

by the simple exercise of faith in Christ crucified. Whatever may be the depth of man's penitential sorrow, the correctness of his moral conduct, the intensity of his desire to please and enjoy God, or the earnestness and importunity of his prayers, he is not accepted and regenerated till he believes in Christ. It is only when he trusts in Christ that forgiveness is sealed upon his conscience, and the sin that dwelleth in him ceases to have the dominion. There is an inseparable connexion between these blessings. No man can receive one without the other. Yet in the order of nature justification is first vouchsafed. It is indeed absurd to suppose that the Holy Ghost will so renew us in the spirit of our minds as to make us partakers of the divine nature, while we remain under the curse of God's violated law. But when we are "accepted in the Beloved," there is no "charge" against us; we are as fully justified as if we had never committed a single sin, and had actually fulfilled all righteousness; and hence there is nothing to hinder the communication of the Holy Spirit in all his plenitude of regenerating power. This salvation is matter of personal consciousness. There is the Spirit of adoption in the believing heart, crying, "Abba, Father;" and permanently happy are the men whom the Son thus makes free by an application of his blood, and the mighty working of the Holy Ghost.

Little did Mr. Wesley and the few devout people who met with him a hundred years ago in a private house in Aldersgate-street, imagine what important results would arise from the events of that evening. From that hour he was a new man. He found what he had long desired, a conscience calm and tranquil; and a heart purified from sin. Up to that period he had wearied himself in ineffectual struggles to gain the mastery over the evils of his own nature. His sincerity and his outward conduct were indeed unimpeachable; for the gratuitous insinuation, that he was guilty of some immoral act in Georgia, which has been recently advanced by a biographer of his friend Mr. Whitefield, I will venture to affirm was never previously heard of; yet he painfully feared that he was not inwardly holy: he was not prepared to die. But now the prevailing disposition of his heart was that of heavenly love, connected with the peace of God which passeth all understanding. Long had he accustomed himself to fasting and prayer; he had carefully studied all the arguments in favour of natural and revealed religion; he had collected the finest devotional compositions, both in prose and verse, and repeated them upon his knees with great seriousness and sincerity; yet after all he felt himself to be the slave of unbelief, of the fear which hath torment, and of various inward evils. "But now" says he, "I always conquered." He had reproved sin, and warned the wicked, from a sense of duty; but now he loved the souls of men with a yearning pity, like that of his Saviour. It was his intention to bury himself for life in the retirement of his college; but now his heart expanded in universal charity. He saw that there was something in Christianity which meets the wants of the world; this substantial good he longed to make known; and he soon began to offer this salvation, in all its magni-

tude and freeness, to condemned felons, to sinners of every grade; and many "rejoiced for the consolation."

At first he was weak in faith; but he was greatly strengthened and encouraged by a visit to Hornbush, and his conversation there with several intelligent members of the Moravian Church, "who were in Christ before him." He was happily compelled by the force of circumstances to violate that canonical order which was a direct infringement upon the liberty wherewith Christ had made his people free, by preaching this salvation in the open air, in private houses, in barns, in town-halls, and other unconsecrated places, sanctioned by the example of the Lord and the Apostles. In the same manner he was led to accept the assistance of Preachers on whose heads Episcopal hands had never been laid. To make this salvation known to the widest possible extent was the one business of his subsequent life. His ministry, his authorship, his disciplinary arrangements, had all reference to this one great end. In recommending this salvation he patiently endured opposition and discouragements of unexampled severity; for he felt that the object which he had in view immensely outweighed every personal consideration; and when laid upon the bed of death, the Lord whose mercy he had known and preached for more than fifty years was still "all his salvation, and all his desire."

How many persons have been saved by his instrumentality, directly, and indirectly, within the last century, the day of the Lord will declare. None will deny that his labours have exerted a powerful influence both upon the established Church and the different bodies of Dissenters. In the present day more than a million of people, scattered over the four quarters of the globe, have adopted the discipline which he recommended to guard and foster the work of God; and perhaps five times that number attend the ministry which he was a means of providing. "Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" To what extent the labours of this great man will be a means of good in future ages, the divine mind only can foresee. But whatever that good may be, the elements of it all are to be traced to the change which took place in his heart in the little meeting in Aldersgate-street. Had he not found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, he would never have been an itinerant and a field Preacher; nor would he ever have been the means of effecting that revival of religion; the fruits of which are visible in the length and breadth of the land among all denominations of Christians, and in some of the remotest nations of the earth. Nothing but the love of Christ, shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him, could have prompted him to undertake the gigantic labours in which his life was spent; nor have enabled him to bear up under the violence and mockery of mobs, and the bitter contumely that was heaped upon him from the press.

That the Methodist body tenaciously adhere to their original doctrine of free, present, and conscious salvation from sin by faith in the Lord Jesus, is matter of sincere congratulation. Upon the faithful preaching of this doctrine the Lord of the harvest at present

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