

Jesus, and made him the Saviour of the world, believes in the same manner, i. e. rests upon the truth and power of God, and this belief of the promise of eternal life, through a crucified Saviour, is just of the same kind as Abraham's faith—the object only different. And therefore all they of this faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

The distinguishing peculiarity of Abraham's belief was, that contrary to all evidence from the reason and nature of things, he embraced, with undoubting confidence, the promise, obviating all the arguments against his confidence, arising from nature and the common lot of men, by the power and faithfulness of God. Now he that believes that through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God will pardon him, account him righteous, raise him up at the last day, and bestow on him eternal life, believes in the same manner, (though the object be different) as Abraham did. For though in the reason and nature of things there is nothing to warrant such a confidence, yet the divine power and veracity are sufficient to overbalance all doubt and conjecture upon the question—How can this be?

When we talk of believing in the same manner, it is in accordance with common usage. For, in fact, there is but one manner of believing any thing, and that is by receiving the testimony of another as true. Faith never can be more or less than the persuasion of the truth of narrative or of testimony, whether oral or written. The only distinction on this subject, which has any foundation in reason or revelation, is this—that the effect of believing is sometimes called faith, which, in this acceptation, is equivalent to confidence. For example, A. tells me that the ice on the Ohio river is strong enough to sustain my weight on the back of my horse. I believe his testimony, and my faith or confidence is such that I hazard my horse and my person on the ice.—Faith, then, is sometimes used to denote the effect of believing. But still, when the grand question concerning faith comes to be discussed, there can be only one faith, and that is the belief of history, or the belief of testimony oral or written. Any operation of the mind detached from testimony may be called perception, apprehension, memory, imagination, or what you please, but faith it cannot be. Any feeling of the mind may be called hope, love, fear, joy, peace, zeal, anger, or what you please, but faith it cannot be. A man might as reasonably talk of seeing without light, as of believing without testimony.

Now the true faith has, in all ages, been one and the same thing, in kind, if not in degree. The "true faith" has ever been the belief of all the revelation extant at that time. Hence Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, &c. were all justified by believing the communications made to them. So Paul teaches, Hebrews, xi. Noah became heir of the righteousness which came through faith, by believing God's promise concerning the deluge, and Abraham by believing, "So shall your seed be."

System-makers, to form a theory in the crucible of their invention, say, that "all were justified by believing the same thing." But this no man living is able to show. It is true, I contend, that the ground work of salvation by faith was either prospectively, or retrospectively