

always been told to believe, and that you find it difficult. I will not blame you. Sometimes faith preached to young Christians, with no exemplification or simplifying of the act, is as inappropriate as to set a bushel of wheat before a half-starved suckling babe with the invitation to eat. You cannot believe without an object of faith. He stands forth before you in the Gospels, Jesus the Son of God. In this sense faith is the gift of God. You cannot believe without grounds, or evidences. They are found in the Gospels, in the miracles, and sinless character of Jesus Christ, and in the effects of his Gospel in human hearts and lives, and in its beneficent influence on the nations which have received its blessed light. The evidences of Christianity are the gift of God to you. But to receive their convincing effect you must study them constantly with a candid mind, willing to follow wherever the truth leads. If you would have faith in Christ, become familiar with His character and His teachings. It may be that we have four Gospels in order that the Son of God, in the perfection of his manhood, and the splendour of his Godhead, may pass four times before your eyes. As he who would be a perfect orator or poet is exhorted by Horace "to handle the Grecian models with a daily and a nightly hand," so must the believer, who aspires to be a perfect Christian, sit before the great Exemplar by day and by night. An enduring faith is largely grounded in the intellectual grasp of the truth. There is a sense in which we must know in order to believe. A man's character must be favourably known to the banker, before he will entrust him with his money. The more we know of Jesus, by the study of his fourfold biography, the deeper and broader the foundation for our faith in His promises. It also greatly assists our faith to know what marvellous effects have followed it in the history of the Church, especially in the opening chapter,—the Acts of the Apostles. Trace again and again the triumphant march of our holy faith from Jerusalem, conquering the inveterate prejudices of Jew and Gentile, as narrated by St. Luke in the Acts. You will find that faith is contagious. Association with some capacious soul who embraces the amplitude of the promises and holds fast to them with an unrelaxing grasp helps the feeble sinews of spiritual infancy to grow strong. St. Paul is such a soul. He is a spiritual giant. He is accessible to you all. His enthusiastic ardour, his invincible faith, which neither stripes nor prisons, plotting Jews nor riotous Gentiles could shake, will be a tonic to your spiritual weakness. Lock arms with him, and walk through his epistles till you catch his gait and measure up to his Titanic strides, as he boldly approaches the throne of grace in the name of the everliving High Priest. "What part of the Bible do you read the most?" said a Scotch minister to an old woman of remarkable faith in God. "The glorious epistles," was the quick reply. On this strong meat all the giants of the Church have fed. You will find St. Paul's later epistles especially adapted to enlarge your view of your privilege under the dispensation of the Spirit. It is very evident that the great apostle grew in grace mightily between the day when the scales fell from his eyes in Damascus and the day when he penned the epistle to the Ephesians. But do not rest satisfied with an intimate acquaintance with the Scriptures.

3. While making this acquaintance with the grounds of faith, endeavour to appropriate to yourself every promise of spiritual grace. St. Paul made the promises and atoning blood of Christ his own private property. Here was the secret of his Herculean strength of faith. "The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of (in) the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." He did not exclude others, but he was sure to include himself, and to insist not on a fraction of Christ, but a whole Christ to be as completely appropriated to himself as if he were the solitary son of Adam for whom atonement had been made. Rutherford, whose name is precious to all