

# THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND HIS LAMBS

BY

H. FORBES WITHERBY

**The Book Society (1750)**  
for the circulation of *Biblical literature*

4 Eccleston Place, Victoria,  
London, S.W. 1

THE GOOD SEED SERIES

**THE SEEKING SAVIOUR**

By DR. W. P. MACKAY

**HOW AND WHEN**

**Do we Become Children of God ?**

50 ANSWERS BY WELL-KNOWN MEN

**THE GOOD SHEPHERD**

By H. FORBES WITHERBY

**ABUNDANT GRACE**

By DR. W. P. MACKAY

**FORGIVENESS, LIFE, AND GLORY**

By SIR S. ARTHUR BLACKWOOD

**WONDROUS LOVE**

By D. L. MOODY

## PREFACE

THE stories related in this book are all quite true. None of the boys and girls spoken of are made-up children, they are—or were—real boys and girls; we say are or were, for though some are children still, the greater number are grown up to be men and women. In a few instances, little children of whom our book speaks are no longer here on earth; but we have not written about children dying, as our object is to tell you how to LIVE, and to live for the Lord Jesus Christ. If we are His, and live for Him, we shall be ready to go to Him whenever He may call us.

We desire, first, dear young friends, that you may know the Good Shepherd in your hearts, and that you may each one heed His voice. Next, our desire is to show you how you may live to please Him.

Many of the stories which are retold here were written by friends, and used in a children's magazine. We have woven them into our book, and thus various pens contribute to make THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND HIS LAMBS a kind of little network, having running through it in bright colours the Name of Jesus, and the words of little children who love Him.

H. F. WITHERBY.



## CONTENTS

| CHAP.                                  | PAGE |
|--|------|
| I. JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD . . . . .  | 9    |
| II. LOST SHEEP . . . . .               | 19   |
| III. THE WAY OF SALVATION . . . . .    | 31   |
| IV. SOME WORDS ABOUT FAITH . . . . .   | 47   |
| V. FREE FAVOUR AND MERIT . . . . .     | 54   |
| VI. THE HOLY LAW OF GOD . . . . .      | 65   |
| VII. COME TO JESUS . . . . .           | 75   |
| VIII. DO NOT DELAY . . . . .           | 81   |
| IX. BROUGHT TO GOD . . . . .           | 92   |
| X. KEPT BY GOD . . . . .               | 101  |
| XI. " AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN " . . . . . | 116  |
| XII. CONFIDENCE AND PRAYER . . . . .   | 129  |
| XIII. SERVING THE LORD . . . . .       | 142  |
| XIV. AS DEAR CHILDREN . . . . .        | 155  |
| XV. THE LORD'S COMING . . . . .        | 172  |

THE TWENTY-THIRD PSALM  
(METRICAL VERSION)

THE Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want :  
He makes me down to lie  
In pastures green ; He leadeth me  
The quiet waters by.

My soul He doth restore again ;  
And me to walk doth make  
Within the paths of righteousness,  
Even for His own name's sake.

Yea, though I walk in death's dark vale,  
Yet I will fear none ill :  
For Thou art with me ; and Thy rod  
And staff me comfort still.

My table Thou hast furnished  
In presence of my foes ;  
My head Thou dost with oil anoint,  
And my cup overflows.

Goodness and mercy all my life  
Shall surely follow me ;  
And in God's house for evermore  
My dwelling-place shall be.

# THE GOOD SHEPHERD

## CHAPTER I

### JESUS, THE GOOD SHEPHERD

“ I am the Good Shepherd ; the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep.”—JOHN X. II.

No master would choose for a shepherd a man who was not trustworthy. A shepherd needs to be very watchful. He must know how many sheep he has ; he must know each day if one be missing ; he must attend to their health and preserve them from danger, and he must lead them from pasture to pasture. Sheep are very helpless, and are prone to wander, therefore a shepherd should be kind and patient. And if these things are so in our country, where there are no lions, bears, or wolves to carry off the sheep and lambs, and no robbers to steal away the flocks, how much more important is it that where there are wild beasts and robbers, as is the case in the Eastern countries, the shepherd should be a man in whom trust can be placed

In the Bible God calls those whom He has set over the souls of others, shepherds ; and He calls the people over whom the shepherds are set, sheep. God called the teachers of Israel shepherds. He set them to watch the souls of His sheep, the children of Israel. But many

of these shepherds were not faithful servants of God, and God pitied His sheep, and was angry with the shepherds. These are His words :

“ Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds ; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves ! should not the shepherds feed the flocks ? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed : but ye feed not the flock.

“ The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost ; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them.

“ And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd : and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

“ My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill : yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them ” (Ezek. xxxiv. 2-6).

If you read men and women, and boys and girls, instead of sheep, you will better understand how grieved was the God of love because those men, who ought to have fed the children of Israel with His words, and to have taught them of Him, were so self-seeking and so indifferent as to their soul-good. And, dear children, the God of love still looks down from heaven and watches the ways of all who call themselves shepherds, and He is grieved with such as do not truly care for His sheep. It is a very great responsibility to be one of God's shepherds, and God requires of such as take up this service that they carry out the wishes of their Master.

Some eighteen hundred years ago the blessed Son of God came down to this earth, where those shepherds were who cared not for God's flock. He came to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to deliver them from the wolf, and to fold them to His bosom. He came to gather God's sheep together. In Him the Father placed all confidence. He did all His Father's will. He carried all His wishes to the sheep.

Jesus bears the name of THE GOOD SHEPHERD. None other shepherd has such a name. He was never selfish. He did not come to make a gain out of the poor sheep. Oh, no; He came to heal the sick, to bind up that which was broken, and to bring again those who were scattered. Shepherds may serve for hire, but the Good Shepherd serves for love. Jesus served His Father and the sheep, because He loved His Father's will. He came from His bright home in heaven to toil and to suffer upon earth, because He so loved us.

We may know why Jesus bears this beautiful name of the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd is so very kind and so full of love and pity, that He "*giveth His life for the sheep.*" He loved His sheep so much that they were dearer to Him even than His own life. How wonderful is His love to us. The sheep had wandered away so far from God that the only way to bring them to God was for the Shepherd to give the most precious gift for them—even His life. The sheep were so sadly unclean, they had become so defiled by sin, that there was none other way of making them clean, save by His precious blood. A sheep cannot wash itself, neither can a sinner wash his sins away; but all who have Jesus for their Shepherd, can truly say: "He who

loves us, has washed us from our sins in His own blood " (Rev. i. 5). Each sheep and lamb of the Good Shepherd is " whiter than snow."

" Christ died ; then I'm clean,  
Not a cloud above, not a spot within."

The Good Shepherd not only gave His life for the sheep, not only did He buy them to be His own flock, but *He willingly laid down His life*. It was entirely of His own free and gracious will that Jesus died. No one could take His life away from Him. In the free full love of His heart He yielded up His life. He had power to lay it down. None save the Son of God could thus speak. We have no power to lay down our lives, for it is appointed unto men once to die. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, came to this earth, and, as a man, willingly laid down His life for the sheep.

The Good Shepherd thus explains why He came to this earth and died for us. "*I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*" He gave His own life for His sheep, and gives His life to the sheep. He died for them, and they live in Him. All who believe on the Lord Jesus have everlasting life. This life is the gift of God. The Lord Jesus gives to His own new life, eternal life, in all the abundance of His being in heaven, where He will die no more. Abundance means plenty. A sickly little flower is alive, but a healthy spreading plant has life in abundance. The Lord gives His own life in very great fulness to His people. And those who, by the power of the Holy Spirit of God, know this, in their hearts, are like the healthy spreading trees ; doubting Christians are like the sickly plants.

Now, we said that God requires of His shepherds

that they should do His will. The Good Shepherd did God's will. He thus speaks of Himself in all His love for the flock: "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life" (John x. 17). So deeply did the Father love the sheep that Jesus, by dying for them, gave the Father a new motive for loving His Son. I need not tell you that the Father ever loved the Son; He ever was in the bosom of the Father; but think of it, such was the love of the Father to the poor, foolish sheep, that He found a special delight in our gracious Saviour, because He died for us.

The prophet Isaiah speaks very sweetly to us of the Good Shepherd. He says, "He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom."

If your father had you in his arms, you would feel quite safe, because you could trust your father's strength. I have never heard of a very little child saying, "Father, don't let me fall." It is only older children who have such fears; when in their father's arms, they will say sometimes, "Don't drop me, father!" If you repose on Jesus' strength, you will never fear that He will let you fall. Think of what He has said: "Neither shall any pluck them out of My hand." A very strong robber might pluck the lamb out of the shepherd's arms, but Jesus is almighty, and none can steal us away from Him. No one—neither Satan, nor any one else—can steal away from the Good Shepherd the least of the little lambs who belong to Him.

If you had your head upon your mother's bosom, you would feel quite happy, because of your trust in your mother's love. I never yet heard of a tiny child saying, "My mother does not love me." But Jesus' love is stronger even than a mother's, and He loves

His own too much even to part with one of them. He loved His own so much that He died for them, and now that He has risen from the grave, and gone back to glory, He says, "Because I live ye shall live also."

In the Eastern countries, the shepherd knows his sheep so well that he calls them all by their names; and the sheep know their names, and their shepherd's voice. They will not follow a stranger. Once a traveller wished to prove whether it was really the voice of the shepherd that the sheep knew; so he put on the shepherd's clothes and learned the names of the sheep; then he drew near to the flock, and called. The sheep looked at him, but not one of them moved near to him; they did not know the voice of a stranger.

All the sheep and lambs of Jesus' flock know His voice; those who do not love Him do not know it. This it is which makes the difference between a child who is saved and a child who is not saved.

*"I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine,"* are the Lord's words.

You will observe that Jesus first speaks of His knowing His sheep; next, of His sheep knowing Him. Sometimes we find His people very much distressed, and doubting whether they are His people; but the happy thing is to rest in the Lord's love to us, and not in our love to Him. A little boy was once asked, "Do you love the Lord Jesus?" He did not make any reply, upon which his friend asked him, "Does the Lord Jesus love you?" When the little boy immediately replied, "Oh! yes, indeed He does." The Good Shepherd knew His lamb, and His lamb could say

with a thankful and loving heart, that Jesus loved him.

Some of the sheepfolds on the moors and hills of England and Scotland have thick stone walls and a doorway, and the sheep are driven into them for shelter during winter. In the Eastern countries the sheepfolds have very high walls, and a door which opens from the inside; into these folds no wolf can come, and the sheep are secure from robbers. The porter inside keeps the door, and does not admit strangers. God's people Israel were like a flock in such a fold.

Jesus said: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out."

We read in the ninth chapter of St. John, of a blind man whom Jesus found, and to whom He gave sight, and whom He made one of His sheep. Jesus put some clay upon this poor man's eyes, and bade him go and wash in the Pool of Siloam, which name means Sent. The man did as he was bid; he went and washed, and came seeing. When we obey the words of Jesus, the Holy Spirit opens the eyes of our hearts, and we, too, come seeing. Now the blind man, you may be sure, would wish to see the One who had opened his eyes—for all who love Jesus wish to see Him—and one day Jesus found him, and asked, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" and when the blind man knew that it was Jesus, he worshipped Him. So the man became one of the sheep of the Good Shepherd.

The poor man had been a sheep in the sheepfold of

Israel, where the idle and selfish shepherds with whom God was angry were, and Jesus was going to lead him out of that sheepfold, in order that he might follow Him alone.

Jesus said, "*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*" There were many people round about the Lord when He called the blind man, but they neither heard His voice nor followed Him. They went on in their own ways, refusing to listen to what the Lord said. They thought they could see, but their souls were blind to Jesus.

We cannot follow the Shepherd until we are amongst His sheep. The first thing, then, is to hear His voice. "Come unto Me" are His words, and whosoever listens to and obeys these words of Jesus is one of His sheep.

Learn these *six* beautiful things that Jesus says about Himself, as the Good Shepherd :

"I am the Good Shepherd: the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep."

"I lay down My life for the sheep."

"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

"I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand."

"I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine."

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

And learn also the *two* things which the Lord says about His sheep :

"My sheep hear My voice."

"They follow Me."

If you listen to His voice, and follow Him, you will be saved from every snare. What more can be wished for from a sheep than that it should obey the voice and follow the steps of its shepherd ?

Think what it cost the Lord Jesus to buy His sheep for Himself. He tells us that the hireling flees from the wolf, because he is an hireling. That is to say, the shepherd who minds the sheep for hire, and not for love, would not risk his life for them. But Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost for love, and He gave His life for us in love. He became a man to seek us, and He bought us with His own blood, because He loved us.

What could a sheep, or a whole flock, do against one wolf ? Satan is the wolf. Satan likes to drive away and scatter the sheep. Poor little proud boys and girls, who think that they can live and die without the Good Shepherd ! They cannot save themselves. They will be driven into the terrible pit. May the Lord save them.

Each of our dear young readers is either safe in Jesus' bosom or in danger of the wolf. Which is it with you ?

One more word upon the Good Shepherd. His sheep follow Him, and " He *gently* leads." He is very kind and tender, very gentle. He knows how weak and foolish His lambs are. But He loves them none the less. Oh, no ! He gently leads them. We do not expect that you who love Him will be all at once very great Christians ; but we do hope that you will *follow* the Lord. " Thy gentleness hath made me great " (Ps. xviii. 35), said King David. Jesus does not drive His sheep. He is full of patience.

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Wandering I was and weary  
When the Saviour came unto me,  
For the paths of sin were dreary,  
And the world had ceased to woo me ;  
And I thought I heard Him say,  
As He came along His way—  
“ Wandering souls, oh, do come near Me,  
My sheep should never fear Me :  
I am the Shepherd true ! ”

At first, I would not hearken,  
But put off till the morrow :  
But life began to darken,  
And I was sick with sorrow,  
And I thought I heard Him say,  
As He came along His way—  
“ Wandering souls, oh, do come near Me,  
My sheep should never fear Me :  
I am the Shepherd true ! ”

At last I stopped to listen ;  
His voice could ne'er deceive me,  
I saw His kind eye glisten,  
So anxious to relieve me ;  
And I was sure I heard Him say,  
As He came along His way—  
“ Wandering souls, oh, do come near Me,  
My sheep should never fear Me :  
I am the Shepherd true ! ”

I thought His love would weaken,  
As more and more He knew me ;  
But it burneth like a beacon,  
And its light and heat go through me ;  
And I ever hear Him say,  
As He goes along His way—  
“ Wandering souls, oh, do come near Me,  
My sheep should never fear Me :  
I am the Shepherd true ! ”

## CHAPTER II

## LOST SHEEP

“ For ye were as sheep going astray.”—I PET. ii. 25.

GOD says we are lost. Is this a hard lesson to learn? Do you believe that you are lost?

Let us look at a few texts of Holy Scripture which teach us that we are lost.

We will choose our first text from the children's chapter in the Gospel by St. Matthew. Do you remember which chapter that is?

The Lord Jesus called a little child, who loved Him, to Him, and setting him in the midst of His disciples, He told them that whoso should offend one of the little ones who believe in Him, “ It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

How could a grown man “ offend ” a little child? By making him “ stumble.” Not by making his feet stumble. It would be a very unkind thing to put a stone in the way of little baby's feet, just when she was beginning to try to run, and to make her stumble and fall, as the little arms were stretched out to reach her mother. But how great the wickedness of making a little one who loves Jesus stumble on his way to Him! And teaching children what is not true about the Lord is like putting a stone in the way of baby's feet, and the wrong things told children about the Lord are

stumbling-stones by which many a child has fallen and been turned aside from the Lord Jesus.

Jesus showed His disciples how terrible the wickedness of doing this was in His sight, and by the words He spoke about the little ones, as they are recorded for us in the 18th chapter of Matthew, verses 1 to 14, He shows us how He loves children.

Why were the disciples themselves bidden by the gracious Lord, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven?" The answer is given by the Lord Himself, "*For the Son of Man is come to save that which was LOST.*"

How kind are these words! Perhaps when you are troubled over your little difficulties you want a kind heart to help you. Remember that Jesus is near. Grown people should not despise a child's desire to know who Jesus is; let them remember that the Father of the Son has told us of their mighty angels in heaven—"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. i. 14). Now, why is this? For no less a reason than that the Creator of the angels, the Lord Himself, came down to earth to save children. Yes, Jesus shed His blood for children—for "little ones." "Little ones," even as grown men and women, were LOST. And to save the *lost* Jesus gave up His life.

Old or young, we are all lost. There are not two ways of being saved, one for grown-up people, and the other for children. It would be placing a stumbling-stone in your way to heaven if we told you of any other name under heaven as your Saviour than Jesus; or of any other way of having your sins cleansed than by His blood.

When the Lord thus speaks of the *lost* little one, He places Himself before us as a Shepherd, *seeking* that which has gone astray. Jesus says, if the shepherd have lost but "one sheep," he would leave the ninety and nine to seek the lost one, and that with a special joy the shepherd would find that sheep. How happy for your hearts to know that the Good Shepherd has rejoiced over you! And the Good Shepherd's love explains to us the love of God the Father for a little child; yes, the love of the great and the eternal God for lost, helpless children. Jesus Himself teaches us, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish."

These words of Jesus, so tender and so kind, make it a joyful privilege for us to tell you about "little ones" who loved Him upon earth, children whom He found.

There are three other texts, spoken by the Lord, and each having *lost* and *found* in them, which you must also try to remember. You will find them in the 15th chapter of Luke.

"Rejoice with me; for I have *found* my sheep which was LOST."

"Rejoice with me; for I have *found* the piece which I had LOST."

"It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was LOST, and is *found*."

We will now give you a few true stories about children lost and found, as related by different writers.

#### LOST AND FORSAKEN

One calm and sunny evening we started out in search of a lake upon a Welsh mountain, the beauties of which had been described to us as well worth seeing. As we

rose higher and higher, the sun's last beams gradually disappeared, and a kind of gloom seemed to be upon everything. All around us was as desolate and barren as the valley had been wooded and fertile. We wandered on, but seeing no signs of the lake, some of our party proposed going forward to look for it, and I, with one companion, was left behind.

We were walking in silence, when we heard, at a short distance, a strange little noise. We listened, and heard it again and again, and looking in the direction whence the sound came, saw a poor little lamb fast in a marshy piece of ground. Its piteous bleating aroused our sympathies; but, alas, we could not rescue it, for if we had ventured where it was, we, too, should have fallen into the swamp. So, although it made us miserable to leave the tiny creature, we were obliged to follow our friends, and as we moved on the bleating grew less and less distinct.

But that little noise rang in my ears, and I could not help thinking how exactly the lamb was in the position of the sinner; it had wandered afar from the flock, and when the others were called by the shepherd to go down the mountain, the lamb did not answer his call, and so it was lost! And is not this just what we have all done? wandered from the Good Shepherd—gone astray—refused to listen to His voice? Have you, dear little reader, till now, turned away from the Shepherd's voice? If so, you are like the poor foolish lamb—lost!

But I must continue my little story, that you may see how different is the Lord Jesus from the Welsh shepherd. Continuing our walk, we saw the wild and desolate beauty of the lake; and after remaining a short time at the top of the mountain we descended by

another path. We thus met a shepherd, and told him about the lamb, asking him to go and save it.

“ Ah ! miss, I’m sorry to hear this. If it were not so far on in the day I would go and see what I could do, but now it is too late. By the time I could reach the spot it would be dark, so the lamb must suffer for its foolishness.”

“ Then do you think that it can live through the cold night ? ” I asked.

“ Well, miss,” he replied, “ I am afeared not—it’s such a young thing. I ought to a-missed it from the flock, but somehow I didn’t.”

So we passed on ; but this conversation did not soon pass from my mind. I could not forget the poor lamb, and that there was no one who could save it. We could not, for fear of getting into the same danger ; and the shepherd said it was too late.

The Bible says, “ All we like sheep have gone astray ” (Isa. liii. 6). But then the Good Shepherd, Jesus, saw us when we had strayed, and came just where we were, though to save us it cost Him His life. He gave Himself for us.

Then, dear little reader, since Jesus came to you to save you from everlasting death, just believe in Him and trust yourself to Him. He is the Good Shepherd, and how well He deserves that name eternity alone will prove—when He has all His sheep and lambs around Him, not one missing, not one forgotten ! Little reader, do you wish to be one of the lambs of Jesus ? If the answer of your heart be “ yes,” then believe in Him. Do not try to help to save yourself. He will not *half* save you—He will do it wholly, if you do but trust Him. He said of Himself, “ The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep. 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, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

## LOST, AND NOT FOUND

One cold, cheerless Sunday night a poor woman was hurrying down one of the crowded streets of the metropolis, and her face wore such an anxious look that I inquired the cause of her trouble. "I have lost my little boy," said she ; "he went to Sunday school this afternoon, and he has not come home. His father and I are almost distracted, and I am now going to the police station to see if he has been taken there." Perhaps my young readers may know that when the police find lost boys or girls they take charge of them until their friends claim them.

"Let me help you," said I ; so we hurried to the nearest police station. We entered a bare room, where stood several blue-coated police. We told our errand, and a ray of hope lit up the poor mother's face as a policeman pointed to a dark corner of the room, where a little boy was lying upon a bench. His face was towards the wall, his head had fallen on his breast, and he lay fast asleep. The mother hastened towards him, hoping that the little fellow was her boy, but as the flare of the gas fell upon his face, her hopes were crushed. He was not her son. Her sorrow became greater through disappointment, but though weary and dispirited, she hurried to the next station. It was some distance off, and I could not accompany her.

## LOST, BUT ASLEEP

I want you, my young friends, to look at that boy lying upon the form. Such a dear, rosy-faced little fellow

he was, and seemed as happy as possible. He was *lost, yet fast asleep*—lost, but unconscious of it, sleeping as peacefully and quietly as if he were safe in his little bed at home. He had forgotten all about the hard bench, and the blue-coated and brass-buttoned men that tramped in and out of the stone-floored room. He was not disturbed by the sin and misery of which a police station speaks.

I wonder if that sleeping boy is a picture of yourself. Are you unconscious of the dreadful fact that you are lost? that you are away from God, and away from all true peace, and joy, and love? Are you saying, I feel comfortable; I do not feel that I am lost? The little sleeper does not *feel* that he is lost; he appears quite peaceful, but that does not alter the fact that he is lost. And God says all are lost; for all—since Adam left the beautiful garden in which God placed him—are away from God and lost. Perhaps you know that you are lost, but like another little boy of whom I will tell you, you are not troubled.

#### LOST, BUT SELF-CONFIDENT

One Sunday afternoon, as I was leaving our schoolroom, I saw a little fellow lingering behind. He had forgotten where he lived, and as he did not belong to my class, I did not know his name and address.

“Can you point out the direction in which you live, my boy?”

“Oh yes,” he said; “that is the way, sir.”

“Then take my hand and run along,” said I.

Presently we came to a crossing.

“Which is the way now?”

“That way,” he said.

"Are you quite sure?" I asked.

"Yes, quite sure, sir."

So we were soon trotting along again. After a few minutes I again asked him, "Are we in the right way?"

"Oh yes; quite right," he replied.

We now came to another crossing, and I said, "I feel sure that this cannot be the right way." Then the little boy confessed that he did not know where he was. What was to be done? After a little consideration I decided to take him home with me, where he was soon happily engaged enjoying cake and tea. But his parents were full of anxiety. His father had gone in search of him, and having learned that his boy had been seen with me, he hastened to my house, and I cannot tell you how happy he was to find his son. The little boy had taken exactly the opposite direction to that which led to his home. This boy was *lost, but self-confident*. He did not cry, was not troubled, and if left alone would have wandered until the shades of night had proved to him with terrible truth that he was lost. This is a picture of many children. They have a way of their own to be saved, and are confident that it is the right one. Some people say there are a great many ways of being saved, but God's word only tells us of one way, and if you are trying to be saved by any other way than through Jesus and what He has done, you are only getting farther and farther away from God, and if you delay coming to Jesus, the long, dark, terrible night of judgment will overtake you, and then you cannot be saved at all.

#### LOST AND FOUND

Little reader, do you understand what a sad thing it is to be lost? Perhaps the following incident which

happened to me when a child, will help to make it plain.

I was on a visit to some friends who lived in a busy part of London. The children of the family were named Frank and Edith. One day their grandmamma took us out for a walk. Frank and I walked together part of the way, and then he left me to walk with his grandmamma and sister. I did not like walking alone, and thought it was unkind of Frank to leave me. But very soon I forgot the loss of his company, and became interested in the many strange sights that met my view. We were just turning into a large square when my eye was attracted by a shoemaker busy at his work near the door of a cellar. Quite forgetting that my friends had gone on, I stood to watch him, remaining a long while, for I well remember he finished soling and heeling a boot. As the man rose from his work I turned round and thought of my friends, but they were nowhere to be seen. I ran up one street and down another, looking for them in vain. What was to be done? I began to feel—lost! and could keep back my tears no longer. While thus standing at the corner of a street and sobbing aloud, a group of children gathered around me, and one or two ventured to inquire the cause of my grief. I could only sob out, "I'm lost!" Some rude boys seemed to enjoy the sight of my grief, for they laughed and shouted, "She's lost, she's lost!" Ah! they did not understand my sad condition; nor the painful thoughts of my heart. How lonely and helpless I then felt, as I thought of my kind parents and home, and that perhaps I might never see them again.

Many busy people were passing at the time, but only a few stopped to express their pity. Some told me

not to cry, and some said I had better be taken to the police station, but no one offered to find my home.

A long, long time I stood at the corner of that street, getting more and more miserable. But God was caring for me—a poor, lost little girl—and was even then preparing a way to lead me back to my friends.

A rough-looking man came pushing through the group that surrounded me, saying as he did so, “Do you know the name of the street where you live, little girl?”

“Yes,” I replied, wiping away my tears, “and oh! sir, do you know the street?”

“I’ll find it for you,” he answered; “give me your hand and come with me.”

You will say, little reader, that I was very glad to go with the man, but indeed it was not so, for I feared that, perhaps, he did not mean what he said, and again the big teardrops fell from my eyes.

“Well,” he exclaimed, “you are a long time thinking about taking my hand; don’t you want to go home?”

“Oh! yes, sir, I do, but”—and I hesitated.

“Ah!” he broke in, “you don’t like to trust yourself with such a rough-looking man as I seem to be; that’s about it now, isn’t it, little girl?”

“You are so dirty,” I sobbed out.

“That may be,” he replied, “but you may trust me for all that. Are you coming?” he continued, for still I hesitated; “if not, I must leave you to your fate.”

“Well,” I thought, “I can’t be much worse off in going with the man,” so, putting my hand in his, I answered, “I’ll go with you, sir, but I do hope you know the way to Aldersgate Street, and that you will please take me there.”

“You are a queer child,” said he, as we hurried

along, "but don't you fear, I mean what I say; I'll take you safe home."

He was as good as his word. We went by a way I knew not, through many dark alleys and dirty places, but he carefully led me along, lifting me over muddy crossings, and holding me tightly lest I should slip, and very soon I was smiling in the arms of my friends.

Oh! how well it was that I had trusted myself to the kind man's care! I shall never forget my misery when I knew myself lost in London, nor how happy I felt when found.

But several years later I had to experience yet greater misery, and after that still greater happiness. Do you understand what I mean?

All my life I had been going away from God, and when at length I discovered my lost condition I was afraid to take another step. It was then that I learnt that "the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost," and with the eye of faith I looked to Him.

Little reader, unless you have felt that you are lost, you can never know the joy of being found by a loving Saviour.

#### THE FLOCK FOLLOW HIM

Yes, Jesus Christ, th' Eternal Son,  
Came down to take the sinner's place;  
Jesus, all glorious names in one,  
Died to redeem His chosen race.

He died to rescue fallen man,  
And bled for sinners here below;  
Dear children, tell me if you can,  
Do you this precious Saviour know?

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

For Jesus' sheep delight to hear  
Their loving Shepherd's gentle voice ;  
His lambs have an attentive ear,  
And in His sweet commands rejoice.

They follow where He leads the way,  
And in His footsteps seek to tread ;  
They fear from Him to go astray,  
Nor will by other hands be fed.

Now, then, dear children, tell me true,  
Are you to this Good Shepherd known ?  
Is Jesus really feeding you,  
And are you following Him alone ?



## CHAPTER III

## THE WAY OF SALVATION

“ I am the way, the truth, and the life.”—JOHN xiv. 6.

THE word “ salvation ” is used very many times in the Bible.

When the children of Israel escaped from Pharaoh and his host, they praised Jehovah for their salvation ; and when the apostle Paul was in the ship which was wrecked upon the rocks of Malta, he said to the centurion and to the soldiers, “ Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.” Crew and passengers “ all escaped safe to land ” ; theirs was a salvation. But the Bible tells of “ great salvation,” and this is not a salvation from earthly dangers or enemies, or from the death of our bodies ; it is salvation for time and for eternity.

If we speak of salvation we cannot but think of a saviour, and when God tells us of His great salvation, He tells us also of our great Saviour, the Lord Jesus.

When the Lord was born into this world, the holy angel said that the babe should be called “ Jesus ; for He shall save His people from their sins ” (Matt. i. 21). From that day, many, many thousands of both old and young rejoice in their Saviour’s name, and love to speak of Him as “ The Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.”

Ours is a great Saviour. Jesus is God as well as man. He made all things ; “ without Him was not anything made that was made ” (John i. 3) ; but to save us from our sins He stooped to weakness and to

death. In love and grace He became the Sufferer to become our Saviour.

There is no other Saviour for sinners than "Jesus of Nazareth, whom man crucified, and whom God raised from the dead." Every other hope of salvation on which men may trust will prove vain, "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 our present chapter we shall try to make clear to you "the way of salvation," as the poor young girl of Philippi described the preaching of Paul and Silas to the heathen of her town.

We will first illustrate to you what salvation is :

#### SALVATION

"Fire! fire!" cry the passers-by. "Make way!" And in an incredibly short space of time the thronged road is cleared—omnibuses, waggons, cars, pulling aside. The long shout of the firemen is heard in the distance ; it grows louder. Down comes the fire-engine, accompanied by the fire-escape. It dashed by, the brass helmets, shining machinery, throbbing motors, and crimson wheels, and you follow the brigade at top-speed. They are not a moment too soon. The urgent haste was needed ; for from the upper windows the thick smoke rolls out in black volumes, while the roar of the flames and the crackling of the timbers of the lower part of the building make you shudder.

And now there is intense silence in the crowd, for the fire-escape man has fixed his ladder, and is mounting to the uppermost floor. He quickly enters the burning house ; at the further end of that upper room lies a child asleep. It knows not its danger, but only dreams

of strange sounds ; and before it is half awake, the strong man has borne it upon his shoulder to the window. He places his foot upon the ladder, and as he does so, a shout louder than the roar of the fire rises up from the crowd below, welcoming his return ; and down he gently bears his burden clear out of the ruins to safety.

## A SAVIOUR

A fine brave man, with a medal upon his breast, called upon me the other day. " What is that medal ? " I asked. " Read it," said he ; and, engraved upon the medal, I read how many persons this brave man had saved.

A house had one night taken fire, when all the people inside it were in bed, asleep. As they slept the fire burned below stairs, first slowly, then swiftly ; soon the flames took the staircase, and room after room, till they reached the very place where the family slept. When the poor people awoke, they found that they could not escape, and thought they were lost. They could do nothing to help themselves.

But the voice of the brave fireman bade them take courage, for he could save them. He put a long ladder to the top window, and quickly mounted it. He entered the smoke-filled rooms ; led some of the grown persons to the ladder, and helped them down the escape. He snatched up the little children in his arms, and brought them, too, safely through the fire and smoke, and down the ladder into the street. He *saved* them all !

Had he not been strong, and brave, and kind, he could not have saved them, and had he not run very quickly to the burning house with his ladder, he would have been too late, and the father, mother, and poor children would have all been burned up.

As I looked at the brave man, I thought, you are a dear, noble man ; no wonder you are proud of the little medal upon your breast, with the names of the persons upon it whom you saved from the flames !

I also thought of One who is strong and kind—the Saviour Jesus, who saves poor sinners, and who loves to show the names of those He has saved. He left His home above, and made haste to the world where we live ; He found us unable to save ourselves, and you know what He did to save us ; He shed His blood upon the cross ; He gave up His own life for our sakes.

Do you not think that the children in the burning house would quickly run to the arms of the brave man who came to save them ? And do you not think that children run to the kind and strong Saviour to save them ? How safely did the little ones rest in the arms of the strong man ; and how safely do the children who have fled to Jesus rest in Him ! And how they love Him for His seeking and saving them !

The little ones in the burning house could not save themselves ; they could not even climb down the ladder alone ; they needed some one to save them, otherwise they would have been burnt up. You need to be saved likewise, and Jesus, the Saviour, came down to this earth to seek and to save the lost. All you have to do is to run to Him, as the poor children ran to the arms of the brave man who came to their burning house.

Those whom Jesus saves are saved for ever. It is His glory to save them, and He will keep them safely to the end. We shall see Him soon, and bless Him for saving us, and we shall love Him better than we do now.

We trust that these stories have helped you clearly to understand what salvation is, but it may be well to

try to answer a question upon the subject which was put to us by a little girl. Let us, then, read about

LITTLE NELLIE'S QUESTION.

The sands were bright with groups of children one warm, sunny morning in August. I was standing within a happy circle of little boys and girls, who had left off building their sand castles to listen to the simple gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. A little girl, who was paddling in the sea at a short distance, ran towards us. She pushed herself gently through the seated children, and stood before us barefooted with her dress tucked up, holding in her hands a small spade and bucket. She was a fair child, with an expressive countenance. The breeze was blowing her golden curls over her head and face and her little white bonnet. Looking straight up to me, not the least concerned with the other children, who were all staring at her, she asked in a clear manner :

" Please—what—mean—' Saved ? ' I don't know : will you tell me ? " She then paused, puzzled and serious.

I confess that I felt somewhat perplexed to give the clearest answer to a child so young, and about such an important question. Looking to the Lord, I began in this way : " How old are you, dear ? "

" Five," she said.

" And what is your name ? "

" Nelly."

" And where do you live ? "

" London."

" Now, Nelly, listen to me, and I will try to answer your question very plainly. First of all, where did you hear of being saved ? "

"A gentleman who talked to the people on the sands said, 'You must be saved!' Many times he said it."

"Well, Nelly, he must have believed that people were lost, or else he would not have told them, 'You must be saved!'" Then I said, "Are you lost, do you think?"

"No, I am not lost," said my little friend, "for I can see my big brother Bertie and my nurse, and they will take care of me."

"You are not lost to your brother and your nurse, but you have a soul in you which neither you nor any one else can see, and your soul is lost to God and to heaven. Let me try to explain to you why. It is because of sin—because you, little child as you are, have done that which God hates. But the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came down from heaven to save your soul. Do you know, dear Nelly, that though only a little child five years old, you have a heart full of sin? Are you never naughty?"

"Yes," she said. "Sometimes I am very cross, and like to do what I like."

"Well, dear, Jesus saves us from our sins. Do you know, Nelly, how Jesus saves us?"

"No, I don't," gravely answered the child. "Mamma never told me."

"I will tell you then. Jesus is God. He made everything—the seashore and the sand, and He made you. Many years ago, Jesus came down from heaven to this earth. When He was here He loved the little children very much; He took them in His arms and blessed them. He was so gentle, so loving. But the people did not love Him, and wicked and cruel men took Him and nailed Him to a cross of wood. They

pierced His hands and His feet with nails, and put on His head a crown of thorns. All this did Jesus suffer, dear Nelly, to save our souls. And more, too, my child. Ah! I wonder if you can understand! God put the sins of His people upon Jesus when Jesus hung upon the cross, and then God turned away from His dear Son, and His soul was an offering for sin. It was as if you had been very cross, and your mamma was going to punish you, when your brother asked to be punished in your place. So the kind Saviour stood in our stead, and 'by His stripes we are healed.' Oh! that pain of soul, when Jesus bore our punishment, was more dreadful to bear than that of the nails with which wicked men had pierced His hands and His feet.

"Jesus suffered all this to be our Saviour. All who come to Him He receives, and God gives them His Holy Spirit. Oh! how happy you will be through life, dear Nelly, if you will only have Jesus for your Saviour. But," added I to my young yet attentive listener, "I must tell the whole truth. If you turn your back upon Jesus you will not be saved."

We had spoken so long that the rising tide made us run quickly to the cliff.

"On this solid rock we all are safe," said I, "and Jesus in the Bible is called 'the Rock.' Mind, all of you, that your feet stand upon the sure foundation."

"I will love Jesus," whispered little Nelly.

These stories about salvation show you that, when we speak of salvation, we mean not a person saving himself, but a person being saved by some power outside of himself. And this is most true as to our souls. We cannot save our own souls. God would not have sent His Son to be our Saviour if we could have saved our-

selves. Yet, whether old or young, there is something in our foolish hearts which, until God by His Spirit teaches us the truth, is ready to say, "I shall try to save myself."

Such was the language of the little ragged girl of the following story :

" WILL THEY LET ME IN IF I AM VERY GOOD ? "

It was Sunday afternoon, and the classes in the Sunday school were all so busy with their lessons that for some time no one noticed a rough little head peeping in through the half-closed door ; but a teacher sitting near saw it at last, and beckoned the owner of it to her. The child, a girl of ten, came slowly in, seeming half afraid to venture, but reassured by the lady's kindness, she took her seat in the class, and, as she could not read, listened to what was going on, and was evidently interested in the lesson, though too shy to speak. The subject that afternoon was " Heaven," and the teacher spoke of the streets of gold, and the gates of pearl, and the freedom from sin and care, and, in finishing, quoted the verses in Rev. vii. 16, 17 : " They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters : and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." The eyes of the little newcomer were fixed on the teacher as she spoke these words slowly and distinctly, and she said half to herself, " Oh, shouldn't I like to go there ! " Poor child, she knew what hunger and thirst meant, and scorching heat and bitter cold, and pain and tears, too, though her life had been but a short one !

The bell rang for closing school, and a few minutes later the children rose to go ; but the teacher kept the hand of the poor ragged maiden, meaning to have a talk with her before she went away. The little one began the conversation by asking her, " Where is that nice place that you were talking about ? Because I do want to go there. *Do you think they will let me in if I am very good ?* "

The teacher answered her first question, and then told her that she would never be good enough to go to heaven, however much she tried, but that Jesus, the Son of God, had died in order that her sins might be forgiven, and that if she would believe on Him, she would be sure to go there."

" I don't know anything about believing," said the little girl, " but I can be good if I like, and I will, and then I am sure they won't turn me away if I say I have done my best."

The teacher talked to her in vain ; the ragged child said she could not understand, but she would try her own way ; and so they parted—the little one promising to come again the next Sunday, to say how she got on.

The teacher went home, and in her own room she knelt long in prayer for the little stranger who had so interested her.

A few days after, in passing through one of the narrow streets near the school, she saw her little ragged friend, with a very sober face, seated upon the doorstep. As soon as the child saw her, she ran to her, saying, " Oh, I am so glad to see you. I was just thinking how long it would be till Sunday, and now I need not wait. I did so want to tell you that I have been trying these three days, and I can't be good. I've done lots

and lots of naughty things, and I seem as if I can't help it. What shall I do? They will never let me go to that nice home you were talking about."

The lady's home was near, so she took the little one there, that they might have a quiet place to talk. When they reached the house, she said, "So you have found out that you cannot be good of yourself, and I am glad, for now you know that you cannot *save* yourself—don't you?"

"Yes, I'm afraid I can't do anything. I've been a dreadful bad girl, and I am afraid I always shall be. There is not anything good in me."

"No," said the lady, "there is not; and yet we read that nothing that defileth shall enter heaven. But don't you remember how I told you that God knew how wicked we were, and how utterly unable we were to save ourselves, and how He, in His love, sent His own Son to die for us, to bear the punishment of our sin instead of us? And God tells us, that if we believe on Him we shall have everlasting life, and shall live with Him for ever. There is nothing for you to do."

The ragged child was learning a great lesson—one which many wise and grown-up people find very hard to understand—she was learning that she was a lost, helpless sinner. The Holy Spirit of God had shown her that there was nothing good in her. Now, dear young friends, have you learned this solemn truth? Have you read in the Word of God, "In me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing," and believed it? So long as we are seeking for any good thing out of ourselves, we do not believe what God says about us as lost and helpless, and we cannot know the blessing of being saved by the Lord Jesus.

No doubt, when you first began to think of eternity,

of the holy and happy heaven above, and of how you should reach that home—you, like the ragged child of our story, said in the thoughts of your heart, “ Will they let me in if I am very good ? ” and, like her, you were ready to declare, “ I can be good if I like.” But we are not allowed to enter heaven because we are good—no ; nor does God bid us try to be good, and so fit ourselves for heaven ; quite the opposite—God receives us because of what Jesus has done for us, and God loves us in our sins just as we are.

The lady further explained to the poor child what sin is. Sin is doing the things our evil hearts have pleasure in. And she showed the ragged child how there is none that doeth good in God’s sight—no, not one : but that all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. And she told the little girl that God, in His mercy to her, had shown her that she could not be good, as she had said she would be. Then she explained more about Jesus to the child, and showed her what God is as the Holy One—so holy that even the beautiful heavens are not pure in His sight, and the very angels are charged with folly. Ah ! what, then, is man—lost, guilty man ! Then the lady told the little ragged one of the blood which Jesus shed upon the cross ; and how that blood cleanses the sins of all who believe on Him. For God has said this, and what God says is true. And God justifies any one, however black his sins may be, who believes on Jesus. Having thus told the child about God and Jesus, and sin and heaven, the lady said to the eager, listening child, “ Will you not believe on Jesus and be saved ? ”

The child was silent for awhile. So the teacher took her Bible, and read many passages upon man’s sin, and the value of Christ’s blood, and then she knelt in prayer

with the little one. When they rose, she asked again, "Do you believe on Jesus?"

"Are you sure He died for me?" asked the child. And when the gracious words of Jesus, inviting every burdened heart to come to Him, were told her, she cried, "Then I will believe Him—I *do* believe on Him—I am so glad." And she seemed as if she could scarcely contain herself for joy.

The words heading this chapter were uttered in the town of Philippi, in which town the gospel was first preached in Europe.

Let us now come to the personal question: "What must I do to be saved?" It was first asked in Europe one night in a prison, and many thousands of times has it been asked since then.

Read carefully our true tale of the poor ragged boy, and you shall learn the golden words which answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?" May God put this cry into your hearts, and may His Holy Spirit teach you to long earnestly for, and never to rest till you find, the Saviour.

#### THOSE GOLD WORDS

One Sunday a little ragged boy was slowly wending his way along one of the less frequented of the London streets. His eyes were fixed upon the ground, and presently he came to a stop, attracted by the sight of something pretty. It was a card that had been dropped from the Bible of a Sunday-school girl. The boy picked it up carefully, holding it at the edges lest his dirty fingers should spoil it. It was pretty, he thought. The colours of the border were so bright, and the gold letters shone in the sunshine. How he wished he could

read those words, but that was impossible, for the poor child had never been taught.

Fearing some of his companions would come and take his pretty card away from him, the ragged boy put it into his pocket, saying to himself, "I'll get old Molly to read them words to me to-night. I bet they're something good, or they wouldn't have taken the trouble to make 'em so pretty."

So saying, the boy walked on, and being soon after joined by some of his companions, he forgot the card for a time. But in the evening, before he returned to his home, he went to a house in the same court, felt his way up a dark staircase, and opening a door, called out, "I say, Molly, are you there?"

"Yes, come in, Jack," answered a shaky voice.

So he went in, and there by a rickety table, on which stood a rush candle, sat an old woman, trying to read.

"Now, Molly," said Jack, "I want you to read these gold words to me. I don't know any one else as can."

"All right, my boy," answered the old woman. "I'd do more nor that for you, Jack, for you be always ready to do a kind turn for me."

She took the card in her hand, and after admiring it for a minute, read slowly, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

"What does that mean, Molly?" asked Jack.

"I'm afraid I can't tell you, boy. I don't know much about them things."

"But who is the Lord Jesus Christ?"

"I have heard say that He is the Son of God, who lives up in the sky."

"I wonder what 'thou shalt be saved' means—what are we to be saved from?"

“ I think I can tell you that, Jack,” said Molly. “ When I was a child like you I used to go to Sunday school, and I used to learn a few things there, but I have nearly lost them now. I do remember that they used to tell us sometimes that every one who was wicked and didn’t serve God as they ought, would be put into a big fire when they died—a fire called hell, and I expect it is that we want to be saved from.”

“ Well,” said Jack, “ I wish I knew more about that Lord Jesus Christ, that I might believe on Him, ’cause I shouldn’t like to be put into that fire at all. Good-night, Molly.” And putting his card into his pocket again, he went home to bed, but it was a long time before he slept, his mind was so full of the verse on his card.

The next day he made up his mind to try and find some one who would tell him something about Jesus Christ, and when he was going out of the court, seeing Molly in front of him, he asked her if she knew how he could find any one who knew anything about Him? She said there was a gentleman that lived at one of the houses where she sold oranges, who, she guessed, would tell him all he wanted to know, and showing Jack where the house was, she went on her way.

It was some time before Jack could get courage to knock at the door, but he did at last, and it was opened by a servant, who thought he was a beggar, and wanted to send him away. But the gentleman passing near the door, saw him, and asked him what he wanted. Jack pulled out his card, and asked him if he would be so kind as to tell him what those words meant. The gentleman smiled kindly, and taking Jack by the hand, led him into a room, and bade him sit down while he explained the verse.

“ My boy,” said the kind man, “ God made everything. He made this world. He made us. God is a holy God and hates sin. All the bad things we do are sin. And God must punish sin. You cannot hide your bad doings from God, and He knows all your thoughts. But God is love. And He sent His own Son into this world. Jesus is His name. Jesus came here from heaven about 1900 years ago. He came to tell man that God is love. He came also to die for man, and to bear the punishment against sin which we deserve. It was a cruel death, Jack, that Jesus died. Wicked men nailed Him to a cross of wood and hung Him up to die. While He was dying there He was bearing our punishment. God laid our sins upon Him. When He was dead Jesus was put into a tomb, but God raised Him from the dead, and Jesus is now in heaven. He is full of love, my boy, and waiting to receive you. He will forgive all your sins and make you ready for heaven. ‘ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ ”

#### THE MESSAGE OF LOVE

Here's a message of love  
Come down from above,  
To invite little children to heaven.  
In God's blessed book,  
Poor sinners may look,  
And see how all sin is forgiven.

For there they may read  
How Jesus did bleed,  
And die for His dear little ones,  
How clean His blood makes them  
And how that God takes them,  
To be His own daughters and sons.

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

And then if they die,  
He takes them on high,  
To be with Him in heaven above !  
For so true is His heart,  
That He never will part  
From a child that has tasted His love.

## CHAPTER IV

## SOME WORDS ABOUT FAITH

“ Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”—ROM. x. 17.

VERY much of your daily life is carried on in faith.

Faith is the taking into the heart that the things told us are true.

A lady one day said to her little boy of about four years of age that his brother would come home from school on the morrow. The little boy was very pleased, and repeated to one and another that his brother would come the next day. At last some one asked him :

“ How do you know that he will come home ? ”

“ Because mamma said so,” was the child’s reply.

This was faith. The little boy believed his mother’s words, and was perfectly sure that what she had said would take place.

Your father when he leaves you in the morning tells you that he will bring you back a book or a present, and you wait for his return, and when you see him coming to the door you run to meet him, expecting to see the book or the present, which he promised to bring.

What made you look out for the fulfilment of the promise ? Faith ! Faith in your father’s words.

Little children believe what is told them, and the greater part of their lives is of faith. Alas ! older people find that so many things which are said are not true that they often do not believe what they hear. But our chapter is about God, and faith in His word ;

and God never deceives, and never changes ; all that God says is true, and God bids us believe what He says. May you believe God.

Suppose the kind father of whom we spoke, has, true to his promise, brought home a beautiful book and nice presents for his children, and that they begin to say, " Father will not keep his word. We do not believe him ! " How sad it would make their father ! How grieved his heart would be ! And do you think that if those children began to do a great many things—one to fetch his slippers, another to take his stick—that, so long as they did not believe him, what they did would please him ?

And the Scriptures declare, " Without faith it is impossible to please God " (Heb. xi. 6) ; therefore, until we believe God, all that we may do cannot please Him.

We have said that many things which you do day by day are done in faith. The following story will explain this :

#### ELLIE'S JUMP

Ellie was trotting along in the middle of the street, holding fast a candle in her round little hand. She was about three and a half years old, yet seemed perfectly content to run alone down the London street.

" My little child," cried a lady who was passing by, " let me take your hand and lead you home, for you may be hurt all by yourself." And as Ellie ran by the lady's side she told the lady how old she was and where she lived, and that her mother had sent her out to buy a candle, and had given her a farthing, which Ellie had taken to the shop all by herself.

As the lady was thinking what a little mite of a child Ellie was to be all by herself in one of the streets of

great London, Ellie suddenly cried out in a shrill voice, "Mother! Mother!"

"Is this your home, little child?" inquired the lady,

"Yes," she answered.

"But you cannot get down there—down that deep place; you will fall and be killed."

To which Ellie did not reply, but only cried "Mother!" louder still.

The lady, who saw the mother through the window, hard at work ironing, was anxious to see how Ellie could get to her home. And here I must explain that Ellie's mother lived in the bottom floor of a house, and the way to her door was from the area, but as there were no steps from the street to the area, it was necessary to jump down, and the area being, perhaps, four or five feet lower than the road, it was quite a puzzle to the lady how Ellie could reach the door of her home.

As Ellie did not succeed in making her mother hear, the lady also called, "Mother! Mother!" and the woman then left her ironing and came just under where Ellie stood.

"There's a good little child for running mother's errand," said she, and then opening her arms, cried, "and now, *jump!*" and in a twinkling Ellie was safe at the bottom of the area. No steps were required for Ellie to clamber down, but a jump into her mother's arms, and she was safely home.

But suppose Ellie had cried, "I dare not jump," or "I fear mother won't catch me in her arms," would that have been faith? No, but Ellie believed it was a good word for her to jump, because her mother bade her do so. Faith is just taking God at His word and not asking or thinking about it.

When a boy or girl receives a letter, containing an

invitation, there is not generally any questioning whether he or she is really asked to the friend's house. The note is very much prized and heartily believed, and when the time for acting upon it arrives, the invited is waiting to go to the friend's house. And very often does the child joyfully repeat, "I am invited."

#### HOW JOHNNY ACCEPTED THE INVITATION

A young girl came bounding into the room with a little note, saying, "Here, Johnny, is an invitation for you to Mrs. V.'s"; and in a second little Johnny's eyes sparkled at the thought of such a treat. "But is it for me?" he said to his sister, for though the little fellow had often heard of the wonders of the magic-lantern and of the cakes at Mrs. V.'s children's parties, he had never been invited before in all his life. And why do you think he had not been asked before?

His brothers and sisters had often been. Was he a very naughty boy? Was he a poor little sick child? These were not the reasons. Johnny was too little to be asked before, but this year the invitation, so neatly written upon the pretty pink paper, said, "all the children." So there could be no mistake; Johnny was one of the children—one of the *all*; he was therefore quite sure he was invited, and you may guess he was full of glee.

He counted the days, almost the hours, till the wonderful evening should come; he talked about it to his mother, his nurse, and to everybody he met when he was out for a walk; he even told some persons whom he had never seen before that he was going to Mrs. V.'s; he had only one fear, and that was, lest perhaps anything should happen to hinder him going. **Indeed** I feel sure that little Johnny enjoyed thinking

about going to the party more than the party itself, and fancied it would be much more wonderful than it really was.

#### THE LETTER

The Bible is God's letter to us ; it is full of the story of His love ; in it the way of salvation and of happiness is plainly and simply told. And all its blessings are ours the moment we stretch out the hand of faith and take God's word as His very word to us. But is this letter for you ?

A little boy once ran up to a postman, saying, " Please give me a letter."

" I do not know you, little sir," replied the good-natured man, smiling. " Do you know that I am the King's servant, and may only give away my letters to the people they are meant for ? " So the little boy ran back to his nurse, not very happy.

God's messengers carry about His letter of love, and at God's bidding ask sinners to receive His word, so that you need not ask, as did the little boy, " Is it for me ? " for God's letter is addressed to you : " Unto you is this word of salvation sent " is written on the envelope, as it were, and " whosoever " will may be saved.

A very pleasing instance of a child's faith came under the notice of one of our friends not long since. It is as follows :

#### BECAUSE THE BIBLE SAYS SO

A few days ago I met a little girl to whom I said, " Do you know that Jesus loves you ? " Her face lighted up with a simple smile of confidence, and the ready answer came forth :

“ Oh yes, sir.”

“ How do you know that ? ”

“ Because the Bible says so.”

“ But as you speak about the Bible, my little girl, I must tell you that the holy book says that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God, and that there is none righteous—no, not one.”

“ But Jesus said, ‘ Suffer little children to come unto Me,’ ” she replied.

“ But you are a sinner. You have done many naughty things. What makes you think He would receive you ? ”

“ The Bible says He died for sinners, and therefore He died for me.”

“ But that is a very great thing for such a little girl as you to say. How can you be so sure about it ? ”

“ Because the Bible says so.”

“ The Bible also says that Jesus will come again and take His people up from the earth in a moment some day. What will become of you then ? How would you feel if He were to come now, while you and I are talking ? ”

“ I should be very happy.”

“ Why would you be happy ? ”

“ Because He would take me up to be with Him for ever.”

“ And how long have you been able to say this, my child ? ”

“ Some weeks, sir.”

This was childlike faith, and I found that she showed by her ways that the confession of her lips was the real working of the Spirit of God in her soul.

We know that God is love, because the Bible says so, and when we believe God’s word our hearts answer to

its truth. Are you sure that Jesus came to this earth to save sinners? And are you sure that you are saved? You may be quite sure, because the Bible says so.

## BELIEVING ON JESUS

If on Jesus we believe,  
By the Spirit Him receive,  
    We shall see Him face to face,  
    Sweetly, sweetly singing,  
    Glory, glory, singing,  
    Sweetly, sweetly singing,  
Near to Jesus, safe at home.

Thousand thousands will be there,  
Each a robe of white shall wear,  
    And have a harp of gold ;  
    Sweetly, sweetly singing,  
    Glory, glory, singing,  
    Sweetly, sweetly singing,  
Near to Jesus, safe at home.

## CHAPTER V

## FREE FAVOUR AND MERIT

“ To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.”—ROM. iv. 4.

YOU doubtless know what merit means. A scholar who gains a prize carries it home to show to his parents, with the card, upon which is written, that he was at the top of his class, and had passed the best in the school examination. The card has upon it the statement of what the boy deserves—it is the record of his merit. He is very proud of this card, and of the prize which he has won.

You know, too, what free favour means. A boy clambers over a wall into an orchard, and the farmer catches him. The farmer, with a tight grasp of his arm, holds the boy so that he cannot get away. The boy is very frightened, for he knows what he deserves. To the boy's astonishment, instead of punishing him, the farmer speaks solemnly, but kindly forgives him for getting over the wall into his orchard, and then gives him an apple.

The boy did not merit the apple, therefore he would not be proud of it. The possession of the apple would only make him feel how kind the farmer was. The farmer gave the boy the apple as an act of free favour, not because the boy deserved it, but to show to him what free favour or grace means.

We read several times in God's word about free favour, or *grace*, and also about our merit, or *works*.

The good news which God sends us is called :

“ The gospel of the *grace* of God ” (Acts xx. 24).

And the way in which we obtain the benefit of the gospel is by *grace*.

“ By *grace* are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves : it is the gift of God : not of *works*, lest any man should boast ” (Eph. ii. 8, 9).

The story we will now relate very clearly explains this truth :

#### HOW ROBERT GAINED THE REWARD

Robert was a merry, bright-eyed boy, with rosy cheeks like cherries ; his great difficulty was to be obedient, and especially when bidden to sit still.

One day a gentleman offered him a bright shilling if he would remain perfectly quiet for a quarter of an hour ; but, would you believe it ? though the prize was held up before his eyes, Robert could not rest. There was a power within him which, try as he would, set his arms and legs at work, and his tongue in motion. So, as Robert did not comply with the terms upon which he was to gain the shilling, he lost it.

But suppose restless Robert looking at the gentleman and saying to himself, “ He looks smiling and kind, I will ask him to give me the shilling,” then the reward would not be of works, but of grace. It would not be of Robert’s keeping still, but of the gentleman’s giving ; and so it happened : for seeing that Robert had lost the prize by restlessness, his kind friend gave it to the little boy because he loved him.

Now, God holds out a priceless reward for lost sinners, young or old. How is it to be had ? What are the conditions ? If by works, then you must do all that He bids you, and not transgress the least of His com-

mandments. Robert lost his reward through not sitting still for one quarter of an hour, and if you have ever had one wicked thought, or said one wicked word, or done one wicked thing, you have already lost heaven. If your mother bade you go upstairs, and you went with a sulky feeling—if your brother or sister wanted your book or ball, and you were too selfish to let them have it, then you have broken some of the commandments of God, and upon the ground of works you have lost the reward. Obedience must be perfect or the prize is forfeited.

“ But I try to be good, yet find myself very naughty instead,” you say. How is this? Ah! there is something within you which, like the restless spirit in little Robert, makes you, against your wishes, do the very thing you would not do. Can you tell me the name of this something? It is in all, old and young—it is sin.

We commit sin because sin is in us; and this shows us that we are without strength to keep God's commandments. Many foolish people still try to win the prize, although they have broken the commandments. There are many who think that they are better than others, and worthy of heaven. We find the Sunday scholar at times looking at the children who do not attend school with the thought that it is a good thing to go to the Sunday school, and therefore that to be a Sunday scholar is to be near heaven! Ah! this is leaving out what the kind and gracious Saviour has done for poor helpless sinners by dying for them on the cross.

But will you be wise? Robert knew that he did not deserve the shilling, so he began to think whether his friend, who was smiling and kind, would not give it to him. He looked trustingly at his friend, and the

shilling was in his hand at once! Now, dear children, there is One who is a Friend above all others, His heart is most kind, most dear, and He loves you. Who do you think it is? It is Jesus, the beloved Son of God, who showed God's love and His own to sinners, old and young, by coming into this world and suffering for us upon the cross, so that whosoever believes in Him may have the prize. As you look up into the loving face of Jesus you shall learn God's willingness to bless you, and you shall rejoice in the possession of the reward which comes to us by grace, and not by works—by the gift of God, and not by our doings.

One word more. I am sure you who love Jesus will never grow tired of being near to Him, and of thanking Him for His kindness. You will seek by obedience to please Him. The way to please God is to do the things which He has bidden us. God loves and saves and makes us His children; and because we are so dearly loved by God, we should seek to do the things which please Him.

Sometimes we find persons who, while they think they believe it is by God's free favour, and not by merit, that we are saved, yet all the while are mixing in their minds God's grace and their own merit. You may have seen a glass having both oil and water in it. The yellow oil swims upon the top of the water. The reason is, the oil and the water are quite different from each other—one is light, and the other heavy. So grace and merit are quite distinct from each other, and we must not try to mix them together. The Scripture says:

“If by *grace*, then is it no more of *works*: otherwise grace is no more grace” (Rom. xi. 6).

The boy who won the prize obtained it because he

had earned it. Robert gained the reward because his kind uncle gave it to him.

God plainly tells us that no one can earn His favour by works. We call those persons who think that they can merit heaven by their works self-righteous. Some children are self-righteous. We will tell you of one :

#### GOD SAYS I'M A VERY GOOD LITTLE BOY

I once knew a very self-righteous little boy ; when he prayed at night he used to tell God about other people's sins, but never say a word about his own.

One day, when he was about three years old, he was playing in the sitting-room near his aunt, when he accidentally threw down her Bible. She said to him, " Pick it up."

" Why, what is it ? " he said.

" It is God's holy book," answered his aunt.

Taking the Bible up again, and pretending to read it, he said, " God says I am a very good little boy."

You see what he thought God would say to him, and perhaps you may think He would say the same to you, so I want to tell you what God really says in His word to us—to me and to you. He says, " There is none good, *no, not one.*" But it is not only children who think they are good ; grown up people often think so too.

There was a man by name of Job : " He was perfect and upright, and feared God," and avoided evil. Now, was not that a good character ? Job thought so, for he said to God, " I am clean without transgression," that means without wrong-doing. But after that Job says to God, " Behold, I am vile." What a difference from saying, " I am clean," and " Behold, I am vile."

How could this be? If Job was perfect and upright, how could he be vile? I will try and explain it. If you see a book upon the table with a beautiful leather cover, you may say, "What a nice book, how perfect it is"; but supposing you open it and find the inside all black, greasy, and dirty, you would say, "Who would have thought that such a beautiful cover could have such a dreadful inside!" If the book were not opened no one would know what the inside was like, because no light would shine on it; but when the light shines on it, it shows what is in it.

Now, when people looked at the outside of Job, and saw all his ways, they could say he was perfect, and when Job looked on it he thought so too. You will ask, how was it that Job changed his thought of himself? It was when he saw God he said, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (ch. xlii. 5, 6). What a lesson Job had learned! and the little boy of whom I have told you must learn it, too, and I hope that some day he will say, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." You see now how very opposite was this little boy's thought of what God would say to him, from what God really says, "There is none good."

Let us find some texts of Scripture upon this subject. We all know how good Abraham was. He was called "the Friend of God" (Jas. ii. 23). Yet even Abraham was not saved by his works.

"For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it

was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt " (Rom. iv. 2-4).

We all also know of King David. He was the man after God's own heart (Acts xiii. 22). Yet, good as King David was, he was not saved by his works, but by God's favour. It is thus that " David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered " (Rom. iv. 6, 7).

Abraham believed God ; David believed God, and their faith was counted for righteousness, and so shall righteousness be counted to us, " If we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead ; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification " (Rom. iv. 24, 25).

Now when any one, old or young, really believes how good God is, how kind He is to love and to save us notwithstanding all that we are and all that we have done, it is impossible not to love God. And God sheds abroad His love in our hearts by His Holy Spirit, Who is given to us when we indeed believe on Him.

The grace of God to us makes our hearts grateful to Him, and as we think of God's free favour to us, we long and pray that we may do such things as please Him, and we earnestly desire to avoid our old evil ways. Nothing breaks the hard heart like the free favour of God toward us. So it was with

#### SINFUL NED.

There was a boy in our village named Ned Johnson ; he was an orphan, and had been brought up from his

birth by people who did not love him, and who took no trouble to teach him anything that is good.

At the time I first knew Ned he was ringleader of all the bad boys in the neighbourhood, and the first in any piece of mischief they committed. Having heard the sad story of his life, I was much interested in him, and so determined with God's help to try and lead him to the Saviour; hoping, at the same time, to win some of his companions also. It was a difficult task, but I knew that "there is nothing too hard for the Lord," so I did not despair of success. I watched for an opportunity of speaking with Ned alone, and, after talking to him kindly for some time, I asked him if he would come to my class on Sunday afternoon.

Ned laughed, and said I need not expect to catch him inside the Sunday school, for that he would never go there, and, before I could say another word, he had jumped over the wall, and was gone.

For some time after that, my efforts to see him again were quite useless, but one morning, having gone for a walk before breakfast, through a neighbouring wood, I thought I heard a groan, so I turned from the path to discover whence it came. At the foot of a tall old tree I saw a boy lying upon the ground, and going up to him, found a broken bird's nest crushed in his hand, and guessed what had happened to him. The injured lad was Ned Johnson. I found that I could not carry him, so I called a man who was working in a field close by to help me. We took him to the cottage of dear old Matty, a Christian woman, who I knew would nurse him kindly, and then I went for a doctor.

Ned's injuries were great, and it was very long before he was even well enough to talk or to listen to me. I

was with him a great deal, and often sat up with him at night to rest old Matty.

One night Ned opened his eyes, after a long term of unconsciousness. He recognised me, and asked me how I came there, but seemed too weak to say more. The next day, when I went in to see him, he said old Matty had been telling him what care I had taken of him; and he said he could not think why I should do so much for a bad boy like him.

I told him that there was One who had done far more for him than I had.

“Who is that?” he asked.

“You have been lying at death’s door for the past few weeks,” I replied, “and God has been very good to you; He knew you were not prepared to die, so He has spared you yet a season, that you may turn to Him.”

“Yes,” he answered, “that was good of Him, and it was more than you *could* do.”

“But He has done more than that,” I said.

“What?” he asked, looking up at me wonderingly.

“He has given His own only Son to die for sinners, to bear their punishment, that they may be forgiven, and go and live with Him in His own bright home in heaven.”

“No, surely that’s a mistake; He don’t want the likes of me there,” answered Ned.

I did not reply to him, but took my Bible and read passage after passage to prove what I had said, and when I had finished, Ned’s eyes were full of tears, and he had evidently understood it all.

“Can you not believe that He loves you?” I asked; but there was no answer, so I went on reading.

When I stopped again, he said, “It seems too good

to think that Jesus should do so much for such a fellow as me"; then, turning to me, he said, "I never knew before all that you have been telling; I don't think I should have been so wicked if I had known it all, but I will live for Him now if He will help me."

The result of this and other conversations was that Ned really repented of his sinful ways and turned to the Lord. And when he became well and strong again his changed life showed the reality of his faith in his Saviour.

There is nothing like God's free favour for melting the sinner's hard heart. Sinful and guilty as we all are by nature, yet God loves us, and gave His Son to die for us. "God commendeth His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). And repentance—turning to God and turning from sin—must accompany faith. The sense of pardon will soften the sinner's heart.

#### JESUS' LOVE

How loving is Jesus,  
 Who came from the sky,  
 In tenderest pity,  
 For sinners to die;  
 His hands and His feet were nailed to the tree,  
 And all this He suffered for sinners like me.

How precious is Jesus  
 To all who believe,  
 And out of His fulness  
 What grace they receive!  
 When weak He supports them, when erring He guides,  
 And everything needful He kindly provides.

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

How gladly does Jesus  
Free pardon impart  
To all who receive Him  
By faith in their heart ;  
His glory is for them, their home is above,  
And Jesus will fetch them to dwell in His love.

## CHAPTER VI

## THE HOLY LAW OF GOD

“ Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”—ROM. x. 4.

WE have spoken to you of God’s grace ; it may be well to say a few words upon God’s holy law.

When God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, He did so by grace, and after the people had been for some time in the wilderness, God gave them His holy law. You can all say by heart the Ten Commandments, no doubt, so that we need not repeat them here. God told the people what they were to do, and what they were not to do, and God promised blessings to such as kept His commandments, and uttered cursings against those who broke them. But Israel, instead of keeping, broke the law of God.

It is a terrible thing for any one to be under and to break the law of God, for thus saith the Scripture : “ As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse : for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them ” (Gal. iii. 10).

Now God tells us very plainly what is NOT to be had by the law.

*Justification* is not to be had by the law.

“ That no man is justified by the law is evident : for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith ” (Gal. iii. 11, 12).

“ By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be

justified in His sight" (Rom. iii. 20). "A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. iii. 28).

*Life* is not given by the law.

"If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law" (Gal. iii. 21).

God justifies those who believe, and gives them new and eternal life. You may find some difficulty in understanding these texts of Scripture, but learn them, for when you grow older they will prove of great value to you.

For what purpose was the law of God given to Israel? It was given for them to keep. They broke it and they needed a Saviour. Jesus the Saviour has come, and the sinner now is bidden, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved," not "Do this and live."

The holy law of God is not written in the Bible in order that you may try to keep it and so be saved, but by the law you may find how much you need a Saviour. "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully" (1 Tim. i. 8). It would be unlawful for us to try to save ourselves by seeking to keep it.

#### LAW REQUIRES ; GRACE GIVES

Some time ago, a friend of ours called upon a poor woman in London. She was very ill, and her half-starved children were around her crying for bread. It was a cold winter's day, and as our friend walked to the poor woman's house, the drizzling sleet was driven in his face by the bleak east wind.

Now the poor woman owed three weeks' rent, and had nothing to pay. But by the law of the land she was bound to pay every penny just the same. What was to be done?

One of her little children opened the door when our friend knocked. As he entered the room the poor mother's face told her fears. She wept with terror. She thought that he was the agent of the landlord come to demand the three weeks' rent, and to thrust her and her children into the street.

But what was her joy when she found that instead of coming to demand her rent, our friend had come to pay her debts and to provide food for herself and her children.

You can see the difference between the law requiring and grace giving, from this true story.

And God's holy law requires from all who are under it that they shall do right. But suppose that *you*, like the poor mother and her children, *cannot* pay the debt, cannot do what the law requires. What then? Ah! then how sweet it is to trust Jesus, Who comes to us in grace, Who comes from God bringing poor helpless sinners God's rich blessings.

There are grown persons and children, too, who think that they can do a great many good things and so keep the law. They do not feel hopelessly poor, like the helpless mother of whom we have just spoken. Yet such is God's mercy to man, that sometimes He so overrules things that these mistaken persons by really trying to keep the law, as in God's sight, have their eyes opened to the truth, that they have no power within themselves to do what the holy law bids them.

The following story may help you to understand our meaning :

#### A LESSON FROM THE LOOKING-GLASS

Little Johnny was promised by his father a visit to the Zoological Gardens to see the strange creatures there.

The day came, and Johnny, full of impatience to be dressed, was ready some time before his papa could take him. His mother said to him, "Now, Johnny, mind you do not make your best clothes in a mess, for if you do so, you will not be able to go; for your papa will not take an untidy, dirty child with him."

Johnny seemed to listen to what his mother told him, as he ran out of doors to wait, but he soon forgot her instructions, and thought of nothing but his play.

At last his father came; Johnny saw him, and ran to meet him, exclaiming, "See, papa, I am quite ready; do take me to the Gardens."

"But, Johnny," said his father, "look at your coat; how untidy it is, and covered with mud; and how dirty your face and hands are. I cannot take you like that."

Johnny was not at all inclined to believe that he was in such a dirty state, so his father carried him indoors, and held him up before a large looking-glass, whereupon Johnny could not help seeing and owning his condition.

Now, I am sure, if I ask you whether the looking-glass made Johnny's condition any better, you will tell me, no; but it showed him how dirty, and untidy, and unfit for his father's presence he was. Did the looking-glass make him any worse? No, it only showed him what his state was. Perhaps you will ask, what was the good of showing him this? It made the boy feel his condition, and taught him to be ashamed of his dirty clothes and hands.

Now, I will tell you of what the looking-glass reminds me. It reminds me of the law. The law shows us what we are, and how unfit we are for God's presence. The law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with

all thy heart," and "thy neighbour as thyself." Take your place before the looking-glass, and see what you are like. Do you love the Lord with all your heart, and do you love your neighbour as yourself? No, indeed. The law, like the looking-glass, shows us how unfit we are for God's presence; but the law does not make us clean, any more than the looking-glass took away Johnny's dirt. You would not run to a looking-glass to wash your hands. Yet there are children who go to the law to get their souls cleansed. Saying "I must do better; I must try," is going to the law to get clean.

Well, Johnny was washed and dressed again, and then his father took him to the Gardens. And God washes us in the blood of Jesus, and gives us a new dress. What is this new dress? I will tell you. It is the robe of righteousness which God puts upon us when we believe on Jesus.

If we were all perfectly good we should not break God's holy law. But, alas, "all have sinned," and "there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Let us suppose a perfectly good child. His mother bids him not to look into the basket which she puts upon the table. Now, what would you do? Perhaps you would not disobey the commandment, but what would you wish to do? But the child whom we are supposing is perfectly good. He never so much as thinks of looking into the basket, neither does he even so much as wish to do so. Had he been like other children, no doubt something in his heart would have *wished* to look inside the basket, though we will not go so far as to say that he would have broken his mother's command with his hands and eyes and have opened it and peeped into it.

Let us now suppose a thing similar to what once really took place: Elizabeth's mother says to her, "I am going out for an hour; mind, my child, that you do not open the lid on the cupboard."

No sooner has her mother gone out than Lizzie begins to say, "I wonder why mother told me not to open the lid."

If Lizzie had not had evil within her she would not have thus spoken in her heart. After about a quarter of an hour's thinking, Lizzie, hardly observed even by herself, has crept up closer and closer to the cupboard. Presently she is saying over to herself again, "I wonder why mother bade me not to look inside; I wonder what is there?" Then she puts her ear to the cupboard and listens.

Half an hour has nearly gone by; Lizzie's mother will soon be home, and by this time the command of her mother has so stirred up the child's wishes to do what she ought not, that she begins to peep through the keyhole. At last she cannot resist. She opens the lid, when in a moment out flies a bird. It is too late, Lizzie's disobedience has discovered itself.

Had Lizzie been perfectly good she would not have wished to disobey her mother's word. And we, too, all of us, are like her—we have evil and wilful hearts, and thus when God's holy law commands us not to do this or that, our evil hearts are stirred up to wish to do what we ought not. Because of this the apostle Paul says, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. vii. 7).

It is because we have evil hearts by nature that we do evil things, and the law of God was not given to us to make our hearts good, but it shows us what God requires of man, and proves to us how evil we are.

It is very sad when any one tries to be made fit for God's presence by keeping the law. For if we could become righteous before God by doing what the law of God demands why did Jesus die to save us? The holy law of God is like a sword to slay guilty man; but the holy gospel of God gives both righteousness and life to all who believe.

"I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.

"If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Gal. ii. 19, 21).

This chapter treats of a difficult subject, but you must try to understand it. We all have an evil nature, and because this is the case, we naturally do evil things. The holy law of God bids us do good and not to do evil, but it does not change our nature.

Suppose a little child wished very much to have a pet lamb, and her father said, "We have no place where to keep a lamb, Mary, but I will give you a kitten instead."

So Mary's father brings her a pretty kitten. She finds that it drinks milk, and she remembers that lambs take milk. Her kitten is white, and she knows that lambs are white. Mary is very young herself, and she says, "I will try and turn my kitten into a lamb." But in vain does the child offer grass to her pet, and try to make it follow her like a lamb; for kitty puts her claws out and gives quite a cross hiss, and in a moment scrambles up a tree out of Mary's reach. A kitten's nature is different from a lamb's, and Mary finds out that she cannot change it.

Willie is plucking up the daisy roots out of his father's lawn, and he is going to plant them in his own garden, where he hopes they will grow into sunflowers. How

silly he is ; he cannot change their nature, and he will find it out by and by.

Perhaps you think that our Mary and Willie are stupid children—so very stupid that no child lived like them. Well, such children never did live. Yet there are thousands of grown-up people who are hoping to change their very natures by trying to keep God's holy law ; and if such people did not live, we should not have told you of silly Mary and Willie. For we cannot tell whether, when you grow older, you may not become, too, as unbelieving and as foolish as these imaginary children.

No, children ; we all have evil natures, and no doings of our own can change them. The root is wrong, therefore the fruit cannot be right.

#### FRUIT AND ROOT

I once had a beautiful little cherry tree in my garden. I took great care of it, put nice fresh earth all round it, and did everything I could to make it grow. If any of you have gardens you will know how I watched my tree. The trouble I took with it only made me more anxious to see it flourish. Spring came, and it looked, oh ! so pretty in full blossom—so pure, and white, and rich ! I shall surely have a great many cherries, I thought, on my pretty tree when summer comes. Summer came, and what happened ? Oh, children ! it was so sad ; my pretty tree faded quite away ! First the blossoms, then the leaves, and then the branches. I was so sorry after all my trouble. I asked the gardener why it faded, and he said there must be something wrong at its root. So he dug it up, and there, deep down in the earth, were nasty bed worms : a great many of them. They had eaten the root of my poor little tree, and so it had died.

Now, this is like what we all are by nature. There is a deep root of sin in all, and though we may be very pleasant and kind, all alike need a Saviour, Jesus. There is no life but in Him, no way to heaven but through Him.

None of the beautiful blossoms upon my cherry tree came to anything, just because there was death in the roots ; so no good promises or works of yours will avail before God, for, young as you are, you must be born again. Jesus died that we might live ; believe in Him and you shall have the new, the everlasting life, and then may you be a fruitful tree for Him upon the earth. Should you live to be old, or should you die young, may you please Him, and bring forth fruit for God.

How can we do this ? By being obedient to God's holy word, and treasuring in our hearts what our Lord says to us.

But remember, dear children, that there cannot be fruit unless there be root ; and, therefore, be quite sure that you are one of those who are of the Lord's planting. Be quite sure that you do indeed believe on the Lord Jesus, and that you have the new life.

#### THE ONLY SAVIOUR

Weeping will not save me—  
Though my face were bathed in tears,  
That could not allay my fears—  
Could not wash the sins of years ;  
Weeping will not save me.  
Jesus died for such as me ;  
Jesus suffered on the tree ;  
Jesus waits to make me free ;  
He alone can save me !

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Working will not save me—  
Purest deeds that I can do,  
Holiest thoughts and feelings too,  
Cannot form my soul anew ;  
Working will not save me.

Waiting will not save me—  
Helpless, guilty, lost I lie,  
In my ear is mercy's cry,  
If I wait I can but die ;  
Waiting will not save me.

Christ alone can save me—  
Let me trust Thy gracious Son,  
Trust the work that He has done—  
To His arms, Lord, help me run ;  
Christ alone can save me.  
Jesus died for such as me ;  
Jesus suffered on the tree ;  
Jesus waits to make me free ;  
He alone can save me.

## CHAPTER VII

## COME TO JESUS

“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord.”—ISA. i. 18.

NOT every boy and girl who reads this book has come to Jesus, though very probably every one has been invited very often to do so.

“Come here, Edward,” we said to a little boy the other day, and the child came; but how did he come? His body came, but not his heart. He walked unwillingly and held down his head, and his face seemed to say, “I do not want to come.”

Many young people go to hear the word of God preached, or to the places where their parents worship, very much as little Edward came to his father. But that is not coming to Jesus. That is not accepting His loving invitation.

“Come,” said a mother to her babe, and immediately the little creature stretched out its arms and smiled a glad answer. The babe could neither walk nor talk, yet it came, in a sense, to its mother. That is, its heart went to her. This is the way in which we go to Jesus. Our hearts say, “Yes, Lord, we come to Thee.”

The gracious word of God contains very many invitations, both in the Old and in the New Testaments. Jesus said “Come” many times when He was here upon this earth.

“Suffer little children to *come unto Me*” (Mark x. 14);

“*Come unto Me*, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28);

“If any man thirst, let him *come unto Me*, and drink” (John vii. 37);

“He that *cometh to Me* shall never hunger; and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst” (John vi. 35);

“Him that *cometh to Me* I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37);

are some of His inviting words. The words and the invitation are so simple that the youngest may understand the Lord. You need rather examples and exhortations than explanations. We cannot, then, do better than relate to you some stories of children who listened to the Lord’s word *Come*.

#### HOW LITTLE JANIE CAME TO JESUS

A little girl, named Janie, went to a Sunday school, where she had a kind teacher, who was very anxious that all the dear children in her class should be saved, so she used to plead with them to come “now,” whilst they were still young, and rest alone in Jesus. And she told them, what I dare say many of the dear children who read this have been often told, that it is much easier to come “now,” whilst they are young, since every day adds fresh sins to the long black list; and she also told them of the dreadful judgment coming upon all who are not saved.

Little Janie listened very attentively, and the thought of judgment, of being lost for ever, of what a dreadful thing it is to be a sinner, made a deep impression upon her mind. In truth the Holy Spirit was working with her, and when bedtime came on that Sunday evening,

it was with a heavy heart that she lay down. Janie went to bed, but not to sleep, and she wished and longed that she was saved; her sorrow increased the more she thought of being shut out of heaven, until at last, about two o'clock in the morning, she could bear it no longer, but jumped out of bed, and called "Father! father!"

Her father came up to her room, and she said, "Oh, father, do pray for me; I don't want to be lost for ever. Father, how can I be saved?"

Janie's father could not very well answer his little girl's question, so he bade her say her prayers and go to bed.

Janie went to bed again, but the load at her heart was still there. "Oh," she kept saying, "I do wish I was saved; how can I be saved?" when all at once she remembered that her teacher had said there was "nothing for any one to do, but that we had only to come, just as we are, to Jesus." Janie then wondered which was the right way to go. If Jesus had only been on earth it would have been easy; but she forgot that Jesus is more easy to go to now than when He was upon earth. At length she raised herself up in bed, and suiting the action to the word, she said, "Here I am, Lord Jesus; take me just as I am." And her load went; she felt so happy, her tears were turned into joy, and she was from that moment saved, and safe in the arms of Jesus.

#### THE RAGGED BOY

Thousands of children were assembling in a great hall one Saturday afternoon, where there was to be a children's meeting, and outside the door stood a boy, whose ragged clothes and bare feet made him feel that

there was no place for him among the rows of neatly-dressed children that he could get a glimpse of through the doorway. He longed to go in, for it looked so comfortable inside, and he wanted to find out what all those children were going there for. A lady, when passing in, noticed his eager little face, and asked him if he would like to go to the meeting. He said he should, but that he wasn't fit.

"Oh, never mind your clothes," said the lady, "come with me, and I will find you a seat."

The boy followed the lady, who placed him in a corner where he would be able to see the speaker and yet could scarcely be seen himself. He was full of curiosity, wondering what was going to be done, when presently two gentlemen came on to the platform at the end of the room, and then the business of the afternoon began. One of the gentlemen, coming forward, said, "Let us pray," and then spoke some words which the little fellow could not understand; but the child wondered why all bowed their heads and covered their faces. After a time the heads were raised, and the gentleman read some words from the Bible, and after that, the other, who had come in with him, sang a beautiful hymn about a sheep that had strayed away from its shepherd, and, as he listened to the hymn, this ragged boy could not help crying, though he could hardly have told any one why he cried.

Presently the speaker gave out the text for his address: "I am the Good Shepherd; the Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep." And then he spoke to the children simply and earnestly about Jesus—of that great love of His that brought Him from His home in heaven, to suffer and die on earth for sinful creatures like ourselves—to give Himself for us, that we might

be His own for ever. He told them that Jesus was like a loving shepherd, caring for and watching over His sheep and lambs, and going in search of those who had strayed away. He ended by asking which of the children were wishing to be lambs of the Good Shepherd, and to have Him for their Saviour, and waited for an answer.

One and another answered, "I am," from all parts of the building. Then he asked all those who had answered to stand up, and amongst them the poor little ragged boy stood up. He had been too shy to answer, but he did not mind standing up.

The lady who had taken him in, saw him, and as soon as the service was over she went to him, and talked to him. "So you wish to be one of Jesus' little lambs?" she said.

"Yes," he answered; "but I am not quite sure that I know the way."

"You heard all the gentleman said about the Lord Jesus; did you believe it?"

"Yes," said the child.

"Do you believe He asks you to come to Him?"

"Yes, I do."

"Do you believe that He died to save sinners?"

"Yes," answered the boy, after being silent a minute.

"Then you may believe that you are one of His little lambs. Jesus will not cast you out."

This lady was very kind to the poor boy; she found out where he lived, got him some regular work to do, took him to a class in the Sunday school, and helped him in many ways, and he is now serving the Lord, and trying to lead more children to "Come to Jesus."

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

## OH, JESUS, HE IS KINDNESS

His heart is full of kindness,  
Sweet words He hath to tell ;  
Come, listen to Him, children,  
For He loves children well ;  
And many to Him gather  
From every clime and land ;  
Come, welcome, happy children,  
And join the holy band.  
Oh, Jesus, He is kindness ;  
Jesus the Lord is love ;  
How sweet to hear Him speaking  
To us from heaven above.

He on the cross once suffered ;  
Nails pierced His hands and feet ;  
But all His pain and sorrow  
Make us for heaven meet.  
His blood our sin-stain cleanses,  
And takes our guilt away ;  
Come, welcome, happy children,  
For Jesus says you may.

He, He Himself will keep you,  
He'll hold you in His hand,  
He'll never let you perish,  
But you shall reach His land—  
The lovely, lovely country,  
All bright, and sweet, and fair ;  
Come, welcome, happy children,  
And all His glory share.

## CHAPTER VIII

## DO NOT DELAY

“Boast not thyself of *to-morrow*; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.”—PROV. xxvii. 1.

“Behold, *now* is the accepted time; behold, *now* is the day of salvation.”—2 COR. vi. 2.

THESE are solemn warning words. Life is uncertain. Eternity is near. When we may pass out of time into eternity, we know not.

## FOR EVER

There was a little boy who began to think about what comes after this life. He went to a churchyard, and looked at the graves. Some of them were very long. He measured them, and found that they were for grown-up people. Some were middle-sized, and these he measured, too, feeling sure that they were much too long for little boys of his height. But presently he came to some very little graves, much shorter than he was, so he felt sure that, young and small as he was, he too might die, and he wished to know where he should go if he died.

It is only the body that dies: the soul lives on for ever. The little baby child that was put into the ground will by and by be raised up from the grave, and body and spirit will be again joined in one, and the body raised up out of the grave will never die again, but live for ever.

Did you ever try to think what is meant by "for ever"? Suppose you were at the seashore, and began to carry away, one by one, the grains of sand to a place a mile inland, how many years do you think it would take you to carry away all the sand from the seashore? If you were to count the grains of sands that you can put into your hand you might reckon many, many hundreds of them, and I am sure you would have to live to be very, very old indeed in order to carry away many handfuls of sand. And what would you have done? You would only have made a little hole, and carried away a few grains, while the seashore would look just the same as before you began. If the sand upon the shore were all carried away, grain by grain, it would take millions and tens of millions of years to do it; but even all that long time would be as nothing at all to "for ever."

Time is shorter than we think, but eternity is longer than we can grasp. Contemplating the distance of the stars from the earth helps us to consider eternity. Men put a line, fathom after fathom, down into the sea to ascertain its depth, and men count the length of time it takes for light to reach the earth from the stars, and thus measure how far they are from us. It would take thousands of thousands of years to reach some of the stars we see, if we could travel to them without stopping day and night more quickly than any express train can go; and even suppose those stars reached, we should then see other stars far beyond them. Thousands of years before we had gained our journey's end the Lord would have come, the earth would have been burned up, and the eternal state in heaven and hell begun. Could we then search out the friends and relations now beside us, we should find them all; not one would be

missing. Some would be happy beyond utterance ; some would be miserable beyond description. Those would be with Jesus in heaven ; these in hell along with the devil and his angels.

And could we then leave our friends and relations and take another journey, only this time to the very farthest off star of all, and be millions and millions of years going to the star, and millions and millions of years in coming back again to our friends, we should find them all living. There would be no change with them ; those, who were so blessedly happy in heaven with the Lord Jesus, would be happy still. All those years in glory would not have wearied them ; they would still be as bright and glad as they were when they first entered God's rest. The presence of Jesus, of His holy angels and of His saints, would be as delightful as ever to them. The songs of heaven, the sights of heaven, the pleasures of heaven, would be still and unchangingly their joys.

Could we then go and search out those poor lost ones in the darkness, we should find them, too, unchanged. Their hearts, their hatred to Christ, their misery, and also the woe of hell unchanged. Some might say, " I did not, I would not believe there was a hell, or that it could last for ever, or if it could, that I could last in it for ever ; but it is true, all true." Others might say, " I would not listen to the gospel, I wanted the world—that little star called the world, which was burned up millions and millions of years ago." Others, " Not a drop of water here, no, not for eternity, ' I am tormented in this flame.' " God says, " Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

The mind of a man can, in a way, receive the idea of millions and millions of years. God has made man

capable of understanding this, for though we are creatures of a day, yet we are to last for ever, and we can all faintly perceive what "everlasting" means.

"How long sometimes a day appears,  
And weeks, how long are they;  
Months move as slow as if the years  
Would never pass away.

Both months and years are passing by,  
And soon must all be gone,  
For day by day, as minutes fly,  
Eternity comes on.

Days, months, and years must have an end,  
Eternity has none;  
'Twill always have as long to spend  
As when it first begun.

Great God! an infant cannot tell  
How such a thing can be;  
I only pray that I may dwell  
That long, long time with Thee."

Well may we all join in the desire expressed in this last verse.

Again we repeat the words forming the heading of our chapter, *Do not delay*. Alas! many children are saying:

#### I'LL BE A CHRISTIAN WHEN I GROW UP

A merry child was little Katie. There was not a girl in the school who had such a merry laugh or was so full of fun. She was a general favourite, too, for she had such winning ways, yet she cost her widowed mother many an anxious thought. Katie's mother was an earnest Christian, not one of those mothers who profess to be Christians and yet never seek to lead their little

ones to Jesus ; no, it was her one great desire, her most fervent prayer, that her little Katie might early learn to know the Saviour. Many were the quiet talks between mother and child, but they usually ended by Katie saying, " I'll be a Christian when I grow up, mother ; that will be quite time enough." So months went on until Katie was nearly twelve years old, and still the mother's prayers for her were unanswered.

One bright summer's day it was arranged that Katie, with one of her schoolfellows, should go for a long ramble in the woods, and, as the evenings were warm and light, they took their tea with them, that they need not hurry home. They had a very pleasant time together, and were thinking it would soon be time to turn homewards, when a distant peal of thunder startled them greatly ; they had been so busy plucking flowers in the woods and weaving them into garlands, that they had not noticed the heavy clouds that had been gathering for some time, and now they found that it would be impossible for them to reach their homes, or, indeed, any place of shelter, before the storm came on, for they were far from the nearest cottage. They hurried out of the wood, but they had some distance to go to reach the road. The rain came down, the thunder pealed loudly, and the lightning was so vivid that it filled them with terror. As they neared the road Katie begged her companion to stay beneath a large thick tree till the storm was over, saying that it would shelter them so nicely ; but Mary insisted on their leaving the shelter as quickly as possible, saying that her father had told her it was very dangerous to go under a tree in a storm. Katie was very desirous to linger, but Mary had at length to take her hand and almost drag her to the road. They had only just reached it when

hearing a loud sound, and turning back, they saw that a flash of lightning had struck the tree, and shivered its enormous trunk.

The children were awestruck, to think how nearly they had lost their lives ; for had they stayed two minutes longer they would have been killed. In spite of the drenching rain they stood still, with pale faces looking at the place where the grand old tree had stood ; then they started on their way again in terror, lest they themselves should be struck before they reached home. But they were preserved, and an impression was made on the mind of each which lasted through lifetime.

Katie did not soon recover the shock, and having taken a severe cold from the wetting, she was obliged to keep her bed some days. One evening, after lying still for some time, she said, " Oh, mother, what would have become of me if I had stayed under that tree ? and it would have served me right if God had killed me then for saying I would not be a Christian till I grew up."

" I think you learned a lesson that night, Katie," said her mother. " Do you really desire to be a Christian now ? "

" Yes, mother, if Jesus will have me after keeping Him waiting so long," was little Katie's answer.

" ' Him that cometh to Me I will *in no wise* cast out,' " answered her mother.

" Then I will come. Mother, how shall I come ? " said Katie.

" ' Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' " replied her mother.

" But I do believe on Him," said Katie ; " I have believed on Him all my life."

" Ah, but not in your heart, or in such a way as to make you love Him."

And then she showed her Katie how that the Lord died to cleanse away our sins with His own blood. And God gave Katie to believe the love of Jesus and to trust in Him. She felt her sins, and repented of them, and came to Jesus.

## TEN MINUTES TO THREE

When I was a boy I read and heard of little boys being converted, and then soon afterwards dying. I did not like to hear or read of children being converted, lest I should find out that they had died ; and I was quite afraid of being converted myself, lest I should die also. Now, I do not doubt, many of my dear young readers have the same feelings that I once had about being saved while they are young ; but God had His own way with me, and was pleased to save me when I was young, and that is about twenty-one years ago, and I am not dead yet, but have been trying, in my poor way, to the best of my ability, by the grace of God, to serve and please Him who gave His beloved Son to die for me on the cross.

So you see, my dear young friends, all who are converted young do not die immediately afterwards.

But I will now tell you of a dear youth who was converted at twelve years of age. I was asked to address a Sunday school in Derbyshire, three Sunday afternoons following each other. There were about 400 scholars in the school. The first Sunday afternoon, whilst I was speaking about Jesus dying and shedding His precious blood to wash away sins, and even those of little boys and girls, the blessed Spirit of God made many of my young hearers very anxious to be washed from all their sins in the blood of the Lamb. Many professed to be saved that afternoon, and also the two

Sunday afternoons following. My young friend William was there the first time I addressed the children ; he had a dear praying father and mother, but he was not saved, and he did not want to be saved ; because he thought that if he were, he would have to give up all his little pleasures, amusements, and companions, and that he would become very miserable, and so he went away, determined that he would not come to Jesus. Nevertheless, the Spirit of God was dealing with him, and made him very unhappy, and caused him to see and feel that there is no real happiness out of Christ.

The second Sunday afternoon William was there again when the address was given, and though many were in tears, and asking what they must do to be saved, he appeared to be quite unmoved ; but he was not really so ; he was listening to the wicked, lying suggestions of Satan, and so he spent a second week rejecting Christ ; and all who reject Him must be very unhappy, whilst all who accept Him are very happy ; and these only are ready for His second coming or for death.

Well, the third afternoon arrived for me to give my last address to the dear young people, and William was there again ; and whilst I was speaking of the love of God, the preciousness of the blood of Jesus, the hatefulness of sin, the blessedness of being saved, and the awfulness of living and dying without Christ, William, as he told me afterwards, felt the burden of his sin to be so heavy, that it seemed as if it would press him right through the floor into hell. In his distress, he cried to Jesus to remove the terrible burden of unforgiven sin, and he simply looked in faith to Jesus, where he was kneeling, and in a moment, he said, the burden was removed, and his soul found rest, and his heart was

filled with joy ; and looking up, his eyes met the clock, and it wanted exactly " ten minutes to three." Yes, at " ten minutes to three," on the second Sunday afternoon in March, God gave William to know that his sins were all forgiven—his soul was saved, and he there and then found happiness in Christ.

It is now more than twelve years since this occurred, and William is a consistent, godly young man, working for the blessed Lord, who loved him and gave Himself for him. He has been used to bring many precious souls to Jesus among the young and the old, and he has long known that

" Search the whole creation round,  
Happiness out of Christ can ne'er be found."

And now, whether young or old, will you not come at once by faith to Jesus, and find rest in Him ? Look at once to Him by faith, and be saved for ever. Receive Him at once as God's gift of eternal life. Give the blessed Lord the sunrise, meridian, and sunset of your days, and then, living or dying, you are the Lord's, and ready for His second coming or death ; and should He spare your life and leave you in this poor world, you will be able by His grace to live for Him and work for Him.

BY AND BY

" Be decided ; come to Jesus now." " Not yet, not yet," says the heart ; " I will wait till I am grown up." Then God says again, " *Now* is the day of salvation." " By and by," answers the heart. Once more the word of Mercy speaks, " To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts."

Ah ! dear young friend, what is *your* answer ? Oh,

harden not your heart, saying, "By and by I will think about my soul and eternity."

In a Sunday class there was a little fellow named Ebenezer. He was a strong, healthy boy, but an unruly scholar, and very, very heedless of his soul. He was often told to come to Jesus, to repent, to seek for mercy, but he put it off till by and by. He would not learn his Scripture lessons, nor attend to his teacher's instructions, neither would poor little Ebby have come at all to the school had not his mother made him do so.

One afternoon we missed him ; but, as it was a sunny summer day, we thought little of his absence. However, as he was still away the next Sunday, we called at his home.

His mother came weeping to the door. "Poor Ebby's dead ! he will be buried to-morrow."

Oh ! dreadful word—dead ! No more Sunday schools ; no more loving entreaties to come to Jesus. By and by all past. Eternity begun.

We watched the humble funeral wind its solemn way along the footpath over the fields, and wept bitterly as we said again and again, "Where is Ebenezer's soul ? Where is his soul ?"

Do not put off Jesus till by and by.

#### LET NOT ONE HOUR PASS BY

How many young lie sleeping

Beneath the earth and sea !

Some safe in Jesu's keeping—

Some past recovery.

Oh ! could they stand before us,

What—think we—would they say ?

Ah ! earnestly implore us

Seek heaven WHILE YOU MAY.

“ 'Tis sweet to be with Jesus ; ”  
Hush ! thus the holy speak ;  
“ 'Tis sweet to be with Jesus,  
Then QUICKLY heaven seek.  
Come, come, and taste our gladness  
Among the happy stand,  
Nor tear, nor sigh, nor sadness  
Can grieve our loving band.”

Hark ! now a voice of mourning  
Like a slow funereal bell,  
With tears and solemn warning,  
We hear around us swell—  
“ Oh ! seek to be forgiven,  
LET NOT ONE HOUR PASS BY  
Till you are sure of heaven,  
The home above the sky.”

Soon we, too, may be sleeping  
Beneath the earth or sea ;  
Will gladness or will weeping  
Our endless portion be ?  
'Tis God's own invitation—  
Come, come this very day,  
His NOW is our SALVATION,  
And shall we more delay ?

## CHAPTER IX

## BROUGHT TO GOD

“ And when He hath found it, He layeth it on His shoulders rejoicing.”—LUKE xv. 5.

I MET a shepherd with a lamb upon his shoulders. The little creature had strayed away, and the shepherd had found it. The lamb being upon his shoulders was quite *safe*. But the shepherd was carrying the lamb somewhere, and that was to the fold. No shepherd would simply *save* a lamb from perishing in the cold : he would *bring* the strayed one home.

Some time ago a little boy of about four years of age strayed away from a Sunday-school party, which had gone for the school treat to the downs. It was not until the evening, when the children were mustered for returning home, that little Willie was missed. Great was the anxiety of all when it was discovered that the child was lost. One teacher ran in one direction, and one in another ; the elder boys, too, hunted and shouted around every thicket, and up and down the hills, but Willie could not be found.

The school children returned home, and a few of the teachers remained behind to search and call for Willie.

It was not until nearly midnight that it was discovered where Willie was. He had wandered along a road all by himself till he had quite lost sight of the school children. Still on, on he trudged. At length a policeman, who happened to be pacing along the lonely country road, met him, and as Willie was too young to explain

who he was and how he had become lost, the policeman took him to a large house, standing by itself, and there Willie received some supper, and was put to bed.

The teachers were thankful indeed when they knew where Willie was, and they telegraphed to his parents the joyful news, "Willie is safe!" But do you think that Willie's father and mother were contented to know that their little boy was safe? No: they could not rest until their brown-eyed boy was brought home.

Now Jesus, by His blood shed for lost sinners, brings them to God.

Let us learn some texts of Scripture upon this truth.

"Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Pet. iii. 18).

"In Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." "That He might reconcile both unto God" (Eph. ii. 13, 16).

Again, in the 15th chapter of the Gospel by Luke, we read of the lost sheep not only being found, but taken home by the shepherd, and of the prodigal being not only forgiven, but taken into his father's house.

The following story will, we are sure, help you to understand the wonderful parable of our Lord about the lost son, who was brought home to his father, and then you will learn the meaning of these words—*brought to God*:

#### HOW BERTIE WAS BROUGHT HOME

In a large town in the south of England, about ninety-five years ago, there lived a rich gentleman. He had three little girls and one little boy, who is the "Bertie" of our tale; and let me say that the writer of this true story was closely related to the little boy.

Bertie was a lovable boy, and, as time passed on, he

became more and more the pride and delight of his parents. One day, when he was about three years old, he managed to slip out of the nursery and downstairs without being observed ; coming to the hall, he saw that the front door had been left open, so he thought it a good opportunity to take a peep at the outer world, and stepped out into the porch.

Now, apart from his intrinsic worth, little Bertie was a valuable piece of property as he stood that afternoon at the front door. His clothes were made of expensive material ; from his waist hung a beautiful coral with silver bells ; his sleeves were looped up with corals, fastened with massive gold clasps ; and a costly necklace encircled his little white neck.

All this was observed by a tall, dark woman who was passing at the moment. She stopped, spoke kindly and softly to him, and taking from her pocket a sugar-stick, she held it towards him.

Not in the least shy, little Bertie hastened to her to receive the prize ; as he advanced, she slowly retreated till she had enticed the child some little distance from his home ; then taking him in her arms she gave him the sugar-stick, promising him more when he had eaten it. She wrapped her shawl round him to conceal his clothes from any passer-by, and talked to him pleasantly while she bore him rapidly toward the lowest part of the town.

Soon Bertie became frightened, and asked to be taken home, but the woman being no longer afraid of his cries spoke sternly to him, which only increased his terror. At length a narrow, dirty street was reached, down which the woman hurried, and entering a gloomy house, she bore the poor little lost one up a narrow, dark staircase, and into a miserable room at the top of the house.

Poor little Bertie ! his sobs and screams gave no pity to the wicked woman. She hastened to take off all his handsome clothes, and, while doing so, gave him many cruel blows because he cried. A few squalid rags were put on him, and soon, worn out with crying, poor lost Bertie soon fell asleep on the hard, dirty floor.

At first Bertie's absence from the nursery was not noticed, but at length nurse thought she would go in search of him. Great was her alarm when she found that no one had seen him. Soon every one in the house was searching for Bertie all over the house and garden, but, as we know, he could not be found. Some one now recollected seeing the hall door open about the time Bertie must have left the nursery ; so they were obliged to conclude he had strayed into the streets.

You may imagine the terrible distress of the parents. The mother could not be persuaded to remain at home. She must join in the search for her child. Long she wandered about, but could discover no trace of the little lost one, till at length her steps were guided to the very street into which poor Bertie had been carried some hours before. At any other time she would have trembled to find herself alone in such a neighbourhood, and have shrunk from the wretchedness and squalor to be seen there ; but now she never thought of herself. As she hastened down the street, she heard a sound proceeding from one of the houses which caused her heart to bound ; it was a child's cry, and well she knew the voice.

She pushed open the door of the house whence the sound came, rushed up the dirty stairs, and did not pause till she was in the room where poor little Bertie stood bitterly crying.

The woman who had stolen him was evidently ready

for a tramp. She had a bundle in one hand, and with the other she grasped Bertie's hand. The child was clothed in squalid rags; his little face all tear-stained and dirty; but the mother did not care for that, she had found her child, and in a moment he was sobbing in her arms.

Before the gipsy could recover from her astonishment, and without waiting to say a word, Mrs. Lester, folding her darling to her bosom, hastened down the stairs and into the street. She hardly felt his weight, so light and joyful was her heart. She cared not for his dirt and rags; it was enough that she had found him, that his little arms were clasping her neck. His tears soon ceased, and only a deep-drawn sigh now and then told of the trouble he had lately been in.

Home was reached at last. The joyful but exhausted mother bore her little one in and gave him into the arms of his father, who had just returned from his unsuccessful search. Oh, how delighted he was to welcome back his lost boy! The little sisters, who had been crying bitterly for their brother, rushed in to rejoice over and fondle him. Nurse, and indeed all the household, were filled with joy. Of course little Bertie was soon well bathed by his loving mother, and fresh, clean clothes replaced the gipsy's rags. Soon he was sweetly sleeping in his own cot, placed close beside his mother's bed.

Happy little Bertie! He was now found safe in his father's house.

I want you to notice several things in this story, for it is a picture of a great many people in the world, both young and old.

Like the gipsy, Satan goes about seeking whom he can entice into the paths of sin. Like her, he has baits wherewith to tempt them, something to suit every eye

and disposition, and while eagerly pursuing the coveted "sugar-stick," the victim is led farther and farther into the paths of sin, till Satan gets him securely in his grasp; the pleasure so eagerly pursued fades into nothing, and the poor stray one finds he is lost! Happy if he discovers this before it is too late.

What did little Bertie do when he knew he was lost, far away from his home? Poor child, he could do nothing; he could not get out of that dreadful room; he was far too small and too weak to overcome his terrible captor. All he could do was to cry.

Just so with the poor lost sinner whom Satan has bound hand and foot: he can do nothing to save himself.

The great love Bertie's mother bore him led her to leave her home and seek for him in that low and dirty neighbourhood; her anxious ear heard his cry, and she hastened to the very place where he was.

Just so Jesus, the Son of God, left His bright throne above to come down to this earth to seek and save lost sinners.

"'Twas love unbounded, love to us  
Led Him to die and suffer thus."

And now He is able and willing to save every lost one who cries to Him for mercy. "His ear is ever open to their cry."

Poor Bertie was a very wretched-looking little object—ragged, dirty, and tear-stained; but his mother did not say, "Bertie, go and wash yourself, and put on your handsome clothes, then I will take you home." No, indeed, her love was far too great for that; she forgot all about his clothes, and, catching him to her breast, she kissed him again and again, just as he was.

How like the beautiful story of "The Prodigal Son"! His father ran to meet him, fell on his neck, and kissed him just as he was.

Bertie was carried home in his mother's arms. Would she let him fall, do you think? Would she let the gipsy get him again? No, indeed, she would defend him with her life, if need be!

Did Bertie's safety depend on himself in any way?

No; he just lay in his mother's arms, and she bore him home.

Then did he do nothing—nothing to save himself?

Yet he did what was very sweet to his mother's heart. He kept his arms tight round her neck, and now and then raised his head to give her a loving kiss.

Even thus it should be with those who have been rescued from the power of Satan, and are being safely and tenderly carried home. We can do nothing in the work of salvation:

" Jesus did it, did it all,  
Long, long ago."

But we can cling lovingly and trustfully to the precious Saviour, and so give joy to His heart.

Though Bertie had been saved in his dirt and rags, he must not remain in them. He is a gentleman's son, and must dress accordingly; he must be washed and clothed in garments of his parents' providing. Here, too, he is like the Prodigal Son. "Bring forth the best robe," the father said; "put shoes on his feet and a ring on his hand." In another part of God's word, too, where we hear of a "brand" being "plucked from the burning," it was said, "Take away the filthy garments from him"; he was clothed with a change of garments 'and a fair mitre set upon his head'—cleansed, clothed,

and crowned (Zech. iii. 2-5). "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." In Christ the vilest sinner is made meet for the presence of God.

Dear boys and girls, are you brought home to God? Have you been cleansed from your sins? If not, you are in a far worse state than little Bertie was. You may not know it any more than he did while he was sucking his "sugar-stick" in the gipsy's arms, and believing her promises of greater treats in store.

You are perhaps so occupied with the things Satan is using to attract your attention that you know not you are straying farther and farther into the path which leads to hell; another step may plunge you into everlasting woe. God's ear is ever open to the feeblest cry; but do not delay, to-morrow may be too late.

#### RECEIVED HOME

In the distant land of famine,  
 Longing with the swine to feed,  
 Oh, how bitter that awakening  
 To my sin and shame and need.  
 Dark and dreary all around me,  
 Now no more by sin beguiled,  
 I would go and seek my Father;  
 Be a bondsman, not a child.

Yet a great way off He saw me,  
 Ran to kiss me as I came;  
 As I was, my Father loved me—  
 Loved me in my sin and shame.  
 Then in bitter grief I told Him  
 Of the evil I had done:  
 Sinned in scorn of Him, my Father  
 Was not meet to be *His* son.

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

But I knew not if He listened,  
For He spake not of my sin ;  
He within His house would have me—  
Make me meet to enter in ;  
From the riches of His glory  
Brought His costliest raiment forth,  
Brought the ring that sealed His purpose,  
Shoes to tread His golden court.

Put them on me—robes of glory,  
Spotless as the heavens above ;  
Not to meet *my* thoughts of fitness,  
But *His* wondrous thoughts of love.  
Then within His home He led me,  
Brought me where the feast was spread,  
Made me eat with Him, my Father,  
I who begged for bondsman's bread.

This, the ransomed sinner's story,  
All the Father's heart made known :  
All His grace to me, the sinner,  
Told by judgment on His Son—  
Told by Him from depths of anguish,  
All the Father's love for me :  
By the curse, the cross, the darkness,  
Measuring what that love must be.

## CHAPTER X

## KEPT BY GOD

“ Unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless.”—JUDE 24.

THERE are some things in the Bible which, as the holy book itself tells us, are “hard to be understood” (2 Pet. iii. 16)—things which the most learned men cannot understand by their own wisdom, and which can be known only as the Spirit of God makes them clear to us. And if learned men cannot understand all the Bible, no wonder that much of it is difficult for our young readers. But there are some things in the Bible which all may understand, and which God bids us believe. Your parents do things, the meaning of which you are told you will know when you are older, but you can, all of you, however young, understand that your parents love you. God is love, and He tells us so in the Bible, and shows to us how we may understand that He is love. Every one, who believes what God says, can understand that He is love. “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” (1 John iv. 9). If we believe God, we shall love Him. “He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love” (iv. 8).

Think over these words. God has shown forth His love towards us, and you who are but a child have come into this world, and will live on, on for ever! God has shown forth His love towards us, poor, weak,

and sinful as we are, because He sent His own Son from heaven into this world, to become a babe, and at length to die upon the cross, so that our sins might be forgiven, and that we might live in happiness for ever through Him. You, who believe what God says about His Son, love Him, and thus you know in your heart what God is. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (v. 10).

Do you trust God's love day by day?

"Don't hurt me, papa," said a little boy of four years of age the other day to his father who was playing at some game with him.

"Why do you ask me not to hurt you, my child?" said his father; "have I ever hurt you?"

"No, papa!" smiled the little fellow.

"Then I am sure you need not ask me not to hurt you now, my boy," answered his father, after which the little boy was quite at rest.

Have you learned that God will never be unkind to you? Sometimes we find ourselves almost like the little boy, praying God not to hurt us! But God is love, and though He may try our faith, as the father of whom I have told you tried the faith of his little boy, yet we know that He will never hurt us, and we know this because God is love.

God keeps the bodies and the souls of His people. He watches over them day and night. He never wearies: He neither slumbers nor sleeps. He withdraweth not His eye from the righteous. He never leaves them nor forsakes them. Each child of His is dear to God. Not one shall be lost. Let us learn a few texts from His own holy book which teach us these things.

"He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep

thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone" (Ps. xci. 11, 12).

"He withdraweth not His eyes from the righteous" (Job xxxvi. 7).

"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb. xiii. 5).

"Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. i. 5).

As these latter chapters of our volume are specially addressed to Christian children, we have adopted the plan of beginning each with stories relating to the little ones, and ending them with what may be more suitable to the elder amongst our young friends.

God never sleeps, and we are ever under His watchful eye. This comforts our hearts, for God cares for us.

#### WILL YOU WATCH ME ?

She was only three years old, and it did seem very terrible to have to run past that big black dog, when he was unchained, too !

"Will you come with me?" was the appeal that reached my ears.

"No; Touch never hurts you," was my answer; "so run away."

But the child would not move. "Will you hold him, then?" was her next demand. But I shook my head, while I told her that the dog loved her and that she loved him, and therefore she knew very well there was nothing to fear.

One more frightened glance at Touch, and these words I could not resist, "Will you *watch* me, then?" This I promised to do, and the little one began her perilous

journey. More than once she cast anxious looks behind her to make sure my eye was upon her, and then, satisfied on that point, set forth at full speed, which soon brought her safely home.

Little reader, what do *you* learn from my story? God's eye is ever on His children; and if you are one of those happy children whose sins have been washed away in the blood of Jesus, it is pleasant to Him to look down upon you, for it is joy to His heart to watch even a little child who is seeking to follow Him.

I want to ask you one question. Does it make *you* feel safe to know that He who loves little children is watching you?

#### GOD'S CARE FOR THE SHEPHERD BOY

In a lonely valley in Scotland lived a poor shepherd, named Robin. He was nearly eighty years old, and his beard and hair were white as snow. His wife and children were dead, and there was only left to him a little grandson, whom he called Jimmy. Jimmy dearly loved his grandfather, who had taken him to his home when he became an orphan, and was the only friend he had in the world. The shepherd taught Jimmy to read, and when the old man's eyes were dimmed with age, it gave him great pleasure to hear little Jimmy read two or three chapters to him every evening. Jimmy was pleased, above all, to see Jesus Christ spoken of as the Good Shepherd, for the little boy took care of his grandfather's flock. When sitting on the top of a mountain, eating his dinner, often a piece of dry cake, he would say to himself, "If I, who am but a child, am able to take care of a flock, how much more able is Jesus Christ to take care of those He calls His sheep. The children are little lambs, and

I am sure He always guards them with tenderness. What did my grandfather say when children did not obey their parents, as God has ordered them? 'Some evil will befall them, like my stray lambs.' "

The time which Jimmy passed all alone on the top of the mountains never seemed to him long, and besides his Bible he had his little book of hymns, which he liked to learn by heart.

Robin had a dog, named Watch, which had been of great service to him. The faithful creature followed Jimmy every morning when he went out with his flock; and when the little shepherd was tired with reading and reflecting he would play with his dog. The good dog loved him so much that he never left him; and if Jimmy hid from him, Watch was never easy till he had found him. One day Jimmy forgot his duty, and wishing to make a sling, like King David when he was a shepherd boy, he left his grandfather's flock and ran to the house to look for a cord. It was very naughty, and Jimmy ran back to his sheep as fast as he could, for his conscience told him he was guilty; but when he reached the mountain, he saw that four of his sheep were gone; he looked on all sides, but he could not see them; he went up higher, but saw nothing. He ran home directly and told the truth to his grandfather, who, instead of being angry, put his hand upon his head, and said, "The sheep are probably gone to the right side of the mountain to go into the other pastures; go and look for them, my child; make haste, for it will snow soon. Bring home your flock quickly."

When Jimmy reached the top of the mountain the snow was falling, and the ground was soon white. Old Robin began to repent that he had told Jimmy to go

out ; for he knew that if the poor child were once to lose his road on the mountains when they were covered with snow, he would not be able to find it again all the night, and that he would be dead with cold before morning. The old man sat near the window, listening with anxiety. The shades of night grew thicker and thicker, and at last the old man could see nothing, and he made up the fire. He was very uneasy about the child ; he saw in a corner of the room the little stool on which Jimmy sat every night, and his eyes filled with tears. He did not hear any noise in the village ; the people were all gone into their houses to take shelter from the storm ; he heard nothing but the wind in the valley and the ticking of the clock, which was placed in the corner of the room ; at last it struck seven. Robin fell on his knees, and prayed God to restore him his poor child. While he was praying, the tears ran down his cheeks, though he did not forget that God has promised to help those who put their trust in Him. Old Robin then put on his cloak, and was going to his neighbour Mackay, to beg him to go and look for Jimmy, when he heard a scratching at the door. What do you think he saw when he opened it ? Do not be disappointed ; it was not Jimmy, but only his good dog Watch. Poor dog ! when he saw Robin he gave a sad glance at him, and then ran a little way from the door and came back again. The dog wanted to make the old man understand that he came to show the way to the place where his little master was.

Robin then went as fast as he was able to his neighbour, Mackay.

“ What is the matter, my friend ? ” said John Mackay ; and having heard, he at once said, “ I shall go and look on all sides for Jimmy. Courage, my good neighbour ;

do not despond. God has not left your dear Jimmy. No, no, Robin ; you will have him again."

He was going to add something, but Watch interrupted him by jumping upon him and running towards the door. "Well, Watch, well," said he, "go on before, and I will follow you." And on very fast he went, but not so fast as the dog wished. Watch ran always in front, when suddenly the dog stopped, but Mackay heard him uttering bitter cries. Mackay then came up, and saw Watch scraping the snow with all his might. A moment after, he heard a feeble voice which said, "Help me, save me"; and he saw the head of little Jimmy appearing above the snow.

The poor child had fallen into a deep hole, which was nearly full of snow, and his little body was almost buried. He was so feeble and benumbed with the cold that he could not move ; and Mackay had a great deal of trouble to take him out.

When Mackay reached his house, and old Robin saw Jimmy motionless on Mackay's shoulders, he covered his face with his hands, and all his body trembled ; but Mackay said, "Did not I tell you to put your confidence in God ?"

When these kind neighbours saw how weak the boy was, they put him in their own bed, made him take some hot porridge, rubbed his benumbed limbs, and took off his wet clothes, the old man watching all the time near the bed. The night's rest did Jimmy a great deal of good ; and the next morning, when all in the house met round the breakfast table, and while Watch was placed at the feet of his young master, Jimmy told all that had happened to him.

In trying to find the sheep, as his grandfather told him, he had fallen into the hole out of which the good

Mackay had taken him. "When Watch saw me," said he, "in danger, he seemed not to know what to do: at one time he pulled me, and then, all of a sudden, he ran away as fast as he was able. When I was alone, I asked God to take me out of that dreadful place." Thus you see that God cares for those who put their trust in Him.

God keeps the souls of His people as well as their bodies. Once a gentleman was walking along a country road, when presently a pedlar came by. He had a pack upon his back; and the two entered into conversation. Presently the pedlar said, "I am saved, thank God."

"And those who are saved are safe for ever, they are eternally kept by God," added the gentleman; "'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee' are God's own words."

"Yes, but then, sir, we may slip through His fingers," replied the doubtful-minded pedlar.

There are many persons who think, if they do not say it, that some day they may yet be dropped, as it were, by God. It is a blessed thing for us to be sure that of all whom the Father has given to the Lord not one shall be lost.

You may have your trying moments, when a kind of dark cloud rolls over you, and you begin to doubt.

There was once an aged believer upon her dying bed. She did not doubt God, but she was dark within her soul.

A person who was sitting in her room, said, "You cannot be a real Christian, for if you were, you would not be so dark in your soul as you say you are."

With great earnestness she replied, "My Father may put me to sleep in the dark if He pleases."

This was true faith in her Father's wisdom and love. And if you should be tried and tempted, remember that God changes not.

But many of God's children seem to change. It is too often the case that boys and girls who are converted, when they grow up to be young men and women, turn aside from the ways of God to walk in the ways of the world. The time arrives when they are no longer under the protecting care of their parents, and they fall into temptation to the dishonour of God their Father and to the grieving of His Holy Spirit. The Name of their Lord and Master, whom they once loved, is no longer sweet to them, and with bad consciences they follow the ways of Christ's enemies.

There are two texts of Scripture which we will speak of in connection with this mournful subject :

"By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. vii. 20).

"The Lord knoweth them that are His" (2 Tim. ii. 19).

"By their fruits ye shall know them," says the Lord. In winter-time it is not easy to tell the difference between a crab tree and a sweet apple tree. But it is easy enough even for a child to do so in the autumn. Whether people are really converted, God knows; we can only judge by their lives. God alone can see what is in the heart, but we can see what comes out of it. It is very sad to watch a young promising tree become sickly and at length wither almost away. How bitterly sad it is to witness the boy or girl, who has professed to be a tree of the Lord's planting, growing older and yet becoming less and less Christian-like.

If you were to go into a garden choked with weeds

to such an extent that the flowers and weeds were altogether in a mass, no doubt *you* could not tell one from the other. "Father, shall I pull up this?" said a little boy who was helping his father, for the child could not tell whether it was weed or flower at his feet. But the father knew. And every one will know at the harvest-time who are Christ's and who are not. It is a most grievous state of things when it is difficult to say of any one whether he or she is or is not a Christian. There ought to be no doubt whatever about it. God knows who are His, and the world ought to know too, by seeing the fruits borne by God's people.

May you be kept by God to bear fruit for Him, to live for Him till the Lord comes, or till you are called to go to the Lord. He will assuredly keep His own, and not one shall be lost; but, Christian children, may you so "keep yourselves in the love of God," that you may bear fruit which those who love Him not shall see is of a heavenly kind, and thus that your Father, who is in heaven, may be glorified.

Let us conclude this chapter with two short stories, the first about a boy who knew how God would keep his soul even should He allow his body to die; the second about an aged woman of more than a hundred years old, who rejoiced in God's keeping her soul through time and for eternity.

#### WHAT CLEMENT WROTE IN HIS BIBLE

How little did the children think, that bright, stormy April day, as they sat round the dinner-table in their home by the sea, that one of their number, then full of life and health, would never more take his place amongst them.

Yet so it was! When tea-time came, the eldest

brother, the one who used to cut the bread, and set the chairs, and see that every one was helped, was absent. They might call "Clement! Clement!" but no Clement came, and it was not till his body was brought home, cold and dripping as it had been found cast up by the sea, that they knew his end.

Oh, it was a sad house that evening! Robert and Aleck looked at each other, and then at that poor dead face, and it seemed a thing too dreadful to be true. But the father and mother, wondering at their boy's sweet, peaceful look, took comfort, for they were assured that the blessed Saviour, who had taught their Clement when in life and strength to trust Him, had surely been near to cheer the boy when no help was nigh, and that Jesus had taken him home to His Father's house, where storms can never come.

"How did it happen?" they asked; but no one could answer. He had been noticed walking along the sands, watching the waves roll in, for it was a spring tide, and very grand they looked; after this no one saw him alive.

His parents knew their boy's love for the sea, and how often he would sit for hours on the shore, busy with his book, little heeding how quickly the time passed. He must have been thus engaged the stormy April day of which we speak. Clement had not noticed, in his sheltered nook, the flowing tide, ever coming nearer and nearer, till, when too late, the water locked him in, and all hope of escape was gone. No doubt he shouted for help, but the wind was high and the sea roared, so his voice was lost.

There was nothing left for Clement Layton but to wait till death should roll in upon him. Did he faint as the chill waters rose around him, or did he long

battle with the waves? We cannot tell; but we know that the same Lord Jesus who came to His disciples walking across the dark waters, and who stilled their hearts with His word, "It is I; be not afraid," was present. Yes! the Lord of Life took away every thought of fear, so that Clement was "more than conqueror through Him that loved him."

While the water was gathering round Clement, the Lord gave him courage and calmness to think of those who loved him, and he wrote for them words more precious than I can tell. I have read these words, and you shall read them too.

His parents went mournfully along the shore the evening of their boy's death, searching for anything that might have belonged to him, and their search was not in vain, for they picked up a Bible and one or two of his books, all soaked with the salt water. It was not till the next day that they noticed some pencil writing on the fly-leaf of the Bible; it was like a message from heaven to their hearts as they read: "In danger, I now declare that I do trust in Jesus my own Saviour, and have trusted for about five years. I know that my sins of heart and action have been many and grievous, but now I do pray to God to forgive me for the sake of the perfect work of Christ, and to help me to do His will, and to receive me to safety and holiness with Himself.

"I ask God to bless my father and mother, and to give them the comfort of His Holy Spirit, and to keep all my brothers and sisters in His faith and fear.—Clement K. Layton."

These were Clement's last words, written with a firm hand, as he sat alone face to face with death.

Sometimes, as Robert and Aleck walk on the sands

thinking of their brother, rough men come up, and, with tears, speak of Clement, and tell how he had read the Bible to them and tried to lead them to his "own Saviour" in whom he trusted.

Dear children, you often sing

"Safe in the arms of Jesus."

See *how* safe and happy in the storm and "in danger" was this dear boy whom Jesus loved.

Now, God can and does keep His own, whether they are called, as was beloved Clement, early to Himself, or whether they live more than a century upon this earth, as did the aged Christian of whom we now tell you.

#### THE TESTIMONY OF THE AGED CHRISTIAN

A gentleman was giving an address in a cottage; after he had done, a man bent with years, and whose head was silvery grey, begged him to come and see his mother.

"*Your mother?*" asked the astonished speaker, for he could hardly believe that the old man of more than eighty years had a mother yet living.

Following the old man, our friend entered a cottage, and then mounted the nearly upright ladder which led from the lower room to the attic of the house. Then he found himself standing in a little room, through the small window of which the setting sun shone in, its rays lighting up a bed whereon sat upright a spare, gaunt figure. This was the mother of the old man. Though more than a hundred years old, and though very feeble in body, yet her mind was clear and strong.

After a short talk, the gentleman said to her, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your own Saviour?" Immediately her dim eyes brightened; her voice started into a shrill energy at the sound of His blest name, and she cried aloud, "To be sure I do," and then added, pointing her finger at the questioner, "Do *you* know Him? Do you know Him for *yourself*? Do *you*?" Then, as if she could hardly contain herself, she added:

"Know Him! Yes; and many a long year before you were born! Know Him! I should think I do." She told our friend how that she was but a girl, going to market along the dirty road, when the Lord Jesus revealed Himself to her, and how that God had kept her all her long, long life.

You need not fear, for the Lord will never leave His own. Those who are His shall be kept, should they die in childhood or live a hundred years.

Our times are in thy hand,  
 Father, we wish them there;  
 Our life, our soul, our all, we leave  
 Entirely to Thy care.

Our times are in Thy hand,  
 Whatever they may be,  
 Pleasing or painful, dark or bright,  
 As best may seem to Thee.

Our times are in Thy hand,  
 Why should we doubt or fear?  
 A Father's hand will never cause  
 His child a needless tear.

Our times are in Thy hand,  
 Jesus the Crucified!  
 The hand our many sins had pierced  
 Is now our Guard and Guide.

Our times are in Thy hand ;  
We'd always trust in Thee,  
Till we have left this weary land,  
And all Thy glory see.

## CHAPTER XI

## "AS OBEDIENT CHILDREN"

"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former desires in your ignorance."—1 PET. i. 14.

THERE are many children in God's family, but, alas! there are many who are not in all things obedient. Those who do not believe God and obey His gospel are called "the children of disobedience" (Eph. ii. 2), and God enjoins His children not to be like them. Jesus was the obedient One, and we should seek to follow in His steps. He was obedient to His Father in heaven, and He heeded the wishes of Joseph and His mother Mary. He "was subject unto them" (Luke ii. 51). And God would have those who belong to the Lord Jesus to act "as obedient children" (1 Pet. i. 14).

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. vi. 1-3). That is a sorrowful day in the child's life when he or she first begins to disobey father or mother. Very little children find a pleasure in obedience; but, alas! as they grow older, a will of their own often works against the wishes of the parents. Bad beginnings lead to bad endings, and a life begun by disobeying a parent will end bitterly.

## DISOBEDIENT ROBERT

It was a bright summer morning in the month of

June, many years ago, that the Sunday school began to assemble in the quiet village of Portstewart. The children were generally regular and punctual; and amongst the pupils, of whom Robert Kelly was one, there were signs of deepening earnestness. Robert was a fine, intelligent lad, " the only son of his mother, and she was a widow."

That morning, as usual, he left his mother's cottage a little before school-time; he had just received from her a new gilt-edged Bible, together with her blessing and a parting kiss: but school was opened and closed, and still Robert's place remained vacant.

Robert was soft and pliable, easily influenced by others; hence it fell out that, on the Sunday morning in question, he was carried away by the temptations of a set of lads who had determined to spend the Lord's Day in pleasure, and joined them in a sail upon the river Bann.

Doubtless there was a struggle between conscience and inclination, but the end was that Robert turned his back on the Sunday school, thrust his Bible under the bridge close by, that he might find it on his return home, and, with loud laughter and eager hope, hastened off with his companions.

It was long past noon, and the village congregation had assembled as usual, and Robert's pious mother was there. Several times did she glance towards her son's wonted seat, and observing that one or two other boys were also absent, she feared that Robert was playing truant.

The writer of this narrative was in the pulpit on that day, and the congregation were listening with their usual attention, when the church door opened stealthily, and a man, pale and agitated, whispered something in the ear of one, who immediately hurried out. Soon

another and another followed ; and when the cause of the excitement was known, it was found that the little sailing-boat, that had gone out so merrily, had been upset, with all the lads on board. Hastening to the spot, the writer was shocked at the sight before him. The bodies of the poor lads were stretched on the green turf, and as the parents of each recognised their child, who can describe their piercing cries of sorrow ?

Robert's mother alone was calm ; no cry broke from her lips, no tear flowed from her eye. In silent agony, with clasped hands, and on bended knees, she looked upward toward heaven, and then on the cold, fair face of her boy. It was a sore thought to her widowed heart, that she should have been called on to part with him so suddenly, and, worst of all, *in an act of disobedience*.

It was agreed by the bereaved parents that all the funerals should take place on the same day ; and those who witnessed the sad scene cannot easily forget it. Some unable to control their sorrow bewailed in wild cries the death of their beloved ones, while in others broken sobs gave expression to their grief. Robert Kelly's mother seemed dumb ; she wept not, spoke not, but gazed steadfastly on the coffin of her boy.

In a solitary nook in the churchyard of Portstewart are two graves side by side. A weeping-willow overshadows the lesser one, and in the early summer-time it is adorned by flowers that were planted by a mother's hand. Need we tell the young reader whose graves they are ?

For some weeks the lonely mother resorted almost daily to the quiet resting-place of her beloved boy, but gradually her visits became less frequent, and the neighbours remarked that she grew weaker and weaker.

At her own request, she was buried near her poor disobedient Robert, near him whose sad end had brought her “ grey hairs with sorrow to the grave.”

Obedience should be prompt. Unless when called the child answers quickly we may fear that the command is but half obeyed. Loving obedience is always swift. How many times in the Bible do we read of God’s people answering His call at once, saying, “ Here am I ” ? Why did not Adam at once answer God’s call ? He was afraid. The love of God was not in his heart. He had sinned.

OBEY AT ONCE

Little Daniel was particularly fond of having his own way, and though not on the whole disobedient, he had a habit of not doing what he was told *at once*. Thus if he were looking at pictures in a book, and his mother called him, he would answer, “ Yes, mamma,” but would *not* come until he had finished looking over the pictures. He did what *he* wanted first, and what his mother wanted by and by. Daniel had been told many times that this was wrong, and at last he began to try and leave it off, and to obey immediately ; and it was well for him that he did, as you shall hear.

He was staying at Ilfracombe, in Devonshire, on the sea-coast, and one day he went with a kind friend to a pretty little bay where the sea runs into a hollow in the land, and where all round the water there are high cliffs. The flowers and grass grow on the top of the cliffs, and you may walk almost to the very edge before seeing the water underneath. When Daniel came to this place, and saw the smooth green grass sloping down like a beautiful lawn, he thought it would be a nice

place for a run, and off he set skipping and racing, and in a few moments more he would have run right over the edge of the cliff and have fallen into the sea.

The lady he was with, called loudly to him to stop, which he did *at once*, and waited for her to come up. She then gently led him to the edge of the precipice, and little Daniel was amazed and terrified when he saw the deep water far below where they were standing. "Now," said he, "if this had happened six months ago I should have been killed, because, instead of stopping at once when you called, I should have said, 'I will just have my little run first, and then come back.'"

#### CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

If you have done wrong, own it.

"Why that sorrowful face, Henry?" said we to a little fellow of some three years of age, who was running to his mamma, with the tears rolling down his cheeks.

"I have eaten some currants in the garden, and I am going to tell mamma," he sobbed.

He had disobeyed his mother's word, which was never to touch the fruit in the garden; but he loved her too well to deceive her, and so he was running in to tell her he had been naughty.

"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).

It is far better to have a broken heart over wrongdoing, and the wrong confessed and told out of the heart, than to have a sealed-up heart with the unconfessed wrong burning within. Indeed, it would not be possible for a "dear" child who had done wrong *not* to confess it. Children who love their parents may be overtaken in a fault, but such children cannot help

coming to their parents and owning their faults. And so it is with God's children when their hearts really are in the spirit of love.

DISOBEDIENCE AND HAPPINESS IMPOSSIBLE

Harriett lived at the seaside. A favourite spot of hers was a long, narrow causeway, formed of small pebbles, which was left dry at low tide, and which was called “ The Bridge.”

One day, two little girls, friends of Harriett's, came to ask if she might go out with them for a game of play on the beach, where stretched out a line of rocks beyond “ The Bridge,” and Harriett, very delighted, ran to ask her mother's leave.

“ Yes, you may go,” said her mother, “ but remember, if you play on ‘ The Bridge,’ you must not go beyond it. You must not run about among the ‘ St. Julien Rocks.’ ”

“ Very well, mamma, I will not forget,” said Harriett, and off she went with her young companions.

When a parent gives a command to a child, that command should be obeyed without questioning, “ I wonder why mamma told me to do this,” or “ I wonder why papa would not let me do that.”

Mrs. D. knew that when the tide was rising it would be dangerous for the children to be near these particular rocks, while she felt it would be quite safe for them to be on “ The Bridge,” as there they could plainly see the gradual rise of the tide.

Harriett and her friends amused themselves for some time in various ways, till one of the two, who were sisters, proposed playing at “ Hare and Hounds,” and soon one of them started off as the “ hare.” Away she went, all along “ the Bridge,” her own sister and Harriett running after her, both very desirous of being the

fortunate "hound" to catch her. On and on went the "hare," till she had reached the end of "The Bridge"; there were the rocks before her, the "St. Julien Rocks," so exactly suitable for helping her to hide from her pursuers, for she could dart away from them, in and out, along the narrow passages formed between the rocks.

Now, Harriett did not forget her mother's orders, but, alas! she disobeyed them. It was so delightful to run in this wild, exciting way, surely it could not matter if she went a little farther than "The Bridge"; then, too, she had not told her friends that she was forbidden to go among the rocks, and they would be so surprised if she were to stop; besides, she was determined to catch the "hare," and if she paused to consider she would lose all chance of doing so.

She yielded to the temptation, took the wrong step, and expected still to enjoy her game; but all enjoyment was gone! She had now an uneasy conscience, and that is always enough to spoil any pleasure.

Do you remember that when "sin came into the world, and death by sin," Adam and Eve were no longer happy, after they had eaten of the fruit of the tree?

Perhaps you are expecting to hear that the tide rose so rapidly that naughty little Harriett was drowned, and never saw her mother's face again; but such was not the case. God, in His mercy, did not cause her to die then, for she did not know the love of the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour; but He has allowed her to live until the present time, and now she is a believer in Him who died upon the cross for sinners.

Harriett's merriment passed away as soon as she had committed the act of disobedience, and all real fun

being at an end, the children retraced their steps along "The Bridge," across the shingly beach, and went away to their homes.

At tea-time, and after tea, Harriett felt so miserable that her little sister even failed to attract her notice, and she dreaded the hour of bedtime. It was Mrs. D.'s custom to help her little daughter Harriett to undress every night, and to see her comfortably in bed before she left her. But now Harriett's heart was full, and she could scarcely restrain her tears; instead of being a cheerful, lively child, as usual, chattering away freely to her mamma, she did not speak a word while she was getting ready for bed, and she felt that she could not look into her mother's eyes. She was not at all afraid that her mother would hear of her disobedience from any one else; no question had been asked her about her afternoon's ramble, and the fact that her mother trusted her made her feel all the more guilty. And then how dreadful to be alone in the dark, with this unhappy secret! Just as she was going to step into bed, and to give her mother a kiss, she could bear it no longer, but burst out crying, confessed all, and earnestly begged for forgiveness. Mrs. D. took the sobbing child on her lap, and, perhaps, she cried a little too. She was much grieved, as any loving mother would be, that her child had disobeyed her; but she freely forgave her, and did not go downstairs until Harriett's head was on her pillow, and her tears were dried up.

This little story is written as a warning to children who may be tempted to disobey or deceive. Such conduct always leads to unhappiness, sooner or later, and it is a sad and sinful thing to disregard the wishes of a parent. Adam and Eve tried in vain to hide

themselves among the trees of the garden of Eden, and no one can at any time hide sin from God. He sees everybody, everywhere, and at all times. Even if a wrong action is concealed from human eyes, God knows all about it.

A Sunday-school teacher inquiring of a Christian parent whether she observed any fruit from the instruction her children received, obtained this reply :

“ There is a great change in Anna ; she is now very anxious to obey me, and sometimes says, ‘ I do not think it right to do this or that,’ and very often comes to me in tears, because she cannot get her young companions to believe what she tells them of the love of the Lord Jesus.”

The first fruit of sin was disobedience to God ; the first fruit of faith is obedience, and faith works by love.

#### LOVE, THE TRUE MOTIVE

A little girl, who was naturally untidy, allowed her drawer to remain in great disorder. Being anxious to overcome her bad habit in order to please her mother, she wrote on a piece of paper, “ To be kept tidy for mamma’s sake,” and placed it in her drawer, so that whenever she went to it she might thus be reminded of her mother’s wishes. And keeping this before her, she soon kept her drawers in neat order. We should do well if we stamped on everything we do, “ To be done in the best possible way for the Lord Jesus Christ’s sake.” He is worthy of not only our unquestioning obedience, but of the loyal devotion of our hearts.

As disobedience to God’s word was the beginning of all sorrow upon this earth, and as sin is lawlessness,

that is doing what we like, we need not be surprised at the number of temptations to disobedience which surround us.

Great is the blessing of having the shelter of a Christian home, and the loving watchfulness of Christian parents' eyes. But as you will all have to fight your way in the world, and to mix more or less with different kinds of persons, learn by a simple story an old lesson.

#### CHARLIE AND THE APPLES

Little Charlie had one great fault, which much grieved his pious father—he often spent his playhours with boys his father did not wish him to be with. He enjoyed their games and fun, and could not believe this word of God—“ Evil communications corrupt good manners.”

One afternoon his father, instead of punishing him for being with the naughty boys, bade him go to the garden and pull three of the very best apples which he could find. This was an errand which any little boy would cheerfully run, and Charlie was not long before he came back with three fine rosy ones.

“ Put them down upon the table, my son,” said his father, “ and now fetch me the worst apple you can find, and, mind it must be quite rotten.”

Away ran Charlie, and soon came back with the bad apple, wondering what his father could mean. “ Now take the three good apples, my boy, and put the bad apple along with them upon the shelf in the cupboard.”

“ No, father,” cried Charlie, “ it will spoil the others—don't say so,” for it grieved him to think of the beautiful juicy apples being rendered good for nothing in such a way.

“ Do as I bid, my boy,” said his father, so Charlie obeyed.

A few days after Charlie's father called him and told him to open the cupboard and look at the apples, and there, just as the little boy had thought, were the *four* apples, quite rotten ; indeed, you would not have known again the three beautiful apples which Charlie had plucked from the garden ; they were quite worthless, and only fit to be thrown away.

Before his little son had time to exclaim and say as children often do, " I said it would be so, father," the good man explained to Charlie his parable.

One bad apple placed by the side of the three good apples had first tainted them, and then corrupted them all. The three good apples had not made the one bad apple good, but they had all caught its badness and become like it. And if one bad apple could spoil three good apples, what effect would many bad boys have upon his little son ? Indeed, had there not been in little Charlie something bad, he would never have played with children whom his father wished him not to play with.

And a great many other lessons did the good man draw from the apples. He showed his little son that it is the pride of our hearts, which says the bad boys cannot do *me* any harm ; that there is something in our hearts which soon makes us as bad as the worst if we go near the evil, just as there is something in a good apple which quickly makes it become a bad one when it is near the bad one. This something is sin. There is sin in our hearts, and it loves the sin which is in other people's hearts.

True and loving obedience will even go beyond observing the bare letter of the command. A loving child will soon learn not only the words, but the wishes of his parent. The child who lives near his parent's

heart will know his parent's pleasure. And, “ My father or my mother do not like this,” will guide him in many a difficulty. The child whose heart is open to his parent's words will be the obedient child.

Our Lord and Master tells us, “ If ye love Me, keep My commandments ” (John xiv. 15). And He also speaks of keeping His sayings. We sometimes find when a child of God wishes to do something very much, that he will say, “ The Bible does not tell me not to do this thing, therefore I will do it.” Such a spirit is not that of loving obedience to the wishes—or we may say—the words of the Lord are not treasured in that child's heart. May you so value the love of the Lord that you shall be anxious to obey Him. The happiness of God's children lies in their obeying their Father.

Let us close this chapter with some of our Lord's own words respecting obedience to Himself.

“ He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me ” (John xiv. 21).

“ He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings ” (John xiv. 24).

“ If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love ” (John xv. 10).

“ Ye are My friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you ” (John xv. 14).

My God ! my Father ! while I stray,  
Far from my home in life's rough way,  
Oh, teach me from my heart to say,  
“ Thy will be done ! ”

If Thou shouldst call me to resign  
What most I prize ; it ne'er was mine :  
I only yield Thee what is Thine,  
“ Thy will be done ! ”

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Should pining sickness waste away  
My life in premature decay,  
My Father, still I'll strive to say,  
    "Thy will be done!"

Subject my will, I humbly pray,  
Blend it with Thine; and take away  
Whatever makes it hard to say,  
    "Thy will be done!"

Then when on earth I breathe no more  
The prayer oft mixed with tears before,  
I'll sing upon a happier shore,  
    "Thy will be done!"

## CHAPTER XII

## CONFIDENCE AND PRAYER

“ If we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.”—I JOHN V. 15.

THE stories we are about to relate in this chapter are concerning the simple things of everyday life. We desire for the children of God, that they may tell their Father not only their large, but also their small, wants and difficulties. God has often answered great prayers, such as that of Elias, who was “ a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain ; and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit ” (Jas. v. 17, 18). And there are very, very often day by day continually answers granted to our simple prayers.

The Lord Jesus says to His disciples : “ Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened unto you : for every one that asketh receiveth ; and he that seeketh findeth ; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” And then graciously speaks to us of the daily wants of children, as if to show us that we should ask God for all good things. “ What man is there of you, whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall

your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him ? ” (Matt. vii. 7-11). Bread to eat is a very simple thing to ask a father for ; it is a “ good ” thing which no father, who had it, would deny his child. And we may all take courage by the Lord’s illustration to ask our Father in heaven for the things we need.

True prayer arises out of confidence. You run to your parents and ask them for what you want, because you know that they love you. You trust them, and learn to be satisfied, whether they give to you or withhold from you that for which you ask. Some of our prayers are asking God for things which are not *good*. Our Father in heaven does not promise to give bad things to His children, but good things.

You have often seen very small children cry piteously because their nurse would not allow them to carry a great, dirty stone in their clean clothes ! Very likely the little ones think that nurse is unkind ; but you, who are older, understand that such is not the case. Many of our prayers, if answered, would do us much more harm than carrying the dirty stone would do the little child. If we were wiser we should not ask for foolish things, but tell God *all* our troubles and all our pleasures, and trust Him. The truly happy Christian is he who has no secrets from God. Not that we can hide anything from God, but still many a time we act in our hearts as if we would not have God know what we like and what troubles us. Children who hide things from their parents are not happy ; neither are the children of God happy who do not tell Him all things. They cannot speak truly of “ the confidence that we have in Him ” (1 John v. 14).

Confidence in God arises out of faith in Him. The

sinner is told by God to believe; he obeys, and the blessings of salvation become his. The more the children of God know of their Father, the more confidence they have in Him.

Let us explain what confidence is. A young girl was sent by her parents to a school at some distance from home. Her parents told her that the lady at its head would be very kind, and the young girl believed the word of her parents. She expected to find a kind heart in the lady, and so comforted herself upon leaving home. After she had been at the school for some weeks, the girl proved how kind the lady was. She would call the young pupil aside and talk with her about her difficulties and troubles. Thus the lady became a friend, and the young girl had *confidence* in her. It was always a happy thing to go to the lady's room, and to tell her everything.

The schoolgirl believed her parents' word, and as she learned what the lady's heart was, she trusted her and had confidence in her.

God is our Friend, and it is His gracious pleasure to call us aside and to speak to our hearts. And so good is God that it is pleasing to Him whenever we run to Him and speak to Him. "Pray tothy Father in secret."

A few illustrations will help us to see what confidence is.

#### LED BLINDFOLD

Marion was a little girl about nine years old. I have nothing wonderful or unusual to tell you about her, but I want to help you by this simple story to understand what confidence is.

One day Marion went out with her mamma and grandmamma. It was a hot summer day, and the sun

poured down on the white stones of the pavement, giving everything a glittering look, which was very trying to the eyes. Little Marion's eyes were not very strong, so the sun tired them sorely. She longed to shut them, but she was afraid to walk along blindfold lest she should fall. But was not her mamma by her side, and would she not take care of her little daughter? Marion knew that she would, so without saying a word, she closed her tired eyes, and slipping her hand into her mother's, walked along in perfect safety close to her mother's side. And was she now afraid of falling? No, for her mother held her hand, and she felt perfectly safe although her eyes were shut.

When Marion's grandmamma saw how the little child trusted in her mamma, she said, "That is a true type of what confidence in God is, to trust Him perfectly, and to know that we are safe near Him."

#### TRUSTING IN THE DARK

Little Henry used to say, "You will come and see me in my bed, mamma"; and when his mamma promised that she would do so, he gave her his good-night kiss, and ran away happily to his nurse. And each night his mother stood over his little bed and watched her dear boy in his sleep before retiring to her own room.

The little boy's belief in his mother's care lulled him to rest. Her one word of promise was quite sufficient for him; her love gave confidence to his young heart.

"Please, Mary, do not take away the candle," said a little girl of six years old to her kind nurse, who had just put her to bed, and was about to leave her in the dark.

"Your mamma does not wish you to have a light now, for you are six years old," was the nurse's reply;

“ but as I am only going into the nursery, next door, if you want anything just call me, and I promise to come immediately.”

But little Emily would not be comforted, and began to cry twice as much as before. Presently there was a step upon the stairs, and the child heard a kind voice saying, “ Why does my little girl cry ? ”

Little Emily then felt so much ashamed of herself that she could find neither voice nor words to answer her father, but at length she sobbed out, “ Mary has taken away the candle and left me in the dark.”

“ And what harm can the darkness do you ? I see,” said her father, “ you trust to the candle. What, cannot my little girl trust God ? ”

“ Oh, papa, indeed, indeed, I do trust God.”

“ Well, my dear, if you did, you would not cry for a light, ‘ for the darkness and the light are both alike to God,’ and He is just as near at one time as at the other.”

When her good father was gone, and little Emily found herself alone once more, her heart beat very fast, and she was nearly crying again, but then she whispered in her heart, “ Please, O God, take care of me, and help me not to be afraid,” and saying this over and over again, she fell asleep.

Now a great part of our lives is spent as it were in the dark. That is, we cannot see what is going to take place ; we do not know what even a day will bring forth. What a happy thing, then, it is to be quite sure that our Father is caring for us, and, like the little children of whom we have just read, to be quiet and confident in His love.

A child’s confidence in his parents will lead him to tell them not only his troubles but his faults. It is our

great privilege as children of God to speak to Him about those things which we may have done contrary to His holy will.

“ SHALL I TELL JESUS ? ”

“ Shall I tell Jesus I have been naughty ? ” asked little Annie.

“ Yes,” I said, “ we must never hide anything from Him, and it will not make Him love you less to hear about it, though He hates your naughty ways.”

So she knelt down, and in a few simple words told the Lord Jesus she had not done her lessons well, and would He not help her to please Him next day ? Then, lifting up her tearful little face, she said, “ Shall I ask Him to let me think of Him ? ”

On my assenting she went on, “ And please, Jesus, let me think of Thee, and don't let Satan get a place in my naughty little heart.”

I did not say anything more to her ; but I saw that she did not forget what she had said. Next day she came running to me, saying, “ I asked Jesus to make me a good child to-day, so I'm sure He will.” And it was true ; I had no fault to find with her.

What I want you all to notice is, that it is as Jesus gets a place in your hearts that there will be no room for anything else. Little Annie knew that if she was thinking of Jesus there would be no place for Satan, and so it is. He likes to know that the youngest child wishes to think of Him, and He will take care that nothing contrary to Him shall be in your hearts when He is there.

Little children, He is worthy of all your thoughts ; do you not think He is ? Think how He has proved His love for you, in leaving the joy and peace of His

home with His Father, and bearing our sins, which caused God's face to be hidden from Him, for God cannot look upon sin. It was because He wanted *you* to share that home with Him, so He puts away the sins which prevent our tasting that joy with Him.

I think if you *believed* this, you would often think of Jesus, like little Annie.

God listens to all that we have to tell Him. His ear is ever open to our cry. And a child's prayer is never rejected by God. The more confidence we have in God, the more simple will be our prayers to Him. Let us read of a few instances of such requests.

#### I ASKED HIM

We heard of a little boy, not quite four years old, whose mother was very, very ill. Little Ernest fondly loved his mother, and he began to speak to the Lord Jesus about her sickness. After some time of anxiety, the little boy was taken away from home by his aunt, so as to make the house as quiet as possible. But Ernest prayed to Jesus to make his dear mother well, if such were His will; and after a short time, the post brought joyful news. When Ernest heard that his mother was getting well, he said, "Yes, gentle Jesus did it—I asked Him."

#### A WORD FROM GOD

There was a little boy, named Samuel, who loved the Lord Jesus. When he was ten years old he went to his grandmamma's to be nursed during an illness. He was very happy there, and often talked with his grandmamma about the dear Saviour.

When Samuel became strong he was told that his

parents wanted him to go to a boarding school. He had not left his home before, and he was afraid that he might not be faithful to Christ among so many play-fellows and schoolmates—for the school contained a hundred boys. When he told his grandmamma how tried he was about going to school, lest he should not be a good soldier of Jesus Christ, she said, "Samuel, my dear, when I am in trouble I always pray to God to give me some word to help me. You go and pray to Him, and ask Him to give you a word to help you. God can answer your prayer by laying some beautiful text upon your heart, or by guiding your eye to one when you are reading your Bible."

Samuel thought much about what his grandmamma said, but he scarcely could think God would give him a word about such a thing as going to school. Still, he prayed for a word from God, for he wanted His help very much.

The day before he was to leave, his grandmamma spoke to him of the comfort in having God's Word for every trouble; but he made no reply, and bade her good-night, looking still sad.

But what a change came over the dear boy the next morning! As he ran to bid his grandmamma good morning, his face beamed with happiness, and, after kissing her, he exclaimed, with great delight, "Oh, grandmamma, God has given me such a beautiful word! When I went to bed last night I asked Him again to give me a word out of the Bible to help me this morning; and before I got into my bed I put my Bible under the pillow, and directly it was light I opened it, and I found such a beautiful word that I shut it up, nor did I look for another verse; so now you must guess what my word from God is."

“ Oh, Samuel, I might guess a hundred beautiful texts, and, after all, not come to yours ; so I think you had better tell me what it is.”

“ Well, it is the 3rd verse of Psalm lvi.—‘ What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.’ And now, grandmamma, you must say it over six times, that you may not forget my text ! ”

The man-servant, who travelled with little Samuel, told his grandmamma, on his return, “ Master Samuel was so happy in the train, singing hymns all the way.”

After Samuel had been a week at his school, his grandmamma received a letter from him, telling her how well he had got through his lessons, and how happy he was. “ I feel quite well, grandmamma, though I have had no tonic medicine since I left you, except Psalm lvi. 3, ‘ What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee.’ ”

#### SHOW ME THE WAY

Eliza was a little orphan girl in whom we were especially interested, for she loved the Lord Jesus, and told Him all her troubles.

When a little servant-maid she was sent out one very hot summer’s day upon an errand. Eliza lost her way, and wandered about for a long time, not knowing where to go. She was afraid to ask the passers-by, lest she should be directed wrong ; and she began to feel in great trouble.

Then she thought, “ I will ask the Lord Jesus in heaven, for He knows quite well just where I am, and the house to which I want to go, and the nearest way to it.” So the little girl prayed Him, in His kindness, to show her the way.

She had hardly spoken to the Lord in her heart,

before a lady drew near, and Eliza at once asked her to tell her the way to Mrs. ——'s.

“ Follow me, little girl,” the lady said ; “ I live next door, and you will soon be there.”

“ Thank you, ma'am,” replied Eliza, “ I knew you would show me, for Jesus told me to ask you the way.”

What the lady thought of such an answer I do not know ; but Eliza was quite happy, and was soon at the house she wished. Will our young readers, like this little child, remember to ask God for everything, for He listens to little children's prayers ? You will find it a pleasant task to look in the Bible for the answers to prayer there recorded, and the more you speak to God about all your wants, the more happy you will grow.

“ YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER KNOWETH ”

The children of whom I am now going to tell you had a kind and loving father, and to see them sad or in want was his greatest grief. Their good mother was in heaven, and so the father had to work for them, and mind them.

In the stormy weather it was difficult for him to catch fish enough to buy his children food, and one winter the weather was so rough for a long time together that he knew not what to do. His children cried for food, and he did not know where to find it for them. So he prayed to God, for he loved Him, and believed the Lord's words : “ Consider the ravens ; for they neither sow nor reap : and which neither have storehouse nor barn ; and God feedeth them : how much more are ye better than the fowls ? ”

He was too poor to have a storehouse or a barn ; he was only a poor fisherman ; but his Father in heaven, to whom all the earth belongs, knew that there was not bread enough in the fisherman's house to feed his little ones.

With a sad heart, the good man went out of doors, and seated his little girl upon his shoulder. As he walked along, presently a pieman came down the street, with a tray upon his head, laden with nice things. Little Mary, being upon her father's shoulder, was just as high as the pieman's tray, and she reached out her hand to snatch off a cake.

" No, my child," her father said, " those are not ours, and I have no money to buy you any." And as he spoke, his little Mary began to cry bitterly, nor would she be comforted, so her father sorrowfully returned to his home.

When her father had put her down, he took off his thick sailor's jacket, and as he threw it aside a bright shilling rolled out from the pocket. At first he could not believe his eyes, or understand where it had come from. Then he called to mind that just when his little Mary was crying for the cakes a woman had pushed against him, and she, no doubt, had put the money into the pocket. God uses many means to accomplish His purposes, and makes men and women His messengers.

You may be sure the good father did not allow the hungry little children to wait long for their meal, neither did he forget to teach them to thank God for His mercies in sending them food.

And, dear young friends, never let us forget to praise God for His answers to our prayers, for He Himself, who is so good and kind, says to us, " Be ye thankful."

Let us end this chapter with some texts of Scripture upon prayer to God.

“ This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us ” (1 John v. 14).

“ Be careful for nothing ; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God ” (Phil. iv. 6).

“ Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks ; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you ” (1 Thess. v. 17, 18).

“ Is any among you afflicted ? let him pray ” (Jas. v. 13).

“ When ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do ; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them : for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him ” (Matt. vi. 7-8).

#### MY FATHER'S CARE

If e'en a little sparrow falls,  
My heavenly Father knows ;  
'Tis He the scented lily clothes,  
And every flower which blows.

He gives the hungry bird its food,  
The drooping bud its shower,  
But I am dearer far to Him  
Than sparrow or than flower.

Because He made His creatures all,  
He guards them 'neath His eye ;  
He made me too—but, oh ! far more,  
For me His Son did die.

When troubles cause my heart to droop  
Or wet my cheek with tears,  
    Father's love, my Father's care,  
Shall soothe away my fears.

## CHAPTER XIII

## SERVING THE LORD

“Ye serve the Lord Christ.”—COL. iii. 24.

GOD does not forget that children are children. All that He does is perfect. And God does not wish that Christian children should act as if they were not what they are—young and, we trust, simple. When we speak of *serving the Lord*, we do not mean to ask a lad of fifteen to stand up and preach, or a girl of twelve to perform some duty which pertains to grown women; but we mean that kind of service which the Christian child, as a child, and not trying or wishing to be anything but a child, can, and should, render to God.

We do not then look for great things in children's service. But remember, dear boys and girls, that life is chiefly made up of little things. The copious shower is formed of little rain-drops, and the mighty mountains of tiny particles; the greatest forces in nature are numberless small things acting together. It is only one person here and there in the world whose name is even so much as known outside a very small circle, and even “great men” are not always doing great things; their lives are chiefly made up of little things. Now, in serving the Lord, it is all-important to observe this principle.

Suppose the apostle Paul had served the Lord in the great work of preaching the gospel, yet had not served

the Lord in the little things of daily duties, he would not then have been the *great* apostle he was. If a man who is regarded in a special way as God's servant only serves Him upon special occasions, such a servant is a bad servant. It is not a great thing to eat and drink ; every one does this, yet the Scriptures say, " Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God " (1 Cor. x. 31). It is not a great thing to earn one's daily bread ; there are few only whose lives are not lives of labour, and the Scriptures say that the great apostle laboured with his own hands, and not only thereby ministered unto his own necessities, but also to those of others who laboured with him in the gospel (Acts xx. 34). In our daily duties we should seek to please God.

A child's service to the Lord is naturally to be found in little things. Now, the Lord does not forget the little things which children do out of love to Him. A mother does not forget the kiss her little ones give her, nor their kind and thoughtful ways ; much less does He, who is kinder even than a mother, forget the least thing done in His name. He has told us that a cup of cold water given in His name shall in no wise lose its reward.

In the first part of this chapter we will address ourselves to young children.

#### WHOM DO YOU SERVE ?

Little children, you have each of you a body which has several members—hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth, and many more besides. Each of these members is a little instrument for good or evil. Suppose I say " Joseph, here is a book, take it." Joseph wishes to obey. He puts forward his hand, closes his fingers round the book, and takes it. His hand serves his will.

A few illustrations will help to explain what I mean. A little boy has a whip, with which he plays at horses ; one day another boy says to him, "Lend me your whip," and he uses it to beat a poor dog. Thus as soon as the whip has a bad boy for its master it serves as an instrument for cruelty.

A girl puts out her hand to stop her little sister from falling, then she uses it well ; but if she lifts her hand to strike some one, then she uses it badly. If the feet run an errand of obedience, it is well ; but if they stamp with impatience, it pleases Satan. You can tell me how your ears serve for good and how for evil. "Yes," you may say, "we use our ears well if we listen to the word of God, and we use them badly when we listen to naughty tales instead of doing our work."

There is a bad master called "Sin," and when we give up our members to sin—hands, feet, eyes, ears—all are turned to a bad use, like the whip in the hands of the cruel boy.

The Lord Jesus, God's Son, became a little child, and had a body like ours, only without sin ; His hands and feet never did evil, His mouth never spoke any wrong words, and He never lent His ears or eyes to what was wrong, nor had He ever one wrong thought. But those hands, which had touched so many sick people to heal them, and which had been laid upon so many little children to bless them, were pierced with nails ; and the feet of Jesus, which had been ever going errands of love, were fastened to the cross. When the good and kind Jesus was nailed to the dreadful cross, all the sins of His people were laid upon Him by God. It is by the stripes of Jesus, by all that He suffered upon the cross, that we are healed. How loving it was of the Saviour to die for us !

Little children, you have obeyed Sin, but Jesus died to put our sins away, and if you believe in Jesus, all the sins that you have done are put away, and God does not look at them any more. And because you are now God's children He bids you not to give up your members as instruments to serve Sin, but to give up yourselves to Him, for He is your God. You are called to serve the Lord in little things, for you are little children. But all your members can be made useful for God. Will you learn this text? "Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus"; and by doing this your members shall not be instruments to serve Sin, but shall be the servants of righteousness.

Two little eyes to look to God,  
Two little ears to hear His word,  
Two little feet to walk in His ways,  
Two hands to serve Him all my days.

We can serve by giving. Naturally our hearts are selfish, but if the love of God is active within our hearts, we shall wish to do such things as please Him who gives us all good things.

#### LUCY AND HER GIFT

I suppose most little boys and girls find waiting rather difficult and uninteresting; but I am going to tell you what happened to me the other day, when I had to wait in a small parlour for nearly two hours, and did not find it at all dull.

The kind mistress of the house was busy, so she could not come and speak with me, but she sent her little girl Lucy to play about the room and amuse me. Lucy and I began talking, and, after a little while, she showed me one of her great treasures, a tiny, tiny china

doll. To explain how small it was, I will tell you that a thimble would have been large enough for its cradle. She also showed me a beautiful large lady doll, dressed in white, and one made of indiarubber; and besides these three, Lucy told me she had four more upstairs. What a number of dolls happy little Lucy had. Presently I said:

“ Lucy, what do you like best of all? ”

Lucy stopped playing, and, coming up to my side, said, with such a bright smile:

“ Oh! I love Jesus best of everything, *of course.* ”

Ah! this was what made Lucy so happy and joyful. She loved Jesus best of everything. This little girl had all that a kind father and mother could give her; she was full of life, and so merry, and yet there was something better than all this that Lucy cared for. She loved Jesus best, “ of course.”

Dear children, and especially you who have parents who tell you about the Lord Jesus Christ, can you say *you* love Jesus best of all? I dare say you know about Him—how He came to die for sinners; you know what a life of self-denial and grace He lived here, and that He, the only begotten Son of God, the Father’s Well-Beloved, was put upon the cross. But do you at heart believe it for your own selves? The Lord Jesus looks at our hearts; He wants our first love to be given to Himself.

I will tell you something more about Lucy, which will show you that she not only loved with her heart, but showed by her ways that she was not forgetful of what God wishes His children to do. I was telling her of a little girl I knew, who had not even one doll. Lucy went at once to her mother, and asked if she might give me one, to send to the poor child who had none.

If you love your mother very much, you try to do what she does, and what she wishes you to do. This is what Christian children ought to do. You know the Lord Jesus said Himself, speaking of Christians, in Matt. v. 14, 16, "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid"; and, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Of course you know this can only be said to those whose sins are washed away in the blood of Christ, because no one else can do anything which will please God. The Lord tells us to shine, which means that we are to let every one see to whom we belong, and whom we want to serve. Think of this, "Even Christ pleased not Himself."

I suppose Lucy had heard her mother read what the apostle Paul said in Acts xx. 35, "Ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Lucy did remember this, and, as it was the wish of One she loved, she acted on it.

Dear children, do you really love Jesus "best of everything"? The time is very short for us to have the joy of loving Jesus and shining for Him in this dark world; and if it be joy for us, *how* much greater must be the joy to Him!

We will now turn to a different kind of service, one which is of a very sweet character, as the following story shows:

#### LITTLE MARY'S SERVICE OF LOVE

Little Mary lost her father and mother when she was very young—her mother died when she was a baby, and her father when she was just nine years old. It was a

great sorrow to the poor child to see her father laid in the churchyard beside her mother, for she then felt that she was left alone in the world. Yet little Mary did not feel quite alone, for she was a Christian, and had learned the love of Jesus, and knew that He would be with her wherever she went.

But there was a trial before her which she dreaded—she had to leave the dear old home in the village, and go to a city far away, to live with an aunt and uncle, whom she had only seen once or twice in her life.

Mary's first night in her new home was not a happy one ; her aunt did not mean to be unkind, but she was a busy, bustling woman, too much absorbed in the cares of her household to think of comforting the little, lonely orphan. Her uncle had stayed late at his work, and her cousins, who were quite strangers to her, amused themselves with teasing the lonely orphan.

Poor little Mary ! how glad she was when it was time to go upstairs to bed. When she went to her room, she found that it was not unoccupied. There were two little beds there, and on one lay a pale girl, with such a sad, weary face. " I put you here, Mary," said her aunt, " thinking, perhaps, if Janie wanted anything in the night you would get it for her, for you have been used to getting up at nights to your father, and if you will do that, you will be a comfort to me," and with a hasty kiss, the aunt went downstairs and left the two girls alone.

Mary soon learned that poor Janie was suffering from a spinal complaint, and could not move from her bed. It caused Janie very great pain at times, and the poor child led a lonely, weary life, being almost con-

stantly in that one little room at the top of the house. Mary's kind little heart was touched when she heard the story of her cousin's sufferings; and when she knelt to pray, she asked that she might be enabled to make Janie's sad life happier.

Mary's prayer was fully answered; and many and many an hour of the bright sunny days of that summer did she spend in Janie's room, talking to her, reading to her, and singing to her the hymns she had learned with her father. Mary soon found Janie was not a Christian, and it was her constant prayer that she might lead her to Jesus.

One Sunday evening, Janie asked Mary how she could be so happy, when her father and mother were both dead. "Because," answered Mary, "I know I shall go to them in heaven some day."

"How do you know that?" asked Janie; "perhaps you won't be good enough."

"No, I shall never be good enough," said Mary; "but Jesus has forgiven me all my sins, because He died for me, so He will take me to heaven."

"Do you think He would take me if I died?" asked Janie.

"Do you believe that He has forgiven you all your sins?" said Mary.

"May I believe that?"

"Yes, listen, and I will read you what the Bible says: '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). And again: 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved'" (Acts xvi. 31).

"You know," Mary continued, "that Jesus was punished instead of us; you know all about His dying

on the cross, and how He suffered, that we might be forgiven. Jesus has done it all, and we have only to believe. You may believe in Jesus, Janie."

Mary was called downstairs then, and Janie took the little Bible she had left on the bed, and read it as she had never read it before ; and when Mary came up she guessed, by the happy smile on Janie's face, that the Lord Jesus had spoken to her heart.

It will always be found that those Christians who most distinctly show by their words and ways that they do really belong to the Lord Jesus, get most easily through the laughter and the scorn which of necessity must beset a godly path ; while timid, half-and-half Christian conduct will meet the reward it deserves. The Lord says we cannot serve two masters. May it be the happy privilege of our young friends who love the Lord to be amongst the Lord's servants who serve Him alone.

#### BE DECIDED FOR CHRIST

In a large boys' school, not far from London, the scarlet fever broke out, and about twenty of the scholars were attacked. But owing to God's special providence all were mercifully spared. After a while the school re-assembled. One of the boys, Arthur ——, a youth of sixteen, had been brought during his illness to think seriously that he might be called at any time to meet God, and his heart told him that he was not ready.

When Arthur came back, and saw his companions who had lain beside him racked with burning fever, now restored to health, he felt deeply impressed with the goodness of God. Arthur had not been brought up

in the fear of God ; the boy had early lost his parents, and had been much neglected, neither was his natural disposition very amiable. It was God's Holy Spirit which was drawing him after God and working in heart, although Arthur was entirely ignorant of Him.

One of Arthur's close companions, to whom he was much attached, had, like himself, been ill. Arthur told this boy one morning how very unhappy he felt, that his sins troubled him, and that he wanted to give his heart to God, but did not know how. " I cannot forget God's love in sparing our lives, and," added he, " have you not thought of this, too ? "

" Well," said Willie, " I am afraid if we turn religious we shall be laughed at and persecuted by the other boys."

" Never mind," said Arthur, " they won't kill us if they do call us names. What I want to know is, whether you will join me in coming right out at once ? "

" What do you mean to do, Arthur ? " asked his friend, rather alarmed.

" This I mean to do—to kneel down to-night by the side of my bed, and to thank God aloud for having spared our lives ; to beg Him to forgive us all our sins, and to make us to love Him. Don't you think that's right, Willie ? Where should we have gone had we died ? "

" I am afraid to hell," said Willie thoughtfully, " for not one of us is religious."

Night came ; the school was gathered together to hear the principal read the usual prayers, and the boys were dispersed to their several sleeping-rooms. About fifteen of them slept in the same room with Arthur and Willie, and as they all began to undress, the two friends

knelt by the side of each other ; and Arthur openly and boldly thanked God for restoration to health, and fervently implored His blessing on his soul, and upon all the boys in the school, and especially upon those who had been ill.

A murmur of surprise and of disapproval was at once heard ; *then a whispering and laughing, which ended in pillows and bolsters being flung at the praying boys' heads.* This they bore patiently ; made neither noise nor resistance, but quietly got into bed, and were soon fast asleep.

The next day all the school rang with the story of Arthur, the praying boy, and the fun the others had had in throwing the pillows at them. However, that act of decision proved the turning-point in Arthur's life. His soul was blessed ; God heard his prayer ; and the Holy Spirit, who had taught him his lost state, showed him Jesus—as his Saviour. Arthur henceforth loved his Bible, and the word became very sweet and precious to him.

The principal of the school soon heard about Arthur praying every night before going to bed, and that the boys tormented him on account of it. He questioned Arthur, who told him simply what he felt respecting God's goodness in sparing them in the fever, and how he wished to belong to God for ever. The master granted Arthur a little room, where he and other boys *met together and read God's word and prayed.* Arthur's conduct and that of several others became so changed that the school at length left off tormenting the "praying band." Arthur, who has long since left school, is now a valiant champion of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christian boys in schools, you may get persecuted by your schoolmates if you are decided for Christ, but

be open and bold as was Arthur, for, "if God be for us, who can be against us?"

There are numberless ways in which the Christian child can serve the Lord. None are too young to help others. And the young have a peculiar way of imparting pleasure to the old. A call made upon an aged person, with even a bunch of flowers as a gift, would often cheer the lonely heart. Again, we say the Lord despises not little things, and remind you that the cup of cold water given in His name to one of His own is pleasant to Him, and will not be forgotten.

Be not careful to do some great thing in order to serve the Lord, but seek for grace, that in the many little things which make up your life you may so act that the Lord Jesus shall say of you, "Well done, good and faithful servant," or, "She hath done what she could."

#### JESUS BIDS US SHINE

Jesus bids us shine  
With a pure clear light,  
Like a little candle  
Burning in the night.  
In the world of darkness  
So we must shine,  
You in your small corner  
And I in mine.

Jesus bids us shine  
First of all for Him ;  
Well He sees and knows it,  
If our light grows dim.  
He looks down from heaven  
To see us shine,  
You in your small corner  
And I in mine.

## THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Jesus bids us shine,  
Then, for all around,  
For many kinds of darkness  
In the world are found.  
There's sin, there's want, and sorrow,  
So we must shine,  
You in your small corner  
And I in mine.

## CHAPTER XIV

## AS DEAR CHILDREN

“Children, obey your parents . . . for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”—COL. iii. 20.

THERE are tens of thousands of children in the world, but how many, think we, amongst this multitude, are “dear” children? The selfish, the greedy, the cross, the vain, are not *dear* children. That pouting-lipped boy who cries because he cannot have everything in the home all to himself, is not a *dear* child; nor is that snappish little girl with a frown upon her face. Happy is that family where the parents rejoice over boys and girls ready and willing to do what their parents love, and whose chief pleasure lies in pleasing others.

How one gloomy face will spoil the simple happiness of the family circle; how one self-willed spirit hushes the joyful voice of the home into a constrained and painful silence! And on the other hand, when sunny-face bounds into the room, how his sweet light shines upon the other faces near him. It is as when upon a cloudy April day the sun breaks out, and, at his shining, the silent woods are filled with song.

Now, God’s dear children are not simply such as believe on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, but they are those Christian children who are kind and tender-hearted, forgiving one another. In their lives are seen some of the holy, the loving things which were shown in the life of our Lord when He was

a child and a man upon this earth. We earnestly desire that our young readers may not only be God's children, but also His *dear children* (Eph. v. 7).

We have not the least kind of wish that any of you should be anything unlike children—that is, so long as you are young. We do not wish to suppose, and we certainly shall not speak about, unnatural children. Not one word of ours shall, we trust, ever lead a child beyond childhood, or to wish to become anything extraordinary. The older we grow, the more desirous we are to see happy, natural, and care-free children. Not the small men and women that fashion nowadays often makes them, but what God made them, and what God would have them to be.

In this chapter we will first tell you of some things which do not mark the dear child.

#### “ BLUE RAISINS

A dark cloud was hovering over little Mary Carlton's usually happy home. Every one stepped softly and looked sad, for in one of the bedrooms Mary's dear brother Willie lay dangerously ill. He was about fourteen years old, and so loving and amiable that he was tenderly loved by every one. Little Mary was six years younger than Willie, but there were no children between them, so it happened that they were always together, and dearly loved each other. Mary thought that no one ever had or could have such a darling brother as she had, so you may guess how very sorrowful she was now he was so very ill; her eyes were red with crying, and her merry laugh was never heard. She took up her place close to poor Willie's bed, and very seldom could she be persuaded to leave it.

At length the crisis was passed, the illness abated,

and dear Willie once more recognised the loving faces which bent over him. But oh, how weak he was! he could scarcely raise his thin hand to his head. Slowly he improved, and his appetite began to return; still, little loving Mary kept her watch beside his bed, eager to anticipate his every desire.

One day Willie expressed a great wish for some "blue raisins," the name he gave to muscatels, of which he was very fond. The doctor said he might have some; so very soon a dish of fine ones was brought to Willie's room. After he had taken a few, the dish was put in a cupboard beside the bed. Now it happened that Mary was particularly fond of "blue raisins," and could not help wishing for some. Willie had fallen into a quiet sleep, and Mary sat beside him, behind the bed curtain; her mind was on the raisins, and at length she thought how easy it would be to take just a few for herself—Willie was asleep, and no one else was in the room.

The thought gained power, as all evil thoughts will do if not at once checked. Presently she moved from her seat and crept stealthily round the bed; a chair stood close to the cupboard, she could easily reach the raisins by standing upon it; even if Willie should wake, the curtain of the bed would conceal her from him. She opened the cupboard, mounted a chair, and took a beautiful bunch of raisins in her hand; she had almost put one into her mouth, when she suddenly thought what a terrible thing it was to steal dear Willie's raisins, and he so ill, too, that perhaps even yet he might die. Oh! how she hated herself for having thought of robbing her brother of a single raisin; how glad she was that not one of them had been eaten! She threw the bunch back with the others, and, shutting the cupboard, hastened back to her old seat. Amidst blinding tears

she looked at the pale, thin face of the sleeping boy, and even pinched herself hard as a punishment for the wicked intention, so nearly carried out, of stealing his raisins.

Willie slowly but surely recovered, his merry laugh was heard again in his home, and very happy times the brother and sister had together. Willie has long since become a man, and even in Mary's hair there are a few silver threads, yet she is still thankful that she was prevented from eating Willie's "blue raisins."

It was her intense love for her brother which saved her from the sin she was so tempted to commit, it was not fear of punishment. Her brother had always been so kind and loving to her, had taken such care of his little sister, had spared no trouble to please and amuse her, that he had gained her tenderest love; therefore, how could she sin against her brother by stealing his raisins?

Jesus proved His great love for us by giving up His life to save us from hell. He is always watching over us as we journey through life. He will soon come to take His people to the home He has gone to prepare for them. Oh! should not His great love to us so win our hearts that we should shrink from doing anything which could grieve Him who has done so much for us?

Perhaps you have not been tempted in the way that little Mary was. But you can think of many things in which you, like her, have not behaved as a dear child. Of course, we are now addressing believing children, and therefore expect different behaviour from them than from those who do not love God. Temptation

will come, but we are told to resist the Adversary, and he will flee from us ; therefore, if tempted, take a lesson from our next story.

#### I LOOKED STRAIGHT TO JESUS

“ I was so nearly getting into a passion the other day,” said a little girl long ago, “ but I looked straight to Jesus, and He helped me.

“ Since dear mother died, Nelly and I have had to mind baby, and to do everything for father ; so I can only go to school when I can be spared.

“ Nelly is ten, and I am not quite twelve years old. The other day I was to go to school, and Nelly had to mind baby till I came home. There were only two little things of dear mother’s which were my VERY OWN—a china mug and a little silver locket—they were safe on the mantelshef when I went to school, and I was so fond of them ; and what must Nelly do, but give them to baby to play with.

“ The first thing I saw when I came from school was my precious mug broken to pieces, and the locket quite spoilt. Nelly said baby had done it, but I fear that she had put it in baby’s way on purpose. I was just going into a passion, but *I looked straight to Jesus*, and He helped me ; so I said nothing to Nelly.”

Thus God gave this little girl the victory. She overcame the temptation in Christ’s power ; and though very much grieved, yet, by grace, she behaved as a dear child ; and hers was the true way of overcoming. We remember what the apostle Paul said when he was in great distress : “ I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me ” (Phil. iv. 13). And when he had all that he needed, he still overcame in the same

strength. We must not suppose that we need the Lord's strength less in the happy hour than in the sorrowful one. Pleasure often leads our hearts from God, while pain sometimes leads them to God. It is as the Christian has the Lord Jesus continually before him as his strength, that he overcomes. Sometimes we find ourselves trying to overcome ourselves by our own efforts, but we do not thus obtain the victory. We must, like our young friend, look straight to the Lord Jesus, and He will give us strength to be more than conquerors.

#### A CHILD'S VICTORY

Let me tell you about a little child with whom I was staying a short time ago, who by the power of the Holy Ghost overcame a great temptation. She was a child naturally of extreme self-will, and if opposed in any way, she directly became exceedingly obstinate, sometimes remaining so for many hours.

One of these occasions showed itself when she came into my room to have her daily Bible lesson. She was learning the 23rd Psalm. Her parents had gone abroad for a time, and were soon returning; and I said to her, "You don't yet know your Psalm very well; I should like you to know it much better before your mamma comes home."

"Oh! but," she said, "I *must* know it for mamma; I must say it *quite* well to her."

I knew this cost her much, as she was not fond of learning, and found difficulty in retaining by heart.

She then began to repeat the Psalm, making several mistakes at the fourth verse, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." I said to her, "I want E—— to say that verse over till she says it without one fault."

After having repeated it three times with many faults, she stopped short, and said in a very decided manner, plainly showing she meant what she said, "I won't say it any more; I can't, I don't *want* to." I paid no attention to this, but simply told her to say it again; then she looked very angry, and exclaimed, "I said I would not say it again, I'm not going to; I *won't* say it any more"; and her little face, before radiant with sunshine at the thought of "saying it *quite* well to mamma," now looked dark and cloudy, as though some distant storm were brewing, and I saw with pain she was in one of her sadly obstinate fits, and that the Evil One was getting the better of her.

Again she was asked to say it; again she sternly refused.

Seeing it to be quite useless to ask her any more, and knowing that self-will and obstinacy are peculiarly difficult to deal with, I thought it best to turn her mind to something else.

As I had said she was to repeat the verse till she knew it perfectly, I wished to keep to it, at the same time knowing it required a far higher power than mine to make her willing to obey, so strong was her will.

After waiting a few minutes, I silently asked the Lord to guide and show me His mind about it.

It may seem to you a little thing, but nothing concerning any of His children is small in the Father's eyes, because the Father looks at them as in Christ, and all that concerns them concerns His Son, and therefore, must accordingly be precious to Him; and we are told the Father loves the believer with the same love with which He loves the Son (John xvii. 23), and *that* we know to be measureless! We can never bear in

mind too much that God delights for us to go to Him about everything.

After a long silence, I said, "Can E—— tell me what Jesus did when He was down here on earth, and Satan came and tempted Him to do a very naughty thing, and one that would have disobeyed and displeased God very much?"

She said, "No, I can't."

"Shall I tell you?"

"Yes."

I then told her how Satan tempted the Lord Jesus three times, and how He told Satan to go behind Him, and how He overcame the Tempter by using God's own word. She seemed much struck, and it was touching to watch the struggle that was going on within.

I said, "Does Jesus want us to be like Him?"

"Yes," she said.

"Yes," I repeated; "and it is the Father's wish to make us like His Son in everything. He is thinking of it all day long; and every little thing that happens to God's children down here is to make us more and more like His Son. That is God's one object concerning all those who are washed in the blood of Jesus.

"If," I continued, "Satan came and tempted me to be very naughty, and I said, 'Go away, Satan,' do you think he would go?"

She looked up in my face, and said slowly, "Yes—I think he would, and I think God would make him go away," and without another word she turned her little head round.

She did not know with what tearful joy I saw those little lips move; but what was my joy in comparison to the joy it gave the heart of God to see a little child

scarce more than five years old overcoming an evil passion by the power of the Holy Ghost.

In another moment she looked up in my face, with almost tears on her own, and said :

“ I will say that verse now, I will say it as often as you like, till—till—I know it quite well.”

The victory was won—the child was happy—God was praised, and I silently thanked the Lord for thus glorifying Himself in one so young, and in bringing His own word home with power to her young heart ; feeling it to be a lesson from Himself that both the child and I would never forget.

Every Christian child does, we are sure, desire in his heart to be a *dear* child, for God the Holy Spirit has planted this desire within the Christian's breast. When selfishness or passion, or any other sin is given way to, sorrow must surely follow. Then it is that the love of the Lord Jesus, as the Holder-up, the Sustainer of His people, is felt. For by His word He makes them happy again before Him. There is no one who will deal more tenderly with the erring one than the Saviour.

The Lord Jesus lives in heaven for us. He remains in God's presence on our behalf, and He teaches our hearts to own to God the wrong which we have done. So we read, “ If we confess our sins, He (that is God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness ” (1 John i. 9). All that which is displeasing to God is sin, and the Lord is in heaven to speak for us to our Father there. “ 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 ” (1 John ii. 1).

Let us take some illustrations of Christian behaviour during the hours of sickness.

PATIENT AND USEFUL

Little Annie was suffering from a severe attack of rheumatic fever, and was very weak and ill. She particularly wished to see me, and as I sat by her bedside, she asked me to read with her.

“What shall it be, Annie?”

“The first chapter of John, please,” she said.

“It is always the first of John, or ‘Rock of Ages,’” said her grandmother. “She is a regular little woman, and without her I don’t know what we should do. May God raise her up! She is the little housekeeper; she knows what everything costs—how much for coals, and bread, and rent, child though she is. She minds the little ones, too, and is a mother to them when I am out.”

So we read a verse or two from the first of John’s Gospel—“Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard Him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou? He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day.”

“Behold the Lamb of God!—that is, Look at Jesus. This is the first word to us all. Look at Jesus as the Lamb of God. And why the Lamb, Annie?”

“Because He was sacrificed for us.”

“Yes, and God’s Lamb, because God gave Him to die, and because Jesus was holy.”

“Then Jesus says to those who listen to these words

and follow Him, 'Why do you seek Me?' And what answer would you give, Annie? Surely this, 'That I may live with Thee, dear Lord Jesus, that I may reach Thy home above.' "

And Jesus says, "Come and see"; so "they came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day." And so shall every one who looks at Him by faith follow Him here, and dwell with Him above through the long bright day of eternity.

This was little Annie's portion in God's word, and may its blessed truths be found in the heart of every one of our little readers—to look to Jesus—to follow Jesus—and to live with Jesus.

Little Annie was restored again to health, and was soon busy once more at housekeeping for her grandmother, and a useful, handy girl she was.

#### HAPPY WHILE SUFFERING

Charley Dudley was a cripple, and the only child of poor parents. One day as Charley was sitting by his window, unable to move, a young lady paid him a visit, saying, "I heard that a little invalid lived here, and I have come to cheer one of his lonely hours." After chattering a while with him, the lady asked Charley if he would like to come to a Sunday school. "I can't walk, miss," was the poor lad's reply; but when he heard that the young lady's father would send his carriage for him every Sunday, poor little Charley's face brightened up with delight.

When Charley's mother came home, he told her all about the visit, and his mother promised him that if the carriage came, he should go to the school. And, sure enough, at ten o'clock on Sunday morning the beautiful carriage drove up to the door, with the kind

young lady seated in it, and Charley was driven off to the school.

You may guess why this young lady took all this trouble about the poor child. It was because she wished that he might indeed know the love of Jesus and be happy for ever. One day the boy said to her, "Miss Caroline, do you think Jesus loves me?" "He loved you so much that He came down from His home in heaven to die upon the cross for sinners," was the reply; and very simply did the poor boy receive in his heart the sweet story of Jesus' love. God gave him power to believe upon the Lord, and Charley was enabled to say to his kind teacher, "Oh, I am so happy, so very happy; I have found Jesus. Everything looks bright now"; and he pointed from his poor little window to the trees and fields, "The trees are more beautiful now, and I am so happy."

And the poor little sufferer would say, "I shall very soon be with Jesus, and then I shall not suffer any more pain; and shall not I be happy up there?"

My little friends, are you as happy as poor Charley, the cripple?

We will speak of another boy who, by his patience in sickness, glorified God, and who thus teaches us a happy lesson as a dear child.

#### JESUS HELPS ME

Willie was a poor, sick boy, who had been a great sufferer for a long time. For more than two years he had lain on his bed, unable to move more than his head and his hands. A good, kind minister, whom we will call Mr. Norton, used to go very often to see him. One day he was talking to him, and said, speaking of a boy

in his Bible-class, " James loves his Saviour ; do you, Willie ? "

" Yes, sir," said Willie, " I think I do a little, but not as I ought."

After Mr. Norton had gone Willie was very unhappy, and cried. The next morning he was grave and thoughtful, but seemed happy. Not long after this conversation, Willie grew very much worse, and every one thought he was dying. He asked for Mr. Norton, but he was away from home, and was not expected back for a few days. At last he came, and great was Willie's joy at seeing him. He said to him, " Oh, sir, I have been wanting to see you so much. Every day I have prayed to God to let me live till you came home, because I had something I wanted to tell you, and He has answered my prayer."

" What did you want to tell me ? " asked the minister.

" Only this, sir, that I love Jesus now with all my heart, and He has made me so happy."

Thankful, indeed, must Mr. Norton have been as he heard these simple words from the sick boy ; and when he left, it was, doubtless, with the thought that they were the last he should hear from his lips on earth. But, greatly to the surprise of all, Willie became better for some months, then again he grew worse, and we saw that the end was near. He suffered great pain, but was always patient, and sometimes he would say, " Jesus helps me to bear it ; He suffered so much more for me."

As Christian people grow older they learn to set a greater value upon those things in which God takes the greatest pleasure. And such things are very often the unseen things of life. Very few eyes would see the patience of a sick child, but Christian patience is precious

to our Father in heaven. In olden times persons used to stand up in the corners of the streets, and there make long prayers to God. But the Lord tells us not to pray so that we may be seen of men, but to pray to our Father "in secret." It used to be a custom for people to make a great show of their almsgiving and charity, but the Lord Jesus tells us not to let our left hand know what our right hand doeth. Our Father's eye sees all. He sees into our hearts, as well as beholds our actions; and the gentle spirit and the meek and lowly heart are more dear to Him than great things done for men to see.

We have already spoken of serving the Lord, but of this we may be sure, that the *dear* child will ever be the most *useful* servant of God.

At times God brings to Himself a child in a family, and not only for the blessing of the child, but also for the blessing of the parents and the brothers and sisters of the circle. The happy path for such a child will be the quiet and humble one. It is not seemly for children to say much, as if teaching their parents, but Christ-like behaviour is always a sweeter and a stronger voice than language.

Let us, by the following story, learn how God can use a few simple and child-like words to the blessing of a parent; the speaker being the father of the little girl in question.

#### A FATHER'S TESTIMONY

"Well, sir, you must first know that I was for many years in the army in India, and, like many others, had no concern whatever for my soul's eternal welfare. I drank freely of intoxicating liquors, and spent much of my time in drinking; and only the night before it pleased God to arrest me I was turned out of a public-

house. My habit was to spend most of the Sunday in bed, so that for many years I never attended a place of worship, but, having several children, I was always desirous that they should go somewhere on the Sunday, and also attend a school. It was only, however, the other day that my children returned from a place of worship just as I was coming downstairs to my Sunday dinner, and one of them—a dear little girl of six years—looked up into my face, and said, ‘Father, why do you not go to church?’ at which I felt so reproved that it went like a dagger into my heart.

“Again she said, ‘One of our children has heard some one sing such a beautiful hymn, father, and it is about being WASHED WHITER THAN SNOW.’

“I then said, ‘What does it mean, my child? Do you know anything that can wash *whiter than snow*?’

“‘Oh, yes; it is the blood of Jesus that washes *whiter than snow*, father.’

“This was more than I could stand. I felt what a sinner I must be, for my own child, only six years old, thus to reprove and instruct me. I said no more, but my heart was pierced with the thought of my need of being washed and made fit for the presence of God. The words, ‘whiter than snow,’ seemed never to leave my mind. Day and night they were in my thoughts. At last I became so miserable, and thought so much of my soul, my sins, and eternity, that I determined to drown all my thoughts with sinful pleasure, but this entirely failed to take away my misery.

“After that I got alone with God, owned myself to be a miserable, guilty sinner, cried earnestly to Him for salvation, and began to read the Bible. Then I found that ‘the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin,’ and that those who believed in Him

would receive remission of sins. Here I could rest before God, and from that time my soul has been in much peace through resting on the blood of Jesus as the only way of peace with God. Since then I have also seen from Scripture that I have everlasting life, and I believe, sir, that God means what He says—that He has given me everlasting life, so that I cannot perish, but shall be in glory with God and the Lamb for ever.”

What joy must have filled the heart of this little girl when she heard her father begin to speak to her of the Lord Jesus and of His precious blood. And through all eternity it will be a special joy for those who have been the happy means of bringing others to their good Lord and Saviour to sing together in glory His praise who died for us.

“ Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory ; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves ” (Phil. ii. 3).

“ Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering ; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any ; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye ” (Col. iii. 12, 13).

“ Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good ” (Rom. xii. 21).

“ Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you ; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven ” (Matt. v. 44, 45).

“ Honour thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise ” (Eph. vi. 2).

## THE SWEET STORY

I love to hear the story  
Which angel voices tell,  
How once the King of Glory  
Came down on earth to dwell ;  
I am both weak and sinful,  
But this I surely know,  
The Lord came down to save me,  
Because He loves me so.

I'm glad my blessed Saviour  
Was once a child like me,  
To show how pure and holy  
His little ones might be.  
O may I try to follow  
His footsteps here below,  
Who never will forget me,  
Because He loves me so.

To sing His love and mercy  
My sweetest songs I'll raise,  
And though I cannot see Him  
I know He hears my praise !  
For He has kindly promised  
That I shall surely go  
To live with Him in glory,  
Because He loves me so.

## CHAPTER XV

## THE LORD'S COMING

“ To them that look for Him shall He appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation.”—HEB. ix. 28.

BEFORE we close this book we will add a few pages respecting the Lord's coming again.

We have sought to tell you things about God and the Lord Jesus, which, by the Holy Spirit's grace, will not only make you happy when thinking of God and of eternity, but which shall also lead you to do those things which please our God and our Father. Should you grow from childhood to youth, and even to old age, life is short. There will be, before long, an end to each of our lives. Now though we may die, yet the Lord may come before death, and in that case, those who believe will never die. God speaks of death as sleep for His people, and He tells us that “ We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed ” (1 Cor. xv. 51). When the Lord comes He will “ change our vile body (these poor bodies subject to death), that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body ” (Phil. iii. 21). And should we die before the Lord comes, even as multitudes of God's people have done, Jesus will call up the sleepers from the grave, and give each of them a new and a resurrection body—a body of glory. “ It is sown in dishonour ; it is raised in glory : it is sown in weakness ; it is raised in power : it is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body ” (1 Cor. xv. 43, 44).

When you sow seeds in your garden in the spring-time, you bury the seed under the ground, and after a time, according to the good pleasure of God, the seed sprouts up. Some seeds lie buried a longer time than others, just as it pleases God, and when the seed comes up, and bears the form of a plant, or a bush, or a tree, it bears just that form which God pleases. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat or some other grain. But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him" (1 Cor. xv. 37, 38). God gives the beautiful sweet pea its bright colour and charming scent, and to the tall sunflower its high stalk and proud yellow blossoms, and to the retiring violet her rich purple petals and lovely odours. And God, who has so clothed the humble flowers, which rise up from their bare seeds into such glory, year by year, will change the poor and weak bodies of His people into the likeness of the body of the glorified Lord Jesus for the Eternal Day.

#### THE CHRYSALIS

One bright spring afternoon a little boy was helping his mother in the garden. His duty was to pick up the bulbs and stones as she raked the border. Presently the rake turned up a curious brown wrinkled thing. It was partly like a long bulb, partly like a rolled-up leaf, and partly like a shiny stone. The child's hand plucked it out of the soil; and showing it to his mother, he inquired what it was.

"It is a chrysalis, my dear."

"Kiss-liss! What is that, mamma? Is it alive?"

"It has life in it; it is dead, yet alive," she answered.

The little boy had never before seen a chrysalis, and full of love of the wonderful things in nature, he was

found by his father gazing intently upon his newly-found treasure.

"Papa," he cried, "I have a kiss-liss; it is dead and alive."

Bidding his little boy not to squeeze the creature, nor to hold it in his warm hand, the father took the chrysalis and laid it carefully in a box containing some handful of earth. He explained to his little boy that the chrysalis had been a caterpillar full of life and movement, that it became the strange thing it now was, and that by and by it would be a bright-winged butterfly. The child was filled with astonishment. "Was this kiss-liss a caterpillar such as the blue-tits in the hollow tree gave to their little ones; and will it one day be a butterfly and lay eggs itself? Oh! papa, this is wonderful."

With eager steps he followed his father to his study, where the box containing the earth wherein the chrysalis was laid was carefully placed under a glass shade upon the mantelshef.

"What have you done that for, papa?" inquired the child.

"That when the butterfly comes forth you may see it, my dear. But perhaps it will not come out for a month or longer."

"Well, papa, I do not know how long a month is, but I will come into your study, if I may, every day to look."

And many a time after that day did the little boy peep into the glass shade, but for long the butterfly did not appear. Patience was needed. The child did not know what a month was, as he said.

Now the chrysalis is a lesson to us all concerning the resurrection of the dead. And like the child, who knew not the meaning of that period of time which a month means, we do not know how long it will be

before the Lord and the resurrection day come. But the day will come. And when you look at the beautiful butterflies you will do well to remember what they teach us.

When the Lord will come we know not. But we know that He has bidden us *watch* and *wait* for Him.

When the Lord comes those who do not love Him will be left behind. One day some friends were busily talking in a railway carriage; they heard the porters call out, but were so engaged that they paid no special attention to what was said.

After a little time one of them said to the other :

“ Our part of the train seems to be at a standstill.”

They then called to the porter.

“ You are left behind,” he said.

They were exceedingly vexed, and asked, “ Why did you not come and fetch us out of the carriage ? ”

“ I was calling out as loudly as I could ; it is your own fault, not mine,” he answered.

Those who do not love the Lord will be left behind when He comes. Cannot you hear His servants calling out ? Are you so busy with your friends that you do not heed them ? What do the Lord's servants say ? They tell you that unless you are *in Christ* you will be left behind.

How does a sinner enter the place of safety—“ In Christ ” ? By faith. If you believe, you shall be saved. If you simply take God's word as He bids you. If you love Jesus the Lord, you shall never be left behind.

Remember that there will be no second train, as it were, to heaven, for those who are left behind when the Lord comes. No, children, when once the door is shut, when once the Lord calls His people home, it will be too late to be saved.

But there are many of you, we know, who are looking to see the Lord Jesus, and are waiting with joy for His coming, and for you this chapter is specially intended. You must, indeed, show by your ways and words that you are saved. It is not enough to say you love the Lord ; you must prove it by being holy children. We expect to see a change when boys or girls tell us that they are converted. Word religion will not save you. It must be faith, that worketh by love. Do not forget your young friends ; tell them also of the way to be saved. Be bright and kind towards them, and seek to win them by love to the Lord Jesus.

Sometimes a child will say, "I love Jesus," just because he has heard another lad say the same. *God* looks to your hearts and sees if love to Christ is there ; *we* look to your lives, to see if you live as those should do, who, when Jesus comes, will not be left behind.

The love of the Lord Jesus in the heart, and the hope of soon seeing Him, render the Christian child bright and happy—so it was with the little boy of whom we will now tell you :

#### LOOKING AND WAITING FOR THE LORD

It is some years ago, though it seems still as yesterday, since Jesus stooped down and took little Henry to be with Himself. On Saturday evening the sturdy child was playing with his brother and sister, who were having a fine romp with their father and mother, but it was little Henry's last game of play. On the Sunday morning he was taken slightly ill, and gradually became worse throughout the day, and before the clock tolled the midnight hour, Henry was in heaven. His short life of three years and a half was over. Eternity had begun for him.

The same fever which had caused little Henry's death, seized his brother and sister, and week after week they lay very, very ill. As Edgar's strength returned, he asked, "Is Henry well?" for Henry was the strong boy, and had never been ill to Edgar's knowledge, so Edgar could not understand why his brother did not come to see him. Over and over again Edgar asked this question, but he never heard Henry's voice, and asked and asked for him in vain.

At length when Edgar became better he was taken to the seaside, where his mother told him that he could never see Henry on earth again, as Henry was gone to heaven where Jesus lives.

Then Edgar lifted up his hands, and, crying bitterly, said, "Oh, shall we never see Henry any more on this earth? Dear mother, let us take the train and all go to heaven instead of going home again; I long to see him so."

"My darling boy," answered his mother, "such things can never be. We must wait in patience till the Lord comes, and then we shall see our Henry again, for Jesus will bring him with Himself when He comes in the cloud."

As his mother was weeping, Edgar turned to her, "My mother, you have only one boy left now, but I will be like two boys to you, and will cheer you." Then he tried to stroke away her tears, and by loving and obedient ways did all he could to hush his mother's sighs.

By and by when Edgar grew stronger he sat in a pretty goat-chaise by the seaside. And then he would tell the passers-by, "Henry is in heaven; Henry is in heaven"; and if any one would stop to listen to him he would add, in his sweet way, "Do you love God?"

The goat-chaise boy seemed very dull-hearted, and would not listen to darling Edgar, so the child told him that unless he loved God he would never go to heaven where Henry was.

When about five years of age, and once more restored to health, darling Edgar was walking down a country lane with his uncle, when two big men came by and begged for halfpence; they said they were starving, but they were not really hungry. Then Edgar, holding fast to his uncle's coat, cried out: "These naughty men will never go to heaven." Upon which his uncle, who did not at all wish that the little fellow should think himself good, and therefore ready to go to heaven, asked him, "Would *you* go to heaven, Edgar?"

"Indeed, indeed I think I should, uncle."

"Then tell me *why*, my dear; would it be because you are a good little boy?"

"Oh! no, uncle, but just because Jesus died for sinners, and I believe upon the Lord, uncle."

Listen to these words, dear young readers; Edgar had been taught by the Holy Spirit to call Jesus *Lord*. You have often heard of Jesus and His love. Do you really believe on Him? Can you truly say, "Indeed, I believe I shall go to heaven—not because I am good, no, but because the Lord Jesus died upon the cross to save me."

Then his uncle said, "Edgar, my love, do you pray to the Lord Jesus?"

"Yes, very often, uncle; many times a day. And I often ask Him to make dear sister well." For she had not yet recovered from the effects of the cruel fever. "And sometimes I pray to Him as I lie awake in bed in the night, 'Please God, hear my little prayer. Make haste this week—to-morrow—very soon—perhaps

to-day.' But why God does not answer me, I do not know ; for she is not well yet."

Then his uncle explained that a little child could not know what was the best and wisest thing, but that the Lord would teach him as he grew.

So Edgar said, " Then I will say, If Thou dost please, make haste, Lord, and hear my prayer, and then He will answer."

We had two little birds in a cage, exactly alike in chirp and feather, and sometimes they would sit close together and be very happy. Then one would get cross and peck the other, upon which they would go to different parts of their cage and mope and sulk. At length one would hop down and nod its pretty green head, and chirp just as if it said, " I am good now," when down would fly the other bird, and then both would be happy. These pretty birds were quite a sermon to us in darling Edgar's days, for he would say that we must be like the birds when kind, and show our love by our ways.

One beautiful autumn evening, Edgar was near his mother, looking up into the darkening sky. Presently a brilliant star began to shine, and, as the twilight faded the unnumbered host of stars shone above. " Mamma," said Edgar, " is heaven very far from this earth ? "

" Ah ! yes, my child," she answered, " a long, long way off—beyond that evening star."

After a pause, Edgar said, " I am so sorry ; I thought that the stars were the floor of heaven, and that Henry ran and played upon the beautiful white floor where the angels walk. And heaven always seems so near, when the stars shine bright. Must not I think so any more ? "

" Dear boy," said his mother, " Henry lives with

Jesus above the starry sky, and endless joy is his. And, my child, heaven is not so far away in one sense, for Jesus is near us, waiting here with us, though we cannot see Him, till He shall call us all up to His home."

One day Edgar was disobedient, and his good Christian nurse scolded him. Then he ran off to his bedroom, and knelt down and prayed to God to pardon him. He told God what he had done, and he felt in his heart that his prayer was heard. So back he came to his nurse, and said softly, "Nurse, dear, forgive me."

"Stay, Edgar," she said; "you have been very naughty, I cannot be so quick."

"But, nurse," he answered, "God has pardoned me, so you must, too." Then she at once forgave him.

A Christian lady said to him one day, "Would you like to go to Jesus?"

"I should," he answered, "and Jesus will soon come in the bright cloud, and then we shall all meet and be at home. Perhaps He will come to-day; perhaps to-morrow; but very soon, and then I shall see Henry again. All who love the Lord will go up to meet Him."

The lady was very much astonished at his answer, and questioned him about it, and she found that, though he was so young, yet he knew that only those who love the Lord will meet Him at His coming again.

Dear boys and girls, are you ready to meet the Lord Jesus should He come to-day? Are your sins washed away? In Edgar's own words, "Do you love God?"

How quietly and reverently the little boy sat during the holy hours of worship. He loved to help to sing the hymn in his little way, and listened with folded hands to all that was said.

Edgar had a quick, clear mind and eye, and a cheerful,

ringing voice. He made every one happy who was near him. His father hoped that he would live to be a preacher of the gospel, but Jesus knows best. When darling Edgar was nearly seven years of age he was again laid upon a sick bed.

"Oh dear," he said, "there is nothing for me to do." So we brought him his red, blue, and black pencils; but they only made his head ache more sadly. Then he said:

"There are many little boys who have no sweet mother, or loving father, or kind nurse to cheer them when they are ill; so I will thank the Lord."

After a time the doctors said that they could do nothing for us, so his mother broke the news to darling Edgar. "Jesus is looking down upon you," she said, weeping.

Then he looked up, and a smile came over his face. He whispered something. We think he said, "Mother," and giving her a sweet look, his spirit went up to be with Henry in heaven. And many wept that day, and as his name is spoken of many still weep, for his smile and loving heart were always welcome.

Dear boys and girls, out of love to you and to darling Edgar I write this story. Perhaps some of you, by reading it, will long to know the same dear Saviour who made brave Edgar the happy Christian child that he was. God grant this. And thus, though the little boy cannot tell you of Jesus, or ask you, "Do you love God?" yet the simple tale of his short life shall be blessed to you by the Holy Spirit. And if God should kindly please to bless these words to you, how happy will Edgar be when he meets you in heaven, both saved by the same Saviour.

How blessed will that day be when God makes all

things new, and when He wipes away all tears from our eyes! We shall have met our dear ones again. Those who "sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thess. iv. 14). It will be such a bright and happy day; nor will there be any end to it, as is now the case with all our most pleasant earthly days, for it will be an eternal day.

A little boy was sitting upon his father's knee one Sunday afternoon, hearing the Bible story of Adam and Eve. He listened very attentively, and, child-like, was interested in the fruits and pleasant things of Paradise.

"Papa," said he, "will there be any fruit trees in heaven?"

So his father read to him from the last book in the Bible of the beautiful city of pure gold and precious stones, with gates of pearl. "In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month" (Rev. xxii. 2).

"You will see your little brothers there."

"But I should not know them, papa," the child said; for he was born after his brothers had died.

"Oh, yes, you will. We shall know one another in heaven."

"Does God say so, papa?"

"He does, my dear."

"And how long shall we live in heaven?" the little boy inquired. He was thinking of happy days on earth coming to an end, and wondering whether the happy day of heaven would also, like earth's days, cease.

"For ever and ever, my dear. There will be no end to living in heaven. There will be no more dying; no

more weeping. The children there will live for ever and ever, and will be always happy."

It is a bright and pleasing question for you to ask yourselves. "How long shall we live in heaven?"

In prospect of the day of His coming again to take His people to His Father's home, the Lord Jesus calls Himself

#### THE BRIGHT AND MORNING STAR.

Little children like to look up at the stars. Many a boy and girl, whose younger brother or sister has been called from earth to heaven, will look up to the sky when the bright stars come out, and wonder if after all heaven is such a very, very long way off. As the night closes in, the stars shine brighter, and all becomes darkness and silence. But, though you have seen the stars in the evening, you have not, I should think, seen the morning star, since, at the early hours of its appearance, you are asleep. In summer-time you must be up very early indeed to see the morning star; and a beautiful sight it is to witness its bright shining before the sun rises. The morning star is brightest at the end of the night, and when we see it shine we know that the day will soon break; and the more we look at it the more often we say the sun will presently rise and the shadows will flee away.

The blessed Jesus calls Himself "The Bright and Morning Star," and those who have a heart to see Him do not sleep as do others—do not live day by day, as if the world were the only place in which man could be happy, but they know that there is darkness and sin in the world, and they long for the day to come when the light of God's presence shall shine fully upon all who love Him.

And those who are looking for the Lord's coming are

also longing that many, many young and old may be ready for Him. Jesus teaches us to desire the good of others ; and in the verse in the last chapter of the Bible, where He calls Himself the Morning Star, we also hear the loving invitation to every thirsty heart to take the water of life freely. How happy it will be for the whole family to meet the Lord in the air ; yes, all—father and mother, brother and sisters—not one left behind, no, not one.

When the Lord comes He will bring with Him all the children who love Him, and there are many, many of them waiting with the Lord above the starry skies. How joyful will that day be ! How glad will all be who have a part in its pleasures. God grant, beloved young reader, that you may be one of those who love to think about Jesus as the coming One—as the Bright and Morning Star.

#### THE HAPPY DAY

Jesus is coming with joy to the sky,  
     Oh, happy day ! oh, happy day !  
 Then all who love Him upward shall fly,  
     Oh, happy day ! happy day !  
 Upward shall fly to the Lord in the air,  
 And be altogether with Jesus there,  
 Far from the earth and from sorrow and care,  
     Oh, happy day ! happy day !

Parents and children shall then again meet,  
     Oh, happy day ! oh, happy day !  
 Sisters and brothers—oh, 'twill be sweet ;  
     Oh, happy day ! happy day !  
 We missed them on earth, to Jesus they went,  
 We love them as ever, their loss we lament ;  
 When all meet again we shall be content.  
     Oh, happy day ! happy day !

Are we all ready, should Jesus now call?  
Oh, happy day! oh, happy day!  
Would each one answer, the great and the small,  
"Oh, happy day! happy day!  
We long to rise up and with Thee to be,  
Thy face, blessed Jesus, our Saviour, to see."  
Children, would you then sing sweetly with me?  
Oh, happy day! happy day!

---

---

**IS THE BIBLE TRUE ?** H. J. HORN. A convincing answer to this vital question, which many are asking to-day. Attractively bound. Price 1/-.

**PALESTINE AND THE BIBLE.** S. SCHOR. A book which will create or intensify a zeal for Bible study. Cloth boards, 2/- ; Art Paper Cover, 1/6.

**HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE.** MARKHAM. An interesting arrangement of Bible study from Genesis to Revelation. Price 4/-.

**STUDIES IN ROMANS.** MARKHAM. An instructive book—suitable for Bible students. Bound in green cloth. Price 1/-.

**FOXES' BOOK OF MARTYRS.** A record by John Foxe of men who "loved not their lives unto death" but defended the faith and won for us the liberty we enjoy to-day. Bound in green cloth. Price 2/-.

**SPARKS FROM THE ANVIL.** H. J. HORN. A delightful collection of literary "sparks" arranged for daily reading. Specially suitable for preachers and teachers. Bound in green cloth. Coloured jacket, 2/-.

**THE CHILDREN'S SAVIOUR.** All who love and care in any way for the "Little Ones" should read this attractive booklet. Price 4d.

SEND FOR CATALOGUE OF BIBLES, NEW TESTAMENTS, ALSO BOOKS FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN, ALL TRUE TO THE TEACHING OF GOD'S WORD.

---

---