

The Prince and the Galley-Slave

In the reign of Louis XVI, a German prince, travelling through France, visited the arsenal at Toulon. The commandant, as a compliment to the rank of his visitor, said that he was welcome to set free any one galley-slave whom he chose to select. The prince, who was resolved to make the best use of the privilege, spoke to many of the prisoners in succession, inquiring why they were condemned to the galleys. One after another protested their innocence.

They had been unjustly dealt with, they had been falsely accused. There was really no proper cause for their imprisonment; in fact, they were all injured and ill-treated persons. At last the prince came to one who, when asked the same question, answered, "I have no reason to complain, I have been a wicked, desperate wretch; I deserve to be broken alive on the wheel; I account it a great mercy that I am here."

The man's honest confession of his guilt impressed the prince so favourably that he once called the commandant, and said, "This is the man, sir, whom I wish to be released." The poor fellow was accordingly set free.

It must be admitted that the prince made a wise choice, for the man who was sensible of his guilt, and so submissive to his punishment, was in all probability the most worthy of pardon, and the most unlikely to abuse his liberty. God deals with sinners in the same way. His Son, Jesus Christ the Lord, came to seek and to save that which was lost, and it is only those who take their place as lost sinners that are ready to receive the lost sinners that are ready to receive the lost sinner's Saviour. The whole world has been brought in guilty before God (Romans 3:19). Let it be your care, unsaved one, to take the place of the guilty – guilty of having sinned against God, guilty of having rejected His Son – and you are at once in a position where you can claim the

great Redeemer as your own personal Saviour. There is no hope of pardon until you confess your guilt. There is no hope of your deliverance until you acknowledge that you are utterly helpless to deliver yourself. The God-given Deliverer is now waiting to receive you. Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

W.S.