



### THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER.

JESUS illustrated important truths with the everyday occurrences of life. Every person who has been in the country knows what it is to sow seed in the field. Our picture represents the seed sower. Jesus told a parable concerning the sower, which is recorded in the thirteenth chapter of St. Matthew. As the sower sowed his seed, some fell by the wayside, and the fowls devoured them, some fell upon stony places where there was a thin covering of earth. When the sun came up the earth was made warm, and the seed came up very quickly, but soon dried up, as there was only a few inches of soil. Some seeds fell among thorns; thorns sprung up and choked them. But other seed fell on good ground and brought forth fruit.

Jesus explains the parable by saying that the seed by the wayside represents persons who hear the Gospel preached, and Satan comes and ridicules or reasons them out of it. The seed on stony places represents those who rejoice that they hear the truth and receive it gladly; but when persecution or opposition comes, they give up. The seed among thorns represents those who receive Christ, but do not follow him faithfully; when cares and allurements of the world come, they forsake Christ and follow the world. But the seed on good ground represents those who receive the truth and welcome it. They follow, count the cost, and resolve to leave the world forever, and follow Jesus faithfully as long as they live. They carry out their resolutions by resisting all the temptations

that Satan brings before them, and steadily follow Christ through every obstacle and under all circumstances of life.

### "WHAT IS CONSCIENCE?"

MR. STEWART had been preaching on St. Paul's words, "A conscience void of offence." When all his children, on the Sunday evening after service, trooped into his study to say "Good night," he wondered how much of the morning sermon they had understood.

"Jack," he said, to his eldest boy, "what is conscience?"

"I don't rightly know, father," and Jack put his hands into his knickerbocker pockets and tried to whistle.

"Kenneth, can you tell me?"

"It's God's voice, isn't it?" said Kenneth.

"Right my boy! Well, what do you say, Eva?"

Eva came close to her father's knee, and a timid little head was laid on his breast. Mr. Stewart placed an encouraging hand under the drooping little chin.

"Well, childie?"

"Father, isn't it"—a pause,

and then softly and reverently, "I think it is Jesus whispering in our hearts."

Mr. Stewart kissed the sweet upturned face tenderly. His little daughter had put his whole sermon into a few words.

God's voice is so soft and low that we must be careful not to miss it. Elijah heard a "still, small voice," and when he heard it, he wrapped his face in a mantle, to shut out all sights from his eyes. So must we. If we would hear the whisper of our Saviour, we must have his "calm" brooding upon our hearts. Ask him to give you the peaceful soul, and the wakeful ear to hear what the Lord God shall say to his people.

### THE BRIDLE.

"DON'T go without a bridle, boys," was my grandfather's favourite bit of advice.

Do you suppose we are all teamsters and horse jockeys? No such thing. If he heard one cursing and swearing, or given to much vain and foolish talk, "That man has lost his bridle," he would say.

Without a bridle, the tongue, though a little member, "boasteth great things." It is "an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Put a bridle on, and it is one of the best servants the body and soul have. "I will keep my mouth with a bridle," said King David; and who can do better than follow his example?

When my grandfather saw a man drinking and carousing, or a boy spending all his money for cakes and candy, "Poor fellow!" he would say, "he's left off his

bridle." The appetite needs a rein. Let it loose, and it will run you to tony, drunkenness, and all sorts of disorder. Be sure to keep a bridle on your appetite; don't let it be master. Don't neglect to have one on your passions. They go mad if they get unmanageable, driving you down a blind and headlong course to ruin. Keep the check-rein tight, don't let it slip, hold it steady. Never without your bridle.

That was the bridle my grandfather meant—the bridle of self-government. Parents try to restrain and correct their children, and you can generally tell their behaviour what children have wise and faithful parents. But parents cannot do everything. And some children have no parents to care for them. Every boy must have his own bridle, and every girl must have hers. They must learn to check and govern themselves. Self-government is the most difficult and most important government in the world. It becomes easier every day, if you practice it with a steady and resolute will. It is the foundation of excellence. It is the cutting pruning which makes the noble and vigorous tree of character.

### PURER IN HEART.

BY MRS. A. L. DAVIDSON.

Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be;  
May I devote my life  
Wholly to thee;  
Watch thou my wayward feet  
Guide me with counsel sweet;  
Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be.

Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be.  
Teach me to do thy will  
Most lovingly;  
Be thou my friend and guide,  
Let me with thee abide,  
Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be.

Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be;  
That I thy holy face  
One day may see;  
Keep me from secret sin,  
Reign thou my soul within,  
Purer in heart, O God,  
Help me to be.

### WILLIE'S PRAYER.

WILLIE is a very small boy, but he is not too young to pray to the dear heavenly Father. His mamma has taught him a sweet little prayer, but one night Willie said, "I want to pray my own little prayer to-night." Then he folded his hands and looked up and said, softly, "Thou, O God, seeest me." Since then that has been Willie's prayer every night, and I think it is a very good one.