

# The Sower

A GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

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*Brethren*

VOL. I.

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In the morning sow thy seed,  
And in the evening withhold not thine hand,  
For thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that  
Or whether they both shall be alike good.

Eccl. xi. 6.

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# THE SOWER.

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## "THIS MAN RECEIVETH SINNERS."

"This man receiveth sinners ;"

"This man"—and who was he?  
Beneath a servant's humble form,  
"God manifest" we see.

"This man receiveth sinners ;"

My soul put in thy claim,  
For surely thou must own that this  
*Alone* can be thy name.

"This man receiveth sinners ;"

Sweet thought for such as me !  
For then He will not cast me out,  
All filthy though I be.

"This man receiveth sinners ;"

Yea, bids them freely come :  
He meets the prodigal half-way,  
And safely guides him home.

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## GOD CHOSE TO SEND JESUS.

SOME little time ago, after the conclusion of one of Mr. Brownlow North's addresses in Edinburgh, a young man came into the room where he was receiving persons anxious for private conversation, and said to him, "I have heard you preach three times, sir, and I neither care for you nor your preaching unless you can tell me why did God permit sin."

“I will do that with pleasure,” was the immediate reply,—“*Because He chose it.*”

The young man, apparently taken by surprise, stood speechless; and Mr. North again replied, “*Because He chose it*; and,” added he, “if you continue to question and cavil at God’s dealings, and vainly puffed up by your carnal mind, strive to be wise above what is written, I will tell you something more that God will do,—*He will some day put you into hell-fire.* It is vain for you to strive with your Maker—you cannot resist Him; and neither your opinion of His dealings, nor your blasphemous expression of them, will in the least lessen the pain of your everlasting damnation, which, I again tell you, will most certainly be your portion if you go on in your present spirit. There were such questioners as you in St. Paul’s time, and how did the apostle answer them? ‘*Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God?*’”

The young man here interrupted Mr. North, and said, “Is there such a text as that in the Bible?” “Yes, there is,” was the reply, “in the ninth chapter of the Romans; and I recommend you to go home and read that chapter; and after you have read it, and seen there how God claims for Himself the right to do *whatever He chooses*, without permitting the thing formed to say to Him that formed it, ‘Why hast Thou made me thus?’ remember that, besides permitting sin, there is another thing *God has chosen to do*—*God chose to send Jesus.* Of His own free and sovereign grace, God gave His only begotten Son to die for sinners in their stead—in their place; so that,

though they are sinners, and have done things worthy of death, not one of them shall ever be cast into hell for his sins who will accept Jesus as his only Saviour, and believe in Him, and rest in His Word. I have no time to say more to you now: others are waiting to see me. Go home, attend to what I have told you, and may God the Holy Spirit bless it for Jesus Christ's sake."

This conversation took place on Sunday evening. On the following Friday, Mr. North was sitting in a friend's drawing-room, when the servant announced that a young man wanted to speak to him. On being shown up stairs, he said, "Do you remember me?" "No." "Do you not remember the young man who on Sunday night asked you to tell him 'why did God permit sin?'" "Yes, perfectly." "Well, sir, I am that young man; and you said that God permitted sin *because He chose it*, and you told me to go home and read the ninth chapter of Romans; and also that *God chose to send Jesus* to die for such sinners as I am; and I did, sir, what you told me, and afterwards I fell down at God's feet and asked Him to forgive my sins, because Jesus died for me, and He did; and now I am happy—oh! so happy sir; and though the devil still comes sometimes to tempt me with my old thoughts, and to ask me what *reason* I have to think God has forgiven me, I have always managed to get him away by telling him that I do not want to judge things by my own *reason*, but *by God's Word*, and that the only reason why I know I am forgiven, is, that *for Christ's sake, God chooses to pardon me.*"

The changed expression of the young man's countenance was quite sufficient to account for Mr. North's not knowing him again. It was radiant with joy and peace.

Dear reader, the *first lesson* a poor sinner has to learn, is to trust in the Lord, and not to his own understanding; to trust God not only for what he *does* understand, and for what *is* explained, but for what he *does not* understand, and for what *is not* explained. This is faith, and such faith honors God and saves the soul. This is receiving the kingdom of God as a little child; and let us ever remember that it is written (and the Scripture cannot be broken), that unless we receive the kingdom of God as a little child, we shall in no wise enter therein.

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### “DO YOU HOPE THIS IS TRUE?”

ONE who had been brought to know forgiveness of sins by faith in Jesus Christ, was speaking to a young person whose conscience had been aroused, and with the Word of God in her hand was showing her that assurance of salvation is the blessed privilege of every believer, when they were joined by a third person, who said to the anxious one “You must hope.” “But, Mr. —,” said the lady, “surely it is more than a hope.”

“What can it be besides a hope?”

“Well,” said she, holding up her Bible, “do you hope this is true?”

There was no reply, for that Bible said, “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”

“Little children, let no man deceive you,” let not Satan defraud you of part of your inheritance; it is the will of God that you should rejoice in Christ “with joy unspeakable and full of glory;” but this you cannot know without committing yourselves wholly and unreservedly to Him. When your soul is saved you may have before you that bright and blessed hope of the salvation of your body at the coming of the Lord, but to go on through life in uncertainty as to your soul’s salvation is to miss the peace and rest of soul which a knowledge of Christ’s completed work must surely give.

If you have been translated into the kingdom of His dear Son, how can you discredit the grace which has placed you there by doubting the faithfulness of God. Away with doubt; away with suspicion and distrust. He is able to keep to the uttermost all them that put their trust in Him.

Now, you may have the company of Christ in a most blessed way by faith; now you may begin the happiness which is yours for eternity; for though eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived what He has in store for them that love Him, yet He has revealed them to us now by His Spirit—“all is yours, and ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.

## THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.

### THE SINNER'S CRY.

"Lord be merciful unto me : heal my soul ; for I have sinned against Thee.—(Ps. xii. 4).

"God be merciful to me a sinner."—(Luke xviii. 13).

### THE LORD'S REPLY.

"I am the LORD that healeth thee."—(Ex. xv. 26.

"Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed."—(Mat. viii. 7).

"Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners ? But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. . . . I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—(Mat. ix. 11 to 13.

"I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord."—(Jer. xxx. 17.)

### THE LORD'S READINESS TO HEAL.

"And He received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.—(Luke ix. 11).

"He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted."—(Luke iv. 18).

“He went on frowardly in the way of his heart, I have seen his ways, and will heal him : I will lead him also, and restore comforts unto him and to his mourners. . . . Peace, peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD ; and I will heal him.”—(Is. lvii. 17 to 19).

“Jesus of Nazareth . . . went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil.”—(Acts x. 38.)

“I wound and I heal : neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand.”—(Deut. xxxii. 39).

#### HEALING ACCOMPLISHED.

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace was upon Him ; and WITH HIS STRIPES WE ARE HEALED.”—(Is. liii. 5).

“He sent out His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions.”—(Ps. cxvii. 20).

“Unto you that fear My name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in His wings.”—(Mal. iv. ii).

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits : who forgiveth ALL thine iniquities ; who healeth ALL thy diseases.”—(Ps. ciii. 2, 3).

“O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and Thou hast healed me.”—(Ps. xxx. 2).

## THE SPOILED PICTURE.

A CELEBRATED painter was employed to paint a fresco in St. Peter's at Rome, and a lofty scaffold was erected for him to work on. The painting went on until the figures and the general design of the piece began to be apparent, and by those who were admitted to see it, the work was greatly admired.

One day the artist was so engrossed in his work, and so desirous to place himself in a position to be able to grasp the subject, that he did not notice how dangerously near he was getting to the edge of his scaffold. Step after step he was going backwards, until, just as a raised foot would have taken him over, precipitating him a frightful distance to the stone floor below, a friend who was near the picture happening to notice him, in an instant spoiled his picture by dashing something against it which he had in his hand. The enraged artist rushed forward and was then shown the dreadful death he had escaped.

And is this not what God is doing continually with earnest souls, who ignorant of the perfect work which the Lord Jesus has accomplished, and anxious to commend themselves to God, are intently occupied with what appears to them to be beautiful works. And how often God in mercy comes in and spoils the picture. How many poor souls are so busy about good works that they never think of the Lord Jesus, and that the Bible says, "there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved,"

only at last to meet a destruction of which they certainly were warned.

You may be painting pictures, even of the Lord Himself, as many of these artists were doing, and have no acquaintance with Him at all.

“And, have I nothing to do, no work,” yes, surely you have; “this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.”

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### A MAN NOT AT PEACE WITH GOD.

**I** ONCE met a man who told me that he had never injured any one, and had never done any wrong, and was not worse than others were; but this man was a man at peace with HIMSELF, and not at all at peace with GOD. Do you, also, as this man, speak of having a good heart? If so, it is because you have never been, by faith, into the presence of God; and your thought from morning till night is how you can please yourself or others rather than God. Are you at peace with YOURSELF or at peace with GOD? Have you no Saviour, no Jesus? “For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to SAVE sinners.” Do you happen to say, “Oh, you make out the gospel to be too easy?” Was it easy for Christ, who went into judgment, that He “should taste death for every man?” Is it an EASY thing for YOU to take your place as a SINNER,

and to judge SIN? "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."

If you, in this world, refuse Christ, Christ must deny you; as He has said, "He that denieth me before men shall be denied before the angels of God."

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### THE LOVE OF CHRIST CONSTRAINETH US.

**H**OW all important it is to have a right spring of action! Duties may be done, services performed, a life may be spent—conscientiously spent—in endeavours to be useful; what is called religion may be attended to with regularity and devotedness, and yet the spring which alone can give value to these things may be wanting. That spring is the love of Christ. Without this, all duties, services, exertions, will be found rubbish in the coming day of the Lord—works that will be burnt up. For the spring of action is everything. "Man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh at the heart." (1 Sam. xvi, 7.) If *that* be unchanged, untouched by His blessed grace in Christ, none of its fruits can be acceptable to Him, however fair they may appear to other eyes, or even to our own. There is but one motive which can sanctify our services, and that motive the apostle gives us here, "The *love of Christ*

constraineth us." Not his love *to* Christ, but *Christ's love to him*, was the thought before his mind. This, once apprehended, became his ruling principle. He had been a poor, *dead* sinner, as were all the race of Adam—dead in the worst sense of the word—dead spiritually—dead to God; and a dead thing can yield nothing but *corruption*, as it is said, (Rom. iii, 13.) "Their throat is an *open sepulchre*." The soul within is *dead*, and the stench of its corruption issues through the lips. "Their tongue and their doings are against the Lord." (Isaiah iii, 8.) Such had Paul been, and such are thousands now; they have a zeal for God, are earnest in the cause of what they call religion, but are strangers to the love of Christ. Wanting this, they are wanting everything that is really valuable in the eyes of God. For what is it that *God* values? Is it not His precious Son? And what is it that the poor sinner, who has been taught of Him, esteems beyond all else? Is it not the same blessed object—the adorable Son of God? For what is seen in Him? *Love*, unspeakable, eternal love, to the *guilty, lost, and ruined* sons of men. Love so rich, so full, so vast, as to lead Him out from that glory which He had with His Father before the world was, to become a man of sorrows down here—poor, despised, rejected—not having where to lay His head, though He was the Maker and Lord of all; yea, a love so deep, so compassionate, as to lead Him to endure the bitter, shameful, and accursed death of the cross, that He might save, pardon, bless, and lift up from the depths of everlasting ruin and perdition,

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a countless multitude of sinners, washing them from all their guilt in His most precious blood, thus freely justifying them from every charge, and giving them a standing before God in righteousness, which is *unto* all, and *upon* all them that *believe*. (Rom. iii, 22.) For God hath made *Him* to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we (who were nothing but sin) might be made the righteousness of God *in Him*. (2 Cor. v. 21.) Every poor, *believing* sinner can say this—Jesus is my righteousness—His *blood* has atoned for me. His finished work—His one offering—has completed my salvation. In His death and resurrection my redemption is accomplished. This has given me perfect peace with God. The love of Christ constraineth me to live no longer to *myself* or *for* myself. Henceforth my life is *His* who loved me and gave Himself for me,

Dear reader, is this your case? Have *you* believed and do *you* love the blessed Son of God? Then happy, truly happy, is your lot. Go on your way rejoicing. Triumph ever in Him who triumphed over sin, and death and hell for you; who saved you by His cross, and who ever lives to guard you by His power. You may have tribulation here—you must expect it—but *in Him* you have always *peace*. Cleave closely then to Him, and get more deeply acquainted with His love—ponder much upon His sufferings—dwell in spirit near His cross. Yet a little while and you will see Him as He is. Then you will be like Him. Then your joy shall be full.

Does any reader fear that he or she has no interest in the love of Christ? There are many fearful souls

that are exceeding precious to Him. Go to Him and prove His love. He waits to be gracious to poor, trembling sinners. Such are *invited* to seek His face. His words are—"Come unto me." (Matt. xi, 28.) "Him that cometh to me I will *in no wise* cast out." (John vi, 37.)

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"GONE, BUT NOT LOST,"

JUST above the Highlands, the Hudson is widened into what is called Newburgh Bay; it is a beautiful expanse of water, resting against the hills, as if it had gathered itself up for strength before it burst away through the mountain barriers into the sea. On the eastern shore, as it slopes towards the bay, is a church and churchyard, as delightfully planted for prospect as any on the banks of this river. It was in this graveyard that I first met, on a tomb-stone, the inscription that stands at the head of these lines, and the scene and the associations render the mention of the circumstance suitable.

"Gone, but not lost." It was the tribute of affection and faith. It expressed, in simple but graphic words, the sad truth that one was gone; and also the sublime assurance, that the departed was not lost.

Was it a fact? I confess it startled me at first. A few months since, and the one whose grave I was standing by, had lived and moved, and filled perhaps no little space in a wide circle of friends. But the place was now vacant; the body had been seen to

fail day by day—death finished the work ; the grave covered it up ; the worms had their prey. And not lost ! not lost ! I reasoned a moment before I could be satisfied that the epitaph was not (like most epitaphs) mere rhetoric.

A broad and beautiful stream was before me. Its waters were rolling silently but steadily on towards the mighty sea. They are here—they are gone—never, never to return. Are they lost ? Every drop is there, as pure and perennial as when I saw it gliding at my feet.

A white-sailed vessel was just entering the gap of the Highlands ; the summer breeze freshened and bore it out of view. It was gone, but it was not lost.

The star that ‘melts away into the light of heaven’ when the brighter sun rises on the world, or the star that goes down behind the western hills, or the sun itself that sets in glory, is *gone* ; but to shine again with equal or brighter lustre. It is not lost. Not a ray of its living light has perished.

A holy man, in the early ages of the world, walked with God and “was not”—for God took him. He was gone. The place that knew him once, knew him no more. But he was not lost. He lived. He yet lives.

A certain prophet of the Lord was walking with another whom he tenderly loved ; and suddenly there “appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder ; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and

the horses thereof. And *he saw him no more.*" He was gone, but not lost.

A disconsolate female came to the grave of her best beloved friend, and as she saw that His precious remains were *gone*, she cried, "They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." She thought in her sorrow, as most of the bereaved are wont to think, that she had *lost* her all; when one stood before her and said, "Mary," and the joy of life from the dead burst in rapture on her soul. It was the voice of her beloved. She had found her Lord. He was gone, but not lost.

This was a natural, if not a profitable train of thought. A believer writes this inscription over the ashes of a departed saint. Day by day disease wears away the tabernacle of clay; by-and-by death dashes in pieces the "golden bowl," and the wheel at the cistern stands still. But the freed spirit starts into new existence before the eternal throne, and like an angel of light leaps in gladness and glory unutterable and inconceivable. And is that saint *lost*? In a diamond mine is found a clod of earth that contains a gem of great price. It is taken from him that found it, and polished for him who owns the mine and all its gems; and now it sparkles on the bosom of the queen, or shines radiantly in the royal coronet. Is that jewel lost? And if the Monarch of the Universe could find, in the darkness of this lower world, gems that infinite skill can polish for His use, shall we count them lost, when He makes up His jewels, and takes them to Himself? If He should send for

these little ones that are this moment laughing in the innocence of their young hearts at my feet, and set them as stars in His crown, shall I break my heart with grief, as if my children were lost?" So Payson reasoned. I asked a friend whom I met after long separation, "How many children have you?" "Two here," said he, "and one in heaven." He would not reckon lost the one first found and saved. He was right. Of such is the kingdom.

They who die in Christ are not lost. They live and rejoice around the throne of God and of the Lamb. Then "weep ye not for the dead," as though they were lost. They are safe where danger, disease or death will never reach them. In the hope of a joyful resurrection, commit their ashes to their kindred dust, and write over them, "Gone, but not lost."

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For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life.

For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.

He that believeth on Him is not judged; he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God.