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A SUNDAY SERMON BY PASTOR RUSSELL

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Many Losing Faith In the Bible as the Word of God-Cause of This Great "Falling Away" - The Light of To-day In Conflict With the Darkness of the Past-Difference Between Faith and Credulity-Basis of Confidence In the Bible—Proofs of Its Inspiration -Proofs That It Is Not Man-Made—A Firm Foundation For Full Assurance



Photo-Drama of Creation, which is being exhibited United States, is awakening 'new interest in the Bible. Many who Photo - Drama have expressed their satisfaction with its beautiful presentation the prominent

features of Scrip-ture and with its clear explanation of some points which long have puz-zled critical people. Whoever sees it thereby obtains a grasp upon the Bible as a whole The public are certainly grateful to Pastor Russell. through whose instrumentality this wonderful work of art is being exhibited free.

To-day the Pastor's text was, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needethnot to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth."—Timothy 2:15.

We are all saddy aware that not many of the people of God have the nany of the people of God have the ull assurance of faith mentioned in the Scriptures, the speaker said. Ineed, we must all admit that the great majority are losing, not only their faith, but also the foundation of faith. For years the great colleges of Christendom have been undermining faith by undermining be-lief in the Bible. While they do not make an attack upon faith itself, while they all admit that faith may have its place as a grand quality of character, and that the Scriptures instruct for faith, yet they proceed to do the very same kind of work that Robert Ingersoll and Thomas Paine tried to accomplish—to undermine confidence in the Bible as the Word of God. That confidence is the very

basis of all faith.

After we have lost our confidence, what have we left for a foundation of belief? We have merely what is called Higher Criticism and Evolution; and this means that after a little process of reasoning along these lines many would conclude that the Bible is merely a collection of choice pieces of ancient Jewish literature, written by men who really knew less than do we.

The Pastor then demonstrated that those who reject the Bible as the Word of God have no other foundaThen the speaker considered some Word of God have no other foundaion for whatever faith they may possess than the guess of this or that man, or of themselves. He ointed out the well-known fact that all men are more or less imperfect in judgment; and that if men were to picture God there would be as many different styles of God as there

are different persons.

The speaker illustrated his point by calling attention to the numer-ous creeds formulated during the Dark Ages and to the different kinds of Gods those different creeds have pictured. The noblest minds f that time were deceived into worshiping the worst kind of images that could be made. He declared that while the heathen nations were making their ugly idols out of wood one, clay or metal, the nations of Christendom were printing atrocious descriptions of God the like of which could not be moulded out of clay or ashioned out of anything else. He was not finding fault with our foreathers, but with the real instigator of the creedal misrepresentations of the Almighty. As St. Paul declares, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

Then the Pastor showed that the eyes of many Christians are not wide open for the same reason that St. Paul gave the Corinthian Church. The god of this world has fastened The god of this world has fastened | ly the den the bandages so tightly that it is | the Bible. with difficulty that any get the eyes of their understanding open. Again, St. Paul foretells that in the end of this Age "many shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons." The Pastor declared that we have come to the time when many have denied the faith and others are denying it—good people, intelligent peo-ple, ministers of the Gospel in the ing that they have lost the basis of

We are not to suppose for even a We are not to suppose for even a moment that these people who are falling away from the faith are wicked. On the contrary, they are well-intentioned—many of them fine is sure to love Him. Mankind are to people. But they have gotten under a delusion. In the light of the New Notwithstanding the six the Dispensation the delusions of the past are coming up constantly for criticism. Indeed, so great is the onflict between the light of the Gospel and the darkness of the creeds that people "see stars," so to speak, and are so astonished that they do not know what to think.

the difference between true faith and that which is often misnamed "Where has God declared such things?" He maintains that we should accept by faith only what the Lord has assured us of in His Word. We have made a great mistake as to forget the devilish part. The sentation. To believe in the Bible as the Word of God merely because our parents did so is not faith at all; heathen peoples do just as well as June 7.-The that-they believe as their parents did, without investigation. But to have faith in the Bible we must have proof that it is of God; and to have that evidence we must understand

the Word. The Pastor holds that most people arc so perplexed that they do not know what to believe. And yet, he declared, at this very time when Higher Criticism is undermining the foundation of all faith, and when many intelligent people are afraid to think along Scriptural lines, Bible students are finding the Word of God to be the most wonderful Book in all the world. God's Plan for human salvation was never so well under-stood as just now, in the midst of all the turmoil in the denominations in he great institutions of learning and

in the world. The Pastor then discussed some of the so-called findings of Higher Criticism—that Moses did not write the Pentateuch, nor Isaiah the greater part of the prophecy which bears his name, etc. These critics, he declared, are trying to prove something by the outside of the Bible. Their so-called findings he believes to be a matter of mere guesswork, although, as some of them are very bright men, they put up a strong argument in some things. They will undertake to prove that Jesus was mistaken when He declared that Isaiah the Prophet said thus and so; that St. Paul was also mistaken when he quoted from the Prophet Isaiah and said, Thus saith the Prophet Isaiah; that Daniel did not write the book which bears his name—or if he did, that it was fulfilled before the Christian era, notwithstanding Jesus' assertion to the contrary. The Pastor, like all reasonable

Christian people, relies upon the in-ternal evidence of the Bible that it is the Word of God. That internal evidence cannot be doubted. The evidence cannot be doubted. The Old Testament prophecies and the teachings of the Lord and the Apos-tles so interlock and depend one upon the other that no human being could possibly have thought out the great Plan therein found. All the way from Genesis to Revelation the parts so co-ordinate and fit together that one great harmonious Plan of the Ages is the result. Another

ly brought forward by infidels. He showed that it is a weak argument indeed which credits priests and knaves with writing the Sacred Book. If Catholics had made the Bible, they would naturally have put into it many things which are not there; for instance, they would have told about the Mass, about Purgatory, hell-fire and eternal torment, of which there is nothing said; they would also have intimated that we should use beads and images in worship; they would have had something about the immaculate conception of the Virgin, and about St. Peter's being the first

pope, etc. If on the other hand, Presbyterians had written the Bible, they would have put in a great deal about Hell, about elect and non-elect infants, etc. Methodists would have left out all about Election-making are not to suffer as evil-doers. They one's calling and election sure, the Very Elect, etc.—for they do not know what to do with these texts. Our Calvinistic friends would have left out the texts about free grace; a Christian." The speaker reminded for these do not fit with their ideas his hearers that Jesus Himself was of election. All these denominations would have inserted something in regard to "the trinity"; for they all hold that this doctrine is the very essence of faith, although it is not mentioned even once in the Bible! The Pastor's conclusion is that clearthe denominations did not make

From its own standpoint, the speaker continued, the Bible is very simple and fully explains itself. He did not wish to be misunderstood as "poking fun" at the denominations; for he realizes that these dear people mean well, and he loves all who love the Lord. But he believes that the whole world is greatly injurerd by the false conceptions of God's character handed down from the Dark various pulpits, professors, theologians, college presidents—confessing after sin to-day who would, if they had a right knowledge of God, be following after righteousness. Many men have been led to drinking

Notwithstanding the six thousand years of falling, there is in every man's brain, unless he be an idiot. the quality of reverence, which impels him to desire to worship his Creator. But, according to St. Paul's argument in his letter to the Romans, although man was created per fect, there came a time in the his-Next the Pastor demonstrated that tory of the fallen race when men

the great difficulty with people who are losing their confidence in the Bible as the Word of God is that they are not familiar with its contents. Many are still holding to the Scriptures in a blind way, hoping against Then it was that the "doctrines of hope that they may not lose their faith. They are afraid to read and afraid to think, lest they lose the very small amount of faith which they possess. If only such knew it, the minds of those who believe not they never really have had a well —blinds them by these various false established faith.

—blinds them by these various false established faith. The Pastor proceeded to point out believed.

The Pastor then gave the two views of the Almighty which once faith, but which in reality is credul-ity. The faith commended in the Christians. One side of our minds, Scriptures is that which relates to as it were, pictured God as the great things which God has promised. Our forefathers, he declared, had too much confidence in men. They swallowed the creeds of the Dark Ages; and the more absurd the pro- imagined Him as kind, loving and position, the more faith they thought they had. They should have asked, to balance these two sides. Fortunmericiful. But we did not know how to what faith really is, he thinks. whole world has been more or less Faith must have a basis, and that basis must have some intelligent pre-

we are in the time when the path of the just is shining more and more unto the perfect Day. That Day is now so near that we can almost see its dawn. In a little while the Church of Christ will have been fully gathered—out of every people, nation kindred and tongue, out of all de nominations. The Pastor then explained how the

consecrated people of God may have full assurance of faith. In His Word God tells us that by nature we were children of wrath even as others; that Christ tasted death for the whole world, and that by and by He will give human life, restitution life, to all who will receive it; but that meantime the call is for those who will separate themselves from the world and be "a peculiar people, zealous of good works"—of every-thing that is God's will—and ready to lay down their lives in doing that will. Those who know that such is the teaching of Scripture have a good basis for faith. Those who have taken the steps of repentance of sin, of trusting in the Redeemer for sal-God, now have by faith all those graces of character reckoned to them which the world will actually receive during the thousand years of the Reign of Christ. To the conse-crated the Father has fulfilled His promise by giving them a measure of His Holy Spirit.

Lest any should misapprehend his

meaning, the Pastor explained that the Holy Spirit is not now manifestwas manifested in a miraculous way tongues, miracles of healing, etc., attesting that those who received these gifts were acceptable to God as members of His Church and had been begotten of the Holy Spirit. But after the Church had been established. there was no further need of such manifestations. Thoughout the re-mainder of the Gospel Age the Holy Spirit has manifested itself only by the fruits of righteousness-meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness—love. When the miraculous gifts ceased, these fruits and graces of the Spirit continued.

The Pastor concluded with an exhortation that the people of God see and in knowledge, becoming more and more like the Lord Jesus in home justified. to it that they daily grow in grace strong proof of the inspiration of the Bible is furnished in present-day conditions, which were foretold by the Prophets thousands of years ago.

The Prophets thousands of years ago. character. Our Lord said that every I like the definition of justification tree is known by its fruits. Are we which I learned in Sunday school when Household of Faith? Are we coming more and more into sympathy with the poor world in its fallen condi- unto us and received by faith alone." Book and in the true God, but that we are the children of God and heirs

> world and in the Church results from busyboding. But the people of God may be misrepresented as evil-doers, but such suffering is not for evil-doing, even if they be so blamed. But "if any man suffer, let him suffer as if you suffer let it be for something right that you have done, in harmony with your covenant with God, in harmony with God's Word and will. Those who suffer as Christians (Ruth ii, 15, 16). should rejoice therein; for the Spirit of God and of glory rests on all such, and they may have full assurance of faith.

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ur department

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Reached Too Far. "Yes," said the bankrupt, "I lost my fortune reaching for an ideal." "Very interesting. And what was

Lesson XI.—Second Quarter, For June 14, 1914.

THE INTERNATIONAL SERIES.

Text of the Lesson, Luke xviii, 9-14; xix, 1-10-Memory Verses, 19, 10-Golden Text, Mark ii, 17-Commentary Prepared by Rev. D. M. Stearns.

Perhaps there are no people more difficult to deal with or to live with than those who, like the Pharisees pride themselves upon their own rightousness, which in the sight of God is only as fithy rags (Isa. lxiv, 6) and can in no case entitle one to enter the kingdom (Matt. v, 20). The righteousness which is required by God must be absolutely perfect, an unbroken law, for "whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point he is guilty of all" (Jas. ii, 10). The law is so holy and righteous that no sinful man can keep it, and it was never intended to give life, but to prove our guilt, shut our mouths and lead us to Christ, who is God's perfect righteousness and the end of the law for righteensness to every one that believeth.

There is no Saviour or salvation for a righteous man in the Bible-that is, for such as think themselves righteous -but only for sinners.

In connection with the murmuring of the Pharisees when our Lord called Matthew or Levi, the publican, and Levi made Him a feast in his own house, at which a great company of publicans and others were present, our Lord said: "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Luke v, 31, 32). On another occasion He said to the chief priests and elders, "Verily I say unto you that the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matt. xxi. 23, 31). To this vation, of consecrating themselves to day there are churchgoers and church members who, "being ignorant of God's righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness. have not submitted themselves unto It is indeed a fearful thing to be sat-

isfied with oneself and have no conviction of sin. In the first part of our lesson today the Pharisee did not pray to God, did not ask God for anything, did ed in the same way that it was in the early Church. At that time it with himself and told God what a good man he was and how much good he did and how thankful he was that he was not a bad man nor even like that publican. Truly he was well satisfied with his righteous self. The publican had no goodness to prove his righteousness, nothing good to say of himself, but he did have a consciousness of his own sinfulness, and from his heart he said, "God be merciful to me, sinner." In the margin of the revised version it is, "God be propitiated to me, the sinner." Weymouth has it, "O God, be reconciled to me, sinner that I am." The Lord Jesus Christ who reads all hearts, the only Saviour of sinners, the only Judge of all men.

with God and with our Lord Jesus? Are we getting into deeper and broader sympathy with all of the pardoneth all our sins and accepteth GRAND TRUNK SYSTEM us as righteous in His sight only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed tion, and with every good effort to help them up out of such condition? If so, then we have evidence not only to see Jesus, and, though he did not that we have believed in the right seem to have the same conviction of sin as the poor publican, he, too, was -joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our | welcomed and saved. He was a prominent man, chief among the publicans We shall be tested as to our will. He was not prominent as to his physingness to suffer with our Lord. ical appearance, for he was little of This does not mean suffering for stature. He was not what one might wrong-doing; for St. Peter reminds call dignified, for he ran and climbed wrong-doing; for St. Peter reminds us that a Christian who suffers as a busybody in other men's affairs is not suffering for Christ's sake. Perhaps one-half of the suffering in the have been to see Jesus look up and to hear Him call him by name and to hear Him say, "Make haste and come down, for today I must abide at thy

house" (verse 5). Was this something exceeding abundantly above all that Zaccheus hadever thought to come his way, or was accused of being an evil-doer, a blasphemer, an injurious person; and so were the Apostles—all their persecutions were on that score. But what the Apostle Peter says is that if you suffer let it be for something pose" which the Lord drops for those who seek Him and for those who seek to serve Him are truly wonderful We do not wonder that Zaccheus

made haste and came down and received Him joyfully (verse 6). Any one but a Pharisee would if he only understood what it meant. According Time Saved.

Politician—My boy wants a job in child of God and according to I John il, 12, had there and then the forgive-Government Official—What can be ness of his sins-freely justified, as was the other publican. There is only one salvation and one way of salvation for rich or poor. It was foreshadowed in the atonement money of Israel, con cerning which it was commanded. "The rich shall not give more and the oor shall not give less than half shekel" (Ex. xxx, 11-15). That which Zaccheus said he did in verse 8 was part of the evidence that he had beome a child of God, for, while no works of ours can obtain or help to obtain salvation, the good works must follow as a result (Eph. ii. 10: Tit. iii, 8). Weymouth translates: "Here and now I give. * * * I pledge myself to repay to him four times the amount."

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