

**No. 152.**

**THE TROUBLED CONSCIENCE,  
AND THE  
PEACE-SPEAKING BLOOD OF CHRIST.  
PART I.**

**BY WILLIAM T. BRANTLY,  
Pastor of the First Baptist Church, Philadelphia.**



I walked along the road very melancholy and miserable, reading the tract which is entitled "The two Ends and the two Ways;" and in that tract I read this scripture, *The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*

**PUBLISHED BY THE  
BAPTIST GENERAL TRACT SOCIETY,  
NO. 21, SOUTH FOURTH STREET, PHILADELPHIA.**

## The Two Ends and the Two Ways.

THESE *ends* are as far removed from each other as *heaven* and *hell*; a state of everlasting happiness, and one of endless misery. The *first* is spoken of in the Bible with the most inviting descriptions. It is paradise; Luke xxiii. 43; fullness of joy and pleasures for evermore; Ps. xvi. 11; a state containing blessings which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive: 1 Cor. ii. 9; and where the positive evils of this life, want, Rev. vii. 16; pain, sorrow, Rev. xxi. 4; weariness, Heb. iv. 9; sickness, Is. xxxiii. 24; separation, 1 Thess. iv. 17; death, Rev. xxi. 4; can never come. Such are only a few of the delightful views of heaven which are to be found in the Scriptures.

The *second end* is depicted in the most awful and alarming terms. It is called a lake of fire and brimstone; Rev. xx. 10; a worm that dieth not, and a fire that is not quenched; Mark ix. 48; a flame without one drop of water to cool the tongue; Luke xvi. 24, 26; *everlasting* destruction from the presence of the Lord; 2 Thess. i. 8, 9; a place where is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; Matt. viii. 12, 13, 50.

And can you, Reader, reflect without emotion, that to one of these ends you must come? Can you feel indifferent to which? Are you desirous of knowing towards which you are now proceeding? You may know it by considering the *two ways* which respectively conduct to the ends which have been described.

The *first*, which is the way of life, is trodden by a comparatively small number. It is called a narrow way, on account of the difficulties encountered by those who walk in it. Matt. vii. 13, 14. Would you enter it, you must begin with submitting your own notions of things to those contained in the Bible. What that book says of your being a sinner, Rom. iii. 9, 23, under the wrath of God on account of your transgressions, Rom. i. 18, must be believed at the very outset; and if you compare your thoughts and conduct with the law of the ten commandments, you will find every thing in the Scriptures on this head fully proved. The declarations which they contain relating to God's mercy, and his forgiveness of all who come to him by faith in the Saviour crucified for sinners,

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#### OBSERVATION.

The occasion of the following pages is briefly this. The individual to whom the *Narrative* relates, was so fully impressed with the belief that others laboring under distressing convictions similar to his own, would find peace and comfort in the same way in which he had found them, as to propose, several years since, a premium of \$60 for the best tract on that subject. The judges at that time appointed to award the premium, received many manuscript tracts composed with a view to it, and examined them; but were of opinion that none of them were sufficiently direct and appropriate to answer the end proposed. They, therefore, remitted their charge to the propounder of the premium—upon which he increased the offer to \$100, and named the Selecting Committee of the Baptist General Tract Society as the judges. The proposed tract was to contain from 12 to 20 pages, to have the narrative prefixed, and to bear the title—“*The troubled Conscience and the peace-speaking Blood of Christ.*” There came before the Committee five manuscript tracts, competitors for the prize. Of these, they considered two as deserving attention and publication, and therefore resolved to adopt them both, and to divide the premium betwixt them. It will be perceived that *Part the Second* does not contain the Narrative, and in other respects is so little coincident with *Part the First* as to justify the publication of it as a separate and distinct tract.

#### SELECTING COMMITTEE.

**THE TROUBLED CONSCIENCE,**  
**AND THE**  
**PEACE-SPEAKING BLOOD OF CHRIST.**

**PART I.**

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THE following narrative discloses a state of mind deeply interesting and instructive. Let it be read with solemn attention.

“On the 8th of July, 1831, a most notable circumstance happened to me. I fell into very gloomy fears of being damned for ever. I frequently arose from my bed at the gloomy hour of midnight, walked the floor, and wrung my hands under the keenness of the sensations of my mind. I knelt down to pray that the Lord would have mercy on me. ‘I wont,’ seemed very plainly expressed to my mind, as if some person had spoken to me. My imagination became disordered. When I would shut my eyes, it seemed to me that the darkness of night was peculiarly black; even frightful images of strange beasts, and other things would appear, such as a disordered imagination is wont to present to view. My nervous system became disordered. There were sensations similar to the burning of the sparks of fire coals when they light on the naked skin; and these sensations were all over the body, sometimes in one place and sometimes in another; not very uncommonly on the face. And frequently I would have to rub the place, the same as if it had been fire, before the smarting would subside. But above all, the word of God condemned me, and represented me, as the

prophet says, 'From the sole of the foot unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.' It was my constant employ day and night, when awake, to plead for mercy. But frequently when I would plead for mercy, an inward monitor would reply very intelligibly to my mind, and show me the reason why I never could obtain mercy any more. Then I would quote Scripture in urging my plea; but many others would be quoted in reply, with this answer—that those which I quoted did not fit my case; because mine was not an ordinary case. But still I would not give up pleading for mercy. I felt,

I can but perish if I go,  
I am resolved to try,  
For if I stay away, I know  
I must for ever die.

My destruction seemed inevitable. My soul was deeply sunk down. Despair stared me in the face; but I could not quite give up to let it ruin my soul. But it seemed very evident that Jesus had forsaken me, and he was the only ground of my hope. When I would plead for mercy and the reply was so emphatic, 'I wont,' I really thought it was Jesus spoke to me in some intelligible way; and I was confident he would not have mercy on me any more; and therefore I was very deeply distressed. I was sorry I had ever been born, or I would have exchanged my case with any beast or bird, or would fain have prayed for annihilation. Frequently when the words *eternal damnation*, would come home to my mind, I would look wishfully at the fire, and anxiously desire that I might even burn there a thousand years, and then go to Heaven. But even that last request would be emphatically denied me; and damnation, eternal damnation, was my only alternative!! To this end I was confident I should go, because I had three evidences to prove it: 1. The inward monitor which showed the propriety and justice of my damnation. 2. The nervous affection like fire in my flesh. 3. The word of God as I understood it, declared that I could not inherit the kingdom of God; and that it was impossible to renew me to repentance. This last evidence, in particular, seemed to sink down into my heart more tremendously than the roar of seven thunders.

And I had not one evidence which seemed to avail me any thing, as a counterbalance to those efficient evidences against me. My former experience appeared to be a deception, and the promises of the Gospel which I had formerly lived upon, now only augmented my pain. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me. I found trouble and sorrow.

“For several months I went on preaching under these feelings, thinking that if I went to hell, I did not want other sinners to go there; and therefore I concluded that I would endeavor to warn sinners as long as I lived. But I did not, from the first of these impressions, feel at liberty to commune any more at the Lord’s Table, while they lasted; yet at first I had no conscientious scruples about preaching and praying in public. Though, ultimately, after I had preached between three and four months, I began to doubt the propriety of preaching. I had many appointments circulated. To think of not filling them, but giving up to despair, troubled me much. And my inward monitor told me in pretty loud language, not well misunderstood, that it was hypocritical, and not right to preach. I had more and more anxiety on the subject, until I tremblingly preached from, ‘Finally, brethren, farewell,’ the last sermon that I ever expected to preach to some of my relations, whom I never expected to see any more—both of which circumstances rendered it a very solemn discourse to me.

“Whilst I was in this predicament, three days after I had preached the last sermon that I ever intended, without relief, which I did not now ever expect in time or eternity, I was at the point of despair.—This world was my prison, God my judge, death the executioner, and hell my doom. I walked along a road very melancholy and miserable, reading the Tract which is entitled *The two ends, and the two ways*,\* and in that Tract I read this scripture—‘*The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin.*’

“I was enabled by faith to lay hold on this precious word of God. The Spirit applied the blood of Christ in its divine and cleansing efficacy to my distressed soul. Life, joy, and peace, instantaneously sprang up in my poor soul. My mind became relieved from an insupportable burden—which it had sustained for three months and twenty-five days. My relief was very great, and I felt

\* See cover.

like praising God aloud. My soul truly magnified and praised God inwardly. I felt a love and happiness which I cannot describe. The blessing was so great, I was somewhat afraid at first that I might be mistaken. But I can say in truth that I went on my way rejoicing, and hoped that I should ever be permitted to praise my God, for redeeming grace, and dying love. I felt that I never could praise the Lord enough. I was very happy in hope of eternal life. Now I was glad that I was born to die, and would not have been annihilated by any means, nor would I have changed my happy situation with any being on earth. From this time my imagination and nervous system became regulated more and more; until they became as they had formerly been. My sleep and appetite, which had fled far from me, became regular and refreshing. Jesus Christ, my dear Saviour, was manifestly my friend, and his word and promises my comfort and support. I was now permitted again to resume the fulfillment of my appointments which had already been circulated, and I was restored again in my feelings to all the ordinances and immunities of the house of my God. Never before was I so well able to appreciate those inestimable privileges. I could now join heartily with David, in saying, 'I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.'"

The foregoing narrative prompts the inquiry—What is there in the scripture referred to, capable of imparting a balm so healing to the wounded conscience of him who thus describes the deep agony of conviction which struggled in his heart? To obtain a suitable answer, we must consider attentively the previous state of his mind.

1. It is evident that he had an awful sense of the justice of God. To his apprehension, a righteous and holy God was a great and terrible God. His justice appeared as it truly is, a high, immutable, and uncompromising attribute—the basis upon which is erected the mighty fabric of the divine administration—the principle upon which proceeds the impartial and inevitable distribution of rewards and punishments—the eternal WILL and voice of God, sustaining and upholding the harmony of the universe; from which WILL emanates that law which is holy, and just, and good. This

sense of the Almighty and holy God, which imparts delight to all his unoffending and obedient creatures, overwhelms with dread and despair all those who are burdened with the consciousness of sin. Their sin brings them into hostile contact with his justice, which becomes a foe to their hopes, and the guarantee of their perdition. That ever wakeful and unsparing attribute detects and marks all their guilt, and proclaims their sad doom.

The condemnation which the voice of that justice utters, is full and fearful. For that voice is the law of God, which is good and holy, and can aim to do nothing but good and holy things. The sinner's condemnation, therefore, with the destruction which impends, is a good and righteous result. Were it a law proceeding from arbitrary power, unsustained by the claims of equity; or were it the law of some fatal necessity, rendering inevitable the woful condition of those under its sentence, how dreadful soever that sentence might be, its infliction, nevertheless, would produce a state of suffering of a kind wholly different from that which results from the effects of a righteous and holy law. The woe in such a case, would be the effect of external and overwhelming power exerting a vindictive energy. The soul would not act injuriously upon itself. Its inward calm and integrity would remain undisturbed, and conscious rectitude would so brace and invigorate it, as to give it the power to recover from dejection and free itself from violence. But a just and holy law fastens upon the condemned soul the painful conviction that the threatened, or inflicted misery, is undeniably just. Such a conviction turns the soul into its own tormentor. There it festers and rankles throughout all the tortured sensibilities of one self-judged and self-condemned. Under such a conviction every attempt to impeach the equity of the sentence of the law is defeated. Every mouth is stopped, every excusing voice is silenced, while holiness, justice, and goodness shine, and triumph in the immutable law of God. To ask to be released from the just sentence of such a law, would be the same as to ask for the impeachment and dethronement of goodness,—would be the same as to beg that holiness may be suppressed, and the unchangeable equity of God's government repealed. To sue for mercy under such a dispensation, is to vent imploring cries and supplications to a

power that has no ears to hear, no heart to pity, no hand to relieve. The invariable answer to all the cries for mercy, is, The law is holy, and the commandment is holy; but thou art under sin.

Is it, then, any matter of wonder that an awakened conscience is a troubled conscience? Itself becomes a terror to itself. Justice and truth, which are the habitation of the eternal throne, which are the security of all order and happiness in heaven and earth—which meditate and design the prohibition of all sin and misery from the dominion of God, and which become ineffectual for the salvation of sinners, only because of their sin, stand in fearful array against the guilty conscience. That conscience cannot long endure the awful voice and rigid requisitions of offended justice, and for this reason mainly,—because justice is holy, and good, and the sentence which it pronounces is manifestly ungainsayable in its fullest extent. Remorse, therefore, bites and corrodes the spirit; anguish burns and rages within it; despair blasts and withers it—deep calls unto deep, whilst the malice of the powers of darkness, now emboldened by its helpless condition, acquires fresh confidence to insult and torment it.

The troubled conscience is sensibly and painfully convinced that goodness is the glory of justice in the divine, eternal Being. He cannot in the nature of things be good without being just; neither can he be just without being good. It is, therefore, not only a righteous but a good act in God, to take vengeance. And whilst it is not required of a troubled soul to become so convinced and satisfied of the goodness of justice, as to be willing to be damned; yet it does become so convinced of that goodness, as to derive from the sense of it the chief aggravation of disquietude and horror, under conviction for sin.

2. In further remarking, then, upon the state of mind described in the foregoing narrative, it should be observed that the individual referred to, had a deep and painful sense of his own personal guilt. The light which had been let into his heart was sufficient to show him a woful spectacle within himself. His whole soul seems to have been occupied with the apprehension of his lost and ruined state. A good and just law, to no demand of which he could answer, condemned him. An injured Sovereign, to

whom he could offer no reparation, became the proclaimer of righteous retributions.—He found, neither within himself, nor out of himself, a refuge from the certain visitation of offended justice. His soul was disturbed and shaken by the contention of justice against injustice, of light against darkness, of truth and purity against deceit and pollution, of God and conscience against the sinning and condemned creature. Job. xl. 4. All the credentials by which an evil and treacherous heart had hoped to secure a smooth and tranquil passage through life and death, were marked with falsehood—and all the soothing testimonials which iniquity had forged for itself, were silenced—“Iniquity stopped her mouth—and the trembling spirit remembered and was confounded and opened not the mouth because of shame.” Ps. cvii. 42; Ezek. xvi. 52. He felt as a sinful descendant of Adam, that the law held him under its power, and was righteously employed in laying before God, a guilt so manifest and inexcusable, as to stop his mouth and leave him confounded, Rom. iii. 19. The curse which the law denounces was pointed at him, Gal. iii. 23, whilst he saw not how its fulness of avenging power could be in any way averted. Thus judged and sentenced, with an apprehended doom of misery before him, is it wonderful that, like the publican, he smote upon his breast? Is it in the least strange, that he should have felt a pain and smart of conscience, the force of which deranged the very order and harmony of his corporeal frame, and drove him, desponding and heart-broken, into gloomy solitude, to vent his sorrows and complaints?

And you, Christless sinner, would experience a similar disturbance of soul and body, did you but know your true state. You are now resting at ease, because of blindness through the god of this world. It is to a hardened heart that you are indebted for all that ease and quietness in which you live. You have not looked up to see the wrath of God abiding on you; neither have you looked around to see that death and hell have no other covering except that which your unbelief has drawn over them. Are you cheerful? It is the deceitful emotion of delight which precedes your threatened fall into the gloom of despair. Are you capable of life's enjoyments? It is the momentary fruition of one, over whom there abides impending horror. Do you rejoice in the light of day, in the

scenes of social intercourse, in the occupations of business or pleasure? The hand of the destroyer is raised, to strike into darkness all your fair supports and cherished satisfactions. You are in the power of the law, which, even while you extend your hopes to distant objects, and count over your chances of happiness, and calm into repose all your fears, is making ready its treasured penalties, and marking you out for a fearful doom. Have you less reason to apprehend the displeasure of God, than the individual who relates his experience in the interesting recital of facts prefixed to this Tract? How should you be better than he was? How can it be, that the law of God treated him with such severity, while it spares you and permits you to be quiet and happy? Be assured that you need, this moment, the pardoning mercy of God. Unless you repent—you perish. Unless you be born again—it would have been better for you a thousand times over never to have been born at all.

3. But you here perceive, how a troubled conscience may find peace. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. The expiation of all sin in them who believe, is found in the blood of Christ. He is the propitiation, the atonement, the sin-offering, in whom all who seek refuge from a condemning law, and an accusing conscience, attain the benefits of expiation. Their sin is atoned for, and pardon and justification secured, through the satisfaction rendered to Divine justice by the death of Christ. The blood which is thus available to atone, is the *blood of Christ*. He was both God and man; and though a divine nature could not bleed and die, yet a divine person could. This distinction deserves attention, because the person being one, the acts and attributes of each nature, are the acts and attributes of the same person, and may be spoken of as belonging to both natures, or to each separately. The union of the divine and human natures in Christ, is the foundation of that peculiar faith which is the medium of comfort to desponding souls. They contemplate in him the form and the properties of man. The corporeal frame, and the human sensibilities are his.—But this humanity is invested with a divine character. It is but the temple in which the divinity resides, the shrine from which the living oracles are heard. Thomas beheld his very flesh, and yet fell at his feet and

cried out, my Lord, and my God! The mysterious depth of his sufferings, is the effect of humanity and divinity united—Those sufferings were such as no mere man could undergo.

“That last mysterious agony, those fainting pangs, that bloody sweat;” that sorrow of a spirit which had no sin of its own to sorrow for; that recovery from such a struggle so as to be able to go through his trial with such calm dignity; those words of majesty, I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it up again; that ability to dispense paradise to a fellow sufferer; that voice so loud after so many agonies; that dismissal of his spirit; that life from death, at the streaming forth of which, the bodies of saints arose and appeared in the Holy City—**ALL** combine to draw from us the exclamation of the Roman officer, “Truly, this man was the Son of God.” The afflicted conscience of the person whose painful experience is the occasion of these observations, was consoled and tranquillized, by a living faith in him as Redeemer and Saviour. In viewing him in the blood of atonement, he dropt in an instant the burden from his soul, and commenced a series of reflections like the following: “I have been filled with perplexity and disquietude from my total inability to comprehend how the penalty of God’s violated law which I deserved to suffer, could be remitted. And even if it could, I have been able to see no way by which my guilty soul could be received into the favor of God. I have seen and felt myself an offender against the supreme power of heaven and earth; and have experienced the conviction, that something more than my repentance was due to that power, before I could hope to be forgiven. I saw that human justice, as ordinarily administered among men, had never been known to acquit a criminal even upon his most pungent sorrow for the act or acts that had caused his condemnation. And how could I take upon myself to become the censor of the common justice of mankind? Could I condemn the proceedings of all times and of all nations, according to which penitent offenders against law and justice had been forced to suffer the legal punishment of their crimes notwithstanding their repentance? I was obliged to see and acknowledge, that if repentance for criminal conduct could suspend the infliction of punishment, and arrest the due

progress of justice, then there would soon be an end of all law, and government, and order.

“A better plea than my sorrows, stronger arguments than my tears and promises of amendment, a higher recompense to offended justice, than all the goodness and devotion of my life, seemed to be demanded loudly and imperatively. And blessed, ever blessed be the God of grace, that demand was answered for me by the voice from heaven. ‘*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses me from all sin.*’ In the shedding of this blood I perceived that ample honor had been rendered to eternal justice. Reparation of injury done by me, had been made by my surety and substitute, who descended into human flesh, and became the propitiation for my sins. Here was a refuge to which I was glad to fly. Justice which had been so exalted, so glorified by the passion and death of my Redeemer, seemed pleased to let me escape; and the infinitely holy God who had, according to the justice of his government, doomed me a vile transgressor to endless perdition, now

Cried, how can I give thee up?  
Let his lifted thunder drop.

Still as a mortal man I could not be just before God. Though sheltered and protected from punishment, I was but an acquitted criminal. A righteousness such as would bring me into favor with God was yet needed. And here again the delightful truth which had begun to roll off my burdens, completed my peace by assuring me of justification. The blood of expiation declared God’s righteousness in the forgiveness of past sins, and proclaimed him, not only just, but the justifier of all those who believe in Christ Jesus. His obedience to death, even the death of the cross, thus appeared as my vindication. My poor and worthless name, stamp and inscribed with the name of the Lord my Righteousness, began to assume a new character, and my vile and sinful person seemed to exult and shine in the perfect righteousness of my glorified Saviour.

“But was I here to pause? Crowned with such mercies, raised to such privileges, advanced to such a height of unexpected, and still more undeserved peace and assurance, was I there to remain in silent meditation and wonder? The blood of Jesus Christ seemed now

fresher, dearer, and holier than ever. Sin, my sin had caused it to flow.

For me those pangs his soul assail,  
 For me that death is borne,  
 My sins gave sharpness to the nail,  
 And pointed every thorn.

Could I ever again cherish the love of sin? Could I cease to remember its cruel, crushing pressure upon the soul of that innocent, self-devoted friend, who, as the Lamb of God, had borne away its guilt from me, and left me in the transports of full redemption? Must I not henceforth become the companion of his griefs, the partaker of his sufferings, and the sharer of his crucifixion? Shall not the love of Christ constrain me, henceforth, to serve and glorify with all my powers, my great deliverer?

“ But it is the blood of Jesus Christ that procures the gift of the Holy Ghost. It is through the offering of himself as a sacrifice for sin, that Christ has established a communication betwixt God and my soul. This is the life-giving Spirit; the renewing and regenerating Spirit; the transforming and sanctifying Spirit. And since the righteousness of Christ does not clothe a dead soul, I am to reckon myself to be alive to God, through Jesus Christ. Christ lives in me by his Spirit, and my life on earth is derived from him. Do I feel this life forming and directing all holy actions, principles, and affections? Am I alive to the presence and majesty of God, so that I stand before him with trembling and adoration? Am I alive to the call of the Lord, so as to be ready to obey him, and prompt to follow to whatever point he may direct the way? Am I alive to the pains and sufferings of that Saviour who endured the pangs of crucifixion so that sin which caused him to bleed, causes me to mourn in bitterness and contrition? Am I alive to the presence and gracious visitation of his Spirit, so as not to grieve him by the hardness of my heart, nor offend him by sinful thoughts and imaginations? Am I alive to all the charities due to the people of God, so as to prefer their company, and to delight in their worshipping assemblies; and to choose even to suffer affliction with them, rather than to enjoy the pleasures of sin? Am I alive to the pure and holy bliss of heaven, desiring admission thereinto because

it is the hallowed abode of the saints, the seat of Jehovah's presence, the end of all sin, and the perfection of all holiness?"

In such feelings and reflections as these, may we conceive that a soul having obtained eternal redemption through the blood of Christ, would delight to employ the moments of its realizing faith.—Let us now briefly consider how it is that the blood of Christ becomes efficacious in bringing peace to the troubled conscience.

1. It reconciles the mercy and the justice of the Divine Being. The Apostle Paul teaches the Ephesians iv. 32, "that God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven them." Col. iii. 13, he speaks of forgiveness as the act of Christ. Eph. i. 7, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. Acts v. 31, Peter affirms, that Jesus, whom the Jews slew and hanged on a tree, was exalted with God's right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. Rom. iii. 25, shows that it is Christ, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood—to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that God might be just, and the justifier of them who believe in Christ. The clear meaning of such declarations of Scripture is, that God is fully reconciled to the free and plenary exhibition of mercy towards sinners, in consequence of the Saviour's submission to death as their substitute. It is just then to assert, that every act of forgiveness ever yet extended to sinful creatures, proceeds upon the great reconciliation effected by the crucifixion of Christ. Upon the same reconciliation proceeds the proclamation of mercy to a ruined world.

2. The blood of Christ has not only fully removed all obstacles to the exercise of the pardoning prerogative in God, but it has rendered him graciously disposed to seek and promote the salvation of sinners, and to prevent and obviate their destruction. The whole Bible stands as a most triumphant proof of this. The design of all its revelations is the prevention of sin, and the consequent peace and happiness of sinners. All its addresses, threatenings, and promises breathe intense solicitude for the salvation of men. The voice of God softened by the tenderness of an affection, truly parental, condescending in kindness alluring by the gentle tones of commiseration

tion, is heard in every line, and echoed from every page of the Sacred Word. "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die, saith the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live? Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die? Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn to the Lord; that he may have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. The preaching of Jesus was a call to repentance—the whole Gospel is a call to repentance, and is evincive of God's gracious disposition to save sinners.

Here then is an effect of the blood of Christ, which we can never sufficiently admire. It renders the salvation of sinners a favorite object, in the view of the Divine Being. Not only has it removed all the hindrances of the sinner's salvation, but has made it the joy of heaven to secure that salvation by surprising methods of grace. The troubled and convicted sinner no sooner feels and mourns his lost estate, than he meets in the Gospel the welcome information, that the Father of mercies is waiting to be gracious; that his pardon is prepared and sealed; and that a kind reception awaits him among the redeemed and sanctified. He was seeking God, and fearful that he should never find him, but as the God of justice; when lo! he perceives to his amazing joy, that God was all the time seeking him in a way of mercy. He was inquiring whether there was any way by which he could escape hell; and lo! he is called up to the hope of heaven, and to the repose of the blessed. He was deprecating the curse of the law; and lo! he is introduced to the privileges of the Gospel. He would have thought it a mercy to be permitted to sink into some profound abyss, where he could have been hidden from the face of Him that sitteth upon the throne; when behold he is raised to a height of righteousness and favor, from which a reconciled and gracious Lord glories in loving-kindness, and proclaims his translation into the kingdom of light.

3. It should be remembered, however, that the blood of Christ saves all those, and no more than those, who are his in spirit—who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. It makes certain the salvation of none irrespective of faith and repentance; but it makes certain the salvation of all found in the possession of these

graces. Whether the blood of Christ was shed for the few, or the many, for a part of mankind, or for the whole world, for saints or sinners—are questions which need not agitate the soul earnestly seeking the mercy of redemption. But it may greatly concern such an one, to know whether he is a new creature—whether the old man with his deeds be crucified—and whether a new state of righteousness and grace be his.

Dear sinner, you are placed in circumstances of tremendous import, because you now have the power of sinking into hell with the cry of Immanuel insulted blood to exasperate your wo. You can now signalize your damnation by making it your own wicked, wilful act. In due time, Christ died for the ungodly. In due time he poured forth his blood, for his enemies. By his own consent he was smitten to death. His submission to the death of the cross, is the moving spectacle placed before your eyes; and the recital of a bloody crucifixion is the mournful sound that meets your ears. You are asked, and the question cannot be dismissed without the deepest guilt, whether this scene of blood has any meaning for you; whether it has an expression and a tone, adapted to your comprehension, and merciful to your guilt and necessity. This question meets you in every form of truth, and demands an answer. Means the blood of Christ anything to you? Has it to your mind an intelligible signification? Your reply is waited for. While you pause and hesitate, amazement at your indifference seizes saints and angels. To whom, if not to you, has the scene of Calvary a meaning? Was the crucifixion of Jesus nothing more than a sight to feast the rage of his murderers? Was it no more than an illustrious martyrdom to grace the annals of history? Was that unexampled instance of suffering virtue, intended only to awaken the sympathies of attending angels? Was it no more than an occasion for Omnipotence to display his power, by showing signs in the heavens above, and wonders in the earth beneath? Was its meaning merged and lost in the awful convulsions of nature? Study—O study the meaning of the blood of Christ. Draw near and examine the mystery of the cross for yourself. Behold in it the malignity of sin, the killing curse of a violated law, the triumph of God's justice, and the display of rich and sovereign mercy for the redemption of perishing souls.

you must likewise receive. Rom. iii. 24, 26. Jesus Christ is emphatically "the way," as well as "the truth and the life." John xiv. 6,—"a new and living way." Heb. x. 19, 20. An honest confession of your state as a sinner, and a thankful reception of gratuitous salvation through the cross of Christ, you will find to be very contrary to the pride and self-righteousness of your heart. Rom. x. 3. *The ground of your aversion* to this way is, that it is the way of holiness, Isa. xxxv. 8, repentance, Acts xvii. 30, prayer, 1 Thess. v. 17, heavenly mindedness, Col. iii. 1, 2, and self-denial, Mark viii. 34. And such is the alienation of your heart, that you will not cease your aversion to this way, until your soul is renewed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and thus receives a new and heavenly character. Rom. vii. 18; John xxxv. 5. Then spiritual religion will be your delight. God will give you wisdom, and strength, and victory over every remaining corruption; 2 Cor. xii. 9; and the excellency of the way itself, with the peace, hope, and joy which attend it, a clear conscience and a pure heart, will make it delightful. 1 Peter i. 8.

The *other* way is broad, its entrance wide, its frequenters many. Matt. vii. 13, 14. It is the way of transgressors. Among its travellers are found persons of very various characters. Some are openly profane, or entirely careless of an eternity to come. 2 Pet. iii. 3, 4. Others, under a form of religion, reject some important truth of Scripture, or hold the truth itself in unrighteousness. 1 Tim. i. 19; Rom. i. 18. The moralist who spurns the word of God, and the false professor of religion who perverts it, are alike crowding this dangerous path. Here may be found the drunkard, the unchaste, the liar, the slanderer, the perjured, the cheater, the envious, the malicious, the selfish. 1 Cor. vi. 9—11. Here are the lovers of money, pleasure, and honor; with all that countless number who give their hearts to the world, mind earthly things, and are thus enemies of the cross and service of the Redeemer. Phil. iii. 18—21.

Such are the *ways* which conduct to *ends* so opposite.

And in which of these ways are you, Reader, walking? To which of these ends is every day bringing you nearer? If you are in the road that leadeth to life, I rejoice with you. If you are in the broad and dangerous path, let me

earnestly implore of you to lose not an instant in quitting it. The way of salvation lies open before you. Seek it without delay, lest the hand of death seal your everlasting ruin.

Repent of your sins. Bow your knees and your heart in prayer for mercy. Cast yourself wholly on Christ; receive him as your only and all-sufficient Saviour. *Whatever* have been your past character and sins, he has made ample provisions for your return to God. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin." 1 John, i. 7. "*Whosoever* believeth on him, shall not perish, but have eternal life." John iii. 15. Object not that you are bound by the "chain of your sins," that you have "no health" in you; and that you cannot release or heal yourself. The Saviour came to proclaim liberty to the captives, Luke iv. 18, and he offers himself, as a great Physician, to heal all your moral and spiritual maladies, and to give you a new and divine nature. Luke v. 31, 2 Pet. i. 4. Trust wholly and alone in him, and he will save you with an everlasting salvation.

With this very design has he promised the gracious influences of his Holy Spirit, to illuminate the understanding, to renew the will, and to sanctify the affections. Luke xi. 13. And of these healing waters he invites you to partake, and says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." John vi. 37—39. *Whosoever* will, let him take of the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17.

**FLEE THEN FROM THE WRATH TO COME! LAY HOLD ON ETERNAL LIFE.**

\* \* Look for the Scripture passages referred to; and consider attentively the following passages:—Psalm i. Matt. vii. 24—29. Matt. xxv. throughout. John iii Romans iii. Ephes. ii Hebrews viii.