

# THE SOWER.

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## TWO PATHS.

**A**RE you treading the old wide beat,  
Pursuing the downward way,  
With steady pace still journeying  
Afar from the gates of day?—  
There's a home of fadeless glory  
Where no sin can enter in,  
Where Jesus, who died for sinners,  
Is calling you to Him.

He loves you with deep compassion,  
He saw your soul's great need  
And there on the cross of Calvary,  
He must, the SINLESS, bleed.  
He has paid the ransom fully  
And met the claims of God,  
And nothing for you remaineth  
But to trust His precious blood.

Is your heart still closed to His mercy,  
Your back yet turned to His cross?  
Oh! the downward track pursuing  
Must lead to eternal loss.  
Oh! change from the old wide beat,  
Come to a mighty Friend,—  
The sinner's only Saviour,—  
Who will keep you to the end.

The old beat leads to darkness,  
 Eternal death, despair,  
 The new beat leads to glory,  
 And to many mansion's fair.  
 Where only the blood-bought enter—  
 Those whom to Christ belong—  
 Come now—accept salvation  
 And join the glad, new song.

THERE is no truth in the bible more sure and certain than this: that as a man dies, so he remains throughout eternity—that as the tree falls, so the tree lies; they that are filthy are filthy still; they that are righteous are righteous still. We have no need then to tell you that you must not wait till eternity to seek the Lord. When eternity arrives, when the cry is heard, "The Bridegroom is coming!" when the lamps are lighted and the doors shut, it will be a sad time to every man at whose door Christ had stayed for days and years, and knocked and knocked, and he would not open to Him. Ah! that man shall stand in his turn at Christ's door and knock, and knock with prayers such as he never put up before, "Lord, Lord, open to me!" but Christ shall not open to him. "I know you not," says the Lord; "the door is shut!" and when the Master of the house has risen up and shut to the door none can open.

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## JOHN III. 16.

**A**MONG the thousands of instances in which the above wonderful verse of scripture has been distinctly used in the conversion of souls, the two following are remarkable.

A well known servant of Christ has related the following narrative, given to himself by the individual who is the subject of it.

X—— was an infidel, and his wife likewise. On one occasion, when taking a solitary walk, he was about to cross a stile, no human being was in sight, but X—— felt conscious of being surrounded by a Presence he could not see, and it seemed as though a voice said to him "If there be no God, go on." He could not; the words were I think repeated, but he could not move a step forward. He found however that he could turn round; and impelled by the same Power, he retraced his steps; and entering his house, asked his wife if they had a bible. His knees were trembling as he returned, and she thought he was ill. She replied that they had not a bible, but he insisted on her going out to borrow one. When he had received it, he turned to one passage after another, but every one seemed to utter only condemnation, until he came to John iii. 16, which the Lord used to give rest to his soul. Thus he became a witness of free and sovereign grace.

On board a Channel Islands' steamer, the

under steward was on one occasion observed by a passenger to be reading his bible; and this led to an interesting conversation, which was succeeded later in the day by the steward's giving an account of his conversion. He was on board the "A——" at the time, when, having been for about two years anxious about his soul, he was one morning alone after his breakfast, reading and praying alternately, struggling for rest, when it seemed as though a voice said to him: "Read John iii. 16." He did not even know the passage, but hastily turned over the leaves of his bible to find it. When he had read the words, he sprang up twice for joy, and exclaimed "I shall have everlasting life, die when I will, for God has told me, and no one else!"

This happened at least eight years before, and his happy countenance as he told it, proved that he could "set to his seal that God is true."

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"**N**O drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." This was the inscription, in large letters, over the desk of a mission chapel. One man, addicted to drink, read it, and said to himself, "Then I'm lost; for I'm a drunkard." He gazed on the words and remained to the close of the meeting; he responded to the invitation and arose for prayers: he was converted and became an earnest Christian.

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## "WITH GOOD NEWS."

THE son of a gentleman in H—— was on the headlong road to ruin. Ashamed of his folly and weakness, he would seek every excuse to get away from home, in order to hide from loving eyes and to indulge unchecked his depraved appetite.

A short time since he went down to New York for this purpose, and one morning, after a carousal, found himself in a most irritable and wretched condition. Being at a hotel, he called for his usual paper before leaving his bed.

Through some mistake, or, as men say, "by accident," the wrong paper was brought to him. In anger he threw it aside; but his eyes caught a sentence of one of Moody's sermons in it which went to his conscience. An irresistible fascination caused him to read every line of the sermon. He read and re-read it.

The fever of his soul impelled him to rise and dress, in order to seek help from Mr. Moody. But here his religious training suggested, "I want God's help, not Mr. Moody's, and that I can have here as well as anywhere. I will not leave this room until I get it."

The day wore away in anguish, and the next day found him still battling with his pride, his fierce appetite and passions, yet crying with the strength of despair unto God.

The third day he walked the earth a free man.

He lifted up his head in the dignity of a son of God, a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, a member of the royal family of heaven. He felt himself to be a conqueror through Him who loved him. Lifted up into a higher plane, how far off and small appeared those things which a few days before had occupied him wholly! He left his room, the room which he had entered as a slave to Satan, and hastened to telegraph home, "Expect me to-night with good news."

Good news, indeed! Did the father ever hear any so joyful as that breathed forth in the happy hour of his son's return? And when, the next evening, he heard the former prodigal avow the Lord to be his God, must not this hymn have seemed written just for this occasion?

"Ring the bells of heaven! there is joy to-day,

For the wanderer now is reconciled;

Yes, a soul is rescued from his sinful way,

And is born anew, a ransomed child!

"Glory, glory! how the angels sing!

Glory, glory! how the loud harps ring!

'T is the ransomed army, like a mighty sea,

Pealing forth the anthem of the free!"

**O**UT of Christ as the way, there is nothing but wandering; out of Christ as the truth, nothing but error; out of Christ as the life, nothing but eternal death. "Look to Him and be saved."

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## TO INFIDELS.

**I**T is reported of a celebrated infidel lecturer that at the close of one of his meetings he challenged those who were present to discuss his conclusions. Who accepted the challenge? A poor old woman bent with age, who approached the lecturer and said to him :

“I have one question to ask you, sir.”

“Well my good woman, what is it?”

“Fifteen years ago,” she said, “I was left a widow, with eight children and without any means, having nothing but the bible. Under its guidance and looking to God that I might have wisdom and strength I have been able to provide for myself and my family. Now I am approaching the end of my journey, not only peacefully but perfectly happy, because I am waiting the immortality which I shall have with Jesus in heaven. What has your belief done for you?”

“Well, my good woman,” replied the lecturer, “I have no wish to disturb your belief, but ——”

“That’s not the question, sir,” said the woman, interrupting him ; “let us keep to the question, what has your belief done for you?”

The infidel tried again to get out of the difficulty, but the sentiment of the audience was manifested by shouts of applause and he had to retire in confusion.

The mother of Hume, the distinguished

philosopher and historian, but an infidel, had professed to be a Christian, but being carried away by the genius of her son she accepted his sceptical views. Lying on her death bed she wrote him the following lines: "My dear son, my health is seriously affected. I am sinking rapidly. I have not long to live. Your philosophy does not bring me any comfort in my distress, and my soul is in a state bordering on despair. I pray you hasten to come and console me, or at least write to me the consolations which philosophy gives at the last hour." The philosopher did not respond to her wish.

Persons may live without Christ, but they cannot have a tranquil death without Him. They may mock at the words, heaven and hell but both are *realities*, and when death comes one is in the presence of these realities. Why be wise as to passing things and a fool as to eternal things?

You seem unable to accept the fact that my soul has been saved by another who died in my place and that God has so loved me as to give His only Son to a cruel death, and that death for me. But that is God's plan. It may seem to you the worst of follies, but "the foolishness of God is wiser than man." And unless you are determined to die as a fool, and to come to the end of fools, you must give up your reasonings and your objections to God's plan for your salvation; accept the offer which He makes you,

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and thus obtain His pardon; then you will possess the happiness which the aged christian woman had and be able to rejoice in the consolations which the dying woman asked in vain from her son's philosophy. If you reject this great salvation there is nothing left you but the dreadful anticipation of a burning judgment of fire which devours the adversaries of the truth—remorse, anguish, despair! But these words are too weak to describe what will take place in those regions, over whose portals is inscribed these words: "Who enters here leaves hope behind."

But why will you go to this place of torment? The Son of God who loves you and has given Himself for you, appeals to you, so to speak, to believe that He died in your place, that He is your Substitute before God, and that eternal life is in Him for you.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

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**A** MAN rose in a meeting and said, "You have been talking about the power of prayer, and I don't believe a word of it; but if you want a hard case, try it on me." The offer was accepted; the Christians united in public and secret prayer for him. In three days he was under deep conviction and was soon converted.

## SUDDENLY CALLED, BUT READY.

**H**ATTIE I—— was a young lady about twenty-five years of age, who had, through God's mercy, been brought to the knowledge of Jesus as her Saviour, and who was desirous of doing something, in which, she might have opportunity to serve God and bring souls to Jesus as well as be a means of profitable employment. And, having waited upon God in the matter for a long time, she decided to become a nurse, and accordingly found a place in a hospital, in a large city.

Her career in the hospital was one which proved a testimony to others, as well as, I believe, brought glory to God. Many a time she found opportunities to speak a word for Jesus to those who were unsaved, and as many times was she able to comfort those who knew the Lord, and brighten their pathway by pointing them to the One who had died on the cross to save them, and who was still caring for them in their afflictions.

One day, after she had been out of the hospital for a few days, attending a private case, she came to the Matron and said: "Mrs. T—— I am so happy now as Mrs. ——, the lady I have been attending, has found peace with Jesus. Of course the Matron could rejoice with her, in the thought that a soul had been brought to One who alone can give peace to a troubled soul.

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A few days later, at midnight, she awoke with a severe attack of headache. A physician was called but could give no relief. The next day she said: "I wish I could go home;" and the nurse assured her that as soon as she was able, she might go home, and have a rest and get well again, but Hattie replied "O I don't mean that, I want to go home where there is no more pain." These were surprising words to her attendant. Ere night came, a message was sent to a dear friend in another part of the city that Hattie was dying, but before her friend could be summoned she had passed away, absent from the body, present with the Lord; yes, where there is no more pain, or sorrow.

This history as briefly stated, deeply impressed me with the thought of the uncertainty of earthly things. Yea! even our life which the psalmist says is as a vapor that appeareth and in a short time vanisheth away. And dear reader, is there not a word for you in this true story? Has it ever occurred to you that you might at any moment be called as suddenly as was Hattie? Has it come into your mind what it would mean to you? Our friend was suddenly called, but she had also been called to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and it was a happy call at the end into the presence of Him who was her Friend and Redeemer.

But the same voice which called her to Jesus, is calling to you, and says, "To-day if ye will hear

His voice, harden not your hearts." Also it says, "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." That means you and me, whether we are moral or immoral, whatever our character may be. We have a nature that is sinful, even sin itself abides in our members (Rom. 6) but Jesus has gone to the cross and answered for both sins and sin, suffering for us, the unjust, that He might bring us to God.

Have you considered this love, dear reader? Does it not move you? In I Cor. 5 we read, that God is beseeching sinners to be reconciled to Him. On God's part all was settled when He gave His Son a sacrifice for sin; and now will *you* accept his offered mercy? Do not put it off; because we read that "He that being often reproveth hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Prov. xxix. 1.) But, "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (Jno. iii. 16.)

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**A** MAN has two eyes; if he lose one he can use the other. He has two hands; if he lose one, he can use the other. He has two feet if he lose one he can use the other. He has but *one soul*. If that is lost, what then?

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## NO, HE WON'T TURN ME AWAY.

HOW forcibly indeed did the 15th of Luke come before the writer, as to-day he visited one far gone in consumption. There he sat propped up in bed, with pillows; worn and thin, but with an intellect as clear and bright as ever. Poor fellow, he had been a hard drinker, and now the end was coming.

He had written to several and no reply; he had lived for the world, and now he was about to leave it; where were his friends? Where? He felt it keenly, the sad look, the tear in the eye all told out but too plainly that "he had spent all"—that he was "in want," and that "no man gave unto him;" but reader could he, did he, go further? Yes, he did, blessed be the Lord for His wondrous grace, for as he spoke of how short; how very short was this life, saying, "it's nothing;" he also said as the tears flowed down afresh, "I do believe in Him and He will not turn me away, no, *He will not turn me away;*" this last he repeated twice, and one would judge from the expression of his face and the tone of his voice, that he felt it deeply, intensely.

O, how in earnest he was as he said, "I do believe in Him and HE WILL NOT TURN ME AWAY." Yes, his whole soul seemed to feel *he would not be turned away*, the blessed Lord would not reject him, but had he complete rest of heart?

No, this he had not. Ah, how true it is "*progress is not peace,*" for it's one thing to believe that the Lord will not turn me away, and quite another to be at home in the Father's presence, having on "the best robe," *knowing*, in joy of heart that all has been eternally settled for me, through Jesus perfect work on Calvary's cross, and that the question of my sins will never come up before God, "this, this indeed is peace." No, O no, he had not learned this, for a few minutes later, like the prodigal again, who said, "I am not worthy to be called Thy son," we hear this convicted soul saying, "O that I had done some good; I would not feel half so bad if I had only done a little good—something for God, but to come 'sneaking into heaven,' so undeserving," for this is what he felt, as he wiped away at his eyes, while his voice grew dry and husky. Well, how blessed to know *God always finishes the work he begins*, and so, sooner or later, if the work be His, this dear soul will be led into the full enjoyment of a child, KNOWING, that his sins are forever gone from before God, and that He is IN the Son before the Father (Heb. x. 17. Eph. i. 3-7).

Reader, where are you as to all this?

"He that hath the Son hath life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not life."

"I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

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## A MOTHER'S SURPRISE.

“ONE Sunday night,” says a preacher, “I was urging christian parents to let there be no delay in speaking to their children about their souls. I said, Do it to-night, if you have not done it already. You mothers may say, My children will be in bed and asleep when I get home. Never mind, go up stairs and waken them and talk to them about their souls. One mother went home and her little girl was in bed and asleep. She woke her and said, ‘Jane, I have not spoken to you, dear child, about your soul. The preacher has been exhorting us to-night and saying that if you were asleep you should be awakened.’ Then said Jane, ‘Mother, I have often thought that you did not speak to me about Christ, but I have known him these two years.’ The mother stood convicted. She brought her daughter round on Monday and said, ‘Let this dear girl be baptized.’ I said to her, ‘Why did you not tell your mother?’ ‘Well,’ said she, ‘you know mother never gave me a chance.’ Then the mother said, ‘Quite right; I have not been to my children what I ought to have been; but, please God, there shall never be another child of mine that shall steal a march on her mother, and find out Christ without her knowing it.’ God graciously rebuked that mother.”

## THE PLANK BEARS.

SOME years ago a ship was wrecked on the coast of Cornwall. All on board were drowned except one sailor boy, who was washed on shore nearly dead, and who lay for weeks upon a sick bed. A young christian man visited him, and told the gospel to him.

"When your vessel was in pieces round about you," he said to the lad, "and you were sinking, if a plank had floated by you and you had been able to clutch it, and you felt it would bear your weight, you would have thanked God for that plank?"

"Yes," said the boy, and he was led to understand that the "plank" for his sinking soul was "CHRIST," and that he had only to commit himself to Christ, as in drowning he would to the plank.

Many years afterwards, in a distant city, the same christian man visited a death bed. The dying person was a stranger to him.

"Is it well with your soul?" he said as he bent over him.

The dying man turned his head—there was a smile of recognition, a grasp of the hand—and he said, "God bless you, Sir, THE PLANK BEARS, THE PLANK BEARS!" And he died.

Poor sinking one, do you imagine that the weight of your sin and weariness is too heavy for Jesus?