

salvation?" (*Heb 2:3; 12:25*). So, though our crimes be heavy, and the constant clamors of conscience roar, with the law, and the devil, let us not be daunted by our enemies and their terrible voices, but find shelter from them all, **in the word of the King**, sealed with his own heart's blood. We have but to believe and receive, the pardon and forgiveness, and stand fast upon his word.

A captain was brought before an Asiatic prince for execution; the guillotine already being raised over his head, when, impressed by intolerable thirst, he asked for water. A cup was handed him. He held it, as if apprehensive, lest the guillotine should fall while he was in the act of drinking. "Take courage!" said the prince. "Your life will be spared till you drink this water." That instant, **he dashed the cup of water to the ground!** Standing in the shadows of death, and with a grave already dug, a flash of light in a word from a prince passed his way; he seized upon it for all he was worth! "Take courage! Your life will be spared till you drink this water." He laid hold of that word! The faith of that barbarian captive saved him that day. The word of a prince was enough! Liberty was immediately granted; he rode off a free man.

In like manner, the guillotine of God's justice hangs over the head of every sinner, with the broken law crying out, "Execute him!" "The wages of sin is death!" (*Rom 6:23*). By nature, we're born under the sentence of death. But there is a Prince, a Prince of Peace, who "hath made peace through the blood of his cross" (*Isaiah 9:6; Col 1:20*); a Prince of Life "who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (*Acts 3:15; 2 Tim 1:10*); and the word from heaven has gone forth, "Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom!" (*Job 33:24*).

A word of life is now sent to the ear of every sinner on death row, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" (*John 11:25-26*). No surer word of promise has ever been published! The word of the Prince has gone forth! "And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you" (*1 Peter 1:25*). "To you, O men, do I call; and my voice is to the sons of men" (*Prov 8:4*). "To you is the word of this salvation sent" (*Acts 13:26*). Life and liberty reside in that word, and our receiving, and laying hold of it!

That's the solid rock for our faith to rest in. It's the word of God, a God that cannot lie, ratified by his own oath, sealed with his own blood, and attested to by the Three that bear record in heaven.

Someone may object by saying, "But God has no purpose or design of mercy toward all; and therefore, how can I apply this word of salvation to myself?" The answer is that God has not made his secret purpose the rule of your faith, but his word; and you may and shall know his merciful purpose, if once you take his word, and believe his promise in Christ.

While Captain Hedly Vicars was waiting in Canada in November, 1851, for the arrival of a brother-officer in his room, as he idly turned over the leaves of the Bible, his eye caught the well-known words: "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin" (*1 John 1:7*). Closing the book, he said, "If this be true for me, henceforth I will live, by the grace of God, as a man should live who has been washed in the blood of Jesus Christ." Even so, every soul should take God at his very word, and in simple childlike faith, receive the promises. There's no surer ground to stand on! □

*Standing on the promises I now can see,  
Perfect, present cleansing in the blood for me.*



### **The Thrilling Conversion of a Negro Slave**

**A**t the time of his conversion to Christ, John Jasper (1812-1901) was a slave, illiterate and working in a tobacco factory in Richmond, Virginia. It need hardly be said that he shared the superstitions and indulged in the extravagances of his race, and these in many cases have been so blatant and unreasonable that they have caused some to doubt the negro's capacity for true religion.

But from the beginning Jasper's religious experiences showed forth the Lord Jesus as their source and center. His thoughts went to the cross; his hope was founded on the sacrificial blood; and his noisy and rhapsodic

demonstrations sounded a distinct note in honor of his Redeemer.

Jasper's conviction as to his call to the ministry was clear-cut and intense. He believed that his call came straight from God. His boast and glory was that he was a God-made preacher. In his fierce warfares with the educated preachers of his race—"the new issue," as he contemptuously called them—he rested his claim on the ground that God had put him into the ministry; and so reverential, so full of noble assertion and so irresistibly eloquent was he in setting forth his ministerial authority that even his most skeptical critics were constrained to admit that, like John the Baptist, he was "a man sent from God."

And yet Jasper knew the human side of his call. It was a part of his greatness that he could see truth in its relations and completeness; and while often he presented one side of a truth, as if it were all of it, he also saw the other side. With him a paradox was not a contradiction. He gratefully recognized the human influences which helped him to enter the ministry.

While preaching one Sunday afternoon Jasper suddenly stopped, his face lighted as with a vision, a rich laugh rippled from his lips while his eyes flashed with soulful fire. He then said, in a manner never to be reported: "Mars Sam Hargrove called me to preach de Gospel—he was my old marster, and he started me out wid my message." Instantly the audience quivered with quickened attention, for they knew at once that the man in the pulpit had something great to tell.

"I was seekin' God six long weeks—jes' 'cause I was sich a fool I couldn't see de way de Lord struck me fus' on Cap'tal Squar', an' I left thar badly crippled. One July mornin' somethin' happen'd. I was a tobarker-stemmer; dat is, I took de tobarker leaf, an' tor'd de stem out, an' dey won't no one in dat fact'ry could beat me at dat work. But dat mornin' de stems wouldn't come out to save me, an' I tor'd up tobarker by de poun' an' flung it under de table. Fac' is, bruthr'n, de darkness of death was in my soul dat mornin'. My sins was piled on me like mount'ns; my feet was sinkin' down to de reguns of despar, an' I felt dat of all sinners I was de wust. I tho't dat I would die right den. An' wid what I supposed was my lars breath I flung up to heav'n a cry for mercy. 'Fore I kno'd it, de light

broke; I was light as a feather; my feet was on de mount'n; salvation rol'd like a flood thru my soul, an' I felt as if I could 'nock off de fact'ry roof wid my shouts.

"But I sez to mysef, I goin' to hol' still til dinner, an' so I cried, an' luffed, an' tore up de tobarker. Pres'n'tly I looked up de table, an' dar was a old man—he luv me, an' tried hard to lead me out de darkness, an' I slip roun' to whar he was, an' I sez in his ear as low as I could: 'Hallelujah; my soul is re-deemed!' Den I jump back quick to my work, but after I once open my mouf it was hard to keep it shet any mo'.

"'Twan' long 'fore I looked up de line agin, an' dar was a good ol' woman dar dat knew all my sorrers, an' had been prayin' fur me all de time. Der was no use er talkin'; I had to tell her, an' so I skip along up quiet as a breeze, an' start'd to whisper in her ear, but just den de holin-back straps of Jasper's breachin' broke, an' what I tho't would be a whisper was loud enuf to be hearn clean 'cross Jeems River to Manchester. One man sed he tho't de factory was fallin' down; all I know'd I had raise my fust shout to de glory of my Redeemer.

"But for one thing thar would er been a jin'ral revival in de fact'ry dat mornin'. Dat one thing was de overseer. He bulg'd into de room, an' wid a voice dat sounded like he had his breakfus dat mornin' on rasps an' files, bellowed out: 'What's all dis row 'bout?' Somebody shouted out dat John Jasper dun got religun, but dat didn't wurk 'tall wid de boss. He tell me to git back to my table, an' as he had sumptin' in his hand dat looked ugly, it was no time fur makin' fine pints, so I sed: 'Yes, sir, I will; I ain't meant no harm; de fus taste of salvation got de better un me, but I'll git back to my work.' An' I tell you I got back quick.

"Bout dat time Mars Sam he come out'n his orfis, an' he say: 'What's de matter out here?' An' I hear de overseer tellin' him: 'John Jasper kick up a fuss, an' say he dun got religun, but I dun fix him, an' he got back to his table.' De devil tol' me to hate de overseer dat mornin', but de luv of God was rollin' thru my soul, an' somehow I didn't mind what he sed.

"Little aft'r I hear Mars Sam tell de overseer he wanta see Jasper. Mars Sam was a good man; he was a Baptis', an' one of de hed

men of de old Fust Church down here, an' I was glad when I hear Mars Sam say he want to see me. When I git in his orfis, he say: 'John, what was de matter out dar jes' now?' and his voice was sof'like, an' it seem'd to have a little song in it which play'd into my soul like an angel's harp. I sez to him: 'Mars Sam, ever sence de fourth of July I ben cryin' after de Lord, six long weeks, an' jes' now out dar at de table God tuk my sins away, an' set my feet on a rock. I didn't mean to make no noise, Mars Sam, but 'fore I know'd it de fires broke out in my soul, an' I jes' let go one shout to de glory of my Savior.'

"Mars Sam was settin' wid his eyes a little down to de flo', an' wid a pritty quiv'r in his voice he say very slo': 'John, I b'leve dat way myself. I luv de Savior dat you have jes' foun', an' I wan' to tell you dat I do'n complain 'cause you made de noise jes' now as you did.' Den Mars Sam did er thing dat nearly made me drop to de flo'. He git out of his chair, an' walk over to me and giv' me his han', an' he say: 'John, I wish you mighty well. Your Savior is mine, an' we are brothers in de Lord.' When he say dat, I turn 'round an put my arm agin de wall, an' held my mouf to keep from shoutin'. Mars Sam well know de good he dun me.

"Aft'r awhile he say: 'John, did you tell eny of 'em in thar 'bout your conversion?' And I say: 'Yes, Mars Sam. I tell 'em fore I kno'd it, an' I feel like tellin' eberybody in de worl' about it.' Den he say: 'John, you may tell it. Go back in dar an' go up an' down de tables, an' tell all of 'em. And den if you wan' to, go up-stars an' tell 'em all 'bout it, an' den down-stars an' tell de hogshed men an' de drivers an' everybody what de Lord has dun for you.'

"By dis time Mars Sam's face was rainin' tears, an' he say: 'John, you needn' work no mo' today. I giv' you holiday. Aft'r you git thru tellin' it here at de fact'ry, go up to de house, an' tell your folks; go roun' to your neighbors, an' tell dem; go anywhere you wan' to, an' tell de good news. It'll do you good, do dem good, an' help to hon'r your Lord an' Savior.'

"Oh, dat happy day! Can I ever forgit it? Dat was my conversion mornin', an' dat day de Lord sent me out wid de good news of de kingdom. For mo' den forty years I've ben tellin' de story. My step is gittin' ruther slo', my voice breaks down, an' sometimes I am

awful tired, but still I'm tellin' it. My lips shall proclaim de dyin' luv of de Lam' wid my las' expirin' breath.

"Ah, my dear ol' marster! He sleeps out yonder in de ol' cemetery, an' in dis worl' I shall see his face no mo', but I don't forgit him. He give me a holiday, an' sent me out to tell my friends what great things God had dun for my soul. Oft'n as I preach I feel that I'm doin' what my ol' marster tol' me to do. If he was here now, I think he would lif' up dem kin' black eyes of his, an' say: 'Dat's right, John; still tellin' it; fly like de angel, an' wher-ever you go carry de Gospel to de people.'

"Farewell, my ol' marster, when I lan' in de heav'nly city, I'll call at your mansion dat de Lord had ready for you when you got dar, an' I shall say: 'Mars Sam, I did what you tol' me, an' many of 'em is comin' up here wid da robes wash'd in de blood of de Lam' dat was led into de way by my preachin', an' as you started me I want you to shar' in de glory of da salvation.' An' I tell you what I reek'n, dat when Mars Sam sees me, he'll say: 'John, call me marster no mo', we're brothers now, an' we'll live forever roun' de throne of God.'"

This is Jasper's story, largely in his own broken words. When he told it, the people were fascinated and transfigured; it swept over that great crowd like a celestial gale. □



**A** certain prince once traveling through France visited the Arsenal of Toulon, where convicted criminals were held. The commandant, as a courtesy to the prince's rank, said he was welcome to set any of the prisoners free, whom he should choose. The prince, desiring to make the wisest use of this privilege, spoke to many of them in succession, inquiring why they were condemned to death. "Falsely accused," cried one. "Unfair trial," grumbled another. "Unjust laws," was the contention of another who had set himself against civil authority. Still another complained that he was a victim of a corrupt social system. They were all innocents who had been ill treated and oppressed.

At last he came to one who, when asked the same question, answered, "My lord, I have no reason to complain; I have been a very wicked and rebellious wretch. I account it a great mercy that I am still alive." The prince fixed his eyes upon him, and said, "You wicked wretch! It is a pity you should be placed among so many honest men; by your own confession you are bad enough to corrupt them all; but you shall not stay with them another day." Turning to the officer, the prince said, "This is the man, sir, I wish to see released."

The bitter remorse that filled the hearts of the other men as they saw their companion walk out a free man, while they themselves remained to face their doom, can better be imagined than told. Any other one of them might have been set free had he confessed his guilt.

But infinitely greater remorse awaits every reader of these lines who refuses to confess his ruin, guilt, and righteous condemnation before God. The Bible says there is "none righteous, no, not one," "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," and "the soul that sinneth shall die" (*Rom 3:10, 23; 6:23; Ezek 18:4*). "Guilty as charged!" is the sentence passed upon every sinner. Christ declared that we're "condemned already" (*John 3:18*). But a free pardon from God with full forgiveness in Jesus is proclaimed in the gospel message. But like the story above, this is for none but those who honestly confess their guilt before God—those who own up to their wickedness and rebellion—those who admit that their sin is their own fault, that they certainly deserve God's judgment.

If you still see yourself as a "pretty good person," God's pardon is not for you. If you're still blaming circumstances or someone else for your sinful dilemma, God's pardon is not for you. Jesus "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (*Matt 9:13*). Are you a sinner? Are you guilty? □

*His cross, his blood, his righteousness,  
my hope, my only plea;  
My sins deserve eternal death,  
but Jesus died for me.*



**"This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ"**

—1 John 3:23

**F**aith in Christ is our duty! The command of God given to "every creature" is that we should believe on his Son for life eternal. This is our sure warrant of faith; none can be wrong in obeying God's command. Our sense and feeling is not to be followed, but the very word of God. Confusion arises when men heed the gospel too little. Instead, they lend their ears to what the law, sin, the devil, and conscience says; and because sin and guilt is in their hearts, they cannot escape the sense of coming judgment upon their souls. This is to set the word of God aside.

Suppose a certain man had committed treason against his king; but for so much as the king had compassion on him, he sent him, by the hand of a faithful messenger, a pardon under his own hand and seal. But in the country where this poor man dwelt, there were also many that sought to trouble him, by often reminding him of his treason, and of the law that was to be executed on the offender. There was only one thing for this man to do in order to shield himself from all the clamors of his enemies—**believe the handwriting, which was the king's pardon.**

Even so it is with us. Our crimes are treason against the King of heaven. We had no right to rebel, no reason to revolt. A God of light had showered us with love, yet we, damnable traitors, chose the powers of darkness. But our God is one who "delights in mercy," "pardons iniquity," and "passes by transgression" (*Micah 7:18*), yea, "abundantly pardons!" (*Isaiah 55:7*). And he, in pure grace, and through the gospel of Christ, has issued a general proclamation of pardon to all, "that whosoever believeth in his Son should not perish, but have eternal life" (*John 3:15*). And his word of exhortation is: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh from heaven," for "how shall we escape if we neglect so great