

THE SOWER.

“I HAVE A WANT IN MY HEART.”

GYPSY SMITH'S NARRATIVE.

HAST thou a want within thy heart,
No human eye can see?
Nor human lips, with all their art,
Explain its mystery?
A secret longing after One,
The “unknown God” to thee.

Acts xvii. 23.

Hast thou a sense that life below
Is fleeting as the wind;
That earth, with all its joy or woe,
Must soon be left behind?
And what thy future then shall be
Is dark and undefined.

O precious soul of dying man!
'Tis God who speaks to thee;
And, by His Spirit, wakes the thought
Of that which yet must be;
Yea, God Himself within thy heart
Hath set eternity.

Eccles. iii. 2. (Marg).

Then search His word, and thou shalt find
That Jesus is the way;
The way to God, the truth, the life,
A Saviour for to-day.
O precious soul of guilty man!
Believe—nor dare delay.

Believe that God, in wondrous love,
 Gave His own Son to die ;
 That whoso'er believes in Him
 Should live eternally ;
 And every craving of thy heart
 Himself shall satisfy !

IF you have gone to God and confessed to Him what you are, there is nothing but blessing awaits you, though you have to confess that you have outraged Him, that you have lived for yourself, without God, that you have thought to approach Him by doing some religious duty, like Cain who brought an offering of that which his own hands had laboured in, thinking he had done his best to bring it in a suitable way to God. It is plain that Cain had never felt his sin. As to natural character, there might have been more in him than in Abel. Cain was such as men can admire. He was a bold man indeed, for he dared to look up to God and answer Him. For when God said, you shall be a fugitive on the face of the earth, he replies, in effect : No ! I will build a city. That is what man applauds. And in all that makes man great, there might be some ground, if there was no such thing as *sin*. But if I have to meet God about my sins—? And meet Him I must, now or hereafter. If I meet Him now, there is nothing but salvation, redemption and forgiveness of sins, love from God, power with God, because He has given all I need in the death and resurrection of His beloved Son.

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"THE BLOOD OF JESUS, ONLY."

THE gospel had been preached for several successive evenings in a village. After the last meeting the old servant of God who had brought before souls the good news of salvation by grace, spoke a few words to a young girl as she was going out. She had attended the meetings regularly but, to all appearance, without having received any impression from them.

"Annie," said he, looking seriously at her, "the blood of Jesus Christ only, can make you pure before God."

Annie felt somewhat hurt by this personal notice, and more still by the strange words which had been spoken to her. They continued to ring in her ears as she returned home. She said to herself: "I lead, anyway, an honest and prudent life, and although I do not doubt that I have my faults, most people are much worse than I am, why then can I only be purified by the blood of Jesus Christ?"

But the Spirit of God who had directed Annie's attention to these words did not allow her to rest. What she had heard the last evening came back vividly to her mind and began to trouble her. "*All have sinned,*" the preacher had said, "and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii., 23.) Was it not true?

"Yes," she was obliged to answer; "for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one

point, he is guilty of all." (Jas. ii., 10.) There then came before her that other passage of scripture which says: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." (Gal. iii., 10.) Ah! said the poor girl, all these passages of the word of God condemn me!

Thus the Holy Spirit recalled to her mind, one after the other, the passages which convinced her of her true state before God. The light had shone into her soul and she saw a vile and condemned sinner who deserved death and eternal separation from God. In passing from darkness to light, this light as yet but revealed her misery. However, God did not leave the work unfinished; He had begun with Annie, and he would show her the remedy, the only remedy for her state. She saw, in the light of God, the meaning of the words which had been addressed to her: "The blood of Jesus Christ only, cleanses us from all sin." She understood that Jesus had given His life for us, that He had suffered the judgment of God in our stead, and in consequence of that, God had been able to forgive all our sins.

"Yes," she said to herself, "the blood of Jesus Christ only, can purify me from all sin." She laid hold of this precious truth in her heart, and God spread abroad peace in her soul.

As she came home to her house the happy girl felt impressed to go to the bedside of her sick and aged father.

"Father," she said, "the blood of Jesus Christ only, can purify you before God."

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The father was a pious Catholic, who, in the presence of eternity, had long been occupied with serious thoughts, but who was still far from a settlement of the question as to how he, a sinner, would be able to meet a holy and righteous God, and to dwell in His presence. He opened wide his eyes on hearing his daughter speak thus, and asked her for an explanation of her words. Annie recounted simply what she had heard and what had occurred to her. She told her father that God has declared in His word that all are sinners, and as such are unable by themselves to enter the glory of God in heaven, but that God, in His love for us, has given us His Son for a Saviour, who has borne on the cross the punishment due for our sins.

"Then," she added, "the word of God says that the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanses from all sin those who put their trust in Him.

As for the young girl, so also for the soul of the aged father, these truths so grand, and at the same time so simple, were sweet and precious. He also found by faith the efficacy of the blood of Jesus, the pardon of his sins, and peace with God. He was able thenceforth to celebrate with a happy heart, the riches of the grace of God, who has prepared so great salvation for lost man.

The following day his son Charles came to pay him a visit. The sick man reached his hand to him and, by way of salutation, said :

"Charles, the blood of Jesus Christ only, can make you pure before God."

Charles was astonished and touched. He listened to the words of his aged father, whom he loved tenderly, and who now announced to him the marvelous fact of the love of God, and bore witness to the peace which he had found in believing in the value of the blood of Christ.

That was a decisive day in the life of Charles. A great change began to take place in him. He was troubled in his soul at the thought of his sins, and turned to Jesus, the Son of God, who invites all sinners to come to Him. He proved the truth of the words of the Saviour, who said: "*Come unto Me, and I will give you rest.*" He believed in the efficacy of the blood of Christ to cleanse from all sin before God. Thus, in a short time, the daughter, the father, and the son found pardon, peace, and life, in believing in Jesus, and the perfect work of salvation accomplished by Him on the cross; a new proof that "the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." The father and his two children became witnesses of life by faith.

In the blood of Jesus there is a full and sufficient response to the agonies of a troubled conscience; there only, can rest for the soul be found.

Whoever you may be, reader, may you thus put your trust in Christ, in the efficacy of His sacrifice for your salvation. However exemplary your character may be, there is not for you any other ground upon which you can be received by God, and enter into His glory, than by the blood of Christ.

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THE SHEPHERD.

ALL we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath made the iniquity of us all to meet on Him.—(Margin) (Isa. liii. 6)

Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts : Smite the Shepherd.—(Zech. xiii 7).

I am the good Shepherd ; the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.—(St. John x. 11.)

I lay down my life for the sheep.—(Verse. xv.)

No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself.—(St. John x. 18.)

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose *one* of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, *until he find it*. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders (the place of strength) rejoicing.—(St. Luke. xv. 4. 5.)

Likewise, there is joy in the *presence* of the angels of God over *one* sinner that repenteth.—(St. Luke xv. 10.)

My sheep hear My voice. * * * And *I give* unto them eternal life, and they shall *never* perish, neither shall any pluck them out of *my* hand.
—(St. John x. 27. 28.)

ONCE A CHILD, ALWAYS A CHILD.

“ I CANNOT accept your doctrine,” said the wife of a farmer to me, whom I had spoken to about the great salvation of God. “ You say that once saved you can never be lost, but I once felt very happy and now I am far from it.”

“ What made you happy ? ” I asked her.

“ Oh ! sir, some years ago I was in great distress of soul. I was troubled at seeing myself lost on account of my sins, and I sought everywhere for rest until one night I heard—as distinctly as if some one had spoken—the Lord say to me: ‘ My daughter, thy sins are forgiven.’ But now I have lost all ; my peace and joy, have left me.”

She had with her two little girls ; I turned towards them and said to the mother :

“ Are those your daughters ? ”

“ Oh yes, they are mine,” she replied.

“ Have they always been your daughters ! ”

“ Certainly.”

“ And will they always be so ! ”

“ Without doubt,” she replied, regarding me as though I had lost my senses in asking her such questions.

“ Listen,” I then said to her, “ what did you hear the Lord say to you ? ”

“ My daughter, thy sins are forgiven.”

“ He said : ‘ My daughter ! ’ If you were His daughter then you are so still, for the Lord cannot change in this respect to you any more than you can

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change with respect to your daughters. If once you are a child of God, God having forgiven your sins, you cannot cease to be such. The relationship of a father with his child can never be broken."

Dear reader, if you are in the same difficulty as this woman was, let me direct your attention to certain clear passages of scripture which show, without any possible doubt, that a person who truly believes from the heart on the Lord Jesus can never be lost, but is forever a child of God. If you say that there are in the word of God, some difficult passages which seem to prove the contrary, all that I ask you is to believe what is clear, and to wait quietly until God gives you to understand the other passages, holding firmly this very simple principle, that *God cannot contradict Himself.*

The first passage I will cite for you is this: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God." (Jno. i, 12.) As many as received Jesus—believed on Him; to them He gave this right, or prerogative. Remark now what is said in John viii, 35: "The servant abideth not in the house forever." Our servants leave us, or rather we dismiss them at our pleasure, and thus the bond is broken. It is not so with our children: "The son abideth ever." Though your child were at the other end of the world he would not cease to be your child. Moreover, wherever you live he can say: "That is *my* father's house."

But some will say: I must *feel* that I am a child, before I can rejoice in the relationship, and if the

Spirit has not borne witness within me, I cannot be a child of God.

The word of God says: "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that *we are* the children of God." (Rom. viii, 16.) Notice particularly here, that in receiving Christ as our Saviour, as the One who has expiated our sins—all our sins—upon the cross, we become children of God, as the first passage quoted shows. Would you cast a doubt upon what God has said? It does not depend upon what you *feel*, but upon the divine declaration. Being then children—which we have to receive as a precious reality—the Holy Spirit takes possession of our hearts, and gives us to rejoice continually in our relationship as children. He bears witness *with* our spirit; our spirit which has received the testimony, the declaration of God; but if you do not believe God, how can you rejoice in what He has declared to be your privilege?

It may be that the things you set up as proofs, wherein you can find contentment are those which create the doubt as to whether you are a child of God. Read then what the apostle says in Heb. xii and see there how God acts towards His children when they stray away, or are in danger of doing so. "Ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you *as unto children*. My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth *every son whom He receiveth*. If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you *as with*

sons; for what should I fear? (Heb. xii, 5-7.) He should father us towards Himself, as the Father of His household.

O doubt not the love of God our Father has called the sons of God. He says further, "He has given us His only-begotten Son." And all things have been named after the name of the Son, that we may have eternal life. It is not the Son, but the *children* of the Son.

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sons; for what son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" (Heb. xii., 5-7). Moreover if the believer should fall into sin, the Father acts towards him as towards His child in order to maintain the holiness of His house; but He never ceases to be a child.

O doubting Christian, will you not add faith to the love of God? "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." * * Beloved *now* are we the sons of God. (1 John iii, 1-2). And God says furthermore; "This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." And, the apostle adds by the Spirit: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life!" (1 Jno. v, 11-13.) Note well, it is not the doubting, nor the fearing, nor the *feeling*, but the *knowing*, by faith in His word, that *we are* children of God.

AND now, through the cross of Christ there is life for the dead; salvation for the lost; there is peace with God, and glory through the Lord Jesus Christ. We have redemption through His blood; not our religion, but through His blood, the precious blood of Christ. Nothing can avail in this matter but death, for it is death alone that can satisfy the righteous sentence of God against sin.

A WORD TO PROFESSORS.

IN the 22nd of Matthew we find "a man among the guests which had not on a wedding garment," and yet amongst the guests. How solemn; as the sequel proves. If the reader will carefully go over this scripture he will see that the king makes a marriage feast for his son. Yes, it is for his son. His son is to be honored, he loves his son; and he will have him honored, spite of [the invited, refusing to come. "They would not come." Spite of their making light of it. Spite of the murderous assault on his servants by the remnant. Spite of all this, he will have his son honored. Scripture is very plain as to it all, for well we know this One who is to be honored is none other than the eternal Son of God, who ever lay in the bosom of the Father, and so we read, "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hands." And again, "The Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son, that all should honor the Son even as they honor the Father which hath sent Him." Every knee must bow. But here among the assembled ones is a man who has *taken the place* of an invited guest, and yet no garment on suited to the presence of the one who, in grace, had provided all. It could not be that he was ignorant; that he did not know what was befitting the company of this one who so graciously sent out the message. No, no. He had no heart for it, he cared naught for the honor of the king's son. Right well he knew that he was garmentless and "speechless" too when all came out. It does not say the

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others noticed his condition, but, that "when the king came in to see the guests." That made *all* the difference. O! christless professor where are you? Are you seeking to hide among the guests? Far better to be like Adam, seeking to hide behind the trees in the garden, for "*conscience* drove him there, and grace brought him out." How awful your portion, if you die in your sins; no garment," no Christ, "*speechless,*" "bound hand and foot," taken away, cast into *outer darkness*, "weeping, gnashing of teeth." But, O how blessed to know, even for thee, poor christless professor, there is hope, yea more, forgiveness, for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from ALL sin. "He that hath the Son hath life, he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

“ I CONFESS to my shame, that I remember no one sin that my conscience doth so much accuse and judge me for as for doing so little for the salvation of men's souls and dealing no more honestly and fervently with them for their conversion. I confess that when I am alone, and think of the case of poor, ignorant, worldly, unconverted sinners that live not to God, nor set their hearts on the life to come, my conscience telleth me that I should go to as many of them as I can and tell them plainly what will become of them if they do not turn to the Lord. And though I have many excuses, yet none of them do satisfy my own conscience when I consider what heaven and hell are, which tells me that I should follow them night and day with all earnestness, and take no denial till they turn to God.”

“YES, LORD JESUS, COME!”

A YOUNG girl had heard the coming of the Lord spoken of, and from that time could not go to bed without thinking: “Perhaps the Lord will come this night and take papa and mamma and all my friends and acquaintances whose sins are forgiven, and leave me here with all those who do not love God nor care for Him; and when I die I shall have to go to the lake of fire with the devil and his angels.” Her anxiety and trouble increased every night, for she knew that Jesus had said, “I come quickly,” and instead of being able joyfully to say like true Christians, “Yes, Lord Jesus, come,” she often prayed: “O Lord Jesus, *do not come* before I am saved.”

One night her fear, lest Jesus should come before she was saved, became insupportable. She arose from her bed, cast herself on her knees and cried, “O Lord Jesus, I know that I have sinned much and that I am very wicked, but the Bible says that whosoever believeth in Thee shall never perish. I believe that Thou hast died for me, and I come to Thee, for Thou hast said that whosoever cometh unto Thee, Thou wilt not cast out.”

The Lord responded to her cry and gave her the assurance of His pardon. She returned to her bed, saying “Now, I am safe.” And from that moment in thinking of the coming of the Lord she could say with joy: “Yes, Lord Jesus, come!”

Dear young reader, can you joyfully say these words to the Lord, or are you in fear of His coming because you are not saved?

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CONVERSING one day, at St. Helena, as his custom was, about the great men of antiquity, and comparing himself with them, the first Napoleon suddenly turned round to one of his suite and asked him ; " Can you tell me who Jesus Christ was ? " The officer owned that he had not yet taken much thought of such things. " Well then," said Napoleon, " I will tell you." He then compared Christ with himself, and with the heroes of antiquity, and showed how Jesus far surpassed them. " I think I understand somewhat of human nature," he continued ; " and I tell you all these were men, and I am a man ; but not one is like Him ; Jesus Christ was more than man. Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires ; but upon what did the creations of our genius depend ? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him."

" The gospel is no mere book," said he at another time " but a living creature, with a vigour, a power, that conquers all that opposes it. Here lies the book of books upon the table (touching it reverently ;) and I do not tire of reading it, and do so daily with equal pleasure. The soul, charmed with the beauty of the gospel, is no longer its own : God possesses it entirely : He directs its thoughts and faculties ; it is His. What a proof of the divinity of Christ Jesus ! yet in this absolute sovereignty, He has one aim, the salvation of the soul of the individual ; the

purification of his conscience; his union with what is true spiritual perfection. Men wonder at the conquests of Alexander, but here is a Conqueror who draws men to Himself for their highest good; who unites to Himself, incorporates into Himself.

“From first to last.” said the great Napoleon, on another occasion, “Jesus is the same; always the same—majestic and simple. Throughout a life passed under the public eye, He never gives occasion to find fault. The prudence of His conduct compels our admiration by its union of force and gentleness. Sublimity is said to be an attribute of divinity; what name then, shall we give Him in whose character was united every element of the sublime? Everything in Him amazes me. His spirit outreaches mine, and His will confounds me. Comparison is impossible between Him and any other being in the world. He is truly a Being by Himself. His ideas and His sentiments; the truth that He announces; His manner of convincing; are all beyond humanity and the natural order of things.” “His birth and the story of His life; the profoundness of His doctrine, which overturns all difficulties, as their most complete solution; His gospel; the singularity of His mysterious being; His appearance; His empire; His progress through all centuries and kingdoms; all this is to me a prodigy, an unfathomable mystery. Near as I may approach, closely as I may examine, all remains above my comprehension—great with a greatness that crushes me. It is in vain that I reflect—all remains unaccountable. I defy you to cite another life like that of Christ.”