

throughout the New Testament faith is constantly declared to be an essential condition of justification. Yet, a sinner may be in a state of mind that renders an act of justifying faith impossible, as long as he remains in that state. One who is living in the practice and love of sin, without any regret for his past wrong-doing, any purpose to forsake his sins, or any desire for salvation, has no Scriptural warrant for thinking that the simple belief of the fact that Christ has died for sinners will secure his present and eternal salvation. Hence the admonition addressed to different classes of sinners, in the Scriptures, are adapted to their condition. To all who are in the same condition as the Philippian jailer, the same answer is the most appropriate that can be given. But to Simon Magus, who desired spiritual gifts for selfish gratification, Peter said: "Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee." To sensual and impenitent Felix, Paul preached "of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." On the day of Pentecost, to the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." To the young man who asked, "What shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?" Christ answered: "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." Doubtless, because He saw that this was necessary to counteract the love of the world which ruled his heart. For, although a measure of faith in Divine truth is the ground and cause of penitence, in some cases hindrances to faith may exist, which must first be removed before we can believe unto salvation. But to all who have resolved to forsake their evil ways, and who desire to be saved from their guilt and power, faith in Christ Jesus is the one essential condition of justification. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, is this gift attained, but, to those who believe, a present salvation is freely and graciously given, without money and without price. Man was ruined by believing the devil, and doubting God's Word; he can only be saved and restored by believing God: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "He that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God."

But, what is that faith which is the condition of justification? What does a sinner believe when he believes in Christ? From its great simplicity, most attempts to explain faith have only obscured it. It implies the giving up of the false views of God, which are cherished by the unrenewed heart, and the hearty reception of the truths respecting the Divine character, which are revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Wrong views of God promote and strengthen unbelief. You do not trust Him, because you have not yet learned how infinitely worthy of your trust and love He is. A believing apprehension of the Divine goodness will scatter all your guilty fears. How many think only of God as a stern and angry judge, without fatherly sympathy or love. As if what we receive from Him was wrung from Him by

our importunity, and given grudgingly, rather than freely. As if Christ only was merciful, and the eternal Father had no feeling towards us but wrath. But this is all wrong. The Father is as merciful as the Son, and the Son is as just as the Father. It was our Father in heaven that so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. His thoughts towards our fallen and guilty race are thoughts of mercy and peace. His mercy endureth forever.

Justifying faith, then, has its foundation in right thoughts of God, as revealed in Christ. It is not a peculiar virtue, that supersedes the necessity for every other virtue, but a fruitful principle from which other graces grow. A full belief of the holiness and justice of God produces the feeling of conscious guilt and condemnation. A full, confiding trust in the mercy of God in Christ, brings inward peace. This implies the renunciation of every other ground of confidence and hope, and the acceptance of Christ, with the assent of the understanding, and the trust of the heart, as our only Saviour. It is not enough that the mind be enlightened, and assent to right views of Divine truth; this must be followed by the practical trust of the heart in the person of Christ. Saving faith is not merely the assent of the understanding to certain truths about Christ. It is not the acceptance of a theory of the atonement. It is trusting in Christ Himself to receive and save you. Faith in Christ is not something essentially different from confidence in man. You know what it is to trust in the veracity and friendship of an earthly friend, and to act upon this confidence. So faith in Christ is simply trust and confidence in the character and word of Christ—in His faithfulness and love—in His willingness and power to save you, and to save you now, freely and graciously, for His own mercy's sake. It is fully believing that He will do what He has promised, saying humbly, but confidently from the heart,—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,  
Into Thy hands I fall;  
Be Thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Saviour and my all."

A JOINT meeting of the officials of the London South Canada Methodist and Bible Christian Churches was held in the Bible Christian Church for the purpose of deciding on the plan of operation when the Union Basis comes into effect. The best of harmony characterized the meeting. After considerable discussion and a full explanation of the proposed union, it was decided that the Bible Christian congregation should amalgamate with the Canada Methodists and meet in the Methodist Church on Askin street. This is, we believe, the only congregation which raised objections to entering the union. The few isolated individuals who have done so since the General Conference we hope will see their folly, and will loyally fall into line with the overwhelming majority of all the churches concerned.

The Scripture assures us that "Our fellowship is with the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ." "Your life is hid with Christ in God." "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." Such words mean something unutterably great.

### The Wife's New Story.

THE story, ma'am! Why, really now, I haven't much to say: If you had come a year ago, and then again to-day, No need of any word to tell, for your own eyes could see, Just what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

A year ago I hadn't flour to make a batch of bread, And many a night these little ones went 'hungry to their bed; Just peep into the pantry, ma'am; there's sugar, flour and tea;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

The pail that holds the butter he used to fill with beer; He hasn't spent a cent for drink for two months and a year; He pays his debts, he's well and strong, and kind as man can be; That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

He used to sneak along the streets, feeling so mean and low, And always felt ashamed to meet the folks he used to know; He looks the world now in the face, he steps on bold and free;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

Why, at the shop, the other day, when a job of work was done, The boss declared, of all his men the steadiest one was John "I used to be the worst, my wife," John told me, and says he— "That's what the friends of Temperance have done for you and me."

The children were afraid of him, his coming stopped their play; Now, every night, when supper's done, and the table cleared away, The boys will frolic round his chair, the baby climb his knee;— That's what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

Oh, yes! the sad, sad times are gone, the sorrow and the pain; The children have their father back, and I my John again. Don't mind my crying, ma'am, indeed it's just for joy, to see All that the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

And mornings when he's gone to work, I kneel right down and say, "Father in heaven, oh, help dear John to keep his pledge to-day!" And every night, before I sleep, thank God on bended knee, For what the friends of Temperance have done for John and me.

THE entire civilized world is at this moment intently watching the progress of one unprotected man on his way across a desert to meet and defeat 50,000 insatiated barbarians, and carrying with him something like a million dollars. If there is anything in history to match this for moral courage on one side and fatuous recklessness on the other we have not come across it. This is "Chinese" Gordon, the British officer now on his way to the Soudan.

YOUNG men should pattern after pianos—be square, upright, grand.

CERTAIN insects assume the colour of the leaves they feed upon; and they are but emblems of a great law of our being—our minds take the hue of the subjects whereon they think. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." Readers of trash become trashy; lovers of skeptical books become skeptical; and students of the Bible, who are in real earnest, become Biblical, and display the qualities of the Bible. If you read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the word of God, the qualities of that word will be displayed in you. —C. H. Spurgeon.

### Puzzledom.

Answers to Puzzles in Last Number.

78.—1. Nightingale. 2. Vampire. 3. Penitent.

79.—1. Spark, park, ark. 2. Bare, are, re. 3. Charm, harm, arm.

### NEW PUZZLES.

#### 80.—CHARADES.

1, 2, 4, a kind of bread; 2, 3, 4, to go fast; 5, 2, 4, give us heat. My whole a poet.

1, 5, 4, a tool; 11, 12, 13, a building; 2, 3, 9, 2, 7, 5, 14, 8, to tease; 10, 8, 6, 6, to vend. My whole a poet.

#### 81.—DECAPITATIONS.

1. An article of furniture; a part of the body; the atmosphere.

2. A country; and to hurt, 3. A girl's name; a boy's name; a girl's nickname.

#### 82.—HOUR-GLASS.

An advocate; deception; swift; prompt; a consonant; by implication; an evergreen tree; to hire; ravenous; an ancient contrivance for measuring time.

#### 83.—DIAMOND.

A consonant; a colour; a Western State; a period of time; a letter.

### Ministers' Wives.

THERE is no use in pretending that it is not a cross for a woman of taste and culture to wander about the world, living in any whimsical house, a sort of infirmary for crippled and mismatched furniture; wrenched loose every two or three years from the good people whom she loves for their thousand kindnesses; obliged to rear children without the sweet, refining order and quietness that seem so essential to healthy growth, and that it occasions a miracle to find anywhere but in a permanent home. The woman who does not feel this a cross is hardly fit for the service. These women have to make model Christian homes under great disabilities; yet many a one succeeds nobly in the difficultly undertaking. I remember going to a gloomy old shell of a parsonage where everything was disorderly, dingy and cheerless. I was there again the next year, and I found that a pair of deft, tidy hands had wrought miracles of comfort. Whether it was the bright rag carpet, the eight-cent paper on the walls, the white ten-cent muslin looped back from the windows with old bits of bright neckties, or the pots of wide-awake geraniums—something gave it an air of cheer and refinement that is often missed in brownstone fronts. It was a place where the young people of the church could be taught many a good lesson without words.

THE view that the recent wonderful sunrise and sunset phenomena have really been due to the terrible eruption of Krakatoa in August last has been confirmed in the most definite manner. Material brought down by rain in Holland and snow in Spain has on microscopic examination proved to be identical with actual products of the eruption brought from Krakatoa in the ordinary manner.