

# THE SOWER.

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“Except ye be converted and become as little children ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. xviii, 3).

Can you measure the mighty ocean  
My little baby friend?—  
Can you tell me where the surgings rise  
Or where the waters end?—  
You can dip in the lapping wavelets  
Thy tiny, restless feet,  
And laugh at the white-crest breakers  
As you and they retreat.

You can bathe the little fingers,  
In the cold, but sunlit deep;  
And hollow out the close-grained sand  
As you and they retreat.  
But your little heart knows nothing  
Of the hidden treasures there  
You can only laugh and wonder  
In the soft sea-scented air.

Can you measure the love of God  
Oh! heart of fierce despair?  
If you sound the mighty depths of sin  
Can you prove its vastness there?  
Oh! not in the force of sin. (John iii, 16)  
You see the love of God,  
But in the wondrous heart of Christ  
Bruised by the judgment rod. (Isa. liii, 5).

Can you measure the love of God  
Oh! heart at rest in Him!  
You sank in the boundless waters  
But you only touched the brim. (Eph. iii, 18).  
You cannot—but your heart can rest,  
With the peace of a little child,  
In the love that knows no measure  
Through Christ be it waste or wild.

(Rom. viii, 38, 39).

“HE WAS CLOSE TO ME.”

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**A**N active Christian friend of mine one day requested me to visit a young woman, who, for several months, had been suffering from an illness which had defied the skill of three medical men, and which at times brought on very great agony. “She is resting on the true foundation,” he said; “and it is a great pleasure and privilege to visit her.”

Though quite a stranger to me, I felt strongly desirous of seeing one who was keeping very close to the Master’s side, whilst she patiently awaited the summons, “Come up hither.” I shall not soon forget the moment when I entered the invalid’s room. Her face was lit up with such a joyous light, that I said to myself, “Surely she is on the threshold of heaven, and its glory is already streaming upon her.”

In answer to a question, she said: “I have several times been thought to be dying; and I believe it is God’s will that I should be with Him above. Sometimes I feel so near to eternity, that it seems as though but the lifting of a curtain would introduce me to the eternal world.”

“Have you any desire to live?” I asked.

“Only that I may do something for God!” she replied, with a happy smile; “but for eight weeks I have not prayed either to recover or to depart, for I desire to give my will entirely up to the Lord’s. Should He see fit to remove me, as I think He will, I shall be so glad to go to Him! But if He should raise me up—and I know that all power belongs

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to God—I am willing to live at His bidding, and gladly sweep the streets, if by so doing I may glorify His name."

"I think I have been as near to heaven as it is possible for a human soul to go without entering," she continued, "and the glory was indescribable; I had no fear; only joy. I have often dreaded lest in the hour of death I should think so much of the friends whom I expect to meet again, as to be more taken up in thinking of them than of Jesus. But no, in that moment, when I believed my spirit had all but slipped away from earth, it was only Jesus who filled my mind. He was close to me; I felt His presence; I heard His voice; and at the same time I knew He was at heaven's gate to welcome me. Oh! it was a disappointment indeed, when I found I must live a little longer; but I do not murmur, and if I am spared to do a little work, even of the meanest kind, for God, and also to repay my mother for all her love and devotion, I shall be very glad and thankful."

Reader, what are your prospects in relation to death? Do you feel that your sins are blotted out for the sake of what Jesus has done and suffered, and that you can lie down to die, saying: "*I have no fear: Jesus is with me; I feel His presence, I hear His voice?*" If so, you are indeed happy—unspeakably happy, though you may be a stranger to luxury and ease, and though the world never smiles upon you as you toil for your daily bread, or struggle with pain and loneliness. You would not give up Christ for any earthly good

or gain. To you He is more precious than aught beside ; and you rejoice to believe that God has placed you in that position which shall best conduce to the interests of your soul. All the promises of His word are yours. You have no burden He does not share ; no sorrow He does not lighten ; and no need beyond His power of relief. The Holy Spirit who first led you to look to Christ as your Saviour is your Sanctifier, your Comforter, and your Guide. And when this life is over you shall see the King in His beauty, and enjoy for ever and ever those things reserved for you.

On the other hand, do you shrink from the thought of death, having no hope beyond the grave, and no title to place at God's right hand ?

An earthly queen, after a long and prosperous reign, lay dying. Was she happy in the remembrance of her former glory, of her victories over her enemies, of the learned men who adorned her kingdom, of her flattering courtiers and her admiring subjects, or of the wealth she had laid up in store ? Hark ? What does she say ? This is what history tells us :—"MILLIONS OF MONEY FOR AN INCH OF TIME !" This was her unanswered prayer. She had lived only for this world, and now, as it was fading from her view, there seems to have broken upon her terrified spirit a vision of the blackness and darkness beyond. Contrast the death-bed experience of this royal lady with that of the humble and obscure child of God, whose triumph in the anticipation of immediate dissolution is here told, in the prayerful hope that it may lead some thought-

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less soul to seek *her* Saviour, and flee to the refuge where *she* found so sure and perfect a safety.

Reader, is this the secret wish of your heart: "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his?" But remember, God asks for your heart, that He may fill it with love, and joy, and purity; but it is full of the world and you are not willing to cast it out. He bids you yield; the Holy Spirit bids you come; but you are not willing to give to God your supreme affection. He asks you to make Him your Friend; but you are not willing to renounce the counsel of the ungodly, and the friendship of His enemies. The unwillingness is all on your part, not on His; therefore do not think to excuse yourself by saying, "He is not willing to receive me." Once only in the Scriptures is it said that God is, "not willing;" and, oh, amazing grace! this is the declaration, "Long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II Peter. iii, 9). Does your heart begin to melt in view of this unparalleled, this all-embracing love? Turn your eyes towards Calvary, and behold the secret of God's tenderness to a lost world, and say are you not willing now to yield yourself to Him.

Salvation is free; you may have it without money and without price; and you may have it now. You have not to seek Jesus, He has sought you; and at this moment He is wooing you to accept of Him. Listen to what He says, "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). "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matt. vi, 28).

A MAN WHO HAD NOT ON A WEDDING  
GARMENT. (MATT. XXII).

IT does not appear from the parable that any of the guests thought that this man was different to themselves. And so it is now. Immense numbers in the present day make a profession of religion, of whom, no man on earth could feel quite certain as to whether they were real, or merely formal Christians. Their lives are strictly moral, they regularly attend some place of worship, they give of their money for church, mission, and benevolent purposes; they sing psalms and hymns as sweetly as any one. They read the scriptures, pray and preach, it may be, in public, and yet when the unmistakable signs of divine life in the soul are looked for, the search is in vain. We have to leave such cases,—thankful that we are not their judges,—until the Lord come.

Such seems to have been the case in the parable. He may have occupied a high place amongst professors. But there was no cleaving of the heart to Christ, and trusting in Him alone. Oh, no! for the full promise of God is sure to all who trust in Jesus. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." (Ps. ii, 12). He was a stranger to the love and grace of God in Christ Jesus. He was a rejector of grace, and man is saved by grace alone, through faith, without works of law.

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guests, he could not deceive the king. "And when the king came in to see the guests he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment; and he saith unto him, "Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment?" and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Alas, alas! what a close to a long life of high-sounding profession! What an end for one who has had a high place in the church on earth. And, alas, for all who have not Christ. Bound hand and foot, and cast into the place of judgment. Now, he must lie where he falls. He must abide in the place wherein he is cast. There was a time when he was determined to have his own will, and to enjoy his own way, in spite of every warning. But now, he is nailed to the one spot. He can have his own will and his own way no longer. Wrapped in the vile and worthless rags of his own evil and hypocritical ways, he is cast outside the presence chamber of the king, and has no means of resisting the righteous, but fearful judgment that he has brought upon himself. Oh! that careless, thoughtless sinners, and mere nominal professors would think on these awful realities now, and take warning. The time is fast coming when it may be too late. Soon shall all who now dwell on the earth have to take their respective places, either in the bright and sunny regions of eternal glory, or in the dark dungeon of eternal woe.

The scriptures are plain and absolute. God is righteous, and He can approve of nothing less righteous than Himself. He is the only true God, and can accept of nothing less true than Himself. He has but one standard, and Christ alone is up to His measure. Nothing will pass as current at the judgment-seat that has not the name of Christ stamped upon it. The sinner can only be received, approved, and justified in the worthiness of Christ. He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man can come unto the Father but by Him. He is the door, the only way of entrance into the Father's house.

When the sinner draws near to God *now*, in the faith of his own worthlessness, and the worthiness of Christ, he is accepted. "Accepted in the beloved." And Christ is ready to receive all that come to Him. He casts out none. Oh! then, unpardoned, unsaved sinners, whether you have made a profession or not; at once, with your whole heart, turn to Jesus, in the full assurance of His pardoning love. Be assured that He is waiting, ready to receive you. Oh! doubt Him not—believe Him—trust Him. He is able—He is willing—to save the chief of sinners. Oh! at once, without delay, flee to the arms of Jesus. Flee from the awful doom of outer darkness. As a lost sinner, take refuge in Him who was *nailed* to the cross for sinners—for you—and yet, as another has said,

"Sins they were, not nails, which held Him,  
Sinner, there He died for thee."

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sin, that you might wear a crown of glory—fruit of grace divine. His side was pierced with a soldier's spear, that you might find a resting place in His heart for ever. He bore the judgment of God against sin, that you might enjoy an eternal weight of glory. Oh! then, be careless no longer—slight the Saviour of sinners no longer. Believe in Him, according to the word of God. But, oh! see that you believe *now*. Can you lie down to sleep another night, with all your sins upon your soul? Surely not. Look to Jesus, and your eyes shall be enlightened, your burden removed. “To him give all the prophets witness that *through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.*” Acts. x. 43.

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### THE BLOOD.

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It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. (Lev. xvii, 11).

Without shedding of blood is no remission. (Heb. ix, 22).

When I see the blood I will pass over you. (Ex. xii, 13).

He hath made peace through the blood of His cross. (Col. i, 20.)

The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin. (I Jno. i, 7).

Redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. (I Pet. i, 19).

## GOD STILL BESEECHING.

IN Old Testament times it was said, "Come 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." (Is. i, 18).

When Jesus was on earth, it was true "that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, *not* imputing their trespasses unto them." (II Cor. v, 19 29); but Christ was rejected and crucified, and having been raised from the dead, and gone on high, God is again beseeching sinners to be reconciled unto Him; at the same time, convicting them of sin and demanding repentance. Believers in Christ, though once enemies, have been "reconciled to God by the death of His Son." Rom. v, 10). And God "now commandeth *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; whereof He hath given assurance unto *all* men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." (Acts xvii, 30, 31). It was man's wickedness that crucified Christ it is his folly to despise the message of reconciliation, and his everlasting ruin to "neglect so great salvation." (Heb. ii, 3). "Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation." (II Cor vi, 2), and while it is said, "To-day if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." (Heb. iii, 15), for to-morrow may be too late! God is still beseeching, but man neglecting!

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WHEN a sinner is awakened and really turned to Christ in deep earnestness about his salvation, in place of listening to the voice of Jesus, through His word, which only can speak pardon and peace to a troubled soul, he anxiously looks within for some inward sense or assurance that he is a changed person, a new creature in Christ Jesus. And not feeling sure that he has undergone this change, the word of God, however plain, is not received as applicable to him; consequently, the anxious inquirer is plunged into a state of the most painful perplexity. This class of anxious souls is numerous, and some are to be found in it of a long standing. We once witnessed a soul brought into full peace through simply believing, who had been thirty years in trouble about her salvation. Her joy was great when she saw it was all settled. She could now rest in peace on the authority of the word of Christ.

The grand aim of the enemy in all this system of looking for feelings, is to get the eye of the believer, young or old, turned away from Christ and His word, and turned in upon self. And so long as he succeeds in keeping them occupied with themselves, his end is gained. The poor soul is kept without peace or joy, and, consequently, in weakness, and so an easy prey

to his wicked suggestions. Sometimes they think that they can feel that all is right, and hope springs up, accompanied with a gleam of joy; at other times they feel cold and dead, and then, dark, dark clouds overshadow them.

But now, let us turn to the word. What light and direction have we from it on this subject? Does not the Lord say, plainly enough, *by His written word*, mark, that all who look to Him as the Saviour, or come to Him—hear Him—believe in Him—trust in Him—are saved? He never says, “may be—will be—or can<sup>i</sup> be,” but, “are saved.” His word meets every state of a soul that has been moved towards Him by the Holy Spirit. The word assures the coming one, that He “will in no wise cast out.” Here, it is assurance of acceptance. But, my sins, my sins! it exclaims. Again the word replies, “thy sins are forgiven.” When Christ receives a sinner, He must put away his sins. He cannot receive them. Or, as the prophet says, “And thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea?” But whose sins? The sins of all who believe in Jesus. But what is meant by “the depths of the sea?” It means they will be cast, where they can never be traced. If you cast a thing into the depths of the sea, you can trace it no more for ever. Thus God and faith get rid of sin. And not *some* sins, observe, but “*all* their sins.” Thus, the sinner can rejoice, through believing God’s word, that he now rests securely in Jesus, and that all his sins are at the bottom of the sea—sunk in the untraceable depths of the deep waters of God’s ever-

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lasting forgetfulness. As it is elsewhere said, on the same subject, "Their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. x, 17).

Listen, then, O tossed and troubled soul, to the very words of Scripture. They are the gracious answers of Jesus to thy anxious requests. Expect not to hear his voice from heaven—look not to thyself in anywise. The right feelings will spontaneously arise from the right truth believed. If *good* news be received, thou art made glad—if *sad* news, thou art made sorry. There must be a corresponding feeling to the news believed. But when is this feeling produced? Just when we believe. Not before it, certainly. Oh then, dear reader, believe the good news of the gospel—the full gospel of the grace of God. At present pardon, full justification and acceptance, are assured, on the authority of holy scripture, to all who believe in Jesus. Look not to self—look to Jesus—look to the word. Go to it at all times and under all circumstances. It is the unfailing word of Christ. Confide in it with unmisgiving assurance. It can never be broken. So shall thy peace be perfect, thy joy abundant, and the light of a cloudless sky shall shine on thy interest in Christ, until thou see Him face to face in the bright and sunny regions of eternal glory.

*"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).

## A DREAM.

DREAMS are usually the effect of our daily occupations or the outcome of imagination through the activity of the mind. They are quickly obliterated and we consider them of no importance whatever. But sometimes God uses them to give a warning or make an appeal to a soul,—“God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men.” (Job xxxiii, 14, 15).

When I was twelve years of age I had a dream which I wish to tell you of. It came upon me, by God's grace, a deep and salutary impression.

I saw a ladder reaching from the earth to heaven and people ascending on it. Their air and manner struck me; they seemed serious, but at the same time so calm, so happy! a heavenly peace manifested in their faces which I greatly desired to have, that I began to follow them in their ascent. At the top of the ladder, and standing at a door, was a person of majestic appearance, who introduced into the place to which this door opened, those who had preceded me. It was heaven. I arrived at length at the top, feeling, it is true, somewhat of anxiety, but filled with an ardent desire to enter, for I saw that all there was resplendent with a pure and glorious light and that all were in an atmosphere of peace, joy and happiness.

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But what was my agony when I saw the door closed before me, and heard a solemn voice twice proclaim these words. "*Too late, too late!*" It would be impossible to express the feeling of grief, regret and profound anguish which I experienced as I heard these words ; there was something so sorrowful in the accent of the one who pronounced them.

I wakened, happy to find myself still upon the earth, and thankful to God who had warned me and had given me yet time to turn to Him and to the Saviour. I felt constrained to tell my father the dream. "You see, my child, "said he" how necessary it is, young and all as you are, to go at once to the Saviour before it is too late."

These words "too late" impressed themselves deeply upon my soul they were for me the beginning of my spiritual life. I had no rest for my conscience until I was saved, and until I became a new creation in Christ Jesus.

Dear young friends who read these lines written for you, and who have not yet come to Jesus, do not delay, but come now. Come as you are, do not put it off till another time. It is not too soon to come to Jesus, to become a child of God, but—most solemn thought—some day it will be "too late," the door will be closed, and if closed to you, how dreadful!

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days, come not, nor the years draw nigh when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." (Eccl. xii, 1).

## SINS COVERED.

WHAT folly sinner for you to attempt to cover your sins, scripture says "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper." (Prov. xxviii, 13). How is it possible to truly cover them, seeing that "all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do"? and "who can forgive sins but God alone"? God only can cover; because against Him and Him only, have we sinned, and done evil in His sight. Hence the preciousness of that word from God. "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins *are covered*." (Rom. iv, 7). How forcibly it speaks as to *who* is the Coverer! even He who can say of every one that believeth in Jesus, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." And again, "And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." What a *Coverer*—the blessed God! What a *covering*—the precious blood of Christ.

God never holds the guilty for innocent, it is contrary to His nature. It would not be the truth; He may put away sin, and receive the cleansed sinner; but He cannot act as if it did not exist when it does, nor be indifferent to it while He remains Himself. He may for good chastise, and to shew His government (that is, deal with sin in this respect); or He may have it entirely put away and blotted out, according to the exigencies of His own nature and glory, which is salvation for us; and both are true. But He cannot leave it anywhere as not existing or indifferent.