

[FOR OUR MISSION.]

The Five-fold Outcome of Faith.

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5.—RIGHTEOUSNESS.

FAITH being the act of the heart, out of which are the issues of life, it naturally leads to a course of conduct in keeping with its distinctive character. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness," Rom. 10: 10. And as he believes in Jesus as dying for his sin and bearing it away, he henceforth is dead to sin, and seeks to live holily before God. As he believes in Jesus as his righteousness before God, he seeks to live righteously before man. As he believes in Jesus as the giver of a new life, through the power of the Holy Spirit, he seeks to enjoy the power of a new life in the Holy Ghost. All that is distinctive in the faith of the man looking to Christ is of necessity reproduced in his life. All that he apprehends Christ as being to him, he seeks earnestly and prayerfully to realize in his own experience. He who finds a preciousness in Christ as a Saviour on the cross, finds that preciousness multiplying itself all along his way, and through it he is led into new discoveries of his preciousness, so that ere long the true description of Him is, "He is altogether lovely," we are "complete in Him."

The life of a Christian proclaims how precious Christ Jesus is to him—it may be a rich, deedful life of self-forgetfulness, or it may be a poor, starved life of self-seeking—whatever it is, it proclaims how Christ is apprehended; for faith fashions and forms the life according to its distinctive character. "Faith works by love." The Epistle of James is a strong statement of this important truth.

Wherever there is a true faith, its outcome is righteousness. Righteousness is a general term for obedience to the law of Christ. Our Lord does not redeem us from righteousness, but to righteousness. "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sins, *should live unto righteousness.*" 1 Pet. 2: 24. "We are his (God's) workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works* which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Eph. 2: 10. "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should *live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world*, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2: 11-13. Righteousness in our life is the evidence of a genuine faith and of a true salvation. Did not the angel who announced his coming say, "Thou shalt call his name JESUS for he *shall save his people from their sins.*" Matt. 1: 21. Not merely from judgment, condemnation, death—these all lie in the future, but from what lie in the present, sins, sins! Jesus saves now. Every moment. Jesus lifts up the

people into the realm of righteousness now. Thanks be to His grace! Paul set this forth in an exceedingly satisfactory way in Rom. 8: 2-4. "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death . . . *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.*" It is because of this that the godly are called the righteous. But they never forget the source of their righteousness. That lies in the Holy Ghost who is in them. And this righteousness is marked by a divine completeness. It springs up in the thoughts of the mind and the desires of the heart, and sweeps around the entire circle of man's activities. It is stamped upon all that belongs to the man within and without. God desires truth in the inward parts, and truth in the word, and truth in act. An entire conformity to his will, in a word—*Holiness*. Faith is the only efficient principle for securing this, because it gives us the blood purged heart, and ear, and thumb, and toe. It consecrates us to God's service as the Priests of old were consecrated. It seals us upon the heart of God. It makes God first and middle and last. It says, "Thy will be done." It brings us to the altar of God so that we present *ourselves* a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is our reasonable service. Rom. 12: 1.

Faith perfects itself in righteousness. Righteousness in the justification of faith. The portrayal of the judgment scene gives righteousness an awful comprehensive significance. "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me, and I was in prison and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer saying, Lord when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee? or thirsty and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger and took thee in? or naked and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Matt. 25: 34-40. What a sermon on righteousness that scene preaches. May we not hear it in vain.

A Great Need.

THE following item is taken from a trade Journal, but the advice given is equally applicable to Christian workers:—

"With most people the want of any well-defined system or method is one of the chief causes of their getting behind with their work. A systematic method of working combined with industry, will complete a vast amount of work in a day, and finish it with ease; but without system and application, the worker may be in a continual rush, and yet accomplish little.