

THE SOWER.

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AND ALL FOR ME!

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“The Son of God, who loved *me*, and gave *Himself for me*.
Gal. ii, 20.

“ O H wondrous truth that Jesus came
Into this world of sin to suffer shame;
That He, the Lord of Glory, Lamb of God,
the Christ, should be
A homeless wanderer, with sorrow pressed and
bitter agony;
And all for me—

Oh, precious truth! that Jesus bore
The weight and burden of my sins—and more
Died He; for with the precious blood He shed
on Calvary,
Bought He redemption's priceless gift—secure
through all eternity;
And all for me—

“Oh, glorious truth! that Jesus lives
Enthroned on high, and in His mercy gives
So free, the blessed Spirit now within my heart
to be
My Light, my Guide, my Comforter, to immor-
tality;
And all for me—”

"A VISION OF THE NIGHT."

IN a large theatre, the Athénée, in Arcachon, about four hundred people have crowded to listen to an evangelist from a neighboring town tell of Jesus and His love. Such a sight is not an unwonted one in our own country, but in the south-east of France, gospel meetings are not so frequent, and almost all of these were Roman Catholics who were hearing for the first time the sweet story of old.

With eager faces riveted on the preacher, they listened, while he pleaded with them to flee to the Saviour, to find instant salvation in His finished work on the cross. He shewed them what a "refuge of lies" it is, that tells the sinner his poor attempts at good works can give him heaven. But whilst he spoke of the love of God who sent His son into the world, that believing on Him we should not perish, He warned them too, of a surely coming judgment, and implored them to come to Jesus before it was too late.

Concluding in deeply solemn tones which thrilled through the hearts of his hearers, he related the following incident from his own life, which may have a warning voice even to some in our more privileged land.

"Brought up by a truly godly mother, who, from my earliest childhood tried to lead me to Jesus, I was never without serious impressions. I wished my mother's Saviour to be mine, and I

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admired the beauty of Christ as seen in her life. But though I earnestly desired to be a child of God like her, some day, I still kept putting off the moment of deciding for Christ.

And so my boyhood passed away. The time was drawing near when I must leave my home and go out in the world, and I was yet unconverted, out of Christ, notwithstanding my mother's constant, earnest pleadings. At length, God Himself spoke to me through a warning dream. It is now more than thirty years ago, but it is as vivid to my mind as if it were but yesterday.

I dreamt one night that I was busily engaged at my studies with the tutor, my mother sitting at my side. It was mid-day, when light should have been at the brightest; but suddenly the sunshine faded away, and a deep gloom overspread the heavens. Awe-struck I arose, and groping my way towards the window, flung it open, and stood looking out into the ever increasing darkness, which became a darkness that might be felt. In the far distance I descried one tiny luminous speck, coming straight from heaven, which steadily increased in brilliancy as I gazed upon it. A terrible foreboding seized me. 'Can this be the coming of the Lord?' I exclaimed. This was no new thought to me; for my mother in her solemn warnings had often told me He was coming again, begging me to be ready to meet Him.

I stood transfixed, unable to remove my earnest gaze from the bright light, which seeming to overpower the darkness, grew larger and larger, and came nearer and nearer, until I saw distinctly in the midst of the glory the Person of the Son of God Himself, and knew that my worst fears were realized.

Shining angels issued from that glorious centre, and sped downwards, entering one dwelling or another, wherever the Saviour's blood-bought ones were to be found. I watched the heavenly messengers' returning, some leading but one, others two or three, of the saints into the presence of the Lord, and I saw the sweet reception of each one by the Saviour--the look of tender love and welcome that He gave them--and understood that they had indeed entered into fulness of joy. My soul was filled with longing to share such glorious happiness, but I knew I was not ready. Oh! if I could but recall a few hours of that precious time, which God in His long patience had given me--now gone forever!

I would gladly have looked longer at those faces lit up with such holy rapture; but another scene attracted my attention and riveted my horror-stricken eyes--a scene of misery, desolation and woe going on in the blackness beneath. Lost souls who in that terrible hour had vainly sought to hide themselves from the wrath of the Lamb, were cursing God, and railing against

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Him, as the inevitable judgment overtook them. I heard them blaspheming His name as they were hurried to perdition, into the outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Dear friends, I beg you to remember that this is but a dream, and so to bear with some details that are not scriptural. It is not the angels who shall come to lead the redeemed into the Lord's presence. You will see if you turn to 1 Thess. 4, 16-17 that He will not entrust this mission to any other, but that He Himself will descend from heaven with a shout and call His own to join him in the air. The terrible judgment that will fall on the wicked will not take place until after the children of God are safe at home in the Father's house, far away from this scene of woe. However, in my dream, God in His grace purposing thoroughly to arouse me, brought vividly before me all the horrors of the damned, at the same time that he showed me the blessedness of the saints. It was truly an appalling moment. I cried aloud in a fever of anxiety for that mercy which I knew had been so freely offered me a little while before. Mercy from which I had then turned away in indifference, but now realized to be of such eternal value—the salvation I had delayed accepting when it was within my grasp. I besought for but one hour more.

But even as I called upon God, I felt, in my anguish, that there was none to hear; the prayer came back as an idle echo to my own bosom. I knew it was too late; the day of grace was over, the day of judgment had begun!

My eyes again sought those bright messengers of the Lord. One of them must come to our home, for there was undoubtedly *one* child of God there. A faint hope arose within me that when the messenger came for that one, there might be yet mercy for another; that perhaps (not having positively refused salvation, though so guilty in delaying to accept it) I might find forgiveness and be caught up with her to join the glad throng around the Lord.

The door opened, and a radiant angel stood before us, his face beaming with the love and peace of Him from whose presence he had come. I felt the decisive moment had arrived, and that my fate was sealed. How many of the inmates of that room would he call? Beckoning to my mother, the angel said, 'Follow thou me,' and she arose up and quickly followed him.

Will he call but one? Has he no word for me? Oh! how gladly would I go too. As a poor suppliant, my entreating eyes were on the angel's face, but not one look or word had he for me. It was the voice of my loved mother that pronounced my doom as she left me for ever. At the door she turned, and casting on me an

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earnest look that pierced my very soul, she said in sorrowful tones, 'My son, I often spoke to you of this, and told you that if you would be saved you must believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; now it is too late! *Too late!* The door closed, and she was gone, leaving me with the burning words ringing in my ears 'too late!—too late!' I sank down in an agony of grief, weeping as if my heart would break. Nothing remained for me—all had vanished in one moment—both earth and heaven—my mother and the Lord. In the utter depths of my misery I awoke!

Awoke to find the pillow drenched with my tears. What! a pillow, a bed! Then this scene had been but a dream. It was not yet for me to lift up my eyes in hell, dragged away from eternal light by those fearful heralds of judgment.

'Depart from me ye cursed' had not yet been said. Those terrible words 'too late! too late!' were not yet true. 'The ransomed saints were not yet gathered into the Father's house. One golden hour was still mine; not one moment of it must be lost. I sprang out of bed and casting myself on my knees before God, with many tears cried for mercy, while I thanked Him that He had given me one hour more in His day of salvation.

Blessed be God! there was yet time left for me to find Christ, to be washed in His precious

blood, and to live henceforth unto Him who died for me, while watching for His coming."

Dear reader, has this story of the French preacher no voice for you? you who are yet without hope and without God in the world. Oh! delay not to come to Jesus while there is time. Do not put it aside only as a dream, for there is a solemn lesson in it. Christ is surely coming again; the cry "Behold the Bridegroom cometh!" has sounded. Is there oil in your vessel, and with lamp trimmed are you going forth to meet Him? How will it be with you when He calls His saints to join Him in the air?

Oh flee to Christ while He is still calling in His tender love.

DEAR reader, do not, we beseech you, be like Israel of old who entered not into the promised land because of unbelief. Believe the *word* of God that *you* are a sinner, because He says "*all* have sinned." Believe the *love* of God, that when He knew that the death of His own Son was the only way whereby He could righteously save sinners, He gave Him up to death. (Rom. 8-32.) And believe this love was for *you*. Yes, for *you*, because you are a sinner. This is a faithful saying and worthy of *all* acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. (1 Tim. 1, 15.)

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FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

THE GROUND OF FORGIVENESS.

WE know well that God is righteous, and that if He forgives sins, He must do it consistently with His own nature and character—He must be *righteous* in doing it. The woman that was a sinner, knew that Jesus forgave her sins, that God forgave in Jesus, but she could not have explained why, or on what ground. But God has been pleased to reveal not only the *fact* of forgiveness, but the *ground* of it as well. And this, the Scripture teaches us, is the *death and resurrection of Jesus*. When Jesus commissioned His disciples to go and preach repentance and remission of sins among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem, He connected it distinctly with His suffering on the cross, and His resurrection from the dead the third day. He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke xxiv., 46, 47). Again, when man has been proved to be without righteousness, God's righteousness in passing over the sins of His people of old, and in remitting the sins of those who now believe in Jesus, is declared in the blood-shedding of Jesus, as it is said, "Whom God hath set

forth a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission [passing over, margin] of sins that are past through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time His righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii., 25, 26.)

Thus the cross laid the righteous ground for forgiveness and justification. God passed over in forbearance the sins of old Testament believers. He forgave those who believed, but their sins were not put away out of God's sight. He passed over them for the time, in forbearance, waiting for the time when all should be righteously settled at the cross in the death of Jesus, the great atoning Victim. The cross is the ground of all God's dealings in grace. He looked forward to the cross and forgave Enoch, Noah, Abraham, David, and all believers of old, passing over their sins till He should lay them on Jesus at the cross. He looks back to the cross now, and forgives and justifies all who believe in Jesus. At the cross God's hatred of sin was expressed in the judgment which fell on Jesus. His righteousness, His holiness, His glory and His majesty were made good in that awful death. God was glorified in Him who was able to sustain, in His own person, the full weight of that glory in the judgment of sin, so that a righteous way was opened up for the full outflow of God's

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love and grace in the forgiveness and justification of the guilty sinner who believes in Jesus. In virtue of the blood-shedding of Jesus, God is righteous, absolutely righteous, in remitting the sins of the vilest sinner who believes. "It behoved Christ to suffer." Righteousness required it if the sinner was to be saved. There was no other way. "The Son of man *must* be lifted up." Awful necessity on account of man's utter ruin, and the righteous requirement of a holy God.

But God Himself provided this divine remedy. God in love gave His Son for them; and the Son gave Himself. "God so loved the world." "God is love." The cross is the proof. There unrighteousness, hatred, malice, outrage, and every horrible wickedness were met by God giving His Son as an atoning victim, and the Son giving Himself to suffer, the just for the unjust, that He might bring them to God. Oh! wonderful story of love. Every demand of righteousness was met by God's own provision. And what remains for the sinner? Just to look on as a self-judged sinner, and take it in as all for himself. "There is life in a look," and there is forgiveness, sure and eternal, on grounds of righteousness, to the sinner who believes.

THE COMMISSION TO PREACH FORGIVENESS.

This was given only after the ground was laid. Before the cross, individual cases of for-

giveness are mentioned in connection with Jesus, which show what was in the heart of God for man; but after the resurrection of Jesus, when the ground of forgiveness had been laid in righteousness through His death, the disciples were commissioned to preach repentance and remission of sins the world over. The door was now open to all. They were to begin at Jerusalem—the very place where they had betrayed and murdered the Son of God. The blood that was shed by wicked hands could wash away the very guilt that drove the spear to the Saviour's heart. It cleanses from all sin. In virtue of it, God is righteous to forgive *all who believe*. And the good news was to be proclaimed *everywhere*—proclaimed to *all nations*.

Repentance is associated with it, because the message was to be addressed to *sinners*, and God expects guilty men to own the truth as to their condition. He must have *truth* in the inward parts. Hence if we stand before God for forgiveness of sins, we must stand there according to truth, as confessedly guilty and self-judged sinners. It is such, God meets at the mercy-seat, to absolve them from their sins.

The message of forgiveness was to be preached *in Jesus' name*. *Jesus* had wrought the work of redemption. *Jesus* had made atonement. *Jesus* had glorified God, and finished the work given Him to do, and it was to *Jesus* all power

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in heaven and earth was now given. *Jesus* sends the messengers, and they proclaim the message in *His name*.

Thus the disciples acted at the beginning, in obedience to His will. They began at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, the day the Holy Ghost descended, enduing them with power from on high. The multitudes were gathered at the feast; Jews and proselytes from every country around. God took this occasion to spread the message far and wide. The disciples spoke by the Holy Ghost with new tongues, and declared the good news to every man in his own tongue. The presence of the Holy Ghost, bearing witness from heaven, of Jesus exalted as Lord and Christ at the right hand of God was there attested. The truth forced itself upon the minds and hearts of multitudes. They were pricked to the heart. What could they do? They had rejected and murdered Christ their King, and now He was on the throne of power. God had raised Him up from the dead. And now what might they expect from Him whom they had thus outraged? "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" was their anxious cry. And then they heard the message Jesus had commissioned His disciples to declare. "Repent, and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Would they own their guilt?

Would they be identified with the name of Him they had nailed to the cross as a malefactor? Then they should be forgiven, and they would also receive the Holy Ghost, God's seal, declaring they were now His, by redemption. Three thousand received the glad word that day and were received into the company of the saved. And many thousands more were soon added. Blessed fruit of the travail of Jesus' soul and the testimony of the Holy Ghost, in the very place where Jesus' blood was shed by wicked hands!

But the message was to go beyond the Jews. The great work of atonement had glorified God as to sin, and opened the door of salvation to all men. The heart of God was now free to express itself fully and gladly in forgiving any poor penitent, far or near, high or low, rich or poor, that simply took the place of a confessed and needy sinner. So the message must go everywhere. The Gentiles, as well as Jews and Samaritans, must hear, and hearing, get the knowledge of full and free pardon, through faith in Jesus.

GOD'S word plainly declares that man by nature is wholly corrupt, that from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot there is not so much as a speck of moral soundness.

Deep as is man's ruin, the love of God is deeper still. Black as is his guilt the blood of Jesus can wash it all away.

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AN INCIDENT IN THE REBELLION
OF 1885.

OF those who read this paper, some will be able to recall, with more or less interest, the rebellion of the half-breeds in the Canadian North-West Territories. Many can speak with personal feeling of dear ones who were called from their homes to take part in the struggle, and some yet mourn over brave lads who went off filled with pride and hope, but, alas! never to return.

Among others was one young man, a stranger in this country, but attracted, perhaps, by the excitement, he joined the troops, and was soon at the seat of action. He was a grave, serious minded young man; sober, thoughtful, well educated, of good family, but with all his good qualities he lacked one thing—he was a stranger to God. He had never come to Him, owning himself hopelessly lost, and casting himself by faith on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.

It was not long before he was engaged in a slight skirmish, in which he was fatally wounded. They carried him to a small tent and all that was possible was done for him; then he was left alone on his little bed.

Soon a second was brought in, also wounded but not dangerously. He was touched by the moans of the first comer, who was well known to him, and tried to say something soothing. The dying man opened his eyes and looking

beseechingly at him said, "I am dying, going, I know not where. Couldn't you make a prayer for me? I don't know how to pray,"—but the boy only shook his head. He could do many things; he was looked upon as clever and smart by his companions, but he had never prayed,—he knew not how. "I cannot pray," he replied. "Then could you say me a text, *one* little text?" but again he shook his head. "I would gladly," he afterwards remarked, "have given all I possessed to remember one verse of scripture, but I could not."

And so that young life passed away with none to tell of the wonderful love of God in giving His only Son to die for poor sinners. What passed between him and his God we know not, in that last sad hour; he spoke to none on earth again.

We would not take from the solemnity of this sad incident, which is strictly true, by adding words of our own, but would simply put to the reader this question—"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul"?

WHATEVER your state, come to Jesus, and you will find that He is always gracious, that He has always grace. The disciples would send some away when they brought young children to Jesus. They thought that He must not be approached. Jesus took them up in His arms and blessed them.