

God's word is the basis of our faith, and faith is developed and strengthened by the study and application of the word of God. "These things are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God, and that believing ye may have life through His name." All the evidence that supports the written word, may be grouped in two classes—external and internal. The external evidence embraces all of that class of historical and biographical facts which support the written word, as a divine record. The internal comprehends all the circle of our own personal experience the special operations and manifestations of the Holy Ghost and all of the specific answers to definite prayer.

All these phenomena are continual reminders of the Father's care, and are designed to inspire within us increasing reliance upon His promises. Every fulfilled promise, every answer to prayer, every new manifestation of love, is a golden spur in the flank of our lagging faith.

It may be dark about it at times, but it is light within—and we need only to observe the fact of fulfilled promise until the day-star be revealed in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

Faith culminates in knowledge; the fact experienced supersedes the act of trust; the individual sets up in his Ebenezer and maps out his course for the future. As to-day we listen to the victorious shout of the pursuing host treading down the discomfited enemy, we take on new courage and launch into the trackless wastes of the unexplored future.

The outlook of faith was never so bright as it is now; the Philistine hordes of sceptical scientists prying about among the fossiliferous rocks of the earth have not mined the citadel of its power; nor have the marauding Bedouins that inhabit the barren wastes of unbelief, who occasionally come down upon the church for plunder, or once in a while capture some unfortunate minister who has straggled into their camp, intimidated it. There is more faith now in the general truth of the Bible than ever before; more faith in Jesus Christ and the power of His Gospel; more faith in the abundance of the divine provision, in the ability and willingness of Jesus to save to the uttermost in this present life, than ever before.

That Christian mother who for years has followed her wayward and dissolute son, not knowing where his feet have strayed, what haunts of vice he has frequented, and into what iniquities he has fallen, and yet nightly from her closet importunes God in his behalf,

and doubts not that He will yet save her son, has stronger faith than was necessary to save Daniel from the devouring lions. The faithful wife that follows with her prayers her ungodly husband for years—as he wanders amid revelry and crime, and never falters in her belief that God will restore him to her a regenerate and saved man, has more faith than was necessary to save the Hebrew children from the consuming fire. And the widowed mother with her group of semi-orphaned children—left without means, and with an unflinching trust that "He who hears the young ravens when they cry" will receive their prayers, and gathers them about the family altar, and commending them to God, lies down and sleeps sweetly, has more faith than was necessary to support Abraham in his crucial hour.

The faculty to apprehend any fact, and the evidence that supports it, is an essential part of every accountable being. God has revealed to His children the facts of salvation through the redemption of Jesus Christ. He has accompanied His revelation with all the evidence necessary for its support. He has sent the Holy Ghost into the world to "lead us unto all truth," and every answer to prayer, every promise fulfilled, gives force to the testimony and lays increasing obligation on humanity to accept the salvation so freely offered.

Every believer, therefore, should place himself squarely on the evidences, abide in the promises, trust God entirely, accept fully the offices of the Holy Ghost, and expect that God will speedily send a tidal wave of life and power that will thrill the heart of the Church and revolutionize the thought of the world concerning the mission of the Church.

A Christian with strong, clear, unwavering trust in the written promises of a living Christ, will always be in fellowship with God, and will constantly receive divine strength in time of trial, and deliverance from temptation. And amid earth's sorrows, overwhelmed with anguish, in the presence of crumbling hopes and dissolving friendships, in the depths of affliction, out of the caverns of poverty, he can say from a full heart:—

"Although the vine its fruits deny;  
Although the olive yield no oil,—  
The withering fig-tree droop and die,  
The field elude the tiller's toil;  
The empty stall no herd afford,  
And perish all the bleating race—  
Yet I will triumph in the Lord,  
The God of my salvation praise."

—*Friend's Expositor.*