

should not perish, but have everlasting life." And who shall pervert this truth? Who shall make the grace of God of none effect? Will it do to mix up with that grace any particle of human merit? It were the grossest contradiction: it were uniting two things that are incompatible. It were saying and unsaying the same thing at one and the same time. But even if it were not, even if these two things were compatible, where is that human merit to be found? Shall we meet with it in the world? Could we seek for it in ourselves? Could we seek for it in the most perfect of our species? We ask you to make the search. Look inward. Look abroad. Where is the perfect man? Where is the just man that doeth good and sinneth not? No! it is by grace we are saved! The whole world is guilty before God: there is none righteous, no not one! And this is the uniform testimony of the scripture: "being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ": "therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace": "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy": "who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose of grace": "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of Eternal life". "By grace are ye saved."

We come to the consideration of the means or instrument, of salvation. "By grace are ye saved *through faith*".

Faith is better known than it can be described. It may be said to be that act of the mind by which we lay hold of, or appropriate, the blessings of salvation:—But this is too vague. In its strictest meaning it is merely belief in an object or testimony. As the word is used in Scripture, however, it is not merely belief in an object or testimony, but belief in that object or testimony *for a purpose*. It does not mean merely belief in the fact that Christ died as a propitiation for sin, but belief in that fact *in order to our salvation*. In other words, it is belief in this, accompanied with such a state of the heart, such a sense of our own guilt, and consequent need of a Saviour; that our belief lays hold of Christ, or appropriates him *for the purposes of salvation*. It were nothing to believe that Christ died as a

propitiation for sinners, unless we knew or felt ourselves to be sinners, and were under this conviction brought to Christ as the Saviour provided in the gospel.—The efficacy of faith in this truth depends upon its being exercised when it not merely believes the fact, but believes it for salvation. And this is the distinction, a distinction often drawn, between historical and saving faith, between faith and merely speculative belief. It has been said, that there is no difference between these: that there can be but one kind of faith; and much idle declamation has been employed against the distinction referred to. But the distinction is an important one. *The belief, the act of the mind, in both cases may be the same; but in "faith," that which Scripture speaks of under this name, there is not only the act of the mind, but a state of the heart. Faith is the compound of these two: it is the resultant, if we may so speak, of these two: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness": "if thou confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved": "if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest be baptised": Faith is believing with the heart: it is believing in order to a purpose: it is believing for salvation.—We may believe the truth that Christ died for sinners, as certainly as we believe any thing else; but until we believe this in order to our own salvation; and we cannot do so unless there is first a conviction of sin, a sight of our own lost state by nature; until we thus believe, there is no saving faith. Saving faith is just faith in order to salvation. If it be said that this is just belief after all, belief in an ascertained truth, belief in a Saviour, we grant it; but that truth is not ascertained, is not appreciated, in other words, Christ is not apprehended as a Saviour, until there be first a conviction of sin, an apprehension of merited punishment, from which it is that Christ saveth. There may be the consciousness of guilt which is inseparable from sin, and which is common to every sinner, and, along with this, the belief of the fact, that the Son of God came into our world, and actually suffered and died for sinners; but as the former is not a true or saving conviction of sin, so the latter is not a true or saving faith in Christ. A distinction is accordingly drawn by the apostle James between two kinds of faith, and the ground of that distinction just lies in the fact that there may be a faith without that state of the heart to which we have advert-*