

ed, along with which alone it is of any avail, or for any saving or practical purpose. When the two are combined, when we believe with the heart, then we believe savingly, then our faith will be accompanied by works, then we shall be able to shew our faith by our works, and we shall obtain peace in the very act of believing: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God." This is the faith, through which, as a means or instrument, we are saved: "By grace are ye saved through faith." It is but an instrument: it has been called a condition. But it is a condition in the same sense that, to lay hold of, or employ, in any circumstances of emergency, or danger, the means provided for our safety, is a condition of our safety in that emergency. It is nothing more than trusting to that gracious helper who has undertaken our cause, and is able to carry it successfully over every opposing influence or difficulty: it is committing our cause to him, knowing that he is able to maintain it against every adversary. It is a condition as it is a condition, that the helpless mendicant believe that there is provision for him in a neighbour's house, if he will go for it; that the sick man believe there is skill with a certain physician, if he will apply to him, of virtue in a certain medicine, if he will use it; or that the prisoner believe that his prison doors are open and he may go free. It is the manslayer betaking himself to a city of refuge: it is the stung Israelite lifting his eye to the serpent on the pole.

If such' then be faith, you can easily perceive that it is "not of ourselves, but is the gift of God." This statement is equivalent to the view presented in other passages of sacred writ. After Peter's memorable confession, and that confession, you will observe, amounted to nothing more than this—"thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—Christ says to him: "Blessed art thou Simon, Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven". It will be admitted it is by faith that we come to Christ; and yet Christ says—"No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me, draw him". "It is written in the Prophets—and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me". And that, coming to Christ is just believing in him; appears from the words of Christ which follow those just quoted: "But there are some

of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given to him of my Father". Unto you, *it is given*," says the apostle in the Epistle to the Philippians, "in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but to suffer for his sake." In the very chapter in which the words prefixed to these remarks occur, the apostle says: "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works," and the initial part, the commencement of that work, is faith. Faith is the foundation of that building which is to be reared to the eternal glory and praise of God: it is the first stroke in the production of that image which is to be renewed in the soul, in knowledge and righteousness and true holiness. In the preceding chapter, accordingly, the apostle speaks of "the exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power". It is the *work*, or *workmanship*, of God, because even faith, which is the first part of that work, is not believing in the ordinary sense of the term, but *believing unto salvation*.

The apostle thus takes away the last remnant of apology for boasting in the matter of salvation; for not only is the way of salvation of the free grace of God, but the very faith by which we lay hold of the salvation which has been provided, the very act of the mind by which we embrace or appropriate the salvation of Christ, is the gift, or of the operation, of God. "Where is boasting? It is excluded. By what law? Of works?—Nay, but by the law of *faith*" From first to last, the work is of God. The salvation is provided by God, and the very *disposition* which embraces the salvation is the gift of God. "We are his workmanship". Our state by nature is such, sin has so affected us, that we are insensible of our very danger, unconscious of our very guilt, or of what that really amounts to; and we can never therefore apply to Christ as a Saviour, till God works in us faith, till the spirit convinces of sin, and "persuades and enables us to embrace Christ, as he is freely offered to us in the gospel". We must beware of being deceived by a faith which is merely of our own exercise. We can no more believe of ourselves, than we can exercise any part of the divine life; and that, we know, is in whole as