

## “The Card on the Pavement”

One Lord's Day evening as Miss Murphy, a teacher, left the school, one girl named Jane came up to her and said, "Miss Murphy, may I walk a bit of the way with you. I have something to tell you so awful and I want you to pray for the person." "Certainly, dear," was the reply.

On their way Jane, who seemed overwhelmed with her subject, broke out, "Oh, I am terrified! I am miserable!" "What is it dear?" Miss Murphy again asked. "Let me hear it, and let us take it to Him who knows it already, and who is ever willing, ever able to help."

"You recollect, ma'am, the young girl I told you of, the Roman Catholic, for whom you have been praying? Well, you know I told you I used to tell her all the stories you used to tell us, but for the last three weeks she has not been allowed to speak to me. Her father and mother are Roman Catholics. She is their only child, and is dedicated, so they will not let her look at me, but now the worst of all has come. Last Friday, as she was walking down one of the main streets of the town, she saw a bit of white paper on the ground, and passed by. Before however she reached the warehouse to which she was going, she felt, to use her own words, something within her urging her to go back and pick up that paper. She did so, and found it to be a little card, blank on one side, but on the other this text: **For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?** (Mark 8:36). Mary read it several times, but never having read the Scriptures, she was at a loss to know the meaning of the words. At last she said to herself, 'Jane can tell me,' and back she came to me, a distance of two miles."

"Entering my room, she said, 'What does this mean? I know you can tell me.' I read it, and replied, 'It means what it says: **For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?** And in a simple way I explained the passage."

"'Who said it?' asked Mary, hurriedly. 'The Lord Jesus Christ in His own Word, the Bible,' I answered. Instantly Mary snatched the ticket out of my hand, and rushed out of the house in a frantic manner. I was so upset by conduct that after a little I decided to follow her. I went to her house and meeting her mother at door I asked if Marry was alright, and if I could see her."

"'Oh, indeed,' replied her mother, 'she is a strange creature; I think her mind is going - she is walking up and down her room like someone bewitched. I do not think she should see any one,' and turning round she went in. In fact, Miss Murphy," said Jane, "I am quite sure she is going mad; do pray for her that the Lord may spare her reason."

This conversation took place on Sunday evening. On Tuesday morning Miss Murphy received a letter from Jane, saying: Praise the Lord, Mary is converted. "Oh, Miss Murphy, such a conversion; I had it all from herself. It seems that on Friday night, after she left me, she was like a lunatic all the evening, pacing up and down. Her father and mother were in a terrible state, not knowing what to do with her, and very early she went to her own room, saying she would be better next day. She dared not tell them the truth. All that night she paced her room in deep agony. To use her own words, Those words were continually impressed upon my mind -- **Lose his ownsoul! Lose HIS OWN SOUL.** I felt the great weight of these words and was terrified, and I did not dare to lie down, or put out the light'."

"Next morning she came down looking pale and miserable. 'Father asked me,' she said, 'Are you no better?' I replied, 'Not much.' He reminded me of a party we were to have, and said, 'You must be all right for that, you know; would you wish to see the doctor?' 'No, no, there is no occasion. I shall be all right by that time.' Again I asked leave to retire early, and did so, but as I closed my door again, I felt the dreadful weight of those words, **Lose his own soul.** That whole night I spent like the preceding one pacing the room, now and again trying to pray, but I had no words except, 'Lord, help me'."

"Next day father was very angry because I looked ill and miserable, and said I must see a doctor. I said that if I was not better tomorrow I would. About 11 o'clock I heard father and mother go by to their room, and just then I remembered that Nana, an aged nurse, had left an old, torn Bible behind her, which was thrown into a lumber room downstairs. At once the thought struck me that I must get it, and starting down I sought amongst heaps of old rubbish till I found it. Bringing it up, I closed my door. I laid it on my bed, and asked God to show me my text. Then opening the Book my eyes fell on these words: **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.** (John 3:16)."

"I was greatly disappointed; I expected to see my verse when I asked God to show it to me, and I said, 'That will not do; it is my own verse I want,' and closing the Book, I reopened it, but at the same place. Again impatiently shutting the Bible, I cried to God to show me my verse. Once more I opened it, and again at the same verse. And this time it was no fancy: it was not the light of the lamp that fell upon the page, but, oh, I saw it all. God loved, God gave, I had to believe and I had everlasting life. I felt bursting, and could only utter a cry of joy, which brought father and mother into my room. They saw what it all meant, and scolded and threatened. Father took my Book to burn, and mother wept; but I was happy. I had no pale face next day, but felt so calm; I cannot explain it to you unless you have known it yourself."

Miss Murphy's heart was filled with wonder and praise as she thus heard the story of God's dealings with this young soul, apparently shut out from all human aid, but whom He had met and taught Himself.- By A.T.