

had personal experience of the remission of his sins through faith. Remission of sins by confidence in God's cleansing, not through works of man but wholly by the recumbency of the penitent soul upon God's method of pardon in the Atonement, was the central doctrine of the Reformation. This brought to Luther his peace and strength, and to the Church a new life. He yielded to the truth, and found more truth; and the sense of pardon that came to him was a sealing, a divine adoption, and it made him the conqueror that he was, and that every man has been whose confidence in God has been such as to lead to corresponding conduct.

The soul yielding completely to God in genuine repentance has an answer in more light and in a sense of sonship. Even when the soul is without a knowledge of the historic Christ, may we not say that God, in his mysterious methods of grace, may sometimes whisper to such a soul pardon, and give to such a spirit regeneration? I am here on holy ground. He who spake as never man spake said that any word against the Son of Man might be pardoned; but that he who blasphemed against the Holy Ghost would have no pardon either in this world or that to come. This influence of the Holy Ghost in the depths of conscience is universal among men. It is the holy of holies in the history of God's universal government, of all natural revelation of his will. The universality of Christianity as a redemptive system is to be found in the universality of the influence of the Holy Spirit, which is Christ's spirit. I would not exaggerate the capacities of the intuitional philosophy, but I hold that he is depending on a shriveled doctrine of conscience, and a shriveled philosophy of the intuitions, who is not willing to assert that God touches us, and that when we yield to him utterly he will give us peace through regeneration. I do not know how often such yielding has occurred outside the range of the knowledge of the historic Christ. If it has occurred, I hold that God most certainly has given answers of consolation to the soul; and that thus salvation has occurred, not by the knowledge of the historic Christ, but by that Christ who is the Word, who was in the beginning with God and is God, and who illumineth every soul that cometh into the world. I hold that salvation reached in this way, through a regeneration obtained by total, affectionate, irreversible self-surrender to the best that the soul possesses outside of Christianity, is not salvation by magic; it is salvation *through* the New Birth and by the Atonement, even without a knowledge of the historic processes of the Atonement. Let all who teach the contrary doctrine remember the terrible words: "He that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness." Some of our newer theologians are in danger of such blasphemy.

Saving faith, understood in its full scriptural sense, must be defined as nothing less than

*confidence in God as revealed in Christ, and leading to adoring self-surrender to him as both Saviour and Lord.*

Mere confidence of an intellectual sort that God has spoken to man, is belief which the devils have and tremble. But such confidence in God, with adoring self-surrender to the dictates of the message, is the faith that works by love and purifies the heart. We find, therefore, that whatever else, according to the Scriptures, faith must mean, it cannot mean less than it means according to the intuitional philosophy and the axiomatic religious truths. It must mean the total, affectionate, and irreversible surrender of the soul to that God in whom the soul has confidence.

There are some men so benighted and belated that they think that, if they on their death-beds wrench their souls up to a belief that Christ was God, or that God has spoken to man in the Scriptures, they are saved. The black angels believe those things. We must not only believe that God and God in Christ are Saviour and Lord, but become affectionately glad that they are both. There are some Christians who think that, if they are affectionately glad that Christ is the Saviour and lean upon him as such, they have faith. But he is to be taken in all his offices. He is to be received both as Saviour and Lord; and, until we affectionately receive him as both, we have not honestly received him as either.

We must, therefore, agree with John Calvin, for instance, in this language: "The assent of faith is of the heart more than of the head, and rather of the affections than of the understanding." We must say with Jeremy Taylor: "Faith of a Christian has more in it of the will than of the understanding." We must say with Prof. Charles Hodge: "If it is asked whether it is Christ in all his offices, or Christ in his priestly office especially, that is the object of justifying faith, we must answer that the believer receives Christ. He takes him as his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption; and if this complex act of apprehension and surrender were analyzed, it doubtless would be found to include submission to all his teachings, reliance on his righteousness and intercession, subjection to his will, confidence in his protection, and devotion to his service. As he is offered to us as a Prophet, Priest, and King, as such he is accepted."

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