

## CIRCULAR LETTER.

FROM THE WESTERN NEW BRUNSWICK BAPTIST ASSOCIATION TO THE  
CHURCHES OF WHICH IT IS COMPOSED.

*Dear Brethren*—The subject of this annual circular letter is faith. Although an apostle said that love is greater, yet faith is spoken of in Scripture as "precious" and indispensable; for without it we cannot please God.

To you this is not a new theme. The object is to stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance. As christian churches you believe the Word of God: you have professed faith in Jesus Christ, and have avowed your trust in Him. Of none other but Baptist churches can this be said, that "ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ." Faith, as a prerequisite to church membership, is disregarded by all pedobaptist churches, and in this particular they have departed from the primitive apostolic example. Let us then, as the household of faith, attend to this distinguishing characteristic.

The following definition of the term we find in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" or in other words, it is the *assurance* of things hoped for, the *conviction* of things not seen.

Those sublime spiritual verities, which neither come within the sphere of the senses, nor could be discovered by a process of reasoning, have been viewed by faith; and an abiding conviction of their reality and preciousness, influences the believer's heart and life. "Faith is the medium of contact between the benefit and the subject of that benefit; between eternal life provided, and the spirit for which it is provided." "It is the link of union between the salvation as prepared and perfect *without* ourselves, and our own personal being." "It is the mysterious link in the chain of moral causes and effects, which connects the weakness of the creature with the almightiness of God."

Faith is supernatural. When Christ reveals himself graciously to the sinner, an assurance of the divine favor and faithfulness accompanies that revelation, and a conviction is produced in his enlightened soul that he shall experience all the blessings of redemption. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit." And of the Holy Spirit Christ says, "He shall take of mine and shall show it unto you." "All men have not faith." "It is the gift of God." Christ is its "author and finisher." The Holy Spirit imparts it. "And faith," said the Apostle Paul, "by the same Spirit."

The preaching of the Gospel is designed to produce it. God, being the object of faith, and the author of the truth, and having declared that His Word shall not return unto Him void, but it shall accomplish that which he please and prosper in the thing whereunto he sent it, accompanies the proclamation of the truth with his benediction. "How shall they believe," said the apostle, "in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? Who then is Paul and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

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