

real bottom, having dug through all this rubbish of creeds and systems and human notions, we shall find a few great foundation truths characterized by great simplicity.

A few of them might be given as examples.

I. The doctrine of *sin*. The Bible teaches that this consists in *three* forms:

1. Direct disobedience to the declared will of God.

2. Neglect of duty, coming short of His glory.

3. A sinful nature or proneness, which lies back of all else, disposing us to do wrong. It is this sinful *tendency* or *disposition* which is the principal hindrance to holiness and happiness, and the principal determining element of character. God judges us not by outbreking sins, but by inworking sinfulness. The opportunity or the occasion may not have developed the evil within us, but God judges us by what we would do or become if we had the temptation and the chance.

II. The Doctrine of *Regeneration*, or the new Birth. This follows from the other. The evil to be eradicated lies in the nature. Back of all reformation of *conduct*, character must be changed. A new disposition must displace the old—there must be not right acts alone, but a right mind. This is Regeneration, going back and salting the fountains of life, that all the streams may be pure. No man can regenerate himself any more than he can generate himself; for the difficulty lies in his *disposition*, which indisposes him to anything better. Hence only God can, by his Spirit, give man a new spirit.

III. The Doctrine of *Justification*. This means more than Pardon: it is accepting the sinner as a just man. God lays his sin on Jesus: he pays the debt to the law in some way, so that the government of God is vindicated and relieved of all complicity with evil. Romans iii. 26 shows

that Justification, or righteousness, means, as Paul uses it, the method by which God can remain just and yet justify the ungodly. The philosophy of it we need not know; but the fact is that it is as though all claims of the law were so satisfied as that the law has *no longer any hold on us as transgressors*. That is justification, and it is perfectly simple when so understood.

IV. The Doctrine of *Faith*. Pres. Edwards says, Faith is the soul's entirely embracing the revelation of Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour. We believe it is even simpler than that: faith is taking God's word for truth and taking salvation as his gift. He so loved the world that he gave his Son: that is the divine side. Man so believes as to take the gift: that is the human side. And every new act of faith is a new act of taking God at his word, and taking his gifts more fully.

V. The Doctrine of *Prayer*. Jesus Himself says it is *asking in His name* (John xvi: 23, 24). We all know what it is to ask a favor in another's name, or, as we say, "using his name," by his authority. We all know that we get favors for his sake which would not be granted for our own. And we can see also that when we thus use another's name, *He really asks the favor through us*. Is not this the simple truth about prayer? When we ask the Father in Jesus' name, not *we* but *Jesus is the suppliant*, and hence we cannot be denied.

VI. The Doctrine of *Eternal Life*.

When a stream enters a river it becomes part of the whole river, and there is no property of the river, from its source to its entrance into the sea, which the stream that is its tributary does not share. When we believe and so become united to God, all that is in the Godhead we partake. We do not only share His immortality *henceforth*, but His eternal *past*. By spiritual heredity we