glad and rejoice in thee ; I will sing praise to thy name, O thou most High."

Sin and death have wrought universal havoc in this poor dark world ; and men's minds, blinded by Satan, grow utterly careless as to the future. Disappointment only too often casts its dark shadow on our path ; and weary hearts are all around. Yet the very object of Christ's advent to this sin-stained earth was to "bind up the broken-hearted," and to pour in the oil and wine of God's own gladness into souls wounded by sin ; as well as to give liberty to those who are led captive by the devil at his will. His wondrous death and glorious resurrection having eternally settled every question that could possibly arise between a holy God and a guilty sinner, it is the believer's happy privilege to rest on the unchanging person, work, and word of Christ ; and, where this is the case, it is the delight of God's Spirit to fill the obedient soul with joy and peace in believing. It is just because Christ loves righteousness and hates iniquity, that God has anointed Him with "the oil of gladness" above His fellows. And now it is the believer's joy, not only to confess Christ in his life ; but, Spirit-taught, to proclaim amidst the ruins of a dying world fast ripening

for judgment, the glad tidings of God's full and free salvation to all around.

What infinite joy filled the disciples' hearts when the risen Christ, fresh from His single-handed victory, breathed into their very souls those precious words, "Peace unto you!" Small wonder is it that those wounded hands and pierced side spoke such volumes to their hearts that "they were glad when they saw the Lord."

What a vivid picture too is brought before us in the fifteenth chapter of Luke, of God's own joy in blessing the lost! Who is the man that goes after the lost and straying sheep, until he finds it, but "the man Christ Jesus?" The weary feet of the Good Shepherd rest not till the object of His love is found; then he layeth it upon his shoulders rejoicing, and brings it home, and "calls his friends and neighbours together" to rejoice with Him that the lost one is found. Who too is the woman, that having lost one of her ten pieces of silver, lights her candle, sweeps her house, and seeks diligently till she finds it, but a lovely type of the grace and power of God's Spirit, who is never satisfied till the lost one is found? And surely we who believe may well rejoice with Him in His joy, and the solid peace which He gives to anxious souls. Lastly, who shall measure the joy of the Father's heart in welcoming home the returning prodigal? This lovely story of such

exquisite grace may well charm sinners' hearts that, like the younger son, have wandered far from God ! The wasted life, the far country, the mighty famine, the husks, the appalling fact that "no man gave unto him," might well awaken the cry of the lost one, "when he came to himself." "I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son ; make me as one of thy hired servants." But oh ! those eyes of tender love that, "while yet a long way off," beheld the sin-stained feet, and the broken heart, of the returning wanderer ! None but God Himself could so act, and hence he runs in sweet compassion ; and, falling on the neck of the lost one, imprints the kiss of peace. The best robe, the ring, the sandals, and the fatted calf, all alike testify to the gracious welcome home, and are but the fitting answer of grace to the prodigal's confession, "Father, I have sinned." Two hearts were made glad that day ; but the father's joy was the greater, as those words ring in our ears, "Let us eat, and be merry ; for this my son was dead, and is alive again ; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry."

"The heart within us leapeth,  
And cannot down be cast,  
Since with our God it keepeth  
Its never ending feast.

All beneath the sun is rapidly fading away, and all earth's pleasure and ambitions perish in the dust ; but the precious knowledge of eternal life, righteousness divine, sins forgiven, and peace with God, bring to their possessor a joy, and a gladness, the world knows nothing of. God Himself is the source and spring of all this joy ; and the psalmist adds his sweet refrain, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart."

Do you know anything of this gladness, dear reader ? Have you yet confessed your own personal sins to God ? have you received His kiss of peace, and has its sweetness filled your heart "with joy unspeakable, and full of glory ?" If so it be, you will pass through this world as a pilgrim and a stranger ; its fleeting pleasures will no longer charm your heart, and you will, with the writer of these lines, be able to sing from the very depths of your ransomed soul :

Gladly, Lord, Thy grace I own,  
My poor wayward heart hath won ;  
In my darkness, guilt, and sin,  
Thou did'st let Thy light shine in.

Gladly did I hear Thy voice,  
How it made my heart rejoice !  
'Twas love's message, full and free,  
"Come, thou weary one, to Me."

Glad am I Christ died for me,  
And from judgment set me free ;  
Glad to know that He is risen,  
And my sins are all forgiven.

Once their burden made me sad,  
 Now Christ's love hath made me glad ;  
 Robed in righteousness divine,  
 I am His, and He is mine.

He who did in glory dwell,  
 Came to rescue me from hell ;  
 Jesus, having shed His blood,  
 Brought me home with joy to God.

Glad am I that, saved by grace,  
 I shall see His blessed face ;  
 Glad to know He'll come again,  
 And with Jesus I shall reign.

In His beauty then I'll shine,  
 Share with Him His joy divine ;  
 This, the gladness of my heart,  
 Christ and I can never part.

S.T.

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## THE REALITY OF SIN.

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**I**F the word of God is to be accepted in connection with man's characteristics by nature, we shall find that no place whatever is given to the trend of human thought that has emanated from certain quarters in the professing church, during the last few months. And that our only safe course is to accept His word as our guide, need scarcely be insisted upon, for it goes without saying.

We have been told that the fall of man is a myth, and that every human soul is constantly crying out

after God. But how can these assertions stand in the light of God's revealed truth? Investigation will prove that they are in direct conflict with the divine testimony of God's holy oracles, and have their origin in the sinful depths of the corrupt heart of man. It needs no second thought to come to a decision as to whether we should lend our ear to the voice of divine truth, or open them to the reception of that which denies it! Let us then, dear reader, glean a little from those sacred pages, as to the reality of sin, its nature in God's sight, and its inevitable doom, with the constant prayer that grace may be given us to withstand all such efforts to shake our confidence in Holy Scripture.

Can I do better than refer you, first of all, to the sweeping testimony with regard to sin, contained in the Epistle to the Romans? Here we read, "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (v. 12). "The wages of sin is death" (vi. 23). Unpalatable as this may be to those unwilling to bow to such a testimony, it is nevertheless the declared truth of God, whose eyes are too pure to behold iniquity.

The indisputable testimony of the word of God is that all men by nature are sinners and children of wrath (Rom. v. 19; Eph. ii. 3), as well as by practice, since all have sinned (Rom. iii. 23); that all are lost, and exposed to the righteous sentence of death, as sin's wages. And as to whether man



in his sinful nature yearns after God, just take a step or two backwards in the same Epistle, and read, amongst other condemning assertions, "There is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. iii. 11).

The inevitable conclusion, then, is that sin, in all its awful reality, has alienated man's heart from God (see also Eph. iv. 18) and exposed him, if left to himself, to the lake of fire, as sins' just deserts. This, dear reader, is the unanswerable truth of God, and the first step to blessing is subjection to it, in spite of the humiliation it inflicts upon those of whom it is true. Men, in the sinful pride of their hearts, might rise up, and profess to have made discoveries that set aside these old-fashioned truths, but let God be true, though every man be found a liar.

By these scriptures we see that not only is sin a reality, but sin's doom is a reality, which might well humble all in the dust, and lead to the earnest soul-cry, "What must I do to be saved?" And this cry will be intensified in its reality when it is borne in mind that the One who makes known this truth is in His nature, perfectly holy, perfectly righteous, and that sin can never be allowed for one moment to stand in His presence; "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (1 John i. 5). It is this that is forgotten, or entirely ignored, by those who so audaciously venture the denial of the truth so plainly made known in God's Holy Word.

But if sin be real, as indeed it is, and sin's judgment also real, blessed be God, His perfect remedy for sin is real likewise, for it is provided in the divine person of His own blessed Son.

In contemplating the sad spectacle of the onward march to the pit of destruction of sin's unhappy captives, God opens His lips to peal forth the thrilling announcement, "Deliver him from going down to the pit : I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24). That ransom has been found in the Lord Jesus Christ, who surrendered Himself to God upon the cross, as a perfect sacrifice, to make atonement for sin, and to put it away.

Death was demanded as the price of the sinner's redemption ; that ransom was given when the spotless Lamb of God poured out His soul unto death. God, in perfect righteousness, has accepted the death of Christ as the divine answer to every requirement of His holy nature in the judgment of our sins and of sin (the evil root), for every poor sinner whose faith rests in that all-atoning, perfect, finished work. In the light of this divinely provided ransom, there falls upon our anxious ears, those sweet, fear-allaying words, "The blood of Jesus Christ his [God's] Son, cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). None need perish, though "all have sinned" and do come short of God's glory. For He justifies freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ;

and being just, He is the Justifier of all that believe in Jesus (Rom. iii. 23—26).

Oh, how can puny men resent the truth of God with regard to the horrors of sin, and its lamentable consequences, in the face of the full provision that a Saviour-God has made for the penitent sinner! My reader, be persuaded to treat as worthless every utterance, from whatever source, that depreciates the value of the inspired word of God, for all such efforts are aimed at Him, of whom it is written, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us . . . full of grace and truth" (John i. 14).

And now, let me ask, in conclusion, Have you ever felt and owned your sins in all their reality before God to whose eyes all things are naked and opened; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight? Thus is it impossible to deceive Him who knows all our thoughts, our deeds, our ways, yea, our whole life. Yet knowing all, He sent His only begotten Son, the propitiation for our sins, that believing on Him we might not perish but have everlasting life, and withal, the full remission, or forgiveness, of all our sins through the Saviour's precious blood. Believe then on Him and know this inestimable boon as yours now and for ever.

W.G.



## “APPROPRIATION;” OR, IS CHRIST FOR ME ?

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THE following incident, as here extracted, illustrates in a very simple manner, the harassing question of “Appropriation.” The record of it has helped many souls, and with the hope that it may yet help many more, it is given a place in this Magazine.

“A dear child, in whose spiritual history I was, and still am, deeply interested, was sorely troubled, for many a day, with this question, ‘How am I to know that Christ died for *me*?’ He knew a great deal of truth. He was, intellectually, so clear and well instructed as to be able to detect any false statement, in a tract or lecture. He was intimately acquainted with the plan of salvation, and much interested in the subject of religion, generally. But he had no personal enjoyment of Christ. He could not see his own interest in Christ. His grand and constant difficulty was embodied in the question, ‘How am I to know that Christ died for *me*?’

“However, it pleased the Lord, at length, to

make use of a very simple incident to answer this dear child's absorbing question. He was sitting beside me in my room, conversing about the matter of his salvation. He told me he felt assured that Christ died for sinners, but that he could not see how he was to appropriate Christ to himself. There was a railway time table on the wall; and at the bottom of the table appeared the following statement, 'Children under six years of age travel free.' I called his attention to those words, and simply said to him, Now, if you were a child under six years, would you have any difficulty in appropriating or applying that statement to yourself? Would it not rather be a difficulty, yea an impossibility, not to apply it? Before you can refuse the application, you must prove yourself to be over six years of age. To *any* child under six years of age, the statement applies with as much force as though he were the only child in the world. True, you do not see your own name given in the statement; and even though your name were there, it would not help you in the matter of appropriation, inasmuch as if there were any other child of the same name, the question would be involved in hopeless uncertainty. But when you see your age, your state, your condition, you can have no further difficulty; you may refuse to take your seat, but you cannot refuse the application of the offer.

“And now to apply this illustration. I read in

the first chapter of first Timothy, 'This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*.' Are you a sinner? 'Oh! yes;' said he, 'that I am in truth.' Well, if you are, in heart and in conscience, on the ground of a lost sinner, then did Christ come to save you, just as much as if you were the only sinner in the world. You must prove yourself to be not a sinner, before you can refuse the application of the gospel message. The gospel applies itself, it is for you to believe and rejoice in the application.

"The Spirit of God blessed the illustration. The simple truth of the gospel flashed like a sunbeam on the mind of the child, and he was enabled to kneel at my side and thank God that he now knew what he had so long desired to know, that Christ died for him. It was a clear decided, unmistakable case. Speaking to a friend, shortly after, he said, 'Do you know that all the devils in hell could not shake my faith, now?' 'Indeed,' said the friend, amazed at this bold decision on the part of one who had suffered so much from doubts and fears, 'How is that?' 'BECAUSE IT IS FOUNDED ON THE WORD OF GOD.' Blessed foundation! Not on feeling, not on reason, not on imagination, not on assumption, but simply on the word of God. This is enough. 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; . . . he was

buried, and . . . rose again the third day according to the scriptures.'

"May the Lord bless this simple incident to many an anxious soul, and His name shall have all the glory."

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## NOW AND THEN.

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**T**IS passing, passing, passing, the uncongenial night,  
With its darkness, strife, and tempest, wherein is  
nothing bright,

For there above the cloud bank, is shining from afar,  
In its own majestic splendour, the bright and morning Star.

Ah ! soon the Sun on rising, in His imperial might,  
Shall put away disorders that appertain to night ;  
The pain, the sickness, sorrow, no longer shall be seen  
But forgotten with the miseries of things that once have  
been.

'Tis only Thou, Lord Jesus, enthroned in glory now,  
But erst who wore the thorny crown upon Thy blessed  
brow,  
When suffering for ruined man, to put away his sin,  
Can set to rights this evil world and bring the glory in.

We wait for Thine appearing, but first Thy face shall see,  
When in the secret rapture we are alone with Thee ;  
And leave behind this squalid place no longer here to roam ;  
But there to see Thy glory and rest in the Father's home.

W.N.T.

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## THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

(LUKE X. 25—35)

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WE desire to dwell for a little upon two grand questions which are suggested and answered in our Lord's interview with the lawyer namely, What is written in the law? What is revealed in the gospel? These questions have only to be named to secure the attention and awaken the interest of every intelligent and thoughtful reader. It is surely most needful to understand the object, the nature, and range of the law; and in no way can these things be so clearly seen as when examined in contrast with the glorious gospel of God's free grace in Christ. Let us then, in the first place, proceed to enquire,

### WHAT IS WRITTEN IN THE LAW?

This question may be very simply answered. The law reveals what man ought to do. This is what is written in the law. We often hear it said that "The law is the transcript of the mind of God." This definition is altogether defective. What idea should we have of God, were we to regard "the ten words" uttered on the top of Mount Sinai, amid thunderings and lightnings, blackness, darkness and tempest, as the transcript of His mind? How should we know God, if it be



true that "the ministration of death and condemnation, written and engraven in stones," is the transcript of His mind? May we not, with great justice, inquire of the framers of the above most objectionable definition, "Is there nothing in the mind of God, save death and condemnation? Is there nothing in the mind of God save 'thou shalt,' and 'thou shalt not?'" If there be more than these, then it is a mistake to affirm that "The law is the transcript of the mind of God." If it be said that "The law declares the mind of God as to what man ought to do," we have no objection to offer, for that is what we hold the law to be. But, then, let the reader remember that the declaration of what *man ought to do*, and the revelation of what *God is*, are two totally different things. The former is the law; the latter is the gospel. Both, we need hardly say, are perfect—divinely perfect, but they stand in vivid contrast; the one is perfect to condemn, the other is perfect to save.

But let us see how this point is unfolded in the scripture before us. "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, what is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all

thy mind ; and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live."

Now, it in no wise interferes with the teaching of this passage to say that the lawyer stood up with the wicked intention of tempting Christ, or that he could flippantly and unfeelingly repeat what was written in the law. What we have to see is this, that the great law-question, "What must I do?" is here proposed and answered. If a man is to get life by keeping the commandments, he must keep them. There is no mystery about this. It is so plain that the question is, "How readest thou?" A man has only to read the twentieth chapter of Exodus in order to know his duty toward God and his duty toward his neighbour.

But then, dear reader, the solemn inquiry is, "Have I done my duty? have I loved God with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself?" Alas! Alas! I have not; far—very far from it. I have proved, times without number, that I loved many things which are quite contrary to God; that I have indulged in lusts and pleasures which God condemns; that my will is most thoroughly opposed to God's will; that I hate the things which He loves, and love the things which He hates. In a word then, it is perfectly manifest that I have not loved God with all my heart, yea,

that I have not given Him a single affection of my heart. And as to my neighbour, have I loved him as myself? Have I, at all times, and under all circumstances, as sedulously sought to promote my neighbour's interest as though they were my own? Have I rejoiced as unfeignedly in his prosperity as in my own? I dare not answer in the affirmative. I have only to bow my head and confess that I have utterly and shamefully failed in my bounden duty, both toward God and toward my neighbour. I own it, most fully, to be my duty to love God, with all my heart, and my neighbour as myself; but I own, as fully, that I have done neither the one nor the other.

What, then, can the law do for me? Curse me and slay me on the spot. Is there no mercy? Not in the law. There is no mercy at Mount Sinai. If a man stands before that fiery mount, the tremendous alternative is *duty* or *damnation*. There is no middle ground. "This do, and thou shalt live" is the solemn, conclusive, and emphatic language of the law. "The man that doeth these things shall live in them;" but, on the other hand, "cursed is every one (without a single exception), that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them" (Gal. iii. 10). "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses" (Heb. x. 28). The law makes no provision for imperfect

obedience however sincere. It makes no allowance for infirmity. Its one brief, pointed inquiry is, "Have you continued in all things?" If you say *no*; (and who can say otherwise?) it can only curse you. And why? Because it is perfect. Were it to pass over a single transgression, it would not be what it is, namely, a perfect law. Its very perfection insures the condemnation of the transgressor. "As many as are of works of law, (that is, as many as work on the principle, stand on the ground, occupy the platform, of works of law) are under curse," and cannot possibly be anything else. The law can only prove to be a ministration of death and condemnation to the sinner simply because he is a sinner, and "the law is holy, and just, and good." It can neither be the ground of life nor the rule of life to a fallen creature. "By deeds of law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20).

Thus much as to "what is written in the law." Let us now proceed to enquire, in the second place,

## WHAT IS REVEALED IN THE GOSPEL?

This is unfolded with uncommon beauty and power, in the touching parable of "the good Samaritan." The lawyer, like all legalists, "willing to justify himself," sought to ascertain who

was his neighbour; and in reply, our blessed Lord draws a picture in which is most vividly presented the true condition of every sinner, be he lawyer or else. "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." What a picture of man's career and man's condition! "A certain man"—the writer or the reader of these lines, "went down." How true! Reader, is it not so? Has not thy course ever been a downward one? Hast thou ever, when left to thyself, taken a step upward—a step in the right direction? There is no use in generalizing, in making statements about mankind, the whole human race, Adam's posterity, and the like. What we want is to bring the matter home to ourselves, and say, each for himself, "*I* am the 'certain man' of this singularly beautiful parable; it is *my own* very figure that appears in the foreground of this masterly picture; *my* course has been a downward one; I have gone down from the innocency of childhood, to the folly of youth, and from the folly of youth to the matured wickedness of manhood, and here I am, 'stripped' of every shed in which I might wrap myself; 'wounded' in every region of my moral being; and having the painful consciousness that death has already begun its terrible work in me."

Such is the career, such the condition of every sinner—his career, downward—his condition, death. What is to be done? Can he keep the law? Alas! he is not able to move. Can the “priest” do ought for him? Alas! he has no sacrifice, and no ability to rise and get one. Can the “Levite” not help him? Alas! he is so polluted with his wounds and bruises that neither Levite nor priest could touch him. In a word, neither law nor ordinances can meet his case. He is utterly ruined. He has destroyed himself. The law has flung him overboard, as a defiled, good-for-nothing, condemned thing. It is useless talking to him about the law, or asking him will he take it as a means of justification, a rule of life, or the power of sanctification. It has cursed, condemned, and set him aside altogether, and he has only to cry out from the profound and awful depths of his moral ruin, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”

Now, it is when a man is really brought to this that he is in a position to prove the grace of the good Samaritan who, assuredly, is none other than the blessed Lord Jesus Himself, who here appears in the form of a Samaritan only to enhance the grace that breathes forth upon our souls in this lovely scene. “Jews have no dealings with Samaritans,” and, hence, had the Jew in this parable

had sufficient strength, he would not, we may safely aver, have suffered the stranger to touch him. But he was so far gone, so powerless, so under the power of death, that the gracious Samaritan had it all his own way. And oh ! what a tender way it was !

“But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was : and when he saw him, he had compassion, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him ; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee.”

Here, then, is what is revealed in the gospel. Man has ruined himself. He has gone down from God. He has fallen under the power of the enemy. He is the victim of Satan, the slave of sin, the subject of death. His case is hopeless, so far as he is concerned. But, blessed be God, the true Samaritan has come down into all the ruin. The Son of God left the eternal throne on high, came down into this world, to remedy our ruin, to bear our guilt, to endure the wrath of God in our stead. All this he did, beloved reader, as the expression of His own tender compassion and love. “He had compassion,” and came to bind up our

wounds ; to pour "the wine and oil" of His own most precious grace into our souls, to heal, restore, and bless us ; to put us into His own position, according to the power which had brought Him into ours ; to make ample provision for all our need ; until that bright and happy moment when we shall be ushered into His presence to go no more out for ever.

The page of inspiration does not present a more touching picture than that which the Master's pencil has drawn for us in "The good Samaritan." It is perfectly beautiful, and beautifully perfect. It is divine. Every expression is wrought with exquisite moral loveliness. "He came where he was"—not half-way, or nine-tenths of the way, but all the way. "And when he saw him," what then ? Did he turn away in disgust at his appearance, and despair of his condition ? Ah ! no ; "he had compassion on him." His tender heart yearned over him. He cared not what he was or who he was, Jew or Gentile, it mattered not ; the streams of tender compassion came gushing up from the deep fountains of a heart that found its own delight in ministering to every form of human need. Nor was this "compassion" a mere movement of sentimentality—an evanescent feeling uttering itself in empty words and then passing away. No ; it was a real, living, acting thing, expressing itself in the most unmistakable



manner—"he went to him." For what? To meet his every need, and not to leave him until he had placed him in a position of security, rest, and blessing.

Nor was this all. Not only did this gracious stranger fully meet the wounded one's present need; but, ere leaving, he dropped these touching words, "Take care of him." How this must have melted the poor man's heart. Such disinterested kindness! And all from a stranger! Yea, from one with whom he would naturally have "no friendly dealings."

Finally, as if to complete the picture, he says, "when I come again." He awakens in the heart, by these last words, "the blessed hope" of seeing him again. What a lovely picture! And yet it is all a divine reality. It is the simple story of our blessed Jesus who, in His tender compassion, looked upon us in our low and utterly hopeless condition, left His eternal dwelling place of light and love, took upon Him the likeness of sinful flesh, was made of a woman, made under the law, lived a spotless life, and fulfilled a perfect ministry down here for three and thirty years, and, finally, died on the cross as a perfect atonement for sin, in order that God might be just and the Justifier of any poor, ungodly, convicted sinner that simply trusts in Jesus.


Yes, dear reader, whoever you are, high or low,

rich or poor, learned or ignorant, Jesus has done all this ; and He is now at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. The One who was nailed to the cross for us, is now on the throne. Eternal justice has wreathed His sacred brow with the chaplet of victory, and that, be it remembered on our behalf. Nor is this all. He has said, "I will come again." Precious words! Say, wouldst thou be glad to see Him? Dost thou know Him as the good Samaritan? Hast thou felt His loving hand binding up thy spiritual wounds? Hast thou known the healing virtues of His oil, and the restoring, invigorating, and cheering influence of His wine! Hast thou heard Him speak those thrilling words, "Take care of him?" If so, then, surely, thou wilt be glad to see His face: thou wilt cherish in thine heart's tender affections the blessed hope of seeing Him as He is, and of being like Him and with Him for ever. The Lord grant it may be so with thee, beloved reader, and then thou wilt be able to appreciate the immense difference between the law and the gospel—between what we ought to do for God, and what God has done for us—between what we are to Him, and what He is to us—between "do and live," and "live and do"—between "the righteousness of the law," and "the righteousness of faith."

*Extracted.*

## “LOOKING OFF UNTO JESUS.”

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 EYES that are weary, and hearts that are sore,  
 Look off unto Jesus, and sorrow no more :  
 The light of His countenance shineth so bright,  
 That on earth, as in heaven, there need be no night.

“ Looking off unto Jesus,” my eyes cannot see  
 The troubles and dangers that throng around me :  
 They cannot be blinded with sorrowful tears,  
 They cannot be shadowed with unbelief-fears.

“ Looking off unto Jesus,” my spirit is blest,—  
 In the world I have turmoil—in Him I have rest :  
 The sea of my life all about me may roar,—  
 When I look unto Jesus, I hear it no more.

“ Looking off unto Jesus,” I go not astray,  
 My eyes are on Him, and He shows me the way ;  
 The path may seem dark, as He leads me along,  
 But following Jesus, I cannot go wrong.

“ Looking off unto Jesus,” my heart cannot fear,—  
 Its trembling is still, when I see Jesus near :  
 For, “ Why are ye troubled ? ” He saith unto me.  
 I know that His power my safeguard will be.

“ Looking off unto Jesus,” oh ! may I be found,  
 Should the waters of Jordan encompass me round :  
 Let them bear me away in His presence to be :—  
 'Tis but seeing Him nearer, whom always I see.

Then, then I shall know the full beauty and grace  
 Of Jesus my Lord, when I stand face to face :  
 I shall know how His love went before me each day,  
 And wonder that ever my eyes turned away !

## “WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

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THE world teems with questions of all kinds, some of greater and some of less degree ; but surely none was ever asked of such stupendous and eternal importance as the one that stands at the head of this paper, “What think ye of Christ?” On your answer, dear reader, does your eternal future, whether of bliss or woe, depend. The One who asked that question was none other than Jesus, the Christ, Son of David, and Son of the living God. Those to whom this searching question was addressed were the proud self-righteous Pharisees, who, all that day had sought to entangle the Lord in His talk. The combined sophistry of Pharisees and Herodians, however, had availed nothing, for it was all exposed and vanquished by the quiet and dignified reply of David’s greater Son, Who bade them “render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s.”

Equally crafty as was the subsequent question of the Sadducees touching marriage, and the resurrection, it was divinely silenced by the wonderful words of Him “who spake as man

never spake." It was while the Pharisees were gathered together, after a second endeavour to tempt the Lord in reference to the great commandment in the law, that Jesus puts this intensely solemn question to them, "What think ye of the Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, David's. He saith unto them, How then doth David, in Spirit, call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then called him Lord, how is he his son?" (Matt. xxii. 42-45). This crucial question proved too much for these blind guides. For, on their answer, everything depended, and many issues were involved. First, if truly David's son, Christ, as of the royal seed, was of course rightly entitled to sit on David's throne. Secondly, David, by his confession of Christ as "my Lord," not only owned that Christ was greater than himself, although He was his son, but also declared in the language of faith his own personal allegiance to Him. Thirdly, he had foretold Christ's exaltation by God to God's right hand. And lastly, he had prophesied of Christ's coming kingdom, as also of His Melchizedek priesthood, and of His future conquests over all His foes, when He should "strike through kings in the day of his wrath" (Ps. cx). No wonder, therefore, was it that these religious hypocrites

made no reply, and in fact, from that day forth, they asked Him no more questions.

Now, as then, the one great question for all of Adam's race is,

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

And so, dear reader, in love to your never-dying soul, I affectionately ask you what personal interest have you in Christ, in His finished work, in His glorious person, and in His unchanging word?

Passing as a lowly stranger through the very world His hands had made, many were the opinions of men as to who He was, and whence He came. Was He merely a man, even as others? Such apparently was the judgment of those in His own country, who spoke of Him as “the carpenter.” If such His occupation, is that all He is to you, dear reader? Were He only such, and nothing more, He would be no Saviour either to you or to me, but would want a Saviour for Himself. Some, evidently impressed by His mighty works, exclaimed, “When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?” Many at the feast, who had heard His words, gladly owned, “Of a truth this is the Prophet,” while others said, “This is the Christ.” Yet, when He told the unbelieving Jews, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am,” they took up stones to cast at Him; but

passing on He fully proved who He was by giving sight to one born blind.

When, later on, He declared before the council that He was both Son of God and Son of man, "the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy, what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death" (Matt. xxvi. 65, 66). Pilate, forced to admit that He was "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews," refused to alter the words he had written; and his wife, who had suffered many things in a dream, sent her husband a warning message, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man." Strange to say, yet true is it, that even demons (for whom is no salvation), were also compelled to own that Jesus was "the Son of the Most High God." But what sayest thou, dear reader? What is Christ to thee?

Alas! alas! so little did the world think of Him that they preferred Barabbas, the murderer, to the lowly Nazarene, who "went about doing good," "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Yet, spite of those who saw no beauty in Jesus, every gracious act of His perfect life, every precious word that fell from His sinless lips, were the daily proofs of who He was, "the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Thus does the apostle John, in his Gospel,

speak of Him, whilst the Baptist takes up the glorious strain, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" adding those golden words, "And I saw, and bare record that [this is the Son of God." Andrew tells Simon his brother, "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." Nathaniel, overwhelmed by the fact that, before Philip called him, he had been seen, whilst under the fig tree, by those eyes of love, now gladly adds his testimony, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel" (John i.).

Such striking witness to Christ's person is grand and glorious. But, again I say, What is Jesus to thee, dear reader? Yea, *what thinkest thou of Christ?* Do you, like Nicodemus (at first), only recognise Him as a "Teacher sent from God?" Or do you, as a poor, lost and guilty sinner, know and realise your urgent need of Him as your own personal Saviour? Can you say, like the woman at Sychar's well, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ?" Or is He still a stranger to you? Can you say from your heart, like Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure that thou art the Holy One of God"?

Have you ever, like the dying robber, truly judged yourself for a life spent in sin, so that,



like him, you "fear God," not merely in the sense that you are already "condemned," but it may be that, even now, you are only reaping "the due reward of your deeds?" But what did even that guilty malefactor think of Christ? Listen to his dying testimony, "This man hath done nothing amiss." "Lord, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom." Truly, as in those solemn hours at Calvary, "Wisdom is justified of all her children." Swift was the answer from the lips of David's greater Son, "Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke xxii.). But oh! how the darkness thickened, as the divine Sin-bearer bowed His blessed head under the awful storm of judgment, and the bitter cry came from His breaking heart, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "Deep answered unto deep, at the noise of God's waterspouts," till that will-less Man, "obedient unto death, having cried out with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit, and having said thus, he gave up the ghost." And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he sweetly confesses, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mark xv. 39).

Perchance, like Isaiah, you who now read these lines may realise your sinful state in the sight of God, and so, with the prophet, cry out, in truth of

heart, "Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips." Then will mercy swiftly bless you, and you will prove, as countless millions have proved before, the significance of those blessed words, "Thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged" (Isa. vi.). But the really great question for us all (whether saint or sinner), is not so much what we may think of Christ, but rather, What does God think of Him?

As to Christ's person, the witness of God is ever the same, whether at His baptism, or on the Mount of Transfiguration. For on both occasions we are privileged to hear the Father's voice declaring from the glory His ineffable delight in Jesus. "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;" save that, on the holy Mount, there is the added testimony, "Hear ye him." Again, in answer to the cry of that dependent Man, "Father, glorify thy name," the same voice comes from heaven, "I have both glorified it (at the grave of Lazarus), and will glorify it again" (in the resurrection of Christ). Hence God's perfect delight and satisfaction in Christ's perfect work (whereby a perfect salvation is secured for every believer,) has its perfect proof in resurrection, for therein God has set His seal to all that Christ has done, and has not only raised Him up from among the dead, but has also glorified for ever the One who so perfectly glorified Him on earth. Yes,

God is eternally satisfied with Jesus, both in life and in death, yea, in all His works, and words, and ways, and the place He now occupies upon the Father's throne is the everlasting proof to angels, men, and Satan, of what God thinks of Christ.

Reader, once again then let me ask,

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

And may your answer be, “He is the chiefest among ten thousand, yea, he is altogether lovely.” God grant it may be so, for Christ's sake! s.t.

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## LOST IN THE DARK

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“**I** AM lost,” cried a traveller through Cornwall, on a dark and stormy night! The cry was loud: but it was the cry of despair. No light was to be seen, no voice to be heard! The passenger had missed his path to Bude.

Suddenly a voice replied: “Stop, man, stop where you are! one more step forward and you are lost, lost!” and while the voice continued to say “Stop,” a light advanced, though the one holding the lamp was still enveloped in the thick of darkness. The trembling and strayed traveller soon discovered by the rays of the advancing light, that he was on the brink of a precipice, and, horror-stricken, shut his eyes, while the lamp-man reached in time to seize him

by his arm, and, pulling him away from the danger, he guided the saved traveller on the right way to Bude.

Reader! you are a lost sinner : you may or may not know that you are lost. If you do not know that you are *lost*, I desire to awaken you to the sense of your dangerous condition, that you may see that you are at the brink of the lake of fire, the second death. If you know that you are lost, I beg you to listen to "the voice of the Son of God," who is the *light* and the *life of men* : the light which enlightens every man, and the life of the believer. Hear His words, "He that heareth my word and believeth him that sent me hath eternal life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."

Reader, stop where you are—let Jesus Christ give you light to see the right way of salvation : let Him be your life and power to bring you in the way. "He is the way, the truth, and the life ;" and He will not only show you the way, but as your God and Saviour He will work in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure. Without faith in His work on the cross your doom is the lake of fire, with the devil and his angels ; but, believing Him as your Substitute there and your righteousness on high, your eternal abode shall be in the Father's house with Christ.

Believe then, now, and live.

G.F.

## FAITH AND FORGIVENESS

ACTS X. 43

“**T**o him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts. x. 43).

On the occasion of one of our prayer-meetings in London, I observed, at the close, two young women, seated by themselves in a corner of the room, apparently not inclined to move, although the others were all going away. I had seen them before. They were troubled about their souls. They had not peace. I was glad to see them remaining for a quiet word with myself about their state of mind.

I asked them if they were still in trouble. They said they were. “How long have you been in trouble about your souls?”

“Five or six weeks,” they replied.

“Now tell me, are you really in earnest about your soul’s salvation?”

“Oh, yes!” There was no question about that. It was the one thing their hearts were seeking after.

“Well, tell me, do you really, as lost sinners, believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for you as such?”

“Oh, yes.” They at once acknowledged that they believed that Jesus Christ died for them.

Referring them to the passage at the head of this tract, I asked them if they believed that Christ finished the work He came to do on behalf of lost sinners, and for the glory of God. Yes, they had no doubt on that point. Christ, raised up from the dead, proves the completeness of His work.

“Now, put your finger on that verse,” I said. “Have you got your finger on it?” Their eyes were gazing on the text. “What does it say? ‘Whosoever believeth in him shall receive’—receive what? the promise of forgiveness at some future time? No, but ‘whosoever believeth shall receive remission of sins.’ Does God speak the truth or not? What then does He say? You confess that you believe that Jesus died and rose again. Well, then, what does Peter say in this verse? ‘Whosoever believeth’—but believeth what?—‘that Jesus died and rose again,’ having finished the work needed for me, a sinner, God raised Him up. If I believe that, what do I receive? Not merely heaven at last, but present forgiveness. I receive a *present forgiveness*. Whosoever believeth shall receive—God says it—mark the word receive.”

Let me speak to souls who may be in a condition similar to that of these two young persons. Can you say it is true? Or is it false? You say it is true. Well, but what is true? That we

receive remission of sins. Glory be to God, that is faith in the word of the living God. Now, tell me, are you looking to your own feelings, or to the word of God?

The eyes of these young women were turned away from themselves, and fixed on the sure word of God. One of them said to me, "I can see it clearly now." The other said, "If I could hear God saying it, I would believe." "Oh, come now," I said, "Is not the written word more certain, if possible, than the spoken word? You might say, at some future day, I thought I heard it, but perhaps I was mistaken. Oh, would you not prefer the written word? You can go back to it again and again."

"I think I would," she said.

There is the victory, dear reader—to receive the truth without hesitation. But, again, let me ask, what is the truth on this important point? That, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we receive—what? The REMISSION OF OUR SINS. When? When we believe the testimony of God. Oh, beloved friends, if God be true, follow their simple example. For six weeks, these girls were going from one meeting to another, running hither and thither, trying to find peace, and could not; but the moment their eye was directed to Christ, and His finished work—the moment their souls received God's word as true, they knew that

they had received remission of sins. Receiving the testimony of God about Jesus, and receiving the remission of our sins, are inseparably connected together in Scripture, and why should we seek to separate them, to our own trouble and distress of mind?

And now, beloved reader, Has your eye and your heart turned to Christ? Is it true that Christ died for sinners? If I be a sinner, has He died for me? Yes! blessed be His name! God says I am a sinner. But what does that entitle me to? I am called to rest my soul on the finished work of Christ. Oh, the boundless grace which flows from the heart of God through that channel into my soul—into every soul that believes. “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” As a sinner, then, I believe this. It is true, is it not? Who questions its reality? Did not Jesus die on the cross for sinners? The word of God plainly states it; but it also states, that He who died for sinners rose again for their justification; and also, that “whosoever believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.” Oh, then, as lost, ruined, hell-deserving sinners, believe God’s testimony about Jesus, His finished work, and His precious grace to you in the full remission of all your sins, and be happy in His great salvation.

Do *you* now see, and can *you* now say, my



friend, that Jesus died for you? Do you believe that He died and rose again, that you might be pardoned and justified before God? May the Lord lead you now in your heart to look to Him, believing this precious truth. The look of faith brings you the full, perfect, and everlasting forgiveness of all your sins. What God hath thus joined together, as to faith and forgiveness, let no man put asunder. May God enable you to believe—to believe now in Him who died and rose again. Christ's precious blood alone cleanseth from all sin, and eternal life can only be received from the risen, living Christ in glory. May you now receive the truth about Him without doubting, and give to God all the glory.

*(Extracted)*

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## THE RECEIPT

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I WAS standing with a commercial gentleman in his office, conversing with him about his eternal prospects. He was one who had manifested some anxiety as to the great question of his soul's salvation, and I had frequently spoken to him before. On the occasion to which I now refer, we were speaking about the ground of a sinner's peace in the presence of God. There were some files hanging up in a corner of the

office, and pointing to them, I said, "What have you got upon those files?" "Receipts," said he. "Well," I said, "Are you anxious about the amount of these various bills?" "Not in the least," he replied, "They are all receipted and stamped." "Are you afraid," I continued, "lest those persons from whom you received the bills should come down upon you for the amount?" "By on means. They are all legally settled, and do not cost me a single thought."

"Now, then," said I, laying my hand upon his shoulder, "will you tell me what is God's receipt to a believer for all that we as sinners ever owed to Him as a righteous Judge?" He paused to consider, and then replied, "I suppose it is the grace of God in the heart." "Nay; that would never do. God's grace in my heart is no receipt for all I ever owed Him." My friend paused again, and then said, "It must be the knowledge of salvation." "No; you have not laid hold of it yet. You cannot but see the difference between your knowledge that these bills are paid, and the receipts which you have on your file. You might know they were paid, and yet, if you had no receipt, your mind would not be at ease." "Well," said he, "it must be faith." "Not right yet," said I. "Faith is no receipt." At length, feeling assured he had the true answer, he exclaimed, "It is the blood of Christ." He seemed a good

deal disappointed when I still demurred, and quite gave up the attempt at further reply.

“Now,” said I, “it is most blessedly true that the blood of Christ has paid the debt which I, as a guilty sinner, owed to divine justice; yet you must admit there is a difference between the payment of debt and the receipt. For even though you had seen the full amount paid down, yet until you were in possession of the receipt, your mind would not be at ease, inasmuch as there was no legal settlement of the transaction. You must have a receipt. What, therefore, is God’s receipt for that heavy debt which we owed Him? Blessed be His name, it is a risen Christ, at the right hand of the majesty in the heavens. The death of Christ paid my debt, His resurrection is a receipt in full, signed and sealed by the hand of eternal justice. Jesus ‘was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification’ (Rom. iv. 24, 25). Hence, the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ owes not a fraction to divine justice, on the score of guilt, but he owes an eternity of worship to divine love, on the score of free pardon, and complete justification. The blood of Christ has blotted out his heavy debit; and he has a risen Christ to his credit.”

*Extracted.*

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## WHAT SHALL THE END BE?

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“THE END OF ALL FLESH IS COME BEFORE ME.”

THESE solemn words have a voice to us all ; and so heart-searching a question demands a thoughtful reply.

Many who have started well, as we say, have, alas, ended badly, and many a bad beginning has had a good ending, of which scripture gives innumerable proofs. All of us, naturally, prefer our own will, and like to have our own way ; and the words of Isaiah are sadly true, “We have turned every one to his own way” (Isa. liii. 6). Equally true are Solomon’s words, “There is a way which seemeth right unto a man ; but the end thereof [are] the ways of death” (Prov. xiv. 12). The only way, however, that leads to life is a narrow way, and few there be that find it ; but the broad road leads to destruction ; and millions are treading it to-day. It was just when man was left to take his own way, unchecked, that God looked down from heaven, and beholding that “all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth,” said unto Noah, “The end of all flesh is come before me” (Gen. vi. 12, 13). Hence the mighty waters of the deluge swept over this

sin-stained earth, and the one and only way of salvation was found inside the ark.

Noah, the preacher of righteousness, was, no doubt, constantly proclaiming what *the end* of the then world would be; but how many believed it?

“ONCE, IN THE END OF THE WORLD HATH HE  
APPEARED.”

After man's trial had lasted four thousand years, and Jew and Gentile had alike “sinned and come short of the glory of God,” the Judge of all the earth pronounced His solemn verdict, and the whole world was brought in “*guilty before God.*” The first advent of the Christ of God, which revealed everything in its true character, brought from the lips of Him “who spake as never man spake,” these portentous words, “Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me” (John xii. 32). Hence, “once in *the end* of the age, hath he (Christ) appeared for the putting away of sin by the sacrifice of himself.” Just as the flood was the end of man judicially, so is the cross of Christ the end of man morally, before God. Calvary's altar bears testimony to the double fact of man's hopeless ruin, and God's super-abounding grace. There, the question of sin, root and branch, was, once and for ever, perfectly and divinely settled by the

sacrifice of Christ ; and the blood which flowed from the wounded side of that divine Victim has made a complete atonement for it, so that God, who is just, is enabled righteously to justify the ungodly one who believes in Jesus. That sinless Man has borne the judgment due to sin ; and the believer is not only justified and set free, but "his faith is counted for righteousness."

None the less, however, is it true and certain that God's judgment of the world, as the scene of His Son's murder, remains unchanged ; and ere long, that judgment will be fully executed on every unbeliever, who will have to answer before God for all his sins.

"WHAT SHALL THE END BE ?"

"What shall *the end* be of them that obey not the gospel of God ? And, if the righteous be saved with difficulty, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear" (1 Pet. iv. 17, 18)? Such is Peter's solemn question to all who have no interest in Christ, and who are still in their sins. If this should be your case, dear reader, would it not be wise for you now to pause and seriously ponder over God's answer to this very question sent to you through His servant Paul? The latter emphatically declares that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey

not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power" (2 Thess. i.). Oh, the terrible end of all those who obey not the gospel, who either refuse to believe or neglect the glad tidings of God's salvation ! These shall incur His solemn judgment, and be banished everlastingly from His presence, to be with the devil and his angels in the lake of fire.

Paul further speaks of those (Phil. iii. 18, 19), who, though found in the company of true believers, are yet referred to as "enemies of the cross of Christ," and are thus mere lifeless professors. And what is their *end*? Let the apostle's warning words ring in our ears, "Whose *end* is destruction ; whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame ; who mind earthly things."

Will such be your *end*, dear reader? Whether you are numbered among the utterly ungodly, or the lifeless professors, matters but little, your end is the same ; it is "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," for, if an unbeliever, the road you are now on is "the broad way that leadeth to destruction."

Peter, in both his Epistles, treats largely of everything connected with the earth, from its creation to its dissolution, and he solemnly reminds his fellow-believers of God's terrible judgments, in these warning words, "The end of all things is at

hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer" (1 Pet. iv. 7). As the end draws near, and the dark clouds of infidelity and superstition are gathering thick and fast, so much the more should every child of God be personally sober in spirit, and watch unto prayer. Yes, "the bright and morning star" will soon appear, and the golden morning of the first resurrection draweth nigh, when all the saints of God, raised and changed, shall go up together, to meet the Lord in the air. Blessed and holy are all such, and the end of their sojourn on earth is but the beginning of glory above.

But oh! what a terribly solemn contrast to all this is the *end* of the wicked! Death, in all its terrors, lies before every unbeliever, and after death the judgment, and after judgment, the lake of fire, with all its ceaseless sorrow! Whosoever thou art that readest these lines, tell me, *What shall thine end be?*

S.T.

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## "AND THEN?"

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A YOUNG man came to an aged Professor of a distinguished continental University, with a face beaming with delight, and informed him that the long and fondly cherished desire of his heart was at length fulfilled—his parents having given their consent to his studying the profession of the Law.

As the University presided over by his friend



was a distinguished one, he had repaired to its Law school, and was resolved to spare no labour or expense in getting through his studies as quickly and ably as possible. In this strain he continued for some time; and when he paused, the old man, who had been listening to him with great patience and kindness, gently said, "Well! and when you have finished your career of study, what do you mean to do then?" "Then I shall take my degree," answered the young man. "And then?" asked his venerable friend. "And then," continued the youth, "I shall have a number of difficult and knotty cases to manage: shall attract notice by my eloquence, and wit, and acuteness, and win a great reputation." "And then?" repeated the holy man. "And then!" replied the youth, "Why then, there cannot be a question I shall be promoted to some high office in the state, and I shall become rich." "And then?" "And then," pursued the young lawyer, "then I shall live comfortably and honourably in wealth and respect, and look forward to a quiet and happy old age." "And then?" "And then," said the youth, "and then—and then—and then I shall die." Here his venerable listener lifted up his voice, and again asked with solemnity and emphasis, "And *then?*" Whereupon the aspiring student made no answer, but cast down his head, and in silence and thoughtfulness retired.

The last "*And then?*" had pierced his heart like a sword—had darted like a flash of lightning into his soul, and he could not dislodge the impression. The result was, the entire change of his mind and course of life. Abandoning the study of the Law, he expended the remainder of his days in the labours of a minister of Christ.

*Extracted.*

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“ YOU ”

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ONLY those who are lost need a Saviour. Men in a sinking ship need salvation. If someone is in the top storey of a house, the staircase of which is on fire, the fire-escape is needed. A drowning man needs a life-belt. One under sentence of death needs a pardon. The life-boat, the fire-escape, the life-belt, and the reprieve are of no use to one who is in perfect safety. But if a man in danger neglects to use these things, he will perish.

We do not talk about his need of a meal to the man on the mast of a ship that is fast going to pieces on the rocks ; nor to the man in the river of some arrangement by which he can be provided with a new suit of clothes ! Nor again, do we explain the details of some old-age pension scheme to the man who is to be hanged next morning. These men need salvation first, other

things, however important in themselves, come afterwards.

Man is a sinner, and as a sinner, he is under the wrath of God, for God hates and must punish sin. "Sin is lawlessness," *i.e.* doing my own will and not God's. God is holy and He cannot pass over sin; His very nature forbids it. Are not you a sinner? For what man or woman is there that "doeth good and sinneth not?" As God's word declares, "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." It is not here a question as to how much you have sinned. You are not the judge of that. God says, "The thought of foolishness is sin," and can you say you do not *come short of God's glory?*

You set your mind, which God formed for a nobler purpose, to an unworthy use. That is, your will leads you to use your mind in a way that God did not intend you to use it. Perhaps, you say, you cannot help it. Well, does not this reveal your need of a Saviour, who came to seek and save the lost? And are you not *lost?* You cannot come up to God's requirements. A tree is known by its fruit; not by the quantity but by the sort it bears. You are a sinner, and "the soul that sinneth, it shall die." "The wages of sin is death." But there is life in the Saviour, for whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish but have *everlasting life.*

Settle this question first. It is the most important question of your life. Are not all other matters insignificant and unimportant in comparison with this great question ?

Jesus came from God to seek and to save the *lost*, and God has manifested *His* love in that He sent His Son that we might live through Him, who were sinners and ready to die. Oh, what a proof of the love of God ! “God commendeth His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” You and I had no claim on God. Justice demanded that we should be punished for our sins. You have an immortal, a never-dying, soul, and if you came under the judgment of God you must continue in a state of everlasting torment, banished from God, and this for ever. The Lord is long suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. God is just and He cannot pass over sin. So the full punishment of sin fell on Christ for all who believe, and God can now righteously save if you come pleading the sacrifice of Christ, that infinite work of atonement on the cross, when He who know no sin, was there made sin, that we might become God’s righteousness in Him. Jesus went down into death, but He was God, and death could not hold Him. Nor had He any spot or stain of sin in Him to keep Him in death, as you have. But He suffered the full

penalty on the cross, and now God is "just and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." God saves you on the ground of faith in Jesus, Who suffered for sins, the Just for unjust, to bring us to God. Oh, will you not confide in His word and "believe the love that God hath toward us?" If you do not believe, you make God a liar, by not believing the record that God hath given concerning His Son (1 John v. 10). Moreover, you condemn yourself (John iii. 18) and put yourself outside that safe place that God sets before you in Christ.

This is God's way of saving, and it is the only way of being saved. Don't trifle with anything else. Flee for your life, look not behind you. Flee to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. To-day is a day of delusion and sham, the devil is blinding men's minds to the truth, and men are only too willing to be blinded and to believe the devil's lies. But God's salvation is according to His truth, the truth as to man's condition and God's nature—for God is the God of truth. The truth is, that, without Christ you are lost and perishing, that God is righteous and cannot pass over sin; that God is love, that He loves you and gave Christ to die for you.

"God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," and, as though God did beseech, so would

we as Christ's ambassadors now entreat *you* to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. v. 20). "Unto you is the word of this salvation sent." "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation" (Heb. ii. 3)?

Then, may you now hear, believe, and live. Read John iii., Romans v., and Romans viii.

A. E. R.

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## DIVINE LOVE

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(EZEKIEL XLVII. 1—5)

**T**RULY, Lord, Thy love surpasseth  
 All that tongue can tell,  
 'Tis a deep that knows no sounding,  
 Yet I know it well ;  
 None, indeed, can ever measure  
 All its breadth, or height ;  
 God Himself alone can gauge it,  
 Who's both "love" and "light."  
 In its precious healing waters,  
*Ankle-deep* I trod,  
 Learning at the cross of Jesus  
 How I'm brought to God ;  
 Oh, what grace ! 'twas from the altar,  
 Came those waters sweet,  
 Flowing still from God's own temple,  
 Bathed my weary feet.  
 Passing onward, I discovered  
 Depths unknown before,  
 Till at length my *knees* were covered,  
 On that holy shore ;  
 Not alone the love that saved me,  
 My affections moved,  
 But *Himself*, the Lord of glory,  
 Was the One who loved.

Strengthened by His deep affection,  
Loudly did I sing,  
Till those waters, ever rising,  
Round my *loins* did cling ;  
Buoyed me up with holy power,  
Till nought else I saw  
But the Man in yonder glory,  
Who my judgment bore.

As I gazed, my feet were lifted,  
Far above the shore,  
Borne upon love's mighty river,  
Now I could explore ;  
Swimming freely in its waters,  
God's own peace was mine,  
Liberty, and rest, and gladness,  
Joys that are divine.

Just beyond, there lay the Ocean,  
Boundless, deep, and free ;  
Swiftly to it was I swimming,  
God's Eternity :  
As I floated on its bosom,  
Every wave was love,  
Circled in its mighty waters,  
Carried up above.

In my Father's heavenly mansions,  
Shall my soul expand,  
No more *ankle-deep* my knowledge  
Of the love that planned ;  
Wondrous love that sought and found me,  
Led me all the way,  
There I'll prove its *ocean* fulness,  
Through God's endless day.

S.T.

