

which imparts *life* and *vigor* to it. This is the meaning of "faith worketh by love." "If ye love me, keep my commandments." "O! how I love thy law, it is my meditation all the day." This is the grand distinction between the devil's faith and the Christian's. Both have intellectual faith—both believe these things to be true. The devil hates and trembles at the truth—the Christian says it is *light, lovely, worthy* of all acceptance.

This, too, is the difference between the believing of man regenerate and man unconverted. Both believe intellectually; but the heart of the one recoils from the things believed, whilst the heart of the other delights in them. *Love* is the grand difference.

"Yes! I love thee and adore,  
O! for grace to love thee more!"

What is the precise difference between the faith of an angel and that of a Christian? Angels go one step with Christians; they believe intellectually. Angels go *two* steps with the Christian; they believe intellectually, and with the *heart* too. With what love and joy did they announce a Saviour's birth? "Into these things" (the affairs of human salvation) the angels desire to look." "There is joy in their presence over one sinner that repenteth." Angels *believe* and *love*. But still there is a step further taken by the Christian, that makes a difference in his faith from that of the angel. What is it? This brings us to the 3rd. Element of faith, expressed by the word *trust*. Angels believe, but do not trust in Christ as *their own* Saviour. The angel is not *lost*, and does not *need*, and does not personally trust in a redeeming Saviour as *his* Redeemer. A man standing safely on the shore may rejoice to see the life-boat launched, and allowed to the rescue of those about to perish in the storm-driven sea; but he feels no need of *personal* deliverance, and does not exercise *personal* reliance. So stand the angels upon the shores of a blessed immortality, and every time a poor sinner is drawn up and placed safely in the ark of salvation, they rejoice, and renew the song, "Worthy is the Lamb!" The angel believes and loves; the Christian, in addition, *trusts*. He personally looks upon himself as lost, and upon Christ as a Saviour.

*Intellectual conviction, love, trust*: these are the three elements of a Christian faith.

This faith is exercised only by the regenerate heart. We cannot believe without *evidence*; nor seemingly without a state of mind favorable to the claims of God upon us. The regenerate man has new intellectual perceptions, imparted by the illuminating Spirit of God; and he is *willing* to be convinced. He believes first that the Bible is the word of God; then that it teaches thus and so, and then he cheerfully trusts God and yields himself to him. The heart once right, and all difficulties vanish. The state of mind—heartfelt opposition to the truths taught is the true and chief cause of infidelity. Men want the Bible to be proven not true, because they dis-

like its teachings. Somebody comes along and says he can prove it untrue, and men eagerly rush to hear him. This makes the skeptic. A man does not like the strictness of the Bible morality and claims; there comes along a man who says he can prove the Bible not true: the unregenerate mind is glad of it, and away he goes to hear the infidel, for he *wishes* that the strictness, purity, and humbling plans of the Bible be not true. But when the heart is changed the affections gather to the cross. It loves the doctrines, and is melted by the facts that cluster there. He is won to love and choose the right; and under the influence of the faith of which the cross is the central object, he walks forward and upward in the life of holiness and usefulness and joy. But depravity is a drawback; it retards the believer's progress. Yet as it is weakened, his faith will grow stronger, and his progress be accelerated, whilst at the same time his increasing faith gives him strength to crucify depravity. Thus he grows in grace—gets stronger and stronger—onward and upward, until yonder see him on his death-bed, as calm as a summer evening. His sanctification is almost complete. His faith by which he walked through life gets him ready for the last conflict. By it he has overcome the world; by it he now conquers death, and claims a victory over the grave.

This faith begins in feebleness, and grows to maturity. It is at once the rule and the impulse of a holy life, and like every other exercise and habit of mind, grows stronger in exertion.

Need I go into a discussion to prove that this faith is that by which the Christian walks? The man who has it could not help but walk by it. His *heart* is in it, his life spontaneously conforms to it. It is in his soul a principle of action; it "worketh by love," purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. Sometimes a small object near at hand seems larger than one of much greater magnitude at a distance. The world is near; heaven is distant. Present joy, even when less in amount, is preferred to that which is future. Now faith is the telescope "which brings eternal glories near." And it brings eternal horrors near, too. Faith brings power from the unseen world to check us up. It brings arguments for the right, both from heaven and hell. Behold that believing soul, ready to wing his way to the brighter world, attended by heavenly guides. Happy soul! assured that he has committed his last sin, felt his last sorrow, and is now ready to ascend! Follow him upward to the world of glory—see his glory, and listen with the ear of faith to his song! No wonder we walk by faith, when it brings all eternity to bear upon the present. We have got the advantage of yonder unconverted man. His eye is fixed on the earth, ours on heaven. His earthly riches are "deceitful riches;" ours are certain. But faith not only assures of final triumph—it makes us wise, gives motives to duty, gives strength, and strength according to our day.