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“The Gospel of the Grace”

AND

The Two Salvations

GEORGE O. BARNES



"THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE"

OR

THE THREE-ONE PARABLE

AND

THE TWO SALVATIONS

*"To him that worketh not, but believeth on
Him who justifieth the ungodly"* (Romans 4:5)

"By grace are ye saved through faith"
(Ephesians 2:8)

BY

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FOREWORD

Many of my father's friends who rejoiced in "The Gospel of the Grace' and The Two Salvations," published in London in 1892, have, like him who made the crooked places straight for them, and reconciled truths that seemed to differ, gone up higher, where faith is lost in sight.

But many more remain who will welcome this second edition, which, we trust, will carry the "Good News" far and wide in this time of dreadful need when many have lost faith in God, and broken hearts need the "oil of joy for mourning," the comfort and strength and assurance which this message of God's love carries to all who will receive it—the message which the author gladly gave his life to deliver.

MARIE BARNES.

Washington, D. C.

March 22, 1915.

CONTENTS

	Page
“THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE” - - - -	7-60
I. A STRANGE SIGHT - - - - .	7
II. THE FIRST CLUE - - - - -	10
III. THE TRUE GOD - - - - -	16
IV. A CUNNING RUSE - - - - -	20
V. A THREAD OF GOLD - - - - -	23
VI. SOMETHING LACKING - - - - -	26
VII. A COMMON ERROR - - - - -	34
VIII. THE ONE CONDITION - - - - -	38
IX. THE “BEST” FOR SINNERS - - -	49
X. THE ELDER BROTHER - - - - -	53
THE TWO SALVATIONS - - - - -	61-95

“*The Gospel of the Grace*”

OR,

The Three-One Parable

I

A Strange Sight

‘ Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners to hear him.’

IT is not said that they were all converted. Perhaps only a few went so far. But they “all drew near to hear.” None were afraid of Him. They did not stand, awe-stricken, at a respectful distance, but came close, as those who had been made welcome, and who felt that they were in place to “draw near to Him.”

Tax gatherers, harlots, thieves, the offal of society, the pariahs of the body politic,

all flocked to hear; and the more they heard, the nearer they drew. People who instinctively shunned the assemblies of Pharisees, who shrank from the approach of respectability, or brazenly defied it with open and avowed hostility, came pressing nearer to this Holy Teacher, as if they relished that which was good. Was it not a strange sight?

Suppose some excellent orthodox minister in the course of his regular performance of duty, should find, some Sabbath morning, the pews of his church crowded with the worst people in town, and the pulpit stairs thronged with "sinners" of every grade, evidently eager to hear him preach, would the sight not impress him with its startling strangeness? And if this singular rush of people, not in the habit of attending church, could be traced to the sermon of the week previous, would not the inquiry be in every mouth: What did the minister say to produce this extraordinary impression?

I purpose asking that simple question, and seeking an answer from the sacred record. The amazing fact, so briefly and clearly stated by the evangelist, demands an explanation.

II

The First Clue

"The Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying: This man RECEIVETH SINNERS AND EATETH WITH THEM."

Evidently they were both astonished and displeased. And the cause of displeasure is stated with perfectly clear-cut distinctness. They were angry with Him for "receiving" and "eating with sinners"! Then, they did *not* "receive sinners." They held them at arm's length till they were something better. This is plain.

And this at once strikes the keynote to the Gospel that drew "publicans and sinners" to a "near" place, to hear our Lord. IT WAS A GOSPEL THAT TOOK THEM IN! The religion of the Pharisees *excluded sinners—ipso facto*. The Gospel welcomed and saved them—*ipso facto*. The contrast is sharply defined. And, to the

Pharisee, it was specially clear that there was not room in Judea for two such religions. So "they took counsel together to slay Jesus"; being largely in the majority, and having on their side well-nigh all the respectability and religiousness and learning of the country. The popularity of our Saviour among the "common people" at one time was so overwhelming that it blocked the way to the fulfillment of their designs. But gradually the influence of the accredited rulers, of the religious teachers, and of the wealthy and respectable classes, gained the day, and the long-plotted iniquity was at last consummated on Calvary. It is not an exaggeration to say that the immediate cause of our Lord's crucifixion was—His persistent teaching of God's love and acceptance of *sinner*s. This Gospel was charged with being opposed to Moses, and the Pharisee was "Moses' disciple." Therefore, they slew the Gospel Preacher.

But was the Gospel opposed to Moses?

Is the Bible like "a house divided against itself"? If so, "it cannot stand." Surely it is not. Old Testament and New Testament *must* be alike, if God is the "same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." "I am Jehovah; I change *not*," saith the Lord.

The Pharisees had the same Bible as our Lord. The Old Testament, from Genesis to Malachi, was their "sacred oracles"; Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, the Epistles, and the rest, "were not," as yet. But out of this *same Bible* the Pharisees got one God; our Lord Jesus, another. No Christian hesitates in deciding which interpreted the Holy Scriptures aright.

After all, this is the crucial test of creeds—the sort of God that each produces. All go to the same Bible, and all come away with a differing thought. About what? We say, vaguely: "About doctrines." But a doctrine means, simply, "teaching." Teaching about what? This question, driven home, reveals, in the last

analysis of the inquiry, the fact that the differences of sect and creed all resolve themselves into differing *Gods*. This is startling, but easily demonstrated. If the result shall be that Christianity has "gods many," it is important, surely, that this resemblance to heathenism should be known, and put away.

It follows, then, that as my apprehension of God, is really *my* god, whether far distant from "the only living and true God," or an approximation to Him; and as our best conceptions, in this imperfect state, are, in much, *mis*-conceptions; our only wisdom is, by careful study of God's revelation of Himself, to arrive at the nearest approximation of a correct knowledge of the true God, that we can; looking hopefully forward to the future, when we are promised that we shall "see Him as He is," and be no longer blinded or misled by the fogs and false lights of earth.

And, further, as Jesus Christ is the *full* manifestation of God—being the "bright-

ness of the Father's glory, and the *express image* of His person"; the "fulness of the Godhead bodily"; and "God manifested in the flesh"—our *highest* wisdom is "to look to Jesus," as an object lesson in learning to know God, as He really is; to know no God except in the person of His Son; and to "bring every thought"—vagrant and mistaken as so many of them are—"into captivity" to the will of the blessed God; who points all inquirers to the person of our Saviour, saying: "Would you know Me? This is My beloved Son. Hear Him"! Who sees Him, has seen the Father. Who looks beyond Him for God, gropes in ignorance, or worships an idol.

This will not seem digression if we attentively consider the controversy—life-long—waged between the Pharisees and the Son of God. Their conception of God, based upon a wrong interpretation of Scripture, could not be "given place to by subjection, no, not for an hour." It

would have been a betrayal of truth. How could He, who was "The Truth," allow that? So He fearlessly taught the people the exact contrary to that which the Pharisees and Scribes inculcated. By knowing what He taught, and taking its opposite, we learn how far astray they had been gradually led by the "traditions of the elders."

III

The True God

“He spake this parable unto them.”

Then He spake *three*. This is like that other grammatical paradox, “Jehovah is one *Gods*”; or, “He called *their* name *Adam* in the day they were created.” “Three in one, and one in three,” is the mystery of Godhead we most steadfastly believe, without understanding; and no gospel is complete that omits the threefold personality and triple energy of the august Trinity. This three-one parable confirms the truth, that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit take equally active parts in the work of salvation; that all are alike on the sinner’s side, and at the sinner’s service; and all, with joy, recognize each success over the powers of darkness, in the rescue of the victims of sin and Satan.

The order of the three-one parable is the order of saving grace. First: The Saviour's finished work. Second: The Holy Spirit's application of it. Third: The Father's welcome home. Or, as one has said: "The blood makes us *fit*; the Spirit gives us *power*; the Father bids us *welcome*." The order of grace is the order of our *need*; seeing it is our guilt and helplessness that call forth that form of God's love that we call "grace." And the three-one parable is the Master's classification of the "wonderful works of God," on behalf of His ruined creature. Sin may seem a simple thing in its commission, but extrication from it tasks the wisdom and power of God.

There are three main features in our ruin. 1. We are LOST; 2. We are HELPLESS; 3. We are GUILTY. So, the *shepherd* seeks the *lost* sheep, and brings it back; the woman lifts the *helpless* coin, and restores it; the father runs to meet his *guilty* son, and freely forgives.

We all know the "Good Shepherd," who *gives His life* for the sheep. It is the most familiar figure of the Three—our Saviour CHRIST. We also instinctively place the FATHER, recognizing the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in Him, who sees the wanderer a great way off; has compassion; runs; falls on his neck; kisses; clothes; invests with authority; and daintily feeds and feasts.

The "Woman," then, *must* represent the Holy Spirit, unless the third person of the Adorable Trinity be altogether omitted. The *female* is bound to be part of the "image and likeness of God," unless wholly unrepresented there; which cannot be, if, when man was made in God's image, "Male and female *created* He them, and called *their* name ADAM, in the day when they were *created*." And we have only to "compare scripture with scripture" to find that the blessed Spirit is the representation of the *female* in Deity. The Spirit *brooding* in Genesis

1:2; the Spirit *conceiving* the Saviour, both agree with the "*Woman*" in Luke 15 lighting her lamp; and never giving over the search till she finds her coin.

IV

A Cunning Ruse

“Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field.”

In parenthesis, we may here notice that Satan has, by a very small trick, turned attention away from the *main* thing in these parables to a *minor* point. Our Lord *spoke* them all, to glorify God. Satan has *named* them, to obscure that glory in the full grace of it. For example: he names the first parable “The Lost Sheep.” Now read the parable, and tell me if that is a proper title to give it. It is “Hamlet, with the part of Hamlet left out.” The whole burden of the narrative is descriptive of the *Shepherd’s* action. The sheep is *lost*—that is all of *it*. The rest is what the Good Shepherd does. It ought to be known only as the

parable of the "Good Shepherd." But it suits Satan to draw the thoughts of men to the sinner and his sins, rather than to the Saviour and His salvation; and so he suggests that this beautiful, transcendent exhibition of God's grace, in the person of His Son, shall be entitled "The Lost Sheep." Every Sunday-school scholar can tell you the story under that name. Ask them if they know anything of the parable of the "Good Shepherd," and they will look bewildered, or point you to the tenth chapter of John, as the only scripture answering your question.

So with the second parable. Who ever heard of the parable of the "Good Woman" ? Who has not heard of the "Lost Coin" ?

As for the third of the lovely series, it would seem akin to blasphemy to change the "Prodigal Son," for the "Good Father." Yet, in all three, the moment you examine them carefully, this disproportion between popular title and essen-

tial contents becomes apparent. Each name is like a story with the Hero left out.

This is diabolical—nothing less. There is set purpose in it. The great strategist is seen at work here. The last thing he wishes to give prominence to is the dear work of God. Anything but that. From first to last, the eye of the sin-hunted, devil-oppressed creature must be turned away from the only refuge. And here, the change of titles is only a small part of a consistent and coherent scheme with this deadly end in view. Who that has passed over the long road that the adversary marks out for unwary feet, and has been kept for weary days, months, or years, looking at self, and so debarred from coming to the Saviour, *at once*, for peace and safety, but can recognize the tempter's "plan of campaign"?

V

A Thread of Gold.

"Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in heaven."

There is a feature of these parables of grace that catches the eye, the ear, the heart, at once, like a golden thread in the fabric of the loom. I mean the thrice-repeated note of joy, that rules the harmony of this sacred "Idyl of the King."

"Likewise, I say to you, there is *joy* in heaven"; "*joy* in the presence of the angels"; "*music and dancing*" in the Father's house. It is unmistakable—this jubilant happiness.

And the joy is not the joy of sheep, or coin, or son; but a higher, holier thing than that. Doubtless the poor, tired sheep was glad, in its dumb way, to get back to a fold of comfort after its perilous wanderings. And the son, in a higher

sense, was glad to taste the cheer of the feast prepared for him. But that joy was "no joy at all by reason of the joy that excelled" it, far—the delight of the Shepherd; the Woman; the Father; in getting back that, so dear, though, for a time, so lost.

Notice how tenderly the shepherd—after his weary tramp, which might well have been an excuse, if not justification, of a hot word of reproach—lifts the exhausted creature, and lays it on his shoulder, "*rejoicing*"; and returns, thus laden, on the homeward road, without a harsh thought, to mar the perfect grace of the action.

And mark how "*diligently*"—the whole heart in it—the search is prosecuted for the missing coin; and how, when found, the joy of finding is too full to be contained, and must be shared with others, if only for relief.

The Father, too, forgets everything but the love, that puts wings of swiftness

on the feet of age; and runs, afar, to meet the poor child over whose absence he had only mourned; with no hard intermingled thought, to kill the tenderness of the grief. As for anything but the single fact, that he is glad to have him back again—there is nothing in the narrative but that.

VI

Something Lacking

"Thus ye make Scripture good with your traditions."

Brought up in certain logical or theological systems, as most of us are, when we get over the fresh pleasure of perusal of this artless narrative, there steals over our minds a sense of something wanting, to complete the plan of salvation here sketched. We miss the doctrines we have been carefully taught to reverence; and without which, we can only look upon any scheme as incomplete, even if set forth by Him who "spake, as never man spake."

For one thing, I fail to find in all these graphically described dealings of a sinner's Saviour, a trace—even the faintest—of that "satisfaction of justice," that I have been trained from childhood to regard as a *sine qua non*.

Can it be possible that our Lord should leave *that* out, in setting before us the *modus operandi* of a sinner's salvation? If it be so indispensable, is it credible that He could leave us so cruelly in the dark about it? Or—and the thought seems like a lapse into infidelity—can it be, that *no such thing exists, save in the busy brains of theologians?* I seem shut up to this, when I come to reflect upon the subject, all round.

The parables, three, are evidently exhaustive. They fill the whole circuit of my real need. There is *pity* and “to spare,” like the bread of the Father's house. There is *power* to save. There is all the *love* I can rest upon, and more besides. There is not only *salvation*, but a *sweet* salvation, making me to feel at ease in being saved. God is good, though I am bad. “Sin abounds, but grace much more abounds.” Yes, all I really want is there; just in the way I want it. And yet!—*my system is not there. It would*

demand a kick of the shepherd's foot, or a blow of his crook, to make the poor sheep conscious of how grievously it had transgressed in leaving the fold. Mercy is all very well—but only mercy, after a *painful* and *faithful* exhibition of sin and wandering. Is there not "justice" to be satisfied, as well as heart yearning? *My system* demands that the Father should only show His love, after the claims of His inexorable rectitude had been met. There must be a full and satisfactory arrangement of the matter of the *squandered patrimony*, before the wanderer can be welcomed. Either, someone must step in, and promise to repay principal and interest of that wasted inheritance, or the boy must promise to refund it by instalments. This latter seems to have been in the Prodigal's mind, as the only feasible plan that he could devise—sitting, disconsolate, beside the swine-trough.

But, marvellous to relate, there is no

hint of anything like this. The Father, of Scripture, asks no other warrant for free forgiveness than His own abounding love. The narrative reminds me of the generous creditor of the two debtors, who, "when they had nothing to pay, he *frankly forgave* them both." Oh, praise the Lord, for that qualifying adverb, "*frankly*"! How like the "rejoicing"; "diligently"; "had compassion" of Luke 15! And how dismally would the Italian monk *Anselm's* theory of forgiveness and atonement break in upon this lovely "plan of salvation"!

Forgiveness—*bought* and *paid* for! It matters not by whom, and under what circumstances. The pardon that is bought, is robbed of all that makes it *priceless*. No so unworthy thought of our God *could* have found entrance, save under cover of darkness—the gloom of an age, we all combine in calling "dark." Well did Satan choose his time. The latter half of the eleventh century was that "darkest

hour before the dawn," when he succeeded in substituting God for himself; and taught men to believe that what his malevolence and hatred alone *could* do, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ *did*. O sorrow! That such a devil's lie should ever have found an entrance!

Thus went out, in darkness, the faith of the "holy men of old," held for one thousand years after Calvary; that the *Redemption* Blood of Calvary was paid to buy off our hated adversary; and the *Ransom* Price was the purchase of our freedom from the power of the hateful robber, who held us captive, and under sentence of death. And, in its place, came in the hideous slander against the "Father of mercies, and God of all grace," that He demanded full payment to be made to His outraged justice; that nothing would appease Him but blood; that unless that were accorded, He would be our eternal enemy; inflicting eternal

torments on us; yet all, leaving His raging justice still unsatisfied, and hungry for never-ending inflictions. To one delivered from the nightmare of such a ferocious dogma, it seems incredible that the human mind could ever take in such a palpable contradiction to every other known attribute of God; or be inveigled into accepting any such dishonoring thought of the God who gave His Son, in love, to die for us. But such is the power of early training. Taken young enough, we could have been trained to feed on human flesh, as easily as on fish or fowl. And so, this inhuman and ungodlike theory is even gloried in, when, for long, believed. I am thoroughly glad the Saviour never even hinted at such a thing, in this sweetest of all sermons, on God's way of saving sinners.

If it be objected, that neither did He give a hint in all this chapter, of *any* atoning work, and that the reasoning of the few preceding paragraphs proves

too much; I answer: It needed not here to speak of salvation in any other light than that related to our attitude towards God, and His attitude towards us. I do not need, in order to be saved, to know the *how*, the *why*, the *wherefore*; I only require to know that God is my friend; that, so far as *He* is concerned, there is not a straw in the way of coming back to Him; that my sins interpose no barrier at all; that the door of welcome stands wide open night and day; and that, whatever difficulties may interpose in other directions, His love has overcome them all; so that in good faith, and without a cobweb of drawback, He can bid me come unto Him, and He will rest me. All this I may be sure of, without any particular knowledge of what His love and power have wrought for me in the way of paying my obligations and overcoming my foes. All that, I may find out afterwards, and do, from other scriptures. But our Lord here is only telling out

simply how a sinner—lost; helpless; unworthy;—may be *saved*.

But if *God's* justice, instead of the devil's rapacity, demands a sacrifice, then no information concerning the removal of that difficulty is given; and I *know* that *something is* removed; and—more than that—*how* it has been taken out of the way. Because the difficulty lies between *God* and *my soul*, I *must* have full information; because I am to *come to Him*. I must be fully, reasonably reassured, as to the method by which the barrier has been taken away. If there had been any difficulty of the kind, our Saviour would have surely mentioned it. As He does not, I am certain the difficulty had no existence. And I am glad to be sure that His love is wide and deep enough to take in all my sins, and cover them for ever in unsounded depths.

VII

A Common Error

“I will go unto my Father and will say.”

Ever since, in Eden, “that old serpent the devil,” played upon man’s sense of guilt, and persuaded the fallen creature that God was against him, and would surely punish him for his sin if He caught him; and then persuaded him to hide away from his Maker, behind the trees of the garden, as soon as he heard His voice; ever since then, I say, he has succeeded, most easily, in beguiling men into the belief that *God has something against them*. They are slow to believe that He is not now “imputing unto men their trespasses”; but they are swift to credit the falsehood of Satan, that He is enraged and angry with them so long as they remain away from Him. This false thought leads to all manner of propitia-

tory actions; and evidently was the groundwork of the Prodigal's plan to soften the displeasure of his Father. First, he "would say"; and then he made up his little propitiatory speech, as he sat beside the swine-trough; winding up with a proposal to *work out* his indebtedness. Concerning which, this is clear in general: First. That a premeditated speech is *not* one in which one looks for the "fulness of the heart." That comes out spontaneously. And, second, he was not allowed to carry out his speech-making—it was utterly needless.

I think we must *read in* the Father's loving response to the son's attempt to get out the made-up speech concocted in the foreign land. It must, in reality, have been interpolated something like this:

Son: "Father, I have sinned against heaven——"

Father: "Bring the best robe and put it on him."

Son: "And in thy sight——"

Father: "Bring my signet ring and put it on his finger."

Son: "I am not worthy——"

Father: "Bring shoes for his feet."

Son: "To be called thy son——"

Father: "Tell them to kill the fatted calf: let us be merry."

The poor boy went no further. The last clause of his poor, little, useless speech died upon his lips—drowned in love, and tears of joy, and kisses.

This is God's way of securing gratitude, unswerving loyalty, joyous obedience, and a love that thinks no more of wandering from the paternal roof. And it is the only way. An appeal to lower motives will only work temporary changes in conduct. It is but a house built upon sand, and the floods will find the weak spot in due time. But "Love and nothing else" is a rock that will never move. Wherever failure ensues, be sure love has not been "shed abroad": it only has

been received in vagrant drops, or feeble rills, mingled with other streams of influence that have diluted its power.

How many of us know bitterly, in well-remembered backslidings, how easily we slip away from "first love," where fear of hell drove us to the God, who threatened to send us thither if we did not accept His terms. This hideous idol of *theology* or *mythology*, with the olive branch in one hand, and the thunderbolts of wrath in the other, finds no place in our Lord's "discourses of salvation," in Luke 15. We have a better God than "*Jupiter Tonans.*"

VIII

The One Condition

"One sinner that repenteth."

I am not afraid of the word, because an *unconditional* salvation is not known to Scripture. There is such a thing as presenting grace in such a way as to destroy responsibility. In truth, they run side by side.

However perfect and complete the provision made by the love of the Lord, it waits upon the feeblest sinner's acceptance, before it can become efficacious. That alone explains why, at the end of six thousand years, salvation *seems*, practically, a failure. It is the insanity of reasoning to suppose that our God, after all His painstaking care in providing a remedy for sin, can complacently view a lack of success in its application, that consigns millions of those, for whom

Christ died, to unspeakable woe and disaster.

The cause *must* lie beyond His own choice and in the human will, unless He be *wholly* responsible for matters as we find them; and everything is going according to His "good pleasure," and the fixed purpose of His inflexible decree. To those who have the heart to believe that, I have nothing to say, but must leave them to their theory of the Divine government. But to those who believe that our God is grieved over man's obstinacy and estrangement: who are thoroughly persuaded that He is not, in the least, responsible for the horrible condition of earthly affairs, and that the whole energy of His grace and power is exercised in trying to save Satan's victims, and to thwart Satan's deeply-laid plans: to such as love Him because of His love to us, and because He is working out a plan of His own, under fearful difficulties, it will be a joy to know just what the Lord

means when He limits the "joy in heaven, in the presence of the angels," over the "sinner that *repents*."

The word translated "repenteth," furnishes no philological difficulty whatever. It is a compound term whose significance is perfectly plain. *Metanoia*=repentance, means simply a "change of mind." *Meta* is a Greek particle of *change*, in common use. *Noios* has no obscurity attached to it: "mind" is its equivalent, according to lexicographers. We have words of like form transferred bodily into English from the Greek, that clear up the point thoroughly. Take "metamorphosis," for example. *Meta*=a change; and *morphosis*=form: metamorphosis=a change of form. So *meta*=a change, *noios*=the mind: *metanoios*=a change of mind. For the present, let us not try to analyze the particular "change of mind" that is indispensable to salvation, but stick to our word. This, any Greek scholar will tell you, is

the only *radical* meaning of the word now in consideration. Doubtless, like a host of other words, popular use may attach other meanings to it. But the word, as used 1,900 years ago, is what we want.

The significance attached to it, as theology has taken it up for its own uses, is nothing to us in this inquiry. A "change of mind" is its meaning, whatever that term may import, as we "compare scripture with scripture." Let us examine enough to settle that point.

"Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." That is an excellent starting-point; it gives me a desirable clue. If you tell me I must "change my mind," or be lost—as, "unless ye *repent*, ye must perish," undoubtedly means—I am at once set upon the inquiry, "Repent about *what?*" The verse above quoted is a finger-board, pointing down the right road. God is the object of my *repentance*, as certainly as "our Lord Jesus Christ" is the object of

my *faith*. I am at once turned away from wrong objects by this peremptory demand.

"*Change my mind towards God?*" How is that? At once, I turn to what I, in common with my race, think of God. I find, on a moment's reflection, that the common idea of God is that entertained by Adam, and not improved upon, but rather intensified, in all the years intervening. Men "flee from His presence" in fear, now, as then. They are in terror because of His supposed anger against them; they believe He is bent on punishing them for their sins; they think He is marking their wrongdoings and shortcomings, in a "book of remembrance," to be used against them in a coming day; they, therefore, naturally recoil from Him, because they suppose that *He recoils from them*.

Now, unless "we change our minds towards God" we are *lost*; for the simple reason, that voluntary departure from

His presence means, casting ourselves into the arms of His enemy and ours; whose "*tender mercies* are cruel"; leaving us to imagine what His rugged *wrath* will be. Now, as long as we have this wrong mind about, or "towards" God, we will never come to Him, and be saved by coming. "Change of mind," therefore, lies at the "root of the matter." When I change my mind, little or much, it must always be "towards" Him; for all my *unchanged* mind is *away* from Him. How sweetly simple! I do not need to study the nature, character, desert of "sin" in general; or my own "sins" in particular. All that will leave me with an *unchanged* mind in the only saving direction. I have the choice to be *driven* by my sins, or *drawn* by my Saviour. Alas! most accept the former alternative—to find by frequent distressing falls, and a life of unresponsive duty-doing, how inferior is *fear* to *love*. So, our Saviour has nothing mingled with love's

invitation—"Come unto Me." "Perfect love casts out fear," if we will only hearken to Him, as the Father bids us.

Safe by His side—saved *for ever*—He *then* teaches His "friends" whom to "*fear.*" I say unto you, *my friends*, fear him who, after he hath killed the body, hath power to cast both soul and body into Gehenna. Yea! I say unto you, "*fear him.*" Noah was "moved with fear" to prepare an ark, long after he had been counted "perfect"; *i. e.*, *fear of what was coming.* Thus we, too, are exhorted to "pray always, that we may be accounted worthy to escape the things coming upon the earth"—as Noah was—"and to stand before the Son of man."

But this only puts fear in its right place, and its object, the right person—even *the Devil*. Need I say that Satan has dislocated everything; injected terror of God into human hearts; changed "fear of the Lord" into being *afraid of God*, and, in the doubt and confusion, hidden

himself completely from view; while, like a skilful performer on an instrument, he plays upon our sense of guilt so adroitly, that we are easily persuaded that *sin* is the great barrier between us and God; that we need to be sorry for *sin*; repent of *sin*; put away *sin*; and so the eye is quite turned away from the Saviour, and "repentance towards God" is completely lost sight of.

There *is* joy in heaven when even *one* sinner "changes his mind" towards God, and, instead of running away from Him, rushes into His arms, believing in His goodness; His love; His unchanging purpose to "seek and save the lost"; His open-armed willingness to receive us at *any* time, and just as we are; and the certainty that the best in the house is ours, if we will but *take* it.

But over a poor grovelling "creature of the dust," bewailing his sins; calling himself "no longer worthy to be called a son"; thinking God is so angry with him

that He will not receive him till he has done due penance; there can only be distressful sorrows, because of his ignorance of God, and his hesitation to come to Him. Oh, the dreary delays that men have made just here; because they did not know that "repentance unto life" meant a "change of mind *towards God*," instead of a change of mind *about themselves*!

When Peter said, on the Day of Pentecost, "Repent," it was to men who *had* changed their minds about themselves, and now knew that they had *sinned*. But he utterly ignores this change, as if nothing *saving* had occurred—as, indeed, nothing *had*. "Repent" meant, "change your mind *about God*." *He* has nothing against you; *He* is not imputing *sin* at all. Your minds are off, "on the wrong tack" altogether. Think better of *God*. He is your Friend; and that very blood He shed, flowed to pay the redemption price for all your sins: the ransom from the hands of your enemy.

“Then they that heard the word *gladly* were baptized.” So, the saving change was *from sorrow to joy*; not plunging themselves in grief and misery. *When we rejoice, there is “joy in heaven.”* Till we know God well enough to be glad in Him, there is nothing in the celestial world but anxiety and alarm for us.

Thus we find that “repentance” and “faith” are, in an important sense, interchangeable terms, in Scripture. Not exactly identical, for the Bible differentiates them. It is “*repentance* towards God; *faith* towards our Lord Jesus Christ.” And again, “*Repent and believe* the Gospel.” We must neither confound *terms*, nor their Scriptural *order*. Repentance is *first*, belief *second*. God, the Father, is the object of one; Christ, the Son, is the object of the other. Yet we may be sure that one *cannot* be without the other. Like the reflection of one’s face in the glass, the one cannot be without the other. Yet, “each in its own

order"—the *look* must precede the *reflection*. So we may be sure, while strictly observing the Divine order, no one can have "repentance towards God" without "faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." Nor can one "believe in Christ" who has not "*changed his mind* towards God." This explains why, at times, only faith is enjoined; at others, only repentance. The Pentecostians never heard the word "faith"; nor did the Philippian jailer hear the word "repentance." Yet both did both, we may be sure.

IX

The "Best" for Sinners

"The last shall be first."

We must not go beyond the Saviour's design, in the three-one parable. He takes up the taunt of the Pharisees, and only tells what God does for "sinners." "Out of the eater came forth meat." As the defections in Corinth brought out the fifteenth of I Corinthians in all its glory, so the hateful scorn of scribe and Pharisee drew forth the fifteenth of Luke.

How does it happen that the garment that clothes the Prodigal's nakedness is called the "best robe"? And the ring upon his finger is in the same line of superlative blessing. It is the *signet* ring, that is placed there, and the act entrusts all the Father is worth to that worthless son. It is all most significant—not to fur-

ther speak of the "fatted calf," for the feast of rejoicing. It tells out a lesson we much need to learn. It is human nature to exalt *itself*, whoever may suffer; and this tendency runs into our religion, as into everything else. That part of it that is dependent on our zeal and activity is thought much of; spoken much of; until, by an insensible and insidious progress, it "exalts itself against all that is called God," and then it becomes another "Anti-christ." "Even now are there *many* anti-christs," we can repeat in this nineteenth century, with deeper emphasis than John could in the first.

There are two salvations. One is *all* of God; the other brings man in as a fellow-worker. And this last would, in its arrogance, elbow the first into a subordinate place, if allowed to have its selfish way.

How often do we see and hear, in this day, the work of Christ for a sinner, assigned to an inferior position, as compared

with the "growth in grace"; "the work of faith"; "the labor of love"! A "sinner saved by grace" is well enough in its way, some say; but not to be compared, for a moment, to the ripened saint, bringing forth the fruits of righteousness. The justified sinner is, at best, a mere "*protoplasm*," needing development, before it can be said to be anything worth mention.

All this unscriptural line of thought goes down before our parable. The sinner has the *very best* that love can bestow. The place of highest honor; the best robe; the signet ring; and the fatted calf. And this superiority is most appropriate, look at it from what standpoint you will.

It is right that the free gift of God should hold the first place. It is the rounded, finished work of Christ, for us sinners, that is represented in this love-gift of the heavenly Father. It is the "wisdom of God and the power of God" combined, that saves a sinner; and it needs no "development" to make it perfect.

Again, the sinner saved is "a new creature in Christ Jesus"; not a baby, to be developed, but a perfect creature in Christ, as was Adam the first; nay, more, as is Adam the second: for "as He is, so are we in this world." Babyhood there is, and must be, *in all that requires development in this devil's world*, where every form of life must struggle on from good to better if it would make progress. But this sinner's salvation is God's work alone, and *Satan cannot mar it* any more. It comes through the God-man, who, "through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." It is, therefore, beyond the reach of the destroyer. How dishonoring to "our God and to His Christ," to ascribe to them an *imperfect* work! "As for God, His work is *perfect*." And the work of *Christ for a sinner* is as much superior to the work of a *sinner for Christ*, as our Lord is above us. The "servant is *not* greater than his Master."

X

The Elder Brother

"Now his elder brother was in the field."

I do not see how we can make Pharisees out of the "ninety and nine who went not astray"; the coins *not* lost; nor the "elder brother," who could truthfully say, "neither transgressed I at any time thy commandments." Our Lord never took a Pharisee at his own valuation, nor countenanced an error by silence. These were *bonâ-fide* statements of *facts*, either asserted in terms, or expressly endorsed, by permitting them to pass unchallenged.

We must go farther afield for counterparts to these. I cannot find them nearer than the angels, who *kept* "their first estate" unimpaired. And these fit the conditions in every particular; whether we consider the peculiar phrase, "he left the ninety and nine in *pasture*" (the true

meaning of "wilderness"), or study the verisimilitude of "elder brother," or his language: "Lo, these *many* years have I *served* thee, neither at *any time* transgressed thy commandments." All arrive at the same conclusion. We were "made a little lower than the angels," and after them in point of time. Therefore are we fitly the "younger."

Now we come, also, to a strange thing that crops out systematically in the sacred record, and here finds a culminating mention. I refer to that mystery of grace compressed in the sentence: "The elder shall serve the younger." It begins in the lives of the twin brethren born outside Eden—this preference, at least, of the younger; it is emphasized in the histories of Ishmael and Isaac: Esau and Jacob: Reuben and Joseph: Manasseh and Ephraim: Eliab and David: Ishbosheth and Solomon: until we find it reappearing in the younger son of the Saviour's three-one parable.

This is a very remarkable thing, whether we find the clue to it or not. Happily the Bible furnishes the explanation of this constant and extraordinary choice.

“A certain King made a marriage for His Son.” Like Abraham of old, He would not take the Bride from those “among whom He dwelt”—but from His “kindred” in a far-off land. We are such—“made in His likeness and image,” but fallen out of everlasting right. He chooses, in sovereign grace, to stoop to these fallen creatures, and from them to “build” a woman, who shall be bride to His Son. We need go no further than His right to “do as He wills with His own”—provided He does wrong to none; for *that* is a necessity of Godhead—yet it is pleasing to find that His glory in grace is promoted by stooping to the *lowest*, just because they *are* the lowest; and so He “lays not hold of angels,” for *this bridal honor*, though they too had fallen; but of the “seed of Abraham.”

This is the true doctrine of Election. It is a choice of the younger, to be forever over the elder—the sinner of man's race to be superior, in point of position, to the sinless angel. So Paul in illustrating it, at one point, uses the typical case of Esau and Jacob—and expressly refers to this mystery of the ages.

To my mind it is the only solution of the doctrine of election that leaves our God with character unstained and resplendent. To select from the *same race*, one to happiness and the other to misery, has been the struggle of ages to receive. It may be doubted if anyone ever *really* believed it; while nothing can be more true than that no loving heart that ever beat in human bosom *wanted* to believe it. A doctrine, from which everything good in us recoils, in instinctive horror, *cannot* be of God.

And it is also true, that unless a fairly reasonable answer be given to the question: "Why put holy angels lower in the

scale of eternal honor than sinful men?" there will not be that hearty acquiescence in the allotment that ought to be felt by obedient creaturehood.

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do *right*?" is a question we are authorized to ask continually. It is not enough to ask, "May He not do as He pleases?" Certainly *not*, unless He pleases to do right. The law-maker cannot be a law-breaker and be guiltless. His exalted position aggravates wrong-doing.

We therefore feel in thorough sympathy with the query of the elder brother, when he asks to be relieved of the difficulty that lies upon the very surface of this gift of the "best robe" to an offender. Ostensibly, it seems to put a premium on sin: a discount upon obedience. It is an honest difficulty. It is a fair question. It ought to be answered.

There are two reasons. The first is in the Father's love and grace. The second is in the sinner's forlorn condition. First,

"It is *meet* we should make merry and be glad." Second. "Thy brother was dead and lost; is alive and found." Let us go into particulars a little, at these points. The matter is too important to pass slightly.

One thing is certain. *Sin can never be petted or rewarded.* No one but the devil can pet sin. God must loathe it evermore—even when He forgives. That is the extent of even Divine ability in dealing with sin—to *forgive the sinner.* Where, then, does the "free gift" come to the Prodigal, that lifts him above his elder brother?

In answer: First. Because these insignia of honor and blessing are so many recognitions of the finished work of Christ; the Father doing honor to His Son through the sinner, and so honoring His own love, which is the source of all. This is the meetness of the closing words of the father: "My son—all that I have is thine—freely. A gift of a kid would

be an insult to your perfect obedience. It would never have crossed your mind but for the 'fatted calf' bestowed on your unworthy brother; but my love must be satisfied in this matter—not at your expense. *I do you no wrong.* You are not *lowered*. I only take up unworthiness and put it in the highest place, because it is linked with Him who died that He might lift His poor devil-oppressed creature to Himself. It is 'meet' that My love and His honor should be *met*."

And, second. "This exaltation is a compensation for suffering. Not a reward for sin. Oh, no! *That*, I can *forgive*—only that. But suffering I may compensate. Satan shall see of the travail of his *hate*, as My Son shall 'see of the travail of His *love*.' This poor, down-trodden creature shall get to the highest point, because Satan has put him in the lowest. And he shall be blessed till he forgets his former suffering. And the adversary shall taste the bitterness of his own malice,

to the lowest dregs, in beholding his miserable victim not only delivered but exalted, *by reason of his oppression*, to the highest possible dignity—a seat upon the Redeemer's throne; to share His life in perfect oneness forever. 'The first shall be last; the last first.' Then only will *grace* be fulfilled, and Satan utterly foiled."

"Which things the angels *with outstretched necks* are looking into." They need to be educated up to it. But they will, in due time, accept it and rejoice.
AMEN.

THE TWO SALVATIONS



The Two Salvations

The Sinner's and the Saint's

WHAT CHRIST DOES FOR THE ONE: WHAT JESUS DOES
FOR THE OTHER

*"Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark."
—Deut. 19: 14.*

WHAT *God* "joins together"; that, Satan tries most strenuously to "put asunder." What the Lord carefully separates; that, the devil teaches men to confound.

In nothing has he succeeded, more signally, in obliterating God's landmarks of division, than in the clearly defined Scriptural difference between a sinner's salvation and a saint's. It will be the object of this brief paper to point out the cunning "devices," by which he has obscured the glory of both, by unifying what the Bible has divided.

The "Sinner"

The word, in its popular, technical sense—used thus for a clearer apprehension, by the general reader, of the subject—means one who has not yet availed himself of God's provision for his salvation: a rejecter of the Saviour; and so, "without God, and without hope in the world."

Perhaps the simplest way to approach the whole subject is to analyze the position of this creation of God's, and clearly to understand, exactly, what he needs, in the premises.

From Adam down, the uniform condition of man is described as "lost." "Sin has entered into the world, and death by sin: so death has passed upon all, for all have sinned." Certainly all have not personally, actually sinned: since more than half the human race die in helpless and innocent infancy—a prey to a malignant

destroyer, who is “a murderer from the beginning.” But it is true that “all mankind descended from Adam by ordinary generation *sinned in him*, and fell with him.” Every one begotten by a sinner is *accounted a sinner*; not by any just or righteous law—for the infamy of the helpless offspring sharing the guilt and misery of a progenitor is diabolical upon the face of it—but by the unjust and cruel enactment of the temporary “ruler of the darkness of this age.” Adam, of his own free will, went out of God’s Kingdom of Light, into Satan’s rival Kingdom of Darkness: he dragged with him the fruit of his loins, as part and parcel of himself (as Levi paid tithes in Abraham, Hebrews 7:5): as well as the guiltless and helpless property over which he had unlimited control—the fish; the fowl; the beast of the field—and these all have lain, ever since, captives; slaves; victims—waiting a deliverer.

The bargain made in Eden 6000 years

ago, between our loving God and Saviour on the one hand, and the Cruel Captor and Master of Man—the Devil—was this: the Blessed God undertook to stand in our place and endure all that Satan could have otherwise inflicted on his victim: this including—as far as the Bible informs us—death and the grave for the body; and death and hell for the soul. The proof of both is this: Christ, our Representative, suffered both. A slain Lamb—the vicarious offering of that dreadful day of sin and disaster—fulfilled the warning God had given: “In the *day* thou eatest thereof, thou shalt *surely die.*”

The pledge was redeemed on Calvary. On that basis, all who went before it were saved *if they so willed*: as well as those who follow after—*if they so will*. So far as deliverance from Satan’s power was concerned, this substitutionary transaction settled his claims definitely and for ever.

But the Destroyer had one hold upon

the lost, and Redeemed creature. For his *will* being untrammelled in the whole transaction, Satan still may deal with each child of Adam, as he did with Adam himself. He may persuade them, of their own free will, to *remain with him*. If he can do that, he may destroy them yet. The election of Satan as God and master, is, of course, a rejection of the "Only Living and True God." We call it *unbelief*. It is the only thing that *damns*.

This fatal choice of Satan may be accomplished in various ways, all leading to the same goal. There may be a "neglect of the great Salvation," merely: there may be an insolent rejection; there may be indolence; or there may be hatred; the result is the same—the sinner *stays where he is; on Satan's ground; in Satan's power; to share Satan's fate*. The prison doors were opened *wide*, but the poor prisoner neglected, or refused, to come forth; and the day of grace once past, the brazen gates close with a crash of doom,

and deny him egress, however much he may then desire release.

This is what a human will can accomplish. It can destroy its owner: it can baffle the benevolent designs of God, to spare suffering, and transport to bliss. It can stay in its dungeon if it wishes; or bring "desolation" into its "house." Love divine may weep bitter tears of sorrow and disappointment, but it is helpless to save. It can only wring its hands with the bitter cry: "I have spent my strength in vain; I have labored for naught"; "Oh, how often willed I to gather you as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, but ye *willed* not." Your will has prevailed—behold your house is left desolate.

So far as the good God is concerned, there never has been a shred of difficulty in the way of *any* sinner being saved. He never can commit a sin that overtops God's dear love. Wherever "sin abounds, grace much more abounds." The Lord

asks no better warrant for taking His Prodigal Child to His arms, than His unchanged love. To present the Heavenly Father as one who sulks, till He is pacified: or will not have mercy till His outraged dignity has been appeased, is to make Him more contemptible than an earthly father. The fifteenth of Luke answers all such slanders of theology, upon His holy character; and stamps the dishonoring theory of the Italian monk of the "Dark Ages," with the mark of disapproval which it richly deserves.

A sinner's salvation, therefore, is simplicity itself—as God intended it should be. Satan's claim being answered perfectly; his debt paid—principal and interest: God having no unsettled account against us—having "frankly forgiven" all we owed Him; there remains absolutely nothing to do, but "*set to* our seals," that God is true and good and loving.

What other way can there possibly be,

but a frank acceptance of His "free gift"; a prompt acknowledgement of the goodness of His generosity, by freely receiving what He so freely gives; and a thankful permission to the strong arm of His power to at once "translate us out of the Kingdom of Darkness into the Kingdom of God's dear Son."

This is being "born again"; or "born from above." As many as receive *Him*—God's gift to the world—are thus born into God's kingdom. By our first birth we are born, as children of the first Adam, into the Kingdom of Death. By the second birth, we are born into the Kingdom of Life. "The first Adam is of the earth—earthy. The second Adam is the Lord from Heaven." And while there can be no birth except as we will to be His; yet is the "borning"—to coin a word—"not of the will of the flesh: nor the will of man, but of God." The Bible *never* says it can be *apart from* or *without the will* of man. That would not be true. But the

birth is a miracle of grace and of God: though like the leper's uncleanness, it needs the question first propounded, "Wilt thou *be made* whole?" or to the blind man, "What *wilt* thou that *I should do* unto thee?"

Scripture is very explicit on this matter of the sinner's salvation—answering all the objections that can possibly be sprung by a guilty soul, acted upon by the guile of Satan.

He need not *wait*. "*Now* is the *accepted* time—now the day of salvation." This would not be true if there were something unperformed, the doing of which would possibly involve delay till to-morrow.

He need not be *worthy*. His title to salvation is unworthiness and helplessness. Luke 15 goes over this ground very thoroughly: and Paul says the Lord can only "justify the *ungodly*." In fact, the point that our God specially "*commends*" in His love, is that feature of it that tells us

while we were *sinner*s, Christ died for us. And Christ died for us, because "God so loved the world"—bad as it was—that He gave His dear Son to do this very thing. Oh, how *can* we doubt Him, and read our Bibles?

He need not *work*—or *pray*—or *weep*—before coming. Listen! "To him that *worketh not but believeth*"—the salvation is sure. It is He who "*beseecheth us* to be reconciled to God": not *we* who are to beseech God *to be reconciled to us*. There is no such thought in Scripture as an *unreconciled God*. Only an *unreconciled devil and unreconciled men*. The devil's mouth is shut by the Blood of purchase and atonement. The only question is, *Will man be reconciled to God?* Jesus weeps over our folly. We need to dry His tears rather than start our own. The only thing that will do this, is the acceptance of His love-gift.

This is the "Sinner's Salvation." It is given and never taken away—once ac-

cepted. *His gifts and calling* are without "change of mind." Once saved—for ever saved. "Once a child always a child." I can never cease to be my father's child—once I am born. I can never be *unborn*. Thanks be to God!

A Saint's Salvation

This is as different from the sinner's salvation as two good things can possibly be unlike. A "saint," as spoken of here, is not the technical holy person; distinguished from his fellows by an excess of sanctity; or one credited in the Divine record with "works of supererogation"; but the Scriptural synonym of one passed from death unto life, who has a holy life before him to choose and live, or reject; or neglect, and be *adokimos*—a "cast-away"—a vessel *not* meet for the Master's use; whose "crown" another "takes."

It is like a sinner's salvation in this,

that success in it is irretrievably bound up with a free human will, that can accept or reject an offered mercy: can win by taking, or lose by refusing or neglecting. Beyond this all likeness ceases. It is not to be had by an “*ungodly*,” but a “*godly*” person. Piety and sanctity are indispensable: “Without holiness no man shall see the LORD,” and enter with Him into the festivities that precede the marriage of the Lamb to the Bride of His choice. Only “to those who *look* for Him shall He appear,” to conduct them to posts of honor and distinction, “in the throne and round about it,” as cabinet officers of the King.

1. It is the *reward* of faithful work, and not a *gift*, at all. To work for a gift, is equivalent to rejecting it. “To him that worketh not” the free gift of everlasting life comes. That is the sinner’s portion. But the saint, who is already a son, hears, now, his Father’s voice saying—“Son, go work to-day in My vineyard”: as a ser-

vant the command of the Master saying—“Work! and whatsoever is right I will pay you.” He has—like Moses—“Respect unto the recompense of reward”—or “*wages*” of reward, as the word translated “recompense” imports. If he does honest work he will be well paid, and get the plaudit, besides: “Well done, good and faithful servant.” If not—not.

2. It is something that we get, only when the *goal* is reached. Only then is an “*abundant* entrance” administered, to the faithful, into the “Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” But up to that, all is uncertain, because dependent on *man’s* faithfulness. How different this, from a sinner’s salvation. He gets eternal life at the starting-point; for “He that believeth *hath* everlasting life” and *shall not* come into judgment—but *hath* passed from death unto life. But the saint—even if Paul—can say at *every stage* of his earthly career, “I keep my body under, lest at any time I should be a

castaway." *One* act of faith will save a sinner, for it secures, for Christ's sake, the everlasting transfer from the devil's kingdom to God's. But the saint must secure his "abundant entrance" by "holding fast the *beginning* of his confidence *steadfast to the end.*" If not he misses it.

Not that he loses what has been honestly and faithfully won. "God is *not unrighteous* to forget our work and labor of love." No righteous *man*, even, would take *yesterday's* wages, *fairly earned*, from a servant who had forfeited *to-day's* stipend, by unfaithfulness. And, surely, God is better than man. But at any point of the race; the fight; the day's work; all that *lies before* may be lost and go to someone else, unless the saint holds out and holds on. "Let no man take thy crown," is the solemn word of warning that is addressed to sloth, frivolity and moral cowardice.

3. Again, the "saint's salvation" differs from the sinner's widely, in this, that

it is a reward for *creature merit*. This, perhaps, is the most striking contrast of all. Clearly, Scripture makes it out as wages for good work; a prize for running swiftly; a crown for fighting bravely. The God of truth can never say "Well done!" to the servant who has *not* done well: the "prize of the high calling" can only go to those who "*press towards the mark*" with strenuous exertion to obtain it; and the crown that belongs to the victor is won by many a blow given and received; many a conflict; and armor dented and battered with thrust of sword, and stroke of battle-axe. When Paul came to be "offered up," *this* was his dying testimony; *not* that God was good and Christ precious; for that had been the unwearied testimony of his *life*; but he cried exultantly: "*I have fought the good fight: I have finished my course* (the race); *I have kept the faith* (not merely *believed*): *henceforth* (still in the future, to be obtained in due time) there is laid up *for me* a crown,

that the Lord, the righteous judge, will give to me *in that day*, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing." How plain all this is! And everywhere God recognizes what His "new creature in Christ Jesus" can do, when energized by the Spirit of God, and "*constrained* by the love of Christ."

In the sinner's salvation, all this is exactly the opposite. *All* that a sinner gets is through the *merit of Christ*, conjoined to his own *demerit*. All he gets is by one single act of faith in the yielding of the will, when he receives the free gift instead of rejecting it. He is *ungodly, helpless*, and utterly *unworthy*, instead of being as the victorious saint is, *godly; strong; and thoroughly worthy*.

4. A sinner's salvation is *all of grace*. His *call* is the call of the "God of grace." But "the God of glory appeared to our father Abraham," and said—not "come to Me," but "come *with Me*—leaving thy father's house—to a land that I will show

thee, and I will make thee a name and a blessing in all the earth." God never asks a sinner to leave *anything, not even his sins*. The case is too urgent for that. No time or leisure for that. It is, "Come, and be saved"; and

"Just as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy Blood was shed for me,
And that *Thou* bidst me come to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I come."

In other words, I am to be saved *in my* sins or not at all. Then I am to be saved *from* them. "*Christ*" died for my sins according to the Scriptures, and therefore can save me *in them*.

"*Jesus*" called such "because He shall save *His people from* their sins." God *anointed* the Blessed One "with the Spirit without measure" to do the first work: the only *Sin-bearer* this world has seen; and the only "Earthen Vessel" that could bear the pressure of the "Spirit without measure." He did it, and so was able to "do the Will of God" in saving sinners,

in their sins. But *Jesus* teaches us how to be good, by always going about doing good, and healing all that are "oppressed of the devil"; "setting us an example that we should follow in His footsteps"; and thrust out practical sin, in the power of the Spirit, by practical holiness. This is the life that wins the crown and gains the victory. To "love the Lord because He first loves me," in the acceptance of His gift of grace—the only way I can possibly show my love as a sinner—should be followed by love to my neighbor. The first secures my salvation as a sinner; the second wins my salvation as a saint. The "Blood of Christ" for a sinner. "Following Jesus" for a saint. This is the un-failing order, and the symmetrical life. This is what Satan, with all his masterful guile, tries to disarrange and confuse.

Continually, the adversary sets the poor helpless sinner to doing what none but a saved man can possibly do. Anything but coming to Christ to *be* saved. He will

tempt him, instead, to pray; to fast; to read his Bible; to go to church; to cultivate sorrow for sin; to do anything and everything rather than the *one and only* thing God has enjoined—*immediate coming to the Saviour*. O the untold wretchedness he has wrought in this way! Is there a quivering heart among all my saved readers that has not felt the agony of the fiery darts that drink up the Spirit; when Satan has urged unworthiness as a reason for *not* coming; and exhorted to fresh diligence in duty, in order to make the unfitness less crushing?

5. A sinner's salvation glorifies the Saviour *only*; because He does *all*, without any co-operation whatever, save a simple acceptance of a free gift. But a saint's salvation shares the merit—Saviour and saint each having his own part. The Lord furnishes the strength, but the saint does the work. Paul says, "*I have fought*"; "*I have finished*"; "*I have kept.*" "Not I, but Christ in me," he

says, in acknowledging his indebtedness to his Saviour. He knew where his strength came from; but his own individual effort is also fully recognized. "*I can do all things, through Christ who strengthens me*"—tells the part wrought by each.

6. And this division of the two salvations indicates the comparative grandeur and worth of each. When we come to see where each comes from, we are ready to confess that what the Saviour does *alone, must* be a greater thing than what He does only in part; the other portion being necessarily marked by the imperfection that attaches to everything that imperfect man touches.

And, therefore, all theories of a sinner's salvation, that make the justification of an ungodly man an imperfect work: or a sort of "protoplasm" that needs development to give it value, are false to fact; and a marked dishonor and slander of the Blessed Saviour. A thief on the cross, counted worthy to mount, in

Christ's company, to the highest heaven, is the unanswerable proof that the "new creature in Christ Jesus" is as perfect in the "day of his creation," as was the transcendent creature of the sixth day, into whose imperial power was committed the beast of the field; the fowl of the air; and the fish of the sea.

Yet how commonly, in the theories of men, is a justified "*sinner*" treated as a poor helpless babe; and only a "sanctified *saint*" as the full-grown man. Thus is the "finished work" of Christ degraded to a mere *beginning* of good things, that has to be supplemented by holy living before it is accounted as anything worth. This is what the adversary delights in. Nothing pleases him better than to exalt the creature above the Creator, as this dreadful theory does. "The righteousness of the saint overtops the righteousness of God"; and the "best robe" that Christ has bought with blood is of lighter worth than the "white robes" that the faithfulness of

men has won. Such is the "confusion worse confounded" that treads upon the heels of a failure to discern the two salvations, that the Lord has made so distinct.

7. A "saint's salvation" is impossible without a sinner's preceding it. But a sinner's can stand alone. This is another striking difference. The Saviour tells us that "if we are not faithful in that which is *another's*, how can we be entrusted with that which is *our own*?" This defies coherent exegesis—till we see that the sinner's salvation covers the first clause and the saint's the second. The sinner's salvation is purely *Christ's*: bought and paid for by *Him*; given freely, by *Him*; glorifying *Him*. If we are true in that, we shall be entrusted with the lesser thing, that is wrought by *us*; exalts *us*; rewards *us*; crowns *us*. But the latter is dependent on the former.

Therefore the call of the "God of Glory" comes to Abram because he had been true to the call of the "God of

Grace." Faithful in "that which was *another's*"; "*his own*" was committed to him in due time. And by patient continuance in well-doing he earned, fairly, the title of the "Friend of God."

But he was intimately associated with others who never heard the call of the "God of Glory." Terah his father—good old man—essayed on *one* call, to follow *both*, and signally failed—dying in Haran. Lot heard *another's* call and accompanied with him for a time, till the fat pastures tempted him to "pitch his tent towards Sodom," and he died a "cast-away" upon the lonely mountain side. Neither ever received a call from the "God of Glory." Yet both were saved by *grace*; which is never more triumphantly "*grace*" than when it saves a failing saint atop of a lost sinner.

Bear in mind, then, that the *sinner's* salvation, and the *saint's* differ—First, in *nature*; secondly, in object.

1. THE NATURE

(1) A *sinner's* salvation is purely of *grace*. It is an absolute gift. A *saint's* salvation is of *debt*. It is the wages paid for work done.

(2) The *sinner's* salvation is based upon the sinner's *unworthiness*. The *saint's* salvation is only calculated on the basis of the saint's *worthiness*.

(3) The *sinner's* salvation is *given* at the *starting-post*. The *saint's* salvation is *paid* at the *goal*.

(4) The *sinner's* salvation must be *without work* ("To him that worketh not," Romans 4), or else it is vitiated. The *saint's* salvation is strictly "according as *his work* shall be."

(5) The *sinner's* salvation is *unconditional* and *eternal*—save as a "willing mind" may be termed a "condition." The *saint's* salvation may be *forfeited* in its *fulness*, at any point along the road, and be taken by another ("Hold that fast

which thou hast, that no man take thy crown," Revelation 3).

(6) The *sinner's* salvation rests upon the *righteousness of another*. The *saint's* salvation depends upon *his own righteousness*.

(7) The *sinner's* salvation is an *instantaneous* bestowal—*never retracted* ("God's gift and calling are without repentance"—or change of mind on *His* part, Romans 11). The *saint's* salvation covers the whole space from regeneration to death, and is full of peril, within and without.

2. THE OBJECT

(1) The *sinner's* salvation glorifies "God and the Lamb" alone. The *saint's* salvation is the glorification of the *saint*.

(2) The *sinner's* salvation meets the sinner's helplessness ("when we were *without strength*—Christ died for the ungodly," Romans 5). The *saint's* salvation meets the saint's ambition *to do* and

win something; and satisfies that God-given part of our being by turning it into right channels; so, preventing Satan from directing it to ignoble ends.

3. THE LESSONS

They are manifold and important.

(1) Paul's *justification by faith* alone, perfectly harmonizes with James' *justification by works*. The one is describing a *sinner's* salvation. The other is accurately defining a *saint's*.

(2) Abraham's "*faith*, counted to him for righteousness" is rounded and complete as God's love can make it. It stands by itself and can afford to stand alone, as a *perfect salvation*—needing no development or appendix. And Abraham's *works* are just as perfect in their generation—securing a *crown* that faith alone could not get. It takes an *Isaac offered up*, to climb to that.

(3) Rahab was "justified by faith" when she *received* the spies, knowing them

to be Israelites, incurring no risk whatever by their coming to a public resort like hers. She was afterwards "justified by works," when she had "sent them out another way." Between the first action and the last, lay risk of precious life; and everything dared and done, that would have involved her in a common destruction with the concealed spies, had they been discovered by the king's police.

(4) Paul's confidence (Romans 8.) "I am *persuaded*" is reconciled with his great anxiety (1 Corinthians 9) lest he should be a "castaway" or disapproved as a vessel meet for the Master's use. He challenged the *universe* to "separate him from the love of God in *Christ Jesus the Lord*": while, he never boasted of the security of his crown, till the fight was fought out: the race finished; and the time of his departure was at hand.

(5) All the *unconditional* proof texts of Calvin sweetly coincide with all the

conditional scriptures of Arminius. Conflict is impossible. The first pertain to a *sinner's* salvation. The second to the *saint's*.

(6) The comparative importance of both—inverted and distorted by popular teaching, in all quarters—is quite understood; and the Saviour's *perfect* work for us, is no longer degraded, by assigning it to an inferior place, and treating it as a “protoplasm” to be developed by careful training into something better—that “better,” being something a poor sinful “creature of the dust” has done. When *Christ's* dear work on the cross for us is seen to be the “noblest work of God,” in time or eternity; rounded; complete; fitting a thief on the cross; a murderer in his cell; a wicked soldier on the red battle-field dying from a severed artery; a blaspheming sailor washed overboard and drowned in two minutes—with but brief space to say to the Lord, “I believe”; a sodden drunkard dying in the gutter, and

turning bleared eyes upon the Saviour of sinners;—fitting, all these for the *immediate* presence of God; a place in “Paradise”—or the highest heaven we know; then, and not till then, will it be properly placed; as far above what is wrought *in* us in the way of *character*, as heaven is higher than earth: and the “*best robe*” of Christ’s dear righteousness outshines in glory the “white robes” which are the “righteousness of saints.”

These precious truths may help some who are perplexed concerning the “strife of tongues” that of late has brought an old, old trouble to the surface, in the Free Church of Scotland.

The “new lights” of theology—following good Thomas á Kempis—are laying special stress on “*De Imitatione Christi*,” to the endangering of the only possible foundation of that imitation. “These things ought they to have done, but not have left the other undone.” They are repeating the failure of the Pharisee in

Christ's time, as well as before and since. They ignore a sinner's salvation entirely. They do not believe in it. "Be a Christ rather than a Christian," is the taking motto. They hold to no atonement for sin. Rightly spewing out Anselm's horrid dogma, with the loathing it deserves, they substitute nothing for it. Christ died for our sins only in a tropical sense. He paid no debt. He transfers no righteousness to us—nor has transferred, our sins to Him. He died on the cross *only* to draw our hearts out in responsive love to Him. He died for us, to elicit gratitude; set us an example of supreme self-abnegation; and teach us lessons of love. He *died* to *save* us "from our sins," as the "power of God," in saving us from their power, and so freeing our captive souls.

All of which is so sweetly true, that one is grieved afresh to think they teach that *that* is all.

That Christ died to buy us from the hands of our worst enemy, as an absolute

sine qua non, to doing all this other, they seem to have no thought. Of a salvation of a *sinner*; rounded; complete; requiring neither development nor addition, they are utterly silent. Alas! for the sons of men, when this specious system of self-Saviourism comes into vogue! "Flying without wings" is what it demands:—worse than "brick without straw." God help the poor deluded souls who try to be saved in such a way!

Yet it is the legitimate recoil from Anselmism. It is the opposite swing of the pendulum, that for 700 years has swung out of plumb, and on the side of slander against God. The souls that have started back at last, have gone so far from *such* an atonement, that they have a terror of propounding another.

And Satan, who has been cunningly working in view of this reaction, has, "while men slept," "sown" such "tares" of unbelief in his own dreadful personality, that those good and scholarly men,

instead of going back to the doctrine of their fathers, which would save them, recoil from *it*, because a full belief in a great and wicked devil is needful to receive it. They have been theologically trained, in fighting "Anglicans" and "Romanists," into a standing contempt for the "Fathers"; they have been taught by Satan himself to treat the doctrine of a personal devil as a nursery hobgoblin horror; they have been in the habit of apologizing to scientific men for their unscientific Bible: and so, have been "left to their own devices" in explaining away all atonement, worth the name.

Is it any wonder that such "handling the Word of God deceitfully" is being sharply followed by a practical denial of the full authority of certain portions of Holy Writ: and a general "down-grade" movement on all the points of faith and practice once held sacred?

If what I have written will "furnish a way of escape" to a single willing soul I

shall be only too thankful. For the others, the time that tries "by fire" is almost upon us. The unrelinquished "Wood, hay and stubble" of false teaching will vanish in the searching conflagration; all false doctrine will be transmuted into "shame and everlasting contempt," and only "gold, silver and precious stones" of unconsumable Truth will abide the test. "*Domine dirige nos.*"

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