


To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins.—Acts x. 43.

"AS BIG AS AN UMBRELLA."

 KNEW an old man, rough and quaint in manner, whose faith in the Lord Jesus was remarkably strong. In his youth he had been hard and wayward; but the grace of God entered his heart, and he became childlike in his religious life. Plodding and industrious in business, he was greatly prospered, and in later life he liberally helped the cause of God. But affliction came, and slow and trying was its progress. The strong man grew weak as a child, as mind and body alike gave way to the inroads of disease. One hour he was perfectly conscious, the next he wandered in speech, and knew no one who approached him. When he could speak there was one name which he knew better than any other—the name of Jesus brought a peaceful, happy smile to his countenance, and evoked some exclamation which told of a clear hope and a firm trust within.

"You can still keep your faith in God?" I said.

"Faith!" said he; "yes, my faith's as big as an umbrella."


It was a strange speech, but it gave his notion of what faith did for him. He is now where faith is changed to sight, and where the Lord spreads His tabernacle over the redeemed.

Faith in the Saviour is a good foundation for the soul, and indeed the only sure and safe one. But it may be also called a covering large enough to inclose us on every side. The old believer felt God so near to him that He completely overshadowed him. He believed God encircled him, so that he was free from harm. He was therefore able to say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for *Thou art with me.*"

Without faith in God, you are in terrible danger. Faith makes sure of a refuge; but there is no refuge from sin and its woes except in the Man Christ Jesus, whom God has ordained to be

"a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Trust in him assures us of safety. It enables us to realize the meaning of that beautiful passage in Isaiah xxxii. 2, "And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." In this we cannot fail to see a reference to the Lord Jesus Christ. It puts into a tender and beautiful form the truth which was so precious to the sick man's heart, when he declared his faith was "as big as an umbrella."

"WANTED—A MAN."

 HAT has been the one great want down from the Garden of Eden. The world wants a man to save. It wants a redeemer. It wants a man to buy it back from its lost estate. And that man is found in the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Christ was a very man. He worked, He wept, He suffered, He died. He is the one man by whom we can be saved. And if men only leaned more on this man, He would lead them "onwards, upwards, homewards, heavenwards." Two blind men were on one occasion seen at Brighton, walking along the street. One kept crawling along the street very slowly, tapping here and tapping there with his stick. The other rattled along at the rate of four miles an hour. But he was leaning on the arm of a friend who could see. That made all the difference.

Lean on Jesus, young man. Link your arm in His, old men and middle-aged men; for He sees, and knows, and will lead you. And now, in a word, I take it that real manhood consists in being like Christ, Christ-like. And in proportion as you resemble Him, in proportion as you obey the commands of Jesus, and in proportion as you persevere until His coming, in that same proportion may you count yourself as possessing real manhood.

In whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.—Ephesians i. 7.