

or, as it might be rendered, "Believe in God, and believe in me." Believe, that is, in the attributes of the Father, so terrible to his enemies, and believe in me, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and you shall see and feel all those glorious and terrible attributes radiant with eternal love. Belief in the existence of God, apart from belief in the existence of the Son, instead of alleviating human misery, aggravates it the more. There is no consolation afforded to the mourning soul, by the knowledge that one Supreme Being holds the sceptre of the universe; for without knowing and believing in God the Son, the contemplation of the Deity would scare the mind of the convicted sinner, who could not but regard the Supreme as a jealous and an avenging God—a consuming fire; and when adversity laid us prostrate, we would regard it only as the frown of the Almighty, not as the correction of a father. We could not see him in the tempest, in the earthquake or the fire, but always in the still small voice, if indeed we could suppose that his voice was ever anything but appalling to hear. Without faith in Christ we could not know God at all: "neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." The light of nature is but dim without the light of the Gospel. The voice of philosophy is powerless in the hour of trial, to comfort and cheer the soul. Of what avail is it to know that the universe is regulated by general laws; that the inexorable decree of mortality and change is engraved on all things under the sun, and that man must bend to his fate? Stoical indifference or passive submission is the cold and heartless philosophy of the world. It is the natural offspring of belief in some one who is at the head of all affairs; but who or what he is, it cannot tell. Life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel; consolations and joys are there unfolded which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man to conceive. It is faith in the Father, in union with faith in the Son, which will enable us to see that light, and appropriate these consolations and joys. By means of this evangelical faith, the fear and love of God are produced in the soul; truth and mercy are shown in beautiful harmony; righteousness and peace in sure and honorable reconciliation. The two affections of fear and love, in which the whole of religion may almost be said to be comprised, exist in one and the same mind, towards one and the same glorious personage. Wonderful harmony! unlooked-for co-existence! It is the union of the two that constitutes the saving faith of the Gospel, and is emphatically called a shield. How is it a remedy against trouble? It enables the soul to repose and trust in the faithfulness and love of God. When under the pressure of distress, we are apt to exclaim with Job—"all these things are against me."

We are prone to reason thus: if God loved me, he would not so chastise me; but faith recognizes in the most trying circumstances the hand of a loving father, and hails it joyfully as a discipline most necessary and beneficial. Too prone to forget God when the sun of prosperity shines upon us, we naturally say, "This is my rent for ever, here will I dwell, for I have desired it." We begin to think too complacently of our condition, and say—"Soul take thine ease, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, but our Lord suffers not his own to be deceived, or thus enjoy inglorious and fallacious rest. The fan is in his hand, and his wheat is winnowed. He is the refiner, and his gold is purified. He is the physician, and the patient must feel the sharp edge of the instrument of cure. "Affliction for the present, is not joyous but grievous;" but the faith enables us to rely on the promise that "afterwards it shall work out a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory. Dark and dismal is the winter of the year, but it is beneficial. Its frosts and snows are but the process preparatory to another spring when the face of nature smiles again, and the gloom of winter is forgotten. Analogous to these are the adverse seasons of the Christian life. Our nature recoils from the tempest and shudders at its sullen aspect; but the faith points out the true hiding place from the storm, and the covert from the tempest until all ills be overpast.

Let us consider the efficacy of faith in enabling the Christian to bear the various ills of life. Take the case of the disciples themselves, after they had been fully confirmed in the kingdom of God; for the greatest difference is observable between their conduct when disciples and when apostles. In the one character, as seen in the passage before us, they were disconcerted and alarmed at the approach of trial. In the other, they shewed remarkable intrepidity. As disciples, they betrayed pusillanimity and cowardice. They forsook their Lord and fled. As apostles they could brave the most appalling dangers and endure the most cruel tortures, unshaken and unmoved. Like Moses, influenced by faith they chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. The trials of the apostles were most severe. See that abridgement of Paul's life, written by himself, in 2 Cor., cap., and what a record of suffering and trial it is! And this terrible catalogue of persecutions was written, be it observed, during his residence at Ephesus, where he had still a long time to labor, that is to suffer, in the Master's cause. Now what enabled him and his fellow-apostles to triumph over all this? It was not their enthusiasm—that they indeed possessed—but it was as remote from fanaticism as courage is from rashness. It were the words of truth and soberness spoken more calmly and deliberately than by