

Off Robert started to the watchmaker's, and when he entered the shop he pulled his watch out of his pocket, and said, "Please, sir, can you mend my watch? It doesn't go well? The watchmaker took the watch, and putting a curious glass before one of his eyes, he turned to a small gas jet, and, screwing up his face in such a way as to make Robert smile, he examined the works of the watch.

In a short while he said to Robert, "I'll set it all right for you, my boy. It needs cleaning. Call for it in a week."

Robert missed his watch greatly during that week.

Yon see its ticking in his vest pocket had made him almost feel that it was like a living friend; and he had got attached to it, and even used to take it out, when no one was near, to have a quiet look at it, and to admire its beautiful cases and pretty hands.

What a long week that seemed to Robert! And when the day appointed did arrive, how eagerly he set out for the watchmaker's! "There's your watch, nicely cleaned," said the watchmaker to him; "it will keep time now like the town clock."

So Robert got his watch again, and thought more of it than ever, because it was so reliable and exact. Every now and then he would test it by the great clock in the tower of the town hall; and it went so well that Robert declared it was quite as good as new.

Now let us see whether we can learn anything from this story of Robert's watch. I have known children who resembled it in some things; perhaps you may know them too. They are pleasant to look at, they have beautiful faces, and are nicely dressed; but just as Robert's watch would not go rightly, they do not act rightly. There is something wrong with them. They need to use that prayer which David used, "Create in me a clean heart, O God."

You know that God is the great Maker, for the Bible tells us that "He hath made us, and not we ourselves." And as the watchmaker made Robert's watch, and knew all about its works, and could say at once what it needed, so God knows about us children, and when a wrong word is spoken, or a wicked deed is done, it shows that the heart requires cleansing, because sin is there.

Now, we read in the Bible, too, that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." And it was because God saw how sinful our hearts were that He sent His Son to shed His blood. And I wish you all to know that by coming to Him you will be cleansed from sin. Only, God does not require to take us to pieces, as the watchmaker did with the watch. He sends His Spirit, so that we are renewed in the inner man. He puts new thoughts, new feelings, new hopes, in us, and thus makes us clean every wit.

After Robert had seen his watch go wrong, and when his papa had told him what was the matter with it, and where to take it to get it put right, if he had still carried it in his pocket, and not troubled to take it to the watchmaker, we should have thought him foolish. We should have said to him, if we had known him, "What's the use of carrying a watch that won't go, that doesn't keep right time?"

So may we not say to all boys and girls, "What's the use of having a heart that is not right with God, and that is not keeping in the way of His commandments?" And here, I think, you will admit that Robert teaches us a lesson. For instead of not caring to go to the watchmaker, he went off at once, and had his watch cleaned and put in order. So, children, let my last words to you at this time be, Go at once to God when you feel you have done wrong or are doing wrong. Tell your wants to Him. Do not hide your faults, but ask that He may give you a clean heart and renew within you a right spirit.

### NEAR TO THE LORD.

Mr. B. had a son whose life was not in tune with his words. He talked very piously, and seemed very devout: but he did things which startled his friends, and made the ungodly scoff. Some one spoke to Mr. B. about his son's ways; but the old man seemed to have no misgiving. He said, "Ah! Willie lives so near the Lord that he can safely do those things."

No wonder that Willie's life was no honour to himself or to religion, if he had been brought up to think that he could live in sin, "near the Lord." He that names the Name of Christ must depart from iniquity. He that would live near Christ must let Christ guide his life. How near to the Lord a man lives is not proved by what he can say to Him. Christ will be Lord over the whole man always, not only over his tongue sometimes. He leads those who are near Him, each step of their way. By faith they know Him near, and feel His Presence giving them hope and power. The truth that He sees and hears and watches over them, that He is with and in them, influences all they do and all they are. Those who are indeed near to the Lord are most careful lest sin part them from Him. They are most jealous not to grieve Him, or to bring dishonour on His Name.

### MEANS OF GRACE.

God gives His grace in many ways. We need not seek it in all the ways He offers it. No way is without its own end. God does nothing that He has not good cause for. We may not see the use of means of grace, or know how they help us, and what part each has in working out God's plan. It is enough that they are all provided for our use by Him who knows all things, and does all wisely.

There are some ways in which we can seek and have God's grace at home, in quiet prayer, and thought, and reading, alone or with our families. There are other ways, over and above these, which are offered in the services of the Church, through Sacraments and other means of grace. We cannot do without either. If we think we can do as well with one kind of help as with both, we set our judgment against God's, and treat what He has provided as of no value. If we neglect the public means of grace, we say to God that we will not take the trouble of going for His bounties, where and how He tells us, but that He must bring us His grace in our way, and let us have it without trouble. We act as the Israelites would have acted, had they claimed that the manna should fall daily round their houses, after they reached the corn-fields of Canaan.

GOD, INCOMPREHENSIBLE.—I know by myself how incomprehensible God is, seeing I cannot comprehend the parts of my own being.—*St. Bernard.*

GRACE AND GLORY are one and the same thing, in a different point, in a smaller and greater letter; glory lies couched and compacted in grace, as the beauty of a flower lies couched and eclipsed in the seed.—*Hopkins.*

LAW AND GOSPEL.—The law begins with commands, and ends with blessings; but the blessings are like inviting fruit hanging upon lofty branches, which human nature in its fallen state can never reach. The Gospel, on the contrary, begins with promises, and ends with precepts.

GRACE A MOTIVE POWER.—Grace infuseth a spirit of activity into a person; grace doth not lie dormant in the soul; it is not a sleepy habit, but it makes a Christian like a seraph, soft-winged in its heavenly motions; grace is like fire, it makes one burn in love to God,

### THE HEATHEN BOY.

Not many years ago, as a lady was sitting in the verandah of her house in Burmah, a jungle boy came through the opening in the hedge which served as a gateway, and, approaching her, inquired with eagerness, "Does Jesus Christ live here?"

He was a boy about twelve years of age, his hair matted with filth, and bristling in every direction like the quills of a porcupine; and a dirty cloth of cotton was wrapped in a most slovenly manner about his person. "Does Jesus Christ live here?" he asked, as he hastened up the steps of the verandah.

"What do you want with Jesus Christ?" asked the lady.

"I want to see him and confess to him."

"Why, what have you been doing that you want to confess?"

"Does he live here?" he continued with great emphasis; "I want to know that. Doing! Why, I tell lies, I steal, I do everything bad. I am afraid of going to hell, and I want to see Jesus Christ, for I heard one of the Loogyees say that he can save us from hell. Does he live here? Tell me where I can find him."

"But he does not save people from hell if they continue to do wickedly."

"I want to stop doing wickedly," said the boy; "but I can't; I don't know how to stop. The evil thoughts are in me, and the bad deeds come of evil thoughts. What can I do?"

"Nothing but come to Christ, poor boy, like all the rest of us," the lady softly replied; but she spoke this last in English; so the boy only raised his head with a vacant look.

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"You cannot see Jesus Christ now," she added, and was answered by a sharp, quick cry of disappointment. "But I am his friend and follower," said the lady, at which the face of the little listener brightened, and she continued. "He has told me in his word to teach all those who wish to escape from hell how to do so."

The joyful eagerness depicted in the boy's countenance was beyond description. "Tell me, O tell me! Only ask your Master to save me, and I will be your servant for life. Do not be angry. I want to be saved. Save me from hell!"

The next day the little boy was introduced to the little bamboo school-house in the character of "the wild Kareen boy;" and such a greedy seeker after truth and holiness had been seldom seen. Every day he came to the white teachers to learn something more concerning the Lord Jesus and the way of salvation; and every day his eagerness increased, and his face gradually lost its indescribable look of stupidity. He was at length baptised, and commemorated the love of that Saviour he had so earnestly sought. He lived a while to testify his sincerity, and then died in joyful hope. He had "confessed," and had found a Deliverer from those sins from which he could not free himself. The lady also has since died, and she and the wild Kareen boy have met in the presence of their common Redeemer.

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