

THE
SALVATION OF GOD.

EDITED BY H. M. H.



LONDON:
W. H. BROOM AND ROUSE,
25, PATERNOSTER SQUARE, E.C.

1886.

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THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST,
AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.”

ACTS xvi. 31.

READ that again, friend; maybe you have never before grasped its wondrous meaning.

God is offering to save your guilty soul from hell, on condition that you believe on His Son.

Do you marvel that He can save you on such simple terms? Listen then:

Long ago, while sin was raging in all its terrible power in this unhappy world, and man was powerless either to arrest its progress or to save himself from its fatal consequences, the Son of God came down in the likeness of man, and then—oh, wondrous kindness, love unparalleled!—He took the place of the sinner, and meekly offered Himself to bear the sinner's judgment.

Stretched on that cross, the torrent of God's wrath against sin swept in upon the sinless One, and sin was judged in His holy person. The face of God was turned away from Him, and as He died there went forth from His lips that cry of agony, “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Look up, reader; for the cross, the tomb, are vacant now, and the risen Christ is seated on the right hand of the Majesty on high. There is no shadow now; but the glory of God shines in His blessed face, and the descended Spirit has brought

to the sinner God's answer to the dying question of His Saviour Son—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

Friend, *Jesus* was forsaken that *you*, the prodigal, might be welcomed by the Father's kiss of peace and love. *He* suffered, that *you*, the guilty one, might never suffer. *He* endured the wrath of God, that *you*, the sinner, might have peace with God. *He* died, that *you* might live with Him in the glory of God for ever.

And is there nothing for me to do? do I hear you ask? Neither prayers, nor reformation, nor ordinances, nor works of righteousness? Nothing, sinner, nothing. You cannot add to a work that is already finished. Do you imagine for one moment that God would allow you to lay the filthy rags of *your* righteousness alongside of the obedience, the atoning blood and the glory of the person of Jesus, the Son of His bosom? Never, sinner, never. God is offering you this instant, even while you read this, a salvation which has already been procured by Christ at Calvary, in agony and blood—procured for sinners, guilty, lost, helpless, hell-deserving sinners, such as you and I, reader; He is offering it to you because you are a sinner, and need it; He offers it to you as a gift, without money and without price, apart from any good works of yours, or any efforts to produce them. Hark! He is still saying, "BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED."

How wonderful! Surely you have responded to this invitation of grace.

Are you a stranger to the fact that Christ at the cross undertook to do for you what you could never have done for yourself; *i.e.*, to satisfy God so completely about your sins that He could right-

eously put them away without punishing you for them, and that to this end there flowed from His riven side that stream of precious blood without which there was no remission? Have you never before heard that the blood shed there, so perfectly and eternally glorified God that He forthwith sent from heaven that wonderful message to a world of sinners—“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” (Acts xvi. 31.)

But this is the truth, and God will never lay anything to the charge of those who have believed in Jesus, nor will He ever judge them for their sins. On that shed blood is founded His offer of salvation to sinners such as you and I, my reader, who, if we had our deserts, would be in hell this moment; and it rests with yourself whether you will take the place of a lost and ruined sinner before God, and accept salvation upon His terms; for the Redeemer has so perfectly accomplished *His* work that all *you* have to do is to believe on Him, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED. W. H. S.

“TOO CHEAP.”

THE following incident serves to show the manner in which, alas! very many regard and speak of God's salvation, when it is brought before them in its own blessed simplicity.

Sorrowful it is to the heart of one who knows how God has acted in His own wondrous grace for the blessing and salvation of poor sinful man, and at what a cost to Him this salvation has been purchased for us, to see so many thousands going on, persistently holding to their own thoughts, and trusting to their own works, as though these were of some value before God for salvation, and gave

them some hope of acceptance with Him; and this is often true of many who would on no account admit in so many words that they thought anything of their own doings, or depended on their own merits in any measure for salvation. Yet one finds with such, a constant and an often diligent attendance to what are called "religious duties," and all that pertains to "a form of godliness," but without real peace or rest of conscience, or knowledge of forgiveness; hence one is forced to enquire, "Why these religious efforts?" If there be no merit in them before God, if they are insufficient to meet the guilt of a single sin, as such persons confess, does it not show that all the while there is, though unadmitted by themselves, an effort to "establish their own righteousness," to raise themselves a little in God's estimation? It may often be the result of a real consciousness of sinfulness, and a desire to be right with God; but how does it appear in the presence of the light that God's word throws upon all such efforts; nay, more, in that light which shines from Calvary's cross—from the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ now exalted to His right hand in glory, and from the blessed message of pardon and salvation now proclaimed "to sinners far and near," with the Holy Ghost come down from heaven? Hence with each individual there must either be the reception of God's salvation in God's way, or else the rejection of it; either by religiously toiling after our own method, or in some other less self-deceptive way.

A friend accompanied me one afternoon to give away tracts, or speak to any who might be disposed to listen. We came to a group of men standing

talking, and my friend offered a tract to each. One man refused. He was still asked to take it, but resolutely refused.

Noticing him, I went up to the group, and said, "That is just how many treat God's salvation; when it is offered to them freely, they refuse it."

The man at once replied, "If it were a salvation such as he heard preached during the week by some one in the street, which a man could have for nothing, he did not believe in it—it wouldn't do for him. His belief was, that if he did his very best for Christ, he could not do half enough, and therefore it was an entire mistake ever to think or talk about salvation for nothing."

When he had finished I said, "Well now, taking you on your own statement, that when a man has done his very best he has not done half enough, how can he, therefore, have any title to, or any hope of heaven or of salvation on that ground? for God must have perfection; half a work will not do for Him. How then can we expect blessing that way?"

This was evidently a new thought to the men, who listened quietly and attentively.

I therefore continued, somewhat in the following words:

"I quite agree with you that a man cannot do half or a quarter enough for Christ when he has done his best, and therefore, as we have just seen, there can be no hope of salvation that way, as God must have perfection—nothing short of this can suit the glory of God."

"I suppose you believe the Bible?" I said, addressing the man who had spoken. He assented that he did. "Well now," said I, "how did the Lord Jesus Himself explain the way of forgive-

ness and blessing for the sinner, and what his real position is? In Luke vii. He speaks of 'a certain creditor having two debtors and when they had *nothing to pay*, he frankly forgave them both.' Now this is the way the Lord Himself puts the matter. The sinner has *nothing* to pay with; he can give God nothing, nor do anything for Him, but there is *free* forgiveness for him. This is the way God acts towards the sinner who feels he has 'nothing to pay.' What then is the use of talking about doing our best? Our doings cannot put away a single sin, but God forgives freely."

Now, dear reader, mark what was the effect on these men of this simple statement as to the free and blessed way in which forgiveness and salvation are presented to the sinner. They could not deny it, but they could turn away from it, and this they did—with one exception they turned away and left.

A little thing it might appear, but, alas! it is only an example of the way an immense number of professing Christians act in view of God's free grace. The pride of the natural heart resents it; and why? Because *grace* makes nothing of man's fancied goodness and self-righteousness.

"God hath concluded *all* in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon *all*."

Not in order to condemn, but to justify, does God declare that "all have sinned, and come short of His glory," that all are guilty before Him. As we read in Rom. iii. 24, "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

But, alas! man is not only a sinner, but he is *proud*; he likes to think well of himself, even in the face of God's word. Making as little as

he can of his sins, he likes to magnify his supposed virtues, and thus persuade himself he is not quite so bad as others. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Reader, God is still acting in grace, and presenting Himself to this poor world as a Saviour-God; and He "commands 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." (Acts xvii.)

Not merely those who are supposed to be sinners above all men does He command to repent, and warn of judgment, which is man's thought; but before God "there is no difference." (Rom. iii.)

The apostle Paul testified "both to small and great, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;" for this is the only way of blessing for any. Oh, the carelessness of men and women about this all-important matter! Not that people are not religious, and often diligent too, in their religiousness; but this is not "repentance toward God." Repentance is the result of a true awakening to what sin is before God, and the real position of the sinner before Him. The burden of guilt is also felt in the conscience, and the hatefulness of sin is realized, and therefore his utter unfitness for the presence of God.

God is before the soul, and the soul is before God, so to speak; and when this is the case there can be no thought of doing one's best as a cover for sin, or as a compensation for it before Him. Saul of Tarsus had the best robe that man could produce; he had worked and laboured for it all his life; and beautiful it looked in his own eyes, and in the eyes of the religious people around

him; but the day came when he examined it in the light of the glory of God, and he found it was only fit for the dunghill. That light which shone "from the face of Jesus Christ" fell upon it, and it faded at once. But that same light revealed to him a more glorious dress. He saw a Man in the glory who had been down under the judgment of God for his sins—in perfect love to him; and this Man was now in the glory of God, making Himself known as a Saviour. Have you ever known anything of "the glory of that light," and the love of Him who still sits there on the throne of grace, still bending down a pitying eye, and with a heart yearning in perfect love, speaking to the conscience and heart of the worthlessness of all human efforts, of the guilt of sin too; but also of His own blood that cleanseth from all sin, of what He has done and waits to do now for every repentant one?

Yes, God points each and all to His Son Jesus the Nazarene, the only and all-sufficient Saviour.

Salvation is indeed free, blessed to tell it; but never forget this, dear reader, that though it costs us nothing, it cost God His Son.

Before God could "justify freely by His grace" the ungodly sinner, He must needs deliver up His own Son. This is "how God can save, yet righteous be." God has provided Himself a Lamb. Behold Him on the cross as the victim. See Him now exalted on the throne of God, and tell me, is not this enough? "By Him *all* who believe are justified from all things," &c.

This is God's way. What say you to it, dear reader? Is it yours?

One word more. If you have indeed turned to God in the full confession of your guilt, and tasted of His grace, do not, I pray you, rest

satisfied with half a blessing. His is a full salvation, a perfect salvation, a present salvation, and an eternal salvation. Have you got it? "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

S. M. A.

GRACE, POSSESSION, AND ENJOYMENT.

THESE three truths seem shown in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 23, and Joshua i. 3, 15.

"Satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord: possess thou." (Deut. xxxiii. 23.) "Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon." (Joshua i. 3.) "And enjoy it." (v. 15.)

It is only when a soul learns God's favour or grace that it gets satisfied and full with the blessing. If something is done for one who is utterly unworthy, it is impossible for that person through want of worthiness to lose what he or she has received. This gives "rest."

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly . . . God *commendeth* His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 6, 8.)

Though daily learning more of our own unworthiness, we also learn that the blessings which flow from Christ's finished work are still ours—to be taken "possession of." If one thing be true, "Christ died *for* me," or in my stead—and it *is* most

blessedly true—then all the rest is true of and for me too. Don't be afraid of appropriating the blessings. All is for the one who believes, purchased by the "redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Life, even eternal life, the free gift of God, forgiveness, peace, through the precious blood of Christ, and meant to be *enjoyed now*. Take God's word for it, no matter what Satan or your own heart may say, and your faith shall be "counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5, 23-25, v. 1.)

A. E. E.

ARE YOU PREPARED ?

A FEW days ago I had occasion to speak to an old man about his eternal welfare, and a conversation ensued, of which the following is the purport :

"Well, sir, how do you do?"

"Not at all well, thank you, since that paralytic stroke. I do not find myself getting better, and the doctors can do me no good; it seems as if I were dead all one side; I am always cold, and have a pricking sensation all down this side of my body," pointing to his left side. Thus was his state described to me. He then kindly enquired after my own health.

"Well," I said, "not too well, still I have no reason to complain. I am still enabled to get about, and, after all, what does it matter about the poor body, as long as we are prepared for the change?"

"True," he said, "we must go sooner or later."

"Yes," I remarked, "but are you prepared?"

"Well, I believe I shall be all right with God. I am one of those men who have always done

what was right and good, and I have always led a moral life."

"Yes," I replied, "that is all right and well in its place; but what about the wrong actions—your sins? What do you think of a man who has committed some awful crime—say the crime of murder—saying to the judge, 'You must forgive me, for I have been an upright, good, moral man until now.' Would he justify him? Ah, my friend, I can see, old as you are, that you have not studied your Bible as you should have done." This, I must say, he candidly admitted. "Well," I said, "how do you think such pleadings would do for God? What you have to say to God, must be said this side of the grave, and through Christ His Son."

This seemed to stagger him, for he said, "I have never seen it in that light before."

I also told him that sin cannot enter heaven, and if his sins were not now forgiven, when could they be? I then pointed him to that well-known passage in Romans—"All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and said, "Now take your stand there, and realize your state as a sinner, that you are guilty before God. Confess your sins, and He is faithful and just to forgive you your sins."

Dear reader, it may be that you stand in the awful position of my friend. Will you continue to trust in the power of your good works to influence God to take you to heaven? for they will not take you there, they are rotten supports, broken props! Oh, be warned in time! On every hand you see your loved ones passing away to eternity. But oh, whither? Let me beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God; you must be born again.

A. H.

REST OR NO REST.

AFTER God had created and made all things, and pronounced them to be "very good," we read that He rested.

Man, the creature who should have upheld the glory and honour of God in every possible way, was the one to trample underfoot and cast dishonour upon His name—he sinned.

Many think that his sin was "only a *small sin*." Not so. Sin is not measured by man's thought of it, but by what God knows it to be. This one "*small sin*" broke the rest of the Creator God: He cannot rest where sin is, and in consequence His rest was broken, and man—the sinner—banished from His holy presence. That rest of God remained broken for over four thousand years, until the Lord Jesus Christ, His only begotten and beloved Son, came into the world, God manifest in flesh, and Himself vindicated God's throne and nature in their every attribute, with respect to the sin of the world, by becoming the Lamb of God, offering Himself through the eternal Spirit *without spot* to God. That offering was accepted; God was glorified; Christ bore our sins upon the cross under the judgment of God; and then He was raised from the dead, taken up by the glory of the Father, and placed with infinite delight upon the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, and, what?—God rests in Christ.—Yes, the rest which was impossible in creation because of sinful man, God now enjoys on the eternally solid foundation of redemption, and rests with overflowing delight in the Son of His love, who

accomplished it all in virtue of His own blood. Overflowing delight! think of it, dear reader. The overflowing goes out to youward, inasmuch as the blessed God invites you to come to Jesus and rest your weary soul where His own infinite heart of love finds eternal repose. Blessed grace to poor hell-deserving sinners! will any be mad enough to refuse?

Reader, how about your sins? Sins of your childhood, sins of your boyhood or girlhood, sins of youth and of riper years; the sins, countless thousands of them, in which you rest, in which you eat, drink, sleep, arise and go about your business or pleasure, year after year—open sins, secret sins, wilful sins, ah! and *sins of ignorance* too—thoughts, words, and deeds which through ignorance you may not know to be sin, but which all stand in the light of God's holy presence unmasked as such. (Heb. iv. 12, 13; Levit. iv. 2, 27; Numbers xv. 22, 29.) Sins forgotten by you, but not by Him, all stored up “against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. (Rom. ii. 5; Jude 14, 15, &c.)

Oh, unsaved reader, can you, dare you, refuse or delay to accept God's free offer of perfect pardon, peace, and salvation, through the one sacrifice for sin—the blood of Christ?

Oh, if you do, and if for you the time should come when it will be too late, those very sins will rise up before you—realized then—in all their hideous character; high, higher and higher, like a black mountain, shutting out Christ, hope, heaven, and God—all indeed that could possibly have filled that heart of yours (so hath God made it) for eternity.

No rest in hell because of the sins in which you

rest so comfortably now, and which, maybe, never disturb your repose for one hour.

“And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.” (Rev. xiv. 11.)

But “there remaineth . . . a rest to the people of God.” (Heb. iv. 9.)

Flee then at once, O sinner, to the arms of that loving, gracious One, who says to you, “Him that cometh to me I will in *no wise* cast out.” (John vi. 37.)

And then, oh, the blessedness of the rest—the perfect bliss of knowing that through His bloodshedding there is not a spot within, not a cloud above, and that underneath are the everlasting arms.

C. C. W.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

WHAT a striking word is this! A warning word indeed from the lips of the blessed Lord Himself. And surely it should have as much force now, in this day of increasing evil, as when it was first spoken. The rich man is an evident figure of the worldling, the unbeliever, though he may have been religious (for religion is not Christ, and Satan can, and does, use religion to shut out Christ, and to blind the soul to its personal need of a Saviour). But if so, his religion could not save his soul.

The beggar, on the other hand, seems to be strongly figurative of the “poor in this world, rich in faith;” for what was his portion here? “Full of sores,” and wanting the commonest necessities of life. “If,” says the apostle Paul, “in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” Why? Because we have given

up all for Christ; but we know that we have "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven." Now, proceeding with the narrative, we get in the compass of two short verses—Luke xvi. 22, 23—the death of these two men, the believer and the unbeliever; and then, as it were, the curtain is lifted which separates the *seen* from the *unseen*, and that too by the Lord Himself. What do we see now? Lazarus in Abraham's bosom; the rich man lifting up *his* eyes in hell, "being in torments." Oh, what value were his riches to him now? Just for his brief lifetime here he no doubt enjoyed them without God; but what is the longest lifetime when compared to eternity? And note this rich man's prayer. He may have said many prayers here on earth, though of this we are not told; but we are told of his prayer in hell; and what is it for? That the once poor and despised beggar Lazarus might dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool his tongue. Just one drop of water! But it is denied him. Oh, unsaved reader, think of this, and of the great gulf *fixed*, not by man's puny hand, but by God Himself.

Note too that memory appears to have full force in hell; and think you it would be the slightest comfort or relief to have brought vividly to your remembrance the many times you had heard the gospel here, and were offered salvation full and free through the death of God's Son? Oh, no; you will then bitterly bewail your folly in turning a deaf ear to the gospel message; but it will be *too late*.

Oh, come to Jesus now! believe in Him now! Life is short and uncertain, the day of grace is running its course; even before another day the

Lord may have "caught up" His saints—all those really believing in Him—from this earth, both those who have fallen asleep, and us who are alive here. And there will then be nothing left for you, my unsaved reader, but judgment. But this is God's strange work; "He delighteth in mercy," and willeth not the death of one sinner, but rather that all should come to Him and live.

T. E. L.

PRACTICAL ASTRONOMY.

"**T**HE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth His handywork" (Ps. xix. 1); and "children of light" should be

Like the SUN

In ministering blessing to all around, whether they be "the evil or the good." (Matt. v. 45, 48.)

Like the MOON

In being a faithful reflection of the absent One, from whom all light comes. (Phil. ii. 5-11.)

Like a PLANET

In their trueness to the course laid down for them by the Lord. (Eph. v. 1, 2.)

Like a FIXED STAR

In their constant shining in the right place. (Eph. v. 13-17.)

Like a SHOOTING-STAR

In their promptness to obey the Lord's commands, even to the extinction of themselves, leaving behind them only a track bright with His glory. (Isa. vi. 8; Phil. ii. 17, 30.)

"They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." (Dan. xii. 3.)

A. DE B.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

TO-MORROW OR TO-DAY.

“**A**ND Moses said unto Pharaoh . . . when shall I entreat for thee; . . . and he said, To-morrow.” (Ex. viii. 9, 10.)

A concise answer, but in full keeping with the proud sinner who made it.

To-morrow will do for mercy! I will defer till *to-morrow*, said Pharaoh.

Ah! these *to-morrows*! how they encourage indecision! how they flatter the irresolute soul! They obviate the necessity for giving a blunt refusal, and they place a premium on procrastination.

To-morrow is the sluggard's time for action; while he cries, “A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep;” and then, with the *morrow*, come his grim visitors, “poverty” and “want.”

To-morrow is the soothing lullaby of the unawakened mind.

To-morrow is the opiate of the sleeping soul.

To-morrow is the promise of the drunken conscience.

To-morrow is the dream of indifference.

To-morrow is the resolution of the fool.

To-morrow is the devil's day.

What was Pharaoh's *to-morrow*?

Beware, reader, lest it be yours!

“And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord,

which He will shew to you to-day." (Exodus xiv. 13.)

A rich and full gospel in these few words! We have God's people, God's salvation, and God's day; that is *to-day*!

A timid, trembling host on the brink of the sea; sands on either side, and Pharaoh behind.

"Fear ye not" stills their anxious hearts.

"Stand still" calls their faith into exercise.

"See God's salvation" raises their thoughts to Him "who alone can do great things."

"Which He will shew to you *to-day*" speaks to them of immediate relief.

The heart is not to "fear."

The feet are to "stand still."

The eye is to witness "God's salvation."

The ear is to grasp God's "*to-day*."

How glorious! how worthy of God!

And the people were led through the deep, and placed on firm resurrection shores; whilst Pharaoh's host had sunk like lead in the mighty waters, on that wonderful day.

Ah! what a thrill of inexpressible delight must have passed through the soul of the "malefactor" when he heard, "*To-day*, shalt thou be with me in paradise," from the lips of the dying Redeemer. Thou with Me, and that in paradise, and that *to-day*!

And how? I for thee, first; and then, "thou with Me" afterwards; that is the gospel. "Christ died for us."

Again, just because of that, "Now is the day of salvation."

To-day is the language of faith.

To-day is the anchor of hope.

To-day is the watchword of heaven.

My reader, let it be yours.

J. W. S.

THE GRACE OF GOD.

THERE is much said in the word of God on the subject of grace. It is a great mercy to us that it is so ; for if it were all righteousness, and no grace, our portion would surely be eternal judgment.

There is a sweetness in the word grace, and the heart of the divinely-convicted soul drinks it in, and feels that, though it is far from comprehending the full extent of that precious word, yet it is the only word that really suits its case. It appropriates itself to the sinner's case and condition, to his lost estate, and proposes nothing short of present and eternal salvation.

God is spoken of as the "God of all grace" (1 Peter v. 10), and how blessed to be brought into the presence of, and have to do with, God in that most blessed character.

Not that God has let go His righteousness in order to exercise grace, but "grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans v. 21.) How wonderfully blessed is this ! Grace and righteousness going hand in hand together for the sinner's eternal blessing. Righteousness the basis, and grace upon that ground saving the lost.

Grace, the unmerited favour of God, reigns in a world of sin and death. On the ground of the death of Christ it goes forth into a scene of ruin, into a world of lost sinners, with a full salvation from God to man. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men."

(Titus ii. 11.) Marvellous statement! It contemplates "all men" as sinners, lost and under God's judgment, and appears to them bringing salvation.

Like a lifeboat going to a sinking ship, it brings salvation, and saves all who will avail themselves of it: if any refuse, they sink with the ship. Such must be the sad consequence if this "salvation of God" is rejected: it leaves the sinner in his sins, to sink—where? Into eternal perdition!

Beloved reader, refuse not this precious, saving grace of God, I beseech of you. It brings you salvation, not as the fruit of your own doings, but of the untold sufferings and death of the Son of God.

How precious is the thought, that salvation has been *brought* to us, and brought by the grace of God! It is brought to us *where* we are, and *as* we are; and whatever may be our condition, *it saves us out of it*, and henceforth we are saved. Wonderful word! "God hath saved us." (2 Tim. i. 9.) "For by grace are ye saved." (Eph. ii. 8.) "Woman, thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." (Luke vii. 50.)

In fact it is grace from first to last. God is the God of all grace; by grace are we saved, being justified freely by His grace, restored by His grace, sustained by His grace, and in heaven to the glory of His grace.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting day;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

E. A.

“WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?”

THIS is a solemn and searching question. Say, my friend, have you pondered over it? Mark, it does not say, “What think ye of professing Christians?” “How very inconsistent they are,” I think I hear you say. “I make no profession, and I think I am as good as some of those that make the loudest.”

Yes, my friend; Christians, alas! are oftentimes very inconsistent. But will these inconsistencies, think you, make your case any better when you stand before the great white throne? Surely not. Then let not Satan blind your eyes to your soul’s eternal interests by such a foolish argument.

“What think ye of Christ?”

And mark it does not say, “What think ye of religion, or of the doctrines of Christianity?” You might be as clear and sound as possible upon these points, and yet have never bowed your heart to Christ.

It is quite possible to be a professor of divinity, an instructor of religion, and a preacher to others, and yet be unsaved all the while. You might be a Sunday-school teacher, a tract distributor, and a district visitor, and yet be unsaved, and a perfect stranger to Christ. Yea, more, there are thousands of precious souls who are at this moment building their hopes of heaven upon the very fact of being zealous and earnest in the performance of these and such-like religious duties as they are called. Let my reader never forget the awfully solemn warning contained in those words which fell from

the lips of Jesus, the blessed Saviour of the lost, and so important in a day of such widespread profession and religious activity as the present: "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, *I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" (Matt. vii. 22, 23.)

But "what think ye of Christ?" This is God's testing question.

"God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son." (John iii. 16.) "Away with Him!" cried the world.

Reader, is it not a solemn thought, that when the Son of God entered this world in grace there was no room for Him even in the inn? He had to be laid in the manger. There was plenty of room for pleasures, for business—yes, even for religion—but *no room for Christ*. The day in which Christ was born was a day of great religious zeal. But it was a Christless religion; a religion of forms, ceremonies, and outward observances; a religion for the eyes of men, but a religion with no reality. And as it was then, so is it now. *You too, beloved reader, may be at this moment religiously rejecting Christ.*

"Are you saved?" I asked of an old man not long since.

"Oh, yes!" was his ready reply.

"What ground have you for saying so certainly that you are saved?" I again asked.

"Well, sir, I was a thoughtless man until five years ago; but then I turned over a new leaf, and I tell you, sir, I have prayed more the last five years than in all my life before."

"You are on the wrong road, my friend, your prayers will never take you to heaven."

The poor man was very angry, and turned me out of his house.

"You need not be angry," I said as I was leaving, "I want to tell you the truth from love to your precious, immortal soul. Your case is just like this, Imagine that a river deep and wide is flowing along outside your cottage. Some rich man has built a solid stone bridge across it; the best engineer has been employed, the very best material has been used, a perfect fortune has been spent in its construction. And now it is completed; there it stands a solid, substantial, massive piece of workmanship, and as no one paid a penny towards the expenses of its building, so now the large-hearted owner of it throws it open to the public *free to all*.

"Now if you wanted to cross that river would it not be madness to refuse to make use of this ready-made bridge? Instead of availing yourself of the kind offer, you set to work to build a bridge for yourself. After a great deal of labour and toil you collect together a quantity of wood, and deliberately refusing to use the solid stone bridge constructed at the expense of another, you start across the river on the rickety bridge which you have built for yourself, when, lo! as you have reached the middle a fearful crash is heard, the rotten wood has given way, and you have sunk never to rise again beneath the surges of that rolling torrent. *Whose fault would it be?*"

"My own," the old man slowly replied.

"Yes, most certainly," said I. "Now Christ by His finished work has constructed a bridge which will carry you in perfect safety across the waters

of judgment; but you are refusing it, and are building one for yourself composed of the rotten planks of your prayers and good works. It will to a certainty give way, and you will be lost for eternity; but remember, *it will be your own fault.*"

And now, reader, let me ask you again, "What think *you* of Christ?" Have you yet bowed to Him as God's only way of salvation? You may be most conscientiously seeking to obtain salvation by your own good works. You may be honestly trusting to your prayers, fastings, sacraments, and religious duties and observances; but remember that all the time that you are trusting to any of these, or to all of these put together, you are in reality rejecting Christ and His finished work. "I have finished the work," said the blessed Saviour. And if the work has been finished by Christ 1800 years ago on the cross, finished perfectly and to God's entire satisfaction, what more is required to be done on your part? Why surely nothing. Something might be added to an *unfinished* work, but to add to a *finished* work is out of the question.

May you, beloved reader, seize hold of the blessed truth contained in these words, "I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK;" and, instead of working to get saved, rejoice in Christ as your Saviour, and then work to please Him who *has* saved you.

"I would not work my soul to save,
That work my Lord hath done;
But I would work like any slave
From love to God's dear Son."

A. H. B.

LOST !

“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.”—LUKE xviii. 27

WITH the expectation that these lines may be found in the hand of one who knows not what it is to be saved, they are written with the hope that the God of all grace may use them to the salvation of your immortal soul. Permit me then in earnest solicitude to put this question to your conscience :

Do you know what it is to be convicted of sin, by the searching light of the truth of God in your heart, in the presence of a holy and sin-hating God? Unless you are awakened to the sense of your guilt, through the Word, by the power of the Holy Spirit, and brought to the consciousness of being a sinner—yea, a lost sinner—the need of being saved will not be felt in your soul. And this, alas! is too often found to be the condition of those who are perishing in their sins—unconscious of being unclean, vile, and 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. 4.)

While standing by the bedside of a young person a short time ago, a patient in an infirmary, seeing her weak condition of body, I said, “Have you a father?” She replied, “Yes.” “Have you a mother?” “Yes.” “Now I want to ask you another question. Have you a Saviour?” She readily and honestly confessed, “I have not.” The bodily ailment was such, that she gladly sought relief from the hand and skill of the doctor, feeling the

need of being healed, to allow of her having restored health ; but there was no awakened conscience, as to the disease of her soul, of being a lost sinner.

Consider, dear reader, this one word—LOST ! It is not the question of the loss of property, friends, a limb, or health. Either of these is sometimes felt to be a most trying calamity ; but these altogether are comparatively trifling to this one fact which Scripture declares of *all* mankind—not some, but all—by nature to be lost ! Yes, I want this solemn and needful truth to be brought home by the Spirit to your heart and conscience, that you may be able to value and appreciate the glad tidings of grace to your soul.

See what Jesus makes known to faith in Luke xix. 10 : “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Now, dear reader, does this declaration of truth touch or affect you ? Observe what it sets forth. Firstly, “The Son of man is come.” Secondly, “To seek and to save.” Thirdly, “That which was lost.” So by knowing your condition as LOST you have this encouraging testimony of redeeming love, that Christ Jesus seeks and saves such as believe in Him.

How telling and precious is the narrative we have recorded of the lost sheep in the fifteenth chapter of Luke. The man not only goes after, but seeks until he finds it. What does God say of you and me ? “All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way.” (Isa. liii. 6.) Is it so to your conscience ? Do you confess to have turned to your own way ? Afar off from God. When the sheep was found, did the man drive it, or leave it to find its own way back ? Oh, no, he layeth it on his shoulders ! The lost sheep was brought home by the care and power of

the shepherd. And what characterised him when he was doing so? He was rejoicing. And when he reached home, he called upon his friends to rejoice with him, because he had found his sheep which was lost. The joy, however, is not confined to earth; for we are told, "Likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth."

In this part of the parable we are shown the activity and energy of the love of Christ, who, as the Good Shepherd, giveth His life for the sheep. (John x. 11.) He came down from the glory, and took the body which was prepared for Him, that, as the Son of man, He might lay down His life upon the cross—"suffering the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God." While salvation is so fully witnessed to as being wholly of sovereign grace, through it the goodness and mercy of God worketh repentance in the sinner; for there is no salvation apart from repentance. "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke xiii. 5.) "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.) The knowledge of ourselves by the light of the Word forms the principle of repentance. The soul's acceptance of God's judgment of its state before Him, and bowing to it, is repentance. Do you know the wages of sin is death? Have you felt the burden of guilt? Is this your state under the conviction of sin? Are you now willing to be saved by grace? Do you ask, What must I do to be saved? Thank God, for He who is rich in mercy, and willeth not the death of the sinner, gives the answer through the word of inspiration: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.) "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.) Yes, dear unsaved reader, though you have sinned against God—and the wages of sin is death—He reasons, and says, "Why will you die?" I have life to give. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. That you might not perish everlastingly, God, who is rich in mercy, in His great love, gave His only begotten Son to die on the cross the death deserved by you, that through His death, burial, and resurrection, according to the Scripture, you might, by believing, through grace, be saved.

It must be one of two things, either SAVED or LOST. "Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation," full and free through the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanseth us from all sin. Mark, the scripture says, "To-day is the day of salvation." Can you now take up the happy strain, and sing from your heart—

"Salvation! oh, salvation!
Endearing, precious sound!
Shout, shout, the word 'salvation!'
To earth's remotest bound."

Solemn indeed is the condition of those who believe not! Therefore I would, before concluding, sound the warning note—"For they shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." (Rev. xxi. 8.) "Flee from the wrath to come." While the door of mercy stands open, enter in. "I [Christ] am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John x. 9.)

"'T was for sinners Jesus died,
Sinners He invites to come;
None who come shall be denied,
For He says there still is room."

T. N.

HOW AN ANXIOUS SOUL FOUND
PEACE.

I WAS asked by a Christian lady, some time ago, to visit a woman who was very anxious about her soul, living a short distance from M——. A day or two later found me at this woman's cottage.

On knocking at the door, which was opened by herself, I said, "Miss —— asked me to call and see you."

With a smile she asked me to walk in. After taking a seat, I said, "Miss —— told me you were anxious about your soul."

"Yes," she said, "I have been anxious a long time."

I enquired how long she had been thinking about her soul, and she told me for about nine years. And she said, "Until Miss —— called the other day, no one has ever been to speak to me about it; and for some time I have been so troubled about my sins, that I am afraid to go to sleep at night for fear I should die and be lost for ever; and although I have prayed earnestly to God to forgive me, I don't seem to be any different."

I said, "I am afraid you are like many others—trying to get peace and forgiveness in the wrong way. You want to get it through your prayers and doings, instead of what Christ has done for you."

I then asked her, "What does God's word say we are to do to be saved?"

She replied, "To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

"And don't you believe on Him?"

"Yes, but I don't think that I am saved; I don't feel saved."

"But," I said, "God's word nowhere says we are to feel saved, but believe and be saved."

Seeing she still had difficulties, I said, "Now tell me who it is you have sinned against."

"God."

"Yes, and God knows every sin you have committed against Him—of thought, word, and deed; and His word says, 'The wages of sin is death' (Rom. vi. 23), and 'after death the judgment.' (Heb. ix. 27.) And who gave Jesus?" I asked.

"God."

"Yes, God whom you have sinned against, and who knew that you were not only guilty (Rom. iii. 19) but helpless too in yourself to get out of your present guilty condition (Rom. v. 6), 'gave His only-begotten Son.' (John iii. 16.) And why did God send His only-begotten Son from that bright glory into this poor sin-stricken world?"

"To die for sinners," was the reply.

"Yes, God so loved us that He gave His only-beloved Son, to meet us in all our deep need. 'Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures' (1 Cor. xv. 3), 'Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world' (Gal. i. 4), 'Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.' (1 Peter ii. 24.) Now," I said, "those scriptures tell us plainly that Jesus died for our sins, that He bare them in His own body on the tree, and it was God Himself laid them on Him. 'The Lord hath laid on Him

the iniquity of us all.' (Isaiah liii. 6.) And He bore too all the judgment that was due to us on account of our sins. Yes, on the cross He did every thing that was needful to meet the claims of a holy and righteous God; and when the work was done, Jesus said, 'It is finished.' (John xix. 30.) And now do you think God is satisfied with the finished work of Christ?"

"Yes," she said, "I suppose He is."

"If I owed twenty pounds to the grocer, and he wanted the account settled, and I had not a single penny to pay him with, what could I do? Why, simply nothing. There was the debt troubling me night and day, and I in a helpless condition to meet it. But supposing you were a rich person, and went and paid the twenty pounds for me, would the grocer be satisfied with your payment? Yes, of course he would. And when you brought me the receipt, settled by the grocer himself, do you think that I should trouble about the debt again? No; and why? Because you paid it for me, and the receipt from the grocer is the proof to me that he is satisfied with your payment. And God, to show you and me that He is perfectly satisfied with the payment Jesus has made for us (for He paid all that we owed on the cross), has raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His own right hand in glory. 'Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.' (Rom. iv. 25.) 'Therefore' (because Jesus has died and risen again) 'being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.'" (Rom. v. 1.)

"Will Jesus ever die again?" I asked.

"No," was the reply.

"No, 'For by ONE offering He hath perfected for

ever them that are sanctified.' (Heb. x. 14.) That one sacrifice was sufficient to meet all God's righteous claims, and now all God asks you to do is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the One who paid your debt, who is now at the right hand of God in glory; and the moment you believe, that moment you are saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

The dear woman seemed to drink in all that I said, and for a moment she hung down her head; and then she looked up, with her eyes filled with tears, and said, "Oh, I see it all clearly now! I believe I am saved."

"But what makes you believe you are saved?"

"Because I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and God tells me in His word that I am saved."

Yes, she believed and was saved; not because she felt it, but because God said so. She is still rejoicing in the knowledge of the forgiveness of all her sins, and living for the One who loved her and gave Himself for her.

And now, dear reader, what about your own soul? Perhaps you have never seen your need of Christ. Oh, what an awful condition to be in!—blinded by the enemy of souls, and going on to judgment and the lake of fire, and every moment brings you nearer to it. Oh, sinner, flee to Jesus! He invites you to come; He beseeches you to come. And "him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

"Soon that voice will cease its calling;

Now it speaks, and speaks to thee.

Sinner, heed the gracious message:

To the blood for refuge flee.

Take salvation,

Take it now and happy be."

J. R.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

“ NEVER.”

DID it ever strike you, dear reader, that the word which yields sweetest consolation to the true believer, is the same that effectually extinguishes every ray of hope for the unbeliever, and leaves him nothing but darkness and utter despair? That word heads this little paper.

To make this the more distinct, let us ask two questions, which, by the lips of the Lord Jesus Christ, are both answered by this very word.

1. Can the man or woman, who dies in unbelief, *ever* be saved? Mark the solemn answer—NEVER!

2. Can the one who has been born again of the Spirit of God *ever* be lost? NEVER!

Now if this weighty little word were but the utterance of feeble man, to quote it might be of little moment. For example, when Peter used it, on two important occasions in his history, it was only to display his own utter weakness—“Though all shall be offended because of Thee,” he said, “yet will I *never* be offended.” (Matt. xxvi. 33.)

Yet what followed? Was he not as vehement in the denial of his Master, as he had, a few short hours before, been vehement in the pledge of his faithfulness?

Then again, in John xiii. 8, we find him saying to the Lord, “Thou shalt *never* wash my feet;” and yet, the next moment, only too glad to submit to even more than his gracious Master proposed. So we see that Peter’s “*never*” was proved to be

as weak as water, and rendered utterly worthless by the first test brought to bear upon it. But let *God* say "*never*," and who shall gainsay it? Who can twist *His* "*never*" so as to bring it within the bounds of human possibility? Nay, who dare try? Who? Alas! it *has* been tried, and, still worse, professed followers of Christ—preachers, and teachers—either in blind ignorance or daring self-will, have done it. How deeply solemn!

But let us turn to God's word, and there find *His* answer to the questions just proposed.

Mark ix. 43-48 bears directly upon the first, and though, for want of space, I shall only quote one of these solemn verses, I would beg you to read, slowly and thoughtfully, the whole passage.

Verse 43 runs thus: "And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than, having two hands, to go into *hell, into the fire that NEVER shall be quenched.*"

Now, mark this well, I pray you: not only is the fire "*not quenched*" (see verses 44, 46, 48), but, as the Lord repeats again in verse 45, it "*never shall be.*"

And yet, in the very face of such unmistakeable language, poor, foolish man, though wise in his own conceits, would seek, by the breath of human argument, to quench that "fire." He would fain treat the gracious Saviour's solemn warnings as mere idle threats, or persuade his alarmed conscience that, if there *is* a hell, it will only be of limited duration, and that, after a few thousand years of punishment, there will be an end to it. But what God said of some who made light of His gracious warnings, in Jeremiah's days, still applies to these human reasoners of modern times: "They SHALL *know whose words shall*

stand, MINE, or THEIRS." (Jer. xliv. 28.) Consider it well, then. "NEVER SHALL BE QUENCHED" is the unchanging word of the Lord.

There it stands on record, as it fell from the lips of the righteous Judge and gracious Saviour. There it stands, and, as God is true, there it *shall* stand for ever. Not all the craft and power of Satan, nor all the tears of the weeping lost, will ever avail to quench that fire—*never! never!*

Oh, my reader, if *you* should at last die in your sins, you will most certainly discover, to your eternal cost, that when the Lord Jesus Christ warned sinners of the fire that "never shall be quenched," He meant what He said! But "why will ye die"? Why should you ruthlessly push from you the outstretched hand of mercy? Christ still waits at the Father's right hand, and while He thus waits "whosoever will" may come.

"Thousands have fled to His spear-piercéd side;
Welcome they all have been, none were denied."

Men, with crimes of deepest dye, have been washed from every crimson stain in His precious blood. The hardest of men have had their hearts melted, and won by His mighty love. And why should *you* still refuse Him? Be entreated. Fall at His feet even now; and, oh, *what* a welcome the poor prodigal will get! What arms of love will encircle him! His sins will all be forgiven, all forgotten. "*Whosoever* believeth in Him *shall receive remission of sins.*" (Acts x. 43.)

Beware of trifling with such momentous issues.

"Resist not the Spirit, no longer delay,
God's gracious entreaties *may end with to-day.*"

And if so, what then?

A long eternity of despair in that "fire unquenchable" will certainly be yours.

May God, in rich mercy, save you from such an appalling doom.

But, it may be, that some fellow-believer, who reads these pages, may be saying, "Though I can and do believe that 'never' answers the first question, I cannot as readily accept it as an answer to the second."

Well then, on what ground do you accept it as answering the first? And why do you believe that the *punishment is eternal*; that the fire of hell *never* will be quenched?

You reply, that when the Son of God said, "Never shall be," the matter was for ever settled.

Certainly. Whenever He spake, He was simply uttering the "word of God," so that to receive His testimony is to set to your seal that *God* is true. (John iii. 33, 34.)

Now then, turn with me to other words of this same blessed One: words none the less plain and unmistakeable (John x. 27-30): "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they *shall never* perish, neither *shall* any one pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

Just take your pencil and write down the two important words we have been considering in Mark ix. 43, and then beside them write the two found in John x. 28, thus:

"NEVER SHALL."

"SHALL NEVER."

Look at them honestly, as before Him who once uttered them, and say which you consider to be most worthy of your trust. Surely *both* are equally true?

"Ah, yes," you say; "and *I* believe that Christ's sheep shall never perish, if——" Stop there! Why did you not say that the fire "never shall be quenched," *if*——?

Ah! reader, there are no "ifs" about the matter. "Never shall" and "shall never" are alike the words of the Son of God, and must stand or fall together. Fall, did I say? Nay. "The word of our God shall *stand* for ever." (Isaiah xl. 8.) "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Matt. xxiv. 35.) And again, in this very chapter (John x. 35), we are told that "the Scripture *cannot* be broken."

It is our wisdom, then, surely, not to reason about His words, but to receive them by simple faith, and rest our souls upon them.

But it may be asked, "Who are the sheep of Christ?" Well, every true believer is a "sheep." The Lord said to the unbelieving Jews in that day, "Ye *believe not*, because ye are *not of my sheep*." (v. 26.)

Now, if the true believer is a sheep of Christ, and if the Great and Good Shepherd has given us His word for it, that no sheep of His shall perish, why not honour His blessed word, and take the comfort for your trembling soul which He desires you to have?

But it may be further objected, "May not some of these 'sheep' turn out very badly after all, and fall sadly and deeply into sin?" Of this there can be no doubt whatever. But there is another question it may be helpful for us to consider first; viz., Did not the Shepherd, who uttered such assuring words about His sheep, know at the time He uttered them, how every one of these very sheep would "turn out"? Most certainly He did. This

very chapter is witness of it. (v. 15.) When He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep," was He thinking only of His then disciples? Look at the very next verse. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold" (*i.e.*, the Jewish fold): "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, and one Shepherd." "*Must* bring!" Why this "must"? Ah! there is, in that little word, the gracious constraint of His own love; just as there was a righteous necessity, because of God's holiness and our guilt, in that same word to Nicodemus—"The Son of man *must* be lifted up." Oh, what a Saviour He is!

Without doubt, then, He had, at that moment, the whole of His flock before His mind. And, let me ask, was He going to die for them without knowing their sins beforehand? Impossible! Did He not let Peter understand that He knew *his* sins beforehand? Yet, of Peter with the rest, He could say, "Shall *never* perish." No doubt, Satan earnestly desired to pluck that sheep out of the Good Shepherd's hand. "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Precious assurance! Just notice here, in passing, that we have three distinct persons brought before us—"the Shepherd," "His sheep," and "the roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," as Peter himself speaks of Satan afterwards. Now the question comes, Who is to have that sheep? the "Shepherd" or the "lion"? "Satan hath *desired* to have thee," was the Lord's word to Peter. But can he *accomplish* that desire? That is the vital question. Did he try? He did. And, as far as the sheep was concerned, he would have come off victorious; for Peter could not keep himself, though he *thought* he could. But He who was going to lay down His

life for the sheep knew as well how to *restore* by His intercession, as to *save* by His death. "*I have prayed for thee.*" "The Lord is my Shepherd." "He restoreth my soul." Not the feeblest, nor the most faulty sheep of Christ will Satan ever get. Blessed be God for that! If we had been told that even *one* would be tempted away and devoured, we should each one of us be saying, "I fear *that* one will be *myself*." But not so. The Father gave Him the "sheep." (John x. 29.) And He says two all-important things about them in connection with their being His Father's gift to Him:

1. He GIVES ETERNAL LIFE to as *many as the Father gave Him*. (John xvii. 2.)

2. He says, "Those that *Thou gavest me* I have kept, and NONE OF THEM IS LOST." (John xvii. 12.) And afterwards, "Of them which *Thou gavest me* HAVE I LOST NONE." (John xviii. 9.)

And what is the secret of their being kept thus? Is it *their* love, or *their* faithfulness? No! A thousand times, NO! Not *their* love, but *His*. "Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." (John xiii. 1.)

Peter might fall—*did* fall, in spite of himself. He utterly broke down, and that, when he meant to do his best. But had his blessed Master's love broken down in consequence? No, no! Peter's *word*, too, had fallen to the ground. Is the word of the Lord to fall likewise? Never!

Could you not understand Peter saying, when he heard the cock crow on that eventful morning, and when the thought of his sin burst upon him with all its depressing power, "*Now*, my Master will for ever turn His back upon me!" Nay, Peter. The very opposite of that. See, what grace! Why His face is turned towards His

erring disciple immediately, and that loving look—with all its unspoken language—broke his heart, and “he went out to weep bitterly.”

Ah, no, dear fellow-Christian; no one is able to pluck us out of His mighty hand, or rob us of a place in His loving heart! Indeed, He speaks of His sheep in somewhat the same way that He speaks of His own life. (Compare John x. 18, 28.)

Of His own life He could say, “No man taketh *it* from me.” Of His sheep He says, “No man” (or no one) “is able to pluck *them* out of my hand.” And, in another place, He says, “Because *I* live, *ye* shall live also.” In Col. iii. 4 we read, “He *is* our life;” and in the previous verse, “Our life is *hid* with Christ in God.” And again, in 1 John v. 11, “He hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.”

How eternally secure, then, is every sheep of Christ! It is no surprise to Him, when, to use a familiar expression, they turn out badly. He knew it all to start with; and, notwithstanding all, died for them. And now He never takes His eye off one of them, but lives to support them in their weakness, and to serve them, as their *Advocate*, if they sin. (1 John ii. 1.) It is this all-prevailing advocacy of His that is the means of bringing a failing believer to repentance and confession of his sins. But do not imagine that the knowledge of such unchanging love will make us careless in our walk. The very opposite. It is this love of Christ that constrains those who have really tasted its heavenly blessedness *not* to live unto themselves, as once they did, but to Him who died for them and rose again. (2 Cor. v. 15.) And if, in their folly and self-will, they *do* stray

from His sheltering side, He will certainly never rest until He has brought them back, though He has to use His chastening hand, and deal heavy strokes, to accomplish it; and all this because of what they are to *His* heart and to His Father's.

How blessed, then, thus to be loved, kept, and cared for all life's journey through, till, in glory, we meet Him who died for us, and all because of what *His* love was, though He knew at the start all that ever *we* should be! Till then, let us never forget that "*He is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.*" (Jude 24.) And not only "*able to keep,*" but "*able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.*" (Heb. vii. 25.)

Finally, let no mere cold, lifeless professor dream that these precious assurances apply to him. Judas was a splendid professor, and outwardly made a better show than Peter did. The friendly kiss looked better, far, than the denying oath. Yet He who searches all hearts said of Judas, "One of you is a *devil*." (John vi. 70.) And at last we read, "*He went to his own place.*" (Acts i. 25.)

This is an easy-going day of outward religiousness, in which it is both easier and more popular to profess Christ than not to do so. Success in business is often in close alliance with the renting of a pew in church or chapel. But I solemnly urge it, that it is *not* to such that "*never perish*" applies, but rather another "*never,*" found in Matt. vii. 22—"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works?"

That was *their* profession; now comes Christ's: "Then will *I* profess unto them, *I* NEVER *knew* you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."

Now, He says in John x., "*I* KNOW *my* sheep;" so that if these had ever been "sheep," He certainly could not say to them, "I NEVER knew you." Believest thou this, my reader?

God grant that you may be brought to see and confess that the "never" of grace is as great a reality as the "never" of judgment; and, on the other hand, that the eternity of the unbeliever's damnation is as distinctly marked in God's word as the eternity of the believer's blessing.

GEO. C.

TAKE CHRIST FOR YOUR SAVIOUR NOW.

PERHAPS you say, "I see no reason why I should take Christ for my Saviour just now. I am young and in health; why not enjoy myself when I can? If I take Christ it will put an end to all my enjoyment, and I have no desire to enter upon the gloomy life of the Christian." These are your thoughts, but they are not right. These are some of Satan's suggestions to turn you away from Christ. You say you are in health; but how many as healthy as you are have been cut down in a moment, and have passed into eternity without hope? Can you say this will not be your case? Then take Christ now. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." You talk about enjoyment; but what is it at best? You seek the pleasures of the world to give you joy. You have your joyous times, but they soon pass away, and leave the heart unsatisfied.

It is not so with those who have got the Lord Jesus for their portion ; how many can testify that their most solid joy is when they are walking in fellowship with Him, apart from the world and all its glittering show !

Do not allow the devil to cheat you by telling you that if you receive Christ for your Saviour now it will put an end to your enjoyment.

This is the way he is blinding the eyes of thousands, and holding out before them one tempting bait after another, in order to allure them on to their everlasting destruction. If he can get you, dear friend, to reject Christ, he has gained his point, and he is sure of having you with himself in everlasting unquenchable fire for all eternity. Oh, then, accept the Lord Jesus now—even now—and escape the death that never dies. Believe on Him and live. Why do you listen to the enemy of your soul, and not listen to the voice of Jesus ? The former wants to destroy you in hell for ever ; the latter is willing to save you from this awful destruction. Why then do you not listen to Him who says, “ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death unto life ” ? (John v. 24.) These are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who is yearning over lost ones such as you. Oh, then, accept Christ now for your Saviour ! We beseech you, dear unsaved reader, to do so now, as you may not have another opportunity. If death does not overtake you suddenly, you cannot tell the moment when the Lord will leave His seat on high, and come into the air, and take up His believing ones to Him-

self, leaving you to pass through the awful judgments that will then fall upon those who have rejected Him. And as sure as this takes place, you will stand before the great white throne, to be judged according to your works, and to be cast into the lake of fire. Oh, how terrible to be banished from the presence of the Lord, and to have your portion with unbelievers in the lake of fire for ever!

Dear unsaved reader, once again we say, Take Christ for your Saviour now—this moment; there is no time for delay. The Lord is coming. Satan is striving to have you. Jesus waits to save. Do you ask, "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 30, 31.) W. P.

TO THE ANXIOUS SOUL, AND TO EVERY POOR SINNER.

YOU have prayed, it may be, many times; but the substance of your first honest utterance to God will be, "Lord, I accept as *true* all that thou hast said in thy Word about ME." (Read Romans iii.)

And your next will be, "Lord, I accept as *true* all that thou hast said in thy Word about THY BELOVED SON." (Read 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Peter ii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 20; and John iii. 33, 36.)

Whatever the past of your life may be, *these* are the two necessary steps in the history of the deliverance of every converted soul. What a deliverance! To have done with the first chapter of my history (Romans iii.), and to have begun eternity with the other. It is rest and peace.

H. C. A.

"YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN."

JESUS said to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again;" and, "Except a man be born again," or "from above" (see margin), "he cannot see the kingdom of God;" and yet more, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John iii. 5.)

To this He added, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John iii. 6.)

John, Peter, James, and Paul, through the Spirit, set their seal to the great truth of the birth from above, or the new birth.

JOHN.—"He [The Word] was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not; but as many as received *Him*, to them gave He power" (or "the right") "to be children of God, even to them that *believe on His name*: which were born, *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*" (John i. 10-13.)

"*Whosoever BELIEVETH that Jesus is THE CHRIST is born of God.*" (1 John v. 1.)

PETER.—"Ye [believers in God] have purified your souls in obeying *the truth through the Spirit* . . . being BORN AGAIN, not of corruptible seed, but of *incorruptible*, BY THE WORD OF GOD, which liveth and abideth for ever. For *all flesh* is as grass. . . . But the WORD OF THE LORD endureth for ever. And this is *the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.*" (1 Peter i. 22-25.)

JAMES.—"Every good gift and every perfect gift

is *from above*, and cometh *down* from the *Father of lights*, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of HIS OWN WILL BEGAT HE US with the WORD OF TRUTH." (James i. 17, 18.)

PAUL.—"But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 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. 4-7.)

This new birth from above is *not* received *in*, or *by*, or *with* baptism, which is clearly a *type* of *burial* of the old man with Christ, as the following scripture proves :

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized unto * Christ Jesus were baptized unto His DEATH? Therefore we are BURIED WITH HIM by *baptism* unto DEATH. . . . Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 3, 4, 6.)

Now Paul, in writing to the believers in Rome, says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to *every one* that *believeth*." (Rom. i. 16.)

And in 1 Corinthians we find :

"Brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye *are saved*, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I

* "Unto" is generally acknowledged to be the sense, and is better than "into."

delivered unto you *first of all* that which *I also received*, 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." (1 Cor. xv. 1-4.)

This is God's power unto salvation to *every one that believeth*, for "we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. i. 23, 24.)

These scriptures show us God's means and their results, and they respectively centre in and flow from Christ Himself, the blessed Saviour of sinners; and we see that the Holy Spirit, by the word of God that endureth for ever, brings about the new birth, without which none can enter into the kingdom of God. Moreover, we are taught concerning believers, "In one Spirit they *were* all baptized into one body"—one church (see 1 Cor. xii. 13, and Eph. i. 22, 23); "if *any* man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9), and "he that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit" (see 1 Cor. vi. 17); and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. viii. 14.)

Now we know man has no power to produce this new birth and bestow the blessings which accompany it; for when Jesus was interrogated, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" He answered, "This is the *work of God*, that ye *believe* on *Him* whom *He* hath sent." (John vi. 28, 29.)

What then does God require?—That we believe Him as Abraham did, and it shall be accounted unto us for righteousness. We shall find what the new birth means when we receive simply God's

testimony to His own Son—we shall enjoy the salvation which is through Christ, and Him alone.

But “all men have not faith” (2 Thess. iii. 2), and faith is “the gift of God.” (Eph. ii. 8.) Hence a man has only God to fall back on, and very rightly, and He encourages all to ask, for He says by His Son, “Ask, and it shall be given you . . . for *every one* that asketh receiveth.” (Matt. vii. 7, 8.)

“If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God, which He hath testified of His Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness *in himself*: *he that believeth not God* hath made Him a liar; because *he believeth not* the record that God gave of His Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” (1 John v. 9–11.)

“He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of *the earth* is *earthly*, and *speaketh of the earth*: He that cometh from heaven is above *all*. And what He hath seen and heard, that He testifieth; and no man receiveth His testimony. He that *hath* received His testimony *hath* set to his seal that God is true.” (John iii. 31–33.)

Dear reader, may the Lord give thee to see thy sinfulness, and grant thee godly sorrow for thy sins, with faith to believe they have *all* been laid on Jesus, and that He is able to save to the uttermost *all* that come to God through Him. Cast all thy man-taught notions to the winds. Take God at His word for thy salvation, and put no confidence in man; but wholly trust the word of the living God. Get into His presence; “acquaint thyself with Him,” and look to Him to save you for Jesus’ sake!

C. G. A.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

FOUR CUPS.

PSALM lxxiii. 10, lxxv. 8, cxvi. 13 ; LUKE xxii. 42.

THESE scriptures speak of four different cups. The first is the *present* portion of the man of the world—"waters of a full cup are wrung out to him." See how eagerly he grasps his cup of prosperity! See how he presses to his lips his cup of pleasure! See him enjoying his cup of fame! Like the rich man of Luke xvi., he is "faring sumptuously every day." Yet he is never satisfied. "He that drinketh of this water shall thirst again." It is said that many publicans salt the drinks which they sell, so that their customers may thirst more. That is just how the devil treats those who drink at *his* bar. Immense the variety, unlimited the supply, from which he fills the cups of his infatuated guests; right jôvial too they seem as they quaff deeper and yet deeper of those fatal, soul-entrapping draughts; and thus he lures them on till, fully intoxicated, they sink—sink to rise on earth no more, for "*the dead are there,*" and his "*guests are in the depths of hell.*" Oh, reader, beware! If unsaved, you are assuredly a customer at the devil's bar; he is luring you on. Happy you may *seem now*; and so you once appeared to me, "until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I *their end.* . . . How are they brought into desolation as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors."

But if such is the end of their *present* cup, what is their *future* portion? Note the solemn words—"In the hand of the Lord there is *a cup*, and the wine is red . . . but the dregs thereof all the wicked of the earth shall wring them out, and drink them." Do you ask what is the nature of its contents? See Rev. xiv. 10: "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation." Reader, the cup is in His hand; it may be placed in *yours* to-morrow, for you to spend eternity drinking its bitter dregs, if you refuse *to-day* to "take the cup of salvation." (Ps. cxvi. 13.) Yes, thank God, He yet extends that "cup of salvation." And a full cup indeed it is—salvation from your bitter bondage to the world's prince and god; salvation from sin's power, with all its loveless, godless gloom, the cruel mockery of its phantom pleasures, the bitter remorse and heart-wearying pangs of your guilty conscience; salvation from the fear of death, from death, from the grave, from hell, from the lake of fire. Yes, present and eternal salvation fill that cup, and divine grace offers it freely. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money . . . yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." Take it then, dear reader.

"Take it now, and happy be."

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." But free though the gift be to you, reader, despise it not as of small cost. Infinite love offers you a gift worthy of its Giver, *but bought at infinite price*; and there in Gethsemane behold the Saviour, as it were, counting

the cost. There, on bended knee, He views the cup extended to Him by His Father, and viewing it, He pours out His soul "with strong crying and tears unto Him that was able to save Him from death." "Father," He says, "if it be possible, let *this cup* pass from me." Reader, see His agony, see His bloody sweat. What could that cup be, the prospect of which was so tremendous? Ah, reader, it was that cup which *He* must drink to purchase the cup of salvation for you and me. But if the thought of it was so overwhelming, what must the reality have been! Do you ask what that cup contained? Turn to Ps. xxii., and you will find it expressed in that one mighty cry, wrung from the infinite agony of the Son of God—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" That, reader, was the cost measured by Himself alone; that the cup, drunk to its last dark and bitter dregs, that He might fill the cup of salvation to the brim, and offer it thus freely to you and to me. Such your sinfulness, and such mine, that nothing less would suffice. Oh, reader, no longer reject that cup of salvation, no longer slight the love that paid such a price for it; but take it at His own hand, and drink it, to His glory and your eternal blessing. W. H. K.

THE ROCKET LIFE-SAVING MACHINE.

SOME short time ago I had been visiting at the Coastguard-station at B—— with a friend, and on our way from the houses at which we had called to speak a little about eternal questions to those we met, we passed the boat-house. The door was open, and the coastguard on duty was

standing close by. Our attention was attracted by a rather interesting-looking machine, capable of being drawn by two horses, which appeared in very good order, and ready for immediate use.

We stopped, and entered into a short conversation with the coastguard as to what this machine was, and for what purpose intended. He at once stated that it was the rocket life-saving apparatus, used to throw a line attached to the rocket to a ship which might be driven on the rocks or sands in a storm, and that many lives had been saved by it on various parts of the coast. I made a remark to the effect that it must be a very useful invention; that to save a man's life was indeed a very important thing, as it not only concerned himself, but probably a wife and family, who would be depending on him for support; but I went on to say that it was of comparatively little importance when compared with the great question of the salvation of his soul. One's life might last for sixty or even eighty years, but the soul must live on and on through the never-ending ages of eternity. He admitted at once that not many of us would reach the age of eighty, and life would probably be much shorter. My friend said, referring to the rocket life-saving machine, that it does not require any machinery to save the *soul*.

"No," replied the coastguard, "we can do that ourselves if we like."

We went on to explain that all man's efforts were unavailing; that the Lord Jesus Christ had *finished* the work on the cross, and that the only thing which could come in between the sinner in his sins and a holy God was the precious blood of Christ.

Our friend the coastguard became rather un-

easy; he did not care to hear more on the subject, and said he knew all about those things.

This case is simply an illustration of that of thousands around us. They do not deny, in so many words, that the Lord Jesus came into this world, and that He died on the cross; but they do not look by faith *entirely* to Him, but put into the scale something of their own as a make-weight to meet the claims of divine justice.

But what has God said on this subject of such vital importance?

First, He speaks of man under trial. The early part of the epistle to the Romans gives us a vivid picture of his condition, whether professedly religious or openly wicked, and sums up with these words: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Chap. iii. 19.) Man, proved in every way for four thousand years, could produce nothing to meet the claims of God, and closed his history as under trial by crucifying the Son of God, come down here in perfect grace. Man is not now on his trial, but proved to be lost and guilty.

But there is another way in which Scripture looks at the sinner, and that is as *dead* in sins. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, *even when we were dead in sins*, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved)." (Eph. ii. 4, 5.) Dead! not one motion of life toward God. What a condition to be in! And yet it is the state of every man, woman, and child, be they moral, amiable, religious members of society, or quite the opposite, unless they have been "quickened," saved by

divine grace. How could a man who was dead do anything whatever for himself? He must get life before he can do one act pleasing to God. But God has come, in the riches of His mercy and grace, and given His own Son, who has gone down into death; having there met and satisfied at once all God's just and holy claims, and all our desperate need.

Now, being risen from the dead and seated in glory, the sinner who believes in Him alone as his own personal Saviour is looked at by God as "*in Him*," far beyond the reach of condemnation or judgment.

Unsaved fellow-sinner, this question is *urgent*. You will soon, perhaps very soon, have crossed the boundary-line that separates time from eternity, and then there will be no going back. The great gulf will be "fixed" between the saved and the lost, so that none may cross it. There is no salvation after death, nothing to look forward to but the gloom of hopeless despair.

Jesus is the sinner's Saviour; *and He alone*. (Acts iv. 12.) God will not allow His Son to be robbed of one whit of His glory; and if you are to be saved, He who completed the work of redemption on the cross, and proved that it was complete by His resurrection from among the dead, He must have *all* the glory; and you will have all the joy, and peace, and blessing, to the eternal praise of the riches of God's grace. F. G. B.

"BE YE ALSO READY."

IT was pay-day a few months ago in a large mill, when John B—— left his home well in the morning to go to his work. At the dinner-

hour he took his pay home, put it away, and had his dinner. Two hours afterwards, feeling weak, he sat down on the side of an opening into a ventilating tunnel; he became unconscious, and fell backward into it—a marvel he did not break his neck in the fall. He would probably have been suffocated with the water at the bottom, had not his cap been observed lying by the side of the opening at the top. When he was got out he was in a very weak state, and vomited blood. He was sent home in a car, and put to bed, and the doctor was sent for. The doctor told him he was not much hurt, and that he would soon be able to go back to his work again (he had been a very healthy man, never ailing, and had reached the age of sixty); but it did not turn out as the doctor had said; he continued to lose large quantities of blood, and to grow weaker day by day: he lingered for about ten days, and passed into eternity.

A word now about his soul. John was a steady, industrious man, attended religious services regularly, and took the sacrament for well-nigh forty years, and was to all appearances a Christian man.

A few days after his accident I called to see him, and after speaking about his ailment, I asked plainly if he knew the work of Christ for *himself*? had he got *his sins* washed away in the precious blood of Jesus? This he did not know; in fact he had nothing to rest on; religion had given him nothing for himself. True he knew the way of salvation, and something of the value of Christ's blood, but not for his own soul; he was not under its shelter, he was unsaved. I read to him from the Word of God, of God's great love to him a sinner, and showed him that, with his forty years of religious life, he was but a poor, lost

sinner, and that God could only save him on *that ground*; “for the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was *lost*.” I said that his case was worse than that of the heathen who had never heard of God’s salvation; for he had, and yet was not saved. He admitted to me that had he been killed he would have gone to hell. He also told me that thirty years ago he had had a dream—he saw the Lord clothed in white with a large book open before Him; his name was called, but he did not answer it till the third time. He never forgot this dream. So after three periods of ten years each, God called him again, and spared his life for ten days, that in His wondrous love and longsuffering He might save his precious soul.

John B—— took the place of a lost sinner, and died trusting alone in Jesus, and His precious blood.

His wife knew the value of the work of Christ on the cross for her *own* soul, and her anxiety was great for her husband’s salvation. God indeed answered her prayers for him.

Who can fail to see the goodness of God to this man, in His patient longsuffering? How He spoke to him in a dream, and then after waiting thirty years brought him to the brink of the grave to save his soul; and when he was there he dared not rest on his religious life for salvation, yea, it proved him to be if possible a greater sinner; for he was not saved. And yet, sad to say, how many are resting in, and trusting to, what they *are*, and to what they have *done*; having only a head-knowledge of the value of the work of Christ!

Dear reader, if you are one of the many who

are doing so, you are on a foundation of sand, and you will be lost, unless your eyes are opened to see your danger, and you flee to Jesus *alone* for salvation. He is the *only* Saviour, and is willing and able to save you, if only you are willing to be saved by Him. Do throw away every other refuge, and come to Him, saying, "Lord, save me, or I perish!" "Him that cometh to Me, I will in *no* wise cast out."

J. R. W.

CHRIST THE DOOR.

"**I** AM the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." (John x. 9.) Such were the words from which a servant of the Lord was proclaiming the gospel, to a large company of persons in the W—— Townhall, one evening in the month of October, 1879; and amongst the company then present was a young man about twenty-two years of age, one who had drunk deeply of the pleasures of sin, but up to that time had failed to get satisfaction.

The preacher dwelt a great deal on the little word "any," showing the people that it did not matter who they were or what they were—great sinners or little sinners, moral or immoral—all were included in the word *any*; whosoever they were, if they entered in by this door they should one and all be saved, and should go in and out, and find pasture. God in His infinite love and grace caused several to enter by that living door that night, and amongst them was the young man above mentioned, who, when the meeting closed, retired happy and rejoicing, because a saved man, and spent the remainder of the night in praising Him

who had called him out of nature's darkness into His most marvellous light. So full of joy was he, that he could not keep it to himself, but told all with whom he came in contact what a Saviour he had found. Have you, dear reader, entered in by *the door*? Do you know what it is to be saved and to have perfect liberty? "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." (Acts xiii. 38.) "I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for His name's sake." (1 John ii. 12.) "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 that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God." (1 John v. 13.)

H. C.

WHAT GOD THINKS OF CHRIST.

BEFORE the world was, He was daily His delight. (Prov. viii. 30.) At His birth the glory of the Lord, shining upon this earth, lying literally and morally in midnight darkness, expressed His joy in Him, while the angelic host, ever in unison with the mind of God, burst forth in a chorus of praise and gladness, welcoming His coming into the world. At the commencement of His ministry, as at its close, God Himself told out His love for Him, saying, "Thou art my beloved Son." (Luke iii. 22.) "This is my beloved Son." (Luke ix. 35.) But not only because of what He was in Himself, but because of His work on Calvary's cross. "*Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.*" (John x. 17.) And

so blessedly did He accomplish that will of God, in making full atonement for sins, in going down to death, even the death of the cross, that He was raised from the dead by the *glory* of the Father (Rom. vi. 4), and God hath "*highly* exalted Him, and given Him a name which is *above every name*." (Phil. ii. 9.) Anxious soul, look to Jesus; see how wonderful are God's thoughts of Him, His delight in Him, His love for Him, and how He has expressed it all in raising Him from the dead, and giving Him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God. Yes, my soul, God rests in Jesus, and therefore I can find my rest in Him too. God is satisfied with Him, and has fully accepted His finished work as a complete settlement of the whole question of sin for all who believe on Him, and therefore I, believing, may know the burden of sins for ever gone, and adoringly exclaim—

"God is satisfied with Jesus;
I am satisfied as well."

WHAT THE WORLD THOUGHT OF CHRIST.

Alas! this blessed One, who came in such wondrous love and tender mercy, was "*despised and rejected of men*." At His birth they had *no room for Him in the inn*, and a manger must be His cradle. At the commencement of His ministry, though wondering at "the words of grace that proceeded out of His mouth" (Luke iv. 22), they were only "filled with wrath;" they had *no room for Him in their city*, and sought to cast Him down headlong from a precipice; and yet again, at the close of that most gracious career, they pronounce in no uncertain language that they had *no room for Him in the world anywhere*. "Away with Him! Crucify Him!" is the united cry. For

once the world was of one mind, and that to crucify God's beloved Son. Oh, friends, thus we see that God's thoughts of Christ and man's thoughts of Him are as opposed as noonday is to midnight! They are as far asunder as the Poles, and therefore the solemn question for each one individually is, "What do *I* think of Christ? Which side am *I* on? If I have come to Him, believed on Him, trusted Him, accepted Him, I am on God's side; but if I am still a rejecter of Christ, still unwashed in, unsheltered by, His blood, I am part and parcel of the world that turned Him out, and put Him to death—part and parcel of the world that God is soon going to judge for its treatment of His Son."

Oh, my reader, neglect not this question. Think not you can be neutral. There is *no neutrality* where the Son of God is in question. "He that is not with me is AGAINST ME." How awful to be still AGAINST the Son of God! Harken to the *Holy Ghost's thoughts* of this: "If any man LOVE NOT the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be ANATHEMA MARANATHA." (1 Cor. xvi. 22.) Oh, are you in unison with the mind of God? and if not, *can you* be content while opposed to it? How many, alas! share *Satan's thoughts* of Christ, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?" (Mark v. 7.) "Don't trouble us, don't come to us about these things; talk about politics, about the weather, about the concert last week, or the ball of next week; talk about the performance at the theatre last night; but don't torment us about our souls; time enough to think of them when we are old, or when we come to die; but the world, pleasure, gaiety, money, these are the things for the present, 'these be thy gods, O England!'"

How different when one mentions the name of Jesus to those who *know Him* as their Saviour. "Ah!" they exclaim, "He is the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely." "Whither shall we turn? to what persons or subjects shall our conversation be directed?" they say. Like Peter of old, if asked to go away from Christ, they reply, "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and *are sure* that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." (John vi. 68, 69.) How blessed to have these thoughts of Him! to look around this scene,—north, south, east, and west—and to say of all it contains put together, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil. iii. 8.)

Reader, may you be delivered from Satan's or the world's thoughts of Christ, and be able to rejoice in God's thoughts of Him, for your present salvation and everlasting happiness! H. P. A. G.

"THERE IS FORGIVENESS WITH THEE."

"If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared."—PSALM CXXX. 3, 4.

THERE are three classes of persons who shall not stand before the Lord if He should mark iniquities—the openly wicked, the legalists, and the religious professors.

The first class are heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. They cast up sin and iniquity, as the waters of the troubled sea cast up mire and dirt. (Isaiah lvii. 20.) One sin would suffice to exclude the sinner from God. If the Lord, there-

fore, marks iniquity, how shall the openly ungodly stand before Him? "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Psalm ix. 17.) Eternal woe is their sure and irrevocable portion.

The second class differ widely from the first. Thousands cannot be charged with flagrant wilful sins. Their conduct, according to the standards of men, may be most estimable. They are known as good citizens, moral, upright, and respectable. Speak to them of the claims of God, they consider it an intrusion. What more can be expected of them? They do their best to keep God's commandments, they say. Dear reader, don't you think you could do better if you were to try? But will man's very best do for God? No, indeed, no more than his worst. Far better, surely, to be moral than openly wicked. But if you would stand before the Lord on the ground of your obedience to His law, you must keep it perfectly in every particular. Now, where is there an unconverted soul that does? Not one. In some point all break it. Our very best deeds are mixed with sin. If any man offend in one point, he is *guilty of all*. (James ii. 10.) If the Lord should mark iniquity, it is clear the legalist cannot stand.

The third class are the religious professors. This land abounds with them. Tens of thousands regularly observe certain ordinances, rites, and ceremonies most religiously. But are they acceptable to God? What is the motive? God looketh upon the heart. No act of service to Him is acceptable until you are *saved*. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." Perhaps some reader of these lines thinks it is perfectly right and proper to follow after a

certain ritual. But God cannot accept the service of those whose hearts are far from Him. (Heb. ix. 14.) "But," you say, "I have been brought up, like thousands more, to believe these things are right." Let the word of God reply, "That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke xvi. 15.) "But how can we be forgiven unless we do something?" Ah! you can never know forgiveness until you leave off trusting in your *religious doings*. Your most religious acts are mixed with sin. If the Lord should mark iniquity, surely no religious professor could stand.

But how blessed to find side by side with this deeply solemn statement for the unconverted world the precious words, "But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared."

Neither moral living, nor religiousness, can atone for sin, nor procure forgiveness. But *there is forgiveness*. With whom? With the Lord. No angel, nor all the angelic hosts together; no man, not even the priest of highest rank in the professing church, can forgive the sinner a single sin. None but the Lord alone. "There is forgiveness with Thee." Have you been *to Him*? He died for sinners, was buried, and rose again, according to the Scriptures. And "to Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) Note it well, "*Whosoever believeth*."

The wicked cannot stand; eternal woe is his sure portion. The legalist is condemned by the law he vainly struggles to keep. The religious professor is ever busy at his religious observances, but, like a man in a treadmill, never getting one step further, because he lacks salvation in Christ. To

whichever class you may hitherto have belonged, the word of God says, that "*whosoever*"—and that takes in you—means anybody—"whosoever believeth in Him *shall receive* remission of sins." Dost thou believe?

The risen Christ is seated in the glory; His work is done. "Through *this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and *by Him* all that believe are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.) Believers, too, are *in Him*; in Him *now*, "in whom *we have* redemption through His blood, *the forgiveness of sins.*" (Eph. i. 7.) And what is the measure? Immeasurable! For the apostle adds, "According to the riches of His grace." And who can compute these? For—

"Eternity, infinity—
Alone of grace the limits are."

Beloved reader, are your sins forgiven? They are, if you believe in Christ. God's word says so. To all believers the apostle John says, "I write unto you, little children, because your sins *are forgiven you* for His name's sake." (1 John ii. 12.) And both Old and New Testament Scriptures pronounce them "blessed," saying, "*Blessed* are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. *Blessed* is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Psalm xxxii. 1, 2; Rom. iv. 7, 8.) Are you one? Can you sing—

"My sins into the sea are cast,
Behind the back of God;
As far as east from west removed,
Through Jesus' precious blood"?

Do you still hesitate? Oh, take Him at His word! And He who cannot lie says now, "Their sins and their iniquities will *I remember no more.*" (Heb. x. 17.)

E. H. C.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



THE PENSIONER'S SERMON.

JUST as I had started for a neighbouring village to preach the gospel, I overtook a feeble, shabby-looking old man walking in the same direction. I enquired of him if he had met an old gentleman in a pony-trap, whom I was expecting to meet. He answered, "No," and then told me the following sad story:

"I'm an auld pensioner, yer honour, and I've been knocked down and kicked in the face"—pointing to large scars on his nose and chin—"and side by two blackguards. They broke the rib of me, and robbed me of my little bit of pension that I'd just drawn, yer honour."

This was concluded by a military salute with his one remaining hand, he having lost his right arm at Sebastopol, as he afterwards told me.

"I'm afraid you've been drinking, and getting into bad company, or you'd not have been served in that way," I replied.

"No, indeed, yer honour; it's not drinking I was at all. When I drew my pension"—and here he took out a little tin box containing a pensioner's certificate for Patrick ———, late of 88th Regiment, to certify the veracity of his statement—"when I drew my pension I just went into a house to have a basin of soup, and two fellows that was there, they saw a few shillings with me, and they followed me out and robbed me."

Just then the carriage I was expecting came up. The old gentleman who was in it was an old officer, and knowing that he took an interest in the welfare, temporal and spiritual, of old soldiers, I told the man to come up and repeat his story. He did so, and, finding he was going the same way for some distance, we offered him a lift, that we might enquire further into his tale.

The old officer immediately concluded, as I had done, that the unfortunate man had been "taking a drop of whisky;" but when taxed with it again, he seemed more hurt by the charge than indignant at it, and replied that he had not tasted whisky for above ten years, and that, if we doubted his word, we might apply to the staff officer of pensioners, who knew him well, or to the chief constable at E——, where the robbery had been committed and the thieves tried, and sentenced to nine months' hard labour for their brutal conduct.

After some further enquiry as to his length of service, and as to when he lost his arm, I asked him, "Well, did you ever think of your soul, my man, amidst all those troubles and dangers?"

"Yes, that I have, yer honour. I've been a follower of the footsteps of the blessed Lord these eight-and-forty years, and if He were to call me to-night, I'm not afraid but that I'd go to Him in glory."

"And what are you depending on for this?"

"Depending on? The blessed Jesus. He died for sinners; He died for you, and me, and everybody else."

I must confess I was fairly overcome with emotion at so simple and unequivocal a reason for the hope that was in him, which this poor, dear old man gave with all meekness and fear; and to

find that this poor, battered, bruised, and suffering man was a brother Christian filled me with purest joy. But a moment before I had regarded him with the strongest suspicion, and now to have the tables turned on me, and to be preached to in so simple, powerful, and practical a way, greatly affected me. My eyes filled with tears, and it was some moments before I could recover myself to ask, "Then you are one of those sinners for whom Jesus died?"

"*I am*," he replied, without hesitation.

"And how long have you known this?"

"For nigh upon eight-and-forty years."

"Then you *have* everlasting life," I answered; "for it says, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but *have* everlasting life.'"

"I have that," he replied; "I *have* everlasting life."

And now, dear reader, let me ask you the same question as I did this old pensioner, "Did you ever think of *your* soul?" I don't ask, "Did you ever think of your neighbour's soul? or of the souls of the poor heathen? or of someone else's soul?" whoever it may be, but, "Did you ever think of *your own* soul and *your own* soul's *salvation*?" Can you answer as he did, "I depend for my salvation on *the blessed Jesus having died for SINNERS*. He died for *you* and *me* and *everybody else*?"

You may reply, "Do you mean to tell me, sir, that believing that will save *my* soul?"

God tells *you* so, if you'll only believe God means what He says, and not turn it off into something which He *does not* say.

Now listen to what He *does* say: "*Hear, and your soul shall live,*" is His own word. (Isa. lv. 3.)

"This is a *faithful* saying, and *worthy of all acceptation*, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners.*" (1 Tim. i. 15.) "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet *sinners*, *Christ died* for us" (Rom. v. 8); that is, God shows us how *suitable* His love is to us. God would impress you, dear unconverted reader, with the *suitability* of His salvation to *meet your need*, by showing you that it was while you were *what you are*—a sinner—that He provided for *you* a Saviour, and thus met your need as a sinner; when you had no strength to better yourself, and fit yourself for His holy presence, for heaven. "For when we were yet without strength, in *due time* Christ died *for the ungodly.*" (Rom. v. 6.) It was indeed "*due time*;" for man had fully shown *what he was capable of*—murdering the Son of God, and *what he was incapable of*—making himself fit for God. "For *all* have sinned, and *come short* of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.) It was indeed *due time*; for had Christ not died, we, all having sinned, must *all* have been shut out of the presence of a holy God for ever.

You are indeed one of those for whom Christ died. Believe it, believe *He died for thee*, and thou *art* a saved person; for *God* says so. "The gospel which I preached unto you, by which also ye are saved," says the apostle to the Corinthians. Get your Bible, and read what that gospel was. Two short verses contain it—the third and fourth of 1 Corinthians xv. It was believing *that* that saved them; believing *that* will save you.

But if I were to go on writing for a week, I

could not preach the gospel to you more powerfully, more purely, and more persuasively than that poor illiterate old Irish pensioner did to me. "The blessed Jesus, He died for sinners. He died for *you* and me and everybody else." Believe that, and you have it. Have what? The salvation of your precious, never-dying soul.

May God bless the pensioner's sermon, to the salvation of your soul and the glory of His Son!

We parted after a drive of two miles, he to wend his weary way to the next town, but with that in his poor old breast which will land him safe in glory, as he himself said in parting, "Well, brothers, thank you for the cup of cold water you have given in the name of a disciple. We shall meet again, I trust, in glory."

Reader, have you got the *same sure ground of trust* for the same thing? Shall *we* meet in glory?

* "My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus Christ, *God's* righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But rest *my all* on *His* sweet name."

W. G. B.

"VERY ANXIOUS ABOUT HER BODY, BUT NOT
AT ALL ANXIOUS ABOUT HER SOUL."

MRS. D— was one of that numerous class of poor sufferers who are ever ready to talk of their ailments, and who think of little more than present escape from pain and weariness. These are, alas! ignorant of the *consolations* of the gospel, of the believer's bright prospect of being with Christ, "which is far better," and of possessing a glorified body, like His own, at His coming.

Two of the Lord's servants called to see the above-named, when, as usual, she dwelt on her

suffering state of health, though she was not indifferent to the things of eternity. To arouse her to a fuller sense of need, one said to the other, "Mrs. D—— is very anxious about her body, but not at all anxious about her soul."

On the next visit she spoke more freely, and said she hoped to go to heaven when she died. On being asked on what foundation her hope rested, she replied, "God answers my prayers." We assured her we were thankful she did pray, but pointed out that many poor unsaved persons ask God for food, and He gives it to them, as He does even to the young ravens which cry (Psalm cxlvii. 9); but that His care for our bodies was no ground to build hopes of heaven on, and was quite distinct from the salvation of our souls. "For He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. v. 45.)

"Ah! but He hears my prayers about my soul," she rejoined. "Why, Mrs. D——," we replied, "you have left out Christ. In your way you can be saved without Him; for God answers your prayers: so *your prayers and His answer are your Saviour*. Christ need never have become a man and have died for sinners."

God graciously showed her her great mistake. She said, "I never saw that before," and admitted she had been depending on her prayers instead of on Christ, and knew not the precious peace of resting on Him for time and eternity. She was now thankful to hear how God had effected a righteous settlement of the great debt of sins for which she was responsible to Him, which she never could discharge. She would gladly accept His way, and exchange a "hope to be saved when I die" for a

present certainty, founded on God's word and Christ's finished work alone.

True prayer is telling God the heartfelt need of the soul. It is written of Paul, that wonderful servant of God, "Behold, he prayeth." (Acts ix. 11.) Cornelius, the head of the first Gentile household to whom the gospel was preached, was a devout man, who "prayed to God alway." (Acts x. 2.)

Such are those to whom now, as then, God delights to send the message of "peace by Jesus Christ"—"remission of sins." (vv. 36, 43.) They have only to appropriate to themselves the precious fruits of His victory.

WORKS OR THE BLOOD.

How apt we are to think we can do something to fit ourselves for God, instead of owning that our every good deed is *mixed with the sin* of our fallen, corrupt nature; and therefore, like Cain's offering, the fruit of the ground which God had cursed because of man's sin is not acceptable to Him.

We can do nothing for God until we have found out what He has done for us. People try to make a purse of good works to present to Him. He esteems them but a bundle of "filthy rags." (Isaiah lxiv. 6.)

God told Moses that if the children of Israel made Him an altar of stone, they were not to make it of hewn stone; "for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." (Exodus xx. 25.)

Yes, as one stroke of the mason's hammer on the stone would pollute the sacrifice laid thereon, so any addition of *man's doing* to Christ's *one perfect work* prevents it being accepted for you.

Sinners dead in sins are invited to remember Him whom they know not in partaking of the emblems of His precious body given to die, and His blood shed. Thus they incur the awful danger of God's judgment, instead of helping towards their souls' salvation. (1 Cor. xi. 27-32.) Only those who truly love the Lord Jesus can thus remember and thank Him for those sufferings which have put their sins away. "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts v. 29.)

You may be doing your best, leaning on prayers, works, or sacraments; but neither of these, nor all of them put together, would put away your sins, give you peace, or give God satisfaction. Nothing but blood will—"the precious blood of Christ." (1 Peter i. 18, 19.) "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Lev. xvii. 11), and which "cleanses us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) The reason that God accepts the blood of His dear Son is, that He provided the Lamb who shed it. (Genesis xxii. 8.) The blessed God sent His Son to enter on the cross into all the depth of our degradation and ruin. There He raised the claim of righteousness against man, and in infinite love settled it for him. There the "sinless One" met God, bore the full penalty of His wrath against sin, and perfectly glorified Him. In token of God's infinite satisfaction in Christ's finished work, He has raised Him as man from the lowest depths to the throne of glory, and thence *sets Him forth* a propitiation (or mercy-seat) through faith in His blood, and invites you to come just as you are—a poor sinner without strength—and claim the blood-bought pardon God's grace freely offers you. (Romans iii. 22-26.)

He has promised to receive you (2 Cor. vi. 17), will set you in His own righteousness, clear you from every charge of sin. Haste thee, wait not to be better; to be without Christ is to be lost. He says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

Dear anxious reader, the very sins which trouble you are the very ones for which He died. He is in the glory, and has left them behind. God is satisfied with Christ. He is in the glory "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." God will never go from *His word*. That, not his feelings, is the unchanging ground of the believer's assurance.

FEELINGS OR FAITH.

Many who truly hate sin are waiting for holy frames within to rest on, and because they do not find them conclude they are unsaved. One day a ray from heaven of the love of Christ reaches them, and they have hope; the next perhaps some earth-born cloud comes between their souls and the Sun of righteousness, and their hope is gone. It rested on feelings that change like the weather, not on Him who changes not. They are looking for their old, corrupt nature to be altered, and to answer to the claims of God, and their own desires after holiness; but it never will. It is a great deal worse than they think it is, and is past mending. Read carefully Romans viii. 7, 8. The carnal mind is

- (1) "Enmity" against God,
- (2) "Not subject" to the law of God,
- (3) "Neither indeed can be."

The carnal mind is the will or corrupt nature born in us, which the verse quoted says cannot be changed. Clearly God does not expect to find

good, or love to Him in it. How then can you? God has put it out of His sight—crucified it with Christ, and you are not to indulge it, but reckon yourself to be dead indeed unto sin. (Rom. vi. 6, 11.)

There are only two objects—"self" and Christ—and the feelings go with them. You are occupied with the wrong one—"self"—and get the bad experiences which flow from it. God's object is Christ. Turn from yourself to Him, and all is reversed, because God's object is before you. As you think of Him who loves you, heavenly happiness fills your heart, and your conscience is clear with God, through His precious blood. You rest on Him, in whom God rests; Christ is your new life, your new self. The new nature never sins. (1 John iii. 9.)

God's way is first faith, then feelings. Our way is often, "If I could feel saved I would believe," which is putting feelings in place of faith in Christ.

"WHAT IS FAITH?"

said a gentleman to a labouring man who was preaching in the open air. "Believing what you cannot see, sir," he replied. "Ah! but I want something more than that," he rejoined. It was at the time sentence was being carried out on some of the poor assassins in Ireland. "Well, sir," the preacher said, "do you believe those poor murderers were executed in Dublin yesterday?" "Yes, I do," he replied. "Why, sir, do you believe it? You were not there to see them hanged." "No; but I read it in the newspaper." The gentleman accepted the *fact*, on the report of the newspaper (which might be wrong). He had faith in it. God presents the *sure record* of His written Word,

which is *truth*, for you to believe *the facts* He states therein.

As such feelings as *awe* at the solemn end of the assassins, are produced by reading the account of the execution, so the glad tidings announced of the death and resurrection of His Son produce, when believed, the happy consciousness of what His work has procured, even “peace with God,” everlasting life, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. (John v. 24; 1 John v. 9, 13.)

Do not dishonour God by doubting His Word. God has accepted Christ. Let Him satisfy you, dear reader, and you will know that you stand *accepted* in the Beloved. (Eph. i. 6.) A.

“YET SPEAKETH.”

HER. xi. 4.

THE first week of the present year was marked by a severe snow-storm, which many persons called seasonable weather; perhaps little thinking it was the messenger of death to many a household.

Whilst it continued, two persons lay dying; one, the mother of seven dear little children, knowing personally through grace the value of the precious blood of Christ for her redemption before God.

Seeing the snow falling against the window, she asked that some might be given her. On taking it, she called two of her dear little girls to her bedside, and said, “My darlings, you see this

snow, *how white* it is?" They answered, "Yes, mother." She then said, "I want you to remember your mother is *whiter than snow*; washed in the *precious blood of Jesus*, and fit to go into the bright presence of God, where there is no sin." Blessedly true; "not a cloud above, not a spot within." A short time before she "fell asleep" she looked up, and with a sweet smile said, "We shall be first;" and when asked, "Do you mean 'the dead in Christ shall rise first'?" "Yes," she said, "that is it."

What wonder then that this dear child of God, who through faith had long known Christ as her Saviour, God as her Father, and heaven as her home, should, with eternity opening before her, be able, not only to rest on, but to rejoice in, the prospect. Just as she was passing away she exclaimed, "He's come! I'm through! He's come! I'm through!" and so she fell asleep—"Absent from the body, present with the Lord," there to know, without a cloud, His full unbounded love; with Him whose grace had thus made her meet for His presence; "the inheritance of the saints in light." (Col. i. 12, 14.)

Once only in Scripture do we get those words, "*Whiter than snow*" (Ps. li. 7); and then, in the heartfelt confession and prayer of a conscience-stricken and repentant sinner, one who had been an adulterer and a murderer; but such is God's grace that even he could say, "I confessed, and thou forgavest" (Ps. xxxii. 5); and 2 Sam. xii. 13 is, "I have sinned against the Lord," calling forth the grace—in "the Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."

The other dying one was a middle-aged man, whose body, as I write, is being laid in the grave

waiting the resurrection. Two or three Christians had visited him frequently during his three months' illness; but not till about a fortnight before he died, could we see that he had any real anxiety in view of eternity. Poor man! he then seemed to wake up to his position; and said that "at nights he was often troubled with bad thoughts, and also that he couldn't help thinking that for over twenty years he had neglected God, and thought perhaps if he had gone to a place of worship, things might have been different, and there might have been some chance for him. But now—what?"

And so Satan tries to cast an awakened soul back upon itself, and to occupy it with what he insinuates might have been, and thus to hinder the soul from really turning to God, and perceiving the blessedness of *what He is—Love*.

But, dear reader, it is just here, when we are brought to our wits' end, that God can step in, in His infinite grace using, perhaps, the simplest means to convey light and grace to the soul.

Three days before the poor man passed away, I took him a little nourishment. He thanked me for it, and said he had much enjoyed it. I then asked him whether he thought I gave it to him freely, and was pleased to do so. He answered, "Oh, yes, I know it." And so in this little circumstance we had a simple picture of God's dealings with poor sinners. God so loved that He gave, and His joy is in our acceptance of, and joy in, His gift. "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.) I pressed him to receive God's gift simply and gratefully. After a

moment or two he answered, "Well, if 'tis like that, I am sure I will." Soon after I left, and I never saw him again. But his sister told me that during the last day of his life he kept repeating that verse (John iii. 16) over and over again; and his last words, three minutes before he passed away, were, "I believe," and soon he was in eternity.

Now, dear reader, how different these two death-beds. The one, a soul consciously in the enjoyment of eternal life, like a ship, as it were, in full sail, going into harbour; the other, like a drowning man struggling with the billows, though possibly dragged out at the last moment.

I only know in Scripture of one case of salvation at the last hour—that of the dying thief (Luke xxiii. 40–43)—one, that the poor dying sinner should not despair, and one *only*, that others should not presume.

A. P.

B.

A DEATH-GRIP OF "WHOSOEVER."

A GOSPEL preaching, held by two evangelists, had just closed, when an old woman of over fourscore years, with deeply-wrinkled forehead, came up to them. Taking hold of the hand of one, she said, "I was so glad you told them about '*whosoever*.' I like that word. For a year and a half I was in despair. I was ten times more guilty than the devil. A thousand times I had the offer of salvation, and I despised the blood; but he never had the offer after he fell. But when I heard that word, *I laid hold of 'whosoever' with a death-grip*, and I made up my mind

I'd carry it with me to hell, rather than let it go."

"How long ago is that?" they asked.

"Some sixty years," was the reply.

Dear reader, how is it with you? Have you ever known what it is to be in despair? Conviction of sin is a solemn reality. Those who have passed through it can well enter into the words of this aged Christian. To have before your soul the terror of the Lord, glorious in holiness (Exodus xv. 11); the broken law, with its awful curse attached (Gal. iii. 10); a sin-burdened conscience; death, judgment, and the lake of fire your impending doom, staring you in the face morning, noon, and night, is a dread reality indeed. And oh, what inexpressible relief at such a moment, and in such a condition, to hear the joyful sound of the gospel, telling how "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.) Who would not lay hold of it with a death-grip?

Picture to yourself a man overboard from a ship in mid-ocean, and about to sink beneath the waves and find a watery grave, when suddenly a rope is thrown to him—his only possible chance of escape; see the death-grip with which he seizes it in his desperate eagerness, and you will get a faint idea of the grip of faith with which, as this aged woman described it, she gripped the "who-soever" of the gospel of God. Eternity depended upon it. To miss it would be to spend eternity in hell, to grip it, eternity in glory with Christ. At one moment the devil's captive, reduced to desperation, the blackness of darkness for eternity

right before her, with the full consciousness in the presence of the Holy One of richly deserving that awful doom, when suddenly the "whosoever" of His boundless grace sounds upon the ear. And as she so graphically described, she *laid hold of it with a death-grip*.

It was the grip of faith, and God's blessed answer went along with it, "That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish." (John x. 28.) No, never. God declares it. No sinner ever did, or ever will, who believes on Him. Have you believed? For sixty years this aged Christian had rested upon, and enjoyed this precious promise of God. She knew that she would never perish, but that everlasting life was hers. She gripped God's "whosoever," and with it this priceless gift; and the mighty hand of the Lord gripped her for everlasting glory. (John x. 28, 29; 1 Peter v. 10.)

Beloved reader, have *you* done the same? Perish you must, perish you will, if you go on without Christ. Another step may be the fatal one—off the precipice of this world, into the vast depth of an eternal hell! God has said it, and He cannot lie. But lay hold this moment, poor, despairing, Christless soul, of the blessed "whosoever" of the gospel of God, and all fear of hell shall for ever depart from your soul, and everlasting life become your portion now. (John vi. 47.) "Whosoever" is a world-wide gospel word that includes all, and excludes none, outside of which no sinner upon the face of the globe can possibly get. Hence it must mean you; therefore lay hold of it, we beseech you, with *a death-grip*, ere it be too late.

E. H. C.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

FOUR SUPPERS.

LUKE xiv. 16-24; 1 COR. xi. 23-26; REV. xix. 6-9, 17-21.

IN each of these passages of Scripture we have an account of a supper. The first is the supper of life, the second the supper of death, the third the supper of joy, and the fourth the supper of judgment. The first is God's invitation to sinners; and if you, by His grace, accept it, and come to the supper of life, it will be your privilege to sit down to the supper of death; you will be at the supper of joy, and will never be at the supper of judgment. It is therefore three suppers or one; and if you refuse God's invitation to the first, you have no right to be at the second. You will never be at the third; but you certainly will be at the fourth.

Supper is the last meal of the day; the one in Luke is to-day, and represents the evening of the day of salvation; and after supper comes the long, dark night of eternal judgment.

"A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready."

God has made a great supper, and He is inviting *you* to come to it. Who is the servant mentioned five times here? It is the Holy Ghost; none but He could compel souls to come in. In Matthew's account of the same supper *servants* are

sent forth—an “s” at the beginning, and an “s” at the end—and there is no compulsion. They are mentioned six times—servants working under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, but none but the Holy Ghost has power to compel those who are bidden to come in. He has; and He is here, personally present in this world, putting forth His power to *compel* sinners to accept God’s invitation. He came down on the day of Pentecost, ten days after the Lord Jesus ascended; and He will be here until the Lord comes again, and takes all His blood-bought, blood-washed ones to glory. *Then* He will leave this world—go up again to the glory whence He came—and there will be no more compelling; nothing but judgment for those who have refused the invitation. “All things are *now* ready.” Come *now*. Accept God’s invitation *now*. “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.” To-morrow will be too late. The Israelites who believed God—who knew what He said was true, and would surely come to pass—took their cattle indoors before judgment came. Those who left them until the morrow were too late; the judgment came, and they lost their cattle. (Exod. ix. 18–21.) “All things are *now* ready.”

Now look at these three excuses, which were really no excuses at all. It says, “They *began* to make excuse.” And you never find they finish. They began eighteen hundred years ago, and they have never been able to make one yet.

The first said, “I have bought a piece of ground, and must needs go and see it.” What man would be so unwise as to buy a piece of land, and go afterwards to see if it were good?

The next said, “I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them.” Would anyone

be foolish enough to buy oxen, and not prove them before they were paid for?

The third said, "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." No excuse at all; all the more reason for him to come, and bring his wife with him. What unreasonable reasons, and inexcusable excuses!

Observe that they are not bad things in themselves; on the contrary, they are God's good gifts. It is so sad to think that the very blessings God gives to man are the things used to keep man away from God. People get so occupied with the gifts that they forget the Giver, and with the blessings that they lose sight of the Blessor. A piece of land and five yoke of oxen are God's good gifts to a farmer, and a good wife is the greatest earthly blessing a man can possibly have.

I was once speaking to a man who was quite unconcerned about his soul, and I said to him, "Well, R——, what are you doing now?"

"Oh," he said, "I feed the horses."

"Have you ever noticed," I said, "what they do after you have fed them?"

"No," he answered.

"Why, they go down on their knees before they roll over on their sides; that is more than you do. You don't go down on your knees, and thank God for His goodness to you before you roll over on your side in bed; your horses put you to the blush. And what else do you do?"

"I drive the pigs into the field."

"And have you ever seen your pigs, as they eat the acorns on the ground, look up to see where they come from?"

"No," he said.

"Ah! you are just like one of them—you take

all the blessings, and never look up to see whence they come."

Now whom does God invite to His supper? Four classes of people.

The poor—those who have nothing to pay, and so are glad to receive the supper as a gift.

The maimed—those who are crippled in their hands, and can *do* nothing towards getting the supper for themselves.

The halt—those who are lame on both feet, and can't *go* a step, can't move to procure the supper for themselves.

The blind—those who can't see; who are on the brink of a precipice, and would be over in another step but for the arresting power of the Holy Ghost.

Do you belong to this company? For such the supper is prepared; it is ready now—"yet there is room," and you are invited.

"God's house is filling fast,
Yet there is room."

I cannot say how much longer there will be room. When once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door, it will be too late—no more room then.

If you accept God's invitation, and come to the supper of life, it will be your privilege to sit down at the supper of death. None but a believer has any right to be there, and the Lord only asks those who know Him, and love Him, to remember Him at His table. Neither is the Lord's supper a "means of grace," as people want to make it. By sitting down to the Lord's Supper at the Lord's table, I show that I *am* joined to the Lord. I do not go there in order to be *made* one with Him; I *am* one with Him, and I go to His table to

remember Himself. I am between the cross and the glory—joined to Him, remembering Him, and showing His death to the world, till He come.

On the table there is a loaf and a bottle of wine. Have you ever thought why they are separate? Why are they not together, the wine mixed up in the loaf?

There is a divine reason for it, but we are so careless, we often do not discover the reason of things. There could not be a drop of wine in the loaf, because it is a picture of the Lord's body, and His blood was shed, poured out for you and me, not a drop of blood was left in His body. After His resurrection, when showing Himself to His disciples, He said, "Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." His blood was shed; He died. None but a saved person is privileged to sit at His table and partake of the supper of death, in remembrance of Himself, but it is the privilege of every believer to be there.

You will never be invited to the third supper, but if you have been to the first and second, you will certainly be at the third, as a part of the Bride, the Lamb's wife. The supper could not take place without you; you are indispensable to it. When I was married, I did not *invite* my wife to the wedding breakfast; she was necessarily there; it could not have been without her. Friends and relatives were invited.

Who are the invited guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb? The Old Testament saints. They will be in the same house, the same glory, but they will never form part of the Bride; that will be the exclusive privilege of those who have lived and believed in Christ, since the day the Holy Ghost came down, until the Lord Jesus comes

again, when the Holy Ghost will leave the world. (2 Thess. ii. 7.) Where does this marriage supper of the Lamb take place? In the Father's house.

It is customary for us to have the wedding breakfast in the house of the bride; but we are so poor—only pilgrims in a lodging-house; for that is all this world is to us now—so poor, that we have not a home to be married from. So the Father provides the marriage supper for His Son in His home, in His house on high, and He is glad to have us there! there is gladness and rejoicing.

The fourth supper, the supper of judgment, is still future, thank God, but we cannot tell how much longer it will be so. It ends in the lake of fire. May you *never* be there! But if you refuse God's invitation to the supper of life, you will *never* be invited to the supper of death, and you will *never* be at the supper of joy, but you will certainly be, you *must* be, at the supper of judgment, for there is nothing but judgment for those who refuse God's grace. Accept His loving invitation *now*—“Yet there is room.” Come to the Lord Jesus Christ whilst He is still a Saviour, or you will have to meet Him as your Judge. And your portion will be, instead of gladness and rejoicing in the Father's house, never-ending misery in the lake of fire.

H. M. H.

“I KNOW HE DIED FOR ME.”

“HERBERT L—— has fallen off the scaffold—ing, and broken his back,” was the sad news scattered quickly amongst those who knew the subject of our narrative. How sad for those praying parents who loved their child so tenderly! Yet they received this news with “Thy will be done”

upon their lips; for God had allowed it, as the following will disclose, and the dear parents felt it was so, owning that God's merciful hand was in it all.

At the time of the accident Herbert L—— was twenty-three years of age—a fine, strong young man; and, to look in his face, one would say that he had many years of life before him.

When a boy he attended Sunday-school, listened to solemn appeals to fly to Christ for salvation, but seemed to resist the strivings of the Spirit of God. Earnestly and prayerfully has the writer of this little narrative pleaded with him. All seemed dark and useless, as far as man could perceive; but God had purposes of grace otherwise. His love would eventually find a lodgment in his poor heart.

Herbert L—— was not happy as years passed on. He could find no rest for his soul in the passing pleasures of this world, so he joined the army. Being a soldier, he thought, would smother his "religious sentiments," as he called them; but they were beyond his or any other power to eradicate. No, he could not erase the impressions of eternal things; and the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, had taken root. His parents yearned over him still, and cries and tears went up to God on his behalf. He became restless and unhappy in the army, and eventually was "bought out." He came home to his native place, and still followed the ways of sin. But God's eye was upon him; and as Herbert (being a carpenter) was working on the top of a high house at Stoke Newington, London, he unwarily put his foot on the end of a plank with no stay under it, and fell to the ground. He was picked up and taken

to the hospital insensible, when it was discovered that his back was broken. He lingered some eight or nine months, and, by the grace of God, finally "fell asleep in Jesus." "What!" you say, 'fell asleep in Jesus,' after resisting the truth as he did?" Yes, "fell asleep in Jesus," so calmly, so peacefully; for he knew what a great sinner he had been, and was conscious of the mighty love that saved him. God revealed Himself to him in a very wonderful way during the accident. As Herbert was falling from the scaffolding he had vivid thoughts of his past sinful life. In a moment he thought of his sins, of eternity, of God, of judgment, and of the Saviour. Like a panorama, all seemed to pass before his mind; so much so, that when his dear relatives and friends visited him they found him calm and resigned, believing that God had arrested him in His mercy. The writer visited him a short time after, and on approaching his bed noticed a heavenly smile upon his countenance, and asked him if he was right for eternity, and if he knew the Saviour's love. He replied, "Yes; and I know He died for me."

Let not the reader trifle with God's strivings with him; for He may not meet you as He did Herbert L——. This was indeed a brand plucked from the fire. God says, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." "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."

Reader, can you meet a holy God? Unless your sins are put away, He must deal with you

in judgment. God can only save a sinner upon the basis of absolute righteousness. "The wages of sin is death." Christ came into this world and died; He was a sacrifice equal to all God's righteous demands. And oh, wondrous, matchless grace, He saves, yea, accepts and justifies, every poor sinner who believes in Jesus! Reader, are you saved? are you resting upon the finished work of Christ? When Jesus trod this earth He was the embodiment, the expression, of all that God is in love towards sinful man. Men grope about this poor world, seeking after lasting pleasures, but cannot find them. Remember, death may overtake you suddenly, and is it worth your while to trifle with eternal things and with the salvation of your soul? There is no foundation for souls to rest upon outside Christ, who was God manifest in flesh.

C. M. H.

THAT'S THE WAY.

WHILE receiving some goods in the ordinary way of business the following remarkable conversation took place:

A traveller standing near the porter thus addressed him: "I was just wondering where I had seen you." The man replied, "I have been in the service of this firm twice, first time about twelve years ago. I am now engaged in the city at the W—— Co."

The traveller said, "I have seen you there then."

The porter, being rather talkative, said, "I have seen many changes here, one and another leaving; twelve years make a great change in a place."

"Yes, and in one's self too. Don't you find it so?"

"I do. Twelve years ago I was younger. I trust though now I am twelve years nearer heaven."

Fearing that the porter did not know the solemnity of his words, I ventured to repeat, "Twelve years nearer heaven! In what sense?"

"I'm older," he said, "and hope to go there."

"If you do not it will be your own fault."

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "how do you make that out? In what way?"

"God has made the way perfectly plain, and you may know for certain now."

The gentleman, still standing by, repeated the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, "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); and then added, "*That's the way.*"

I rejoiced to find one so ready to speak of the *Saviour*, and point a fellow-sinner to the way that "leadeth unto life."

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Prov. xiv. 12.)

Dear reader, are you travelling that downward road? Are you prepared for the consequences of your sin and folly? After death the judgment (Heb. ix. 27); and then the "second death." (Rev. xxi. 8.) Solemn reality! Are you, like the porter, hoping all will be well? False foundation! Let me tell you, in love, that your hopes, prayers, tears, resolutions, will never give you admittance into heaven. JESUS alone is the way. Yes, Jesus

is the very portal of heaven. He says Himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." (John xiv. 6.)

And again, "I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved." (John x. 9.)

No, dear reader, nothing, nothing apart from this man, Jesus, the very Son of God, who died on Calvary's cross, giving His life a ransom, whose blood was shed—nothing, I say, apart from Him can give entrance there.

"Salvation is of the LORD," the "gift of God," by "grace through faith." Not by anything we could do, or have done (Titus iii. 5), but by what He Himself has done. Wondrous grace, that God should come in the person of His Son, and dwell among us (John i. 14.), speaking words of life. "I AM come that they might have life." (John x. 10.) "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." (John vi. 63.) "I AM the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?" (John xi. 25, 26.)

Reader, you perhaps may question this; but the fact remains the same, that God, through Christ, has made a way by which He can be just, and the justifier of Him which believeth in Jesus (Rom. iii. 26); and by faith in Him, and in Him alone, you may be a possessor of eternal life. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John iii. 36.)

"This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.)

Reader, do you know "*the way*" to heaven?

T. H. D.

“I CLING TO EARTH;” OR, “ALL IS
BRIGHT.”

“**I** CLING to earth.” These words came from the lips of a young woman who for a long season had been in failing health, and now was suddenly laid low with hæmorrhage from the lungs. Poor indeed were her earthly prospects, should she recover—ill-health, poverty, no home, her only surviving relative being unable to support her. I wondered, as I listened to her words, what could possibly attract her down here. I had thought she would be so glad to go, for she had professed faith in Christ for many years, and I felt saddened as I thought of there being no joy with such a glorious prospect before her. I read Psalm xxiii.; for I wanted her to think of the Lord in His shepherd-care for her, and also 1 Peter i. 3–13, to lead her thoughts to the rich inheritance.

It was about an hour afterwards I asked her the following questions: “We haven’t to ask you, Do you know the Lord as your Saviour?” “No.” “You have a right of entrance into the holiest through the blood of Jesus?” “Yes.” “You know you are made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light?” “Yes.”

“My dear girl, what a blessed prospect is yours! If it please the Lord, whose you are, to take you to be with Himself it will be far better than remaining upon this earth.” “I used to think so,” she faintly uttered; “but I don’t now.” “Well, Satan may tempt you, in your weakness, to think differently now; but it does not alter what is written, To depart and be with Christ is far better. Look into the opened heavens, and see that precious

Saviour sitting there. He loved you, and gave Himself for you, and loves you to the end."

A few hours later every hope that she would recover left her, and she said, "I must die." Then, and not before, did the joy of being with the Lord dawn upon her. She then passed away, saying, "All is bright!"

There is a scripture which says, "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Luke xii. 34.) And again, "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. xii. 34.) How divinely true. Reader, where is your treasure? On the earth? If so, a heavenly prospect has no gladness for you. But are you washed, saved, forgiven, through the precious blood of Christ? If so, where is the joyous acknowledgment of it now? How is it that Christ and His home have so little attraction for you? When you came to Jesus with your burden of sins you had learned the utter helplessness on your part to put them away, you simply left *self* and looked to Jesus. He received you, and gave you gladness in knowing that He had done what you could never do. You were happy, the burden of your sins, the fear of judgment and of hell, no longer distressed you, but thoughts of your Saviour, and the home in heaven, filled you with joy. How did the joy go? You left looking at Jesus, and turned again to *self*, and your brightness fled. And you've got troubled, and discouraged, and the things of earth hang heavily upon you; and though you know heaven is sure, and that you can never perish, you long for the freshness of first love.

Well, dear Christian, you have left Him, but He has not left you. Just look up straight into heaven (for it is open to you), and behold the same

Jesus. Do you see those wounds? Remember they were caused by you. Can you mistake His love? Look at Him. He will rejoice! All heaven will rejoice! and His happy saints will rejoice together with you! Do you wish to give Him pleasure? Then occupy yourself with Himself. He has little enough of this in this the day of His rejection. He will have full praise soon, but He looks for it from His saints now. It must be either self or Christ, earth or heaven!

But some will read this paper who are yet unsaved—the future is a dread, dark uncertainty. I do not wonder at such clinging to earth, for they have nothing better. Such cannot say, with the breath leaving their body—the last hope gone, “All is bright.”

I said to a person the other day, “Do you know the Lord?” She answered, “I haven’t arrived at that yet.” And she said it earnestly; she was evidently doing her best, but had not seen her helpless, hopeless condition. She will try a little more; and if the Lord does not come before her efforts are finished, I trust she will break down altogether, and then, and not till then, will she turn to the Lord. Is the reader like to this person? May God in His mercy remove every prop; for ere you know Christ to be everything you must see you are nothing!

Why did that woman in Mark v. go to Jesus? Because she had spent her *all* in paying physicians, and grew nothing better, but rather grew worse. Had she grown better she never would have gone to Jesus. But she grew worse! Ah! the merciful Saviour knew her need; He knew she would not go to Him until all help had gone. Did not He know her past history, her doings and her tryings?

And did not He happen to be near when she could do no more? . Yes, He knew all; and He knows all about you too. And so she went, and was healed, and sent away in peace. Do you see the grace of His heart, to receive people who only go to Him for what they can get? Go to Him yourself, and prove Him, it will make His heart glad. Never cease looking to Him, or you will cling to earth, and there will be no brightness in the thought of being with Him. E. E. S.

"YE DO ALWAYS RESIST THE HOLY GHOST."

Acts vii. 51.

THIS solemn and searching scripture reminds me of a conversation I had with a man a little while since. I was preaching the gospel, and his wife and many more came, but he did not. Amongst the many houses visited was his own. I found him suffering from erysipelas, and soon entered into conversation with him on matters of eternal importance. I immediately saw that he was on the defensive; and the hostility of a heart that for many years had been steeled against God and His word soon came out.

"You are getting on in years, dear friend, and soon will go the way of all flesh; and the great questions for you are, Are you ready? Are you saved? Are your sins forgiven? Your present life will soon end, with all that pertains to it; and when it is over, how will you meet God? That is the great question—*How will you meet Him?*"

"I don't take any stock in those things," the old man replied. "You would make a very good insurance agent."

"Well, dear friend, whether you do or not, I can assure you that God is standing before you, beseeching you to be reconciled to Him. He brings you salvation full and free, and offers it to you as a gift. Christ died for sinners, and now God in grace brings you salvation."

"*And I don't want it!*" replied the old man; and getting up, he left the room.

His wife told me, after he had gone out, that, when a young man, he had been under deep conviction, but had resisted the Holy Ghost; and now in old age, on the brink of the grave, he was committing the same soul-damning sin. "*Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.*" As a young man, and as an old man, he always resisted the Holy Ghost—thrusting from him that very goodness of God that leadeth to repentance, and thus sealing his own doom for ever. Terrible madness! Blind folly surely!

Thus saith the Lord: "And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." (Matt. iii. 10.) And what good fruit is spoken of here? It is "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

Beloved reader, how is it with you? Does God see in you this goodly fruit? If not, think on the sharp gleaming axe laid at your root, and the fire of divine judgment that must follow the cutting down of your tree! "The time is short." Hasten without delay to be saved!

"'Tis madness to delay!
There are no pardons in the tomb;
And brief is mercy's day.
Return! Return!"

E. A.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

A TRIPLE INVITATION.

“**C**OME 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.” (Isaiah i. 18.)

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” (Matt. xi. 28–30.)

“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.” (Rev. xxii. 17.)

This is an invitation to you from God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. They say, “*Come.*” You all know what that means; it is an easy word to understand. If a little child falls down, and hurts itself, how gladly it runs into mother’s outstretched arms when she says, “Come to me, darling.” We have all fallen in Adam; and God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, say to us, “Come.”

When are we to come? *Now.* “Come *now.*” “Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.” To-morrow will be too

late ; you do not know that you will be here to-morrow. "Come *now*."

"Let us reason together." What marvellous condescension ! what wonderful grace ! To think of God stooping to reason with man ! But although man may reason very well when he is away from God, all his reasonings are silenced when he is brought face to face with a holy God ; he has not a single reason to give for not accepting God's invitation. An infidel on board a sinking vessel once said, "Infidelity will do very well to live by, but it won't do to die by."

"Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Why scarlet ? Because that colour can be seen from the greatest distance ; it is used for signals on the railway, signs of distress at sea, &c., being visible so far off. Well, these sins of ours, which are like scarlet, are to be "white as snow." What a contrast ! You have never seen anything whiter than snow, have you ?

"Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Crimson is the fastest colour. Suppose you were to take a white handkerchief to the dyer's, and ask him to dye it crimson for you, he would do it, and you would have a crimson handkerchief instead of a white one ; but supposing, when it came home crimson, you were to take it back to him, and say, "Please, dye it white again," he would say, "It cannot be done." A white thing can be dyed crimson, but a crimson thing can never be dyed white by man. But it is just what God does ; He makes our crimson sins as white as the pure, virgin, unsoiled wool on a lamb's back.

Innocency was lost in the garden of Eden when Adam sinned ; God is not going to take us back

to a state of innocency. He is going to do something far more wonderful—to make us like His own Son. If you look in Dan. vii. 9 and Rev. i. 14 you will see a description of the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, and these very things, “snow and wool,” are mentioned. We are as unlike Him by nature as sin and Satan can make us; but, if saved, we shall be as like Him as the grace of God and blood of Christ can make us. “When we see Him, we shall be like Him;” and God says to you, “Come *now*.”

Matt. xi. 28–30 is, as it were, the Son echoing the Father’s invitation. He says, “Come unto *Me*”—a Person not on the cross, nor in the grave, but in the glory.

“There is life in a look at the glorified One.”

He said, “It is finished;” and now He says to labouring ones (those who are seeking by their own good works, alms-giving, church-going, &c., to add to His finished work), and to weary ones (heavy-laden with their dreadful load of sins), “Come unto Me, . . . and I will *give* you rest.” He gives it; it is not to be bought at any price, nor to be had as a reward; it must be received as a gift.

There are two rests mentioned. He gives the first; the second you have to find. He says, “Come unto Me, . . . and I will give you rest;” and if you have not rest, it proves you have not come. Perhaps you say, “Oh, I want to come, I should so like to come, but I do not know how.” Satan never put that wish into your heart; the very wish to be there lands you at His feet.

How is the second rest to be found? “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me”—follow in my footsteps—“for I am meek and lowly in

heart." Just as He delighted to do His Father's will in perfect, implicit obedience, so we should delight to be doing His will. "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." The yoke never galled Him, never marked His blessed neck, because He always went down, down, down. He humbled Himself. We get our necks marked, and the yoke galls us, because we don't go down low enough ourselves, but have to be put down. If we humbled ourselves, we should find His yoke easy, and His burden light; and thus we should find the second rest, which can only be found by treading in His footsteps, bearing His yoke, and, above all, by allowing Him to reveal the Father to us. There is no rest apart from knowing His Father.

The first half of Rev. xxii. 17 is addressed to the Lord. Four times in Revelation, and in Revelation only, He says that He is coming quickly. And the Holy Ghost is the first one to respond, and say, "Come." Then the Bride—the whole Church—says, "Come." And, thirdly, it is the privilege of each individual believer to look up and say, "Come."

Then the Holy Ghost invites whosoever will—anybody, everybody—to come and take the water of life freely—take it as God gives it (Rev. xxii. 17), *freely*; there is enough not only to quench but satisfy the thirst. In hell there won't be a drop of water. Now "whosoever will"—every one that thirsteth (Isa. lvi.)—may come to the waters, and drink deep, and be satisfied.

"Jesus the water of life will give,
Freely, freely, freely."

H. M. H.

“THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE.”

ROMANS iii. 22.

“**A**S in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man,” was the declaration of one who, besides possessing wisdom beyond all others, also wrote by the Spirit of God ; and it is therefore not only the verdict of Solomon, as having learnt the truth of it from close observation and experience, but also the announcement of the Spirit of God to the heart of man. (Prov. xxvii. 19.)

Hence, my reader, when you see the outcome of the heart of another, be it in its most repulsive form, you see only the unsightly fruit of that which has its roots in your own heart.

Whatever distinctions there may be socially or naturally, whatever may be the varied results in outward conduct and ways, through training, education, and favourable influences, or the reverse, still, just as in all alike, from the highest to the lowest, from the most moral to the most degraded, there are the seeds of death and physical decay, so equally is there in all the different classes of society, the one common source and spring of evil in the human heart ; the outcome in one single reflection, as in a mirror, or (to use the figure adopted in the Proverbs) as in clear water, the image of each and all.

And yet man has to do with a God who searches the heart, who looks deeper down than the surface, who cannot be deceived by the outside appearance, however fair and beautiful. A God, too, of abso-

lute holiness and purity, in whose presence no evil can ever be allowed, but who must judge and punish sin. Yes; in the presence of this holy God all must stand. Every moment as it flies past is hurrying each of us on to the time when he or she must be manifested in that unsullied glory, where He who is Light "will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts."

This is a solemn truth to be awakened to, and if there were no further truth to tell, we might well exclaim, "Who then can be saved?" Yet it is this very thing, this most humbling truth, that there is no goodness in man, that in his nature he is evil and corrupt, that "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart" is "only evil continually"—that is the occasion for the gospel to be brought to him. This gospel reveals to us God's purpose and desire to have man happy in His presence, and fit to enjoy His glory—yea, even to have him in His own house as a son and heir; also the wonderful means that He has devised, and the mighty and blessed work that has been accomplished to effect this end.

Only infinite love could ever carry out this purpose, and only at infinite cost to Himself could it be accomplished; but, blessed to tell it, "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." None other but that blessed One could be found able to meet the condition of man; which, as we have seen, was not only that he had sinned, but that he was, in the springs of his being, evil and sinful. Therefore one must be found who, though truly a man, should be free from all sin, either

actually committed, or any taint of evil in his nature. In God's own beloved Son made flesh we have such an one revealed as our Saviour. The gospel presents Him to us as the "Lamb of God." "Without blemish, and without spot." "He knew no sin." "In Him was no sin." But He "suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God;" *and also* He was "made . . . sin for us . . . that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

In Him "God condemned sin in the flesh." And the reader of this is either "*in Him*" or in his sins. If you have not bowed to the truth of God about yourself, but are covering over that which is essentially evil, or trying to improve that which is absolutely corrupt, or, it may be, treating with indifference and affected scorn the whole truth of the matter, you are treasuring up in store for yourself a fearful harvest of just judgment and wrath. You are shutting yourself out *for ever* from the joy and glory unfading of the mansions of light, and throwing yourself into the abyss of remorse and despair.

If, on the other hand, you cast away all confidence in yourself, and draw near to God in your true character of a helpless, ruined sinner, He will assuredly justify you; for "Christ died for the ungodly," and God justifies the ungodly. (Rom. v. 6, iv. 5.) He will no longer look at you as in your sins, or as a condemned child of Adam; but as a believer in His Son, and a sharer in the blessed results of the glorious work of the Son of God; and you will have the divine assurance of God's word, that "there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." (Rom. viii. 1.)

S. M. A.

RICHES.

DEAR reader, I wish to draw your attention for a few moments to part of Luke xviii., especially verse 23: "And when he heard this he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich." It is a common idea, especially among young people, that riches must make a man happy; but, alas! it is a delusion; nothing but the knowledge of Christ, and the forgiveness of sins, can make us truly happy. We have before us here a man (a ruler) of good position in this world, and of an unblemished character, speaking after the manner of men, but he has a sense in his soul that he lacks something; viz., the knowledge of his soul's eternal security. "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37.) So he comes to Jesus. But oh! he comes in the wrong way. He says, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" But the Lord Jesus takes him on that ground, and tells him, "Thou knowest the commandments." Yes, so he did, and could say, in answer to those the Lord Jesus brought before him, "All these have I kept from my youth up." "Oh," you say, "what a perfect man! Surely if keeping the law will save anyone, it will save him." Ah! but hear, "Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me." But now we see how it brings out what is in his heart. Surely we must acknowledge what God says about our hearts to be true? Let us turn to His word and see. "The

heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.) But we have a very striking illustration here of the next verse to the one just quoted, "I the Lord search the heart." This ruler could do many things, but when put to the test, as to which he loved most, "Christ" or "Riches," we see he goes away "very sorrowful." What a painful scene! this world's goods keeping a soul away from Christ, dragging a soul into hell. How solemn!

Dear reader, thou mayest have a good moral character, but thou art a sinner by nature, as a child of Adam, and needing the salvation God has provided free, "without money and without price." And to know God, it needs a new nature; as the Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again." And again we are told, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God;" therefore I would entreat of thee to own thy need; for the Lord Jesus says, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Beware that thou art not deceived; for "how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

Oh! think what it has cost the Lord Jesus to leave those heights of glory—where He was with His Father before the world was—to come into this scene, in love to man, His fallen creature, to satisfy God about the question of our sins. But He has so satisfied the righteous claims of God, that those who come to God through Him receive the forgiveness of sins, and everlasting life; and remember, "This is God's commandment, That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ."

There is another point I should like to notice, showing that the Lord was not asking anything of

this ruler but what He would amply reward him for. He says, "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." And, dear reader, that is the safest place for our treasure, "where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." So we see what a mercy it is to have nothing down here, no treasure here, no great riches, no great name; for where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. And oh! how true those words of the Lord Jesus, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God."

Again I would intreat of you, Come to Jesus. Like the publican, who said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The invitation is, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely;" for, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

F. T. J. M.

"BEHOLD, YE DESPISERS, AND WONDER,
AND PERISH."

ACTS xiii. 41.

I WAS called away to settle the business of my brother, whose end was fast approaching. It makes one feel the great importance of being *born again*, and of not having on a death-bed to reflect on a life spent "without God, and without hope in the world." The little conversation I had with my brother before he departed, reminded me of what I had said to him just after I was converted. I was anxious about his soul, because I knew of the doctrine he held. He told me that the soul was nothing but the breath, after it left

the body. Though young in the faith, I well remember telling him that "the soul that sinneth it shall die," and of the great need of coming to Christ, owning himself a guilty sinner, and praying that God would teach him the great value of the soul. Little did he think that so soon he would be reminded of that conversation on his death-bed. I told him in a simple way of the great salvation, and of the consequence of neglecting it. He requested me to stop talking about such things, as he could not stand it.

I had to go home for a couple of days, when he sent for me to come as soon as possible. He kept calling for me until God called him out of time into eternity. Before I got there he had expired; and, I am afraid, without one ray of hope as to the future. It is sad to see those who are near and dear to us leaving this world with that awful word branded on them—lost! and that for ever.

We who know of the power of the blood of Christ that has redeemed us, and that it is our title to the inheritance of the saints in light, can thank Him from the bottom of our hearts for His great "love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." (Rom. v. 8.) May it be ours to serve Him, and that in accordance with His own will and purpose.

Beloved reader, while it is called *to-day*, turn to the Lord; while you have health and strength, seek His face. (Isaiah lv. 6, 7.) Follow not, I entreat you, in the footsteps of this poor man, who despised the salvation of God, and became his own bitter enemy for eternity. "Acquaint *now* thyself with Him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." (Job xxii. 21.) E. A.

NOW OR, IT MAY BE, NEVER.

“Behold, *now* is the accepted time ; behold, now is the day of salvation.”—2 CORINTHIANS vi. 2.

I AM told that on some parts of the Atlantic coast the cliffs rise many hundred feet above the ocean, in some cases upwards of nine hundred feet. The peasantry on these coasts gain their bread by gathering the eggs of the sea-fowl who have their home in the rocks. The way the descent is accomplished is so daring, that none but those accustomed to it from their youth would venture upon it. At the top a crowbar is driven deep into the ground with a rope fixed to it ; at equal and convenient distances there are knots in the rope, on which the person descending rests his feet, and in this way it forms a kind of swinging ladder. One day a peasant was so eager in gathering the eggs, where he had got safe footing about midway, that in a moment of forgetfulness he lost his hold of the rope. There he was, about midway betwixt the land above and the yawning gulf below, the rope, of which he had lost his hold, swinging past him, but still beyond his reach. What was to be done in such circumstances ? Every time it swung its stretch was being shortened, and in a few minutes it would certainly cease to approach where he stood. The poor man saw that everything depended on his instantly getting hold of it ; that to remain where he was would be certain death from starvation. If he missed the rope, he would only be killed more suddenly by falling to the bottom ; but if he could grasp it, all would be well. There was no room here for procrastination ; action, instant action, was necessary. The leap therefore was taken, the rope caught, and the poor man was *saved*.

My dear unsaved reader, I write this for you. I want you from this true and simple narrative to see the terrible condition which you are in, and the instant need for you to lay hold of the gospel rope, lowered from heaven, to rescue your soul from danger, death, and destruction. Solemn thought ! It may be possible that you are on the very verge of that awful abyss of eternal perdition ; one false step, and at any moment you may be engulfed for ever in the surging billows of eternal damnation. Oh, sinner, it is in love to your precious soul that I pen this warning word. Satan would deceive and delude you, and, if possible, lull you to sleep with his deadly opiates. Have you shut your eyes against the fact that you are a sinner, and hell-bound ? And quite possibly you may shut your eyes now, and sleep in time in indifference to these things, but it is more than your precious soul can do to sleep in eternity, when you have wakened up to the fact that you are in the heart of hell's dreadful realities, to open your eyes to weep and howl at the misery come upon you. All are awake there, and oh, slumbering soul, better far to awake *now* than to awake in hell, where there is no mercy, no hope, no salvation, no Saviour to look to, but a long, long for ever, of a night that knows no slumber or sleep, of a darkness that knows no dawning, but for ever walled around and over-arched by the midnight blackness of darkness, where

Light shall revisit thee no more ;
 Life, with its sanguine dreams, is o'er ;
 Love reaches not yon awful shore,
 For ever sets thy sun.

But this need not be the case. You are still in this life, where salvation is offered, where a Saviour is held out to you for your acceptance. Well could

the apostle say, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.) But "*now* is the accepted time." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) Oh, sinner, think of it; God holds out to you this faithful saying, but to be accepted now—now, not to-morrow. "Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth."

Alas! the to-morrow you are waiting for may find you, as it has done myriads—in hell! Had you departed this life yesterday, I ask you faithfully, where would your precious soul have been to-day? Remember, then, every time the gospel message is held out to you is one time less; gradually is your day of salvation getting shorter, and it may be closed sooner than you expect. Why, oh, why then procrastinate this great and important matter, when that which is needed to save your precious soul from hell is held out to you for your acceptance, namely, the value of the finished work of Christ. You have simply got a word to believe, about a work done, and this is the gospel. How different are the thoughts of many from this, who, when they are in any way troubled about their soul's immortal welfare, think they have got a work to do. But not so; the work is finished that was necessary to save sinners, and that by the blessed Lord Jesus more than 1800 years ago. When He from His lofty throne stooped to do and die, everything was fully done, hearken to His cry—

"It is finished. Yes, indeed; finished every jot.
Sinner, this is all you need; tell me, is it not?"

And the moment the work was done, then began the time of acceptance, the due time, in which this blessed truth is testified. "God our Saviour, who will have all men to be *saved*, and to come unto

the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim ii. 3-6.) Oh, let me beseech you then to accept this offer of salvation; and accept it now, resolve to be saved ere you lie down to rest, or it may be said to you, as it was said to one of old, "This night thy soul shall be required of thee." (Luke xii. 20.) "If thou be wise, thou shalt be wise for thyself: but if thou scornest, thou alone shalt bear it." (Prov. ix. 12.)

"Salvation *now*, this moment.
Then why, oh, why delay?
You may not see to-morrow;
Now is salvation's day."

W. N.

EXTRACT FROM LETTER.

(MARCH 20th, 1882.)

"**W**E are both of us at an age when some sort of infirmity may be looked for, and these warnings are intended to be regarded. How thankful I feel that you are quietly resting on that finished work that has been done for us, whose unchanging value gives us such quiet peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. I dare say you remember how difficult you found it to realize that salvation is what is done *for* you, and not done *by* you; that as Rom. v. 6 says, 'For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.' 'But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' There was always the idea in us that some preparation, some improvement, some religious advancement, was necessary before we could obtain the benefits of salvation by Christ

Jesus. And what an opening of our eyes it is when the truth flashes upon us, 'Christ died for the ungodly,' therefore He just suits me. I do not know anything more convincing than the argument of St. Paul in Gal. ii. 21, 'I do not frustrate'—*i.e.*, make of no avail—the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law'—*i.e.*, by *my doings*—'then Christ is dead in vain.' My claim on God is my utter helplessness, or, as the verse has it, 'without strength.' It was this that drew forth the Lord's words in Luke x. 21, 'And hast revealed them unto babes.' It is most blessed when we step down out of the class of the wise and prudent and take our place in 'the infant class'—'the no strength people,' the ungodly and the unrighteous—and 'drink of the water of life freely' (Rev. xxii. 17), my only claim being 'that the Spirit calls the thirsty ones.' It is a wonderful thing that the Bible ends with nothing but the fullest invitations to accept freely God's great salvation; and the only thing that grieves the heart of God is that, with such a free and willing offer, as He says in Isaiah, 'Without money and without price,' man is so unwilling to accept it on God's terms. 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.' (Isa. xlv. 22.) And how happy it is that, after He has saved us, He delights to form us for good works. As Eph. ii. 10, where He would have us know that not only is *life* His *gift*, but the *fruit* of life. And how could it be otherwise with those who are 'His workmanship'? 'But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we are the work of thy hand.' (Isaiah lxiv. 8.) How, indeed, we shall realize this when we are in heaven!" C. B.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

LOST! SO DARK, AND WANTING WATER.

IT was about four o'clock one dark, wet autumn morning, and ere the midnight lamp had been put out, that a man just recovering from the effects of drink alarmed the house by knocking violently at the back and then at the front door. Upon enquiring who was there, he replied, "I am lost; I have lost my way. Can you direct me?" Having told him the way, he cried out, "But it is so dark; and I want a drink of water."

What a striking picture of a poor sinner who has drowned his senses, and wasted his time of grace, in the vain pursuit of this poor world's empty pleasures! Waking up in eternity like the rich man in Luke xvi., he finds he is for ever lost in the blackness of darkness, and he asks for a drop of water, for he is tormented in the lake of fire. But, thank God, *you* have a body out of the grave and a soul out of hell.

Have you found out that you are lost? If you have, I affectionately direct you to that blessed Saviour, who came to seek and to save that which was lost. Oh, trust Him! for blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord. But trust Him *now*; to-morrow may be for ever too late. He is the good Shepherd who laid down His life for the sheep. Just fall into His outstretched arms, and

heaven shall hear Him say of you, "Rejoice with Me, for I have found my sheep which was lost."

Have you found out the terribleness of being in the darkness of unbelief? If you have, oh, then look to Him who went into awful darkness on the cross when bearing our sins, and the wrath of God against them; that you, through believing in Him, might be led by the love of God out of darkness into His marvellous light; take your leave of the darkness for ever, and find your home in the light of God's presence for eternity.

Are you thirsting for the water of life? Have you found out that the pleasures of the world cannot satisfy the thirst of the immortal soul? If so, then listen to Him who is so tenderly and lovingly saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink" (John vii. 37); the invitation is world-wide, for it is, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.) Oh, drink by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, then the thirst of your precious soul shall be everlastingly satisfied, and you will be able by the grace of God to say, to His glory, "I was lost, but I am found. I was in darkness, but now I am light in the Lord. I was a poor thirsty sinner, but now I am a rejoicingly-satisfied saint."

Turn to God and praise Him for what He has done for your soul, and tell others the good news; and may God use you to the salvation of many precious souls, and He shall have all the glory for ever.

H. M. H.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

SOME little time ago, as several of my work-fellows were busily engaged storing away grain in one of the largest flour-mills in the North of England, one of them—a young man, full of strength and energy—fell as he was ascending the plank, and severely cut his head. For a moment it caused great consternation; and as the poor fellow was lifted up, and all was done that could be in order to bring him to consciousness, I looked into his ghastly face; and as I looked, I could not help turning in silent prayer to God, that He would, in His boundless grace, use this occasion to the salvation and blessing of his soul. Oh, how good and gracious is our God in His ways with the children of men! This poor fellow might have been hurried into eternity almost instantaneously, but for His divine goodness, and, as far as man could judge, or his ways indicate, he must have perished. Oh, the goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering of our God, it leadeth to repentance! (Rom. ii. 4.)

Reader, hast thou been an object of the goodness of God, and yet indifferent to it? Remember you will not always be so; for we find it recorded in God's blessed word, that he who, "being often reproved, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy." Oh, dear reader, whether moral or immoral, you must have to do with God! Better far have to do with Him now in this day of grace, than have to do with Him when He takes the character of a

judge. (Acts xvii. 31.) Oh, think of His love, expressed in the gift of His dear Son! (John iii. 16.) For "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. 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. 19-21.) Oh, think of that blessed One, who was the perfect, lowly, obedient Man; the holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, yet in perfect grace ministering blessing to all with whom He came in contact. There was never a need that urged a claim, but He met it in all the tenderness and grace of His heart. Then I ask you, dear reader, Have you been to the Saviour as a needy sinner? Have you, in all your helplessness, all your guilt, cast yourself upon Him for salvation? If so, on the authority of His own blessed word, I tell you salvation is yours. But if, on the other hand, you are still indifferent as to your need, may God open your eyes to see yourself, to see your awful danger; and by the cords of His divine love draw you to the feet of Jesus, where salvation alone can be found. Oh, dear reader, as one who writes in love for souls, seeking the glory, honour, and praise of that blessed One, who has redeemed me by His precious blood, and made me fit for His own blessed presence, I entreat you not to lay down this paper heedless as to your need; for we know not what a day may bring forth; yea, an hour, a moment hence, and you may have entered

upon eternity! Oh, what a foundation to rest a soul upon is the precious blood of Christ! All else will crumble into dust, every other foundation will prove a total failure, and leave the soul an eternal wreck. But where the blood is trusted, that soul is safe. Who can estimate its value, or dare to question its efficacy? (1 John i. 7.) All that have ever been saved, and all that ever will be saved, must trust it, apart from this there is no salvation. It is the ground of redemption's song begun on earth (Rev. i. 5, 6), in glory the theme of eternal praise. (Rev. v. 9.) May you, dear reader, prove its cleansing power, by simply trusting in it, and to God shall be all the glory for ever and ever.

R. G.

TWO STEPS.

ONLY a step between his soul and death! Poor old man! He could hardly totter from his bed, with the ready help of his wife, to the easy chair close by.

Often had we spoken to him of God, of sin, of eternity; but he said he had little to fear, for he had never done much harm. Though he owned that like all others he was a sinner, and had done things he would not like his neighbours to know, yet he had never felt how terrible sin is in God's sight. He prayed, he said; but the cry of a sin-convicted conscience, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke xviii. 13), had never gone forth from his heart. Hiding from God, he was building hopes of heaven on not having done much harm in his life of seventy-six years here. What a rotten foundation! We told him God had not

forgotten, nor would He overlook, the sins he had done, and which his neighbours knew nothing about. In vain he clung to his self-satisfaction; regardless of the unveiling day so soon coming, when every man shall give an account of himself to God; and those who trust in their works will be judged according to them, and be "cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. xx.) Guilty as he was, the poor old man reminded us of a criminal on the scaffold with the rope round his neck, his feet on the drop, and the executioner ready (like death) to withdraw the bolt that shall launch his soul, if still unrepentant, into the depths of hell.

Unsaved reader, such is your position now with God. Disease was born in you, and sooner or later will bring forth death. You cannot free yourself from its grasp; you are, as it were, living with a rope round your neck, your feet on a drop, and don't know when the silver cord of life will be loosed, and launch you into a Christless eternity. The very moment is fixed. Are you *prepared to step into the presence of God* in your sins? Dare you thank Him you are not a murderer, and that the sentence of death is not yet carried out? But God has already pronounced you guilty on two counts:

Count 1. You "have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.)

Count 2. "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.) "Truly, as the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death." (1 Sam. xx. 3.)

In a miserable upper room, destitute of all

comfort, the chairs without backs or seats, lay a poor costermonger dying. To the question, "Are you a sinner?" he replied, "One of the biggest;" but added, "*there is but a step between my soul and heaven.*"

When asked how he knew he was saved, he quoted the precious scripture, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) The night before he died he asked his sister to read him the verse once more. When she had done so, he said, "Always keep it in mind yourself." He begged his wife to turn to God as he had done. Twenty-four hours later, lifting up his hands in the attitude of prayer, he said, "Lord, take me," and soon after was absent from the body, present with the Lord.

God put a difference between these two men. (Exod. xi. 7.) What made it? (for both were sinners alike by nature and practice). (Rom. iii. 22.) The blood of the Lamb. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you." (Exod. xii. 13; John i. 29.) One man did not feel his need of a Saviour, or put *the blood* between God's wrath and his soul; the other went to Him just as he was, and faith alone in the "precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter i. 19) set the feet of one of the biggest of sinners firm on the rock. God saw the end of his sins in the death of Christ; so did dear S——, and could look up to his Saviour in glory and say, "There is but a step between my soul and heaven." Can you say so, reader? Would death to you be a step into heaven, or a drop into hell? Ask yourself, and answer to God. You may never have a death-bed, or another opportunity. Hesitate no longer; "choose you *this day* whom ye will serve." (Josh. xxiv. 15.) God's time is *now*

(2 Cor. vi. 2), *to-day*. (Heb. iii. 7.) The devil's time is to-morrow.

God warns, grace lingers; yield to that love. He will save you as you are this very moment, now, to-day, and keep you for ever. (John x. 28.) Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die? Bear it in mind yourself. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31), and you will be able to rejoice that death to you would be a step into heaven. A.

"THEIR OWN WAY."

YOUTH is the time to rejoice, when the faculties of the mind and the bodily powers are in full vigour and freshness.

"Just what I think," says some youthful reader. "This is why I do not wish to become religious, at present at least; I mean to enjoy the world, and see something of life first. Praying and church-going are better suited to those who are advanced in years, and who are no longer able to enter into the gaieties and amusements of youth. Besides, even the Bible you are so fond of quoting 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.'"

Truly so; but in quoting Scripture the point of the entire text is often omitted. Our great adversary, knowing that it is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, seeks to turn aside the edge, lest it reach the conscience, and

arouse it from its deadly lethargy. My young reader, have you observed the one little word which shows the terrible reverse of the seemingly-pleasant picture, the short but significant "BUT"?

"Am I not told to rejoice, and gratify my senses, and follow the dictates of my heart?"

Listen. "BUT know thou, that for *all these things* God will bring thee into judgment."

"For what? For murder, theft, immoral conduct, such as the world itself condemns?"

No; for "walking in the ways of *thine* heart, and in the sight of *thine* eyes." God will bring thee into judgment for this. What is said of this heart of mine and thine? That it is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? *I* the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his *ways*"—the ways of a heart such as God declares it to be. Doth not He who made us know our hearts better than we can know them? God says again, "This *their* way is their folly;" but "the way of the Lord is strength to the upright." Again, it was said to Israel of old, if one should "bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart," "the Lord will not spare him." "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the *end* thereof are the ways of death."

Are you looking to the *end*, my young reader? There *is* an end, and whatever the sophistries of reasoning, or the glare of false science, may have taught you to doubt, the evidence of your own senses witnesses to this fact, that sooner or later your end will come; the silver cord will be loosed, and the golden bowl broken. What will your end be? Shall a father's remonstrances or

a mother's prayers rise up in judgment against you?

Listen to these words: "I am the way . . . no man cometh unto the Father but by *Me*." *This* is the way of life. Have your feet entered upon it? In which way are they treading? "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." Christ is the door, Christ is the *way*, the only way to God. You are not invited to become religious, to turn over a new leaf, to give up anything; but you are invited to come to a living, gracious Saviour in heaven, to come to Him for life, without which you cannot walk in any right way, but only the one which *seems* right, but the end of which is death. The world knows it not; for God says, "The way of *peace* have they not known." The feet of the Son of God trod in the narrow way down here, the way of peace and holiness. He says to thee, young man, young woman, "Come unto Me," "Follow Me."

Oh, let not those words of sad reproach be applicable to you, "Ye *will* not come to *Me*, that ye might have life." The testimony of those who have come, and who have endeavoured to walk, though feebly, after that blessed Saviour, is unanimously the same, that "His ways are ways of pleasantness, and all His paths peace."

Compare the dying testimony of the infidel with that of the true follower of Christ. Which, my reader, would you choose in your dying moments? For these you would choose assurance of eternal life beyond, pardon, peace, the knowledge of Him who is the resurrection and the life. Then you must choose them now; they are offered

now, but not for any dying hour. What has the world given you? What profit have you found in "the ways of thine heart"? Listen to His voice who said, "*My peace* I give unto you; *not* as the world giveth, give I unto you;" "My yoke is easy, and My burden light;" "And ye shall find *rest* unto your souls."

What an exchange!—life eternal for everlasting death, pardon for condemnation, assurance of happiness for doubt and uncertainty, the knowledge of the Father for orphanhood, an eternal home for uncertain possessions here, abiding satisfaction for fading pleasure, bread for husks, gold for tinsel, the fadeless and enduring for that which passeth away. For "heaven and earth shall pass away"; "but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." And "this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." "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." E. H.

THREE "BESEECHINGS."

THERE are three portions of the word of God to which I desire to draw the attention of the reader. They present a very marked and striking contrast to each other. The first you will find in Matthew viii.: "And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw Him, they *besought* Him that He would depart out of their coasts." (v. 34.) How intensely solemn! No place in their city, much less in their hearts, for Jesus, the Son of God! But let us look for a moment at the circumstances which led to the rejection of this blessed One.

The Lord, while passing through this world, doing His Father's will, had entered into the country of the Gergesenes, when there met Him two possessed with devils. His eye saw them under the power and dominion of the wicked one; His heart pitied them; and what think you, dear reader, He did? He simply *delivered them from the power that held them captive!* Casting out the devils, He suffered them to enter into a herd of swine; and when the tidings of these things reached the ears of the people of that guilty city, they all with one consent *besought* the blessed Son of God to depart out of their coasts. They thought more of their swine than they did of the Christ of God.

How terribly blind to their own condition were they! The One who could have delivered them—for they needed a deliverance too—was positively and unanimously cast out. Alas! dear reader, the crowning sin of to-day is this closing of the door of the heart against the Lord Jesus, the Saviour and Deliverer. 'Tis true He is not here now. He was here once, as we have seen, but was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He came unto His own (the Jews), and His own received Him not: and, finally, the whole world, Jews and Gentiles, in answer to His life of perfect love and grace, of obedience to His Father's will, cried with one accord, "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him." Oh, my reader, in this awful rejection of the Son of God do you see the terrible state and condition of your heart revealed? How true the word, "Out of the heart proceed . . . murders." (Matt. xv. 19); "Feet . . . swift to shed blood" (Rom. iii. 15); and this not the sad state of a few only, but of *all*; the whole of the first Adam's race, without a single

exception, for the same scripture (Rom. iii.) saith, "We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are *all under sin.*" (v. 9.)

Let us turn now to the second scripture, "When the Samaritans were come unto Him, they *besought* Him that *He would tarry with them:* and He abode there two days. And many more believed because of His own word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and *know* that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world." (John iv. 40-42.) What a contrast! The blessed Lord had met the deep need of a poor, guilty Samaritan woman; He had reached her conscience by the light of His word, and had won her heart by the revelation of His person, the Christ of God. Forgetting the earthly water-pot, her heart full of the heavenly "well of water springing up into everlasting life," she returns to her city, and says to the men, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" They went to Jesus; they heard His word; they believed on Him, and knew that He was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Precious fact! Do you believe it, my reader? "They besought Him to tarry with them:" and He granted them their desire. What joy it must have given Him, in the midst of this world, which, as a whole, had rejected Him, to find, here and there, some whose hearts were opened to receive Him.

What think *you* of Christ, dear reader? Can you say with the apostle Paul, He "loved me, and gave Himself for me"? that He is "the chiefest among ten thousand, yea, He is altogether lovely"? or do you see no beauty in Him that you should desire Him? Sad indeed must be your state if,

like those to whom the sweet invitation of grace was sent, you have said, "I *pray* thee have me excused." Ah! it matters not whether there is on your part the callous hardening of your heart against God and His beloved Son, or whether there be a respectable "form of godliness," without true "repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ" having been wrought in your soul—you are, in God's sight, in but one class, and the word "rejecter" describes what you are. Do you know that the portion of all such will be to spend an eternity in the lake of fire, where "their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"?

But "God is love," and He willeth not the death of the sinner, but rather that he should turn and live. It may be that the reader is one who has been awakened by the Spirit of God to a sense of his utterly lost and ruined condition, and in the depths of his soul is crying out, "What must I do to be saved?" To you, indeed, the gospel of God's grace must be welcome; and here let me call your attention to the third portion of God's precious word, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though *God did beseech* by us: we pray in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made Him who knew no sin, to be sin for us; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor. v. 19-21.) Here we have another "beseeching;" not the heart-hardened Gergesenes "beseeching" the Lord to depart from them; nor even the heart-opened Samaritans "beseeching" Him to remain with them, blessed indeed

as that was; but the Saviour-God as it were beseeching sinners to be *reconciled to Him*. Oh, how wondrous is this! Christ, the holy, spotless Lamb of God, has been into this world to do the will of God, to take up the question of sin, and to settle it once and for ever. He has appeared once in the end of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. He has satisfied the claims of a holy God against sin, and now, in virtue of that accomplished work, God can come out to the sinner in all the fulness of His love. The judgment due to man—to you—on account of sin, was borne by that blessed One, so that God can now be "just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." It is not now, "What shall *I* do?" but, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

"God could not pass the sinner by;
His sin demands that he must die;
But in the cross of Christ we see
How God can save, yet righteous be.

"The sin alights on Jesus' head;
'Tis by *His blood* sin's debt is paid;
Stern justice can demand no more,
And mercy can dispense her store."

Yes, dear reader, God is now the "giving" God. He asks nothing of you; He has so loved the world as to give "His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Do you believe on the Son of God? "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name *whosoever* believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.) "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.)

J. L.

PEACE.

IT is just seventeen years to-day since I got peace with God, and oh, what a peace it has been! A peace not made by me; for I, a poor lost sinner, could never have made peace with a holy God, against whom I had sinned, and whose laws I had violated. It needed a third Person, and that blessed Person who has come in between me and that holy, holy, holy God was His own eternal Son. He became man, to make peace with God for me by the blood of His cross. And this peace is now preached, or declared, through the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, as having been made by Jesus Christ, and is offered to *all free*; "for all have sinned."

Will you have it, anxious one? It is a divine work, and, as a result, perfect. The Peacemaker is in glory, and wants you to enjoy the result of *His own work*, and be happy now and for ever. Our peace and our victory is through the blood of the Lamb; yea, He is our peace. Praise and glory be to Him.

"I hear the words of love,
God looks upon the blood;
Accepts the mighty sacrifice,
And I have peace with God.

"'Tis everlasting peace,
Sure as Jehovah's name;
'Tis stable as His steadfast throne,
For evermore the same."

J. R. W.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



“LORD, REMEMBER ME.”

LUKE xxiii.

WHAT mysteries circle round the cross of the Lord! It is the wonder of wonders, it stands alone in its solemn and solitary significance. There never was such a crucifixion seen before nor ever will be seen again. Yet though you have read and heard it spoken of ever since you can remember, have you ever asked yourself the question, How do I stand before God in relation to it?

The whole world was represented by those three languages, written over Christ on the cross. And without one dissenting voice it cried, “Not this man, but Barabbas.” And of whom are people making choice to-day? At any rate, they don’t want the last Adam—the Christ of God. If God left man to his own will, what would happen? They would all accept the devil’s man. They shook hands with Barabbas as he came out of prison, and then turned round and hooted at the Lord, and joined in the popular cry. If you don’t believe *you* would have done it, you don’t know the deceitfulness of your own heart. If my heart rejected Him, God’s heart received Him. God is saying to-night, “Choose you this day whom ye will serve.” Whom you will have? The Christ of God and glory, or the devil and the lake of fire?

Blessed be God, it is the green tree before it is the dry. Now it is the green tree of grace, but it will be succeeded by the dry tree of unmitigated judgment. Just think of how they treated Christ from the time He came into the world. They would not give Him as much room as the mischievous fox. They would not make room for Him in the inn when He was born. He had no room while on earth, and when He died they hung Him up in the air, between heaven and earth, in the midst of two thieves. But how does He meet it all? He could have commanded the earth to open her mouth and take them to the judgment they deserved; but did He? No! Listen, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." He met it all by the tenderest grace. If I were asked to write the character of my Saviour, I should choose this sentence: "This man hath done nothing amiss."

How easy, under the influence of splendid music, etc., to work on the feelings; but what God wants is for people to weep for themselves and for their children. You are on the cracking edge of the lake of fire, and your soul is unsaved. Never were we so near the moment of the Lord's coming, or the moment of judgment falling on this guilty world. The *green* tree is the day of *grace*, and the *dry* the day of *judgment*. Notice how the grace that flowed from the Lord Jesus met and broke down at least one poor sinner at that time. In Matthew xxvii. 44 and Mark xv. 32 we see both thieves united with the rabble against the Lord, which was the most heartless thing He experienced on earth. They both came to their crosses as hard as the nails that fastened them there; and there hung

the sinless One between them. But when we come to Luke, what a change has come over one of them. Both had railed on Him. Of all the heartless things that ever happened in the world, from the Lord's birth to this time, this was the most heartless. Now one of them turns round and rebukes his fellow.

"Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." (v. 42.) This was a modest request to ask of that blessed One. Faith had opened that man's eyes to see the *moral* glory, the *official* glory, and the *personal* glory of the Lord Jesus. *Moral* glory, "This man," etc. *Official* glory, "*Remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.*" *Personal* glory, "Lord." He gave four proofs that he was saved: First, he feared God when he said, "Dost not thou fear God?" second, he took the right place—"We indeed justly;" third, he justified Christ—"This man hath done nothing amiss;" fourth, owns Him as Lord and King. All the prayers of anxious souls recorded in scripture are short. This is one of them: "Lord, remember me." Two persons, and one sentence to connect them. The thief linked himself with Christ by three words—"Lord, remember me." Oh, have you ever said that? Swift came the answer to that poor repentant thief—"This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." This was not an eleventh-hour conversion. This was the first hour in the thief's life. There is not a text in the Bible that says God will save you at the eleventh hour. No, the eleventh hour is the lake of fire—too late! God preserve you from listening to the devil's lie. To-morrow is the eleventh hour, and that is judgment and the lake of fire for ever. *Now* is the

time, *the eleventh hour* is not. The thieves were near each other then; but now, how far separated! Don't put off accepting God's salvation, and *hope* you will be like one of them. Yes, you *will* be like *one*; but remember one went to perdition.

The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. This had taken place in the heart of one of them, and he wanted to convey it to his fellow. The proof that the Holy Ghost has thrust the brightly-furbished blade of the Word of God through a man's soul is that he leaves off saying, "I am no worse than any body else." Justify God and condemn yourself. Pointing to the One who was between them, the thief witnessed to the spotlessness of the Lord in these words: "This man hath done nothing amiss." This was the justification of Christ. "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds" was the condemnation of himself and of man altogether. The testimonies of Pilate and of the thief for Christ were exactly the same. Between sunrise and sunset the thief was convicted, convinced, converted, and consecrated to Christ. The instant you look to Him by faith you get everlasting life. Never mind *how* you come. It is not a question of coming, but of faith in the right Person. What rest He gives! Just come to Him. He took one thief with Him and He left the other, and He will repeat that. He'll catch up all His blood-washed, blood-bought ones, and leave those behind who have not accepted His salvation to stand before the great white throne, and then to be thrust into the lake of fire.

H. M. H.

CAUSE AND EFFECT.

THE world rushes on with its ever-swelling ranks. On, on, on in its death march, hoary in sin, seeking rest and peace from every spring of earth, to find sooner or later the truth of that unerring word, "*All is vanity under the sun.*" Yet, thank God, to-day there is a portion above it, enough to meet the need of any weary soul. To such I write, knowing there are many aroused from the *death sleep of sin*, seeking rest, but finding none, trying anything and everything their soul can find; but tossed like a vessel caught in a whirling storm, her decks swept with foaming seas, her chart, compass, and helm of no avail. Then you might read in every face two words—

NO HOPE!

So with souls. Conviction, by the word and Spirit of God, has come. What a mercy! Like the foundering vessel, such can no longer sail smoothly, and obey the helm of an awakened conscience. No longer will the chart of feelings avail. The more your eye is turned inward, in search of rest, the more you find the darkness deepens, and your compass of hope proved to be but the hope of a hypocrite.

Instead of the sky being bright ahead, but one word meets your anxious gaze—

LOST!

And, like the men on the sinking ship, as you read these lines, Satan's last effort to crush you for ever may be pressed in upon your soul, expressed in two words—NO HOPE!

To you I cry, "*Stand still, and see the salvation*

of God." Did you read the words that head this paper? If not, do so now; and turn with me to 1 John iv. 19. Here you get the effect of a cause: "We love Him, because He first first loved us."

Like many another, you have reversed God's order. Finding your soul hopelessly sinking, the cry has often come, "Is there not a cause?" and, "How can God be love?" Ah, the secret is, you reason from your heart upward; faith does the reverse.

"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.)

Hence the effect, believing God, "We love Him, because He first loved us."

"God is light," and "God is love."

Love is the main-spring of His every dealing with poor sinners. Could God be proved a lover of sin, then might the sinner make light of it, and face the future uncleansed; but because He is love, He loves you, not your sins; and love alone led Him to show you in the light of His presence what you are, and this found, what is there for you but *salvation*?

"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.)

"Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed." (1 Peter ii. 24.)

"God is light." Read it in that cry of agony on the cross: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mark xv. 34.)

“God is love.” Read it in that shout of triumph :
 “It is finished.” (John xix. 30.)

And resting here, where God rests, look up and find in a risen Christ an eternal proof to you, that He is satisfied with that “finished work” in your stead. What a portion for the heart of God the Father! and what a portion for yours! All of time bears the stamp of vanity now, but beyond it is One who in it “for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” (Heb. xii. 2.)

“The storm that bowed His blessed head
 Is hushed for ever now;
 And rest divine is ours instead,
 Whilst glory crowns His brow.”

“For we which have believed do enter into rest.”
 (Heb. iv. 3.) P. D. O.

WHERE WILL YOU SPEND ETERNITY?

IT is a solemn thought, dear reader, that you will spend the future in real existence somewhere when you leave this world, with all its joys and sorrows, behind. You will enter upon an eternal existence, not measured by days, weeks, months, or years. There is no measure for eternity. Once entered upon, there is no possibility of its ever being ended.

Would it not be wise then for you to think for a moment where your present course will lead you?

Scripture speaks of two places where eternity is to be spent—one, the blackness of darkness

in everlasting fire, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth for ever, and where hope never comes to cast a ray of gladness over the heart wrung with anguish and pain, bearing the punishment of sin; or in the presence of the Lord, beholding His glory, and singing the new song unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.

As there are two places, so are there two characters, each suited to the place where they must be for all eternity. The unsaved, unwashed sinner cannot be in company with the Lord and His redeemed ones; for nothing that is unholy or defiled can come where they are. Nor is it possible that the blood-washed ones in glory in the presence of the Lord can be allowed to enter the dismal abode of the lost; for they are dear to the heart of Christ, which those who are for ever lost in hell might have been also, but for their rejection of Him, and of the salvation purchased by His blood.

Now we ask you, dear reader, to which of these two classes do you belong? To which of the two places are you going? Which will you choose? Heaven or hell? Christ or Satan? Oh, decide now! to-morrow too late may be. The door of mercy may soon close for ever; and if it does, and you are not saved, you will most assuredly spend your eternity in hell. Oh, solemn thought!

“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.)

Jesus died and made satisfaction to God for sin, and bore our sins in His own body on the

tree. Take your place, we beseech you, as guilty and lost, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the sinner's Saviour.

W. P.

"NOT GOLD, BUT GILDED."

SOMETIMES a very simple incident, trivial in itself, leaves an impression on the memory which things far more important fail to do. Often, too, one has heard of cases where some little insignificant circumstance has proved a turning-point in the life of one or another. Many of the readers of this magazine have heard the true account of a young man who was awakened to see his danger as a sinner and to believe on Christ as his Saviour, through a Christian gentleman in the train simply repeating the words, "And the door was shut" (quoting from the parable of the ten virgins in Matt. xxv.), as the young man jumped into the train just when it was starting, and the guard shut the door quickly after him. The narrow escape from missing the train, and the solemn words repeated by the passenger, no doubt reminded the young man of the danger of being "too late" at the door of mercy and pardon, and of being shut out from "the glory to come."

Oh! reader, has your conscience ever been awakened to your danger as a *needy* and a *guilty* sinner? If not, we would indeed earnestly desire and seek to awaken you to the uncertainty, as well as the worthlessness of all here, even while you are seeking to enjoy it. Those bright attractions and ensnaring pursuits which the world furnishes are "not gold, but gilded."

This title was suggested by one of those passing

incidents alluded to at the beginning, which I have often recalled to mind since, when noticing the eager pursuit after enjoyment and pleasure which occupies the lives of so many.

While travelling to my place of business one morning by train, a young girl got into the same compartment, with a book in her hand, which she commenced reading the moment she sat down, and in which she seemed deeply absorbed.

Curious to know what it was which was thus engrossing her mind, I glanced at the title, which was, "*Not Gold, but Gilded*," and the book appeared to be one of those exciting novels so much read and sought after, especially by the young of the present day, absorbing their minds, and often destroying all desire for, or interest in, more profitable reading; often indeed leading to the ruin of both soul and body.

I could not help reflecting at the time how applicable the title was to the vast mass of such reading, and of all the other attractions by which the poor pleasure-seeker is drawn on—things that look so bright, so golden, on the outside. "*Not gold, but gilded*," may be written over all that this world can offer of enjoyment or pleasure, over all its pursuits and prospects.

Often since then these words, and the eager interest of the young girl in her book, have come to my memory, as I have noticed the throngs of pleasure-seekers, some bent on one kind of enjoyment and some on another; and often, too, noticing the same persons on the Lord's-day, arrayed in all that told of the pomps and vanities of this world, and of the pride of life, going professedly to worship God, who during the week had been seeking their fill of the world's pleasures, but

whether on week days or Sundays, whether in the gay excitement of worldly enjoyments, or the religious formalities and routine of the Sunday, all betraying an unsatisfied heart, and testifying to the fact that what they possess is not the true thing, the real gold, but only the outside and valueless gilding.

But someone may ask, Is it not right to seek pleasure, and to enjoy oneself, especially when one is young? Certainly, I answer, if you have nothing better or more satisfying to pursue or to gain; if every moment be not bringing you nearer to eternity, and to meeting God, to give account of the deeds done in the body; if God is not holding out to you something far more blessed and abiding. But what if you are being attracted by that which is only gilded, and all the while fancying it to be gold? What, indeed, if, in seeking to enjoy these empty and unsatisfactory pleasures that allure so many, and for which they seem to live, you should lose the true gold, the real enjoyment and happiness which is now offered—"offered without price or money." What shall it profit, if you gain the whole world, and lose your own soul? This is the way we wish you to look at this matter.

The blessed God has made known to us and provided for us true joy and happiness—"pleasures for evermore;" and to one who has tasted something of these, there is the knowledge of how deceptive and vain is that which the world calls pleasure.

Yes, dear reader, God offers to you "the unsearchable riches of Christ;" and there is also one whom Scripture calls "the god of this world," who is seeking to dazzle and allure poor unsatisfied mortals by the gilded attractions of the world, and thus to blind them to the bright joys, the real and

golden treasures, which abide for ever, and you are making either one or the other your portion.

God pleads with you. He not only provides, but invites. His voice is still speaking to you, unsaved one, "Wherefore do you spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

Man's day ends in eternal night, his pleasure in eternal misery; and even while it lasts, how much bitterness is in it, how thin is the gilding which covers a rusting and decaying interior!

But God gives us a cup of unmingled sweetness. Sorrows there may be in a Christian's life, griefs and trials too, while here; but His love "sweetens every bitter cup." He gives joy in the midst of sorrow, and His love brightens the darkest hour. But oh, reader, terrible is that night of darkness without His presence!

The sun of your short day will soon set; the night is coming on; a dark night for thee, poor unsaved soul. But if thou wilt now believe on the Son of God, if thou wilt own and honour Him as thy Saviour, He will give thee light. He will be thy Sun, and the brightness and warmth of His presence and love will be thy eternal portion. He saves and He satisfies. Even now His heart yearns over thee; from His bright throne in glory He stoops down in tender pity and love, and invites thee to Himself. May you have no rest nor joy till you know Him, and can say to Him, "Thou hast made me full of joy with thy countenance." Then, as you look around and see others still following after vain pleasures, and seeking rest from religious observances, you too will long to

under heaven among men whereby *we* must be saved. Let me entreat thee, do not put it off. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

S. W.

TO THE HARDENED SINNER.

THE blessed Lord has given me this opportunity of laying before you, solemnly and truthfully, the awful danger in which you now stand as condemned already, and only waiting that inexorable power which you can never resist, that sure messenger death, to convey you as to your soul and spirit to the everlasting burnings of hell! there to await, in torments of unquenchable fire, the resurrection of your body, which for hundreds of years will lie covered by the clods of the valley until that day comes—that day when the sea will give up the dead that are in it, when death and hell will deliver up the dead which are in them, and you will stand again the complete man—spirit, soul, and body—upheld by the mighty power of Him *from whose face* the earth and the heaven flee away.

"But is there no hope in this?" you ask. "No last hope here after all these years of misery?" No, no, there is no hope, none whatever; it is the *last* resurrection—the resurrection to judgment, the resurrection of the great white throne, the resurrection of the wicked dead, who are judged according to their works.

Here, poor soul, you are judged in righteousness by that Man whom He hath appointed. (Acts xvii. 31.) Is there no hope of escape? no chance of acquittal? None, sinner, none; "but I say unto you, that every *idle word* that men shall

“speak they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” How can you, who are shapen in iniquity, stand for one moment before that great throne of dazzling whiteness? What an awful contrast to you in your sins and works of darkness, which are black as midnight, dark as hell! “If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him, and we should come together in judgment.”

Oh, I implore you, while it is called to-day, flee from the wrath to come! Flee from eternal judgment in that fire which never shall be quenched, where their worm dieth not, where the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. Unsaved reader, you are hastening on to this pile of Tophet, unconsciously it may be, hushed by the sweet lullaby of the god of this world, who has blinded your eyes by his Satanic power. Every beat of the pulse brings you nearer and nearer to that second death. Oh, be warned, I pray thee, by one who has never seen thy face, but who knows thy doom!

“Knowing,” says the apostle, “the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.” Let me entreat thee then, as one who loves thy soul, to make haste. Escape for thy life, for thou hast no time to lose. Before thou wilt have time to finish this paper the door may be shut. Oh, avail thyself of His own gracious offer of safety! Listen to that voice of love, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”

R. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



ONE TOUCH.

SOME years ago I was asked by a friend, a medical man, to go and see a young woman who was dying; and as I think it is very wrong to conceal from one who is nearing eternity the fact that such is the case, I asked him if I might tell her that she had not long to live. "Certainly," he said; "and tell her I say so." I went to the address given, and was shown up into a comfortably furnished drawing-room, on a sofa in which lay one of whom it might be said she was almost beginning life, and yet one glance showed that very soon this world would be for her a thing of the past. She was but nineteen years old, and she was a wife and a mother; but the eye, with its almost unnatural brightness; the sunken cheek, with its hectic flush; and the quick breathing, told plainly that consumption had done its terrible work, and that her days on earth were numbered; and yet, strange to say (although I believe a not uncommon feature of such cases), she thought she would recover. And her answer to my first question was, that she was better, and would soon be about again; and that her kind husband had promised, when she was stronger, to take her to the sea.

What could I say to her? I knew I must tell her the terrible truth; but how cruel it would seem, to dash those hopes to the ground, and tell

her plainly that so far as this world was concerned there was no hope, and that eternity was close upon her.

Looking to God to help and guide me, I said quietly, "But suppose you don't get better?"

"Oh, but," she said, "I am sure I shall! I have felt much better the last two days."

"I don't think you will!" I answered; and, after a pause, "indeed, I am sure you will not."

She looked quickly up at me, and said, "Why do you say so? you are not a doctor."

"No," I replied, "I am not. But Dr. —, who asked me to come and see you, told me I might tell you that you could not recover."

I shall never forget the look on that young face as she said, looking me full in the face, "Did he say I was dying?" No need to answer that question, for she knew what the answer must be; and with a cry of despair she exclaimed, "Dying! dying!"

I felt it was better to say nothing till the first outburst of grief was past, and then I asked her if I should read something to her about that precious Saviour who came to die for poor sinners. For a time she did not answer, but at last said, "Yes, if I liked." But I could see there was little, if any, desire to hear, and that her one thought was that soon she would have to leave this world, and the husband and child she loved so dearly.

Turning to Luke viii., I read to her, slowly and quietly, the beautiful and touching story of the poor woman who, when every resource of man had not only failed her, but had brought her only more and more disappointment, had in simple faith touched the hem of the garment of that

blessed One, who not only never failed or disappointed any who turned to Him, however deep their need might be, and however hopeless their case, but who met the simple faith of their poor weary hearts out of all the endless resources that were in Himself, and gave them much more than they expected. I read it through once to the poor weeping one, and then I asked her if I should read it again. She quietly said, "Yes," and I did so, very slowly, and she ceased crying, and I could see she was listening.

When I had finished I told her how, when every hope seemed gone for the poor sinner, and all his resources were at an end, that blessed Saviour had come down to this poor world of sin and death, had gone through it blessing all who turned to Him, and then on the cross finished that wondrous work for which He came into this world, going into the judgment of a holy God against sin, and drinking that cup of judgment to the very dregs. I told her that just as one touch of faith brought to this poor helpless one all she needed then, and the blessed words, "Thy faith hath made thee whole, go in peace," so one look of faith to Him where He was, a Saviour for sinners at the right hand of God, because His work for sinners was finished, would bring *her* all she needed—not in healing to the perishing to-day, but, what was far better, in life to the immortal soul; and that a peace and joy sweeter and more real than any this world could give would be hers if she simply took God at His word, and as a poor helpless sinner believed in that precious Christ whose blood was shed that she might live for ever. This and much more I told her, and, though she said nothing, she listened; and when I

had once more read the precious story of grace to her she thanked me, and I left.

A few days after I went again; but what a sight met me as I entered the room. There she was on the sofa, with evidently only a short time left her here, but with a bright smile on her face that spoke more than any words could have done. No need to tell me of the blessed change that had taken place—there was joy instead of sorrow, and there were smiles instead of weeping; and it was easy to see that the peace “which passeth all understanding” was hers.

“Why,” I said, “how happy you look.”

“Yes,” she answered; “*I’ve touched the hem of His garment, and that’s enough.*”

There was no need to ask what she meant when she said those words. The brightness of that face told more than any words the deep reality of all they expressed to her. She, like the poor, needy, helpless one in the gospel story, had found her resource in Christ when every other had failed, and had learned the reality of those blessed words, “Go in peace.” Praise and thanksgiving came from those lips which before could only speak of dying; for she had been led to put her whole trust as a poor sinner in Him who had died for *her*, and had borne *her* sins “in His own body on the tree.” (1 Peter ii. 24.)

My heart did indeed go up in thankfulness to God for the greatness of that grace which had done such great things for her. I did not see her again; for very soon after she passed away, bright and happy to the last.

Reader, what would death bring with it to you? Ask yourself that question honestly before God. Are you still “*in your sins*” before Him? or have

you as a poor sinner learned that there is one thing only that answers to God for sin—that precious blood which is on the mercy-seat, and which has met and satisfied His every claim? Do you know Christ as a Saviour who has “made peace through the blood of His cross”? (Col. i. 20.) If so, you can joyfully say—

“Christ died, then I am clean ;
Not a cloud above, not a spot within.”

P. G.

TEARS OR NO TEARS—WHICH?

ONE sunny morning, when walking down a pretty footpath, on both sides of which grew the red and white hawthorn, laburnum, rhododendron, cherry, and other beautiful trees in bloom, I met a young man, whom I knew, wiping his eyes with his handkerchief. On asking him what he was crying for, he answered, “Oh, I am not crying, sir, I have only got something into my eye!”

“Indeed,” I said, after a short pause, “do you *never* cry?”

“No, not much now; I have about given up that sort of thing.”

“Well, how *often*, do you think?”

“Oh, may be once in six months, or not quite so often!”

I enquired whether he had ever heard of the place where there is *no* crying, and where all tears are for ever wiped away; or if he had ever heard of the other place, where people will be *weeping for ever*, and their tears never wiped away.

He replied, "I think I know what you mean, sir."

"Yes," I said; "for all who dwell in the all-joy place, 'God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more . . . crying' (Rev. xxi. 4); but for those in the all-sorrow place 'there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Matt. xxii. 13)—where their tears shall be for ever flowing."

"Would *you* like to escape the one place and get to the other?" I asked.

"Yes, I would," the young man readily answered.

"Then which place are you bound for?"

"I am trying to get to the better place."

"*Trying!*" said I. "But Jesus finished the whole work on the cross long ago, and don't you see your trying will only hinder instead of helping you. Jesus, when here on earth, did not say, 'He that tries shall have everlasting life;' but, 'He that *believeth* on ME *hath* everlasting life.'" (John vi. 47.) I pointed out that *sin* was the first cause of *tears*, there being none till after Adam and Eve first sinned in Eden, and that there have been tears ever since.

So that when souls get "from sin and sorrow free" they are out of reach of tears, or clear of the *cause*, clear of the *effect*. That if people died in their sins they would have their sins upon them for ever, and therefore tears for ever in the lake of fire, where the worm *dieth not*, and the fire *is not quenched*; and out of which eternal tears of repentance will never extricate souls; and mark, Jesus will never go there to wipe away one single tear, nor wash away one single sin. "Can *you*," I asked, "trust the precious blood of Christ alone that cleanses from *all* sin?"

"Yes," was his answer.

"Then do you receive Christ as your very Saviour?"

"I *do*," was his emphatic reply.

"Then, if that be really true, I shall, ere long, meet you where all tears shall be for ever wiped away; where all will be joy and gladness; and where there will be no more sorrow, nor any crying, around the blessed One who 'loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.'" (Rev. i. 5.)

"And God has fixed the happy day,
When the last tear shall dim our eyes;
When He will wipe these tears away,
And fill our hearts with glad surprise;
To hear His voice, and see His face,
And know the fulness of His grace."

Now, dear reader, what about your sins and your tears?

Is it to be *all tears*, or *no tears*? All sins and all tears, or no sins and no tears—which?

Have you, let me ask, never seen the need of the immediate settlement of this all-important, solemn question? Do you not perceive how absolutely necessary it is to have it settled *now*, in God's time, and while you have health and opportunity before you, and ere it is for ever too late? Oh, do, I beseech you, think about it, friend! Don't shelve it once more to quiet your conscience, for you will, of a certainty, have to face the question sooner or later, and why not *now*? "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" and what does it matter whether you cry once in six months or otherwise? Like that young man, you may have "about given up that sort of thing." But rest assured of this, that if you do

not get clear of your sins, you will have to begin weeping again, and that for ever, when this very gospel story will rise in judgment against you.

"The wages of sin is death;" and Jesus, the spotless and undefiled One, in the place of humiliation which He took, wept on account of man's sin and death.

See Him weeping over Jerusalem, because of Israel's sin (Luke xix. 41); and at the grave of Lazarus, on account of death. (John xi. 35.) Wondrous sight indeed to see such an One thus weeping, for others, tears of sympathy! But, dear soul, tears do not put away sin.

"The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul."

Have you trusted that blood? Are you by it sheltered from eternal judgment? Can you truly say, "The One whose precious blood was shed on Calvary is my Saviour"?

God is for ever satisfied with the blood of Christ; nothing less was of sufficient value to satisfy God. He alone knows its full value.

Trust it, friend, and see your sins gone for ever, and ere long your tears too. Be warned of that eternal weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth; for God is holy, and will not be mocked. Paul, the apostle, said, "Watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." (Acts xx. 31.)

How many warnings have you had, dear soul?

How many hearts have yearned, and how many tears have been shed, for your salvation? Yes, how many? GOD ONLY KNOWS. J. N.

"BE NOT AFRAID, ONLY BELIEVE."

SUCH were the words addressed by the Lord Jesus Christ to the intensely-earnest and loving-hearted Jairus, who fell at Jesus' feet and "besought Him greatly" to come and heal his "little daughter." (Mark v. 22, 23, 35-43.)

When Jairus left his house his little daughter was "at the point of death," and scarcely had he reached Jesus, and implored Him to come and heal her, ere messengers arrived with the heart-crushing intelligence, "Thy daughter is dead;" but before the broken-hearted father had time to be stunned by this fresh overwhelming news, the blessed, tender-hearted Saviour and Lord anticipated all the mournful thoughts that would at once rush into his heart by saying, as it were, "It is all the same to Me whether she be sick or dead, as I am both Healer and Life-giver;" and thus He touchingly stayed up the sinking heart of the bereaved father with those five divinely-comforting words, "*Be not afraid, only believe.*"

And is there no comfort in them for thee, poor, weary, anxious, trembling, doubting one? Are you saying, "My sins are too many?" Oh, "only believe" in Him who had all our sins upon Him on the tree, suffered for them there once for all, and that His precious blood cleanseth from all sin!

Do you still say, "Ah! but I am lost, helpless, and guilty"? Thank God for showing it to you, and causing you to own it; and now, for your immediate and lasting comfort, remember that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost;" that God has laid help upon

Him who is "mighty to save;" and is saying to you, "Thou hast destroyed thyself, but in Me is thine help;" and God is now commending His love to you in the gift of His beloved Son for you, by saying, as it were (yes, though you are lost, helpless, and guilty), "Christ died" for those who are "without strength"—"ungodly," and "sinners." Therefore, poor anxious soul, "be not afraid, only believe." Just fall into the strong, loving arms of the Saviour, saying—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall;
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus, and my all."

The above verse was blessed to a young woman who had long been anxious about her immortal soul's present and everlasting salvation. She said, "When you were reading that hymn last night, I saw the whole way of salvation for sinners perfectly plain, and wondered that I had never seen it before. I saw that I HAD NOTHING TO DO BUT TO TRUST IN CHRIST."

A poor woman was dying, a servant of the Lord who had known her for years visited her and said to her, "You seem to be very sick." "Yes," said she, "I am dying." He continued, "And are you ready to die?" She lifted her eyes upon him and replied, "Sir, *God knows I have taken Him at His word*, and I am not afraid to die."

And that is all you have to do, dear anxious, inquiring sinner; however dark and desperate your case may be, still the Lord says to thee, "BE NOT AFRAID, ONLY BELIEVE."
H. M. H.

"PRASE GOD, I NO JESUS."

A DEAR Christian sailor, writing to a fellow-believer whom he had never seen, winds up a letter, full of joy in the Lord, with the words, "I am a poor scoller; but, prase God, I no Jesus." The writing and spelling were sufficient to prove that the dear man was a poor scholar, but the whole tenor of his letter bore witness to the fact that he was "wise unto salvation," and did indeed "know Jesus;" and not only so, but was far in advance of many Christians in the knowledge of that blessed Person in whom "dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

These are days of great enlightenment, and of wide-spread education; these are undoubtedly days in which the prophecy applies, "Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." (Dan. xii. 4.) But these are also days of great darkness and grossest ignorance. Where? Amongst savages? Nay; but amongst the highly educated and enlightened inhabitants of so-called Christian countries. And why, but in accordance with that solemn word, applicable to a nation as to an individual, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness"?

England has for centuries been favoured with light above any other country, but how has that light been treated? Has it not been undervalued, slighted, tampered with, resisted, to such an extent that men are becoming judicially blinded, and are beginning to "put darkness for light, and light for darkness"? (Isa. v. 20.)

Do we not now find men with even the greatest pretensions to *knowledge*, who pride themselves on questioning or rejecting the Scriptures, and who, shutting their eyes to the light of revelation, go searching for what they call truth in their own minds, or the minds of other men, as expressed in writings where Christianity is either misrepresented or ignored?

They know a thousand things—astronomy, philosophy, philology, geology, ethnology, biology, anthropology, and all the “ologies” under the sun; but with it all they are but “poor scollers,” for they have not the “beginning of knowledge,” which is “the fear of the Lord.”

Most of these learned men believe in a “Supreme Being;” but they know not God, because they do not “know Jesus,” the only revealer of the Father; as He says, “No man cometh unto the Father, but by Me” (John xiv. 6); and they know not the Lord Jesus Christ, because flesh and blood cannot reveal Him, but the Father which is in heaven. (See Matt. xvi. 17.) Many such men profess great admiration for Jesus, and will write large, learned, fascinating books to describe what they call the “Life of Jesus;” but they know Him not, nor see in Him “God manifest in flesh.”

Wise in their own conceits, they are destitute of the only knowledge worth having—the knowledge of Christ. Blind, and yet they say, “We see.”

“Dost thou teach us?” said the Pharisees to the man whose eyes the Lord had opened (John ix.); and these wise men would probably say much the same to a man who could only say, “I am a poor scoller, but ‘one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see,’ and I know Jesus.”

"But," the reader may say, "I am no sceptic; I am an orthodox Christian. I believe implicitly in the Bible, and in all the truths of the Christian religion."

Well, my friend, that is something to go upon; but let me put to you this simple question, Can you say, with the sailor above referred to, "I know Jesus"?

You reply, "Of course I do; I have always believed in Him."

Well, I am sorry to contradict you; but if that is your answer, the probability is you do *not* know the Lord Jesus. You may know a great deal about Him, all the facts recorded in the Bible—but do you know *Him*?

You know very well there is such a person as the Prince of Wales, but do you know him? If you met him in the street would he give you a look of recognition, as he might to one of his companions or a servant? Surely you see the difference between knowing *about* a person and knowing the person?

The Lord Jesus says, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine;" and when He comes for His own—His blood-bought and *blood-washed* people—there will be a meeting and a *mutual recognition* between Him and them; but many, who think they know Jesus, will hear Him say from within that shut door, "I know you not." (Matt. xxv. 12.) All their knowledge will then be of no avail. They knew the Bible; they knew *about* Jesus—that He was "the way, and the truth, and the life;" they knew all you could have told them; but they did not know *Himself*; they could not one of them have said with truth, "I know Jesus."

"Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches : but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth *me*." (Jer. ix. 23, 24.) "This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom Thou hast sent." (John xvii. 3.)

Oh, my friend, I beseech you, make sure of this priceless knowledge—the knowledge of the Lord Jesus. He is waiting to make Himself and the Father known to all who come to Him. "Acquaint *now* thyself with Him." He is the Saviour of sinners. Rest not until you can say with certainty, He is *my* Saviour. "He died for all." Be not content until you can say, "He died for *me* ; He loved *me*, and gave Himself for *me*." (Gal. ii. 20.) Then will your heart rise up to God in praise, as it never yet has done, and, with our sailor friend, you will be able to say, "Praise God, I know Jesus;" and though you may have more "scholarship" to boast of, you will account it of little worth in comparison with the new *science*—science *not* falsely so called, but in which "are hid *all* the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

But is it possible that any, who really know the Lord Jesus as the One who died for them and rose again, can be satisfied with what they know, and not want to know more of Him? Who was it counted all things loss that he might know Him? Was it not that one who had seen Him in the glory, and to whom He had said, "I am Jesus"? And did not Paul know the Lord Jesus better than you or I do? To be sure he did; and that is the very reason why he was not satisfied. He knew all that Christ had done for him, but he

wanted to know more of Himself, and he would never be satisfied until he was with Him and like Him in glory. But in order to know Him better here, he was pressing on; and for the surpassing excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus he esteemed everything else but dross and dung.

May the reader be able to say, not only "I know Jesus," but, I "count all things loss that would hinder me from following on to know more of Him"—"that I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection." (Phil. iii. 10.)

E. B. G.

TRUSTING.

NOT long ago I was at a small town by the seaside. While on the beach there, I saw a tiny child bathing. She was evidently very much afraid of the water, and was crying, when her nurse asked me to hold her hand, to which I readily assented; and taking off my shoes and stockings, I led her to the water, and held her firmly by the hand. She no longer seemed afraid, but began to laugh and smile. Now, why was this? Because she trusted to me; she knew that I would not let her slip. But I have only used this little illustration, dear reader, because I wish to point you to some one who is far worthier of your trust than I was of that child's. It is Jesus, the mighty to save; and He wishes you just to put your trust in Him, and He will save you from hell. Yes, Jesus is ever willing and ready to save poor lost sinners; for He says, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.)

And will you not trust Him? The dying thief trusted Him, and was saved even at the eleventh hour.

“Oh, turn ye ! oh, turn ye ! for why will ye die,
When God in His mercy is coming so nigh ?”

Do trust Him. He is ready to save you, waiting to save you, almighty to save you. Not one who ever trusted Him was turned away. Even Saul of Tarsus, the *chief* of sinners, trusted in Jesus and was saved. The blood of Jesus was shed on that awful cross. He suffered all God's righteous ire on account of our innumerable sins. He lay three days in the dark, cold grave ; but He was raised up from the dead, and is exalted to God's right hand, in proof that all the work is done, and it only remains for you to trust Him. In trusting Him, you set the seal to your own salvation. He will never cast you off, if you trust in Him ; for He says (and surely His word is enough), “Him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out.” What a glorious declaration ! Even though your sins be as scarlet, if you believe on Jesus, and come to Him, you are His for ever. And I can say of Him, to any who have really trusted Him with all their soul, that

“That soul, though all *hell* should endeavour to shake,
He'll never ; no, never ; no, never forsake.”

And then do not keep the glorious news of such a salvation to yourself. Tell it to others. Tell them that if they thirst, Jesus is the Water of life ; if they hunger, He is the Bread of life ; and, above all, that He is the Life, and that He says to all who trust Him, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

S. S. B. G.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.



CHRIST, AND NOT FEELINGS.

TWO servants of the Lord, visiting in a small hamlet, having heard that an elderly woman who lived at a certain house was a happy and an intelligent Christian, called in to see her. One of them asked her how long she had been converted, which elicited answers from her, of which the following is the substance:

"It's hard to say exactly," she replied; "for as long as I can recollect the fear of God was before me. When I was quite a little child I knew about Him, and I thought it was such a hard thing not to be able to do anything without God seeing me. I remember one Sunday I was going to play with a toy which had been given me; but when I got half-way across the room I thought, 'Thou God seest me,' and I couldn't touch it. Time went on, and I grew up; but I was never happy, although I wanted to go to heaven. I read volume after volume upon faith, by this good man and that good man, but only got more and more bewildered; and the same by the teaching I heard. I was *living by my feelings*, but they didn't give me the happiness I desired."

"What was it that put you right at last? Was it any particular scripture?"

"Well, one day, getting on for thirty years ago, I was wondering how God could possibly forgive all my backslidings, when I read a passage in Acts xiii., where it says, 'Be it known unto you

therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him all that believe *are justified from all things*, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.' (vv. 38, 39.) From that time I discovered (pardon me, I cannot tell you about it as I would like) that my best feeling was no more worth to rest my salvation upon than my greatest sin, and I looked to Christ alone. I felt I might as well jump into hell at once as trust in my feelings."

"And now you've told us all about the past, what about the future before you?" said the other.

"I'm waiting, looking, longing for Christ to come," she replied; and then, after a short pause, added with deep earnestness, "I do wish He would come, *I do*. When I've been near death's door, I still longed for Him to come; and as I wait, when Satan comes and attacks me, I don't fight or argue, but look straight to Jesus."

Her clear and unfaltering confession of Christ greatly cheered the hearts of her visitors. Would that all who peruse these lines could speak with the same simple confidence! Beloved reader, whoever you may be, how is it with *you*? Have *you* found out that the eye of God is upon you, and that nothing escapes His all-searching gaze? "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." (Prov. xv. 3.) And He looketh not upon the outward appearance, but upon the heart. Think of that. And "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." (Jer. xvii. 9.) What a spectacle then is your heart, unsaved reader, for the eye of God! Utterly unfit for His holy presence, what will you do in the day of judgment? Face, then, this all-

important matter now, in the day of His abounding grace. There is a sure refuge in Christ the Saviour in glory, and His precious blood will cleanse you from all sin. (1 John i. 7.)

But thousands we fear, are looking in at themselves, occupied with their feelings, reading volumes on faith, instead of simply resting on the sure testimony of the word of God concerning His Son. Never did truer words cross human lips than these, "I discovered that my best feeling was no more worth to rest my salvation upon than my greatest sin." Happy discovery! Have you made it? "The soul that sinneth, it *shall die*;" and nowhere do we read that the soul that has happy feelings *shall live*. It is true that happy feelings follow faith; but as long as you look in at yourself for faith, you will neither have the one nor the other. It is, "Look unto *me*, and be ye saved" (Isa. xlv. 22); not look at yourself, or your own heart. It is astonishing how many souls are caught in this delusive wile of the enemy, occupied with *faith* instead of *Christ*, as though faith were their Saviour. You will never have peace and liberty and joy until, like the one of whom you have just read, you take God at His word, and rest on the finished work of His Son. (John xix. 30.) "*By Him* all that *believe* are justified from all things." (Acts xiii. 39.) It is not, Whosoever has happy feelings; or, Whosoever looks into himself for faith; but, "*Whosoever believeth in Him* shall receive remission of sins." (Acts x. 43.)

And having believed, what are you to wait for? The same eternal Word teaches us to look for Christ. Having looked *unto Him* for salvation, we are now to look *for Him* to take us to glory. (Phil. iii. 20.) Every believer should be "waiting,

looking, longing for Christ to come." If the thought of His speedy return fills you with dread, it is clear that you are not simply resting on the sure word of God. But if you are, what can give greater joy to the heart than to anticipate the glorious moment when we shall see His face? (Rev. xxii. 4.) "Surely I come quickly," are almost the last words of Scripture. Can you respond, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus"? If so, till that moment see that Christ is the measure of your ways; and if Satan attacks you, do not fight or argue, but look straight to Him.

E. H. C.

"I WILL."

THERE are seven passages of Scripture to which I would ask your attention; and in each of these passages you will find the short sentence above. By connecting these scriptures together, I think we may say we have the history of a soul exemplified in these seven "I wills" of Jesus.

The first is an *invitation*—"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and *I will* give you rest." (Matthew xi. 28.)

Notice whence that invitation came, and to whom it is given. It came from the lips of the blessed Son of God, and it is to all who labour and are heavy laden—those people who are toiling beneath the load of their sins, and need rest. How are they to get rest? By accepting the invitation, and coming to Jesus, who says, "*I will* give you rest."

The second is the *reception*—"Him that cometh to Me *I will* in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.)

There are many persons who do not doubt the power of Christ to save, but who doubt His loving will. Like the leper who came to Him, saying, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." (Mark i. 40.) What was the answer? "Jesus, moved with compassion . . . saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." Mark, this leper came to Jesus, to the One who says, "Him that *cometh* to *Me* I will in no wise cast out;" and we may come as did this leper—filled with doubts and fears. It matters not how or in what way we come, providing we do come, for Jesus is able to remove all doubts and fears.

An anxious soul, when asked the other day if she had received Christ, replied, "I do not feel that I am accepted. If I only knew that I was accepted, I should then feel happy. But, oh dear! I am such a long way off." I said to her, "Then you are like the prodigal. He was a long way off, and in a very degraded condition; and perhaps he wondered whether his father would receive him. But, however, he resolved to try him. So we read he arose and came to his father. And what sort of reception did he meet with? Certainly not that which he expected. 'But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.' He was not only kissed, but clothed, housed and fed far beyond his expectation."

Thirdly we come to *confession*—"Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him *will* I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew x. 32.) The Lord hath declared that "every tongue shall confess to God" (Rom. xiv. 11); but it is our happy privilege to confess Christ now before men, and every day of our lives we

are either confessing Him or denying Him. It may cost us something if we are constantly confessing Christ, as it did the blind man in John ix. The Jews had agreed that if any man did confess Jesus to be the Christ he should be put out of the synagogue. (John ix. 22.) And they acted upon their resolution: when they found the man whose eyes had been opened confessing Christ they cast him out. Alas! how sad, a synagogue and a religion without Christ!

Why are so many Christians sad and unhappy? Is it not because they are not confessing Christ? Where ought we to begin? At home. "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee" (Mark v. 19), said Jesus to the one who had been possessed by a legion of demons. The Samaritan woman, having her heart filled with Christ, could not forbear speaking of Him. She went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" (John iv. 29.) She began with one of the Lord's favourite words—"Come," and ended with "Christ." The result was, "They went out of the city, and *came to Him.*" (v. 30.)

Fourthly we get *service*—"Follow Me, and *I will* make you fishers of men." (Matthew iv. 19.) This was a distinct call from the Lord Jesus to Peter and Andrew, two brethren, to a distinct line of service, and the fruit of their service depended upon their obedience. They were not to go to that which they thought would be the most likely place to catch fish, but they were to follow Him where'er He might lead them. They would then find plenty; for He said, "*I will* make you fishers of men."

Let us look for a moment at Peter fishing for the Lord in Acts ii. What a splendid haul of the net—three thousand souls! Oh, what fish would be caught were the servants only following in the footsteps of the Master! Obedience and *subjection* are the things which constitute a perfect servant, and we have an example in our fifth scripture of the One who came to be obedient and subject to His Father's will, whatever that will might be.

Is it His Father's will that He should go into death? He would say, "Not as *I will*, but as thou wilt." (Matt. xxvi. 39.) He was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 8.)

Oh, blessed and perfect Master, give to thy servants, we pray thee, more of thy spirit, and grace to follow in thy footsteps! In service we may expect to meet with opposition. Many things will cross our path. If the eye be not single, and we have not constantly before our gaze that One whom we are serving, we shall be discouraged and disheartened. The servants need a word of cheer and *comfort*. Hence the Lord says, in the next scripture, "*I will* not leave you comfortless: *I will* come to you." (John xiv. 18.)

And is there not indeed great *comfort* in the thought of the blessed Lord's return? That He who says "Come unto Me," and encourages every one to do so by declaring, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out," will Himself come again to receive all those who have accepted His gracious invitation, and will take all of them to His Father's home—the house of many mansions—there to enjoy the unbroken and eternal rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Art thou tried and tempest-tossed, dear fellow-

believer? Cheer thee, for it is only "a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." (Heb. x. 37.) And again, "Surely I come quickly." (Rev. xxii. 20.) "Wherefore," says the apostle, "comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. iv. 18.)

But there remains yet another scripture to be considered ere we close this paper, and that is one which speaks of GLORIFICATION.

"Father, *I will* that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me: for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 24.)

H. C.

"IN YOUR SINS," OR "IN CHRIST." WHICH?

"**I**F ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins." (John viii. 24.)

These were the words spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ to the unbelieving Jews of His day. They apply with equal force and power to unbelieving Gentiles of to-day, to unbelieving (professing) Christians, to unbelieving hearers of the gospel, who have never bowed down in heart, and owned His claims over them.

Christ had given ample proofs of who He was, and from whence He came. John the Baptist, His own works, His Father, and the Scriptures, had borne plain and unmistakable testimony as to this—testimony sufficient to convict the conscience, unless it was set and hardened as a flint stone against the streams of grace and mercy, which flowed out from His blessed Person to the most unworthy sinners around.

But these to whom he was speaking, having no sense of their own unworthiness, and pre-occupied with their lifeless form of religion, would not believe on Him; and the solemn warning addressed to them was, that they should "*die in their sins.*"

Now there are two conditions, in one or other of which every one must be found—"in your sins," or "in Christ."

There is no possible standing-ground, no intermediate position, between these two; they are as distinct and separate, the one from the other, as light is from darkness. The one describes, as seen by God's eye, the condition of the most utter destitution, death, and distance in which, as a guilty child of Adam, I could be found; the other gives us, in two words, the position of the most exalted blessing into which, as a child of God, I am introduced.

But to *die* "in your sins!" Could anything be more awful? For persons to have their sins as a garment upon them, as their *fixed* condition—fixed for eternity—such a thought must awaken even the most careless to serious consideration, to see how they stand as to this great question with God.

There is a striking difference between the way in which this great future eternity, for the saved and unsaved respectively, is spoken of in 1 Thess. iv. and Rev. xx. They are raised from their graves by the life-giving voice of the Son of God. But the first scripture gives us "*the dead in Christ;*" in the second, the words "*the dead*" occur four times. What a vast difference the words "*in Christ*" make! The resurrection of those who have died "*in Christ*" is a moment of

unspeakable blessing and joy. They shall be summoned from their graves by the assembling shout of their risen Saviour. The resurrection of "the dead" (Rev. xx.)—that is, those out of Christ—is a resurrection to stand before the "great white throne," a throne of pure, unmingled judgment, and for all who are found there must end in the "lake of fire." In which resurrection will you take part?

But why did the Lord say to the Jews that they should "die in their sins"? Simply because they would not believe in Him. The whole question turns upon this—believing in Christ. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) Faith in this Christ once crucified, but now risen and exalted, is, as it were, the bridge by which I pass over from the condition of an unsaved sinner in my sins, to that of a saved person on the road to glory. All who believe in Christ are justified from all things. (Acts xiii. 39.)

To those "in Him" there is no condemnation. (Rom. viii. 1.) We are complete "in Him" (Col. ii. 10); we are blessed with all spiritual blessings "in Him." (Eph. i. 3.) God sees the simplest believer as "in Christ" before Him, complete and perfect, standing in all the value and virtue of His person and His work as God alone can estimate it.

It is not a question of what I may see myself to be, what I may feel or experience; but of how God looks at me; and He looks at the believer as "in Christ."

"In Christ." What surpassing blessings for time and eternity are wrapped up in those words! Which then is your condition? Still "in your

sins," going on to be for ever and ever in banishment from God's presence? or "in Christ," pressing on to be for ever "with Christ" in glory? It must be the one or the other. F. G. B.

"GOD KNOWS YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS."

I CALLED the other day to see a man who was dying, and during my conversation with him, I said, "No doubt you can look back upon your past life, and see how you have been kept from many dangers. You have heard the gospel many times when in health, and *now* you cannot say you're too busy, and have *not time* for such matters."

He listened very attentively, and I felt the importance of the moment, as I might never see him again on earth; so I went on to say:

"*God knows* I have come from London to see you; and just think, *God knows* your name and address."

At this his wife, who was present, looked up, and gave a sigh. Then I strove to impress how deeply God was interested in each one of us, and that He had proved it by giving up His Son to die for our sins, at the same time quoting, "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.)

"And *now* it is only for you to *stand still*, and see the wonderful salvation God has provided for you. God is speaking to you, and it is for you to accept God's estimate of your condition as a sinner, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." "You need not go to sleep to-night

without knowing that all your sins are *blotted out for ever.*"

He murmured something about all right. Then wishing him and his wife "Good-bye," I left, with my heart lifted up in prayer to God that the word spoken might be blessed to the salvation of the poor man's soul.

A few days afterwards I heard that he had passed away; but just before, he had said how pleased he was that I had been to see him, and that he could have listened all night to the gospel, as *he wanted to go to the Saviour.*

Dear reader, God has made it possible for you to be there (without your sins); for most certainly you could not be happy for one moment if you were there with them. But, blessed be God, you can be in that glory, praising the One who died to put them away for ever. It is only for *you* to have the question of your sins raised *now*; it is only for *you* to accept God's estimate of your lost and guilty condition, and "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." (Acts xvi. 31; Rom. iv. 25.)

As I said to the man about whom I have been telling you, I say to you, "*God knows* your name and address." He knows the worst about you, and He has provided the best for you. He knows you are a sinner; consequently He has provided a Saviour, if you will only believe. Why are you refusing to be reconciled to Him? "*Now* is the accepted time; *now* is the day of salvation. How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" God gave His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is He who has done all the work. The Holy Spirit is testifying to you by the written

Word, that "through this Man is preached unto *you* the forgiveness of sins: and by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." (Acts xiii. 38, 39.)

God is not speaking to you in an unknown tongue. No; He comes to you in your own language. He comes to you *where you are, as you are*. You have neglected Him, but He has not neglected you. He loves you. The Lord Jesus Christ died to win your heart's confidence. Will you believe on Him? Listen to His gracious 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 [judgment]; but is passed from death unto life." (John v. 24.)

W. J. W.

INFIDELITY v. CHRISTIANITY.

RATIONALISM and ritualism are dividing Christendom between them. Like two broad, deep rivers, they seem to be carrying everything before them; and the leaders and teachers of the day scruple not to speak against Christ and Christianity.

God is mercifully opening the eyes of some. Only to-day I was reading a letter from one of the Lord's saved and devoted servants, in which he says, "Being asked for a book by a preacher, I said to him, 'You surely do not mean what you say, seeing that you are a preacher, and therefore cannot need one of my little books.' 'Ah! sir,' he said, 'I used to preach years ago; but since my eyes have been opened by the Holy Spirit, which I attribute to some books you gave

me about two years ago, and which I read and re-read, I am thankful to say I was led to see my own utter unworthiness. Previously it used to be all of myself, and none of Christ; but now what a difference! It is all Christ, and none of self.” What a blessed discovery to make! God grant that thousands who are to-day blind leaders of the blind may make the same discovery, and have grace given them to confess it.

Infidelity has nothing to comfort or cheer the heart in life or in death. When I was preaching in Quebec some years ago, I heard of a young woman who had been induced to give up Christianity for infidelity. But shortly afterwards a fatal disease brought her to her death-bed, where she was visited by one of her infidel friends, who said to her, “Hold fast!” But looking at him with scorn, she said, in the most withering manner, “You have taken everything from me, and given me nothing to hold fast by!”

I believe there are many persons to-day who simply embrace infidelity to try and quiet their uneasy consciences about their morally wicked course.

The infidel lives for himself in life and health, and has nothing to comfort him in sickness and death; and his future is as dark and threatening as the murky storm-cloud.

The truly-saved Christian lives for Christ in life and health, and has Christ to support and cheer him in sickness and death. Such can say,

“In peace let me resign my breath,
And thy salvation see;
My sins deserve eternal death,
But Jesus died for me;”

and their future is full of brightness and glory.

They know that they will be with Christ, and like Him for ever.

To show the contrast between infidelity and Christianity, I would adduce the experience of the infidel Voltaire, and the unworldly, devoted, saintly Halyburton. The first said of this world, which is full of the darkness, mystery, and suffering of sin, "It abounds with wonders, and also with victims. It is a vast field of carnage and contagion. Every species is, without pity, pursued and torn to pieces through the earth and air and water. In man there is more wretchedness than in all the other animals put together. He loves life, and yet he knows he must die. If he enjoys a transient good, he suffers various evils, and at last is devoured by worms. This knowledge is his fatal prerogative; other animals have it not. He spends the transient moments of his existence in diffusing the miseries which he suffers; in cutting the throats of his fellow-creatures for pay; in cheating and being cheated; in robbing and being robbed; in serving that he might command, and in repenting of all he does. The bulk of mankind are nothing more than a crowd of wretches, equally criminal and unfortunate; and the globe contains rather carcases than men. I tremble at the review of this dreadful picture, to find that it contains a complaint against Providence itself, and I WISH I HAD NEVER BEEN BORN!"

And now let us turn from this dark, cheerless, sunless picture, which infidelity has so graphically drawn, and look at what a child of God can say with death in view, and the future opened up before him.

"I shall shortly get a very different sight of God from what I have ever had, and I shall praise

Him for ever and ever. Oh, the thoughts of incarnate Deity are sweet and ravishing! Oh, how I wonder at myself that I do not love Him more, and that I do not admire Him more! What a wonder that I enjoy such composure under all my bodily pains, and in view of death itself! What a mercy that, having the use of my reason, I can declare His goodness to my soul! I long for His salvation. I bless His name that I have found Him, and die rejoicing in Him. OH, BLESSED BE GOD THAT I WAS BORN!"

Infidelity is like wrapping oneself up in a sheet of snow; and you might as well try to fasten a shadow upon a wall with a nail as to try and get one tiny ray of comfort from it.

Christianity puts before us a divine Person, and teaches the blessed certainty that through His glorious Person, and blessedly-finished work, all who believe in Him, and have faith in His blood, are forgiven; they have redemption through His blood, are saved by grace, are sealed with the Holy Spirit, are children of God through faith in Christ, are members of Christ's body, and are made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Such have no future but the glory; and whilst waiting with longing hearts for Christ to come and take them to His and their Father's home, they seek to live and act so as to please and glorify Him.

Oh! "what think ye of Christ?" Can you say of Him, "My spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour"? Do be in earnest about your precious soul's eternal salvation; submit yourself to the Son of God, and everlasting life shall be yours now, and everlasting glory with Christ soon.

H. M. H.

THE SALVATION OF GOD.

SAVED, OR NOT SAVED?

THE last load of corn had left the field, on its way to the stackyard, and two men, who had the charge of it, were resting themselves by the gate ere they proceeded to add their load to the stack.

"Well, your field is cleared at last," said I.

"Yes, we are just taking home the rakings."

"Have you got all in now?" I asked.

"Yes, all but this load."

"Ah! then the harvest is over?"

"Yes; for us."

"The harvest is past, the summer is ended,'" I added, without completing that well-known passage, in order to see how these men would fill up what I had left unsaid. I have noticed that sometimes the remaining words are given sadly and solemnly; but I have also noticed that, now and then, they are quoted correctly, except one of them, and that one word makes all the difference as to the state of the speaker. Omitting that word he declares himself saved; but by retaining it he admits that he is lost.

Now, reader, how, may I ask, would you complete the sentence? "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and—" ? Now pause, and consider. Let your words be true; speak them as in the hearing, not of man, but of God. Remember that in them your state, as saved or lost, is

declared. "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are—" What? Ah! the golden harvest of heavenly blessing is past, and the balm of summer, of abundant opportunity, is ended, and we, alas! alas! are "*not saved*" had the rebellious people to own in Jeremiah viii. 20.

"*Not saved.*" Two fearful words when thus thrown together.

"*Not saved.*" A negative statement, which, in the language of the New Testament, means "*lost.*"

"*Not saved.*" And that, too, spite of the balm of summer and the golden harvest.

"*Not saved.*" When grace has been flowing, and mercy calling, and conscience accusing.

"*Not saved.*" When opportunities innumerable were yours, but, alas! despised.

"*Not saved.*" And another year nearly gone, and yourself (soul) so much nearer hell!

"*Not saved*" are the words now written by your own pen upon your present condition.

How terrible, but how true, ye who believe not, and you know it. You quote this passage to-day, and you declare that you are "*not saved.*" Take heed, oh! take heed, lest to-morrow you have to quote it differently, lest you have to say, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are"—damned. You are "*not saved*" to-day; you may be "*damned*" to-morrow. That fatal step is very short; once taken, it is irretrievable. As you enter eternity, so you will spend it. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still." No water to cool the tongue, no blood to cleanse the soul. The state is fixed. "Son, remember." Remember all thy good things—harvest, summer, favour, mercy, many a call, many an invitation, many a golden opportunity—all gone now, and, alas! for ever.

Dear reader, shall things be so with you? Another step is short—oh! take it—from being unsaved to being saved; yes, one short but blessed step—out of self into Christ. He makes you welcome; He died to save. Believe in Him, and live; and then say, in truth, with all His own, that if the harvest be past, and summer ended, yet, thank God, “*we are saved.*” J. W. S.

ARE YOU READY?

ON Saturday, the 26th June last, one of those very painful circumstances, which so often take place in this world of sorrow, occurred in the river Thames, in Berkshire. Two youths, brothers, aged respectively 15 and 16 years, sons of a gentleman living at B——, had come from school to their home to spend the Lord's-day with their dearly-loved parents and sisters, a young friend, S. B., accompanying them. After tea they went with their friend to bathe in the backwater of the river, very near their home, and a place much frequented for bathing—the two brothers first getting into the water, when the younger got out of his depth. The elder brother immediately tried to pull him out, when he also was soon out of his depth—the friend, S. B., then doing his utmost to rescue them; but all his efforts were of no avail. After being nearly drawn in himself, and quite exhausted, he was obliged to give up the attempt, and the two brothers sank to rise no more, and thus met their death in the midst of their youthful enjoyment, to the inexpressible grief, not only of their own family, but also of a large circle of friends—schoolmasters and school-

fellows, to whom they had endeared themselves by their rectitude of conduct, which had gained for them universal esteem. But, beloved reader, we wish to press upon you that rectitude of conduct does not change the heart, and that a blameless life is not salvation, and, as Scripture says, "Thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," let me earnestly entreat you to consider the question at the head of this paper. "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.) The Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed Son of God, died upon the cross to fit you for the glory of God, that through faith in Him, and His precious blood there shed, which cleanseth from all sin, you may be ready. No good doings of ours, or anything else our hearts may suggest as likely to fit us for God, will ever avail to put away one single sin, or to give us any fitness for God's presence, into which at any moment any one of us may be called. Let me earnestly entreat you, dear reader, as we consider the untimely and sorrowful end of these two youths, to ask yourself the question, "Am I ready?" and let me point you to Him who is a present as well as an all-powerful Saviour. S. B. would gladly have saved his friends, but he had not the power. The Lord Jesus is not only willing, but able to save to the very uttermost; and through faith in Him, and His finished work upon the cross, you may have the joy we who have simply rested in Him know, of being made meet for "the inheritance of the saints in light" (Col. i. 12), because "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, [according to the riches of His grace."

(Eph. i. 7.) "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. vi. 2.) "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.)

J. D.

"THERE'S ALWAYS A LIGHT IN THE VALLEY FOR ME."

THE speaker was an aged woman. For years she had been unable to leave her room, and now a friend sat by her bedside listening while she related how, the night before, she had suddenly got worse, and she thought the time had at last come when she was about to be called away from this world for ever. Was she filled with terror as she thought of the near approach of death? You shall hear. As she speaks another pushes open the half-closed door, and, entering the room, overhears the words of the aged child of God—"And was there not a light in the valley?" she questions. Oh, what joy lighted up that aged face as with confidence she gave the answer, "Oh, yes, indeed there's always a light in the valley for me!" Reader, have you ever faced death? Have you ever stood, as it were, on the brink of *eternity*? And can you take up these words while your heart gladly responds to them, and say, "There's a light in the valley for me"? Let me ask you, my reader—and, oh, may you answer it before God!—Is the thought of death one from which you shrink as from some dreaded future shrouded in darkness and horror, which you seek to put from you, and which yet at times forces itself upon you? Ah!

God is speaking to you. "It is appointed unto men once to *die*, but *after* this the *judgment*." And can you go on from day to day with *death*, *endless* death, before you? "Blackness of darkness for ever" your eternal portion, your *certain* doom, if you remain *unsaved*.

Fellow-sinner, awake! There is yet one way of escape. Listen while God speaks—"Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom." Yes, God has devised a "means that His banished be not expelled from Him." Let me point you to One who has "given *His* life a ransom for many," to One who "came from off the throne eternal, down to Calvary's depth of woe," and stepping into that awful breach which our sins had made between us and a holy God says, "I will redeem them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." There, on that cross, all God's waves and God's billows rolled over Him; there He "poured out His soul unto death." Pause for a moment, and see Him there—God's only begotten Son, His well-beloved, yet bearing the wrath of a sin-hating God, His *own* self bearing *our* sins in His own body on the tree.

"Oh, why was He there as the bearer of sin,
If on Jesus your sins were not laid?"

Oh, why from His side flowed the sin-cleansing blood,
If His dying thy debt has not paid?"

Every claim has been met, and now God has made that same Jesus, who was once crucified, both Lord and Christ; and in proof of His entire satisfaction has seated Him at His own right hand in glory, and now from that glory He speaks to you and says, "Why will ye die?" My reader, "the sting of death is *sin*," but the blood of Jesus

Christ "cleanseth us from *all* sin." (1 John i. 7.) Will you not accept the salvation which God so freely offers? Washed in that precious blood, you will be able to say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" And you will surely find that He, who through eternity will be the light of the city of God, will indeed prove a "light in the valley," if ever He should cause you to pass through death, to be for a little while with Him ere He comes to take all His own to be for ever with Him, where we shall no longer need the light of the sun: for "the Lamb is the light thereof." But one word more—"While ye have the light, *believe* in the light lest *darkness* come upon you." B. S.

HOW HE FOUND ME.

IT is now nearly eighteen years ago since I found out that God was for me. And how did I find this out? Was it that I was near Him that I might know it? *No*; I was so far off from Him that I was *lost*, and, worse still, I was *dead* in trespasses and sins; but I did not know this then.

At the same time I was a member of the Established Church, a teacher in the Sunday-school; I was moral, a good son, and faithful to my employer; I had been confirmed by the bishop, and had been a partaker of the Lord's Supper. My parents feared God, and I had been brought up to do the same.

With all this I was *lost* and *dead* before God, so needed to be *found* and *quickened*; in one word, I was not born again. My throat was an open sepulchre, and yet His song of praise was on

my lips. The outside of me was very good to look at, most respectable (no wonder it was said I needed not to be converted). Ah! but God seeth not as man seeth; for man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks upon the heart; and I was like many another fair thing in the world—I had a bad heart, an incurably wicked one. How very true it is what God says, in Prov. xiv. 12, that “there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death!”

Well, the Lord Jesus was seeking me, the *lost* one. I was eighteen years old, an apprentice in a large shop. I was taken ill, and during my illness I heard my conscience speak (true and faithful). It said to me, “Should you die, you are not fit to meet God; then there is only hell for you.” I then made the resolve, that when I got better I would begin to make myself fit to meet God. Oh, what foolishness this seems now to me when I look back! But the Lord let me try what I could do. I prayed earnestly for the forgiveness of my past sins; I saw that I was a sinner, but did not see that I was lost; I read religious books; I gave away tracts, took a deeper interest in my Sunday-school class, attended every service in church, and loved to look at and be near good men; I was awake to my danger, and tried in my *own* way to escape it. God had quickened me. I felt my burden, but tried by my *own* efforts to be free from it; I was under the impression that God wanted something from me. This state of things went on for some months. My master’s son was in business in London, where he had been lately brought to the Lord. He came home for a few days. What a bright light he was! and every-

thing about him spoke plainly of Christ. One evening he asked the young men up to the sitting-room after business hours that he might talk and pray with them, and great was my disappointment when I went home (for I lived with my parents). My father sent me with an important message into the country; I hurried all I could, but was too late when I got back for the meeting. All the way I did so long—yea, really long—to possess for myself what I had seen in my master's son; for he had got what I had not, and I thirsted for it. He left, and I had not an opportunity to speak to him about my state; still, the Lord knew all my desire, and cared for me, blessed be His name!

There was a young man in the same business house with me who had been anxious too about his soul, and had got peace through dear Mr. H—— talking to him. We said to one another (although we had not previously spoken about our spiritual state) that we would meet that night. I remember that night so well; it was the night of the concert. My mother was going to it; so I left her at the door of the town-hall, where I was to meet her when it was over, to bring her home. I went up to the shop, and met dear C—— waiting for me. We went to his bedroom together, shut the door, lit the candle, and opened the word of God. He told me how he had got peace, how Mr. H—— showed him from John iii. 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"—that it was not what we could do for God, but what God had done for us; that He did not want anything from us, but

He had something for us, poor lost sinners that we were. "He *so* loved the *world*" (that's me)—I am part of the world—"that He *gave*"—then His wondrous gift—"His only begotten Son." He told me that "*whosoever*" was surer than if I got a letter from God with my name on it; for there were others of the same name as myself. It was surer than if an angel appeared to me and spoke it. How thankfully I took my place as one of the "*whosoever*s," and accepted His great gift, and thanked Him for it! I knew then that I had everlasting life; for I believed, and God had said, "He that believeth on the Son *hath* everlasting life." (John iii. 36.) So all my sins were gone; for I just simply took God at His blessed word. I trusted Him, and peace and joy filled my heart. It was not now what I could do for God, but what He had done for me. He had given His only begotten Son, the best gift He had. I had eternal life, for I had Christ. He is my life, and as to myself I felt that I belonged to Him now. How astonished I was to find that it was so simple, and that I had not seen it before! I had been trying to make myself fit for God, but could not (thank God) get peace in that way. Ah! it is all God's *own* work, and a *finished* work too, and He offers it to all. Well, I met my mother, and she told me about the singers, &c., at the concert; but oh, what a different joy filled my soul! I was God's child now, and an heir of glory; but I felt I was as weak as a babe, and I wondered how I should do on the morrow. Then there was Satan too to meet; but in my weakness I clung to God, and held fast His blessed Word, and He has kept me ever since (blessed be His name), and He will keep me till I am with Him in glory.

Now, dear reader, I have written the above for you. Do let me ask you, in all love, In what relationship do you stand towards God? Are you His child? Can you say that "He has saved me from what I so richly deserved"? If so, praise Him, and live for Him as His child. If you are anxious to be saved He is for you, and if you only just come as you are, whosoever you be, taking your true place before Him as a *lost* one, He will not cast you off. Do just trust His blessed word; only believe, and eternal life is yours; cease your doing, for *all* has been done; look at the blessed Son of God as Man on the cross, made a curse for you; gaze upon that wondrous sacrifice; see that mighty Victor in glory now, and peace is *yours*, because *He* made it by the blood of His cross.

Oh, how I wish that blessed verse—"God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—were written in letters of gold on the blue sky, that all might see it! but if it pleased God to do so it would not make it *truer* or *surer* than it is. Clouds and night would come, and then we could not see it. But there it has stood night and day since spoken, nearly 1900 years ago, by God's own blessed Son, written in God's own blessed word; so that you have it there as well by night as by day. How many millions have read and heard it! and yet how many have missed the blessing it contains! On the other hand, how many will remember and repeat it through eternity! No wonder Luther said that John iii. 16 was the "*miniature Bible*;" it is inexhaustible.

J. R. W.

PROSPECT.

“Till I come.”

THE beloved children of God have no future but the glory. What a blessed prospect! As I know that there are very many such who regularly read this little magazine, I desire to draw their attention to the four scriptures in the New Testament where the words which head this paper are to be found.

“And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, OCCUPY TILL I COME.” (Luke xix. 13.)

Beloved fellow-labourers, the time for both proclaiming and writing the salvation of God is nearly at an end, so be not weary in well-doing, but the rather be “stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Beloved fellow-child of God, are you praying for the salvation of sinners, and are you seeking to bring such to the Saviour of sinners? It is the blessed privilege of each child of God to seek to bring one fellow-voyager to eternity to the feet of Jesus; and if we each desired and sought to be used by God to the salvation of one precious soul, what a work would be done for God and His Christ by us in this world.

As I think upon the thousands upon thousands of children that this sad and wicked world contains, how intensely I long for their salvation now in their early days, as I believe that the coming of the Lord is so near that I feel there is not time left for them to grow up to manhood and woman-

hood before the Lord's second coming will take place. Who of us will go and tell them that Jesus died and shed His precious blood, to wash them from all their sins, to make them whiter than snow, to make them lambs of His flock, and to fit them to be for ever with Himself in glory? Oh, the time is short for working for the best of Masters! If we would do anything for Him in this world, it must be now or never; for His word is, "SURELY I COME *quickly*;" and He is saying to us individually, "*Occupy*"—not till death, or till the world is converted, but—"till I come."

"A little while for winning souls to Jesus,
Ere we behold His beauty face to face;
A little while for healing soul-diseases
By telling others of a Saviour's grace."

"Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry TILL I COME, what is that to thee? follow thou Me." (John xxi. 22, 23.)

Now this second scripture is the picture of the child of God in this dispensation, waiting—not for death, nor for the world's improvement, but—for the Lord's return.

The dear young converts at Thessalonica were converted "to *wait for His Son from heaven*, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." (1 Thess. i. 9, 10.) And the Lord Himself told His disciples that they were to be "*like unto men that wait for their lord*." (Luke xii. 36.)

There is the greatest difference possible between waiting for an *event* to take place and waiting for a *Person* to come and take us away to His Father's house. The first has little or no effect upon us; the last touches every point of the compass. Which are you looking for, my beloved saved

reader? Do you get up in the morning and expect Him to come ere night wraps this world again in darkness? Do you retire at night and expect Him, "the bright and morning star," to come ere the light of another day shall flood your chamber with its rays? As you rise in the morning, or retire at night, listen to your Saviour and Lord saying, as it were, "*Wait for Me till I come.*"

In the third scripture (1 Cor. xi. 23-26) He asks all His own blood-bought and blood-washed ones to *remember* Himself "*till He come.*"

Do we not seize every opportunity of showing our dearly-loved ones that though we may be absent thousands of miles from them that still they are remembered by us? Oh, think of His love to us! Was there ever love like it? His enemies said, "Never man spake like this man." But we who are by grace His friends can say, "Never man *loved* like this man."

He has left His name as a rallying centre for all His loyal-hearted ones to surround (Matt. xviii. 20); and by His Spirit, who is down here, He would fain gather all the members of His body to His earth-rejected name to respond to His loving request, "*Remember Me till I come.*"

But as the word of God and every divine principle are being called in question to-day, once more the words sound loud and clear upon the ear that desires to hear, "But that which ye have already **HOLD FAST TILL I COME.**" (Rev. ii. 25.) Refuse persistently all the modern notions of the day that are called "developments," and stick to the good old word of God, remembering that it is written in its sacred pages, "He that is of God heareth God's words." (John viii. 47.)

“Eternal glories gleam afar
To nerve my faint endeavour
So now to *work*, to *watch*, to *wait*,
And then to REST FOR EVER.”

But if the sure and certain prospect of the child of God is glory with Christ for ever, what is your prospect, poor unsaved reader of these pages? If still unsaved, it is because you have not known and trusted the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently you cannot, in your unsaved state, work and wait for Him. You cannot remember Him; for you neither know nor love Him. Neither can you hold fast His word; for it has no place in your heart.

Let go your sins, yourself, the world, and all that is keeping you from the Saviour, and just fall into His arms, and then your prospect, instead of being the lake of fire for ever, will be glory with Jesus for ever.

Now, which is it to be? It must be one or the other. There is no time to lose. Make haste, and come to Jesus; make haste, and have faith in His blood; make haste, and believe in Him who shed it, and He Himself will be everything to your heart for time and eternity.

If you do not wish to be left when Jesus comes to claim His own; if you do not wish to spend an eternity in the lake of fire, and to be forgotten for ever, then delay not another moment, but come to Jesus. He will gladly welcome you into His outstretched arms of love and mercy, and then will give you the holy and blessed privilege of working for, waiting for, and remembering Him, and holding fast for Him *till He come*. God grant that all who read these pages may have glory with Christ, and not the lake of fire for ever, for their eternal prospect.

H. M. H.

CHRIST'S WELCOME.

OUR right to come to Jesus is full and clear. It is irrespective of aught in us. It presupposes want and sin, nothing more. The invitation is wide and free, annexing no restrictions, and enjoining no pre-requisite. It does not fence itself round with conditions, as if fearful lest too many might avail themselves of it, or as if desirous to keep off the unqualified and unworthy. It makes no exceptions as to previous life or present character. It welcomes the unworthiest. It forbids none. It leaves no room for suspicion on the part of any. "Come, and come at once. Come, and boldly," is its message to all; for "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." His free love beckons and beseeches you. It does not stand on ceremony or insist on terms. It does not say, "Whosoever comes in this manner or that manner, according to this rule or that rule," but, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

C. O. G.

I have a Saviour; He is in heaven, and I am upon earth. He has saved, is saving, and will save me from all that He can find to save me from, until, having saved me from and through all, He will safely deliver me up faithfully to Him who entrusted me to Him, to be my Saviour, even His Father and God. Possessed of such an One, I need to have nothing in mine own hand.

I have a Saviour! Yes; I have not only a Saviour-God, but God has given to me the Christ, His Christ, and He is my Saviour.

G. V. W.