

THE SOWER.

THE WARNING.

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then destruction cometh upon them. (I Thes. v. 3).

Speak not of “*The good time coming*”; Lu. xvii. 26-30.

Say not, “Happy times draw nigh.” II Tim. iii. 1.

Lo! the clouds with terror looming, Rev. i. 7.

Darken o’er the future sky! II Thes. i. 7, 8, 9.

Undeceive thyself, O mortal! II Tim. iii. 13.

To the wind such dreamings give! Eccles. v. 7.

Think upon the fearful purging Matt. xiii. 40, 41.

That the earth *must first* receive! Matt. xiii. 43.

Rather tell of *wrath* and *vengeance*, Isa. xiii. 9.

Pending o’er this guilty race; Jude 14, 15.

In its shame still glorying—boasting; Phil. iii. 19.

Deaf to all the calls of grace— Lu. xiv. 16-24.

God forgetting—God dishonoring— Rom. iii. 10-23.

Guilty world, thy doom is nigh! Rom. ii. 5.

Fear unknown will seize upon thee, Prov. i. 24-30.

When He shakes the earth and sky! Hag. ii. 6, 7.

Sodom’s fall but faintly pictures, Jude 7.

What thy awful lot will be; Luke x. 12.

It had not so many warnings, Matt. xxiv. 39.

As the Lord hath sent to thee. Mark xvi. 15.

- Grace refus'd, makes judgment sorer—Prov. xxix. 1.
 O what grace hast thou refused ! John iii. 16.
 Guilty world, thy judgments hover, II Pet. iii. 7.
 All escape for thee is closed ! I Thes. v. 3.
- Yet, as in the case of Sodom, II Pet. ii. 6.
 Lot departed ere it fell ; Gen. xix. 29.
 So, the Lord will come from heaven, John xiv. 3.
 Take His Church with Him to dwell, I Thes. iv. 17.
 Ere destruction's work commences, II Thes. i. 7.
 On *this* Sodom's guilty ones ; Rev. xi. 8.
 They, the salt, alone preserve it— Matt. v. 13.
 They removed—the judgment comes. Luke xvii. 29, 30.
- To the Ark and *from* destruction Gen. vii. 1.
 All who'd be preserved, then haste ! II Pet. iii. 9.
 Christ's *alone* the Ark of safety— Acts iv. 12.
 Come—and full salvation taste ; Rev. xxii. 17.
 Tarry not for reformation— Rom. iv. 5.
 (*Sinners*—Jesus died to save), Mark ii. 17.
 Art thou *lost* ? He came to *find* thee ; Matt. xviii. 11.
 Thou, believing, life shalt have. John iii. 36.
- Then, amid the coming glory, [share ; Rev. xx. 4.
 Which the Church with Christ shall I Thes. iv. 17.
 Thou shalt have thy happy portion, Eph. ii. 6. 7.
 Bride of His—His image bear— I John iii 2. [28.
 Then, His earthly people gathered, Ezek. xxxvii. 24-
 Earth made clean and Satan bound ; Rev. xx. 2.
 Thou shalt, with thy Saviour reigning Rev. v. 10.
 O'er a happy world be found ! Rev. xi. 15.

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IN WHAT SORT OF LIGHT ARE YOU LOOKING AT YOURSELF?

THERE used to be a place in London (England) called the Polytechnic Institution; where, amongst other things, popular lectures on scientific subjects were delivered—the lectures being generally accompanied by experiments and practical illustrations. Many years ago I went in to hear the lecture. The subject was about various kinds of light and the different effects produced by them. The lecturer said that there were certain sorts of light in which there were no distinctions of colour. He then gave a practical illustration of it. The room was lighted with gas. He produced a box filled with ribbons of all the brightest colours, turning it round so that all the audience could see them distinctly. He then changed the light, turning down the gas and turning on another kind of light. By the latter, there was no difference in the colour of the ribbons. He changed back again to the gas light, and there were the different colours as bright as ever.

Since being brought to God, I have often thought of that lecture and the illustrations.

I see men and women around me; and, looking at them from the stand-point of man's light, (man, having rejected and crucified Him who was "THE LIGHT of the world" John viii. 12, also John xii. 46, 35, 36, has left himself in darkness;) there seems a great difference—some nice, honest, and even religious; others the opposite of these. I turn on the light of

God's word, and it says "There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 22, 23). We get in scripture a remarkable illustration in the very one who was God's penman to write down the above words viz; Paul, who writing of what he was before his conversion and looked at from the human stand-point, said "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more; circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law a Pharisee ("after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee," Acts xxvi. 5, shows what that means); "concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law blameless." (Phil. iii. 5, 6). Can the world produce a finer specimen of man—upright, earnest, religious? Reader you cannot beat that. Now be honest as before God in whose presence you will have to stand. "So then *every one* of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. xiv. 12). Well, dear reader, that very same man was going on one day full of religious zeal; when, all of a sudden he saw himself in a different light—listen! "At midday O king, (the sun in its noonday strength in an eastern clime), I saw in the way a LIGHT FROM HEAVEN, ABOVE THE BRIGHTNESS OF THE SUN shining round about me." (Acts xxvi. 13). What effect did seeing himself in that light produce on him? Hear what he says of himself after that, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save *sinners*; of

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whom *I am chief.*" (I Tim. i. 15). Ah! he found out, that with all his earnestness, all his zeal, all his religion, he was but the chief of sinners; yes, but he found THE SAVIOUR too; and resting upon His perfect work, he then was able to say, "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord." (Phil. iii. 7, 8).

Now we are told, "The *entrance* of Thy words giveth light," (Ps. cxix. 130;) and, "The word of God is quick (living) and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is there any creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom *we have to do.*" (Heb. iv. 12, 13).

Dear reader, has the word of God yet obtained (not merely a hearing—though you are responsible to God for that—but) an "*entrance*" into you, so that, as to your conscience, you have stood in the presence of God? If not, you may be very well satisfied with yourself, which is always a proof of darkness and moral distance from God; but if you have, and have seen yourself a poor ruined sinner; the same precious word tells us, that "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).

THE NAME OF JESUS.

THIS is the Name honored of God, but dreaded and hated by all His enemies. At this Name every knee shall bow—heavenly beings, earthly beings, infernal beings—every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father (Phil. ii. 10, 11). Friends or foes; *all* shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, all shall bow the knee. In that day of manifestation it will be judgment to the wicked. Wicked men and wicked angels will depart from the presence of Jesus to go into the lake of fire. The Name that is on the lips of the wicked now, so often and so thoughtlessly, and in connection with all that is sinful and wicked, is the Name before which they will quail with terror in that awful day. Oh! thoughtless sinner, swearer, blasphemer, despiser of the Name of Jesus, stop and think, ere it be too late. Why will you perish in your sins? Is there no remedy? If there is, why go on to destruction and perdition? Thank God there is a remedy. That very Name you use so profanely is *the Name of salvation*. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12). In the risen and exalted Jesus there is salvation for all who in truth confess His Name. Even to the wicked Jews who had put Him to death, was this salvation announced, through faith in His Name, by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

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Great as had been the grace and tender compassion of God toward guilty Israel, as seen in Acts ii, He would give them still further proof of His love, and of His readiness to forgive. By the Holy Ghost, God was saying to them, as it were, you have despised my holy servant Jesus, my Son, and put Him to death, but I have raised Him up from the dead, and I will prove to you that there is power in His Name to heal and to bless every one of you. How was this? There at the gate of the temple sat a poor beggar, a cripple from his birth, known to all. This man was to be a sign to Israel. He asks an alms from Peter and John as they go into the temple. Peter, guided by the Holy Ghost, fastens his eyes on him, with John, and says, "Look on us. And he gave heed unto them, expecting to receive something of them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength. And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God." (Acts. iii). This was the sign of God's wondrous grace to Israel. Oh! what grace, flowing from the exalted Jesus, to these His murderers. Would they bow to the truth? would they own their guilt? would they repent: If so, they should be forgiven, their sins should be blotted out, and the times of refreshing would come from the presence of the Lord, and He would send Jesus back

again to bless them. How true it is, "the Lord . . . is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (II Pet. iii. 9). His heart has not become chilled, or narrowed up by man's wickedness. He is a tender, compassionate Saviour. But apart from repentance, and confession of His Name, there is no salvation. God will have truth in the inward parts. If we come with a lie on our lips He will not receive us. Our *vileness* will not hinder Him from receiving us, but if we do not own our guilt, if we come excusing it, or covering it up, it is equal to saying God will overlook it, and receive us, sins and all. This He cannot do. He is holy, and cannot act contrary to His own nature. In virtue of the blood of Jesus, He can forgive our sins, can blot them out forever; but He cannot overlook them, or pass them by. But if we come confessing our sins, owning our guilt, accepting His judgment of sin, He can point us to the blood of Jesus which has cancelled all for every one that believes. One who repents is one who owns before God that he is a sinner, and that the judgment of God against sin is just. It is one who comes like the prodigal in Luke xv; not waiting to get his hunger satisfied in the land of famine, nor to get the rags exchanged for better apparel, but, turning back on his course of folly and sin, condemning it all, owns the truth to his Father, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." (Luke xv. 21). No one ever came to God thus, and was turned away. On the contrary every one

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who comes thus will find God more ready to receive than he has been to come. It has been said there is only once in Scripture that ever God is seen in a hurry! It is when the prodigal, perishing with hunger, and come to himself, has said, "I will arise and go to my father." "When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck, and kissed him." This is the way God receives a repenting sinner. "Robe," and "ring," and "shoes," and "fatted calf" are all ready, waiting for the poor prodigal's return. The Father's heart and arms are open to receive, and angel hosts are ready to strike their harps when the sinner says "I have sinned." Oh! sinner, God has given His Son Jesus Christ to die for you, and to make atonement for sin, that He might receive you thus. Will you not come, and be saved, and make glad the heart of God, and the heart of Jesus the Saviour?

You say "you have no other confidence than the cross;"—As to the conviction of your heart, that may be true; and "that you feel your need of it;"—that I suppose, or you would not look to it. But you have not yet learned the value of the cross; and the secret of it is that you have still a little bit of your own goodness lurking within. You do not think yourself as thoroughly bad as God says you are. You have to learn that it is the *ungodly* that God justifies. You do not think yourself ungodly, and nothing else, and *to be nothing else*, in order to be justified; and therefore you have not yet realised God's justification.

“THE SUNNY SIDE OF CALVARY.”

HAS the reader ever meditated on the love of God made known to us by the cross, in contrast to the love which God exacted from man before it? Under law the command went forth, “Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” (Deut. vi. 5). Has man ever been capable of doing this? again we read: “I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that *love me*, and keep my commandments.” (Deut. v. 9, 10). In short God announced that He would punish those who hated Him, and shew mercy to those who loved Him. This was law; “this *do*, and thou shalt live.” (Luke x. 28).

After the grievous and hopeless failure of man in presence of such demands upon him, can we wonder that God should conclude all under sin that “every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God?” (Rom. iii. 19). Dear reader, how will you escape this sentence? How will you please Him and live? for to live for ever in bliss is surely the wish of all.

Listen to the other side of the story—to the “sunny side of Calvary” as an old man was overheard to say. “Law and demand and Sinai’s thunders belong

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to the far side of the cross, to the shady side of Calvary," and there, alas! souls stay too long seeking to satisfy their own consciences and the demands of a holy God by doing that which will never succeed—for how can tears and prayers and a good life atone for sins?

We are now living on the "sunny side of Calvary;" God has been fully satisfied there, His Son came to die, the just One stood in the place of the unjust—of those who had *failed to love God*, and He has borne the burden and the penalty of sins, so that God can alter His proclamation now and hence we read, "*God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*" (Rom. v. 8). No longer "Thou shalt love," but "God is love;" what a change!

"Does God really love me all the time?" Was the touching question asked of one who was seeking to set forth these blessed truths. The questioner was a poor afflicted deaf-mute, who probably had been long on the "shady side" of the cross. Tears filled his eyes as his visitor gladly replied, "yes, *all the time*—He loved you in the past and gave His Son for you, He loves you now and offers you salvation, and He will love you in heaven." Do you doubt it reader? Listen, "In this was *manifested the love of God toward us*, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, *not that we loved God, but that He loved us*, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (I John iv. 9, 10).

Before the cross God's forbearance with man was in exercise: He was passing over sins in view of the work of Christ which was to be. Now He has come out in all the fulness of His love; and in virtue of a finished work, every poor soul who accepts this may bask in the sunshine of God's love on the "sunny side of Calvary," and thankfully say, "being justified *freely* by *His grace*:" Yes, *God really loves us all the time!* Do *you* believe it?

THE RETURN OF THE WANDERING SINNER.

The prodigal son on his return to his father found a more exalted place, and enjoyed, an intimacy very much greater than anything he had known before.

The "fatted calf" had never been killed for him, he had never been clothed in the best robe.

Whence was this? from what merit in him did it come?—Oh! none at all; it came only from the heart of love, of the One who gave the poor prodigal to know Him as his Father: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." (Luke xv. 24).

THE PROMISES OF SATAN.

Satan promises what he never gives—AN ENDURING PLEASURE;

And he gives what he never mentions—AN ETERNAL
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GOD'S CHRIST.

IT was the evening before so-called Good Friday. The sun had set over the sea in lines of crimson and gold. The beautiful blue mountains had changed from purple to grey, and then only became a dark outline against the clear sky. The stars had peeped out one by one over the picturesque little town of Bordighera, and one was feeling that the day was over with its mercies and its cares when suddenly, borne on the clear air, came the sound of voices chanting. Nearer and nearer they came, sounding somewhat wild, and somewhat grand through the stillness of the olive woods.

Going to the window one saw winding round the narrow, scarcely lighted road, a procession of many people old and young, filing slowly onward.

Little girls of four and five years of age dressed like brides, older ones arrayed in the same manner, little boys and young men, old women and those who could scarcely walk for infirmity, priests in many colored robes, and monks with their cowls, came slowly wending past the house. And there in the midst, borne by a man who looked half brigand, half Judas was an enormous cross with a life-sized figure of Christ upon it. A motley crowd of men, women, and children followed.

As one watched them in the dim light of a single gas lamp, and the white light their own tapers threw upon their faces, one's mind went back to the crucifixion, and somehow they seemed to represent some-

thing of the crowd which closed around, and watched that cross on Calvary. I saw the little ones, pleased with their gay dresses, knowing and understanding nothing about *Him*. Alas! Not even knowing "He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them and blessed them." (Mark x. 16). The elder ones with more conscious vanity, had here and there a look of desire after Him, but they too, alas! knowing so little of what *He* did, or meant by "Follow Me." How could they know when His precious word was shut and sealed to them! The boys careless, and intent upon their tapers and each other, seemed thinking simply of the payment and excitement, and the priests and monks looked almost indifferent, one or two laughing as they went—while following after, amongst those poor illiterate hearts, dwelt, as I knew, here and there a soul full of wonderment and devotion—hearts that might have been capable of pouring out an alabaster box of ointment upon *Him*, had they but seen Him as He is, but now with souls dead. ened by superstition and callous of the darkness could only give their withered herbs to this.

There were the chief Priests at the cross, there were the scribes and pharisees, there were the soldiers and the people. There were those who had spit upon Him, whose hands had arrayed Him in a scarlet robe, those who had platted a crown of thorns, and put it on His head, those who bowed the knee before Him, and said, "Hail, King."

Dear friends, what part would you and I have taken there? What sort of crown would we have woven

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for Him? What sceptre would we have put into His hands? Would we have bowed the knee in mockery or in worship? Some one has said: "The soldiers watched Him with cruelty, they saw only a criminal; the priests and scribes watched with mockery, and saw only an imposter; Barrabas watched with gratitude, and he saw a substitute; His disciples watched with doubt and assurance, and saw the Messiah; the centurion watched with conviction, and saw a God; the women watched with sorrow, and saw a benefactor; His mother watched with anguish, and saw a son."

And others watched too, dear friends, and they are watching us to-day. "The devils watched with bitterness and dismay, and they saw the seed of the woman." The angels watched with wonder and deep reverence, and they saw love; and the Father looked down with the affection which only He could give, and He saw obedience—perfect obedience! "Lo I come to do Thy will O, God." He saw "The Lamb of God bearing the sin of the world." The passers by watched with indifference, and what did they see? Nothing. How should you and I have watched that wondrous Form suspended by nails on that uplifted cross! Dear reader, how do you watch Him now that He is in the glory? Would you have cried "Crucify Him, crucify Him?" Do you say now "we will not have *this man* to reign over us." If so, what think you will be your cry when you see Him face to face? When those same eyes which closed in death in the anguish of the cross, *for you* look into yours, and ask, "what think ye of Christ?"

They took the crucifix to the old cathedral, and there they took down from the cross, the form that man's hands had fashioned, and laid it in a sort of tomb until the following Sunday, then the little ones hold "Christo è risuscitato!" "Christ is risen!"

A wooden cross and a marble Christ! What a substitute for the living Son of God, the Saviour whose heart beat in love for His mother even in the agonies of death. A figure fashioned by man laid in a brick and mortar cavern to be taken out and put again upon the cross until next Good Friday: what a substitute for the risen Jesus who said to Thomas, "reach hither thy finger and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side." (John xx. 27). Who said, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have." (Luke xxiv. 39). Dear ones, what have you? A marble Christ and a golden cross, or no Christ and no cross? Have you seen Him crucified for you? can you say as you look at Him, "Who *loved me* and *gave Himself for me*." And then does your heart ring out the echo of the music of those sweet golden bells of old, as the priests served in the tabernacle, "He ever liveth to make intercession for us."—God grant so. You will have to tell Him *one day* how you watched, and do watch the cross, the resurrection and the living, glorified Christ who is still calling from His place on high, "come unto *Me* and I will give you rest," "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never, never, (a double negative in the original) perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." (John x. 28).