

The Sower

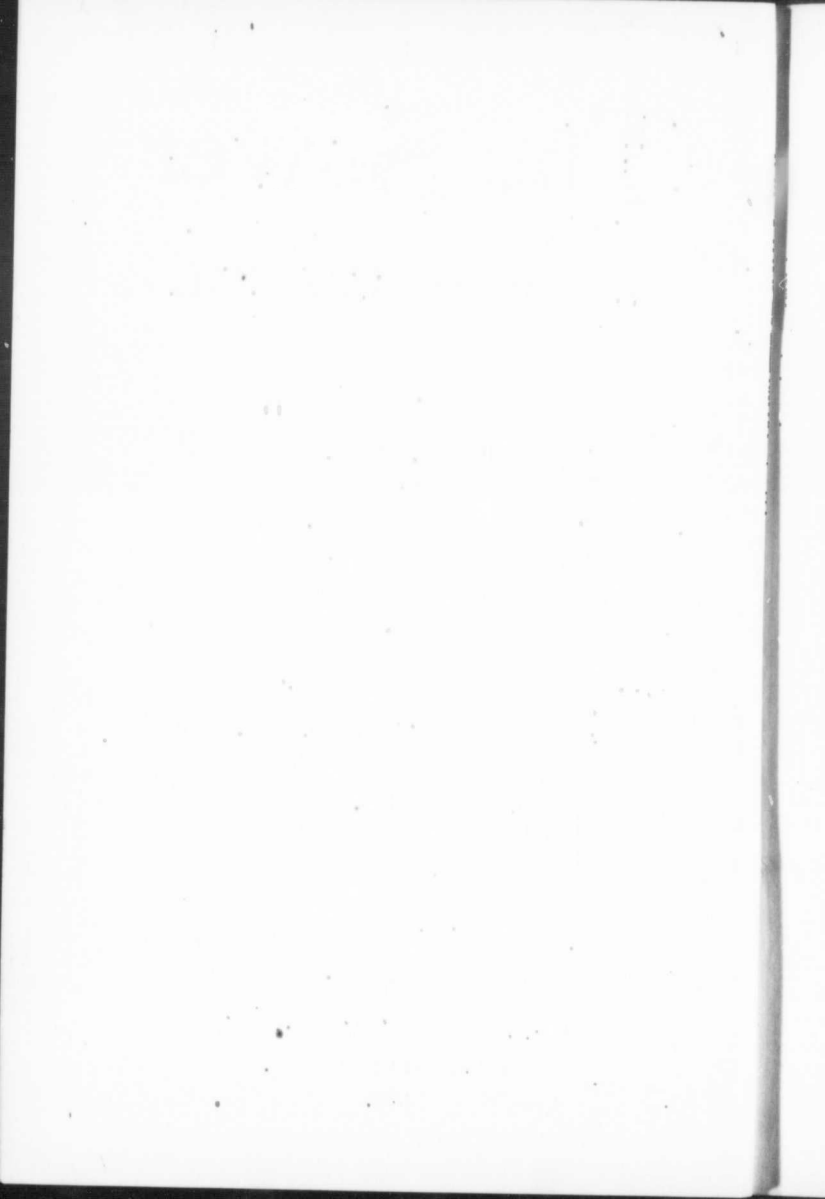
A GOSPEL MAGAZINE.

VOL. VIII.

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In the morning sow thy seed,
And in the evening withhold not thy 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.

—•••—
"WHICH?"

LIFE, like a vapour bubble,
Mingles its colours bright;
What will you do when its radiance
Is lost in fuller light?

Life, as a summer cloudlet,
Tinged by the golden sun,
Glories your sky of azure;
What when its course is run?

What when the eye of Jesus
Flashes its light divine;
Will adoration kindle,
Or anguish torture thine?

Now, while the dew is lying
Upon the tender grass,
And summer days are flying,
And clouds of autumn pass,
Will you not come to Jesus
In answer to His cry?
Can you spurn a love so mighty
Or scorn a grace so high?

Now, while thine eye is dancing
In radiancy of life,
And thine eager pulses throbbing
For pleasure or for strife,
Will you not come to Jesus
Who gave *Himself* for thee?
The choice is endless darkness,
Or *Him* eternally.

THE FRENCH GENTLEMAN AND THE DOCTOR.

THE Count de X——, a French gentleman of high birth, who suffered from a melancholy which nothing could relieve, came to England to consult an eminent doctor, a specialist of repute in the treatment of mental maladies.

The Count was a rich and distinguished man, beloved by his family and esteemed by his friends. But was he happy? No; for strange as it may seem, a profound sorrow followed him everywhere. Neither the charms of a happy family circle, nor the important duties of his life as a public man, were able to amuse or distract him.

His friends, really alarmed, counselled him to consult professional men. He did so; he went to several doctors, each of whom recommended travel, change of scene, and mental occupation. He tried all but in vain. It was then that an intimate friend of his urged him to go to England and see the doctor of whom we have spoken. The Count willingly consented and some days later he found himself in the doctor's office.

After having asked him several questions, and after examining him carefully, the doctor said:

“There is nothing wrong with you, Count, you are robust, and I can see nothing to explain the melancholy which is afflicting you.”

"It is strange," said the Count: "This dejection of spirit, will, I fear, overthrow my reason, and I beg you to help me if you can."

"Perhaps an inordinate ambition is the cause?"

"No; I am not ambitious for a more exalted position than I now occupy. It exactly suits my tastes and my desires."

"Perhaps there are family troubles, or the loss of some loved one?"

"No, doctor; peace and love reign in my family, and none have been lost."

"Have you any enemies?"

"Not that I know of."

"What subjects habitually occupy your thoughts?"

"There doctor you touch a subject I have hardly spoken of, I am a skeptic. From my point of view the forms of religion are repugnant to common sense, however reasonable its mysteries may be. I do not believe in religion, yet I must confess that one of its dogmas haunts me like a spectre. I try to persuade myself that it is the result of a disordered mind, and yet I am continually occupied with it."

"May I venture to ask what it is?"

"A vision of the last judgment is continually before my eyes. The end of all things seems to have arrived, and the great white throne is set up—upon this throne is seated One whose look,

indicating unswerving righteousness, frightens me. I try to escape from this all searching eye, but the heavens and the earth disappear and I am there alone, waiting, moment by moment, the utterance of those awful words: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels!"

"What is it that makes you fear such a sentence?"

"To the eyes of the world, my life is thought to be irreproachable, and not without reason; I have less to accuse myself of, than the most of those whom I know; but in presence of that dazzling glory; of that spotless purity; my best deeds seem black and hideous. I am consciously guilty and condemned, and I would be thankful to find some place in which I might conceal myself from His view."

"Is that the cause of the melancholy which so troubles you?"

"I suppose it is. This terrible vision is always before my mind. I cannot rid myself of it."

"I have a book which contains a remedy for your ailment," said the doctor confidently, as he went to his book-case to take therefrom a book which bore marks of frequent use. He turned over the leaves for a few seconds, then holding it to the Count he asked him to read in a clear voice the passage he pointed out.

The Count read the following:

“Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”

“The unbelief of which the prophet complained two thousand six hundred years ago exists still in our day,” said the doctor.

“For he shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.” Of whom do those verses speak?” asked the Count.

“Of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom God sent into the world, in order that by His death He might make propitiation for sin.”

“He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and we hid as it were our faces from Him; He was despised and we esteemed Him not.”

“How true that is,” said the doctor; “truly we have not esteemed Him.”

“Surely He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted.”

“In that again, prophesy has been accomplished.”

“But 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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to

His own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquities of us all. What does that mean doctor?"

"That the Son of God, has taken the place of the sinner and submitted to the punishment he deserved."

"Is it possible, doctor? What beauty and what divine simplicity!"

"Will you read a little further."

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth."

"It is because He was there as a voluntary substitute," added the doctor.

"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb so He openeth not His mouth."

"He gave His life a ransom for me!"

"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgressions of my people was He stricken."

"Praise the Lord! He has taken the place of the sinner. But continue please."

"And they gave Him His grave with the wicked, but He was with the rich in His death, because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him. He hath put Him to grief."

"Oh! what great love for sinners!"

“When he shall give His soul an offering for sin He shall see his seed, He shall prolong His days and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hands. He shall see of the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied. By His knowledge shall My righteous servant instruct many; for He shall bear their iniquities.”

There again I find the same thing, doctor. I see it * * * I see it * * * justified by the death of another! What love of God! What love in His Son! I ought not to fear judgment now, since Christ has endured it in my stead. I understand it now.”

“If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, He Himself tells you that you have eternal life. Read it yourself.”

And the Count read:

“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 judgment; but is passed from death unto life. (Jno. v. 24).”

The Count received this glorious truth in his heart and kept it. He left the doctor's office quite another man. All his soul troubles had disappeared. He returned home full of thankfulness to God, and desiring to live thereafter for the glory of Him who had loved him and had given Himself for him.

Reader, the wonderful chapter which the Count read was the fifty-third of the book of

the prophet Isaiah. Eight hundred years in advance he described the humiliation and the sufferings of the Son of God, became a man here below in order to be our substitute before God ; in order to bear the iniquities of us all ; and in order that by His stripes we might have the healing of our souls. Ought not such love in the past of the Son of God touch your heart ?

It may be that up to the present time you have not had any estimation of Christ ; perhaps you have not seen anything in Him to cause you to desire Him. But God has loved us ; He has esteemed us at a great price, since He gave His Son for us. Now, by running in the paths of sin ; by following our own wills ; we shall perish forever ; but, if we believe, the chastisement which we deserved has fallen upon Him. Is there then nothing in Him that attracts you ? Have you any expectation apart from Him ? Any true peace in this world, or for the next ?

Ah ! nothing but judgment ; the terrible thought of which, had so profoundly troubled the spirit of the Count. In Christ you will find peace for your conscience, and rest for your heart ; for you the judgment will have no more terrors, for he that believeth has everlasting life and shall not come into judgment.

Can you rejoice in the possession of this great salvation ?

LIFE AND SALVATION.

THERE are some who have *reasoned to salvation*, thus: "If one has eternal life through faith in the Son of God; for scripture says, 'Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life' (John 6, 47): then I have it; and if one having it cannot lose it, nor perish; for it is also said, 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish' (John 10, 27-28): then, I must be saved." But this is only reasoning to a conclusion; and not *believing unto salvation* (Heb. 10, 39). Consequently, there is no assurance; nor can there be in this way any real enjoyment of the salvation of God, but rather a mixed experience of doubts, fears and hopes, rendering one's life most miserable in thinking of the future, because, while there may be a certain assurance of life through the word, and that they shall not come into judgment, having passed out of death unto life (John 5, 24); yet, without the knowledge of salvation, through the remission of their sins, they must still be disturbed and unhappy, and their praises weak and spasmodic. See Luke 1, 77.

Now there is an important difference between "eternal life" and "eternal salvation." Christ

is *our life* (Col. 3, 4); but He is also "the AUTHOR of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5, 9.)

As born of the Spirit, the believer in the Son of God has eternal life, and is *safe* from judgment; but this is not forgiveness of sins and the knowledge of salvation through faith. It is like the younger son, in Luke 15, on his way to the father's house; he is on the right road but may have grave doubts as to his favorable reception and pardon. But when his father meets him his anxiety is all gone. So when the believer in the Son of God, as revealed in the gospels; having heard the word of truth and believed the gospel of His salvation, the glad tidings of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, as set forth in the epistles, he IS SAVED, and also sealed with the Holy Spirit. See Eph. 1, 12-13; I Cor. 15, 1-4. He has the assurance of the gospel of God's grace, the witness of the Spirit within, and his doubts have given place to praise and thanksgiving; he is a worshipper of his Father, and of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The difference between life and salvation, and also the order of work in the soul, may be further illustrated in the first-born of Israel. They were safe from the judgment when the blood of the slain lamb was sprinkled on the door posts; but they had not yet seen the salvation of

Jehovah. When they were encamped on the shore of the Red Sea, their trouble began ; and now for the first time they hear of *salvation*. " And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which He will show to you to-day," etc. See Exodus 12, 12-23 and chapter 14.

Only this may go further than what we have in Romans 3, 7, taking in also the deliverance from sin and law as taught in chaps. 6 and 7. but there is a fair picture of it in the reception of the prodigal son by his father, whose joy at the return of his lost son, although in rags, was manifested in such a marvelous way ; banishing forever from the son's heart any question or doubt as to the love of his father, and his welcome back to a real home and blessings.

The above may explain the unsatisfactory condition of soul so prevalent among professing Christians. Merely quickened souls, although having eternal life, are in great danger of falling into some of the many snares current. Instead of the above reasoning process to salvation, there must be repentance and faith in the gospel of the grace of God. The order of work in the soul is unchanged. Saints before the cross had " eternal life " (John 6, 47) ; after the cross they had life abundantly in relationship as the fruit of the atoning death and resurrection of Christ, who, *as risen*, breathed

into them the Holy Ghost for their assurance and enjoyment (John 10, 10; 12, 12; 20, 17, 22, 30, 31). But through the glorified Saviour was preached an assured pardon and salvation, by faith in Him, to Jew and Gentile (Acts 2, 36-38; 10, 38-44; 13, 38 39; 16, 31.) "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1, 16.)

IN a paper which was printed in this magazine recently, the following sentence occurs: "And this Tophet is in Gehenna, and Gehenna is in Hades." The reading should have been, Gehenna is the conclusion of Hades, for death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire—Gehenna—after the last judgment of the great white throne.

If any suppose that because an awful punishment awaits the man of sin, that another place will be their abode if lost; remember that Tophet is not a separate place; it is in Gehenna, in the lake of fire. And if any think that "hell upon earth," so often spoken of, is the end of human suffering, let them remember that it is "after death the judgment."

O careless soul, why will you go on to this awful fate?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF JESUS.

A lady was asked shortly before she died, "Do you feel Jesus precious?" She replied "It is not what I feel but what I *know* of Him." What a beautiful answer! One's feelings *may* change and *do* change many times in a day, but we know that Jesus *never* changes. He is "the same yesterday, and to-day and forever." His love is as strong and as real and as fervent towards us to-day, as it was when He hung bleeding on the cross for our sins. There is no change in His heart. His love for "His own" will never decrease, and it cannot possibly increase. "For love is as strong as death." "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it." (Song 8, 6 7.) The love of Jesus has been tested by God on the cross, when the many waters and floods of divine wrath went over His blessed head. (Psl. 42, 7; 88, 7.) Jesus stood the test. His love never abated, it was as deep and warm as ever. Nay, it was love to God His Father, and love to those whom the Father had given Him, that enabled Him to bear all the suffering and shame and reproach of the cross. It is not our feelings towards Him, but His feelings towards us, that should occupy us.

“ We change—He changes not :
 Our Christ can never die :
His love, *not ours*, the resting place ;
 We on his truth rely.”

Dear friend, what do *you* know of Jesus ? Do you know that “ His heart is made of tenderness, His very name is love ? ”

The lady referred to above was dying in a foreign land, whither she had gone to tell the poor heathen of that Saviour whom she had known and loved and served for many years. She was alone, yet not alone, for Jesus, whom she knew as her friend, as well as her Saviour, was with her.

How would you and I, dear reader, bear to be tested thus ?

Pain and weariness at such a time might prevent happy feelings, but if through grace we could say, “ I know *whom* I have believed.” I know Jesus, He loved me and died for me, and He has said “ I will never leave thee nor forsake thee,” all will be well. Again I would ask my reader : What do *you* know of Jesus ?

“ **A**ND He shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone clear as crystal.”

A CLEAR CONFESSION.

A YOUNG girl of only twelve years of age became troubled about her soul. Her desire was to be saved, and to know that she was saved.

The exercises of an immortal soul, when brought to think deeply on the subject of eternal salvation, are exceedingly interesting. How deep and real they are! The trifles of earth may have engrossed the mind before, but now the realities of eternity engage it. Sin is seen in its true light, death and the judgment to come present themselves before the soul, and the word and Spirit of God are there to bring conviction of the soul's guilt before a holy God.

My dear reader, allow me to ask you in the presence of eternity, have you thus been brought into the presence of God about your sins? Have you ever stood on the shores of eternity and asked yourself the question, "Where shall I spend eternity?" But more. Have you ever had any trouble about your many sins, and about your sinful self? And as a discovered sinner, in the presence of a thrice holy God, to abhor yourself and repent in dust and ashes? It is what the nature of the whole case demands, and God "commands all men everywhere to repent." (Acts xvii. 30, 31.) Remember it is God's command in the light of the day that He has fixed for judgment.

To return to the exercised soul referred to at

the beginning of this article. She was some time in a state of trouble about her precious soul. After a while a gospel paper was placed in her hand, in which was found an article entitled: "The Woman of Samaria, or the Sinner Found," which God in His infinite mercy was pleased to use to bring her into peace with Himself, and great was the joy of her brother when he heard her say, "Christ died for me, a sinner, and I believe it, and now I am saved." Blessed, simple, artless confession of a soul brought for the first time to rely upon God's word alone, and enjoy peace with Him. It was the utterance of a sinner, consciously saved by the grace of God upon the authority of His blessed and changeless word.

"Christ died for me a sinner." How simple She stood apart from the multitude, singled herself out, and as a confessed sinner saved by faith, Jesus dying for her and bearing all her sins in His body on the cross.

"I believe it." What more natural than to add *"and now I am saved."* Does not the word of God, in scores of places, say, "He that believeth on the Lord hath everlasting life?" and, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved?" It does. And is not God to be believed? Is His word not to be trusted? Surely. Then she was right when she exclaimed, "Christ died for me a sinner, and I believe it, and now I am saved." *Reader you will be saved or lost forever.*