

# THE SOWER.

## A LOST SOUL.

Never to be invited more,  
To enter by the open door ;  
Never to see the Saviour's face,  
Never to share the wondrous place ;  
Never to feel the Father's kiss,  
Oh, sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Never to thank Him for His love,  
Never to dwell with Him above ;  
Never His likeness true to bear,  
Never His glory bright to share ;  
And joy at His right hand to miss,  
Oh, sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Never to hear His praises ring,  
Never with saints and angels sing ;  
But Christless in that awful throng,  
Who to the realms of woe belong ;  
Never to taste of endless bliss,  
Oh, sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

Into the depths of *endless* woe,  
Rejecters of the Saviour go ;  
Forbid the thought that you who read,  
Should longer have no sense of need  
Of th' only way to realms of bliss,  
Oh, sinner ! hast thou thought of this ?

## ELECTION.

CORINTHIANS (II), v, 14 and many other passages of scripture, teach, in the most distinct manner, that Christ died for all. The aspect of the death of Christ, as also of the righteousness of God, is unto all; but when we come to the practical application, it is "upon all them that believe." All who hear—are responsible to believe, for the message is sent unto *all* the world, and to *every* creature. "*Who-soever* will, let him take the water of life freely." But what stumbles and perplexes so many people is, that they are occupied with the dogmas of theology, instead of the love of God, the atonement of Christ, and the record of the Holy Ghost. The moment any doctrine of scripture is taken, whether it be election, predestination, final perseverance, or any other, and detach it from the Person of Christ, and the living and eternal reality of what God is, it is turned into a stumbling block. It may be set down as an absolute truth that our gracious God would never have people to be puzzled about their souls' salvation. Theology often puzzles, but God never does, and difficulties arise from looking at theology instead of at scripture, and in scripture we find both God's sovereignty and man's responsibility; to reconcile them is not our business; they *are* reconciled, inasmuch as they are taught in the word of God. If man is not responsible to believe the Gospel, then on what ground will men be punished with everlasting destruction for not doing

so? (2 Thess. i. 8-9; ii. 11-12); and what mean these words of our Lord, "How often *would* I have gathered you . . . but *ye would not*." When we look at this subject through the hazy mist of systematic divinity and begin to reason, we are involved in hopeless perplexity; but when we come to scripture like a little child—when we view the matter in the light of the divine presence, all becomes clear and simple.

Election is one of the precious family secrets to be unfolded in the bosom of the family, a spiritual landmark in the inheritance of the Israel of God; not a stumbling-block in the way of the anxious enquirer, or a plea in the mouth of the caviller.

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### I WILL GIVE YOU REST.

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**T**H**ERE** are thousands of quickened souls who have not found in Christ a satisfying portion for their hearts. It is to such as these He sends the blessed message, "Come unto me and rest." Now, if a person has not rest, how can he or she be said to have really come to Jesus? Coming to Jesus is finding in Him a perfect covering for the eyes, and a satisfying portion for the heart. How very few, comparatively, even of God's dear children, know the deep blessedness of this. They are occupied with themselves, and reasoning on what they find there, instead of simply resting in Christ. The grand cure for a legal mind, a morbid conscience, and a self-occupied heart, is to have a full Christ before us. His work for the conscience; His person for the heart; His word for the path. May the reader know the reality and peace of these things.

## THE CONVICTED ACTRESS.

SOME years ago, a servant of the Lord was preaching the Gospel at the City of——, where considerable interest was being manifested, and some were convicted of sin, and brought to the knowledge of Christ as a Saviour. Among others an actress came to the meetings, brought there by a christian lady who lived next door to her, and who felt a deep interest in her welfare. From the first this woman seemed to feel an interest in what was being presented from God's word. There was that which attracted, while her heart was yet hard, and while she could only say she was too great a sinner to be saved. The grace of the Gospel seemed to touch her heart. It was so different from all her former modes of thinking, as the Gospel must ever be to one familiar only with the thoughts of men. At times her feelings overcame her, and several times in the meetings there was a convulsive sob indicating the struggle that was going on within; yet when spoken to as to receiving the Lord Jesus as her Saviour, God's gift to her, she said her heart was too hard—she was too wicked. However, the fact was she had not yet learnt how really bad she was, and that her being a *lost* sinner was her best recommendation to the Saviour, for Jesus said, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are *sick*. I came not to call the righteous but *sinners*," (Luke v. 31, 32); and again, "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was

*lost*," (Luke xix, 10). Nevertheless, slowly and painfully she was learning the solemn lesson of what it is to be a vile sinner before God. God Himself was dealing with her, and discovering to herself what a sinner she was.

While these convictions were being wrought in her soul, she had a remarkable dream, evidently sent of God to enforce the truth of the Scriptures she had been listening to. In her dream she thought the day of judgment had come, and she thought she saw countless throngs standing before the throne to be judged, with herself somewhat separated from the rest. As she thus stood before that awful tribunal, she happened to look at herself, and discovered that she was all covered over with "tags," and saw written on these tags the names of the various sins of which she had been guilty. This was an awful revelation to her poor soul, and she now thought herself the worst and guiltiest of all that numberless multitude. The terrible impression produced by this dream she could not shake off after she became awake, and she realized that it was intended to deepen and enforce the conviction already begun in her soul by the word of God. God was really dealing with her soul, and leading her to a point where she would give up all hope in herself, and just thankfully receive the message of pure and unmingled grace.

This came in the presentation of God as revealed in the gift of His Son to be a sacrifice for us, when we had not one atom of righteousness we could present before Him; when we had no sacrifice we could

bring that would take away our sins; when we had nothing but sins, that we could bring to Him, being covered with them from head to foot. The Cross was pointed out—man there, and God there—all the dark horrible malignity and hatred of the human heart laid bare in the murder of Jesus, the Son of God. And God instead of hurling them into hell as they deserved, meeting their hatred with love, and meeting their sin with a sacrifice to put it away—love thus triumphing over hatred, and righteousness over iniquity and evil.

Along with this was brought out the blessed peace-giving truth, that the vilest sinner under the sun cannot now go to God confessing his sins, without finding himself in the light, and in the presence of that mighty sacrifice that God has provided, all his need met, and all his sins gone through that sacrifice; himself washed, and made whiter than snow, through the blood of Jesus which cleanses from all sin. Then there was the appeal, “Does a God like that suit *you*? Can you not trust Him? Can you not go to Him and confess all? You will thus find Him a Saviour-God, bestowing life and pardon and salvation through Jesus Christ, His Son.” These truths found their way into that poor, needy soul, carrying with them confidence in God, and ere the next morning calming the storm, and setting her conscience at rest, as purged by the blood of Jesus.

May the reader know the same rest and peace, through the same blessed Saviour, and His work on the cross!

## DOING HIS BEST.

ONE morning, while seated in a railway carriage, I overheard a conversation between two gentlemen, in which one made this remark, "The question of salvation has always been a puzzle to me. I don't see, when a man is doing the best he can, how anything more can be expected of him." As his companion did not see fit to answer this remark, I took occasion to move over beside him, and said, "If you will excuse a stranger speaking to you I would like to point out where you are wrong in the remark I overheard you make. There are two things wrong with it. The first is *you have not done* the best you could, therefore you are condemned at once." He admitted it. I then pointed out in the second place that even if he had been ever so diligent and faithful in seeking to do "the best he could," as many people before now had been, it would be no good as a means of getting into God's presence or heaven. I then turned up the 20th of Revelation and read him the last five verses, where the judgment of the wicked dead before the "Great white throne" is spoken of, and pointed out to him, that was where his works would land him, and that he could find no fault with it, as every man was judged *according to his works*.

I then asked him if he was prepared to stand before God and take His judgments according to his

works, pointing out that unless every one had been perfect and none omitted there was nothing for him but the lake of fire according to the last verse.

He was a good deal surprised when I told him that *I* would never stand there, and then I showed him my authority for making so bold a statement, saying that unless I had it, I would not do it. Turning up the 5th of John's Gospel and the 24th verse, I read him the following: "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 the judgment; but *is* passed from death unto life." I then showed him that if God could allow him or any other person to stand before Him on the ground of "doing the best he could," there was no necessity for the Son of God to have come to die for our sins, but on the ground of my standing before Him by reason of what His Son did for me I have perfect peace, as I am quite sure that the work was done perfectly and God can be just and the justifier of him that *believeth* in Jesus.

What a wonderful salvation! The Lord Jesus getting all the glory as the One who accomplished redemption, and me, a poor sinner, getting all the blessing, seeing His work was done for sinners, and for no other class, therefore doing the best I can only takes me further away from salvation as I must take my true place before God as a poor helpless sinner in order that He may save me in His own way.



## THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

## ATONEMENT.

For the life of the flesh is in the blood : and I have given it to you upon the altar, to make an atonement for your souls : for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. (Lev. xvii).

## PROPITIATION.

Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past through the forbearance of God. To declare I say at this time His righteousness : that He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. (Rom. iii, 24, 26).

## JUSTIFICATION.

But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. (Rom. v, 8, 9).

## REDEMPTION.

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself : according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace. (Eph. i, 5, 7 ; Col. i, 14).

## PURGED CONSCIENCE.

For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. (Heb. ix, 13, 14).

## ACCESS INTO THE HOLIEST.

Having therefore brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus. (Heb. x, 19).

## WALKING IN LIGHT.

If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. (I John, i, 7.)

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 JOHN III, 36.
 

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The last clause of this verse is as simple as it is solemn. It tells us plainly that the wrath of God abideth on all who refuse to believe on the Son. The entire verse meets, with one mighty stroke and demolishes two fatal errors of the day, namely, universal restoration on the one hand; and annihilation on the other.—“*Shall not see life.*”—there the universalist gets his divine answer. “The wrath of God *abideth* on him.”—There the annihilationist gets his. If the unbeliever shall not see life, it is evident he cannot be restored. And if the wrath of God *abideth* on him, it is evident he cannot be annihilated. What living power—what overwhelming force in holy scripture.

## THE WOMAN WHICH WAS A SINNER.

(LUKE VII, 36 TO THE END)

READER did you ever read the story of this woman carefully? If not it might be well to do it now, for it is fitted to benefit your soul. Jesus is invited by a Pharisee to come and eat with Him. He did not think well of the Pharisees yet went in hopes, no doubt, that He might have an opportunity of doing good, which accordingly came to pass. When they were sitting, or rather reclining in Oriental fashion, at table, the door opened and another person made her appearance uninvited by the host. Her name is not given, but we have a description of her character in these words, "a woman in the city which was a sinner," and to such a one the language of the Pharisee, whether of the ancient or of the modern type, ever has been: Stand by thyself, I am holier than thou. Yet, nevertheless, she had been invited by another one in some such terms as these, "Come unto *Me* all ye that labor and are heavy laden and *I* will give you rest," and so knowing that He was in the house and feeling as she did, weary of the wretched life she was living, and bowed down under the weight of her sins, she came to Him.

It is interesting to observe her demeanour. Women of her class are as a rule characterised by bold, unblushing effrontery, seared consciences and hardened hearts. But such was not the case with her. She advanced to the place where the blessed Lord was

reclining, and stood behind at His feet weeping and that so copiously that she could wash them with her tears. The towel she made use of to dry them with was a peculiar one, it was what Scripture calls the glory of the woman, her own long hair. Then she humbly wiped His feet and finally anointed them with ointment which she had brought with her. Her conduct towards the object of her affection was characterised by deep humility; sincere contrition; profound faith; holy reverence; strong affection; and fervent feeling. Everything denoted this and yet she never spoke a word. What was the cause of this marvellous change upon this "woman which was a sinner"?

"God is Light" and "God is Love." Thus it is that Scripture speaks. It does not say that He is Holiness; or Goodness; or Mercy; or Power; or Truth; although all these are His attributes but it says that He *is* Light and Love; and as such, Christ manifested Him. The rulers of the Jews sent officers to arrest Jesus, but they came back without Him. "Why have you not brought Him"? was the question put to them. "Never man spake like this man" was the answer given. They did not take Him. They intended to have done so when they went, but when they heard Him speak, light broke in upon their consciences and they could not. They were paralyzed. The woman also heard Him and she too got light in her conscience; but in her case His words went deeper; for God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shone in her heart, and gave the light of the knowledge of His glory, and His goodness, in

the face of Jesus Christ ; and then she learned the stupendous truth that God is Love. "Is not my word like as a fire saith the Lord ; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces" ? Fire penetrates. So does the word which is quick and powerful, sharper than any two edged sword. The hammer breaks the rock. So does the word when wielded by the Spirit. Is there anything on earth more tender than the heart of a loving mother ? Is there anything on earth harder than the heart of an utterly abandoned wicked woman ? It is as hard as the nether millstone and yet even it can be broken by the hammer of the word. This was the hammer which broke the heart of the woman which was a sinner. It was the word of love flowing from the heart, pouring from the lips of a loving Saviour. What judgment, anger, scorn and contempt could not effect was brought about by the utterance of words of love. It is "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance."

At another part of the narrative, after Jesus had spoken to the Pharisee of the wonderful love of this woman as contrasted with his own lack of even the common courtesies of Oriental life to his guest ; He says, "Wherefore I say unto thee that her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much." Are we to understand from these words that there was anything meritorious in loving the Saviour as she did, and that He forgave her many sins on account of that love ? By no manner of means. There can be nothing meritorious in loving God. The Law takes for granted that it is a matter of duty (Matt, xxii. 37), and the

fact is that men cannot help loving Him when once they know Him and believe in what He has done for them. The want of love to Him proves want of faith in His word. There are two leading reasons for loving the Lord, and neither of them shows that by so doing we can acquire merit. The first reason is because of the Saviour's personal worth; the second is because He suffered death on the cross for us. It could not be because of the second reason that the woman which was a sinner loved Him for as yet He had not died; it must therefore have been for the first. She loved Him for His wondrous worth, and well she might, for He is the chiefest among ten thousand and it was the sense of that worth which drew her to the Pharisee's house and brought about her remarkable display of feeling. She knew that the Pharisee would regard her tears and her adoration of Jesus with scorn, but for that she cared nothing, and so her penitential tears flowed as freely and her adoration was as intense as if there had not been a Pharisee or a scribe within a distance of a hundred miles.

Love first descends and then it ascends. Its native home is heaven, its dwelling place is the heart of God. The love which now glowed in the heart of that guilty woman emanated from the heart of God and kindled love in her's; for we love Him because He first loved us (I John, iv, 10). Then that love re-ascended to God and thus there was mutual love, God loving her because it was His nature and the woman loving Him because He was worthy of all love. But it began with God and hence the lovely fruit which it produced. There was a divine order in it all, and the starting point was the love of God as manifested in the Person and words and actions of His Son.

## A RANSOM.

“AND now, tell me,” I said, “has all this blessed work been done to-night?”

“Yes, to-night, and I may say, in a moment. As you were repeating these words, ‘Christ gave Himself a ransom for all. He put into God’s hands the ransom price of our redemption, and God having accepted that price, He now proclaims the good news; deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom,— I have it in my hand.’ Then I said to myself, I must be free. If Christ has *paid* the ransom, and if God has accepted the ransom, I am free; and from that moment I was perfectly happy, and could only praise the Lord. *I know I am saved.*”

The reader will be satisfied to know that all proved a blessed reality, and time has shown that it was not the shallow joy of the stony ground hearer, but the deep and permanent joy of God’s grace in the heart.

Oh! that the same blessed truth, in God’s hand, may become the means of the happy deliverance of every soul that reads this brief record! And why not? we ask. Is it not as true now as then? Is it not as true to thee, dear reader, as to any? Most assuredly! Christ gave Himself a ransom for all—that is, He paid a price adequate to the redemption of all; and God accepted the price. Surely then, believing this, thou art free, and righteously free on God’s own ground. This is God’s grace to all who believe in Jesus; and surely the redemption is from

a pit deeper far than the grave, and out of which no soul ever escaped. No chain can ever be broken there. O, then, dear reader, in the name of all that is fearful to contemplate, and of all that is blessed to anticipate, look at once to Jesus, He only is the deliverer from the thralldom of Satan! He died to save thee from the power of the grave; He died to set thee free; He has in righteousness paid the adequate price of thy redemption, God has accepted the ransom and is satisfied; He asks no more; He asks no ransom from thee; He says, "I have found it." Why then, O why, shouldst thou despise liberty—the glorious liberty of the children of God? *Awake, AWAKE, AWAKE*, from the awful sleep of sin—the lullaby of hell! *Arise, O ARISE*, and shake from thy long enslaved soul the captive's chains! Another day and thy chain may be riveted in the depths of hell for ever. Thy danger is great; it is imminent; it is irreparable; it is thy soul—thy immortal soul; no appeal can be too loud; too long; too earnest; eternal liberty or eternal slavery is the mighty issue.

"Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace."

#### A GOOD CONFESSION.

"*Thou knowest* the atoning work is *done*,  
 God of all grace! so now I own  
 The power and love Thy Christ has shewn:—  
 What He is *there*—beside Thy throne—  
 What Christ *is* now, and Christ alone,  
 Is all my joyful plea:  
 HE's all *my* goodness! all my boast!  
 And—since He died to save the *lost*,  
*Thou knowest* He died for *me!*"