

THE SOWER.



KNOWLEDGE OF SALVATION



“CAN it be right for me to go
On in this dark, uncertain way?
Say ‘I believe’ and yet not know
Whether my sins are put away?

“Not know my trespasses forgiven
Until I meet Him in the air!
Not know that I shall get to heaven
Until I wake and find me there!

“Not know my state till on my brow
Beams the celestial diadem!
Why, surely all the world will know
That I’m a pardoned sinner then.

“Must clouds and darkness veil my brow
Until I dwell with saints in light?
And must I walk in darkness now
Because I cannot walk by sight?

“And shall I just begin to say,
 ‘Father, Thine every word is true,’
 And cast my doubts and fears away
 When all the world will own it too?”

“Is this the way to treat the God
 Who bids me trust and love him now?
 Is this the way to use the Word
 Given to guide me here below?”

“How can I forth to sinners go,
 And tell of grace so rich and free,
 If all the while I do not know
 Whether that grace has smiled on me?”

“How can it be my joy to dwell
 On the rich power of Jesus’ blood,
 If all the while I cannot tell
 That it has sealed my peace with God?”

“How can I be like Christ below,
 How like my Lord in witness shine,
 Unless with conscious joy I know
 His Father and His God as mine?”

“Oh, crush this cruel unbelief!
These needless, shameful doubts remove,
 And suffer me no more to grieve
 The God whom I do really love.”

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SALVATION BY FAITH.

ACTS, xvi. 23 TO 34.

FOR THE ANXIOUS, there is salvation by faith presented in this scripture. When the apostle Paul, and Silas, had received many stripes they were cast into prison, and the jailer having been charged to keep them safely, thrust them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks. Their prayers and praises were suddenly interrupted by a great earthquake at the mid-night hour. "The foundations of the prison were shaken, and immediately all the doors were opened and every one's bands were loosed." The keeper of the prison was startled, and very likely thought of death and the judgment that follows (Heb. ix, 27), Seeing the prison doors open, and supposing that the prisoners had escaped, his first thought was self-destruction. But Paul cried out with a loud voice saying, "Do thyself no harm: for we are all here." If God awoke him in terror it was only to speak to him in grace bringing salvation (Titus ii. 11). "Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Here was "repentance toward God," it only remained for the exercise of "faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ," and salvation was his (Acts xx. 21). "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

What a change in a few minutes for a hardened, perhaps indifferent sinner; fear, repentance and salvation! But such it was, and this is God's way, and His order of work in the soul; yet, He may lead to repentance by His goodness. (Rom. ii. 4.) But repentance before salvation there must be, as also for "the kingdom of God." (Mark i. 15.) His salvation was perfect and final, not only from the penalty of his sins, but saved to God on the righteous ground that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18), and there can be not one sin left to the charge of the believer in Christ as they were all future when He suffered the death-penalty on the cross. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree," (1 Pet. ii. 24.) Thus he is saved and saved to the end. (See John xiii. 1.) For He who died is risen, and after the power of an endless life has become our great High Priest on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, therefore, "He is able also to save them to the uttermost (the end), that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii. 25.) But in view of this perfect salvation right on to the end, what is the effect if the believer sins? The salvation itself cannot be touched by the sin as it is based entirely upon the atonement of Christ; but his *enjoyment of it* is, since his failure has interrupted communion with his Father to which he must be restored by confession in order to re-enjoy salvation, and his relationship with his

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Father as a child, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," (1 John i. 9). This provision of sin is through the advocacy of Christ. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins, etc." (1 John ii. 1 and 2.) David prayed to be restored to the "*joy of Thy salvation*," (Ps. li. 12.)

So scripture goes beyond the possession of "eternal salvation" (Heb. v. 9), and instructs how to continue in its enjoyment while on earth. Obedience to Christ *as Lord* is imperative. "And they spake unto him the *word of the Lord*, and to all that were in his house" The jailer promptly owned Him as Lord, and took his place with his own upon Christian ground through baptism. "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptised, he and all his, straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." His was now a Christian household, externally at least, and was no longer identified with the world, but with the church and family of God. "Because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John xvii. 14.) Obedience to the truth ("Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth.") in separation from the world and its principles are absolutely necessary if we would live in the enjoyment of the salvation of God, for the friendship of the world is enmity with God, "whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God," (James iv. 4).

JOE, THE INDIAN.

JOE was an Indian, but an Indian of a very wicked nature, so bad indeed was he, that a price had been placed upon his head on account of the murders and evil deeds he had committed.

War had been his delight, but as it had become dangerous for him to remain with his own tribe, he resolved to leave. Some missionaries passing through the country, he got the place of driver on one of their waggons; but being in the company of Christians did not make Joe a saint. He hated religion and if he saw but a hymn book he avoided it as though it had been a snake. For the Bible he had the greatest horror and when he saw it opened he got away as quickly as possible. As they did not travel on Sunday, Joe took his gun and went out to hunt, hour after hour, so as not to be required to assist at Divine service.

The journey was being made in the middle of July, and on a certain Sunday it was so hot that Joe had not the courage to undertake his usual pastime. He stretched himself in the shade of a waggon, carefully choosing that of one of the missionaries whom he thought would not take part in the service; but he was mistaken. The missionary whose turn it was to preach was so overcome by the heat that he asked to be excused and the one who had the waggon under which Joe was lying offered to take his place. All gathered around the waggon and the service began.

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Joe was extended half asleep in the long grass, and was not a little disgusted at being disturbed. To remain tranquil while the hymns were being sung, and to see the Bible opened which he detested was too much for him. He wished much to get away, and getting on his feet he began to move his long limbs but the heat was excessive and his lassitude overcoming him, he again cast himself in the grass and there, stretched upon his back he found himself in full view of the preacher upon whom he fixed his irritated looks, as though to defy him.

“Lord help me to speak to Joe,” was the fervent supplication from the heart of the Lord’s servant, when he saw this opportunity of speaking to the poor Indian. Forgetting every one else he set forth the love of God for all His creatures. He said to his hearers that although God had given the rain and the sun—the meat, the grain, and the fruits, every thing that was necessary for them, they had not loved Him in return, on the contrary instead of loving Him they had hated Him, and His servants, and His word. But did He destroy them for their hatred? No. He had given His Son to die for them in order to take away their sins. He had in this manner shown His love for them notwithstanding their sins and their murders even, and if they would only believe in His Son He would forgive them and make them His dear children.

The eyes of Joe were fixed on the preacher, who noticed as he went on that the look of anger had disappeared and he hoped that the Holy Spirit was

driving out the evil spirit from the heart of the Indian. Soon after the missionaries separated, each to go to his own station.

Joe did not forget the preaching. As he accompanied another of the missionaries he one day said to him :

“Did not the preacher tell great lies the Sunday it was so hot?”

“Lies, Joe? I did not hear any.”

“He said the Great Spirit loved the poor wicked Indians. Isn't that a lie?”

“Not at all Joe; it is written in the Bible, ‘God who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sin.’”

“But is it not a dreadful lie to say that the Great Father has given His Son;”

“No, Joe, it is in the Bible—‘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.’”

Then Joe said, “But surely it is a lie to say that He has prepared a beautiful country for them.”

“No,” replied the missionary, “That also is a precious truth. It is in the Bible, Jesus the Son of God has said to sinful men whom He loved and whom He has saved, ‘I go to prepare a place for you.’”

The conversation ended by Joe saying, “If all that is true missionary, I will stay with you, I will never again go to war.”

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When they reached the station Joe did not want to go further. He remained to cut the wood and do other work about, and as time passed the change that had been wrought in him was apparent. His consistent Christian life proved that he was a truly converted man.

The following year, small pox broke out among the Indians at the station where Joe lived, and numbers died, among whom were three daughters of one of the missionaries, and there was no one to make their coffins, and bury them, except the heart broken father.

The missionary who had had the conversation with Joe which we have recorded came to see the afflicted father, and tender his sympathy and consolation. While he was there some one came to say that a poor dying Indian wished to speak to him. He immediately went to the place indicated and found that the poor creature had reached the last stage of the terrible disease—he was a living mass of corruption—his eyes were gone and his face so disfigured, that one could scarcely discover his features or recognise him.

“Who are you?” said the missionary. “Are you Joe?”

“Yes I am Joe.”

“Have you anything to say to me my poor friend?”

“I will soon be dead; but all is well. I would like to send a message by you.”

“What is it, Joe?”

"I cannot see you, but I can see Jesus. You remember the young man who preached that Sunday afternoon when it was so hot, and you know that mine has been a changed life since then—If ever you meet him, tell him that his sermon has made me a Christian—I will very soon be with Jesus, and if the good Spirit will guide me, I will meet him at the gate of heaven.

Thus died Joe the Indian, who had been so wicked. He believed that God loved him, and had given His Son to die in his place, and having received the pardon of his sins, he had been made fit to go to the home the Lord had prepared for him.

My dear reader, God loves you as He loved Joe; His Son has also died for you. Have you believed in Him; have your sins been blotted out; are you ready for the moment when Jesus will come for His beloved ones, and take them to His Father's house?

THE LAST OPPORTUNITY OF HEARING GOD'S GOSPEL
WILL COME;

THE LAST OPPORTUNITY OF ACCEPTING IT
WILL COME;

THE LAST MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE ON EARTH
WILL COME;

THE JUDGMENT DAY
WILL COME;

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MAN'S reasonings for not submitting himself to the righteousness of God, and the deceptions of his heart in order to avoid the necessity of being saved by grace, are but too well known, and scripture lays them bare, and shows the worthlessness of these excuses.

If in speaking to any one the fact is insisted upon that all are sinners, and that without grace none can be saved, it will perhaps be replied: "Me, a sinner! But I go to church, I attend to all my religious duties, I am upright and honest towards all—why do you say I am a sinner?"

"Well, my friend," we reply, "the Lord Jesus has said, 'I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance, there is therefore no Saviour for you.'

"O," says another, "I am not as bad as the most of those I see about me—I lead a respectable life—I do not get drunk or swear, I do not speak ill of any one, and I do not associate with quarrelsome people, surely no one can reproach me."

"Listen, irreproachable man, to what the Lord says, 'Unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and

prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." (Luke xviii. 9 to 14.)

Thus, just men (or those who think themselves to be so), respectable and without reproach—*there is no justification* before God *for you*; it is for him, who, like the publican, knows himself to be a sinner.

True, says a third, I have not been, nor am I now what I should be; but I am resolved to begin a new life—I will serve God more faithfully, and will apply myself to do what He commands—I will do the best I can, and God will be satisfied.

You are mistaken, my friend, God will not at all be satisfied. In ceasing to do evil and learning to do well, you will only be doing your duty; but as to your past sins, and your present state before God, listen to the scripture, "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight" (Rom. iii. 20). Thus *for you* neither, is there any hope of *justification*.

I am a sinner, I confess it, we are all sinners, says a fourth; but God is merciful—He does not want to condemn me, His goodness is too great—all will be well at the last.

But what do you make of His righteousness and

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holiness. You set up a god of your own creation ; but what saith the scripture—"without shedding of blood is no remission." (Heb. ix. 22.) *For you* then who are looking to the mercy of God without repentance, and outside of the atoning sacrifice of Christ; *for you*, there is no remission of sins; *no redemption*.

Many other excuses are made; many other pretensions are put forward; which all go to show that man will not have God's righteousness in Christ: what then can he expect but condemnation.

But, blessed be God, there are sinners who are on the true ground of salvation. The fifth person says.

Yes, I acknowledge I am a sinner and a great one; and since I have reached this conviction, I have tried many times to mend my ways, but alas! always in vain. If God had given me my deserts I would long ago have been cast into hell, "what must I do to be saved?"

What says the scripture to such an exercised and self-judged soul? It tells him the good news of pardon and peace with God: "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom" (Job xxxiii. 24). Yes, dear friend, there is a salvation *for you*.

You say you are a sinner?

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. i. 15.)

You say you have no strength to save yourself?

"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." (Rom. v. 6.)

You only deserve hell? But God has found a ransom *for you*.

"The Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for *all*," (1 Tim. ii. 6,) and consequently *for you*.

You wish to be saved? Well, God replies, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." or, "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Acts xvi. 31; Rom. x. 13.)

Yes, reader, if you truly desire to be saved, you must abandon your assumed righteousness, and no longer trust to your morality resolutions, or efforts to please God as a ground of acceptance by Him. You must take your place with miserable, guilty, lost sinners, deserving only the lake of fire. It was in the company of sinners desiring grace, that the Saviour when on earth found Himself for their blessing for said He: "I am come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Matt ix. 10;) Luke xv. 2; xix. 10) and it is in the company of sinners saved, redeemed, glorified that He will be in heaven to make them eternally happy.

Do you not wish to be there?

You say: "I believe in all the value, in all the efficacy, of the work of Christ, but I am not able to apply it to myself." Who asked you to apply it to yourself? It is God who applies it and He has applied it to you, if you believe in its value and efficacy.

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“YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.”

PROPOSITION:

Whosoever is born but once,
Must die twice.

But whosoever is born twice will die
but once; and many of those
thus born will never die.

“Believest thou this?”

In other words, “*It is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment.*” But all who receive the new birth become the children of God, and are delivered forever from the judgment; and though they surely will die, if the Lord come not in their day, nevertheless their dying will be but as a falling asleep in Jesus, to be soon awakened again by the coming of the Lord Himself *for His own*. And thus, all those—who through faith in Him have become His—will have part in the first resurrection; and “*On such, the second death hath no power.*” All can obtain this glorious exemption from that fearful “second death, or lake of fire,” if they will but accept the blessed ransom God has provided for them in Christ Jesus. But they who refuse His proffered mercy, will have to take the sad consequences and will have none but themselves to blame.

God, in this day of grace, “*is commanding all men, everywhere to repent,*” and *believe the Gospel*, and all who do repent, and believe the truth of the Gospel,

are righteously acting in obedience to His commands; and thus *the Lord Jesus Christ becomes the Author of eternal salvation to all such, and to no others.* And Christ "entered once, into the Holy place, *having obtained eternal redemption.*"

How is it with you, dear reader?

Have you believed?

If you have not? I beseech you see to it quickly. The time is flying fast.

"*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*"—Acts xvi. 31.

"VERILY, VERILY, I SAY UNTO YOU."

In John v. 24, there are five things the Lord says: The first thing is:—

"HE THAT HEARETH MY WORD."

How simple to listen; to cease from our efforts; to turn from ourselves; to incline our ear and come unto Him, to hear His voice speaking unto us, showing us our need, or telling of His love.

The second thing is:—

"BELIEVETH ON HIM THAT SENT ME."

If one can truly say, "I have heard, and I believe;" what has he received? Everlasting life.

That is the third thing:—

"HATH EVERLASTING LIFE."

And if you have the first and the second, you must have the third.

Then the fourth is:—

"SHALL NOT COME INTO JUDGMENT."

And the fifth:—

"IS PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE."