

man truly believes he is born of God. The eternal Son of God became flesh; he was born of a woman; he had a true body and a rational soul, and so was and continues to be God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever. God thus manifested in the flesh was made under the law; he fulfilled all righteousness; he offered himself unto God a sacrifice for our sins which he bore in his own body on the tree. He was set forth as a propitiation for our sins through faith in his blood. Having died for our offences he rose again for our justification and is now seated at the right hand of God, all power in heaven and earth being committed into his hands, whence he sends forth his holy spirit to apply to men the benefits of his redemption.

Faith in Jesus Christ is not merely speculative assent to this testimony of God concerning his son. It is the cordial or sincere recognition of all that is revealed concerning him and his work, and resting on him alone for our salvation. There is however a dead as well as a living faith. There is a kind of faith which is of no avail. Our Lord says: In the last days many shall say Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? To whom he will say, I never knew you. How then can we tell whether our Faith can be genuine or not? Some endeavour to solve this question by a process of introspection—by analyzing their feelings and endeavouring to determine which are natural and which are gracious. This seldom leads to any satisfactory result. Others endeavour to decide by the immediate effects of faith in their own consciousness, from the degree of joy and peace and sense of God's favour which they experience. This also is delusive. First, because great joy, and great confidence may arise from a faith which is not saving. Many with joy receive the word who soon show that their faith had no root. Secondly, because even when the

Faith is genuine these conscious effects may vary indefinitely in different persons. Some are ecstatic in their joy; others from their constitutional temperament from their physical condition, from their ignorance of their mistaken views, from mourning or doubting all their days, yet reach heaven, at last. There are only two criteria given in scripture by which this great question can be decided. First saving faith is not a transient emotion or state of the mind. It is permanent. We are saved only on the condition that we hold fast the beginning of our Faith firm unto the end, secondly it works love, purifies the heart and overcomes the world. It makes Christ precious and leads to the consecration of the soul to his service.

DEALING WITH INQUIRERS.

The things above mentioned—conviction of sin, regeneration, repentance, faith—are not stated in the order of occurrence. There may be no order of occurrence so far as consciousness is concerned, when Christ opened the eyes of the blind, the restoration of the power of vision, in the order of nature, preceded the act of seeing; when he raised the dead, the restoration of life preceded vital exercises. But there was no perceptible interval of time between them. Thus as genuine conviction, repentance and faith are the fruits of regeneration, in the order of nature, conviction comes first. But of this the sinner knows nothing. When God revealed himself to Paul. (Gal. 1-10), he was regenerated, he was convinced of sin, he repented, he believed, in the same moment of time.

Here it is that the greatest difficulty is encountered: a difficulty equally embarrassing to the enquirer and the minister. The Bible teaches that the sinner must be born again; but regeneration is the work of God. He is bound to repent and to believe, but repentance and faith are the gifts of God. If a man never has or can truly repent and believe,