

THE
SALVATION OF GOD.

THE
SALVATION OF GOD
IS SENT UNTO THE GENTILES
AND THEY WILL
HEAR IT.

Acts xxviii. 28.

—♦♦♦♦♦—

LONDON :
W. H. BROOM, 25 PATERNOSTER SQUARE.
1881.

INDEX.

	PAGE
"Come," or "Depart"	1
A Liberated Soul.. .. .	5
"Why, it's as Plain as the Fire in the Grate" ..	7
Maggie; or, God's "Hath"	10
"Do You Know the Value of the Blood of Christ?"	14
"I shall be Clothed in <i>His</i> White"	17
Mary L——; or, The Pierced Side	20
Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ	22
"If I Die without Absolution, I shall be Lost!" ..	23
Glory, the Fountain, and the Lake of Fire	25
"Ye may Know"	33
"A Beautiful Place"	38
Christ Alone	40
"For the Last Time"	43
Why will ye die?	46
"Wondrous Blessing"	48
"I will Fear no Evil"	49
Conversion to God	52
"There were Two"	54
Thy Sins are Forgiven	56
"God is Light, and God is Love"	61
An Echo	64
An Old Professor Saved.. .. .	65
A Striking Difference	67
"God our Saviour"	70
Is God New?	73
"Ten Minutes to Three"	76
Salvation is of the Lord	79
"The Man in the Middle: He Died for Me" ..	81
A Word for Sceptics	84

INDEX.

	PAGE
Happy and Comfortable	87
The Cross and the Glory	89
"Perfect Love Casteth out Fear"	93
What a Contrast!	95
"Father, Read the Third Chapter of John"	97
Man's Ruin, and God's Remedy	100
Jesus, the Sinner's Friend	102
Power in the Word	105
"Not my Body, but my Soul!"	108
State and Actions	110
An Unclouded Sunset	113
They meet with Darkness in the Day-time.. .. .	115
"The Quaint Old Picture"	117
"Here we are, like Birds of Passage"	123
The First Recorded Conversion of a Coloured Man	124
"Go Thou and Do Likewise"	129
Satisfied—Unsatisfied—Which?	132
God Says you have it	134
"Thou shalt be Saved"	137
"The Holy Scriptures"	140
"Be ye therefore Ready"	145
"This Night"	148
A Happy Departure	150
A Faithful Saying, Worthy of Acceptation.. .. .	154
To See Jesus!	156
An Appeal.. .. .	160
"I have been Making a Saviour of my Good Works"	161
"Isn't it Easy?"	163
"How wilt Thou do in the Swelling of Jordan?"	166
"Thanks ; I do not Appreciate It"	170
Two Trains.. .. .	172
"God Gave"	174
"You have Two Strings to your Bow"	177
"Specially Designed to Drive Dull Care away"	180
The God who Paid the Debt	183
One of God's Chosen Ones	186
Lost! Lost!	188
Difference	189

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“COME” OR “DEPART.”

“TO-DAY” OR “TO-MORROW.”

TO-DAY Jesus is saying, “Come;” to-morrow He will say, “Depart.” To-day is the day of salvation; to-morrow will be the day of judgment. To-day Jesus lets fall from His gracious, tender, loving lips, into the ear of faith, the invitation, “Come;” to-morrow He will thunder in the guilty ear of unbelief the terrible word “Depart.”

To-day the three persons of the ever-blessed Godhead are inviting poor sinners to come and get cleansing, rest, and life. In Isaiah i. 18, GOD says, “Come NOW, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” In this verse God Himself is inviting sin-stained sinners to come to Him, where they are, as they are, and just now, with the blessed promise that they shall be cleansed from all their scarlet and crimson-dyed stains, and be made as white as the pure snow-flakes on a winter’s day. But it is “NOW” that God invites.

In Matt. xi. 28, JESUS says, “Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give *you* rest.” In this lovely verse, which is

clustered with blessing, Jesus is inviting restless wanderers after rest to come to Himself and get it. He does not invite you to *come* to so-called church, chapel, or meeting-room to get rest, or what would become of the thousands of bed-ridden ones? No; He invites you to come to Himself, a living, loving Person. And those whom He invites to come are those who are labouring to do the best that they can; such He would have know that He has laboured in the fires of a holy God's wrath against sin, and said, ere He left the awful scene, "It is finished;" then let the labouring ones trust His finished work and get rest. But He also invites to Himself the "heavy-laden," with the guilty conscience of unforgiven sin; such He would have know that He bore our sins in His own body on the tree, and has put them away for ever with His own precious blood, and He would fain give them rest from the intolerable load of a guilty, unpurged conscience.

What an unspeakable mercy, that in the midst of this scene of unrest, where there is naught on earth to rest upon, there is One who is inviting us in the most winning accents to come to Himself and have rest. Poor anxious one, He desires that you should say at His feet what many thousands there can truthfully say—

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

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

But it is "NOW" that Jesus invites.

In Rev. xxii. 17 it is the SPIRIT that invites : "And the Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." How exceedingly sweet and welcome it is to find that, just ere the canon of inspiration closes, the Holy Spirit joins in the cry of the Father and the Son, for sinners who are dead in trespasses and sins, to come and "take the water of life freely." "Ho, *every one* that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. lv. 1.) The Holy Spirit's invitation is not only to the *thirsty*, but to "*every one* that thirsteth ;" it is to whosoever, and whosoever means you, me, and anybody and everybody.

In Rev. xxi. 6, God says, "I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Here we have God as a *Giver*; giving to the *thirsty*, giving the *water of life*, and giving *freely* ; but whilst the Holy Spirit invites and God gives, our responsibility is to "take ;" and if we do not take we must perish everlastingly in the lake of fire.

We have now seen in the Scriptures that we have glanced at, that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, all join in inviting poor anxious souls to "COME," "NOW," "TO-DAY," with the blessed assurance that whosoever *comes* will be sure to get present and everlasting cleansing, rest, and life.

Do you ask, "How am I to come?" I answer, "The moment you own that you are a hopeless, helpless, and hell-deserving sinner in the presence of God, at the feet of Jesus, bowing to the testi-

mony of the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, that moment you have come, and it is yours to know that you *are* cleansed, and that you *have* rest and life."

Now, the devil will allow you to believe all that we have said, only he will say that "to-morrow" is time enough to come. To-morrow is death, the grave, the judgment, eternity, too late, when, instead of hearing God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost say "Come," you must hear the awful word "Depart."

To-day Jesus is saying, "Come unto Me;" to-morrow He will say, "Depart from Me." If He were to say, "Depart into the righteously-deserved lake of fire" it would be intolerable enough; but when He shall say, "Depart *from Me*," how inconceivably awful it will be to have to depart from the One who once as a Saviour-God said, "Come unto Me," but who will then as an inflexible Judge-God say, "Depart from Me!"

To-day as a Saviour-God He is *inviting* you to Himself; to-morrow as a Judge-God He will be *commanding* you from Himself!

But not only will He say to-morrow "Depart from Me," but He will add the terrible words "*ye cursed*," and you will go away out of His presence with the curse branded indelibly upon your forehead.

To-day He desires your blessing; but if you refuse to be blest, to-morrow He must curse you.

But He has yet more words to add to the already dreadful sentence, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, *into everlasting fire*," and everlasting fire not prepared for us, but "prepared for the devil and his angels," but to be shared with them by those who have deliberately preferred the lie of the devil to the truth of God.

Oh, come to Jesus now, to-day, and "eternal life" shall be your portion; but if you put it off until to-morrow "everlasting punishment" will be your portion.

To-day you may have "rest" and "eternal life" in Christ; but if you refuse to accept His invitation, then the awful to-morrow will find you in "everlasting fire" and "everlasting punishment."

To-day Jesus is saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

To-morrow He will say, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Which is it to be, "COME," or "DEPART;" "TO-DAY," or "TO-MORROW"? H. M. H.

A LIBERATED SOUL.

(A NOTE OF PRAISE FROM THE STATE OF MAINE, U.S.A.)

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,—We have been very anxious to hear from you since you were here and returned home. Thank the Lord, through His mercy and grace He has led me (though through grievous falls) to look away from this wretched vile heart up to the perfect One—Christ. I now see what before I only saw intellectually, and did not take hold of it in its simplicity. How simple all is when we look to the cross, and by faith see what is true there, and then look up to the glory and see what is true as to that. The whole thing is a work outside of me, and it does not require any of my help. It is all of grace; the truth is in Christ, not in me. Free from the law! "No condemnation to them in Christ Jesus."

And now it is to be occupied with Him, to seek His things—"walk in the Spirit," done with self. What a relief, and yet how simple! Why? Because Christ has done it all. He was nailed to the cross for me; His blood cleanseth from all sin, and God looks upon the blood and is satisfied, and so am I. Christ died, and so have I. His death is mine (see Col. ii. 20); but "He was raised by the glory of the Father," and I am "risen with Him." (Col. iii. 1.) "He is my life;" "My life is hid with Christ in God." I am just nothing, but I know One who satisfies the heart of God, and He is mine. "Accepted in the Beloved," "His love, His glory, His joy, His rejection down here, are mine; and I am loved by the Father with the same love as He is loved. The Father loves me as He loves His Son (see John. xvii. 23), and I shall be like Him. Oh, it seems almost too much to be true! And it is if I look within. But the truth is in Him, so I look there where "the truth" is. *To be happy now is to be occupied with Him.* God leads us to despair in ourselves as to all hope of improvement or being better. Oh, how I have struggled to be better, and only got worse, and been discouraged time after time, and did not know that *that* was what God was leading me to! But God's infinite grace has provided a perfect Christ, and has He not glorified God? has He not removed everything that barred me from God? and is not God perfectly righteous in justifying every one who comes to Him by Jesus? and now what do I have since God has raised Him up? Why, I have Himself, the very One who delights the heart of God, and I am "as He is." (Read carefully 1 John iv. 17.) What! such a vile wretch as I am? Yes, because *the cross is the end of me* (see

Gal. ii. 20), and I have life in Him, "Made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 21.) Oh, what will it be to be blameless there *with Him*, and that too, not because of any merit or worthiness of mine, but all of Him! And it soon will be. How rapidly all things are preparing for the change when we look at them as taught in the Word; if we are at His feet we shall know His mind. Pray for me, dear brother, that I may keep at His feet and know His mind as to His things, and keep my eyes up there.

I am, yours affectionately, * * *

"WHY IT'S AS PLAIN AS THE FIRE IN THE GRATE."

BEING asked to visit an aged woman who was, as I was told, really anxious about her soul, I did so. She was at the time suffering from bronchitis, but when I called was up, and sitting by the fire in her bedroom. Taking a seat by her side, after a few words as to her body, I said I had heard she was anxious about her soul, and troubled as to her sins. This she said was indeed true, and long had she known the burden. Finding the work of conviction had been already wrought in her, and that she took her place before God as a guilty sinner bowing to the truth that "the wages of sin is death," I opened my Bible, and read Rom. v. 8: "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," and then turned to 1 Cor. xv., and read the first four verses, showing her that this was the gospel that

the apostle preached to the Corinthians, which he says they received, in which they stood, and by which they were saved. "How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." "Now," I said, "Mrs. B——, these glad tidings are for you, that Christ died for *your* sins, and was raised again for your justification." She assented, and I pointed her to what God said, that receiving this, she was saved. She replied, "I do believe, sir, believe that Jesus died for me ; but," putting her hand to her heart, "oh, this burden, it isn't gone, sir !" "Now, Mrs. B——," I said, "you tell me you believe the Lord Jesus died for your sins, and moreover God says in His word, 'Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree' (1 Peter ii. 24), will you tell me where the Lord Jesus Christ is to-day ?" She looked up in my face, and said, "Why, in heaven, sir."

"Then, Mrs. B——, has the Lord Jesus Christ taken your sins to heaven ? for you tell me you believe, and God says, He died for your sins." After a pause she again looked me in the face, saying, "No, sir, He couldn't take my sins to heaven, for God couldn't have sin in heaven." I said, "No, that is certain, Mrs. B——, God cannot have sin in His presence, and yet His word says, 'Christ died for our sins,' and that 'He appears now in the presence of God for us.' He must therefore be there without sin, and if He is there without our sins, must He not have first put them away ?"


And reading Heb. i. 3: "Who being the brightness of His glory . . . when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Again I said,

“Mrs. B——, has the Lord Jesus Christ taken your sins to heaven?” and now it was evident that God was letting the light of His word into her soul. Her eyes filled with tears, and looking up she said, “Oh, no! Christ could not take my sins to heaven, and He is in heaven; then my sins are gone. Oh, thank God, I never saw it before. Why, sir,” looking me in the face, “it’s as plain as the fire in the grate. God couldn’t have my sins in heaven, and Christ is in heaven; then my sins *must* be gone.” After a little further conversation I said, “Well, Mrs. B——, and how about the burden now?” “Oh, sir,” she said, “it is gone! thank God, it is gone. Why it is as plain as the fire in the grate, Christ couldn’t take my sins to heaven.” We then knelt down and thanked God together that He had by His Spirit and word taught her, not only that she was a poor, guilty sinner, but that God had commended His love to her as such, “Christ having died for her sins,” and so glorifying God in putting them away, that now He was in heaven without her sins, and that believing in Him she had the free, full, and everlasting forgiveness of them, and “being justified by faith had peace with God,” and could “rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

My dear reader, how is it with you? Have you taken your place as a lost sinner before a holy sin-hating God, receiving from Him “the forgiveness of sins”? If not, and you pass into eternity without it, solemnly would I say it to you, your sins must for ever shut you out from His holy presence; for, as the dear woman of whom I have written said, God could not have your sins in heaven. Then, with whom and where will you spend eternity?

H. S. G.

MAGGIE; OR, GOD'S "HATH."

HE subject of this narrative, Maggie S—, was growing a tall girl, and becoming a comfort to her mother. Her delight was to render all the help she could in her quiet way. She spent much time at home with her, as she had no sisters and only one brother, who was seldom there, having lived away for some time. Her father had a small farm, which kept them very comfortably. When old enough, her parents thought it advisable to send her to a boarding-school.

During one term she had a slight attack of measles, and it was noticed on her return home for the winter holidays that she was not so cheerful and bright as usual, but would lie on the sofa in a listless way, while a mother's eye could detect the pallor that, almost imperceptibly, was creeping over those cheeks, once so rosy with a healthy flush. She was told she need not go to school again if she did not feel well; but there were *marks* at stake, and Maggie did not want to lose them.

However, very soon after her leaving home they wrote her to come back. A young friend had come to the farm on a visit, and she had been promised to be sent for whenever she did come. Even the few days had told upon her; she was looking pale and ill. A doctor was consulted, as her parents were quite anxious about her; but he thought lightly of it. Finding her growing weaker, Mrs. S— wrote to her own brother, who came up, and thinking the sea-side place at which he

lived would be likely to do her good, he persuaded his sister to bring her daughter down.

Maggie was seen by another medical man, who said *one lung* was affected, but that with fresh air, nourishment, and careful nursing she would most likely get strong again. So it was proposed to leave her, while Mrs. S—— returned in a few days.

Some six years before, when Maggie must have been about nine years old, she had been visiting her uncle, and had gone with him to a gospel meeting, and heard God's love and good news told out in simplicity. That well-known verse of John iii. was deeply impressed on her mind: "God *so* loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not *perish*, but have *everlasting* life." She cried much that night, but seemed assured by that little word *so*—"God *so* loved."

Her uncle and aunt were both saved, as were also her dear mother and brother, through the grace of God. Since she had been to school there had been nothing to manifest divine life in her, and it was feared that the work was only superficial, and this led Mrs. S——, before rising on the morning of leaving for home, to put to her daughter the question,

"Maggie dear, tell me before I go, *are you sure you are saved?*"

She replied, "No, mother dear, I am not. I have been very much troubled about it lately, and have so wished I could *feel sure*, as you always do."

Her mother replied, "I don't *feel* it, dear, I *know* it, because God says so. He tells me Jesus died for sinners; and I knew I was a sinner, and I know he died for *me*, and *His blood* has washed

away *all my sins*. Will you let me tell your uncle or aunt; they both are better able to help you than I?"

After a pause she slowly answered, "No, mother dear, thank you; no, *it must be between God and myself, then there will be no mistake.*"

A few days after a letter arrived at the farm, bidding her father and mother to come at once, as she was much worse; but being Sunday, and no trains running, they could not reach her until the next day. Her brother was also sent for. On arriving at the house, Mrs. S—— went straight upstairs to the room where her child lay, and leaning over her, kissed her, and said, "Have you any *good news* for mother, Maggie?"

The dear child, so happy to see her loved mother, softly answered, "Yes, mother dear; God says, 'He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life.' Hath, mother dear! Hath! *God's hath!* and *I have it!*"

* * * * *

Oh, what a picture is here! There in that bedroom is a fond mother, all weariness from her journey forgotten, bending over her greatest treasure on earth, knowing that, if the Lord Jesus did not come, she was soon to lose that loved voice, and for a while the sight of that dear face; but does she give way to her grief, and bewail her approaching bereavement? No; she has an unseen Arm to lean on; and to many, oh, how many, an unknown Heart, beating in tenderest sympathy with hers; and she can bow in loving submission in such an One, and though her heart yearns over her cherished darling, yet she can yield her to the hand that gave her. Though it well-nigh bursts with sorrow, yet can that heart

well up in praise, and silent, unutterable gratitude, as her ear drinks in the precious words, breathed in such restful confidence.

Some days after the mother again put the question, to satisfy a lingering doubt which her love encouraged, only to feel rebuked for such a doubt by the heavenly smile of peace, and simple answer of unquestioning faith in what God had said.

Day by day the dear girl lingered, her very presence filling every heart round that knew the Lord Jesus with sunlight. It was a real pleasure to be with her. She longed to be at home with the One who had loved her, and died for her. She delighted to speak of Him and His love, and her soul could revel in the knowledge that the Father Himself loved her. Not once did the blessed Lord allow satan to disturb her peace or cloud her happiness. Her whole being was filled with the joy of His presence. Her face wore a new, sweet expression, almost weird in its heavenly beauty; while, as to death, there was none to her, she but waited with joyful anticipation the moment when she should enter into life more abundantly. She entreated her dear father to meet her in heaven, and seemed to think of everyone who could be helped by any word from her.

Soon her joy was crowned with *Himself*, who had given in Maggie such a blessed proof of His grace and power over death; for she was "absent from the body, present with the Lord."

The remembrance of her short, touching testimony, while she was waiting until the Lord put her to sleep, glimmered with a halo, softening the stern, cold realities of "the wages of sin," and as the precious body was committed to His care, who

has bought it till the day of redemption, when He shall descend from heaven with a shout, and claim it with all His own, there was an unspeakable joy filling many weeping hearts, and songs of praise and thanksgiving arose to God through Him whose heart was once broken that we might know the "Balm of Gilead."

T. H. R.

"DO YOU KNOW THE VALUE OF THE
BLOOD OF CHRIST?"

MANY hundreds of years ago, in an eastern land, might have been seen a sight described in the Bible for our profit. A vast army compassing a strongly-walled city night and day, causing fear and dread to fall upon every inhabitant except those dwelling in one little house on the walls. Exposed more than most to the power of the enemy, yet only in that abode is there peace and safety; and why? What distinguishes it from every other house? In the window overlooking the enemy is a small token—a scarlet thread bound there; of no value whatever in the eyes of the besieged perchance; of countless value to the mistress of the house, the one who trusts the true token, and has gathered under her roof her father and her mother, and all her kindred. Not many days before she, a poor sinful woman, had hidden from her countrymen two of the men of Israel, the people of the Lord; and had only let them depart after receiving from them a promise that when they came to possess themselves of the land the Lord had given them they would save her alive. The token of their promise

and her faith was the scarlet thread bound in the window. She *believed* that the Lord was God in heaven above and in earth beneath, and was willing to surrender her idols and cast in her lot with the people of God. "Whosoever," the men had said, "whosoever shall go out of the doors of thy house, his blood shall be upon his head"—he shall be *lost*; and "whosoever shall be with thee in the house, his blood shall be on our head"—he shall be *saved*. And how was she to *know* that it would be so? She was to trust to the word of the men, who had sworn to her by the Lord, and to bind the token in her window. She did so, and with what result? "And Joshua saved Rahab the harlot alive, and her father's household, and all that she had; and she dwelleth in Israel even unto this day; because she hid the messengers, which Joshua sent to spy out Jericho." (Josh. vi. 25.)

"Do you know the value of the blood of Christ?" asked one gentleman of another. What a question! The one who asked it had been possessed of much that is valued in this world, and had surrendered it for something better. The one of whom it was asked was seeking pleasure, riches, place, anything he could gain; and knew nothing, alas! of the value of what God calls "precious." He did not even like to be asked about it, or to be reminded that there was something of value unknown to him. Oh, reader, *what* is the value of the blood of Christ? "Man knoweth not the price thereof." What was the value of that scarlet line? None at all to the thoughtless in that beleaguered city—perhaps even an object of ridicule—but, oh, of what untold worth to the trustful dwellers in that house on the wall! It gave present peace and safety, security from judgment, and assurance

of salvation to them. It reminds us of the One who

“Has washed us from our scarlet sins
In his most precious blood.”

Rahab believed that judgment was coming on the city in which she dwelt, and she trusted the words of the messengers of the God of whose wonderful ways she had heard. If judgment was coming, she must escape, and the scarlet line was at once her way of escape and her shelter. *Do you believe that judgment is coming on the world in which you live?* Would any other refuge have done for Rahab, or any other token have served her but the one chosen by the two men? It would have been presumption had she sought for either. So for us “there is *none other name* under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Judgment is coming just as surely as it was on guilty, worldly Jericho; but, oh, how safe you will be if, like sinful but believing Rahab, you put your trust in the word of another, the word of the living God, who has sworn that we may “have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” Oh, “*do you know the value of the blood of Christ?*” If so, you may say, in another’s words—

“How sweet the plea,
From all to flee,
And shelter in my Saviour!
Oh, precious grace,
With Him’s my place,
In God’s eternal favour!

“Jesus, the goal
Before my soul,
The One I know in glory;
While I’m on earth
I’d sing His worth,
A saved one’s sweetest story.”

H. L. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

"I SHALL BE CLOTHED IN *HIS* WHITE."

T—— W—— was a young man, respectable, moral, amiable, and upright, and loved by all who knew him. As to outward conduct, we might say he was "blameless;" none could lift a finger against him. His morality was that which Satan used to blind him, and keep him propped up with a false peace, which would eventually have carried him to hell had not God in sovereign grace interfered.

Disease had laid its hand upon him, and death had marked him as its victim. It was a terrible grief to the parents and loved ones around to see the dear youth wasting away day by day and hurrying into eternity, while love was utterly powerless to do anything for him in saving him from the ruthless hand of death. And their grief was intensified by the fact that H—— was Christless. Solemn position—on the borders of eternity, and unsaved!

Oh, how sad, to have those we love torn from our embrace by that grim monster death, that king of terrors! But sadder far when we have "no hope" that they have departed to be "with Christ, which is far better." Laid in the grave to be *forgotten* by man—*forsaken* by God, and *for ever* in hell.

My reader, allow me to ask, How is it with you? If you were on your death-bed, knowing that in a

few moments your earthly history would close, would you be able to look up and say, "Victory through the blood of the Lamb," in the consciousness that your sins were washed away by His blood, and you were on your way to be clothed in *His* white? Or would the dark curtain of death fall upon you, and close your miserable and Christless life in time, while you passed away to commence a more miserable existence in eternity? which?

Although H—— had lived in carnal security, satisfied, alas! like so many thousands with their own goodness and ability to do something to merit salvation, God had His eye upon the self-righteous youth, and had marked him out for blessing. Thanks be to His blessed name!

It so happened that one day a Christian friend went into the house to visit them, and as they sat talking the mother motioned to him to speak to H——. None had ever spoken to him about his soul before. Visitors, as a rule, spoke about every topic except the great and all-important one—the soul's salvation; but God was about to speak to the dying youth. The time had come when Satan was to be robbed of his prey, and another heart tuned to sing the praises of the Lamb for ever in glory.

To give the whole of the conversation which passed would be impossible and uncalled for, but I give a little to set forth once more the riches of His grace who still waits to bless and save sinners.

"Well, H——, suppose you don't get better, and should die soon? You will have to meet God, and what are you going to say to Him? How will you stand before Him if you are not saved?"

"I don't know. I don't see why I should not stand."

"But are you not a sinner, and unfit for heaven?"

"I don't know that I am. I have not done anything very wicked, and I do not see why I should not go to heaven."

After some further conversation, in which poor self-righteous H—— tried to maintain His position in carnal security, and in which his friend tried to press upon him his guilt, and shake his false peace, he took his hat to leave, saying:

"Well, H——, I don't know a Saviour for *you*. I know a Saviour for *sinners*, but not for good people like you. Jesus only came to save sinners; you are too good for Him."

The friend left, but the arrow did not leave; it had pierced the conscience of the young man, and could not be so easily withdrawn. He was now in deep soul-trouble; he had found out his true condition at last. "None righteous, no, not one." "Every mouth stopped, and all the world guilty before God." (Rom. iii. 10-19.)

The next time the Christian called a wonderful change had passed over dear H——. The Holy Spirit had opened his eyes, and now, instead of the darkness and gloom and misery which had filled his soul, all was brightness, and "joy and peace in believing." (Rom. xv. 13.)

"Well, H——, how is it now? What about your soul now?"

"Oh, I have found out that *I* am a sinner—that Jesus died for *me*!"


Blessed discovery for the dying youth. The Lord give many more to find out the same thing! No sooner had the Lord blessed his soul than he began to sink rapidly. It was evident he was

soon to pass away, "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." (Phil. i. 23.) The last time his friend saw him he was calm, peaceful, and happy, resting in Jesus, and longing to be with Him. Looking at Him, the visitor said, "You will soon be with Him who died for you, dear H——."

He looked up with a bright smile, and speaking with emphasis, he said, "Yes, I shall be clothed in *His* white." It was the last he was heard to say. He sweetly passed away to be with Christ, washed in the blood of the Lamb, arrayed in *His* white. No righteousness of his own covered dear H—— W——, but a robe made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Reader, are you trusting your own goodness, your own works, or anything connected with yourself? It will not do. You must take the lost sinner's place, and receive the lost sinner's Saviour. "Jesus died to save sinners." "His blood cleanseth us from all sin." Turn away from all that you have done, from all that you are. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) W. E.

MARY L——; OR, THE PIERCED SIDE.

NE Lord's-day, as I was visiting the small village of A——, in the North of England, where I live, I was requested by a friend of mine to visit Mary L——, the subject of this narrative. Having heard all about her from my friend, that she had been ill for a long time, and had gone through an operation for some inward disease, I called at the house. The


door was opened by her mother, and having asked for Mary, I was told she was very poorly. At the same time she invited me in, and after some conversation I told her I should like to see her daughter. This request she was slow to grant, as the doctor had ordered her to be kept quiet; but on my promising that I would not stay long, I was taken to the room where she was lying, taking my seat by her side, I made some remarks as to her trouble, and how she must have suffered when going through the operation. I said it was hard to be laid up, as she was young in years and in the bloom of life; but it reminded me of another who "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." (1 Peter iii. 18.) "Yes, Mary," I said, "your side was pierced to save you from natural death; but His side was pierced to save you from eternal death. You, while suffering, have been surrounded by kind friends supplying all your wants; but oh, think of Him! He 'looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but He found none.'" (Ps. lxxix. 20, 21.) He had to suffer the hiding of His God's face. Hear that cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" "Oh, Mary," I said, "it was our sins that caused Him to suffer thus. Oh, think of the love of that One who has suffered thus! trust Him now as your Saviour and all will be well, and well for ever, should He call you home to be with Himself, or should He raise you up again to wait for Him here."

She did not speak, but the tears rolled down her pale face. I saw I had said enough, as she was very weak in body, so I arose and bade her, with her mother and sisters, who were also sitting

in tears, good-bye. I did not see her again. The next time I called she was too weak to be spoken to, and in a day or two she passed from time into eternity. I trust we shall meet again, no more to know what sorrow and suffering is ; but feast together on the love of that One who suffered for us.

And now, dear reader, what about you? Do you know Jesus as your Saviour? do you know what it is to be saved? or are you only hoping to be saved? Oh, miserable state to be in! Take care that you are not called away before you have done reading this paper, if unsaved you are without God and without hope in the world. (Eph. ii. 12.) What room have you for hope if you are out of Christ? Why, then, go on hoping any longer? Why not trust Him who came to seek and to save the lost? Sinner you are, if not saved; and He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Bow now, I beseech you, to the word of God while it is still the day of grace. Trust Christ now, and get salvation; for His word is, "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." J. P.

ASHAMED OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST.

"HE wise are ashamed of it, because it calls upon men to believe, and not to argue; the great are ashamed of it, because it brings all into one body; the rich are ashamed of it, because it is to be had without money and without price; the gay are ashamed of it, because they fear it will destroy all their mirth. And so the good news of the glorious Son of God

having come into the world to save lost sinners is despised, uncared for; men are 'ashamed' of it.

"Who are *not* ashamed of it? A little company whose hearts the Spirit of God has touched. They were like all the world, and *of* it; but He awakened them to see their sin and misery, and that Christ alone was a refuge. And now they cry, 'None but Christ!' 'None but Christ!' 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of Christ.' He is precious to their hearts; He lives there; He is often in their lips; He is praised in their family. They would fain proclaim Him to all the world. They have felt in their own experience that the gospel is 'the power of God unto salvation, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.'

"Is this your experience? Have you received the gospel, not in word only, but in power? Has the power of God been put forth upon your soul along with the Word? Then, if so, you can say, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ.'"

"IF I DIE WITHOUT ABSOLUTION I SHALL BE LOST!"

WALKING homewards I met a pedlar trudging along with his pack on his back, and offered him a copy of this periodical. He looked hard at the heading on its cover—*Salvation of God*—indignantly declined it, and then demanded my authority for offering people such books. I gave the word of the Lord Jesus as my authority. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." "Hear," I continued, "this beautiful verse, 'Verily, verily,

I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” (John v. 24.) With great warmth the pedlar rejoined, “You are one of those of whom it is said, ‘By their fruits shall ye know them,’ going about deceiving people without authority.” “I suppose you mean that Satan is leading me?” I said. “Yes,” he replied, “your gospel and Bible are untrue.” My friend being anxious to move on I said in parting, “Tell me, How will it be with you if you die without absolution?” With softened voice and expression he answered, “If I die without absolution I shall be lost.” How sad to find a fellow-creature so deluded as to forget that death may summons him into the presence of a holy God without a moment’s warning, or time to find or fetch a man to give him absolution, when he would be lost indeed, without remedy, and for ever. God grant that His own words may show him that his soul’s salvation rests on a sandy foundation, and not on the Son of the living God—the rock Christ Jesus—nor in direct personal faith in Him whose precious blood cleanseth from all sin, who is the way, the truth, and the life. Reader, hast thou been convinced, in the presence of God, who sees and marks thy way, that thou art a sinful man, and needest His own salvation, purchased at the cost of that precious blood, His gift, and offered thee without money and without price? “Be it known unto you, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins” (full absolution): “and by Him all who believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses. Beware there-

fore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets ; behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish." (Acts xiii. 39-41.)

In one instant the silver cord of thy life may be loosed from thee, and thy golden bowl be broken. "This Man," from the throne of God, bids thee come to Him. Obey ! Go as thou art, in thy guilt, thy misery, thy helplessness ; trust Him ; He will in no wise cast thee out. Thy faith shall save thee, and His own blessed word speak thine absolution : "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." (Mark v. 15.) Reader, if you die unforgiven by Him, you will be lost, and cast into the lake of fire.

H. A.

GLORY, THE FOUNTAIN, AND THE LAKE OF FIRE.

REV. xxi. 1 8.

WHO but God Himself could unfold to us the eternal state ? And this He has done in the first eight verses of the twenty-first chapter of the Revelation. In them with His own divine hand, He has drawn aside the curtain of the glory, and told us what there will not be there ; He also draws aside the curtain of the lake of fire, and tells us who there will be there. But He omits not to point us with loving finger to the ever-playing Fountain, planted midway between glory and the lake of fire, to which He invites thirsty souls to come and drink, as the only possible way of escape from the dreary, fathomless depths of the lake of fire on the one hand, to the peerless heights of glory on the other hand.

In the twentieth chapter of the Revelation we have an account of the two resurrections: the first resurrection of the blessed and holy which takes place at the beginning of the millennium or thousand years of Christ's reign over the earth; and then the second and last resurrection of the dead—the unforgiven, unpardoned, unsaved, unrepentant, Godless, Christless, wicked dead, who died in their sins—which takes place at the end of the world, in front of the great white throne. Then after the seven thousand years of this world's sad and tragical history have run their course, we are introduced, in Rev. xxi. 1–8, into God's eternity.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.”
(v. 4.)

Here we have glory as it were on the right hand, and the five things—tears, death, sorrow, crying, and pain, that this poor world is full of, have no place there.

“God shall wipe all tears from their eyes.” What a blessed prospect for the weeping child of God, in a world where tears are always falling and sighs are always rising! God is about to wipe away with His own hand of love all tears from the faces of His own everlastingly loved ones. There will be the eternal absence of tears in glory.

“And there shall be no more death.” Now ruthless, arbitrary death, enters unbidden and unwelcome our dwellings, and snatches away the darling objects of our love; and neither bolts, bars, locks, nor entreaties can keep him out. But there is a land where there are no graveyards, no

cemeteries, where the undertaker and the gravedigger are seen no more in their harrowing occupations, and where the solemn death-knell is never heard. And that land is yon lovely home in glory, where Jesus is, and which He has purchased for us with His own most precious blood. Death is not ceasing to be, it is not annihilation. Death is viewed in three ways in Scripture, but always as separation.

First, the instant Adam and Eve disobeyed God in partaking of the forbidden fruit in the garden of Eden, death was the penalty, as God had said, "*In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" (Gen. ii. 17.) Did they then cease to exist? Were they immediately annihilated? No. But they were at once separated in their whole moral being from communion and intercourse with their good Creator.

Secondly, there is physical death, or the death of the body, which is the separation of the spirit and the body. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." (Eccles. xii. 7.)

Thirdly, there will be the re-union of the spirit and the body of those who die unsaved, and in this state they will stand before the great white throne, and will be consigned from thence to the lake of fire which is the second death, which second death will be eternal separation from God, Christ, the Holy Ghost, the saved, the unfallen angels, and the eternal glory. (Rev. xx. 13-15, xxi. 8.)

"Neither sorrow." Now we are in the scene of a thousand sources of sorrow. But

"In glory above, where all is love,
There will be no more sorrow there."

“Nor crying.” Now the jarring, discordant notes of murmuring, repining, complaining, wailing, and clamouring, fall upon the ear sadly enough, but none of these will ever have an existence in the glory.

“Neither shall there be any more pain.” No more pain of spirit or body ; no more mental and no more physical pain. Sin has wrought such havoc with the human body that it is a very rare thing indeed to meet in one’s travels with a sound body. The first cry that issues from the new-born babe is a cry of pain, and the last cry of the dying one is a cry of pain.

But, blessed be God, there is a home, a place, a land, where there are none of the five sad things we have been looking at, and that is the eternal glory of God, where it is all joy and no tears, all life and no death, all happiness and no sorrow, all singing and no crying, all bliss and no pain for ever and for ever and for ever. Will you be there ?

“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone : which is the second death.” (Rev. xxi. 8.) In this truly awful verse we have eight classes of persons described, who, should they any of them die unforgiven, are doomed to spend eternity in the lake of fire.

The first on the list are “the fearful,” or *cowardly*. Oh ! how many are wearing the white feather of cowardice ! They would like to be saved, but they are afraid of being laughed at for belonging to Christ. Man, you would like to be saved, but you cannot endure the thought of being laughed at by your fellow-men. Young man, you too would

like to be saved, but you dread being scoffed at by your fellow young men. Young woman, you have a desire to be saved, but you fear being talked about and made game of by your fellow young women. Poor cowards, and will you sell your souls to death, damnation, and the devil, for a curled lip, for a scoff, for a laugh? You may be amiable, kind, and generous, but if you are a coward, God has put your name first on the list of those who are bound for the lake of fire.

Then, second in the list are the "unbelieving." Sceptic, rationalist, rejecter of Christ and divine revelation, this means you. "He that believeth not shall be damned," are the words of Jesus Christ Himself. (Mark xvi. 16.) You may be moral, and yet a rejecter of Christ; you may be philanthropic, and yet a rejecter of Christ; you may be religious, and yet a rejecter of Christ. I do not ask you if you attend any "place of worship," if you have been baptized, or if you are a member of a "religious society;" but, have you received Christ? You are either a receiver or a rejecter of Christ. And whatever people may think or say about you, or you think or say about yourself, if you have not yet received Christ as God's gift of eternal life, you are one of the unbelieving, whose sad course ends in the lake of fire. You must spend an eternity with those who make themselves abominable, and with murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars.

But, says someone, "there are no idolaters in this land of Bibles, tracts, preaching, and Sunday-schools." Very likely, and I hope it is so, that there are none in Christendom who bow down to worship images of metal, stone, or wood. But do

you not know that God says, "Covetousness, which is idolatry"? (Col. iii. 5.)

What is the crying sin of the present moment? I am bold to say that it is covetousness. Oh, covetous man and covetous woman, thou art an idolater—a worshipper of gold, and God hath put thee number seven on the list of those unhappy beings who, living and dying in their present state, will find themselves at last in the lake of fire. Last on the list are the "liars." How common is the sin of lying, from the very uppermost to the very lowest strata of society.

Ladies and gentlemen tell lies, say they are not in when they don't wish to be seen, or don't wish to see those who call. Tradesmen tell lies, say their goods are what they well know they are not. Servants tell lies to hide their sins or to get their own way. Children tell lies to hide their guilty faults. Whatever may be your standing in society, and whatever your age, if you have come to the years of responsibility, and are in the habit of telling lies, you rank among the "all liars," who "shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." I would ask any moral, proper, noble-minded person, "How would you like to be shut up for twelve months with these eight classes of guilty sinners?" "Ah!" you say, "I would rather die ten thousand deaths than be subject to it." But if you are unsaved, if you are, in short, a rejecter of Christ, you will have to spend an ETERNITY with them in the lake of fire!

And now having looked at the glory, and seen what there will not be there, and at the lake of fire, and seen who there will be there, let us turn to "the Fountain" which we find mentioned in

the sixth verse of our scripture, and which God has placed between glory on our right hand, and the lake of fire on our left hand, and coming to which is the only possible way of securing the glory, and escaping the lake of fire.

"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." (Rev. xxi. 6.)

"O Christ, Thou art the fountain,
The deep, sweet well of love."

Four things are stated in connection with this fountain. First, God is a *giver*. "I will *give*," not I will sell for so much money, nor I will reward for so much done; No, "I will *give*." God is the giving, not the exacting God. Poor sinner, He is not asking you to give Him something, but He desires to give you everything. Jesus said to the woman at the well, in John iv., "If thou knewest *the gift of God*, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of Him, and *He would have given* thee living water." Do you know God as a *giver*?

Secondly, to whom He gives. It is to the *thirsty*. Thirsty, anxious soul, do you thirst for pardon? then God will give you pardon. Do you thirst for forgiveness? then God will give it to you. Do you thirst for eternal life? "The gift of God is eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord." Do you thirst for the Holy Spirit? He will give you the Holy Spirit the moment you have believed in Christ to the salvation of your precious soul. Do you thirst for the glory? God will presently give you that with Christ eternally. The thirst that God creates God satisfies.

Thirdly, what God gives, it is of the fountain of the water of life. God gives the best He has

to give. He gave Christ to die for us, and now having raised Him from the dead, He gives Him to us as our life, our peace, our righteousness, our sanctification, our redemption, and our hope.

“Salvation in God’s Christ is found,
Cure for my grief and care;
A healing balm for every wound,
All, all I need is there.”

Lastly, how God gives. He gives FREELY. It is the style and fashion of God’s giving that adds significance to it and makes it so welcome to us.

All this is the sovereign grace side of the giving; there is the other and responsible side in Rev. xxii. 17: “And let him that is *athirst* COME. And whosoever will, let him TAKE the water of life FREELY.”

It is divinely true that God gives to the thirsty, but such are responsible to come and take; and it is also blessedly true that God gives freely; but He expects us to take as freely as He delights to give.

In these eight verses of our chapter, God having rolled up the past ages, brings us into His eternity. He shows us the eternal glory which is ours who believe in Christ, as the fruit of His redemption work. He has shown us the lake of fire which He has prepared for the devil and His angels, and which we have seen will be shared by eight classes of persons living and dying in their described state. He has also shown us the fountain, to which He invites us to come in this day of His long-suffering mercy. Oh, will you not come and drink?

In conclusion, I ask, *Where* will you spend ETERNITY? *with whom* will you spend ETERNITY? and *how* will you spend ETERNITY? H. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“YE MAY KNOW.”

I WAS preaching some time since, in a watering-place in the West of England, from the words, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John v. 24), when I sought to impress upon my hearers that all who had really heard the life-giving words of the Son of God, and had believed God, who sent His Son to put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, were in the present possession of everlasting life; that it was not left to them or to me to say that they had it, for Christ Himself said that; but what they had to do was to believe that they had everlasting life, because Christ said so.

An earnest but questioning person, sitting at the extreme edge of the congregation, said, loud enough to be heard by those sitting alongside, “Yes, Christ did say ‘hath everlasting life;’ but He did not say that we were to know that we had it.” I did not know what thoughts were passing through the minds, or what words were dropping from the lips of any in my audience, but at the moment the words that I have just given fell from the lips of the one who uttered them, I was led of the Holy Ghost, who was personally present in the meeting, and who knew all that was going on in it, to turn to 1 John v. 13,

where the following strikingly blessed words occur: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; *that YE MAY KNOW that ye have eternal life.*" And I was informed by the one who heard the words spoken that the questioner was confounded and silenced by the force and clearness of the word of God.

When I turn to the Scriptures, where the words "known," "knowest," "knoweth," "knowing," "knowledge," and "known," occur altogether above *one thousand times*, as any reader of the Holy Scriptures may see for himself who will take the trouble to look them out as they are given in Cruden's *Concordance*, I am perfectly amazed at the daring boldness of the man who can write or say that it is impossible for any one to know that they have eternal life or the forgiveness of sins in this world.

What would be the state of society if God, who has instituted and given the relationships of husband and wife, parent and child, had at the same time prevented our knowledge and enjoyment of those relationships? Imagine wives not knowing their own husbands! husbands not knowing their own wives! parents not knowing their own children! and children not knowing their own parents! Could you conceive of anything more truly sad and sorrowful, and as far removed as possible from all intelligent enjoyment of the relationships of life, morally and socially? To say nothing of how unworthy such a state of society would be of Him who is the author of our natural relationships! And where would be the goodness and love of God in forgiving me, saving me, giving me eternal life, making me His child, putting His Holy Spirit in me, making me

one with Christ, and fitting me for the glory, and then preventing my having, or not giving me, the knowledge and enjoyment of all these divine and eternal blessings? Such teaching is a slur upon a kind, good, and loving God, and is totally opposed to the word of God.

But I will turn to a few scriptures which are infinitely preferable to all our words and illustrations.

"And He said unto them, Unto you *it is given* TO KNOW the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables." (Mark iv. 11.) Are you within the favoured circle of His own blood-bought and blood-washed ones to whom "it is given to know"? or are you "without," and therefore in darkness and uncertainty?

The blind man in John ix. 25, whose eyes Christ opened, said, "One thing I KNOW, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

If you heard anyone saying that it was impossible to distinguish colours, you would be justified in immediately concluding that such an one was colour-blind. So when I hear persons saying that nobody can know they are forgiven and saved in this world, I cannot avoid coming to the conclusion that such are not forgiven or saved themselves. Some have the hardihood to say that Paul the apostle did not know that he was saved. I find him speaking very differently himself in 2 Tim. i. 12, where he says, "*For I KNOW whom I have believed*, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Again, in 2 Cor. v. 1, where he associates others with himself, he says, "For WE KNOW that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house

not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And in 1 Cor. ii. 12 he traces this wonderful knowledge up to its source: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; *that WE MIGHT KNOW the things that are freely given to us of God.*" There is no uncertainty in these scriptures, where we have heard Paul saying by the Holy Ghost what was true of himself, and equally true of all saved persons. And remember, the scriptures cannot be broken, and cannot contradict themselves.

If I turn to the apostle Peter's writings, I find him speaking in the same strain. "Forasmuch as YE KNOW that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." (1 Peter i. 18, 19.)

Now, let us listen to what the apostle John has to say upon this subject of assurance. "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: *hereby KNOW WE* that we are in Him." (1 John ii. 5.) And again, in iii. 2: "Beloved, *NOW are we the sons of God*, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but WE KNOW that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." "And YE KNOW that He was manifested to take away our sins." (v. 5.) "WE KNOW that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. . . ." (v. 14.) "Hereby KNOW WE that we dwell in Him, and He in us, because He hath given us of His Spirit." "And *we have* KNOWN and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." (iv. 13, 16.) "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; *that YE MAY*

KNOW *that ye* have eternal life." "And WE KNOW that we are of God. . . . And WE KNOW that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that WE MAY KNOW Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." (v. 13, 19, 20.)

What can we say, in the face of such an overwhelming and unanswerable body of Scripture proof as to the doctrine of assurance, but what the blessed Lord Himself says in John vii. 17: "If *any* man will do His will, HE SHALL KNOW of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself"?

And yet once again Christ says, speaking prophetically of the days in which we are living, "At that day" (the day of the Holy Ghost being given, which was ten days after Christ's ascension) "YE SHALL KNOW that I am in my Father, and ye in Me, and I in you." (John xiv. 20.) I ask in all solemnity, Who am I to believe? Christ, who says that the characteristic of Christianity is, that "*ye shall know*," or those who teach it is impossible to know, and presumption to say that we do know? What is the object of "the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us," if it be not "*to give KNOWLEDGE of salvation unto His people* by the remission of their sins"? (Luke i. 77, 78.)

Poor, anxious, troubled soul, drop all your reasonings and questionings; flee from the dreary regions of frames, fears, feelings, and experiences which you are now putting in the place of simple faith. Cease from those who teach you cannot know that you are saved, and take God at His word, for He says "YE MAY KNOW." H. M. H.

“A BEAUTIFUL PLACE.”

“**H**ASN'T God put me in a beautiful place? I couldn't change places with anyone, could I?”

Had you seen that poor, thin face, sparkling with joy, and the earnestness with which those words were uttered, you could not have doubted their reality.

What are you picturing to yourself? One surrounded with loving faces, and soothed with thoughtful care, luxury, comfort, and plenty?

Follow me into a bustling, noisy alley, in a poor part of London, and in an upstairs' room of one of the houses you will find a young man laid on a bed of suffering, and fast wasting away from consumption.

It was in answer to a neighbour's request I found myself at his bedside. The first words that started involuntarily to my lips were, “Poor fellow!” I could not help it; I was ashamed of it afterwards.

Poverty was stamped on everything. The scanty clothing on his bed was quite insufficient to keep him warm, and the glass of water and biscuit at his side were certainly not calculated to tempt an invalid's appetite.

It was touching to see him as he lay there, his finger between the pages of his large-print Testament, ready to be opened between each paroxysm of coughing. Latterly it was an effort to read much himself, but up to the very last it was his great delight to hear that Word: truly he esteemed it *more* than his necessary food. Few came in to

see him, and the days must have seemed very long, as he lay there hour after hour alone; for his young wife was out, from early morning until late at night, working hard to keep a shelter over their heads. He would say, "I am afraid she has not much idea of anything; I read to her when she comes home, but, poor girl, she's worn out."

He had himself only known the Lord for about six months.

He was standing one evening just outside his door—he was ill then, but able to get about—when someone passing stopped and asked him if he might come in and read to him occasionally. He said "he should be very glad;" "but, you know," he said, when telling me about it, "he spoke to me of salvation, and at first I did not think I was bad enough to want it. I soon found out I was, and was thankful enough to accept it."

It was a great privilege to trace the Lord dealing with his soul, and the tender way He revealed *Himself* to his heart.

We were speaking one day of the joy of knowing for certain that those we loved, and were gone from us, were, even as we were thinking of them, "present with the Lord." I remember him so well throwing himself back on his pillow, and murmuring, as if to himself, "And isn't it nice to know *I* am going there too."

As I went in one afternoon, I think it was the last time I saw him, he was lying quite still and silent from exhaustion. I could see he was more feeble than usual, and I just leaned over him, and said, "I am afraid you have had a bad night." "Yes," he said slowly, "I have; I think each night takes me nearer home." He then raised himself on his elbow, and looking up with a beaming face,


burst out with those words quoted above—I seem to hear him say them now—“Hasn’t God put me in a beautiful place. I couldn’t change places with anyone, could I?” My heart was full; it was some time before I could answer; I could only look with reverence on that dear face, and thank God for such a testimony to the all-sufficiency of His beloved Son.

It was not many days before he was with that Lord for ever, who had won all the affections of his young heart.

Thank God, there *are* hearts satisfied with His Son! Is He everything to *you*? “The God of hope *fill* you with all joy and peace in believing.”

A. M. H.

CHRIST ALONE.

“ELL, sir, the minister told me as I *must* pray if I want to get forgiveness.”

Such was the reply given by a poor old man who was dying in a village in one of the midland counties, to a question which his visitor had just asked him. The same visitor had often been to him before, and had again and again put Christ before him; but although he had been long lingering in ill-health, and under medical treatment, he had not looked death in the face, and thus had paid but little attention to what had been said to him. He now knew he was dying, and knew also that there is “after death the judgment” awaiting the sinner, and hence his conscience was alarmed. But another had been to him, and told him, in his anxiety for his soul, that he must *pray* for forgiveness.

"And how long," said his visitor, "must you pray before you get forgiveness?"

"I don't know, sir," said the poor man dolefully; "but I suppose I must pray as long as I live."

"Then you will never know before you die whether you have got it or not?"

"No, sir, I suppose not."

"Would you like to die without knowing it?"

"No, sir, in course not. But I can't expect to be *saved* unless I *do* pray."

"Then your prayers are to save you?"

"Well, sir, I don't know about that. It's Christ as must save me if I am to be saved; but I must pray to Him to do it."

"That is, you must have a hand in it, and yet will never know whether He has done it or not until you die! Now just listen to me. If I were to hold out five shillings in my hand, and ask you to accept it, would you beg and pray of me to give it you; or would you simply *take it*?"

"Why, in course I should take it," said the poor man, smiling in spite of himself at the absurdity of such a question; "in course I should take it."

"If I offered you five shillings, and you believed that I *meant it*, you would not keep on begging and praying and entreating me to give it to you."

"No, sir, in course not."

"You would take it at once. Well, now *listen to God*. 'Be it known unto you . . . that through this man (Christ Jesus) is PREACHED UNTO YOU THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS: AND BY HIM ALL THAT BELIEVE ARE JUSTIFIED from all things.' God *offers you forgiveness*, and you keep on praying Him to give it to you. He bids you to *know* that you may have it through Christ, and you say you

cannot know it till you die. He tells you that you may be justified from all things BY CHRIST, but you want to be justified BY PRAYER. He says, 'All who believe are justified,' and you won't take Him at His word; for if you did you would not keep on *asking* Him to give you that which He offers you. In short, you don't believe Him. Now 'he that believeth not God hath made Him a liar.' It is a most solemn thing to do that; and to expect to be saved for doing it is strange indeed!"

"I don't mean to do that, sir," said the old man in alarm.

"No, you don't *mean* it, but you are *doing* it. Do you not see that if God *offers* you salvation, and you keep on asking Him to give it you, that you as good as tell Him you don't believe Him?"

"What be I to do, sir?" said the dying man in distress.

"What would you do if I offered to give you five shillings? You would take me at my word, of course. Take *God* at His word; believe *Him*. 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.' Jesus says, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, HATH everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.' *Simply believe Him*, and you are saved at once; He says so."

A few more words were said, prayer was offered, and then the poor old man, who was as simple as a child, *took God at His word*, and before his visitor had left the cottage he was quietly resting in the finished work of Christ upon the cross for sinners. His surprise at his own blindness was now as great as his difficulty had been before, and he wondered at himself almost as much as he mar-

velled at the grace that had so suddenly and so completely saved him with an everlasting salvation in Christ Jesus, through simple faith in Him.

He lived long enough afterwards to give abundant evidence of the reality of the work of God in his soul; for the false teacher who had persuaded him to look to prayer and religious exercises instead of to Christ for salvation came again; but the old man's faith, or rather the divine work in his soul, stood the test well. His reply "to them that did examine him was this:"

"Hasn't Christ said, 'He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, HATH everlasting life'? And haven't *I* heard His word, and don't *I* believe? Very well; then *I* have everlasting life, in course, because He says so;" and he lay back on his pillow with a smile of quiet triumph on his dying face.

How is it, my reader, with you? Is it *religious exercises, prayer, or CHRIST ALONE?* J. L. K.

"FOR THE LAST TIME."



HERE is always something solemn in the thought that we are bidding a *last* adieu to a friend, or leaving a place after seeing it for the *last time*, or doing anything which is *never* to be repeated; this, I say, if known as being done for the last time, gives a certain feeling of seriousness to the act. Of course, if we do not know that we shall never speak to the friend, or see the place, or perform the action again, we are not solemnized by it; and

yet perhaps someone who may read this paper is reading their *last* message from God; their *last* chance of being saved is *now*; their final opportunity of closing with God's mercy *has come*; their very *last hope* of being saved from a never-dying hell of remorse and suffering (*remembered* and *endured*—see Luke xvi. 25) is here; perhaps, dear friend, it is your LAST CHANCE. God arouse you if it is! God save you if it is! He is willing to do so; are you willing to be saved in His own way?

On my way home from the preaching the other night, I called upon a young man only lately married, who had been very ill, but was apparently much better. As I approached the house I heard the gospel being preached in the street, and that with no uncertain sound. So on going into the room I thus addressed the sufferer: "My friend," I said, "as you are not well enough to go and hear the gospel, God has sent the gospel to you;" and opening the window wide, the glorious gospel of God, who "so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life," came floating on the air into that room, along with the solemn call of God, that He "*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." He listened, said he "liked to hear it." I shut the window, it could be open no longer; and giving him this one text, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," and a word

of exhortation as to the folly of delay, the willingness of God, and the need of man, I left.

It was about nine p.m. when I was there. After I had gone God's word was again read in that man's hearing, and all retired to rest. At three a.m. the man awoke with the blood flowing from his mouth, and, unable to speak a word, fell back a corpse. He had heard God's message *for the last time!* Had he received it? The day will declare it; but now, dear reader, apply the story to your own case. You know well enough, as you read this, whether you are saved or not; whether, if you die to-night (and you may), you are eternally lost; or saved with an everlasting salvation. You have the message, "God so loved the world, that He gave His Son." The debt is paid; the punishment of sin borne for the believer; God's own Son has borne it, God gave Him up to do it; and more, God is eternally glorified about it, and now He brings Himself before you in these blessed words: "He commendeth His love" (not yours, mind, but his), "toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners" (that is the condition you are in this moment, if not a believer), "Christ" (oh, think of it, the Christ of God, the Brightness of Glory, the Lamb, the Son of the Father, Jesus the Saviour of sinners) "died for us."

Do you believe it? Have you received it? Can you say, "He died for me"? Mind, it may be the *last time* you hear it, the *last message* you will have; "CUT IT DOWN" may go forth within an hour. Little thought that young man, little thought the preacher in the street, little thought the young wife by his side, little thought I when I opened the window, when I spoke the words, ~~that~~ I was addressing a soul for the last time on

this side eternity. O God, awaken an unsaved one reading this! *Great God, make thy voice heard.* Perhaps it is the *last time* this dear soul will hear of thy goodness, and if they will not hear thy voice in grace they must hear it in righteous judgment.

One word more, and I have done. This paper will test you, my reader; if you dislike reading it, if the subject is unpleasant to you, and you put it from you, depend upon it YOU ARE UNSAVED, and that is why you dislike the truth it contains. If you are saved, and know it, you will be asking God to bless the truth to others; and praising Him for the grace that opened your eyes, and "turned you from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God: that you might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in Christ."

Trifle then no longer; rest not on the chance of being saved some day, of hearing and receiving the message when you like; another opportunity may never come, THIS MAY BE THE LAST TIME. Do not put it off, but "*to-day*, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

E. C.

WHY WILL YE DIE?



WAS visiting in a village in Lincolnshire, towards the end of the summer, when I came to a better kind of house, and knocked. The door was opened, and I found the inmates of the house were an old man, his wife, and a servant, who was just then very busy washing the floor. The husband was in the big chair in the corner, reading his news-

paper, and seemed to take no notice of my being at the door. I gave a little book to the wife, and spoke to her of the Lord Jesus and His love. She was pleasant, and even asked me to come in; and much I regretted afterwards that I had not done so; but as they were so busy I did not like to hinder them, and after asking them to come to our preaching that night in the village, I passed on to other houses.

Two days after, that same old man whom I had seen in the chair, started as soon as he had had his breakfast to a village two miles off, to collect some money that was due to him. See him as he walks slowly along; his thoughts no doubt busy about the money he was going to collect. He has at one part of the road to cross the railway; there is a train coming, but he does not look about him much; besides, he is advanced in years, and his eyesight is rather gone. The engine-driver sees him crossing the line slowly, and whistles loudly to let him know his danger; but he hears not and heeds not the whistle. Why? Because he was very deaf. A moment more and that poor man is cut to pieces and is in eternity. How was it that this man was killed in this terrible way?

Had he no warning of his danger? That was not the reason; the whistle was heard a good way off, but he was deaf, and heard it not. Now that is just the condition, spiritually, of thousands. You, dear unconverted reader, have you not been warned? have you not been urged to flee from the coming wrath? Surely you have; but you have, alas! till now, been deaf to the warning, and one moment more you too may be in eternity, and your soul lost through turning a deaf ear to the warning notes of the gospel. Ah, dear friend, if

you lose your soul, if *you* miss your way, it will not be for want of warning, it will be your own fault I feel sure. Has not God spoken once, yea, twice also to you? What will He say the next time He speaks? Perhaps it will be the same word that He spoke to the rich man in Luke xii., "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

How gracious of Him not to have cut you off before this. His long-suffering is salvation, and He still lingers for you in love, saying to you this day, "I am the door: by me if any man enter ~~in~~ he shall be saved." (John x. 9.) Remember this, however, that you may be close to the door, but safety and happiness are only to be found *inside* with Jesus.

"He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. xxix. 1.)

A. F. R.

"WONDROUS BLESSING."



H! what blessing, what wondrous blessing, is brought home to the poor, aching, harassed, anxious soul, when it is given to see that *that* God whom it despised, that Jesus whom it crucified, that Spirit whom it resisted, are for it! Oh, what gladness to receive daily proofs that it is one upon whom God is looking in love, in pity, and that He is for it! As the Lord, speaking of the children of Israel, says, "I have seen the affliction of my people, and am come down to deliver them." Oh, what wondrous extent of love? Nor height, nor depth, can reach or fathom it!

J. N. D.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“I WILL FEAR NO EVIL.”

TWO women sat talking together in a hamlet in the West of England, about the *possibility of knowing the forgiveness of sins in this world.* One of the two believed it to be possible; the other did not. The one who did believe it endeavoured, upon the authority of God's word, to show her friend that God had laid upon Christ, when He was upon the tree, the sins of all who believed in Him, and that He put them all away for ever before He left the cross; that He is now in heaven without them, and therefore that they are all gone—gone for ever from Christ, and for ever from all who trust Him.

Did not JESUS *say* to the woman in Luke vii., “*Thy sins are forgiven*”? and does not the apostle John, in 1 John ii. 12, say, “I write unto you, little children, because *your sins are forgiven* you for His name's sake”? and do not Eph. i. 7, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the *forgiveness of sins*, according to the riches of His grace;” Col. i. 14, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, *even the forgiveness of sins*;” and Rev. i. 5, “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood,” prove beyond a doubt that all

saved persons ought to *know* that their sins *are* forgiven them, and to praise God and the Lamb for it?

Annie W., a little girl of about twelve years of age, the daughter of the woman who believed, sat and listened to the conversation between her mother and her friend, and drank it all in. Anxious about her soul, she went upstairs, shut the door upon her, and kneeling down, asked God to forgive her all her sins, and to let her know it before she got off her knees. Sweetly came the words of Jesus to her soul, "Thy sins *are* forgiven," which her young soul believed. She thanked Him for forgiveness.

Annie's mother was taken seriously ill, and for some months she remained in that state, and then it was that the young disciple waited lovingly and constantly upon her, and looked after the comfort of her father and the rest of the family. *Love is unselfish*, and is glad to seize opportunities of showing love to others, and especially at home in the family circle. But soon Annie herself was taken ill, with an illness from which she never recovered, and that made long and sad work with the poor body. But as the lapidary's wheel takes off the roughness of the apparently ugly stone, and discovers exquisite beauties in it, so did the trying sickness bring out what God had wrought in Annie's soul, and show most clearly the beauties of the "divine nature" which had been implanted in her.

Many Christians visited Annie, by whom they were always welcomed; for she loved to hear them speak of Him who had loved her, and given Himself for her, and who had told her that her sins were all forgiven.

Whilst Annie was lying ill a most gracious work of God's Spirit broke out in her neighbourhood, and many precious souls were truly brought to God; and it was a very real joy to Annie to know that some of the young people with whom she used to associate were among the number of the saved. But it was a still greater joy to her that she was nearing home. Jesus was becoming daily increasingly precious to her, and she had intense longings to see Him and be with Him.

The grace of God that had saved and kept her now shone brightly in her. She not only loved to hear about the blessed Lord, but she loved to speak about Him. When told she was dying, she smiled with joy at the thought of so soon being with the Lord, and repeated, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me."

Her mother said, "The valley is not dark, is it?"

"Oh, no! it is bright—it is beautiful."

"Yes; the Lord Jesus has been through the valley, and lit it up for you, my child."

She said, "Yes; I heard the voice of Jesus say, Come *unto me* and rest. I shall soon be at rest—at home. Jesus, blessed Jesus, thou art precious unto me."

As her sight grew dim, so that she could not see her kind devoted mother, she said, with a sweet forgetfulness of self, "Don't *you* be afraid, mother; I hope I shan't frighten you;" and then, without a fear, murmur, or struggle, she sweetly fell asleep in Jesus. A few days after devout men carried her body to the grave, and around it we spoke of the positive, comparative, and superlative blessedness of being a Christian. The *positive* blessedness—*living* Christ (Phil. i. 21); the *comparative*

—to depart and be *with* Christ (Phil. i. 23); the *superlative*—for Christ to come again, raise the bodies of all who sleep in Him, change the bodies of all who live in Him, and take all away in the chariot of the clouds to meet Him in the air, “and so shall we *ever* be *with the Lord*.” (1 Thess. iv. 15–18.) And then, having sung a hymn of praise, we left the body of Annie in the village burial-ground, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

“BE YE ALSO READY.” Are *you ready*, dear reader? Oh, where will you spend ETERNITY? Will it be spent with Jesus, His saints and angels, in the peerless heights of everlasting glory, or with the lost in the fathomless depths of the lake of fire? If you are not saved, I beseech you no longer to refuse the love of God. Reject not the Christ of God! Resist not the testimony of the Spirit of God, but at once, *where* you are, just *as* you are, and just *now*, believe in God, who delivered Christ “for our offences,” and raised Him again “for our justification,” and you will be *saved*, and *ready* for death or Christ’s second coming.

H. M. H.

CONVERSION TO GOD.

WHAT a wonderful thing is conversion to God! and as blessed as wonderful. No marvel that the Spirit of God should call it an “*illumination*”—“After that ye were illuminated” (Heb. x. 32); or, as in 1 Peter ii. 9, “Out of darkness into His *marvellous light*.”

How vastly different is true conversion from any mere reformation of ways. Conversion affects

the springs of life, the affections, the conscience, and carries its results to the utmost activities of conduct. It involves reformation, but it signifies a great deal more.

CONVERSION TO GOD IS A GLORIOUS REALITY.

"I'm so sorry that I went to that meeting," said a young person on her way home one Wednesday night. *"This has been the happiest day I ever spent,"* said the same on the following Sunday evening, after she had attended a meeting exactly similar. In both of these meetings the truth of the gospel was declared: Man ruined and hopeless; all, moral or immoral alike, unsparingly denounced as "condemned already," and deserving *their* part in the lake of fire, which is the second death.

But not that alone; Christ was preached as Saviour. Now the first part of the truth had reached this young soul in living power; and the Spirit of God had made the feeling of her lost condition utterly intolerable. Hence the regret expressed. And, may I ask, is it possible for a criminal to hear the sentence of death proclaimed and yet remain indifferent? He may. But not so when a sinner has been convicted of sin by the truth of an omniscient and sin-judging God.

This was her position. She was "*convinced of sin.*" The knife had entered her conscience. *Self* had been laid low. Oh, the awfulness of that sight!

My reader, *have you ever seen yourself?* If not, let me urge on you, as part of your devotions, the prayer of the poor Highland kitchen-maid, "LORD, SHOW ME MYSELF." *Self* must be seen, known, felt, judged, condemned, and then apprehended as set aside at the cross in order to peace with God. Conversion is a tremendous

thing indeed, although precious beyond conception.

Ere two days had gone, the other side of the truth had been received. The anxious soul had seen the Good Shepherd giving His life for the sheep; and then giving these sheep eternal life, and then putting them in His almighty hand, and lastly, challenging any one to take them thence. What a Shepherd! What a life! What security!

Then came, of course, the "*illumination*," and the "*marvellous light*," and the easily-understood expression—" *The happiest day I ever spent.*"

"What tongue can express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love?"

"O, taste and see that the Lord is good." Such is the language of all who know Him. The heart is filled with light, and joy, and peace in believing. How different to the mere act of outward reformation!

J. W. S.

"THERE WERE TWO."

"**P**EOPLE say sometimes, I shall take my chance with the dying thief. Ah! but with which of them? There were two."

These were the words I heard from some one preaching in the open air as I passed on to the railway station at —, and my mind has again and again recalled that solemn story of Luke xxiii. "*There were two.*" Yes indeed. One went from the side of the Lord Jesus to the paradise of God, the other from His side to an everlasting hell. Man, in his enmity against God, preferred a murderer to His Son; asked life for the life-taker, but nailed the life-giver to the cross.

Release unto us Barabbas; but away with Jesus, "crucify Him, crucify Him."

Two things met in that cruel cross—the enmity of man against God, and the love of God to man. The heart of man was there displayed in all its awful malignity and hatefulness to God, and there too the heart of God was manifested in His wondrous mercy to the guilty and the lost. Yes, reader, your heart, my heart, was there displayed; for "as face answereth to face in water, so the heart of man to man."

Listen. *"He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for he said, I am the Son of God."*

"He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

"The thieves also, which were crucified with Him, cast the same in His teeth. If thou be the Son of God, save thyself and us."

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." And one said unto Jesus, *"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, this day shalt thou be with me in paradise."*

What a translation! "Made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." Straight from the cross of ignominy and shame to the paradise of God. Hear his dying testimony to the spotless humanity of the blessed Lord: *"This man hath done nothing amiss;"* and to the justice of his own sentence *"we receive the due reward of our deeds."* He owned the One by his side crucified in weakness as Lord and King, asking to be remembered in that kingdom whence all that is vile and unjust will be excluded; and what an answer he gets from the blessed Lord

Jesus. Not only paradise, and that "*this day*;" but "*with me*." Yes, this is the heaven of the believer in Jesus—"with Him," and "*like Him*," and that "*for ever*."

If man was *just* in putting this poor malefactor out of this world, God was in *justice*, as well as in *mercy*, taking him home to His presence above, on the alone ground of the precious blood of the One hanging by his side. God could thus be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. And what of the other thief? He died impenitent, a rejecter of Christ, and therefore a rejecter of mercy; for while it is a blessed fact that God is rich in mercy, it is only in Christ, and through Him, that mercy can reach us. How could God accept one who despises His beloved Son?

Reader, "*there were two*." With which of them will you spend ETERNITY? Ah! ponder the solemn thought, the awful alternative; an eternity of unsullied bliss with Jesus, or the blackness of darkness for ever with the devil and his angels. "*Be reconciled to God*." That gracious Saviour's heart is the same to-day as when He hung upon that cross. He says still, "*Come unto me*." Reject not this offer of mercy; it may be your last.

"*Now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation."

W. R. H.

THY SINS ARE FORGIVEN.

IT is sweet to trace the Lord's gracious dealings with different individuals, as presented to us in the gospels. And perhaps none is more telling or touching than the case of the woman in Luke vii. It cannot fail, as we dwell on the circumstances, to present to

our hearts a picture of the grace of God, and is a practical unfolding of those words, "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound." How God delights to magnify His grace, to gain the confidence of poor lost man. What an introduction! "Behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner." A noted person, a sinner (*v.* 37); a person known for her badness. And here lies the secret of her approaching Jesus; she was convinced of her state. We are not told of the unseen work of the Spirit of God with this woman, whether long or short. That the work had been done is quite clear, and that it was deep too. To this the alabaster box, the tears, the washing the Saviour's feet, the wiping them with her hair, and the kissing them, all testified. Repentance and faith are clearly traced in these things. Deep inroads had been made upon her conscience as to her guilt; and deep inroads upon her heart as to His grace; the generation of good people had set at nought God's testimony of righteousness in John, and the testimony of grace in Jesus. Of the one they said, "He has a devil;" of the other, "A gluttonous man, and a winebibber." Thus ended the controversy. "Wisdom is justified of all her children." (*v.* 35.) "A generation pure in their own eyes." (Proverbs xxx. 12.) But before us stands a woman of another generation, known as sinners; she dare not set at nought righteousness, nor despise grace. This surely is wisdom's child; the Spirit of God had made her wise; she has been found out; hidden emotions can no longer be suppressed; grace and truth had done their work; she comes, drawn by cords of love divine; she is at His feet. It might have been that she had heard His loving voice, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour

and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;" "and he that cometh I will in no wise cast out." And now the moment had arrived; she can resist no longer; every restraining power that would hinder must give way. Grace drew her from darkness into light, not because she was a little better; doubtless, there had been moments when she thought herself too bad to come to Jesus; but now she sees herself too bad to stay away. Happy moment in your history, my reader, when it comes to be too bad to keep from Jesus. His grace and her guilt combined could have alone tempted her to put her foot across the threshold of that Pharisee's house, even had she been invited; but now it was irresistible. There was love beating in that heart toward her, notwithstanding all her guilt. The One who knew her every sin loved her, though all in this world beside, even her nearest and dearest friends, had given her up, scorned and spurned her; but here was One who loved her truly—a friend of publicans and sinners. This breaks her heart; still, as yet, her conscience is not clear. Perhaps the Lord had two reasons for relating the story of the debtors—to convince Simon, and to deepen a sense of grace in that trembling sinner's heart. No doubt she listened with breathless attention to every word that fell from His gracious lips, and wondered what the end would be. As for Simon, up to this point he had no sense as to whose presence he was in, knew not the greatness of His person, knew not the largeness of His heart; he knew there was a notorious sinner there, but dreamt not of a Saviour's love. But how different with that poor woman! Every word to her was of the deepest interest. Doubtless she had noted well the difference between the debts—

one, five hundred pence; the other, fifty; but this was gospel to her. When they had nothing to pay, He frankly forgave them both. In this she learns the divine principle of how she can get ~~her~~ sins forgiven. Grace! It matters ~~not~~, fifty or five hundred pence; man has been proved, beyond a doubt, to be unable to pay anything; then it ~~must~~ be of grace. Hence we are told in Romans iii. (where man is brought into court and proved guilty), "*Being justified freely by His grace.*" (v. 24.) Quite true, redemption in Christ is the basis upon which a Holy God can thus act in eternal forgiveness. The cross has declared His righteousness. My reader, have you been forgiven thus? or is it a matter yet unsettled? If the latter, let me appeal to you ~~at~~ this very moment, and beg of you to linger no longer, but to believe God's testimony concerning yourself as a sinner, and concerning Jesus as a Saviour, and be saved. God forgives frankly, gives freely, and never repents. (Rom. xi. 29.) He never gives me eternal life, and then repents of it. No; even though the sinner may despise His gift, and turn a deaf ear to His call of mercy to-day, and thus seal his own eternal doom in the wild fierce flames of the lake of fire. He cannot repent; man, not God, must be the repentant one. What remorse there will be in hell, and all real! It is real to-day that Jesus receives sinners; will you come as such? To return to the woman, the ground is now fully prepared for the seed; her extremity was God's opportunity; grace takes root in guilt's soil. To ~~this~~ the thief on the cross, the woman in the eighth of John, Samaria's daughter (John iv.), and the publican are all witnesses. "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet

sinners, Christ died for us." "And He said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven." (v. 48.) These words to Simon may have been of little worth; but to her they were more than "apples of gold in pictures of silver," and were drunk in more eagerly than rain by ground when parched by summer's heat. They were indeed a welcome shower to her—"Thy sins are forgiven." Here conscience finds a healing balm; His word is abiding; His grace for her heart, His imperishable word for her conscience. Nothing less will do for you, my reader; you may restrain conscience with the happiest feelings, and the sweetest imaginations, but you cannot silence it, or purge it. The moment must come when it will break through all. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." But if God tells me my sins are forgiven, then my conscience is at rest. "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." The blood of Christ is the remedy. (Heb. ix. 14; 1 John i. 7.)

Oh, happy woman! happy day for thee when the blessed news reached thine ear. Forgiveness of sins is to-day's news; but the day is closing in; its gospel sun will soon set; the supper has long been spread; if the door closes ere night, and you are still outside, hope must die in dread despair, and you "of all hope bereft, and to judgment left," for ever to wail and weep.

Oh, indifferent soul, wake up! Eternal night is a long one; thine eyestrings may break in a few hours. Then trifle no longer, but come to Christ now. "Delays are dangerous." "Procrastination is the thief of time," and its road leads to the regions of the damned. No traveller was ever safe for five minutes on it. The feet of thousands have slipped through it, and are consigned to hope-

less night for ever. My reader, pause one moment. What will it cost you to die in your sins? Have you counted the cost? (See Rev. xx. 10-15.) Sinner, once again, before your breath stops. In these broken lines mercy lifts her voice, saying, "Why will ye die, since Jesus receives the vilest, and turns not away from the feeblest faith that trusts Him?" May the exhibition of grace displayed in Luke vii. encourage thee to come. His parting words to her were, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." There cannot be perfect peace, unless I know that I am saved; not what she felt, but what the Lord said, was gospel to her. May it be the same to you. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 9.)

Before you lay this paper down, let me again entreat of you to come to Him; then forgiveness of sins is yours, and eternal life, and a glorious prospect that nothing can blight, of soon being with Himself for ever and ever. (1 John ii. 12; v, 13; 1 Thess. iv. 16-18.

E. M.

"GOD IS LIGHT, AND GOD IS LOVE."



WHAT a moment when the searching light of God's presence first breaks in upon the sinner's heart, of which God's word declares, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart." (Jer. xvii. 9.) And, dear reader, it may be thy heart has been closed, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and perhaps even

three score years and ten, against the light. Oh, the condition of thy immortal soul, thy sins of years, thy rejection of Christ, that blessed one who said, "I am come a light into the world, *that whosoever believeth* on me should not abide in darkness." (John xii. 46.) Thy present is dark; what of thy prospect for *eternity*? God's word speaks of "outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. viii. 12.) You say, I know I am a sinner, and the thought of meeting God in my sins strikes terror to my heart. And have you ever thought, that the holiness of God cannot tolerate one sin in his presence? and what greater proof could we have than that which the cross of Christ gives? There that spotless one was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Cor. v. 21.) Listen to His cry, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. xxvii. 46.) And is that nothing? God grant it may be everything to you henceforth; there on the cross the light of God's holiness searched that blessed one through and through. And God has found in Him the perfect answer to His own heart, and His precious finished work has met every claim of God's eternal throne. Surely the anxious soul must own it is enough. True it is you cannot get away from God, and meet Him you must, either in grace, or in judgment. But while we bear witness that "God is light" (1 John i. 5), we also witness that "God is love." (1 John iv. 16.) And the cross of Christ gives the fullest possible proof. Oh, may you learn it for yourself, in the light of God's own presence! That light detects and discovers to the sinner his true

condition, which when owned, like Job of old, when he said, "Behold, I am vile" (Job xl. 4), or, like the prodigal, "I have sinned" (Luke xv.), God, in the fulness of His love, runs out to meet him, and covers him with kisses. Oh, what love, flowing out as it does in all its blessed fulness, since Jesus accomplished redemption's work!

And now, dear reader, if still unsaved, remember God's word declares that "all have sinned" (Rom. iii. 23); and we beseech you to own the truth of your condition in His presence. Take God's side against yourself, which is true repentance, and receive *eternal life*, the gift of God. Do not put it off, do not delay. *Now* the light still shines, and the love of God is still being shed abroad in the hearts of believers by the Holy Ghost. *Soon* the light will be gone, and darkness and judgment will follow, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. How deeply solemn! But for the believer, who is brought into this wondrous place of light, liberty, and blessing in Christ, how sweet it is to own in His presence "our every joy on earth, in heaven, we owe it to thy blood." And the light of God's presence only brings out the perfection of His work, and the deep inestimable value of that precious blood, which cleanseth from all sin (1 John i. 7), and makes a poor, vile sinner whiter than snow; and that precious glorified Christ is *now* the object for the believer's heart, and *soon* we shall walk with Him in white. Once I dreaded the light; now I am happy as I walk in it in communion. May it be yours, dear reader, to walk no longer in darkness, but have the light of life.

W. H. O.

AN ECHO.

SOME years ago a servant of Christ was preaching in a large public square, formed by lofty and elegant buildings, in one of our manufacturing towns. Very earnestly he told out the glad tidings of God, and in the fervour of his spirit shouted out at the top of his voice those well-known and precious words, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." As he paused, there was heard following his words the very distinct echo—" *hath* everlasting life."

Some deem it presumption on our part when we say we have everlasting life, and think if we said that we hope to have it eventually, or that we trusted it might be so, it would be more becoming. What false humility! It is pride and presumption to dare to call in question the word of the God that cannot lie; it is true humility to receive and believe it with the simplicity of a child. Ought the echo to have altered the words of the preacher into, "*May hope* to have everlasting life"? Surely not. An echo returns the words exactly as they are pronounced; and just so simply should our hearts respond to the word of God.

"He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." Has the word come home to you, dear reader, laden with all the love of God's heart, the love which led Him to give His well-beloved, His only-begotten Son, that you might not perish, but have everlasting life? If it has, then echo it back to Him, laden with all the joy of your own heart in the realization of the blessed fact—
"Hath everlasting life."

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

AN OLD PROFESSOR SAVED.

BELOVED H. M. H.,—Did I ever tell you, or have you ever heard from anyone else, how M. T—— got his soul exercised, and afterwards saved out in Nova Scotia? It was very blessed, and striking too, so I will put down what I can ; for God may arouse and convert someone else as they read the account.

Never shall I forget the old man's face as he sat on the front seat, away on my left hand ; misery was depicted on every feature, and no wonder. For twelve long weary months he had been troubled by God about his sins, had been passing through soul trouble ; he got roused up under the faithful preaching of G. N——. Oh, how merciful God was to this aged one ! I should judge that from twenty-five to seventy he had been a thoroughly reformed man, had given up swearing, had abstained from strong drink, and to his morality had tacked on "the form of godliness," being a regular baptized communicant ; but God's eye was on this guilty one, and at the age of seventy a heaven-sent message reached his soul, and he felt convinced, had he died—albeit he had reformed, was respectable and respected, as well as *outwardly* religious—he must have gone to the pit of unutterable anguish and never-ending woe, "where *their* worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 44.) He had left God out of his calculations, but the words "Ye *must*

be born again" pierced him to the quick, and left him a condemned, guilty sinner, stripped of his self-righteousness under the holy eye of a sin-hating God. Old M. T—— stood high up in the estimation of his fellow-townpeople, and well in his religious community; but before God he was an unconverted, unforgiven sinner. The "new birth" with him was "the one thing lacking. Strange that people overlook or seek to explain away this verse, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God;" but there it stands, and must abide. All man's explanations can never erase it; but heaven's door must for ever be barred against every soul of man who neglects it. It was rather remarkable, humanly speaking, that M. T—— came to my meeting, he was such a regular attendant at his own place; but come he did, and that very afternoon he got "peace and joy in believing." The Scripture which God used to set him free was, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life;" and whilst explaining that it was not believing about the Son, or simply believing the Bible (for he had done this all his life), but there must be a living faith in Jesus, the Son of God, upon the Father's throne, and that whoever really had faith in the Son, let it be ever so small, God's word declares that "he that believeth on the Son" (not *hopes* to get, but) "*hath* everlasting life," a present, blessed reality. Well, there and then on the very bench he set to his seal that God is true, and he knew for a divine certainty that he had "passed from death unto life" on the authority of Christ's own words: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on ME *hath* everlasting life."

This then was enough for him. God had spoken.

first a year before the words, "Ye must be born again," which had thoroughly aroused him from his death-like slumber and false profession. Now the same voice had set him free. How true the words, "If the Son shall set you free, ye shall be free indeed;" and so he was "free indeed!" His heart became full, his face shone, his cup ran over, and at once he confessed the Lord Jesus as his own dear Saviour. From this time he endeavoured to walk so as to please and glorify Him who had "loved him, and washed him from his sins in His own blood." It was now no longer the miserable drudgery of a soul in bondage to sin and Satan, but the happy, intelligent service of a freed man; not for many months, however, for he was to be called on high "to be with Christ," with whom his happy spirit now is, waiting with Christ, whilst we on earth wait for Him, who has said, "Surely I come quickly."

"Soon He will come, the saints shall be raised;
We who remain alive shall be changed;
Then all caught up at His blessed call,
Changed to His likeness once for all."

I have written this short account, thinking you might put it in "*the Salvation of God*;" and if so, I do hope and pray that some unconverted readers may get blessing from God through it.

Affectionately in Christ, your brother,

H. T.

A STRIKING DIFFERENCE.

THE train for Maidstone was not due for another fifteen minutes, as one day, I entered the waiting-room of the little country station of Kemsing. An old man was its only occupant.

While standing waiting till the ticket-office was opened, my eyes glanced round the walls, and I was greatly struck by two announcements of a very different character.

On one wall I noticed a Scripture-roll, with the following words printed thereon :

“ALL HAVE SINNED,

and come short of the glory of God.” (Rom. iii. 23.)

“But God commendeth His love toward us, in that,

WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS,

CHRIST DIED FOR US.” (Rom. v. 8.)

“NEITHER IS THERE SALVATION IN ANY OTHER ; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.)

On the opposite wall was suspended a large placard, headed, in bold type, CAUTION ! and which was to the effect that a boy, having been caught throwing stones at a train, was brought up before the magistrate, and obliged to pay a certain fine, with costs, or in default thereof to endure a week's imprisonment.

Turning to the old man, I said, “What a striking difference there is between these two statements.”

“That there is,” said he.

“Yes,” I replied, “the one tells us of a lad who, having committed an offence, was brought before the judge ; the evidence was heard, his guilt proved, and he himself obliged to pay the penalty of his misdeeds. The other tells us that we have *all* offended against a holy God ; the charges brought against us by divine justice are undeniable, *our* guilt has been proved beyond the possibility of a question—yes, every mouth stopped, and all the

world *guilty before God* ; but instead of our having to bear the penalty ourselves, it tell us that another has borne it for us, even Christ, the Son of God, who 'died for us' on the cross. What a contrast ! The one is the law, the other is the gospel."

"Ah, that is a difference," said he ; "but I'm afraid, sir, I've put off thinking of *that*" (pointing to the Scripture-roll) "too long. I've not thought of that as I should."

"That may be," I replied ; "but, thank God, it is not yet too late. Even though you have put it off so long, there is salvation to be had in the name of Jesus NOW for you ; but remember, if you put it off any longer, even another day, it may come to *this*" (pointing to the railway company's caution), "and you yourself will have to endure the everlasting penalty of your own sins against God."

"Well, sir, I suppose if I ask aright I shall be saved ?"

"Let us hear what God says," I replied.

"'What must I do to be saved ?' Now, what is the answer ? Ask aright, pray, do your best, turn over a new leaf—any of these ? No. What then ? '*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*'"

A Christian friend who was with me gave the old man some little gospel books as the train was coming up, and we parted, probably never to meet again on this earth.

May God bless this simple story to you, dear reader. Do not put off the consideration of these matters till the day of judgment. *Then* not only will your guilt be proved, but your doom will be fixed, and that for eternity. Oh, turn to Jesus *now*, and trust in His precious blood, which "*cleanseth from all sin.*"

A. H. B.

"GOD OUR SAVIOUR."



HERE is nothing more wonderful or more blessed than to see God Himself becoming our Saviour. The common thought is that God is a Judge. True He will be a judge; but at present He is a Saviour. This is what the gospel, which has been going out for the last eighteen hundred years, declares; viz., how God can be just, and yet the Justifier. Reader, think of that—God a Justifier. For four thousand years God was bearing in patience with man, at the same time bringing out, by testing, what was in man. Made upright, he was placed in the loveliest spot in God's fair creation—placed there as head of it all; he sinned, and was driven out. Then from that till the giving of the law at Sinai you find him utterly lawless, and overrun by his lusts and passions. The law is the next test, and man is seen as a transgressor. When God's will is made known to him, he goes against it. The last and final test is the coming of God's beloved Son into the world, and man hates Him without a cause. (John xv. 25.) The cross is man's answer to God's love.

Reader, gaze on that solemn sight—the beloved Son of God put on that cross of shame by man's hands—and tell me what it reveals of the heart of man. What is the voice of that cross as to man? Is it not that he is not only a sinful, sinning creature, but a hater of God, of God come in grace to this world? Oh, tell me, have you gazed on that cross until you positively *abhorred* yourself? Many think and say that *man is not*

altogether and irreclaimably lost. But once I know the meaning of that cross, that in it I get the full expression of man's heart towards God, I say there is no good in me as a child of Adam. And, oh, blessed fact! it is just then that God meets me. When I wake up to the fact of my terrible position—guilty, without strength, lost—I find God is for me. He has found a way to save me. And there is nothing that so humbles one, that so breaks us down, as the discovery of this, and at the same time banishes all fear from our hearts, and gives us to find our joy in God (Rom. v. 11), instead of hiding from God. (Gen. iii. 8–10.) Could there be a more terrible exhibition of the heart of man than those words give: "Away with Him, crucify Him"—He who had healed their sick, given sight to their blind, made the deaf to hear, the dumb to sing, and the lame man to leap as a hart, fed the hungry, and with His word made the storm a calm, took the victims out of the grasp of the king of terrors, and caused the grave to give up its tenant. There man stands out as the enemy of God; there he has done his worst; the secret of his heart is unveiled; and yet it is just at that point that God comes in. If we follow man as far as he can go in the enmity of his heart—that is, to the cross—we find something more than man's hate there. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" arrests us; a solemn awe creeps over our spirits, as we echo that cry of deepest agony, and ask, Why at that moment, when He most needed sympathy and support, did God forsake the one with whom He was well pleased? The answer to that is, "He (God) 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.) "He was delivered for our offences." (Rom. iv. 25.) "Christ died for *our* sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 3.) "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.)

Now, reader, look at that cross, and tell me, is God *for us*, or against us? He is against *my sins*, but He is *for me*; and to save me, and yet righteously deal with my sins, He gave His Son to bear the judgment due to me on account of sin. Could anything show more clearly the whole truth about man, his utterly lost condition, and the whole truth about God and His love? In the passage of the Red Sea Israel proved that God was for them, and against their enemies, when He removed from the front and came behind, between them and their foes. So in the cross I see that God is against my sins, but for me. And continuing to study that cross, I find that God is as much between me and my sins, as He was between Israel and the Egyptians. Once my sins were between me and God, but that cross has put them behind His back, and I am before His face in all the value of the blood, and in all the acceptance of the person of Christ. On the cross Christ was the Measure of my distance from God as a sinner; on the throne He is the Measure of my nearness to, and acceptance with, God as a believer. To whom am I indebted for all this? God! that God whom I had sinned against; He of whom I was once afraid. Oh, are you giving God credit for all this grace? or are you still giving heed to that deceitful heart of yours, and saying, We must do our part? May God graciously open your eyes to see your state, and your heart to attend to His word.

G. R.

IS GOD NEW ?

NOT long ago, whilst talking to a little girl, the child of respectable and nominally Christian parents, the speaker was much pained by the totally ignorant state in which he found her as to the knowledge of the true God.

She seemed never even to have heard the good news of God's gospel; and when in simple language the story was told of man's great need as a lost sinner, and of God's wondrous love in giving His own Son to put away sin and bring every believing sinner nigh unto Himself, the little girl exclaimed, in childlike simplicity, "Is God new?" Ah! dear child, new to you, and to how many besides!

Reader, do you know the God of the Bible? Do you know His Son?

Remember, no man naturally knows God (1 Cor. ii. 14), neither can any by searching find out God. (Job xi. 7.) There is but One who can reveal the Father to you, and that One is the Lord Jesus Christ—"God manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii. 16), "The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of His person." (Heb. i. 3.)

I daresay you have often noticed, when walking in the cool of the evening by the side of some calm, peaceful lake, upon which the moon's rays are gently shining, how beautifully the starry heavens above are reflected in the waters, and even seem to be brought nearer as we thus behold them.

So gazing upon "the chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely Jesus" (Song of Sol. v.

10-16), the believer sees revealed in human form the image and the glory of God. Jesus is the connecting-link—the one only means of communication between God and man, as it is written, “There is one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Tim. ii. 5.) He can lay, as it were, one hand upon God, and the other upon the vilest sinner (Job ix. 33), and bring the two together in the most real and sweet communion. “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” (2 Cor. v. 19.)

Oh, it is worth worlds thus to know the Lord Jesus, and to be able to say, “My Beloved is mine, and I am His!” (Song of Sol. ii. 16.)

Can you truly say this, dear friend? If not, why not?

You know perhaps what Christ Himself taught us when on earth about this. “I and my Father are One” (John x. 30); “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father” (John xiv. 9); “No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, *and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.*” (Matt. xi. 27.)

Then what follows? Christ’s loving invitation to every weary sinner—“Come unto me, *all* ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you *rest.*” (Matt. xi. 28.)

“Ah!” you say, “that’s what I want; what I certainly have not got—*rest* and *peace.* I have tried to be very upright, and very religious before men; but, oh! I have no *peace*, no *rest.*”

The reason is plain. You have not accepted Christ’s invitation; you have not responded to the call. You mean to do so some day no doubt, when you can no longer enjoy the things of this

world, and death stares you in the face. How many mean to turn to God at the last! How many are leaving the salvation of their immortal souls to be the work of a dying hour!

Friend, be warned in time. The very worst and hardest place to turn to the Saviour is on the death-bed.

The body then is weak and racked with pain, the mental powers are exhausted, the heart is grown hardened by indifference and delay, and in too many cases what alarms and troubles the unsaved sinner at the approach of death is rather the prospect of future punishment than grief of heart over the base ingratitude of the past, in his treatment of the loving Father he has been sinning against and the Christ he has rejected.

Oh, be wise in time! Throw down the arms of rebellion, and flee to Jesus for pardon and for safety; and do so *now*, for "*now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

Dear soul, beware of stifling the voice which now speaks for God, and bears witness to the truth. Beware of trying to satisfy yourself with any counterfeit of man's invention. Beware of the popular, formal, worldly, religion of the day—a religion from which Christ is virtually excluded, and God's own unchangeable Word is set aside to make room for man's wisdom and man's opinions. Beware of falling into a false security by imagining that God is such an one as yourself (Ps. l. 21), and that each may have his own opinion of God, and think of Him or forget Him as convenient. He hath said it, He will make it good: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget* God." (Ps. ix. 17.)

Oh, how many are forgetting God! How many

are even calling in the aid of an outward form of religion to help them to forget and to hide away from God ! *Are you doing this ?*

Oh, may the Spirit of God search your heart, dear unsaved reader, and show you yourself as He sees you ; and then, may the sight of that Father's tender pity, who spared not His own Son, but freely gave Him up *for you* (Rom. viii. 32), lead you to realize, to rejoice in, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.)

"TEN MINUTES TO THREE."

WHEN I was a boy I read and heard of little boys being converted, and then soon afterwards dying. I did not like to hear or read of children being converted, lest I should find out that they had died ; and I was quite afraid of being converted myself, lest I should die also. Now, I do not doubt many of my dear young readers have the same feelings that I once had about being saved while they are young ; but God had His own way with me, and was pleased to save me when I was young, and that is many years ago, and since then I have been trying, in my poor way, to the best of my ability, by the grace of God, to live, serve, and please Him, who gave His dear Son to die for me on the cross.

So you see, my dear young friends, all who are converted young do not die immediately afterwards. But I will now tell you of a dear youth who was converted at twelve years of age.

I was asked to address a Sunday-school at C——, in Derbyshire, three Sunday afternoons.

following each other. There were about four hundred scholars in the school.

The first Sunday afternoon, whilst I was speaking about Jesus dying and shedding His PRECIOUS BLOOD to wash away the sins of little boys and girls, the blessed Spirit of God made many of my young hearers very anxious to be washed from all their sins in *the blood of the Lamb*. Many professed to be saved that afternoon, and also the two Sunday afternoons following. My young friend W—— R—— was there the first time I addressed the children. He had a dear praying father and mother; but he was not saved, and he did not want to be, because he thought that if he were, he would have to give up all his little pleasures, amusements, and companions, and that he would become very miserable, and so he went away, determined that he would not come to Jesus. Nevertheless, the Spirit of God was dealing with him, and made him very unhappy, and caused him to see and feel that there is no real happiness out of Christ.

The second Sunday afternoon, W—— R—— was there again when the address was given, and though many were in tears, he appeared to be quite unmoved; but he was not really so, only he was listening to the wicked, lying suggestions of Satan, and so he spent a second week rejecting Christ; and all who reject Him must be very unhappy, whilst all who accept Him are very happy—they only are ready for His second coming, or for death.

Well, the third afternoon arrived for me to give my last address to the dear young people, and W—— R—— was there again; and whilst I was speaking of the love of God, the preciousness of the blood of Jesus, the hatefulness of sin, the

blessedness of being saved, and the awfulness of living and dying without Christ, W—— R——, as he told me afterwards, felt the burden of his sin to be so heavy that he seemed as if it would press him right through the floor into hell. In his distress he cried to Jesus to remove the terrible burden of unforgiven sin, and he simply looked in faith to Jesus where he was kneeling, and in a moment, he said, the burden was removed, his soul found rest, and his heart was filled with joy; and looking up, his eyes met the clock, and it wanted exactly "ten minutes to three." Yes, at "ten minutes to three," on the second Sunday afternoon in March, 1863, God gave W—— R—— to know that his sins were all forgiven, his soul was saved, and he there and then found happiness in Christ.

It is now many years since God saved W—— R——, and he is living still, a very consistent, godly young man, working for the blessed Lord, who loved him and gave Himself for Him, and he has been used to bring many precious souls to Jesus among the young and the old, and he has long known that—

"Search the whole creation round,
Happiness out of Christ can ne'er be found."

And now, my dear young friends, will you not come at once by faith to Jesus, and find rest in Him? Look at once to Him by faith, and be saved for ever. Receive Him at once as God's gift of eternal life. Give the blessed Lord the sunrise, meridian, and sunset of your days, and then, living or dying, you are the Lord's, and ready for His second coming or death; and should He spare your life, and leave you in this poor world, you will be able by His grace to live for Him and work for Him.

H. M. H.

SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.

IT is a good thing when we have truly learned that all our help is in Another, and that there is nothing on which we can for a moment lean in ourselves; "our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," and what shall be said of our unrighteousness? But not only have we to learn that there is no help in ourselves, but if we look outside there is not one of all Adam's race who can help us either, since all have sinned, and are therefore in the same condemnation as ourselves. What then shall I do? Am I shut up to despair? and is there nothing before me but the yawning mouth of an eternal judgment as the righteous consequence of sin? The glad tidings of God makes known to me One who was not of the fallen race of Adam, but the eternal Son of God made flesh that He might give Himself a sacrifice for sin, and open the way of life and eternal blessing for every guilty sinner. And now, having accomplished that mighty work, and Himself gone to the right hand of God, He has become a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins, and all the results of His atoning work, to those who believe on Him.

These thoughts were suggested to my mind by the scene recorded in Luke xxiii. Three persons are there before our eyes, all in a similar outward position, all suffering death by the ignominy of the cross. Two of those three persons are described as malefactors and thieves; sin, their own sin, had brought them to that terrible moment. They were suffering the penalty of their guilt. Into the soul

of one of those thieves a ray of light from God entered, conscience was reached, self was judged. And now, dear reader, where can he look for help in such a moment? If he looks inwardly, he sees only a malefactor; if he looks at his fellow-creature, he too is in the same condemnation. But, blessed be God, there was One near to him who had done nothing amiss, but who in divine love had come into that place of condemnation to deliver man out of it. The dying robber turned to Him in faith, and passed from the place of his greatest shame into the paradise of God with Jesus. Do you call this a wonderful and exceptional instance of grace? Wonderful indeed it is, but not exceptional. It sets forth the need of every unsaved soul; it sets forth too the character of the grace of God in the case of every converted person, and, thirdly, it furnishes in a striking way the manner in which that grace is made known to the soul. I admit we are not all dying robbers, but, if unsaved, we are in the sight of God under the condemnation that rests upon the fallen race of the first Adam; and if in the judgment of ourselves we turn the eye of faith to that only Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, He instantly ministers all the fruits of His atoning death, which fits the soul that same moment to be in His own company in paradise.

My beloved friend, have you learned these two great and important facts, that the whole of the first creation is under condemnation? and that the soul who has been turned to Christ is fitted by His precious blood to be the meet companion of Christ in the paradise of God? If not, you have yet to learn that "salvation is of the Lord."

H. A. C.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE: HE DIED
FOR ME.”

HERE he lay, stretched on a bed of pain, which might have been the bed of death but for God's mercy. Had it been so he must have been damned; for God says, “He that *believeth not* SHALL be *damned*.” (Mark xvi. 16.)

A friend had informed me of his state by letter, and that he was very anxious about his soul. What was my delight on visiting him to find that anxiety was passed, and he was simply resting on Christ, full of joy and gratitude.

The following is the substance of the account he gave me of his conversion, tears of joy filling his eyes, while every now and then he was stopped by his emotion.

“I have been a very wicked man. My parents were Christian people, and brought me up in a pious way, and for years I kept up a show of religion, went to chapel regularly, and liked to hear a good sermon. Many a time I have repeated after the minister, ‘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.’ But I never arose and went. At last I got so fond of company, and they got so fond of me—for I was the life of any party I was in—that I became much less

regular in my attendance at chapel, and cared less for good things.

"Although sixty years of age, I was as nimble and active on my legs as most young men of twenty, and took great pride in it. But as I was hurrying through the shop one day I ran a long needle into my ankle. I didn't take much notice of it at first, being very hardy, and never having had a day's illness since I can remember. But I was soon compelled to lay up, and erysipelas setting in, abscesses broke out, and my leg has been one mass of abscesses from the ankle almost to the thigh joint. I was brought very nearly to the point of death, and I felt myself to be *as near to HELL as I was to death.*"

He was too weak to go on talking, so, after assuring myself that he was resting on the finished work of Christ, I turned to his wife, who gave me the following particulars of his conversion.

"He was terribly ill, and in deep anxiety of soul, but quite unable to realize his own personal interest in the work of Christ. I bethought me of a little book that your friend had left with us, but I had given it to a woman twelve months before, who was anxious about her soul, and the first story was used to her finding peace. It was called, "Move your finger," and told of a woman who was directed to put her finger on those words in Luke vii., "*Her sins*" (which are many), and she felt that was only too true. She was then directed to move her finger to "*ARE forgiven.*" She did so, and through faith was enabled to believe it. I wrote to your friend, and asked him if he could send me another of those little books. I could not remember the name, but told him that story was in the beginning of it, and another at the end,

something about a man in the middle. He wrote me back that he had not got the book, but sent me these lines (showing me the letter)—

"Three in One,
And One in Three,
And the Man in the middle, He died for me,
And the Man in the middle is the Man for me."

I repeated them to my husband. That line, '*The Man in the middle, He died for me,*' seemed to lay hold of him, and gave him to see immediately his own personal interest in the death of Christ. And day and night, sleeping and waking, I've heard him repeating those words, and in between the dozes, '*The Man in the middle, He died for me; yes, He did die FOR ME.*' Oh, sir, I'm so happy! For five and twenty years I've prayed for that man. I always knew my prayers would be answered, but about two years ago I began to pray afresh; I felt I hadn't half believed as I ought that God would answer me."

My first visit terminated here. On going again I found the patient even happier and more grateful than before. His wife told me he had not been going on so well, as he had been trying to do too much, but that he was now better. I took occasion to turn what she said to account by remarking that now he had found out he had no goodness of his own, he would have to learn that he had no strength either.

"It will take you a long time," I said; "it took you a long while to find out that you had no goodness of your own" (thinking of his sixty years of sin).

"No," he replied, with great eagerness; "no; I saw it in a moment. It flashed upon me like a flash of forked lightning," he exclaimed, stretching

out his hand and imitating its rapid course. "I saw in a moment what a guilty, hell-deserving sinner I was. Had I been left in my agony a few hours longer I must have died and perished; for I could not have stood that agony of mind in the weak state I was then in. I cried out for mercy; but I feel I've been such a coward. When God gave me health and strength I didn't trouble to turn to Him; but when He laid me low, I bellowed out for mercy then." And he fairly oried at his ingratitude.

"Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living." But don't you put it off till then, my reader. Instead of being brought back from the brink of hell, as this dear man so mercifully was, you may "come to yourself" when it is too late, and not cry out for mercy till you're in hell, like the rich man in Luke xvi. But *where* you are, *as* you are, and *just now*, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" — "the Man in the middle who died for me" — "and *thou shalt be saved.*"

W. G. B.

A WORD FOR SCEPTICS.



MY dear —, . . . I was exceedingly sorry to hear that you have been very ill. Such news as this recalls the time when we were fellow-officials in —, of which I am sure the very sight of a letter from me will also remind you. . . .

Will you forgive me for saying that I cannot look back to those days without feeling deep regret that I did not seek to bring before you far

more fully the truths I hold for my own soul's joy, and which are dearer than life to me?

I say this because the reception of these truths has brought with them the possession of everlasting life, of the forgiveness of all my sins, of peace with God, and of a sure and unalterable title to heaven. I have found the Lord Jesus Christ to be my Saviour, and God as my Father, with whom I am going to spend an eternity of glory and unspeakable joy. The tidings of your illness have made me think of you, with a longing desire to set before you that by which you too may be as fully blessed and as perfectly saved. We do not know what is hid in the future of the next twenty-four hours; but I know this, and have seen it proved again and again, that if what men call "the worst" comes to the one who is simply trusting in Jesus, he can and does meet it with a peaceful calmness and a holy joy, that nothing else than faith in Christ could possibly produce. It is when we find ourselves face to face with the "king of terrors" that the very foundations are put to the test. Oh, the blessedness of being on the "Rock of Ages," the foundation laid on a rock, that all the raging floods may beat against in vain! But everything else is but shifting and sinking sand.

I do not know, of course, how far, if at all, you have changed the views you clung to while in ——. If you still retain them, I would beseech of you to give them up at once. You professed to disbelieve the Bible; but without going into external evidence at all in its support, it contains its credentials within itself. It tells you your inmost thoughts; it exposes your heart to you in terms which your conscience tells you are true.

Who could thus read your inmost soul but God? or who could write it down but the One who thus knows it?

But this blessed book goes further. It has not only made known my disease to me, but it has brought a remedy, which *all* who have tried and taken have found perfectly suitable and efficacious. It tells me I am a sinner, deserving the wrath of God; it tells me of God's infinite love in giving His own eternal Son to become man to die on the cross, to bear that wrath which was my righteous due, so that I might be set free.

It tells me I am helpless to do anything to put away one single sin; but it tells me too of a Saviour "mighty to save," one who has *all power*, and on whom, therefore, I can trust with perfect confidence. He has been into the *judgment* that I might be made *righteous*; He has *died* that I might *live*; He has become *poor* that I might be made *rich*. In a word, He took *my* place at the cross that I might share with Him *His* place in glory. All this blessedness God offers you—yes, and beseeches you to take, only asking that you would honour Him by taking Him at His word, and believing with your whole heart on the Lord Jesus Christ, on the efficacy of His finished work and of His atoning blood. Won't you take Him at His word? "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," are His blessed words. Won't you come and prove them? Do you ask how? Ah! *He* will see the moment your *heart* first turns to Him, and like the reception that awaited the returning prodigal will be the welcome you will get. "The father saw him a *great way off*, and *ran*, and fell on his neck, and *kissed him*." May God in His mercy bless you,

my dear —, and turn you to Himself, to His blessed word, to His beloved Son, to His finished work, to His precious blood, that cleanseth from all sin; and may you find life and peace in believing.

With my best wishes and earnest prayers, ever
yours very sincerely, H. P. A. G.

"HAPPY AND COMFORTABLE."



POOR old woman in a country village, about eighty years of age, was seated one evening by her fireside, when a Christian called in at her little cottage to speak to her for a few minutes of the things of the Lord. Taking his seat opposite to her, she listened with marked attention as he spoke to her of Jesus, the only Saviour, and His finished work on the cross. As he paused for a moment, she broke in, "I should like to sit and hear that all day. I should never tell you to go. I wasn't like that once, not till I believed in Christ. It makes one *so happy and comfortable*. I used to be miserable, and make everybody miserable about me, thinking that everybody was doing better than myself. Now I'm happy, waiting for the Lord to come. Sometimes I've wondered how I should get to Him when He does come. But then I've thought, How silly; why, He'd take me."

"What makes you so sure of that?" asked her visitor.

"Because I put my whole trust in Him, and do all I can to please Him, and believe all His promises."

"But how do you know that He would take *you*?"

"Because I believe in Him, and He said He would take *all* who believe."

"But how about your sins?"

"*My* sins are all washed away in Jesus' blood. *He* washed them all away, or I shouldn't be so happy. What a comfort to think Christ died for *my* sins. We can do nothing of ourselves; it is the blessed Lord in heaven did all for us. It is such a blessed thing to think none can take us away from Him."

"Don't you get tired sometimes living in this little cottage all by yourself?"

"Never by myself, sir," replied the poor old woman earnestly; "Christ is always with me. Though I am living alone, I don't fear to die. Without the Lord what should I do? I'm glad you came; it lifts one up a bit. It's a great comfort to see a Christian, when you know he is one. A good many I speak to catches me up, and says, 'You belong to those ——.' I should always come down to the meeting if I was able; I shouldn't sit at home here."

"Why?"

"Because I should hear the word of Christ. Have you time to read to me a little, sir?"

"Oh, yes, Mrs. S——." And, taking the Bible, her visitor began reading a portion of Scripture calculated to cheer and encourage the heart of this simple but real disciple of the Lord. After explaining it to her for a few minutes, for she was not able to read, it was time to part; so he left the cottage.

Beloved reader, how precious to meet with such simple faith and implicit trust and confidence in the Lord in one so ignorant! How true indeed it is that "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him!" Yes; and it is a secret which gives a peace that the world cannot give, understood and

enjoyed by the simplest believer; while the wisdom of the wise, and the understanding of the prudent, keep them utterly blind to it. (1 Cor. i. 19.)

But how is it with you? Can you say, like her, "*My sins are all washed away in Jesus' blood*"? Are *you* happy? If not, *now* is the time to believe on Him. Without Him you are *lost*! If you leave this world without Him, *eternally lost*. (Rev. xx. 15.) "But the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) Do you own you are lost? Then God presents to you "*Christ*." Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. "*All that believe are justified from all things*." (Acts xiii. 39.) "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) To-morrow might be too late. (Prov. xxvii. 1.) "Behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.)

A lost sinner needs a Saviour, and Jesus, the Christ of God, is just the Saviour to meet that need. A present Saviour, and a perfect one. Sinner, will you have Christ? "As many as received Him, to them gave He power (right) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." (John i. 12.) Then, and not till then, will you, like this poor old woman, be truly *happy and comfortable*.
E. H. C.

THE CROSS AND THE GLORY.



THE earnest attention of the reader to a few Scriptures which bring before us the person and work of the Son of God—the blessed Lord Jesus Christ—is affectionately asked; for be assured that all blessing for any

poor sinner rests upon the person and work of Christ—the One given by God the Father to die upon the cross, on the one hand to maintain His glory, and on the other to secure the salvation of the repentant, believing sinner.

First a word as to the life of this blessed One. Born of a virgin in a stable begins His wondrous history here below, who was none other than God manifested in flesh. Amazing grace! God come down to poor sinners upon earth, and not in power, and displayed glory which would have overwhelmed us, but in grace and lowliness: Full of grace and truth He was—meek, lowly, and accessible; but unbendingly faithful to God's interests. But why, we may ask, dear reader, did God thus visit this world of sin and sorrow? Because we were unfit to go into His presence above. Sin and ruin brought Him into this world, looking from our side; grace and goodness, if we look at His side.

But, we may further ask, what did we think of this wondrous visitor, and what treatment did He receive at our hands? Sad, sad story! Let us hang our heads in shame as we tell it. "He was despised and rejected of men," and at the end of His marvellous career He had to say, "They hated me without a cause." He had found it so. Rejection marked His pathway throughout; and thus His life, but especially His death, told out the terrible fact of our utter ruin. "The carnal mind is *enmity* against God." (Rom. viii. 7.) Say, reader, is it not so still? Is He not still "despised and rejected of men"? Every divine beauty was, and is, in Him; heavenly lustre shone around His footsteps; but man, blinded by sin and Satan, perceived it not, and not more now than then.

But He died ; yes, “delivered into the hands of sinful men,” to whose malice He gave Himself up. “Delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God,” He was. In two ways, then, may we regard His death. First, as the deed of man—the outcome of his wretched heart. Yes, to speak plainly, man killed Jesus, the Son of God. But secondly, His death was the fruit of His love ; for He laid down His life in love and obedience to the Father, and to make atonement for guilty rebels.

But upon the cross sorrow and infinite suffering come from another quarter. God enters that scene as a judge, and there displays His righteousness against sin, but His love to the sinner. Jesus is forsaken of God, and openly declares it in words of inexpressible grief, saying, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. xxvii. 46.) Why is this only righteous man forsaken ? At the commencement of His gracious ministry, when about thirty years old, the heavens had opened upon His sacred person, and sealed by the Holy Ghost, the Father’s voice was heard to proclaim Him His beloved Son, in whom was His good pleasure. But now all is changed—outwardly of course—for the cross only served to draw out afresh the Father’s affection for the Son. (John x. 17.) But the truth is, dear reader, that He made “His soul an offering for sin ;” and God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look upon sin. The sins of many were laid upon Him there, and during those three hours of darkness He bore in His holy person the punishment they deserved. Made sin too He was, so that for the believing sinner every question is settled, to be raised no more. Mark well the fol-

lowing Scriptures in confirmation thereof: "Christ died for our sins." (1 Cor. xv. 3.) "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree." (1 Peter ii. 24.) God "sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John iv. 10.) "Who was delivered for our offences." (Rom. iv. 25.) "God 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.) "God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and (as a sacrifice) for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." (Rom. viii. 3.) He bowed His blessed head, for which earth gave Him no pillow; for He was homeless and houseless, and dismissed His Spirit. "It is finished," was His dying cry. Behold then, dear reader, the completion of the most stupendous work ever accomplished; and that not by power, but in suffering.

But now turn, not to His life upon earth, nor to His atoning death upon the cross, but to His resurrection and ascension glory. In Romans iv. 25 we read, He "was raised again for our justification." In Heb. i. 3, that "when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." From the grave of death the Father's glory raised Him, which, with His present seat on high, testify of the Father's satisfaction and delight in His person and work. Having finished everything pertaining to sin, He is now sitting above waiting "till His enemies are made His footstool." Look up, poor doubting one, and see God's glory shining in the face of that blessed Man. What a change! *Below* man spat in it; *above* God's glory illuminates it. Look up, I say, and confess that He who is there was once upon the cross for your sins. Why question this

blessed fact? Hebrews i. 3 shows us that He could not have sat down there unless He had purged away the sins He bore. In another day He will occupy His own throne, and put down evil, and sway His peaceful sceptre over a scene so long marred by sin and Satan. But now in grace God is calling out poor sinners to share the inheritance with Him as His joint heirs; and what is better still, to share His home above, and be "with Him" and "like Him" for ever.

One word more. Believing on Him you stand accepted in His person on high—"accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 6.) "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are *in Christ Jesus*." (Rom. viii. 1.) You may look at the cross and see an end of your sin and sins, albeit you still find sin within; but faith counts with God. What remains but to praise Him for His grace and glory, and to seek, while waiting for Christ to come and receive you to Himself, to "walk worthy of God."

Unpardoned and unsaved one, see that you no longer "neglect so great salvation." T. T. E.

"PERFECT LOVE CASTETH OUT FEAR."

"**I** SHAN'T be so afraid to meet Christ now," said an old lady of ninety-nine years of age. She had lived all that time in the world without facing eternity; but when the end drew near the thought forced itself upon her that she was afraid of death and what would come after. She sent for her medical man and told him her trouble, and he

was able, having been for many years a believer in the Lord Jesus, to point her to the Saviour of sinners. Simply and truly he told her the good news of salvation, even for one who had lived ninety-nine years without wanting to have it. And God blessed His own message at the eleventh hour; for none ever seek Him in vain. She grasped the free pardon offered to her, and peace and rest took the place of dread in her heart. "I shan't be so afraid to meet Christ now," told out that she had found in Him a Saviour instead of a Judge.

God says, "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after death the judgment;" but that judgment had no terror for her now, because Christ had borne it instead of her, as the little child's hymn so beautifully expresses it—

"He knew how wicked man had been,
He knew that God must punish sin,
So out of pity Jesus said,
'I'll bear the punishment instead.'"

Man as a sinner is always afraid of meeting God, and Satan knows this very well, and he has been trying to make man believe that there is no God, and that death has no sting in it. But though he may succeed for a time when life looks fair and promising, the death-bed surely comes with all its terrors for the unsaved soul, and then eternity becomes a reality. Yes, it is a reality that we all have to meet God, and if we have no Saviour in His presence the thought is a terrible one.

We read in the third chapter in the Bible that Adam and Eve, when they heard the voice of the Lord, were afraid, and hid themselves in the trees

of the garden. That was because they had sinned, and they "loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil."

Light has come into the world now in the person of Christ ; it exposes your deeds as evil ; and if you do not like them to be exposed, you are loving darkness and hating the light. Oh, it is much better to have our hearts laid bare in all their wickedness, in the light of God's presence, there to own that nothing but the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin. There is a day coming when man will want to hide in the dust for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of His majesty ; and when they will call to the rocks to fall on them and hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. But the darkness hideth not from God, the darkness and the light are both alike to Him.

What will you do, dear reader, in that day ? Will you flee away and seek in vain for a refuge ? or will you shelter *now* in the Saviour, and find in Him an *everlasting* hiding-place ? "There is no fear in love ; for perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment." C. A. W.

WHAT A CONTRAST !



WHAT an immense difference there is between the position, portion, and prospect of a saint and a sinner.

A saint is one who is separated to God by the Spirit of God and the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A saint is a person who *has* got the present and eternal forgiveness of all sins ; *has* everlasting

life in the Son of God ; *is* saved for ever ; *is* indwelt by the Holy Spirit ; *is* "accepted in the Beloved ;" *is* complete in Christ ;" *is* a member of Christ's body, of His flesh, and of His bones ; and *is* made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

In short, a saint is one who has judgment behind him ; hell shut under his feet ; heaven open over his head ; everlasting glory full in front of him ; there is only a spider's web between him and the glory ; by faith he can see Jesus in glory ; and he only waits for Jesus to rise up, put His feet upon the spider's web, and then he and Jesus will be wrapped in each other's embrace for ever.

" He and I in that bright glory
One deep joy shall share ;
Mine, that I am ever with Him,
His, that I am there."

But a sinner is one who loves his sins and his pleasures in preference to the Saviour and pardon ; he is unforgiven, unpardoned, and unsaved ; he is a refuser of the love of God, a rejecter of the Christ of God, a resister of the Spirit of God, and a deliberate destroyer of his own precious and immortal soul.

In short, a sinner is one who has glory behind his back ; "eternal judgment" staring him in the face ; heaven is closed over his head, and hell is open in front of him ; he is a child of wrath on his road to the lake of fire, and ready for it.

Which are you, a saint or a sinner ?

H. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“FATHER, READ THE THIRD CHAPTER
OF JOHN !”

HIS face shone with that expression of deep joy which is the result of a heart full and running over, as dear —— entered my office. In reply to my question, “Well, what has brought you here?” he said, “I felt I must tell you how gracious the Lord has been to my household; for to-morrow William is to be received at the Lord’s-table.” I really was astonished; for I had in past days known what a trial his sons and daughters had been to him; so I said, “Why how has this come about; His grace is rich, and His long-suffering salvation.” I then heard a story of God’s wonderful ways in grace, which so filled my heart with thanksgiving that I would have you, dear reader, to join with me and this happy father if you are the Lord’s. And if you cannot say, “He is mine, and I am His,” “He loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*,” you might be brought, through His mercy, to learn your need of Him for your very self, ere that moment comes when, in the “twinkling of an eye,” all shall be changed—those who are His for ever with Him; those who are not His for ever shut out from His presence, when “*Too late*” will be the cry. “Come unto me” will be changed into “*depart*.”

“Ah, sir, it is John’s death which has been the
VOL. IV. No. 43.


cause of all the blessing! William, Thomas, and Mary, and William's wife also, are now trusting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus;" and at the very thought of it the dear man's eyes were full of tears—tears of deep joy, of thanksgiving, of praise to Him who works in His *own* way. "That death-bed, sir, was a direct contrast to his life, which was so bad. I had been compelled to turn him from home, and it was his delight to sit with his riotous companions outside the public-house, which he knew I must pass on my way home from meeting, with his mug of ale before him, and thus to bring the ribald jeer and shame upon me. I was sad indeed, and my heart was breaking for my poor boy. How I cried to the Lord for him! Well, sir, I heard one day he was ill, very ill; no hope of recovery. A few short years of sin had done their work; consumption, rapid and deadly, had taken hold of his constitution, which once had been so hardy. The once strong frame was now bowed and broken. My first thought was, I must have him home. I did not doubt for a moment but that he would come; I could not rest. 'John, boy, will you come home?' 'Yes, yes, yes, father!' I said, 'There is no hope here. The doctor says you must read your Bible, and look to Jesus; your only hope is there.' That night I was happy; my boy was repentant, and at home. With tears he had asked my forgiveness. How all the dark past came before him, every cruel word, every wicked deed! All, *all*, came back. 'Twas all dark within, all dark around. Poor boy, what he suffered! He knew he must die, and all that heavy load of sin upon his *head*, his *conscience*! He felt the judgment *just*; he *deserved* to die; he *deserved* to be *for ever* banished

from the presence of a holy God. On the morrow one of the Lord's servants came in to read the Word with poor hopeless John. The portion chosen was the third chapter of the gospel by St. John, and the blessed words of love and grace gently read out—"Ye must be born again" in all their solemn power reached home to the conscience of the stricken man; he felt he could not meet God as he was. 'Yes, I must be born again, *I must be born again,*' rung in his ears. 'Yes; it's true, it's true. But *now what can I do?*' said the poor fellow. 'Listen, 'tis not *you* at all; 'tis *God* who has *done it all*, not you. God has so loved—who and what? why this wicked world. *God* has so loved you, John, that "He gave His only begotten Son that *who-soever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'" At night I went in to see my boy, and his first words were, 'Father, read the third of John.' The next 'twas the same—"Father, read the third of John." The power of the Word reached home to his soul, and very soon peace and joy in believing were his. Two days before he died he called each brother and sister around him, saying to each, 'Take my hand, and promise you will meet me in glory.' One sister could not do this then, but came the next day purposely to do so. He would speak of nothing else but God's love in saving him through the finished work of that blessed One who was lifted up from the earth to draw all men to Him. Now two months are past, and nearly all that family have 'turned to God from idols to serve the living and the true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.'"

Dear reader, do you know the truth of "the third chapter of John?" If not, may God by His

own Spirit lead you into all the deep, deep blessing of it. These are closing days; the Lord is so soon to come. *Are you ready?* It may be your life has been without spot, and you may be able to say, with the young man of Mark x., "All these things have I done from my youth up;" but "one thing thou lackest." "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." God says, "All things are now ready." *Are you?* He waits to be gracious; own you are a sinner to *Him*, and see He has laid the anxious sinner's sins on the head of His own beloved Son. "The Lamb of God"—His blood, through faith in it—"cleanses from *all* sin." G. W. H.

MAN'S RUIN, AND GOD'S REMEDY.

 HERE are two things which are distinctly brought out in the word of God. They are, first, man tried by God in every possible way, and found utterly incapable of doing anything to please God, Romans i.—iii. being God's estimate of what man is: "There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. . . . All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." And not only has man no desire for the things of God, but he is an enemy of God. God has proved it to be so. He sent messengers time after time to Israel, the people who really represent to us what man was at his best, surrounded with everything that was calculated to keep God before their minds. Yet, alas! what a history! God's messengers rejected, and in some cases put to death; and last of all His beloved Son, whom

God in His grace and love did give from His bosom, man has cast out and crucified. Is it any wonder to read, after such a history, "The carnal mind is enmity against God. . . . So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 7, 8.) In short, the wrath of God abideth on every one out of Christ. (John iii. 36.) And now I come to the second thing, which is Christ, the second man, the Lord from heaven, as the One who has glorified God and accomplished His will; where man has failed Christ has triumphed. In every word He spoke, in everything He did, God was glorified, and then at the end of that blessed pathway He offered Himself a sacrifice to God, there He took the sinner's place, there He suffered the judgment of God against sin. It was this that wrung that terrible cry from Him, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" when He who had ever known what it was to have His Father's smile resting upon Him experienced there what human thought can never fathom. All the righteous judgment of God against sin laid upon Him, and now, what is the result? God's righteousness has been satisfied, and He Himself has been glorified. He has raised that Blessed One from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in glory; and now God can come out and meet the sinner, now He *is* beseeching men to be reconciled to Him; "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.)

And now, dear unsaved reader, what remains for you to do? Nothing. The work has been fully done. It is just for you to meet God, and accept that finished work and that blessed

Saviour, who is enough to satisfy the heart of God, and is enough to meet the need of every poor sinner. This glorious salvation is unto all; but only upon them that believe. What God wants is a simple faith in Christ, as the One who took the sinner's place before God. "To Him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Dear reader, have you met God? He is willing, He is beseeching you to be reconciled to Himself; for He has been perfectly satisfied and glorified by the death of Christ, and now He can be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

JESUS, THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

READ LUKE vii. 36-50.

IT is a sweet and touching narrative that the Spirit of God has written in this passage of Scripture. Have you ever read it? If not, perhaps you would not mind doing so, and then see whether I am right in speaking of it thus.

Words of forgiveness, words of salvation and peace, the Lord speaks to a poor woman, who was indeed a sinner beyond the common meaning of that term—words which shut up the fountain of her tears, and filled her with deep, strange, heavenly joy, such as she had never known before.

Simon the Pharisee, who had bidden the Lord to his house, looked on amazed to see one so vile as she at the feet of Jesus, and He suffering her to be there. Had he had doubts as to who and

what the Lord was they were set at rest now, and in his heart he said, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth Him ; for she is a sinner." In Simon's eyes the One who was His guest was less than a prophet, and in thinking so it was made plain that he neither knew Him nor his own need, and the grace that alone could meet it.

And yet Simon lays us under an obligation, in that his sadly sinful thoughts gave occasion to the Lord to show us whereabouts we all are in one of the shortest parables He ever uttered.

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both."

Need it be said that God is the Creditor, and that you are one of the two debtors ?

Neither of them disputed the justness of the debt. That they owed the money could not be denied. 'Tis true one owed ten times as much as the other ; but the point of the parable is not so much in the amount they owed, as in the fact that neither had anything wherewith to pay.

But is this in truth our state ? If He forgive fifteen shillings in the pound, cannot we pay the other five ? Nineteen shillings in the pound, can we not anyhow scrape together the remaining one ? Are we hopelessly insolvent, destitute, and penniless ? Alas ! it is so. We are able to contribute nothing towards the payment of the debt we owe. *"Nothing to pay !"*

Reader, you may be a fifty pence debtor, and I a five hundred pence debtor ; you a little sinner, and I a great one ; but the question for both of us to consider is, Are we able to pay ? Can our

sins be atoned for by works of righteousness that we may do, by the zealous discharge of a round of religious duties, by tears of sorrow and prayers devoutly said? For my part I answer, No! and am free to own that God, the great Creditor, has right and justice on His side if He cast me into prison till the uttermost farthing is paid. My only hope is in His mercy. Is it so with you?

And mercy has come down in the person of the Saviour; and the woman of our narrative stood at Mercy's feet in standing at the feet of Jesus. Her tears fell fast; she said nothing; but the unspoken language of her heart was heard and understood by Him, who was not ashamed to take up her cause in the presence of the proud and haughty Pharisees who were also Simon's guests. The Lord could speak of her sins as being "many," for many they were. But He had power on earth to forgive sins, even as He has now in heaven; so He turned to her and said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." Those who sat at meat with Him exclaimed against this way of grace, and frowned on Him who dared thus to speak; but He heeds them not, and goes on to tell her that her faith had saved her, and that she might go in peace. The five hundred pence debtor was forgiven, saved, while peace flowed into her soul like a mighty river, widening as it went.

Nor let it be forgotten that He whose grace forgave and saved this sinning woman, and turned her feet into the way of peace, had a right to give Himself the joy of doing this; for He was soon to bear in His own body on the tree the sins He so frankly forgave. Righteousness was about to receive payment of the debt, not in so much silver and gold, but in the precious blood of Christ. "He

was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

If you know that you have "nothing to pay," utterly bankrupt, will you not as such address yourself to Him who was, and still is, the sinner's Friend? Precious Saviour, thou hast said that none shall be cast out that come to thee!

W. B.

POWER IN THE WORD.

"Sharper than any two-edged sword . . . a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."—HEB. iv. 12.

"**A**ND how is —— to-day?"



"She's gone! died this morning."

"Died this morning?"

"Yes; and she left a message to tell you she had forgiven you."

"Forgiven me! What had I done to need her pardon?"

"You so offended her last week when you visited her, and reading that portion made her very angry; but some one else saw her after you did, and put the other side of the truth, which she received, and died very happy this morning, leaving the message I have just given you."

Hardly ever had I been more startled than with the announcement of ——'s passing away, and with the message from the dead young woman just delivered to me.

I had been asked to visit ——, who had come home from her place with a bad cold, which had settled on her lungs. I did so, and found that for the first time she had taken to her bed; and there

she lay, evidently never to get up again, an interesting respectable girl of some twenty years.

After a few enquiries as to her symptoms, how long she had been ill, and other such like questions, I said—judging the sort of state of soul I had to deal with—

“I suppose you have always been a good girl, kept your places, and brought home good characters?”

“Oh, yes, sir.”

Finding she was building upon this, I remarked,

“Well, shall we have a look at what God says as to the sort of character He writes in His word for such as you and I are?”

I turned to the third chapter of the epistle to the Romans.

Have *you* ever, dear reader, viewed yourself in that looking-glass; seen *YOUR* full-length photograph; read *YOUR* character as reflected, depicted, told out in the verses commencing at verse 10: “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, *not one* :

“There is *none* that understandeth, there is *none* that seeketh after God.

“They are *all* gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, *not one*.

“Their *throat* is an open sepulchre; with their *tongues* they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their *lips* :

“Whose *mouth* is full of cursing and bitterness :

“Their *feet* are swift to shed blood :

“Destruction and misery are in their ways :

“And *the* way of peace have they not known :

“There is no fear of God before their eyes.”

And further on :

“For there is *no* difference : for *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God ?”

These were the verses I read to ——, emphasizing what has been underlined; looking up occasionally to see the effect of God's word, and noticing how the small hectic spot on each cheek-bone, telling their own tale of what mischief was going on in the poor lungs below, spread, and spread, and spread as I proceeded, till her whole face was crimsoned over. She said little, and I left, telling her I would call the next Tuesday, leaving that two-edged sword to do its own work in God's hands, little thinking I should never see her again; for to my non-professional eye there were no signs of passing away in seven days.


On that day week it was I called in at the house where a cottage-meeting was held to ask after ——, and I received the answer at the commencement of this to my enquiry.

Little did I know how that sword was being handled, nor did I put down that spreading colour from cheek to forehead to anger; but so it was; and after that edge of conviction, of ripping up the stitches of the dear girl's fig-leaved apron of respectability, amiability, morality, another was led in to apply the other edge, and tell of God's dear Son coming into this scene, and meeting all His holy claims, being "set forth to be a propitiation" (as it says a little further down in that same chapter we have referred to) "through faith in His blood." Bit by bit she was led to see that what Christ had done satisfied the holy God, and she found peace in believing, and left the kind message she did for me, which revealed how she had resented the truth (but, like another, found it hard to "kick against the pricks") and the person who had brought it, yet was constrained when the other edge had done its work, and she was happy as one

knowing she was "justified freely by His grace" to send the loving word she did.

Thank God, He knows how to wield His own sword ! And now, dear friend, has your conscience ever been slashed or your heart pricked by the word of the living God till you have looked upon the person speaking to you as one who wished to insult you ? And you resented it immensely ? So did —— . BUT have you, as she, bowed to the other edge, and found that He wounded but to heal, of whom it is said, He kills but to make alive ? *Have you ?* If not, may you now learn that it is hard to "kick against the pricks," and find joy and peace in believing that same Word ; but do not put it off, for that same Word says, "Now"—"to-day." "Now is *the* accepted time ; to-day is *the* day of salvation." S. V. H.

"NOT MY BODY, BUT MY SOUL!"

 DEAR brother and myself were visiting amongst the hills of North Staffordshire, speaking of that lovely One, the Lord Jesus Christ, to poor sinners. In one of the houses where we called we found a poor old woman, nearly eighty years of age, lying ill in bed. After speaking to her of the Lord, she exclaimed, "Not my body, but my soul!"

Praise the Lord, He had showed her that her soul was of far more value than her body. He in one moment brought her face to face with *herself* and her eighty years of sin ; gave her to see that all those years she had served the world and Satan, caring nothing for her immortal soul, never thinking of the eternity to which time was hastening

her along. How is it with you, dear sinner? Are you listening to the god of this world? Remember he is a liar and a deceiver, a hard master to serve, and his wages are death; if you spend all your life in his service you'll gain *nothing but hell*. He tells you, "There's time enough yet;" but God says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Remember, dear sinner, the word of God says, "He that hath the Son hath life: and he that hath not the Son hath not life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." The poor old woman, while speaking to her of the love of Christ, was asking God to have mercy on her. Is not that what each poor sinner needs? not her alone, but all; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Tears filled her eyes, and well they might, soon to face God and all her sins upon her; but God had something for her. He had sent us with a word from Himself, and while talking to her her ears were opened to hear His message; with simple faith she believed on Him that justifieth the ungodly. I think I shall never forget the lonely place where she lived, far off from other habitations, helpless, aged, and ill; yet the Lord knew where she lived, and all about her, and Himself had led us to her. When leaving her we heard her saying to herself, "Jesus is my friend." Blessed be God, He not only pardons your sins, but He becomes your friend.

Dear reader, while passing through this valley of the shadow of death, God is continually warning you to flee from the wrath to come. Are you careless and unconcerned about your immortal soul—living to please yourself? Remember the word of God says, "Rejoice, O young man in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of

thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for these things God will bring thee into judgment." Yes; God hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world by Jesus Christ, the One who died upon the cross, the One who finished a work that was needed for you and for me, and if you set aside that work how can you expect to go to heaven? Jesus says, "Except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." "I am the Way, he that climbeth in any other way, the same is a thief and a robber." Oh, my friend, He is the Door, enter and be saved, before it is too late, and He rises and shuts the door, leaving you outside.

We called again on the old woman, and found her still believing on Jesus. We left her in His hands, knowing we shall meet her in our Father's home on high, where there are no partings.

Dear reader, think on these things; for you must meet God some day, it may be very soon. I do not tell you to do anything to save yourself, but I do tell you, yea, I plead with you, to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

R. G.

STATE AND ACTIONS.

MY DEAR READER,—Will you allow me to say an earnest word to you about your *state* and your *actions*? The Psalmist, speaking by the Spirit, says, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. li. 5); and Paul, speaking by the same Holy Spirit, says, "And were by nature children of wrath." (Ephes. ii. 3.) These verses

prove beyond doubt that *we are all born lost*: from the Queen upon her throne to the meanest peasant in his hut; from the philosopher to the clown; from the millionaire to the penniless pauper; from the upper ten thousand of Belgravia to the dregs of society at Blackwall. Yes, whether it be the monarch in his palace, the monk in his cloister, or the mendicant in the streets, "there is no difference" (Rom. iii. 22); *all are lost*. We have not to go to hell to be lost; WE ARE BORN LOST. God in His mercy give you each to *see* it, *own* it, and to *accept* His remedy! "For the Son of man is come to *seek* and to *save* that which was LOST." (Luke xix. 10.)

"*All we like sheep have gone astray*; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah liii. 6.)

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was LOST, and is found. And they began to be merry." (Luke xv. 24.)

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are LOST: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) These verses show our *state*.

And now a word about your *sinful acts*. Perhaps you think that only great sinners go to hell. Will you allow me to ask how many sins Adam committed before God drove him out of Paradise? One! only one! If God was so holy that He could not have Adam in the earthly Paradise with *one* sin, do you think He will let you into the heavenly Paradise if you have committed one sin? I do not charge you with being a great sinner, but

I know you have been guilty of one sin at least; for God says, "*All* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.)

Now, as sure as God is holy, *one* sin, not washed away in the blood of Jesus, will keep you out of heaven just as much as one million of sins. It required the death and bloodshedding of the Lord Jesus to put away one sin, just as much as to put away one million of sins, and "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from *all* sin." (1 John i. 7.) Tears, prayers, and good works will not put away sins; there is no blood in these things.

Nothing you have done, or are doing, or ever will be able to do, will avail before God to put away your sins. "Faith in His blood" (Rom. iii. 25) will alone put you in immediate and everlasting possession of the forgiveness of all your sins. Now what will you do? Will you trust Him who came "to seek and to save the lost," and have "faith in His blood" for the full remission of your sins? or will you go on refusing the love of God, rejecting the Christ of God, resisting the Spirit of God, and spurning the precious blood of Jesus the Son of God? Remember, if you die in your sins you will be put into your coffin in them, you will be buried and raised in them, you will stand before the great white throne in them, you will then have them fastened upon you, and have them as your everlasting companions in the lake of fire.

"Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.)

May the salvation of God be yours, dear reader, prays yours affectionately in the Lord,

H. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

AN UNCLOUDED SUNSET.

DEAR M—— M—— required a good deal of attention. It was necessary that some one should be with her constantly, and I gladly shared the privilege. But she needs not our ministry now; the Lord has taken her home.

Her last few weeks on earth were exceedingly bright, far beyond anything I ever witnessed. Although quite prostrate, and not able to speak above a whisper, at times the Lord gave her strength to speak of Him, and to sing whole hymns without inconvenience. Just before she departed, when to all appearance life was almost imperceptible, she suddenly stretched out her hands, and exclaimed with rapture, "*Blessed Jesus!*" On my mother attempting to steady her hands, she said, "*Oh, stand back! let me gaze on that blessed face; let me have a full view! oh, the brightness!*" and then quietly fell asleep.

My heart is filled with joy and praise as I write. Oh, what will it be to "*see Him as He is,*" and to "*be like Him!*" May the blessed moment soon come when we all shall be "*for ever with the Lord!*" How beautiful! Is not the horizon tinged by the glow of such a sunset? the heart is spellbound as it looks on. All the storms over—and they had been rough—all the sorrows and disappointments of a short but chequered career gone, and the power of a Saviour's love, known, proved, and brightly confessed before, realized now as never: "*Let me gaze on that blessed face.*"

And we thought, as I read, of the Scripture—*“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;”* for that is the portion of every believer: *“In whom ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”* The joy is as deep as the source from whence it flows. An unseen Christ is the deep and exhaustless Fountain, and the heart of the Christian the little reservoir. No marvel, then, that the joy should be full of the glory.

But why should the joy of the Christian be usually so much more intense on his death-bed than previously? Because at that supreme moment there is *“nothing between.”* All that has effectually hindered the soul from being filled with the Spirit is gone; the world, the flesh, the ties of a dissolving nature are broken, and nothing remains but Christ: *“Let me have a full view; let me gaze on that blessed face; blessed Jesus!”* It is this, and only this, that gilds the bed of death.

How important it is to see that Christianity introduces us to a Person, and that it does not consist merely of a system of doctrine! The rays of the sun conduct the eye to the great central luminary; doctrine leads to Christ. If He be not the subject of doctrine, then the soul is left empty; Christ is the food of the heart. On a bed of death mere head knowledge is likely to fail; it is then that the friendship of a faithful Saviour sheds its peculiar lustre and brightness over all. And is not that a fine word of Paul—*“I know whom I have believed!”* Observe, it is not that he had accredited an historical account, or a certain line of revelation, but that he had *believed a Person*. So “Abraham believed God.”

Now in days of infidelity as to revelation, the heart is thus possessed of acquaintance with a living, loving Saviour and God, in order to sustain it when doctrine is so ruthlessly assailed. We "*serve the living and true God.*" We know Him; we trust Him. This is life eternal. Fortified thus, the assaults of the enemy are vain; hence the prayer—" *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith.*"

But, my reader, do you know the Lord? You believe the prophets, like Agrippa; you accept the Scriptures; you are outwardly a Christian; but, withal, *do you know the Lord?* Give yourself no rest until you can say, "I know whom I have believed;" be not satisfied with anything short of a real and intimate knowledge of Christ Himself.

J. W. S.

THEY MEET WITH DARKNESS IN THE DAYTIME.



WHAT is darkness? God is light, so where He has not given light there is total darkness. I speak not only of natural night, but of a darkness far worse—the darkness of a soul which knows not Christ Jesus as Saviour, and God as light and love, and as the One who gave His Son.

"The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble." (Prov. iv. 19.) Ah, they stumble at the most precious, the most costly gift this world has ever had offered—the perfect love of the Saviour God! The living corner headstone on which every saved soul now rests perfectly safe, and that for eternity, is the

same stone of stumbling, which the Lord said should grind to powder those who refuse His salvation. May you who read these lines never be of that same sorrowful company who, with no wedding garment, are cast out into outer darkness, blackness of darkness, because the true Light of the world was despised.

Only a few days ago a small party of working-men were sitting in the taproom of a public-house. Hear what one says: "Well, as for me, I know my way so well about in our tanyard that, if wanted, I could walk right through it, the darkest night, and make no false step."

Next morning the sun rose as usual. This man went to the same public-house, where he was in the habit of having his breakfast and dinner. Nothing was different to his eyes; only just another day of work begun. About eleven o'clock there was a hushed rumour in the tanyard. What had happened? Some rushed eagerly forward to see; they saw all too soon. This same poor boaster had, in bright shining sunlight, taken one false step and fallen into one of the tan-pits.

Truly has the word of God spoken, "They meet with darkness in the daytime, and grope in the noonday as in the night." (Job v. 14.)

He was taken out of this ghastly pit, full of fluid for tanning processes, and a doctor quickly fetched; every effort was put forth to restore consciousness. Was it too late? Yes, too late! All efforts were in vain. The lifeless body alone remained; the living soul had *gone*. Where?

Was it to "a land of darkness, as darkness itself; of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness"? (Job x. 22.)

Did that living soul, faster than you or I can

think, find itself *for ever* in that land where even one drop of cold water was begged for by the rich man?

Do not judge so harshly, you may think; people often think a good deal without always speaking. This may be true, and harsh judgment is wrong; but this poor man did think and did speak.

A Christian workman one evening begged him to come to a gospel preaching. He went; the preaching ended, and they left the room together; one soul in the light, and the other in darkness itself. Ah, he was speaking thus, "It's all very right and good, *but I ain't agoing to give no heed to it!*" This is what he thought, and this is what he said.

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Reader, what do you think, and what do you say?

A. B. Y.

"THE QUAINȚ OLD PICTURE."

TH E was a High Church clergyman, devoted to church architecture, music, and ritual; visited his parishioners weekly; did his utmost to get them to church, and to make good Churchmen of them.

He says, "I remember that my thoughts dwelt very much on forgiveness and salvation, but I preached that these were to be had in and by the Church, which was as the ark in which Noah was saved . . . and all who were not inside were lost. . . . I had no idea that I was lost now. Far from that; I thought I was as safe as the Church herself, and that the gates of hell could not prevail against me."

But all the time he was a stranger to conversion, forgiveness, salvation, and the new birth. Often he said to himself, "What can this conversion be?" and God graciously showed him through his own servant. I give the account in his own words:

"Soon after my gardener, a *good Churchman*, and duly despised by his neighbours for attaching himself to me and my teaching, fell seriously ill. I sent him at once to the doctor, who pronounced him to be in a miner's consumption, and gave no hope of his recovery. No sooner did he realize his position, and see eternity before him, than all the Church teaching I had given him failed to console or satisfy, and his heart sank within him at the near prospect of death. In his distress of mind he did not send for me to come and pray with him, but actually sent for a converted man, who lived in the next row of cottages. This man, instead of building him up as I had done, went to work in the opposite direction—to break him down. That was to show my servant he was a lost sinner, and needed to come to Jesus just as he was for pardon and salvation. He was brought under deep conviction of sin, and eventually found peace through the precious blood of Jesus.

"Immediately it spread all over the parish that 'the parson's servant was converted.' The news soon reached me, but, instead of giving joy, brought the most bitter disappointment to my heart. Such was the profound ignorance I was in.

"Still I went on, hoping against hope, 'building from the top' without any foundation, teaching people to live before they were born.

"God was speaking to me all this time about the Good Shepherd who gave His life for me; but I did not hear Him, nor suspect that I was lost.

"In those days, when building my new church, and talking about the tower and spire we were going to erect, an elderly Christian lady, who was sitting in her wheel-chair, calmly listening to our conversation, said, 'Will you begin to build your spire from the top?' It was a strange question; but she evidently meant something, and looked for an answer. I gave it, saying, 'No, madam, not from the top, but from the foundation.' She replied, 'That is right! that is right!' and went on with her knitting.

"This question was not asked in jest or in ignorance; it was like a riddle. What did she mean? In a few years this lady passed away, but her enigmatic words remained. No doubt she thought to herself that I was beginning at the wrong end, while I went on talking of the choir, organ, happy worship, and all the things we were going to attempt in the new church; that I was aiming at sanctification without justification, intending to teach people to be holy before they were saved and pardoned. This is exactly what I was doing. I had planted the boards of my tabernacle of worship, not in silver sockets (the silver of which had been paid for redemption), but in the sand of the wilderness. In other words, I was teaching people to worship God, who is a Spirit, not for love of Him who gave His Son to die for them, but in the fervour and enthusiasm of human nature. My superstructure was built on sand, and hence the continual disappointment. . . . No wonder that my life was a failure, and my labours ineffectual, inasmuch as my efforts were not put forth in faith. My work was not done as a thankoffering, but rather as a meritorious effort to obtain favour with God."

And is not this where thousands are to-day in

highly-privileged and responsible Christendom? They have a name to live, but they are dead, and all their works are "dead works," from which they need cleansing by "the blood of Christ" to enable them "to serve the living God." (Heb. ix. 14.)

At this point the subject of my narrative went on a visit to a truly saved and godly clergyman, who told him plainly he was "not converted," and showed him he was not from the Scriptures, and then prayed for him. "What he prayed for," he says, "I do not know. I was completely overcome, and melted to tears. I sat down on the ground, sobbing, while he shouted aloud, praising God."

A few days after this the subject of our paper was truly converted to God whilst preaching from the blessed words, "What think ye of Christ?" (Matt. xxii. 42.)

The news spread in all directions that "the parson was converted," and that by his own sermon, in his own pulpit. The church would not hold the crowds who came in the evening. He says, "I cannot exactly remember what I preached about on that occasion, but one thing I said was, 'That if I had died last week I should have been lost for ever.' I felt it was true. So clear and vivid was the conviction through which I had passed, and so distinct was the light into which the Lord had brought me, that I knew and was sure that He had 'brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and put a new song into my mouth.' (Ps. xl.) He had 'quickened' me who was before 'dead in trespasses and sins.' (Eph. ii. 1.)

I now turn to the "quaint old picture" and the inferences that the subject of this paper drew from it, which I will give in his own words:

" . . . As I was sitting by the fire one wet afternoon, my eyes fell on a little coloured picture on the mantelpiece, which had been the companion of my journeys. . . . It was a quaint mediæval illustration of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness, copied from a valuable manuscript . . . in the Bodleian Library, at Oxford.

"As I looked at the engraving before me I began to suspect for the first time that there was a design in the arrangement of the figures, and that it was really intended to convey some particular teaching. I took it in my hand and studied it, when I observed that the cross or pole on which the serpent was elevated stood in the centre, dividing two sets of characters; and that there were serpents on one side and none on the other.

"Behind the figure of Moses is a man standing with his arms crossed on his breast, looking at the brazen serpent. He has evidently obtained life and healing by a look. On the other side I observed that there were four kinds of persons represented, who were not doing as this healed one did to obtain deliverance.

"First, there is one who is kneeling in front of the cross, but he is looking towards Moses, not at the serpent, and apparently confessing to him as if he were a priest.

"Next behind him is one lying on his back, as if he was perfectly safe, though he is evidently in the midst of danger; for a serpent may be seen at his ear, possibly whispering, 'Peace, peace, when there is no peace.'

"Still further back from the cross there is a man with a sad face doing a work of mercy, binding up the wounds of a fellow-sufferer, and little suspecting that he himself is involved in the same danger.

"Behind them all, on the background, is a valiant man, who is doing battle with the serpents, which may be seen rising against him in unabating persistency.


"I observed that none of these men were looking at the brazen serpent, as they were commanded to do. I cannot describe how excited and interested I became; for I saw in this illustration a picture of my own life. Here was the way of salvation clearly set forth, and four ways which are not the way of salvation, all of which I had tried and found unavailing. This was the silent but speaking testimony of some unknown denizen of a cloister, who lived in the beginning of the fifteenth century, in the days of ignorance and superstition. But notwithstanding this darkness, he was brought out into the marvellous light of the gospel, and has left this interesting record of his experience.

"Like him, I also had fought with serpents; for I began in my own strength to combat with sin, and strove by my own resolutions to overcome. From this I went on to do good works, and works of mercy, in the vain hope of thus obtaining the same for myself. Then I relied in the Church for salvation, as God's appointed ark of safety; but not feeling secure, I took another step beyond, and sought forgiveness through the power of the priest. This I found was as ineffectual as all my previous efforts. At last I was brought (by the Spirit of God) as a wounded and dying sinner to look at the crucified One. Then . . . I found pardon and peace. Ever since it has been my joy and privilege (like Moses pointing to the serpent) to cry, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world' (John i. 29); 'I have determined to know nothing but *Jesus Christ* and

Him crucified ;' that is, to tell only of the person and office of Jesus Christ our Lord."

May God use this paper to show any who are trusting to the Church, its priests, or its sacraments, or their own doings for salvation, that it is not to be found in these things, but in Christ's person alone ; as God has said, "Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." (Acts iv. 12.) "SALVATION IS OF THE LORD." (Jonah ii. 9.) H. M. H.

"HERE WE ARE, LIKE BIRDS OF PASSAGE."

"T is stated," says Dr. Philip, "that when the first missionary who arrived in Kent presented himself before the king to solicit permission to preach the gospel in his dominions, after a long deliberation, when a negative was about to be put upon his application, an aged counsellor, with his head silvered over with grey hairs, rose, and by the following speech obtained for the missionary the permission he had sought : ' Here we are,' said the orator, 'like birds of passage ; we know not whence we come, or whither we are going. If this man can tell us, for God's sake let him speak.'"

My reader, is it so with you ? Reflect for a moment on the aptness of the figure. Did you arrest one of these birds in its flight it could tell you nothing of whence it had come, or of whither it was bound, or of the cause of its passage from clime to clime. And if you are still in your sins, what better are you than they ? Made for the

glory of God, you have sinned and come short of it. You have missed that for which you were created. You are an anomaly among the works of God, and, like the bird of passage, you go on from day to day pursuing a blind instinct, going you know not whither. Your origin, your course, and your destination an unsolved problem before your soul now, and you are about to plunge into the blackness of darkness for ever !

Oh, ye wayward wanderers from God and from Christ, stop ye, stop ye, in your flight to an unknown eternity ! Hear ye, hear ye, the loving voice of His word that appeals to you in touching tones, to *warn*, to *woo*, and to *win* you ! "Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways ; for why will ye die ?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." "For He saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee : behold, NOW is the accepted time ; behold, NOW is the day of salvation." Believe in Him, and thou shalt be no longer as a mere bird of passage, pursuing only natural instincts, but through faith a child of God, and by grace an heir of glory.

W. R.

D.

THE FIRST RECORDED CONVERSION OF A COLOURED MAN TO CHRISTIANITY.

ACTS viii. 26-40 gives us the first clear case of an African converted to Christ. Others there had been, but most likely Jews living in the country of Libya and Cyrene, who had heard the gospel on the day of Pentecost, and some of whom may have received the glad

tidings and carried them back to their country. Others too, probably Jews from the same country, had distinguished themselves against the gospel (Acts vi.) by disputing with Stephen. But this was a man of the pure black race, a son of Ham, who, like the queen of Sheba of Solomon's day, had come from his far country to seek the wisdom of Him who was wiser than Solomon; and where should he expect to find it but where the queen of Sheba did—in Jerusalem. Certainly we are not told that he came to seek Jesus, for he had not heard of Him; but he came to be a worshipper of Jehovah, the God of Israel in Jerusalem. (Acts viii. 27.)

He held a position in his country of no low standing; he was a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasure. No doubt his heart had been touched by the God of Israel, and he went to the place where alone his presence was to be found before Messiah came and was rejected, and that was in the temple of God in Jerusalem. But, alas! Jehovah had been rejected. The King of the Jews had come according to promise—the true Son of David, the heir to Jerusalem's throne—but they would not have Him. Wise men from the East had borne witness to His glory, to His having been born King of the Jews, but the only answer was, that Herod, the Idumean king, sought to kill Him. John the Baptist had heralded His approach unto thousands, but the scribes and Pharisees had rejected the counsel of God against themselves by refusing His baptism. Jesus Himself had appeared, been baptized, owned by the Father as His Anointed, His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased, had gone about doing good,

preaching the gospel of His own kingdom. He had healed sickness and diseases, but all to no avail. His own nation had rejected Him, and now the city of the great King was empty, and the godly heart of the Ethiopian must well have been disappointed, as he had gone through the rites of that splendid ritual, but had found it all but empty form. The very thing he ought to have found in Jerusalem he found not! He ought to have found the Messiah upon His throne, but the Messiah had been cast out and crucified. Perhaps he may have heard rumours of the impostor who was hung on the cross for blasphemy and rebellion against Cæsar, from the apostate Scribes, Pharisees, and Sadducees.

Perhaps he may have heard some different story from some of the poor despised followers of Jesus of Nazareth preaching in the courts of the temple. He heard and wondered, and set his face to return to his country with the Scriptures in his hand.

But God had seen and watched that lonely stranger. He saw his unsatisfied soul, and just at the right moment he met his need, but where? Not in Jerusalem, the centre of man's religion, but in the desert of Gaza. What a wonderful contrast! but not to be wondered at when Messiah had been rejected! What had the world become to the true heart who saw things as they really were, but a desert? Gaza then was the right place for the Ethiopian to find what he did—to find Jesus.

And now, my reader, it is time for me to ask you this question: Has the time come in the history of your soul when this world has become a desert place to you? You have tried its fashions, its amusements, its politics, yea, religion, and you have found it all vanity; you have not found the

Saviour there; you are returning to your earthly home wearied, disappointed, yet cleaving more and more to that Bible in which alone you have found a glimmer of light and satisfaction, and you are still seeking you know not what. But God knows, and He has provided for your need.

Outside Jerusalem—outside the religion of the day—God had a servant of the name of Philip. Persecuted and driven out of Jerusalem, he had gone down to Samaria, and hundreds had bowed to the claims of Jesus of Nazareth that he was the Anointed. But suddenly in the midst of his success he is summoned away from Samaria down to Gaza to meet this solitary stranger, this one black man. Blessed picture of the heart of God going after the black race. It was not in the midst of an excited religious meeting that the Ethiopian found the Saviour, but alone in the desert! It was not from the lips of a priest of the established religion of the day, but from the lips of a despised servant of the Lord outside the camp.

He was silently reading Isaiah liii., not knowing whom he was reading about, when Philip joined him, having been told by the Spirit of the Lord to join that chariot. Philip sat down with him, and asked him whether he understood what he was reading? The eunuch replied, "How can I, except some man guide me?" and he requested Philip to come and sit with him. He was reading in the place where it is written, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so he opened not his mouth: in his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life was taken from the earth." The eunuch inquired, "Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?"

Then Philip opened his mouth and preached unto him JESUS."

JESUS! what a theme! what a subject! My readers, do you know what that name means? If you do not I will answer you. It is the personal name of God manifest in the flesh. It was the name Jehovah, the God of Israel, took when He was born a babe in Bethlehem's manger: as the angel said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins." In fact it means that when man had been proved guilty without law and under law, God became a man to take the guilty culprit's place; to die in the sinner's stead. to present his blood to God as a ransom, so that on that ground God could be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. The result is, perfect, complete, eternal salvation. Jesus, risen and ascended, is the proof of it. Jesus as man gone into the presence of God in perfect acceptance, communicating present eternal life to everyone that believes, is the result of this work. But, my reader, it was through death.

They went on their way and came to water; the eunuch had believed and said, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. Thus the eunuch owned that it was only through death passing over him as a man in the flesh that he could become possessor of Jesus, God's gift of eternal life, the glorified man in heaven. They both came up out of the water, and the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip that the eunuch saw him no more, and he went on his way rejoicing, a known possessor of Jesus, God's salvation.

A. P. C.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE.”



VICTOR EMMANUEL, the late king of Italy, was an immense favourite with his people. On one occasion, in 1860, he went to visit the Cathedral of Pisa; but Cardinal Corsi, the archbishop, had forbidden his clergy to receive him, and when he reached the church he found it deserted, and the great bronze doors closed against him. The whole population of the town had escorted him, and when they saw the insult thus put upon their king they became indignant, and an ominous murmur of rage began to be heard among them. Their fiery Italian blood was stirred, and a riot, which would have had serious consequences for the clergy, and probably the cathedral too, seemed imminent, when just in time the good-natured monarch, in nowise disconcerted, espied a small side-door, which, either by accident, or more probably in purposed contempt, had been left open.

Directing his steps towards it, the king turned to the people, and said with a smile—

“My friends, it is by the narrow gate that we must enter paradise.”

The crowd laughed and cheered lustily, the king walked into the edifice, and thus an incident which through clerical insolence might have had disastrous results, passed off.

These words, spoken half in jest by a king, contain a solemn truth. He who uttered them is now no more on earth, and that which served for

the moment to quell the rising indignation of an angry mob, has ere this been found a tremendous reality by the speaker, involving eternal consequences to himself.

Where he now is we know not; whether with the crucified thief in the blissful region he so jestingly referred to, or with the rich man on the other side of the "great gulf fixed," who shall tell? In either case he doubtless remembers his own words; for memory does not die with the body, or that short, solemn sentence, "Son, remember!" would not have been spoken.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matt. vii. 13, 14.)

I don't suppose you have ever seen an eastern city, but you can picture to yourself a town surrounded by walls, having a wide gateway and comparatively broad road for horses, camels, and other beasts of burthen, and there beside it, or perhaps on both sides of it, like old Temple Bar, a narrow entrance, and a raised and narrow pathway for foot passengers. You can also imagine a caravan or company of mounted travellers coming in from the desert. The horses, camels, mules, and asses, most of them laden heavily, are hurrying through the broad gate, and, it may be, they are all thirsting to reach the water tanks; for water is scarce in the sandy plains, and sometimes the poor animals are almost perishing for want of it.

At such a moment any heedless person who happened to be in the broad way would probably be trampled to death. Destruction would certainly be the reward of his heedlessness, or rather

foolhardiness ; for the cry, "A caravan is coming," ought to have warned him to run for the "strait gate" and "narrow way," where, as the latter is always raised considerably above the road, he would have been *safe* ; safe *above* all the turmoil and headlong rush below.

Now, my reader, you know that *death* is coming, "and after this the judgment," even if the Lord Himself does not come before and *shut* the door of eternal safety to all who enter now. Have you entered yet? "Too strait," do you say? Well, it is so for beasts of burthen, but surely *you* are not "like the beasts that perish;" you would not rank yourself with them? But perhaps you are carrying something which you are conscious will not, unless dropped, admit of your going through the narrow gate? If so, *drop it* before it is too late; drop it for your own sake. God sees it; *He* knows the secret of your dislike to the narrow gate, and He will one day *judge you for it*.

Repent towards God, TURN TO GOD from IDOLS, whatever their nature or value may be in your eyes. Better to lose even a right hand or a right eye than "go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched," don't you think so? Do you say you have no power to drop? you find you *cannot* shake off your idol, your "besetment," as some would call it? I quite believe it; but do you *wish* to do so? Jesus Christ the Son of God says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I WILL GIVE YOU REST." You have nothing whatever to do; but take Him at His word, and go to Him *just* as you are, *just now*, at this very moment, and you will find yourself saved *from* your ruin, and saved to God." "I AM THE DOOR: BY ME *if any man enter in*,

heⁿ shall be saved." So speaks the Saviour of sinners, the Lord of glory. You have no power to divest yourself of that which hinders; but BY HIM you *can* enter in, and if you will not, whose fault is it now?

I once knew a man who "signed the pledge" to escape from his "besetment." He broke out, and was worse than ever. He gave up the struggle as a hopeless one, and told the writer, "It's of no use, sir; it was bred in me, and born in me" (his father was a drunkard before him), "and has grown up with me. Nothing but the power of almighty God can ever deliver me." He was quite right; but you see he *wished* to be delivered; for he was under conviction of sin *before* God. That same night he was persuaded to come and hear the gospel. He went to Jesus *just as he was*, a poor, helpless, sin-burdened sinner, and was *saved then and there*. "GO THOU AND DO LIKEWISE."

J. L. K.

SATISFIED—UNSATISFIED—WHICH?



FOR nineteen years I served self, sin, Satan, and the world; drank deeply of its unsatisfying, bitter pleasures ("pleasures of sin for a season," Heb. xi. 25), rushed headlong with the stream downwards to perdition, ruining my own soul in company with a host of young companions like-minded with myself, *and thirsted again*.

On September 15th, 1875, God revealed Himself—wondrous love and grace!—to me, a poor, lost young man, as "my salvation," as the One who, though I had sinned against Him in a hardened, high-handed way, I could "trust and not be afraid," and who gave me, instead of the bitter

waters I had drank and thirsted for again and again, to “draw water *with joy* out of the wells of salvation,” and praise Him for it. (Isa. xii. 1-5.) I have through His grace proved the intense reality and truth of the blessed words of the Lord Jesus to one who, like myself, was a sinner; who, like me, came to draw water at a spot and time when she thought none would see her, so glaringly crimson was her character, but who, nevertheless, came in for wondrous blessing from the Lord Jesus Christ, “full of grace and truth” for empty, graceless, truthless sinners.

“Whosoever drinketh of this water shall *thirst again*: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall *never thirst*; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life” (John iv. 13, 14), and can look up to heaven where Christ now is, and in response to His saying, “Surely, I come quickly,” can answer, “Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.” (Rev. xxii. 20.)

Sinner, to you I also say, “COME, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” (John iv. 29.) “Trust,” and do not “be afraid,” this blessed Son of God, the Saviour of sinners, who knows *all* about you beforehand, and is even now seeking to save you, and fill your heart with “joy unspeakable and full of glory.” (1 Peter i. 8.)

Alas! if you do not, when He comes it will be to fill you with terror unimaginable, and full of blank despair for ever; and for ever you’ll thirst in the lake of fire with not so much as a single drop of water to cool your burning tongue. (Luke xvi. 24.)

Child of God, does Christ, His word and His name, sufficiently satisfy you? “Whosoever

drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall *never thirst*; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

J. A. H. S.

GOD SAYS YOU HAVE IT.



WHAT comfort to a poor broken-hearted but believing sinner to hear such a word as this, “He that believeth on the Son **HATH** everlasting life.” (John iii. 36.) The moment the soul believes it the doubts, and fears, and clouds, and anxieties, and everything else of the kind, take to themselves wings and flee away; and full assurance and joy and peace from God take their place.

It is so simple, yet so true. There can be no mistake about it. Were it your thoughts, or the words of some mere man, however great or clever he might be, you might doubt, you might make a mistake about it; but it is God’s word, and there is no possibility of being deceived.

The question is, Do you want this eternal life? Do you feel you need it? Has sin become a burden to you, yea, such a burden that you feel crushed beneath the sense of your awful guilt and the righteous judgment of God due to you on account of it? Probably this is all true of you, my reader, and not only so, but if you expressed your mind you would say, “I have felt all you speak of, and I do believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, but I cannot say I am saved. I have not experienced this saving change yet; if only I could feel I was saved, I would give anything.”

Dear anxious, burdened soul, Satan is deceiving you, and keeping you in misery, occupying you with yourself, and some change which you expect

to come over you, while all the time he is hindering you from listening to God's voice, who is speaking to you in His word, and saying, "YOU HAVE IT," not "You may *hope* you have it." No; thank God, there is no uncertainty about it. His word is unmistakeable, "He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life." Precious, soul-stirring, soul-delivering word HATH!

Dear anxious one, think of it! look at it! spell it—H—A—T—H! HATH everlasting life! Can you doubt any longer as you look at that precious word? or will you substitute something vague, indefinite, and uncertain for that heart-resting, soul-blessing, and peace-giving word, which makes the believer to know at this moment, while here in this world, that he possesses eternal life? Surely not. Oh, do take God at His word! If you do really believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, if you do really trust Him, "GOD SAYS YOU HAVE IT." Never mind your own *heart*, take no notice of your *thoughts*, wait not for some *feelings* to make you sure. All this is treacherous ground; yea, sinking sand; it will not bear you. No; the only thing that will do is God's word; it abides for ever. Could you be more sure if He says so? Surely not. Then why not at once, where you are and as you are, now, this moment, without any reserve, trust His word, "He that believeth on the Son HATH everlasting life," and all the blessed results will follow. "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing." (Rom. xv. 13.) But remember, the joy and peace do not come *before* believing, so you need not wait and expect it. It comes *in* believing, and all the blessed results follow believing.

What a mercy that God deigns to speak to men, and preach His blessed gospel to them. Though

guilty, yea, defiled and polluted by sin, and unfit for His holy presence, still "He loved the world and gave His Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) And now that Jesus has died, and glorified God about the whole question of sin, through His most wondrous work the throne of God is upheld in righteousness, the claims of that throne all met, justice satisfied, and the love of God's heart can flow out unhinderedly through a righteous channel. "Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. v. 21.) A full deep river of grace flows from the very throne of God o'er this barren place where Jesus died, and any poor, weary, thirsty soul may "*take* of the water of life FREELY." (Rev. xxii. 17.) "The *gift* of God is eternal life." (Rom. vi. 23.)

But oh, how the heart sickens as we look around and see the thousands of thousands who *need* this eternal life, but who *do not want it*! and, like the prophet of old, we feel led to cry out, "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be ye very desolate" (Jer. ii. 12); for men who are guilty of the crime of sin against a holy God, and who are on the brink of eternity, exposed to the righteous judgment of God, and in danger of eternal banishment from His presence into the lake of fire, are refusing eternal life and turning a deaf ear to all God's offers of mercy. Oh, for God's mighty power to be exercised in awaking them to a sense of their need, and giving them to believe on the Son, and causing them to hear His word, which says, "HATH everlasting life!" Then they will be able to say confidently they possess it; for "God says you have it."

W. E.

"THOU SHALT BE SAVED."

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."—Rom. x. 9.

MY READER, art thou saved? Though in a ruined, perishing world, surrounded by people who are lost, yet to be one of that blessed company described by that thrice-precious word "saved." If not, why not? Our verse of Scripture gives the reason: thy mouth has never confessed the Lord Jesus, nor thine heart believed that God has raised Him from the dead; "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 10.) Therefore thou art not saved, but still connected with the ruin part of it, and numbered amongst the lost; not yet eternally lost, for then thou wouldst be damned, never to be saved. The Scripture saith; "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now, is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) Would'st thou, my reader, be saved? God's time for salvation is, now; His word to thee is, now. Will you say, "Not now, not to-day," and thus, it may be, exclude thyself for ever from the company of the saved, who are ready for their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is coming the second time without sin unto salvation, unto them that look for Him? (Heb. ix. 28.) Are you, my reader, looking for God's Son from heaven? Nowhere in God's holy word can you find that salvation is provided for, or will be offered thee by Him for thine acceptance "to-morrow." Could'st thou find it, what worth would it be to thee? a future and a "to-morrow" in this world may

never be thine; and there is no salvation in the grave. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." (Prov. xxvii. 1.) Can you, my reader, assure yourself, your own immortal soul, that it will have another chance, another opportunity, better than this one for receiving the grace of God, which bringeth thee salvation? is this the only message of salvation thou hast had sent to thee? Oh, no! Too numerous to be counted or remembered by thee, perhaps! The gospel is a familiar story. Saved ones have sought thee for their Saviour, entreating, beseeching, warning; and thou art still unsaved. God knows, and has them all recorded. "How shall ye escape, if ye neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 3.) "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." (Prov. xxix. 1.) May this never be true of thee, my reader, whether often reprov'd, or now for the first time. "The Word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith; which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 8, 9.) Is this too simple, too easy for thee? There is no other way if you refuse this. It is a way worthy of God—honours His Son, and is alone suitable for thee.

Heart belief and mouth confession concerning the person and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, God has linked together for each and every sinner's salvation. The dying, repentant thief of Luke xxiii. was so saved, sets thee an example, not in his life, but in his death. Will you follow it, and meet him in the paradise of God, where he is now, and will be for ever? He turned to Him

who, though holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, was there in the same condemnation, numbered with the transgressors, and for sins not His own. "He who knew no sin was made sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him," crucified in weakness, taken, and with wicked hands crucified and slain. To this One turned the dying thief, to the dying Saviour. He had nothing to commend him; on the contrary, as he himself said, was justly receiving the due reward of his deeds. "But this Man hath done nothing amiss;" before his companions in sin and the assembled throng he owned Him who was set at nought and despised; confessed Him as "Lord," adding, "Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Listen to the reply of Him who came to seek and to save the lost—"To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;" and in a few hours he followed his Saviour in. What about you? This is the only way into the only pathway to the paradise of God; the same cry and confession will bring as swift and as sure an answer—"Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Rom. x. 13.) It was then or never with the dying thief. Thy condition is more solemn, if possible, than his; he knew His time was short, and was alarmed; thou art in absolute ignorance about thine, and know not what will happen before you lay this book down. This present, passing moment is of priceless importance to thee, nearer eternity than ever before; the day of grace nearer its close than ever before; but now, in "this little while," ere it does, thou mayest be saved. What is your decision? what is your choice? what will you do with this sweet, simple message of salvation from God to thee, which

commences and concludes this appeal? With Him and yourself I must leave it, in the earnest hope that you may know this divine certainty in the midst of all the uncertainty of this scene. To Him shall be all the praise; "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, THOU SHALT BE SAVED."

U. G.

"THE HOLY SCRIPTURES."

2 TIM. iii. 15-17.



CANNOT *know* God as Father apart from Christ (John i. 18; Matt. xi. 27); I can know nothing of Christ apart from "the Holy Scriptures" (Luke xxiv. 27; John v. 39); and I cannot understand the deep spiritual meaning of "the Holy Scriptures," apart from the teaching of the Holy Spirit. (John xiv. 26, xvi. 13.) Blessed mystery of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit revealed to faith, for eternal life and comfort, in "the Holy Scriptures."

Prayer should ever accompany the study of the word of God, that the Holy Spirit might produce a full and right understanding of its meaning, and an acceptable ministry of it to others. Peter says, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." (Acts vi. 4.) Paul says to Timothy, "Give attendance to reading." (1 Tim. iv. 13.) And when Paul is taking his leave of the saints at Ephesus, to whom does he commend them? To the elders? No! "I commend you to God, and to *the word of His grace*, which is able to build you up." (Acts xx. 32.) And surely, beloved, nothing but "God and the

word of His grace" can keep us steady in these perilous times, and indeed at any time. In the study of Scripture we must be careful never to disconnect it from God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. To do so is to find ourselves in the region of "the letter" which "killeth."

At this point I would like to put a question to my young brethren and sisters in Christ. How do you read the Holy Scriptures—the word of God? The answer that I almost invariably get to such a question is, "Oh, I have no rule; sometimes I read in one part, and sometimes in another, and sometimes just where it opens in my hand!" If some dearly-loved one wrote you a long letter, how would you read it? You know that you would begin at the beginning, and read carefully through to the end; otherwise you would fail to see the connection of its parts. How are you treating that blessed volume of inspired letters, that our God and Father has so graciously given us, known as "the Holy Scriptures," the word of God? Is it not, to say the least, a dishonour to the Holy Author of those letters, and a shame to ourselves, that we should be in such lamentable ignorance of their contents and connection? It required divine illumination to write "the Holy Scriptures," and it requires divine illumination to understand them, or to read them intelligently; thus it becomes us when we approach the word of God to look up in felt need and dependence, saying, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy word," and He will open our understanding to understand "the Scriptures." (Luke xxiv. 45.)

I would be far from putting any saved soul under bondage, but I would affectionately suggest the orderly reading of the word of God. If three

chapters of the Old Testament and one of the New Testament were read every day, the contents of the divinely inspired volume would be compassed in the course of a year. The Lord preserve us from the terrible looseness of the day in which we are living. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." (1 Peter ii. 2.)

But to return to the Scripture at the head of this paper; in it we have presented to us "a child" and "the man of God," and the Holy Scriptures are said to be sufficient to make "a child" wise unto salvation, and for the thoroughly furnishing "the man of God." How important, then, to be diligent in a duty which has been too much neglected by us—the careful instructing of *children* in "the Holy Scriptures."

Whether I am a man or a child, I can have no certain and true knowledge of the Saviour or His salvation apart from the Scriptures. I am not saved by faith in the Scriptures. To say or think such a thing would be giving the Scriptures the place of the Saviour. The Holy Spirit convinces a sinner of sin by the Scriptures, and then from the same blessed source He reveals the Saviour, and gives that faith in Him who alone saves the soul for ever. Thankful as we ought to be, and most surely are, for simple gospel tracts for children, we must be very careful never to allow them to supplant the Holy Scriptures, which the Holy Spirit most plainly teaches are able to make even "*a child*" wise unto salvation. But more: all Scripture being God-inspired, "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness, that *the man of God* may be perfect; thoroughly furnished unto all good works." If a man, professedly a teacher, bring a doctrine, a

reproof, an instruction, and is unable to produce Scripture for them, we should be warranted in rejecting such teaching without hesitation. It will not do to infer, deduce, and conclude. We cannot build a doctrine upon inference, deductions, or conclusions. No; nothing less will do, and nothing more is needed, than "the Holy Scriptures." Oh, beloved, there is sad departure from the simple Scriptures! Beware how you receive anything that is not directly from the word of God. If you accept a doctrine founded only upon inferences, deductions, and conclusions, your premises are upon a wrong foundation, and God alone knows where they may land you.

There is much religious literature abroad in our day, and it is being largely read; but if these things take us from the word of God, the only source of light, truth, and blessing, in that same measure they do our souls a very serious wrong. If "pamphlets" and "notes" do not lead me to an increased appreciation of the word of God, then, instead of benefiting me, they are doing me mischief. Why is it that so many dear children of God are being tossed about by the many and false doctrines of the day? Simply because they do not know the Scriptures, are not established in them. Job could say, "I have esteemed the words of His mouth more than my necessary food." (Job. xxiii. 12.) Is it so with us, beloved? I am sadly afraid that we care much more for our necessary food, than we do for the words of His mouth. Jeremiah could say, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them: and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." (Jer. xv. 16.)

"Every word of God is pure." (Prov. xxx. 5.)
 "For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy

name." (Ps. cxxxviii. 2.) It is by "the word" that we are "born again." (John iii. 5; James i. 18; 1 Peter i. 23.) It is by the Word that we are made clean and are kept clean. (John xv. 3; Eph. v. 26.) The feeble Philadelphians were commended because they had kept His word. (Rev. iii. 8.) The noble Bereans, because "they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and *searched the Scriptures daily*." (Acts. xvii. 11, 12.) And the blessed Lord Himself said that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. iv. 4); and He Himself, when tempted of the devil in the wilderness, used this "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," against the tempter, and with an "IT IS WRITTEN" thrice repeated, He overcame and worsted the enemy of God and man. (Matt. iv. 4, 7, 10.)

The blessed Lord never in a single instance of His blessed, holy, wondrous life down here, took His stand upon the baseless foundation of inferences, deductions, or conclusions, but ever upon the sure, infallible, unalterable, and eternal word of His God and Father, and He is our pattern; *He* has left us an example that we should follow in His steps, and He that says He abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked. (1 Peter ii. 21; 1 John ii. 6.)

The good and gracious God bring us back to Himself and His word, give it its proper place in our hearts, lives, worship, and service, make us very jealous for it, and cause us to remember that it is God-inspired to make *even* "a child" wise unto salvation, as well as for the thoroughly furnishing "the man of God." H. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

"BE YE THEREFORE READY."

"For man also knoweth not his time :
Who can tell him when it shall be ?"

HE had stood beside the sick and dying, and had watched their expiring breath, until death had lost all terror for him. The chamber of death had become a familiar scene, and he could enter it without a thought approaching to fear.

His own death was quite a thing in the future ; for he was young and strong, and life looked fair and promising. He did not know that, without a moment's warning, God would say to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee."

Ah, it is often so ! Men and women go on day by day as if their life were their own and there were no God and no eternity ; and yet they are hanging, as it were, by a spider's thread over the very mouth of hell !

Ah ! God can snap that thread in one moment, dear reader, and bring you in reality face to face with judgment and the lake of fire.

In the days of Noah men went on enjoying life, and making themselves happy without God, although all the time Noah was preaching and warning them of judgment to come. They had seen him building the ark, and had no doubt mocked at the idea of needing a shelter ; but

suddenly, without a moment's notice, the flood came and swept them all away. As they sank beneath the waters they could see the ark floating on the top of the waves, and what would they not have given to have been safely inside with Noah and his family? But it was too late. They had been unbelieving of God's message through Noah, and God would not be trifled with.

He says, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish." Are you unbelieving? You have heard of God's grace in sending His Son to die for the ungodly; but perhaps you have closed your heart against Him, and set at nought His word. If so, He may cut you off without a moment's notice, and then there will be no escape. "Consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver."

Dr. — had been to attend an inquest in a neighbouring town, and on returning home, having missed his train, he started to walk, and took a short cut which lay for some distance along the line of railway. It was a dark winter's evening, and a blinding snow was falling. Many a time had Dr. — been warned of the danger of what he was now doing on this occasion. He knew not that an extra train had been put on. On it came, heedless of what lay before it; and, dashing round a curve, the guard and some of the passengers felt a jolt as if some impediment had obstructed the line. As soon as possible the train was backed, only to make the sad discovery that poor Dr. — had been literally cut to pieces beneath it. There lay the remains of the earthen tenement, but where was his soul? Without a moment's warning he had been called into eternity. Only an hour before he had stood

beside the corpse of one of his fellow-creatures, and if any one had whispered in his ear, "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," do you think he would have heeded the warning? I fear not; for Satan knows how to lull the soul to sleep as to the future. Man will not be persuaded, and if a message were to come direct from the lake of torment it would be of no avail. "Neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." What did the passengers of that train feel when the terrible fate of Dr. —— came to light? We cannot tell. Perhaps a momentary feeling of horror, mingled with pity; but did it make their own future seem any nearer? When *you* hear of a sudden death, do you ever say, "My turn may come next; am I ready?"

But perhaps you will say, "Oh! I should never have been so foolish as to walk on the line when a train was due." Perhaps not; but God can usher your soul into eternity whenever He pleases, and you cannot call an hour or a moment your own. "Be ye therefore ready." And how can we be ready? Well, the Lord Jesus has been through death for us, and has taken away its sting for those who believe in Him. Death is the punishment of sin, and it is our due reward; but the Lord Jesus has been under those dark waves of judgment to set us free, and if we come to Him as poor lost sinners, owning that death and hell are our just deserts, He can whisper in our ear, "Fear not, I am He that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

C. A. W.

"THIS NIGHT."

FOOL!" Such is the language used by God to the rich man in Luke xii. He had, as men say, got on in the world. The earth had yielded to him her increase.

"Many years" of ease, comfort, and pleasure lay, he thought, before him, when God's voice made itself heard, and God's hand made itself felt.

"But—God said unto him." Oh, reader, do you mark the force of that little word "*but*"? It comes in between man's thoughts and God's thoughts, and changes the scene of fancied pleasure and security into one of gloom and uncertainty. "*God said*"——. What does God say to this man? "Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." By one word from God's mouth all his life of labour and profit, of ease and enjoyment, was swept away, and himself too shown up in the light of eternal realities as a "fool!" "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." "We brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out." No, dear reader, if you die in your sins, with your heart in this poor world, it must be to stand before the great white throne, divested of all the pomp and glitter it can give, to see your life melt away, and find yourself with your eternal portion in the lake of fire. "They were judged every man according to their works;" mirth and pleasure (the "pleasures of sin for a season;" for at God's right hand there are pleasures for evermore"), luxury and money will have vanished for ever, and your sins alone will stare you in the face in that day.

Do you wonder that I write thus strongly? Let me tell you that close to where I live lies all that now remains of one who while she lived was rolling in wealth and comfort. Beginning very humbly, she and her husband worked their way to more than affluence, and people envied them their position in this world. But were they happy even here? No; a worm was at the root; trouble, sickness, and sorrow are not debarred from entering the dwellings of the rich, nor can *death* be kept away. And what of their hereafter? "*God said*"——. What *did* God say? what *will* He say in that dread day? Reader, let me entreat you hear His voice to-day in grace, lest you hear it too late, when your irrevocable doom is fixed. Judgment is His "strange work," but not the less *is* it His work. "*To-day*, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

Again and again does He, in His infinite love and pity, and His long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, warn you of your danger in trifling with your eternal destiny, not only in His word, but by His dealings with yourself and those around you. A few months ago, a young married woman sat late at night at work upon a ball dress, in which no doubt she hoped to shine. Ah, how little did she anticipate those solemn words—"Fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee!" But so it was. Her husband awoke to find her a corpse! and sad indeed must be his recollections. And what of *hers*? Did she know Christ and the virtue of His blood, although her heart clave to the world that cast Him out? I fear not. God knows. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" But mark, reader, there *is* remembrance in hell. In the solemn picture drawn for us of

the departed, in Luke xvi., the rich man *remembered*. Bitter the remembrance of a soul that has lived for self and vanity, and despised the grace of God, and the eternal joys of His presence.

A servant of the Lord tells of another woman, far away in the country, whose conscience had been pricked by the preaching of God's word, and who, meeting with the preacher, had begged him to come and see her, which he did that very afternoon; he heard a few days later that she too was amongst the dead. And can you say *who* will be the next? And can you say *when* this day of gracious invitation will be over, and *your* last chance gone, by the Lord's coming for His own? Oh, dear reader, be real with yourself, and with this world! be real before God! You like not to hear of death and judgment, of hell and of the lake of fire; but they are nevertheless *realities*, and face them you must, either in time or in *eternity*. Let God's solemn words in Luke xii. sound *now* in your ears, and close them not, I entreat you, in indifference and lightness. O.

A HAPPY DEPARTURE.

TRUE believers are conquerors; yea, they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them. So says Paul by the Spirit in Rom. viii. 37. What a challenge too verse 35 is—"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Can you tell us of anything or anyone that is able to do it? Some speak as if they could. Paul, yea, rather the Holy Spirit, cannot. Death has no power in this matter. No; for Christ has through death destroyed him that had the power

of death; that is, the devil. He has also taken the sting from death—*sin*. The song of victory is, *even now*, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who giveth us (believers) the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. xv. 55–57.) How blessed it is to be delivered from the fear of death! Christ is the deliverer. (Heb. ii.) Reader, can you thank God for the victory? Is it true that you are a delivered one? If not, come to the Lord Jesus Christ, and prove what an emancipator He is for all who believe in Him.

When reading a certain book, a short time ago, I was struck with the account given of the departure of a Scottish minister to be with the Lord; which happened in August, 1631. It was in this manner: “On the morning of his departure he arose to breakfast with his family, and having eaten an egg, he desired his daughter to bring him another. Instantly, however, assuming an air of meditation, he said, ‘Hold, daughter, my Master calls me!’ and having asked for the family Bible, and finding that his sight was gone, he said, ‘Cast up to me the eighth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and place my finger on these words, “I am persuaded that neither death nor life shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.”’ ‘Now,’ he said, ‘is my finger upon the place?’ and being told it was, he added, ‘Then God be with you, my children; I have breakfasted with you and shall sup with my Lord Jesus Christ this night!’” and so saying the good man expired.

I make no comment on his words; but was it not a happy departure into the presence of

the Lord? All fear of death and everything else was gone. He was persuaded, like Paul, by the Spirit; his finger on the verse, and the verse in his heart also; he was confident, and he could peacefully leave all, "to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Oh, the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, what power it has to dispel all fear! "He that feareth is not made perfect in love." Do you know it, reader? You have heard of it and read of it, no doubt; it is wondrous love. "God so loved the world, that He gave His *only begotten Son*, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.) "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.) Has it been shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Spirit? Is it real to you? or is it only something about which you have heard and read? If so, you have never felt its winning, drawing, separating, and delivering power. "We have *known* and *believed* the love that God hath to us." (1 John iv. 16.) Is it so with you? See to it; for it is all-important; for hearing of it, reading of it, singing of it, speaking of it, will not do; you must know and believe the love that God hath to us. Then, when it is known, what rest it gives to know also, that nothing, seen nor unseen, can separate us from it. Come what may, all is well for time and eternity.

God's love is real and true to those who have received His Christ, and have been made accepted in the Beloved One; but it is unknown by the Christless. Is it not indeed very sad that men will not receive God's Beloved One? Anything but


the Person of God's Christ. It is the case both with the religious and the profane. When Judas spoke to the religious ones of his day about delivering up Christ to them to be put to death, we read, "And they were glad." (Luke xxii. 5.) Think of it, men, yes, religious men too, were glad to get Him, so that He might be killed; and when they had got Him they gave Him up to be nailed to a gibbet. Their witness of Him was, that He, the Christ of God, was the vilest, and they cried, "Away with Him, crucify Him!" But God's witness of Him was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." What a difference between God's thoughts and men's concerning Christ! What are your thoughts of Him, reader—that One in whom God's soul has found delight? All-important question, seeing religious men were glad to have Him put to death and buried, so that He might be out of their sight. He was the One whom they abhorred. Are you a religious one, a professor? See that you have received Him. The name of Christian will not do. Is He yours? and are you His? If not, you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, such is His opinion of you, *whom* you know not; but He knows you, what you are, He cannot be deceived. You cannot possibly know the wondrous love of God if you remain Christless. Your state is dreadful. A traveller to eternity without God, without Christ; no heaven, no love of God now, nor for ever. Do not rest, I beseech you, until, with your finger, as it were, on the love of God, you can say from your heart, because you know and feel His love there, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things

to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate me from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." What next? A little while for Him here, and then above with Him for ever.

"There we shall know, without a cloud,
His full unbounded love."

G. L.

A FAITHFUL SAYING, WORTHY OF ACCEPTATION.

" HIS is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*." (1 Tim. i. 15.) Blessed, glorious news this for poor *lost sinners*. Glad tidings of grace and glory this, beloved reader, for you, if you have "ears to hear." "He came to seek and to *save* that which was *lost*." (Luke xix. 10.) In the parable of the shepherd and the *lost* sheep, he never gave up the search till he found the *lost* one and brought it home rejoicing. The Shepherd of the sheep is the Saviour of the sinner, and GAVE His life for the sheep.

"I believe all that," perhaps you say.

Well, perhaps you do; but which belief is it, *head* or *heart*? For the Scripture says, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe *in thine heart* that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be *saved*. For with the *heart* man *believeth* unto righteousness; and with *the mouth* confession is made unto salvation. For whosoever believeth on Him shall not be ashamed." (Rom. x. 9-11.) Have you *thus* believed the record God has given of His Son, and not been ashamed to confess

with your mouth that you are saved? Thousands to-day believe on the Lord Jesus Christ *intellectually* who do not believe on him *heartily*, and so the Scripture says, "My son, give me thine heart." (Prov. xxiii. 26.)

Many and many a *saved sinner* to-day can gladly testify that it is "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*." And what a wondrous declaration by the unerring pen of a ready writer! Do you believe it, dear reader? Has He, the exalted, though once-crucified Son of God, saved you? Or are you casting in your lot contentedly with "them that *are lost* : in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them"? (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.) Going on with the devil's own to the devil's hell! Solemn work this, and sad, sad end indeed to your earthly career! Resting satisfied with the *plan of salvation* and being ignorant of the *person of the Saviour* glides many a soul religiously into hell fire, "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." (Mark ix. 48.)

Oh, reader! awake, ere it be too late, to the actual truth as to what you are and where you are, what you have done and where you are going; and as the light of God penetrates your dark soul, listen to His own message of love and grace, and accept it; for "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."


Has He saved you? or are you practically denying the priceless value of "the precious blood of Christ," which is available to cleanse the vilest

sinner from his or her sins, and give "perfect peace" in the very presence of God? For "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) This is the price He paid when, in love to poor *lost* sinners, He endured the just judgment of God against sin "in His own body on the tree;" and now being raised from the dead and glorified at the right hand of God, "whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.)

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts xvi. 31.) For "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*."

He saved me. He is still *able* to save, WILLING to save, WAITING to save, MIGHTY to save. Has He saved YOU? J. A. H. S.

TO SEE JESUS!

"O see Jesus! Impossible," you say; "He is in heaven, and I am on earth." Wait, dear reader. If He were on earth and you wanted to see Him, He might perchance be a thousand miles away, and how then could you reach Him? What therefore does the Lord mean when He says (John vi. 40), "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which *seeth the Son*, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise Him up at the last day"? Clearly natural and spiritual sight are different, though sometimes the one is a figure of the other, and both may truly be possessed by the same person. Scripture shows us the difference between them. Job said, "I have heard of thee

by the hearing of the ear" (equivalent to natural sight): "but now mine eye" (his mental, spiritual eye) "seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent."

When the Lord was on earth king Herod, who had heard many things of Jesus, "desired to see Him." (Luke ix. 9.) And though the desire was purely natural, it was granted, but at a solemn moment. The Lord Jesus was brought before the earthly tribunal of this man. "And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see Him of a long season, because he had heard many things of Him. Then he questioned Him in many words: but He answered him nothing. And Herod with his men of war set Him at nought, and mocked Him." (Luke xxiii. 8-11.) Awfully solemn to think of, when one knows that by-and-by the tables will be turned, and Herod will stand before the heavenly tribunal of the King of kings and Lord of lords, and that God will "laugh at his calamity, and mock when his fear cometh." (Prov. i. 26.) Herod, who "hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord," will have his portion in the lake of fire. Oh, reader, be warned in time!

In Herod's earthly dominions were found many who gladly received the blessing their king rejected. One there was among his civil functionaries who "sought to see Jesus who He was" (Luke xix.), and who took pains to find Him, with evidently more than Herod's superficial curiosity. Zacchæus climbed up into a tree to see Him, and when Jesus came to the place He looked up and saw him, and spoke those never-to-be-forgotten words, "Make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house."

Zacchæus *saw* and *believed*, gained spiritual light, and learned what each of us need to know—that “the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Gentile strangers there were also who announced, “We would see Jesus” (John xii.); and in their hearing the Lord made known the wondrous truth that He must go down into death to bring life to others. He was to be lifted up on the cross. What a sight! Have you seen Him thus by faith? Wicked hands nailed Him there, but God raised Him from the dead; and now where may we look? Into the glory. The One who was on the cross, the Purger of our sins, has gone into heaven without them, and by faith we who trust in Him may say, “*We see Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour.*” “This is the *will* of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life.” Think you that if God’s will is concerned in this, anything will hinder its accomplishment? He can satisfy our desire as He met the need in the heart of Zacchæus and those longing Greeks.

But in what direction will you look to see Him now? To the cross, many would say. But He is not there. “What I want to know,” said a poor anxious one, “is whether He will accept me.” The place He has taken proves that He must, He will. It was “when He had by Himself purged our sins, *He sat down*” in heaven. He sat down because His work was done; His offering of Himself without spot to God had been accepted, and God cannot in justice to Him refuse to receive any poor sinner who comes by Him. “He is able to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him.” “That *every one* which seeth and believeth,”

He says. Oh, do you see Him? Does your soul reach Him, and grasp by faith the wonderful truth that He was on the cross for our sins, and is in glory without them? That is seeing and believing, and receiving everlasting life; it is God's will for you, and nothing can change it.

But what about the future? That is settled too. Those who have everlasting life He will raise up should they die, and change their bodies, and make them like Christ, and then—or when caught up if living when the Lord comes—they will with their bodily eyes see Him as He is. Solemn, too, it is to think that not only will He be seen by those who know Him, but "*every* eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him." (Rev. i. 7.) Could you bear that, reader?

"The hand my many sins had pierced,
Is now my guard and guide,"

the believer may say; but think how awful it will be to be obliged to look with the eyes you now possess on the One who will still retain the marks of the nails and the spear, and who will not fail to be recognized as the One who might have been the Saviour; for "He died for all." Oh, see Him now in this day of salvation instead! Think of the Saviour in glory. Once there were no marks in those blessed hands and feet, no spear-thrust in His side; now all are there, and why? Because of your sins and my sins, reader, that lay like a heavy burden on His head, and shut Him out from God, who could not look on sin. Have you ever thanked Him for what He did on the cross for you? If now from your heart you can do so, then He is your Saviour; you see Him, and you believe Him. The Lord grant that it may be so.

H. L. H.

AN APPEAL.

WHILST millions of immortal souls are heedlessly treading the broad road to eternal destruction, and thousands for whom Christ died are languishing in painful uncertainty as to their acceptance, ignorant of the free grace of God in Christ, the silver and the gold of which they are stewards are being spent by children of God in ministering to self in various forms.

Would any who truly love the Saviour who died for them, like to taste the luxury of doing something for Him with the means He has entrusted to them, whether great or small? This little publication is circulated largely among all classes, and the cheering assurance reaches us from time to time that the message is not in vain: many have found eternal life through the truth conveyed in its pages.

If any would like to help on this work who cannot go out personally to carry the message of free grace, they might do so by sending a small sum to the editor, who has a fund devoted to the *free* circulation of the magazine. This money would be put out to interest at a "*hundredfold*" for eternity, and the gracious promise of Isa. lviii. would be the present reward: "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul . . . the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not."

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“I HAVE BEEN MAKING A SAVIOUR OF
MY GOOD WORKS.”

T was in a large iron room in the southwest of London that I first saw, in front of a crowded audience, an aged woman, between ninety and one hundred years of age. She lived at a considerable distance from the iron room, and was seen one day sitting outside her little house, enjoying the warm sun and refreshing air of an early spring afternoon.

The young person who saw her sitting outside her cottage invited her to come to some special gospel meetings, which were then being held in the iron room. My aged friend told her that she was too old and too feeble to walk so far, when my young friend, though possessed but of very limited means, immediately offered to pay the expenses of a cab fare there and back again, which she did the next and two following Lord's-day evenings.

I did not speak to her myself until the third time of her coming to the meetings. I had been preaching that evening from the last words of Jesus on the cross before He died, which were, “IT IS FINISHED.” She remained behind with some others after the preaching was over, to have personal conversation with me about her soul. I found her in deep distress about her many years of sin, though she had led a very moral life. She told me that she had been a nurse; but that when-

ever she had an opportunity she went to "church;" that she was kind to her neighbours, paid her debts, did not owe anybody anything, read her Bible, and said her prayers. "But," she added, "God has undeceived me, and shown me I have been all wrong all these years, and that instead of accepting JESUS for my Saviour, *I have been making a Saviour of my good works.* Oh, pray for me!"

Seeing that she was looking from herself and her doings to me and my prayers, I replied, "No; I shall not pray for you, nor ask you to pray for yourself. JESUS said, '*It is finished,*' and His finished work is so perfect that it does not need the weight of either your prayers or mine. You must therefore trust His finished work for salvation, or neglect it, and be damned for ever."

God at once caused her to see the force and truth of what I had just spoken, and removed her last false prop from under her, when, with all the simplicity of a little, helpless child, she trusted the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and cried out with a loud voice, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name."

She lived some four or five years after this, and was frequently visited by aged and experienced, and by young, earnest Christians, and by myself, and we none of us ever doubted, but had many proofs, of the genuineness and reality of the work of God in her soul. What hath God wrought! To Him be all the praise.

And now, should this little narrative meet the eyes of any who are making a Saviour of their good works, be warned by it to look away at once to Him who did all the work of the sinner's salva-

tion on the cross. Are you like some of old, saying, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" Then listen, and bow to the answer, "Jesus answered and said unto them, THIS is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (John vi. 28, 29.) "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 4, 5.) If ever you are saved at all, it must be without your works, so that God may be able to say of you, "By grace are ye saved *through faith*; and that not of yourselves: it is the *gift* of God: *not* of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii. 8, 9.) Works will flow fast enough after we are really saved by grace, and know it; but all the way home to glory we shall be led adoringly and gladly to say, "*Not* by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy *He saved us*, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being *justified by His grace*, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus iii. 5-7.)

H. M. H.

"ISN'T IT EASY?"

TWO young girls were converted some two years ago in the town of S——. Two servants of the Lord had been preaching, and either in the discourse or afterwards the words "It is finished" were pressed by one of these servants on them.


The Word was received, and on their way home the words burst forth from one to the other.

"And isn't it easy?" And the other said, "Yes, it is easy," and so they went on, and kept saying to one another, "And isn't it easy?" Again, next morning, one of them ran into her friend's house full of the same thought, "isn't it easy?" and some time after they were received at the Lord's table. The time seemed so long; the servant of the Lord there evidently wanted to test the reality of their faith a little before they were received; and the thought during this time in their mind was, "How can Mr. C—— do this? how dreadful, if the Lord were to come, if He did not find us at His table!" Not that they dreaded that they would not be saved; but the thought was, the Lord's table was their place, and they would like to be there to please Him when He came.

And now, dear anxious soul, I want to ask you this question, through the pages of this little magazine:

Is not the reason why you have not peace this, that you think the way of salvation is hard? because you think God expects you to do a great number of things before you can be saved?

Now, here you are all wrong. It is true that the gate is strait, and the way narrow, that leads to life; but why is it hard to go in? Because you try to get in with the filthy rags of your own righteousness bound about you, or you try to carry your money-bags with you, instead of coming as a naked, undone, ruined sinner, and looking at the inscription written over the strait gate; namely, "It is finished."

 What was finished, my reader? Why, all that

was needed to meet God's righteous claims against you as a sinner, and all that was necessary to meet your need.

You were a guilty criminal, under sentence of death ; but Christ paid down His blood to God, thus vindicating His justice, so that He is just, and yet the justifier of you who believe in Jesus. (Rom. iii. 19-26.) You have been an enemy of God, resisting His grace ; but Christ was the exhibition of the love of God, dying for His enemies, so that if you put away your unbelief, and trust His love, you will be reconciled to God.

You were born in sin, a poor, fallen child of Adam, under the threefold consequences of sin, death, and condemnation, coming upon you through your connection with him. (Rom. v. 12-17.) But Christ, by His wonderful act of righteousness on the cross, has so glorified God, and met all the consequences, that by faith you may look upon yourself as delivered from them all, by Christ's death being reckoned to you, and as being in Him risen from the dead, made a partaker of grace, justification, and eternal life. (Rom. v. 15-21.) "It is finished" means that Christ has met all your state of guilt, enmity, and birth-sin on the cross completely, and that now all that is in Himself comes to you as God's free gift ; namely, righteousness, peace, and eternal life (Rom. v. 1 ; vi. 23.)

Only believe then, dear anxious one, and all this is yours ; for God hath said, "By Him all that believe *are* justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 37-39.) "Being justified by faith, *we have* peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. i.) "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John iii. 36.)

A. P. C.

“HOW WILT THOU DO IN THE
SWELLING OF JORDAN?”

SOLEMN question for the unconverted soul! How dost *thou* answer, reader? What about *your* dying hour? Have you ever given it *one* thought? “I *never* think about the future,” was the reply I received from one to whom I put this query. Poor soul, it was the *only* means by which he could “enjoy life,” never to *think of death*. But what a fool is man! The ostrich in the desert, it is said, when pursued by hunters, thinks itself secure by simply burying its head in some bush, so that it may not see *them*. Thrice-foolish man! He too blinds his eyes to his terrible enemy, death, and then thinks himself so safe that he may forthwith go and enjoy a *merry life*.

But it will not do. The unwelcome, unthought of visitor *comes at last*, though none can say *how soon*. “I have much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease,” says man to his soul. “Thou *fool*, *this night* thy soul shall be required of thee,” says God. “Then—what?”

“Death with its arrows may soon lay us low,”

we used to sing as children during the soul-stirring times of 1859. How it used to affect me! But through grace I was afterwards able to add—

“Safe in our Saviour, we *fear not* the blow.”

Dear *unsaved* one, I beg of thee, look the solemn question that stands at the head of this paper *straight in the face*. If sickness has, it may

be, alarmed you, or the death of some near one, some dear one, and you have been aroused in some measure to face the thought, look it, I pray you, *straight in the face*. "How wilt THOU DO" when DEATH comes and demands thee as his prey? when there is no escape, and it must be gone through, how wilt thou bear the ordeal, HOW WILT THOU DO? Where then the world and its pleasures, gaieties, amusements, parties, concerts, theatres? People say, "What harm in these things?" I ask you, "*What will they avail you in the hour of death?*" If it is all you have to support you through life, let me tell you all your supports will fail you when you want support most; and it is a terrible thing to be *alone in death*. Fearful beyond conception to be left a poor helpless soul without one single prop or stay in the moment when worlds would be given for a ray of hope. I know no more dreadful thought than a soul leaving the shores of time, and entering into an endless eternity in a state of *solitary loneliness*.

But there can be no greater contrast on earth than that between a soul dying alone, *without Christ*, and the one who has Christ with him, and knows that he is about departing to be with Christ, which is far better. Such a one can say, "To me to die is *gain*." To the former, death comes as the "king of terrors." To the latter, he presents himself as a friend. The Christian exclaims, "O death, where is thy sting?" The unpardoned sinner realizes that the sting of death is sin. The one rests in the knowledge that his house has been built on a rock, the other discovers, alas! that he has erected his on the sand. This one falls, "and great was the fall thereof." That remains unmoved, because it is founded on Christ,

and "nothing but Christ." Said a dear one lately, in departing to be with Him, "Nothing but Christ will do for death."

"Turn ye, turn ye; for *why will ye die?*" Know ye not that the blessed Son of God has been down in this scene? "He came to be a man and *die.*" Beloved soul, HE has known what it is to be alone, ALONE IN DEATH, and He was there *for the sinner.* Oh, death in all its terrible reality, in all its unconquered awfulness, was before Him, and He, that holy, sinless One, shrank from it, and prayed in the garden, "Father, *if it be possible*, let this cup pass from me," and being in an agony, he prayed *more earnestly*, and His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground. "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine be done," and then, in perfect obedience, He took the cup, and drank it to the dregs. He went into death, and felt its full weight. "All thy waves and billows have passed over *me.*" He was there *alone.* "All His disciples forsook Him and fled." "My God, my God, why hast *thou* forsaken me?"

* * * * *

"It is finished!" we hear Him say in death. "Peace be unto you" are His resurrection words, and then He showed them His hands and His side, whence the blood had flowed—the blood which cleanseth from all sin, and by which peace was made. As the ark went before Israel in their approach to Jordan, and going, as it were, alone into the river, dried up its waters, so that Israel passed over dry-shod; so Christ has gone into death alone, and drinking the cup of judgment that was my due, has dried up the waters, so that I, and *all who believe* on Him, may know that

we too may pass over on dry ground. We can sing—

"Lord Jesus, we remember
The travail of Thy soul,
When, through Thy *love's deep pity*,
The waves did o'er Thee roll.
Baptized in *death's dark waters*,
For us Thy blood was shed ;
For us, Thou, Lord of glory,
Wast numbered with the dead."

Do you ask, "How do you know it was for *you*?" I reply, "He came into the world to save *sinners*." I know I have been one. Thus I have a *title* to His salvation. "*Whosoever* believeth on Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." I *do* believe on Him, thus I am saved. Reader, "*dost thou* believe on the Son of God?" If so, you can look forward to death fearlessly. Its sting has gone. Christ has taken it away. Its power has gone. Christ has destroyed it. I do not look forward to "Jordan's dark swelling tide," it is *dried up* for me. He *has done this*, and I am *free*. Free to *praise* Him, free to *serve* Him, and free to *wait for* Him. Blessed Jesus! Oh, that you knew Him thus! Beloved reader, come to Him, come now, make His acquaintance; believe on Him, trust Him, and *you will never repent it*.

"Jesus, I *will* trust Thee, trust Thee with my soul;
Guilty, lost, and helpless, Thou canst make me whole ;
There is none in heaven, or on earth, like Thee ;
Thou hast *died for sinners*, therefore, Lord, *for me*.

"Jesus, I *do* trust Thee, trust without a doubt,
Whosoever cometh, Thou wilt not cast out ;
Faithful is Thy promise, precious is Thy blood,
These, my soul's salvation ; Thou, my Saviour God."

H. P. A. G.

“THANKS; I DO NOT APPRECIATE IT.”

IT was on the pier at R—— these words were spoken by a gentleman—to all appearance educated and refined—to a servant of Christ, who offered him a small book bearing this title—“THE PRECIOUS BLOOD OF CHRIST.” A Christian lady sitting near overheard the words in which the refusal was couched, and a pang went through her heart.

What was this that the young man did not appreciate? It was something *precious to God*; even the blood of His own beloved Son, poured out on Calvary to atone for the guilt of a lost and ruined world. It was something without which neither the rejecter of the tract nor any other child of Adam can ever enter the presence of a holy God, who “is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.” It was something of which all the sacrifices and offerings, from Abel’s lamb down to the last offering presented on God’s altar before the advent of the true “Lamb of God,” were but the types. His alone was that “precious blood” by which all who trust it are cleansed; for it is written, “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all* sin,” and “without shedding of blood is no remission.”

Judgment is coming. The long-suffering of God lingers in yearning compassion over His rebellious and guilty creatures; but He is a righteous God, and will visit them for these things. “Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine

eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." (Ecc. xi. 9.) There is a way of escape, but it is God's and not man's way; it is by the blood shed on Calvary, by the spotless Victim who hung there, that the righteousness of God is alone satisfied, and the repentant and believing soul is justified. Reader, are you trusting to aught else for your eternal safety and acceptance with God? Do *you* appreciate or not the precious blood of Christ? If not, you are in terrible danger. You may be hurried off to stand before the bar of an offended God before to-morrow! What will you say to Him, rejecter of Christ? for he who rejects the work rejects the blessed Person who did it. God "spared not His *own Son!*" How dire must have been the need of man to demand so great a sacrifice! Do you believe the Bible is really God's word? Listen then to these tremendous words:

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an *unholy thing?*" (Heb. x. 29.)

Behold a multitude whom no man can number before the throne! Whence came they? "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the BLOOD OF THE LAMB." (Rev. vii. 14.)

Beloved reader, are you *thus* cleansed? or thinking yourself clean by your own merits or works? They are *dead works*. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience *from dead works* to serve the living God?"

The blood of the Lamb has ever been the only plea of the redeemed since the entrance of sin into the world, and ever will be, till the last blood-washed soul joins the countless throng who sing, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain." Oh, beware how you build your hopes on anything beside! It will prove as drifting sand, to be swept away by the first wave of the judgment of God. There remaineth nothing for you but a *certain fearful* looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. May God in His infinite mercy deliver you from such a doom.

But remember that "the BLOOD of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from ALL sin." Have faith in His BLOOD.

E. H.

TWO TRAINS.

I WAS standing on the platform at W—— railway station the other day, awaiting a train that was due there at 5 p.m., but which, on account of the numerous passengers-travelling by it from different places, was delayed, and did not arrive until 5.45. During that interval another train departed at its stated time, and as I stood I watched the different passengers who entered it.

Some who had been marketing, and were returning home; others, excursionists, who were tired, and glad to return; others again, intoxicated and careless, who did not seem to mind what became of them; but what drew my attention most of all was a party of five men, who were prisoners, handcuffed, and in charge of two constables, all of whom got into the same train. Then,

when all were seated and ready to start, the guard gave the signal, and off they went.

I watched the train till it went out of sight, then I thought of the one I was expecting, and wondered how long it would be before it arrived.

Now these two trains suggested the thought to me of death, and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, by either of which events we must all be carried away from this present evil world.

Death, like the train that started punctually, conveys all sorts of passengers. Some who are weary of this poor sinful scene, and glad to go home; others who are careless and indifferent; and others, like prisoners, tied and bound with the chain of their sins, who, having lived without God and without hope in the world, are finally carried into eternity, so to speak, in the arms of the devil!

Dear reader, what is *your* condition? Should this train carry *thee* away to-day, wouldst thou go *joyfully* to *glory*? or, like those handcuffed prisoners, be dragged by Satan down to an eternal hell?

Oh, if still unsaved, let me beseech of you to flee from the wrath to come! Come to Jesus, the *only* Saviour, and take shelter beneath His precious blood—

“The sinner’s PERFECT PLEA,”

and his *only* plea too, to travel into eternity with. Jesus is *mighty* to save, *able* to save, *anxious* to save, *willing* to save, *waiting* to save, and to save NOW, to save FULLY, and to save ETERNALLY, EVERY poor sinner that will but TRUST HIM. Then come *as such*, and trust Him fully, trust Him only. There is no time to be lost. Get your “title to glory” at once. It is to be had “without money

and without price." "*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be SAVED."

But if you do not avail yourself of this grand opportunity to-day, to-morrow may be *too late*. There is a train which has been expected for more than eighteen hundred years. It has been delayed for numbers of passengers, but may arrive at any moment, and will only take those who are ready for it. There will be no time to *get ready* when Jesus comes; for He comes in the twinkling of an eye. "Then they which *are* ready" go in with Him, and, instantly and eternally the door shall be shut upon every rejecter of Jesus.

"Therefore *be ye also ready*: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." (Matt. xxiv. 44.)

H. C.

"GOD GAVE."

THE finest truth of the gospel, and that which lies at its foundation, is the fact that *God gave*. It is not that I ought to give. The giving is on God's side. To lay hold of this in power is to know Him.

Naturally, the heart deems Him "austere," "reaping where He has not sown, and gathering where He has not strawed." It cherishes thoughts of God that are wholly false. The truth is that, instead of making demands upon the sinner, the gospel brings richest blessing to him. "The grace of God brings salvation." To import the idea of *requirement* into the gospel would only be to falsify its character. How can "good news" be at the same time "bad news"? And whatever claims from me that which I cannot render is anything but "good." The gospel is, strictly

speaking, only good news. Under the law the sinner was bound to give. His blessing depended upon his obedience. "This *do*, and thou shalt live," were its terms; but then the law and the gospel stand in direct contrast the one with the other.

The law was introduced in order to expose guilt, "that the offence might abound." The gospel, on the other hand, tells how sins are put away, and how the sinner is saved. How different! Under the law God made demands, in the gospel He gives. And hence the Lord Jesus announced, in John iii., what had never before been declared, that "God so loved the world, that He *gave* His only begotten Son;" and again, in the following chapter, when addressing the poor Samaritan woman, "If thou knewest the gift of God." Now this tells out the heart of God. And how blessed to know that heart! How far beyond all utterance is the joy of knowing God as the giver of His Son—as the Saviour-God!

Yes; we boast a *giving God*, One whose Word says that "it is more blessed to give than to receive," and One who has ever acted on this principle.

Let us see then how this can be applied. Here, for instance, is a soul who has learned his state as a sinner, and that he cannot yield that which law demands; in a word, that he is "*an enemy*," and that he has "*no strength*." What is to be done? Let the gospel speak. "A certain creditor had two debtors: the one owed him five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had *nothing to pay*, he frankly forgave them both." Notice, each is a debtor; and further, each is penniless. Their only prospect, according to law,

is imprisonment; yet, strange to say, they are both frankly forgiven. What a creditor!

Now see how this fits into the case in point. A sinner is a debtor, and he who has "*no strength*" is like a man who has *nothing to pay*. Well, just as the creditor forgave the debtor at the moment when he had nothing to pay, so when the soul owns its guilt and spiritual weakness it is then that God forgives, justifies, and sheds His love abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. That is the moment He selects. Man's deepest extremity is God's choice opportunity. Grace meets the soul that is truly and thoroughly *down*. See the prodigal of Luke xv.: "*As soon as,*" said his self-righteous brother, "this thy son is come . . . thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." Such instant grace was incomprehensible; yet how fitting! how appropriate! Ah, grace is always speedy! It "*flew*" with a live coal from the altar to the penitent lips of the prophet. It "*ran*" to meet the prodigal; and, believe me, dear reader, it will hasten on the wings of the wind to your troubled heart, if there only be the true confession of your sins.

There need be no delay. "*To-day,*" said the Lord to the contrite malefactor, "shalt thou be with me in Paradise." How sudden! A criminal expiating his crimes at one moment, and the next in spirit in the paradise of God!

Love is always expeditious. God can save the greatest sinner in a moment of time. In fact, God's salvation is always instantaneous, although the apprehension of it may be delayed. When His gift is accepted, then eternal life is possessed; for "the gift of God is eternal life."

J. W. S.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“YOU HAVE TWO STRINGS TO YOUR BOW
WHILST I HAVE ONLY ONE TO MINE.”

THE subject of this paper lived in London, where I called upon him one Lord's-day afternoon to speak to him about JESUS, the Saviour of sinners, and his immortal soul's eternal welfare.

He was ninety-seven years of age, wore no glasses, and had all his faculties in a remarkable degree, and looked the very picture of health!

After asking me to be seated, he enquired about the object of my visit, as I was a perfect stranger to him. I at once informed him that I had come to read the word of God to him, to speak to him about God, about Christ, and His precious BLOOD, about his soul and ETERNITY.

He looked steadfastly at me, and said in the most determined manner that I might save my breath and time, as he did not believe in anything of the sort, and was not in the slightest troubled about the future.

“I am ninety-seven years of age,” he said, “and no thanks to anybody but myself. I have lived a most careful and abstemious life, and I mean to live three more years, until I am a hundred years old, and then I think I shall have seen and had enough of life, and shall quietly lay myself down and die.”

“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment,” I rejoined.

“All fudge and nonsense,” he said; “when a
VOL. IV. No. 48.

man is dead he is done with, there is no hereafter for him at all;" and then for the space of nearly an hour he quoted to me the most blasphemous passages from his favourite infidel authors.

It was difficult to keep one's seat, and my blood seemed to curdle in my veins as I listened unwillingly to his awful conversation, and looked at him and thought of his nearness to eternity, and the dread future that awaited him if he died as he was; but I felt God had sent me to him with a message from Himself, and I must bide my opportunity to deliver it.

I told him that I had listened to him for nearly an hour, and now he must listen to me for ten minutes. I saw that to reason with the old man would be useless, and a waste of precious time, and I had and have no faith in it either, so I began quoting the Scriptures which I knew were the sword of the Spirit, such as "The FOOL hath said in his heart, There is no God." (Ps. liii. 1.)

"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that *forget* God." (Ps. ix. 17.)

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 16.)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

"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.)

"And the BLOOD of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.)

I then fell on my knees, and asked God to bless

His word just quoted to the old man, to open his eyes to his danger, to deliver his precious soul from the diabolical grip of the fiend of hell, and let me meet him as a brand plucked from the burning, and washed from all his sins in the blood of the Lamb in heaven.

As I rose from my knees our eyes met, full of tears, and as I took my leave of him he grasped my hand, and said, "If there is a heaven I hope I shall meet you there; if you are wrong and I am right, you are as right as I am; but, oh, if you are right and I am wrong, I am wrong indeed. You have two strings to your bow, whilst I have only one to mine."

I was unable to call again until that day fortnight, when I found myself again knocking at his door. His wife, who was a Christian woman, answered my knock, and to my first question, "How is your husband?" bade me follow her, which I did, into the old man's bedroom, and there the first object that met my gaze was the mortal remains of her husband!

She said he complained of a spot on one of his feet giving him pain, which rapidly grew worse, until inflammation set in, followed by mortification, which closed his long career on earth. Thus had God summarily cut the impious old boaster down, who had said he would live three years more in this world.

His wife informed me that the doctor who attended him in his last brief illness was also an infidel, that he urged the old man to stick to his infidel opinions, and to die like a brick: but that her husband found no comfort from his miserable, guilty adviser. And no wonder; what had he to stick to in infidelity? No God, no

Christ, no Holy Spirit, no precious blood, no hereafter! What was there in the baseless myth of infidelity—the thin, cold shadow of a fool's heart—to stick to?

I asked the poor weeping wife to tell me her husband's last words. She said, "He took my hand in his, and looking earnestly at me, he said, as loud as his remaining bit of strength would allow him, 'Wife, I believe in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, heaven and hell,' and then breathed his last."

Dark, cold infidelity hath nothing to cheer its deluded votaries in the hour of death. Christianity hath everything to cheer its happy followers in sickness and in health, in poverty and plenty, in life and in death, in time and in eternity. There is everything to cheer and nothing to chill in Christianity. "What think ye of Christ?"

H. M. H.

"SPECIALLY DESIGNED TO DRIVE DULL CARE AWAY, AND MAKE LIFE HAPPY."



UCH were the words at the foot of a circular, announcing an entertainment to take place at the town hall of a town in the South of England, and in this way was it commended to the public. The sentence arrested my attention, and I thought how far, how very far, short must this come of its proposed purpose. Drive away the thought of care it may for a brief hour, by engaging the mind with sleight of hand, and various other things; but how transient the relief, if relief it can be called, even as to this, but to "*make life happy!*" My reader, do you believe it possible that by such

means, yea, that by any means under the sun, this can be attained and secured? If you will read Ecclesiastes ii. you will find the experience and judgment of one who had, as no one since, every thing at his command: "And what can the man do that cometh after the king?" He makes trial of mirth, wine, wisdom, all in turn—everything that is supposed to make men happy, everything that human capacity can entertain as a means of joy. All has been tried, and "vanity of vanities" written upon all; nothing satisfies. But more than this, he says in his heart, "As it happeneth to the fool so it happeneth even to me." Death closes all; man has to leave it; and what then? what about the question of sin that has brought in death? God's word declares—and no amount of indifference or unbelief can set aside or annul it—"The wages of sin is death," and "it is appointed unto men once to die; but after this the judgment." And this applies to all who are without Christ—the moral man and the immoral, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, every one whose iniquities are still upon him. You may be of blameless reputation in the world, a patron or member of one or more of the many schemes organised in the present day for self-improvement; but improve or amend as you will, you are still in your sins, and sin not washed away in the blood of Christ will banish you from the presence of God and His glory for ever, and sink you into the lake of fire. How many, alas! have tried this way of improvement, which Satan so busily occupies men with, until, ushered by death into eternity, they find that improvement is not Christ, and that no amendment of life can atone for sins in the sight of a holy, sin-hating

God. It required the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ to put away even one sin, for "without shedding of blood is no remission" (Heb. ix. 22); but "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *all* sin." (1 John i. 7.) This proves that no effort of yours, however honestly made, can avail before God to put away your sins. "Faith in *His* blood" (Rom. iii. 25) is God's way for "the remission of sins," and "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.)

My reader, let me put it solemnly to you, the question will not brook delay: Will you bow now to what God says in His word of you as a sinner, as you surely must some day? and trust Him of whom it is written, "It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," that He "came into the world to save sinners"—the Lord Jesus Christ, who is ready to say in power to your soul, "Thy sins be forgiven thee"? or will you go on seeking (so-called) happiness in present passing things, hardening your heart against and refusing to bow to the word of God, rejecting or neglecting His salvation, despising the precious blood of Christ, and resisting the Holy Ghost, until, awakened too late from your wilful and deadly lethargy, you learn the truth and reality of these solemn words: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress

and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: and despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices"? (Prov. i. 24-31.)

And the fruit of your own way will be death—the second death, and you will have your place and portion with the devil and his angels in “the lake of fire.” This is the second death. (Rev. xx.) My dear reader, accept Christ now; “in Him is life,” and present and eternal happiness to the heart that knows Him. “Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” H. S. G.

THE GOD WHO PAID THE DEBT.

A POOR negro on the coast of Africa, having his conscience stirred of God, applied to his priest, who gave him various directions; but he got no relief from the oppressive burden of his sins. Deeply distressed, he wandered wretchedly from place to place without finding any comfort to his soul.

Sitting one day solitarily upon the beach, a squad of English sailors came ashore for fresh water. As they were rolling their cask along, the moanings of the poor negro caught the ear of one of the party, who, going up to him, exclaimed, “Hallo, shipmate! what’s the matter with you?” The distressed African began in broken language to tell his tale of woe, but was hastily interrupted by the sailor crying out, “Oh, I see what’s the matter

with you! You must go to England, and there you'll hear of the Christian's God, who paid the debt."

The words were uttered in a moment, and in a careless, thoughtless manner; but they made an indelible impression on the softened heart of the poor negro, who resolved at once to make his way to England. The first step was to get to an English settlement, and many and many a weary mile he travelled on foot. At length he arrived, and soon got leave to work his passage over in a ship that was lying there. During the voyage he would frequently approach one or another of the sailors, who formed a godless crew, saying, with great simplicity in a plaintive tone, "Please, massa, you tell me where Christian's God dat pay de debt?" But they only laughed at his vagaries, and concluded he was mad.

The ship reached London, and he was put ashore at Wapping. Having no money to receive, the poor negro wandered penniless from street to street; but the burden of his sins formed his crowning misery, and thus when he could catch a single passenger he would stop and say, in the most melancholy manner, "Please, massa, you please tell poor blackman where Christian's God dat pay de debt?" But, alas! in so-called Christian England, he was still as one beating the air; for some told him to *go about his business*, forgetting that no business can be more urgent than the salvation of the soul; and some *gave him money*, as though the conscience could be bribed into quietude; and some passed on in silence, *supposing him to be deranged*, not reflecting that when the brightest Christian that ever trod this earth, standing on his defence, spake forth the words of truth and soberness, the world's digni-

tary before whom he stood accounted him to be mad. Where, where was the Englishman's God? As well might he seek Him amid the burning sands of Africa as in "Christian England."

But at length he observed a number of people flocking into a large building, which he concluded must be the temple of the Christian's God. With trembling steps and agitated heart he entered. He listened intently, and came out with the rest; but his soul was as barren as ever, for all he had heard gave him no relief. He had heard a sermon, but he had heard nothing of Christ. Oh, what a mocker of souls is Christless Christianity! Despair was rapidly overtaking the poor negro, and frequently would he steal down some by-place, and give vent to his afflicted spirit in similar strains to these: "Ah! me no hear of Christian's God dat pay de debt; me walk, walk, day, day, but me no hear. White man tell me in Africa go to England, but me no find; me go back, me die dere!"

Hitherto all he had heard was so dark, so unintelligible to him that he could only go moaning about, the subject of deep despondency. Thus he was overheard one day by a gentleman, complaining to himself of his fruitless enquiry after the Christian's God. Some conversation ensued, and he was directed to go to a certain place that evening, when he would assuredly hear of the Christian's God. He went, and the gentleman himself preached on the suretyship of Christ for believers—the terrible debt that as sinners we had incurred, and how Christ had come into the world and cleared the dreadful score that stood against us, by His death on the cross. And now He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." The

Spirit of God sent His word as oil and wine into the open wounds of the poor negro's heart, and as balm to his troubled spirit. Very quietly he rose from his seat, clasped his hands together, and as the tears trickled over his sable cheeks he breathed forth with deepest pathos, "Me have found Him! me have found Him! de Christian's God dat paid de debt!"

Only one word more, dear reader, *have you found Him?*

W. R.

D.

ONE OF GOD'S CHOSEN ONES.

"God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence."—1 Cor. i. 27-29.

FAST summer, on a Lord's-day eve, a young evangelist was inviting the passers-by to turn in and hear the gospel. A poor, weak-minded man, afflicted with a creeping paralysis, which was gradually depriving him of mental as well as bodily power, was amongst those who responded, and, to the surprise of those who knew him, he not only behaved quietly, but appeared deeply interested. He came frequently afterwards, and always listened attentively; now and then being heard to mutter something he was told—"We must be quiet here"—to which he nodded assent. But one Lord's-day eve, when sinners were being pressed to accept the Lord Jesus as their Saviour, and assured that none who came were ever sent away, the dear fellow stood up, and with a countenance full of earnestness, tears filling his eyes, he said aloud, "O Lamb of God, *I come!*" Surely no rebuke was needed; for there

was joy in heaven as well as in our hearts over the return of this poor lost one. That it was a real work, and no mere momentary excitement, further conversation with him proved. The beautiful story of the Father's welcome in Luke xv. was the subject preached from that evening, and he frequently alluded to it, and begged others to "go and hear about the prodigal son." He grew rapidly worse after this, and was soon confined to his room, where his mother once observed him spend a whole morning contemplating a picture of the crucifixion, which hung on the wall, talking to himself all the time. And she heard him say, amongst other things, "And to think that He suffered all this for *me* !"

As he soon became quite helpless, and his aged mother was unable to attend to him, it was arranged that he should be taken to the infirmary. Just previous to his removal thither, one interested in the dear man called to see him. His mother said, "He won't understand what you say, sir." But going upstairs the heart was lifted to the Lord that he *might* understand, and the answer was graciously given. He not only understood what was said to him, but was able to reply, and to join in prayer intelligently. Upon a question being put to him as to what sin was, he answered, "*I'm* a sinner."

A little more conversation followed about how sin was put away, and he was then asked if God was glad to have him saved. After pausing a few moments, he said slowly and emphatically, but joyfully, "*He kissed him*," referring to his favourite story of the Father's reception of the prodigal son. After his removal to the infirmary he grew rapidly worse, till, seeing his end near, the nurse

asked if he knew how ill he was. He answered, "Yes; and I don't want to get better. I want to go *where Jesus is*." And so he passed away, to be for ever with Him who, at the infinite cost of His own precious blood, had sought and found him. Though of weak understanding as to earthly things, and not even able to understand much of the word of God, he loved it, and he loved him of whom it spake, and of whom he often spoke most earnestly as *his Saviour*. J. M.

LOST! LOST!

READER, shall this word, "lost," be inscribed upon the tomb that buries all your hopes and joys? Will you be lost? Would you be lost in the wilderness, and left to famish with hunger, or perish among beasts of prey? Would you be lost at sea, and have your ship ground to fragments amid the roaring tumult of the breakers and the lee shore's frowning wrath? Would you cling hopeless to a plank that glides away from your enfeebled grasp? Would you be lost in an abyss of vice and sin, and feel powerless to stem the tide of passion that swept you on to death? All these might be endured; but to be lost in dark eternity, to be dashed a wreck upon perdition's stormy coast, to be plunged hopeless amid the surging billows of the lake of fire, to drop helpless in the jaws of the second death, to see the sun of joy and the stars of hope go out in the blackness of darkness for ever and ever, to be lost from joy and peace, from life and love, from mercy and salvation, beyond remedy or rescue, ah! this you cannot bear.

Dare you take the risk? Do you put this

danger far away? Do you say, "I do not intend to be lost"? Christless reader, you are lost now! Oh, your burdened heart that has no peace; your guilty soul that cannot rest; your secret anguish, which smiles may hide but fail to cure; your mocking jest, that spreads its curtain over a sickening, aching heart; your mournful memories, that haunt you like the shades of doom; your hollow calmness, that gives way to secret tears! Yes; and the sting of conscience, and the word of truth, and the gospel of salvation, and the call of Providence, and the workings of the Holy Ghost, all these tell you that you are lost, even now. Not fatally, not hopelessly lost, thank God; but yet you are lost, and need a Saviour; lost, and require salvation. You are a lost sinner; but the Saviour seeks for you to-day. You are a lost prodigal; but the Father waits to welcome your return. Will you come home? Will you be saved?

H. L. H.

DIFFERENCE.

LUKE xviii. 9-14; EXODUS xi. 7.



VERY boldly the Pharisee pressed through the temple, until he stood, with uplifted head, his heart swelling with pride, saying, "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican." Surely he was one who trusted in himself. Very clearly could he draw the line of difference between himself and others, as he stood and boasted before God of what he was, and what he did.

And have no such thoughts been in your mind, dear reader? Are not you one of those people

who are ready to say, "Oh, I know, of course, that we are all sinners, but I am not so bad as others; I have ever lived a moral, respectable, church-going life; pray, do not class *me* with those who are a pest to society"? Surely, *you too* are trusting in yourself, *you too* despise others. Have you not, as you have thought of the poor drunkard, or those debased through the gratification of other lusts, oftentimes said in your heart, "Stand by thyself, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou?" Friend, you pride yourself upon the difference between yourself and your poor fellow-sinner. Now, listen to God's plain words, "There is *no* difference: for *all* have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 22, 23.) Be not deceived; God *judges* according to every man's work. Those who at the last stand before the great white throne, will be *judged* according to their works; but God will never *save* you on the ground of your works, never! He takes note of, and bears in remembrance, all your life, whether it be moral or otherwise; but none can ever stand before Him on the ground of their morality or religiousness. The Pharisee boasted of what he was, and what he did; so also do you. Now, God distinctly declares that *you are* a sinner (for "there is none *righteous*, no, not one"); and that *what you do* is sin before Him, because it proceeds from the self-will of your heart ("there is none that *doeth good*, no, not one"). Man measures by the outward appearance; God looks at the heart. Where man puts his greatest difference, God puts none; for most solemnly, as the beholder of the hearts and lives of all, He says, "There is no difference; for all have sinned." Do you say, "I have not

sinned"? Then you will make God a liar. (1 John i. 10.) Do you say, "I have sinned"? Then you stand in danger of the judgment of God, and you stand in need of the salvation of God. Whose thoughts are to prevail, yours or God's? Will you cling to your own thoughts of self-righteousness, and be lost eternally, or will you receive God's thoughts in His word, and receive freely His full salvation?

Ah! I think I hear someone echoing the words of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Do you cast yourself upon the mercy of God? Then I have good news for you; He is rich in mercy, and He delights in it. Let me turn your eyes to another picture.

God had in Egypt a people whom men regarded but as down-trodden, ill-used slaves. He, however, heard their cries and groans, sighs and tears, and His pity and compassion were towards them; "for His *mercy* endureth for ever." The people of Egypt He must needs judge in His holiness; for they had hardened their hearts against Him, and despised His warnings of coming judgment. With them the Word was verified, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." Alas! with how many is it so in our day? But now the night of judgment is drawn near (Ex. xi.); God *as judge* will pass at midnight through the land. How can He spare His people when He spares not the Egyptians? Are they not sinners as well? Yes, they too are sinners; by nature there is no difference. Must not judgment then enter their houses as well as the houses of the Egyptians?

Listen, dear friends. He hides them beneath

the sprinkled blood (see Ex. xii. 22, 23); the mark of death is upon every house, and the destroyer passes by. It is on the ground of that blood that "Jehovah DOTH PUT A DIFFERENCE between the Egyptians and Israel."

That blood spoke in type of the precious blood of Christ, which has answered before God all the claims which His holiness had upon the poor sinner who now believes. We were poor sinners; but now we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of our sins. The feeblest one who believes in Jesus is filled with all joy and peace in believing, and he waits for the coming of Jesus Christ, his Saviour, to take him to be for ever with Himself in heavenly glory. There is a day of wrath and vengeance coming, but he does not fear it; for God, on the ground of the blood of Jesus, has put a difference between him and those who refuse to bow to His word. In that coming day God will recompense to the believer *rest*, whilst He will recompense tribulation to those who have troubled His people, and refused to obey His gospel. Is not this a wondrous difference? Indeed it is! And how is it ours? Is it because we are not sinners? Nay, on no such ground; but because Jesus has shed His precious blood, and we believe all that God has said about Jesus and His blood to be indeed true.

The believer does not boast of the difference between himself and others, as though it were any of his work; he says, "*By the grace of God I am what I am.*"

Dear reader, have you yet learned that "the Lord *doth put a difference*" between the one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the one who rejects Him?

J. R.