

“Except Joe Whitbread.”

MLADY in Dorsetshire, England, went to the home of a sick man, Joe Whitbread by name. She found him very ill, being, in fact, doubled up with pain. After speaking with him for a few minutes concerning his health, she turned the conversation to his state before God. He unhesitatingly declared that in that respect he was all right, as he had never injured any one in his life, and was not a bit afraid to die, altogether evincing his state to be one of stubborn self-righteousness.

Having heard all he had to say without making much answer, she proposed to read to him a little from the Word of God. He made no objection, and she accordingly opened her Bible at the Scripture commencing Romans iii. 9, reading it as follows, very slowly, and with much emphasis upon the words in italics:

“What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin”—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one’—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God’—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one’—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘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’—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight’—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the

righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference’—*except Joe Whitbread*. ‘For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God’—*except Joe Whitbread*.”

When she came to the last of these verses, he cried out in great distress, “Oh stop, ma’am! I can’t bear it any more! Oh, stop, stop, ma’am!”

She, affecting surprise, asked what was the matter, remarking, “I’m only putting together what God says and what you say. God says, ‘*All have sinned*’; and you say you have *not*: so that must be ‘*except Joe Whitbread*.’” Only a few more

words passed, and she left.

The next time she saw him, the moment she appeared in his room, his face brightened up with joy and gladness, and he exclaimed how delighted he was to see her, having been longing for her to come. He then related what agonies of soul he had gone through since her first interview with him, so much so that a report began to spread in the village that he had lost his reason; but the Lord had revealed himself to him, and it was all now perfect, cloudless peace, and he was longing to depart and to be with Christ.

They accordingly rejoiced and praised together for the wondrous grace that had rescued him from the self-righteousness in which Satan had held his prey. A few days afterward he fell asleep, having been full of joy from the moment he found peace, to that in which his spirit passed into the presence of Him whose precious, perfect work had made him meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Dear reader, are you *self-righteous*? God’s Word says, “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, NOT ONE.”—(Romans iii., 11, 12.)—*Selected*.

THE GOSPEL ALPHABET. No. 20.

There is a **WAY** that seemeth right. Prov. xiv. 2.
Broad is the **WAY** that leadeth to destruction. Matt. vii. 15.
Kiss the Son, lest ye perish from the **WAY**. Psa. ii. 12.

**THIS IS THE WAY
WALK YE IN IT.
THIS**
ISAIAH XXX. 21

Thou art the *Way*, O Lord,
The *Way*—there is but one
No man can to the Father come
But by the living Son.

Thou art the *Truth*, O Lord,
The Word of power and might;
Thou cuttest as a two-edged sword,
And, entering, givest light.

Thou art the *Life*, O Lord,
And I am hid with Thee
For ever in the Eternal God,
Where loss nor harm can be.

I show unto you a more excellent **WAY**. 1 Cor. xii. 31.
I am the **WAY**, the truth and the Life. John xiv. 6.
The **WAY** of the just is uprightness. Isaiah xxvi. 7.