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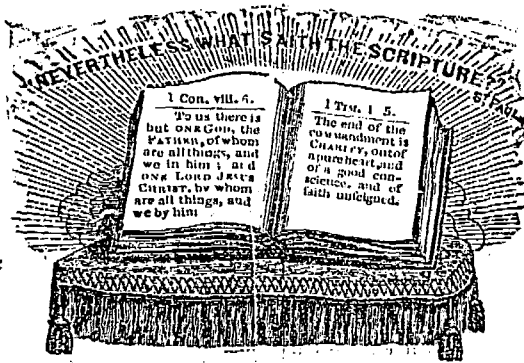
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THE BIBLE



CHRISTIAN.

TRUTH, HOLINESS,

LIBERTY, LOVE.

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No. 1.

CHRISTIANITY A UNIVERSAL RELIGION.

BY A. P. PEABODY.

Several reasons might be adduced which go to prove that Christianity is designed and adapted to become a Universal Religion. Among others is its adaption to all the varieties of external situation in which man can be placed.

The fanciful systems of Greek and Roman mythology could be embraced only by a nation of painters, sculptors, and architects. The loathsome objects of Egyptian reverence none but a resident of Egypt could worship. The Hindoo must live near enough to the Ganges to wash in its purifying stream, or he lives and dies in his sins. The worshipper of the god who requires the slaughter of flocks and herds can live only in a pastoral region; nor could a tribe of Nomades embrace a religion which demands the presentation of first-fruits or frequent libations of wine and oil. The Jewish religion commanded all its professors to appear at the temple in Jerusalem three times a year, and to maintain perpetually the daily, weekly, and annual sacrifices; and now that Jerusalem is deserted, that the temple is level with the ground, that the daily oblation has ceased, there is not a man living who, as to religion, has a right to call himself a Jew. Nor have the votaries of these several systems ever professed to regard them as of universal design or adaptation. They have not even attributed anything like a universal supremacy to their gods. The Egyptian would not have ascribed a civil war in Italy to his pet crocodile, nor would the Roman have supposed Jupiter much concerned in a change of dynasty on the throne of the Ptolemies. The Hindoo owns Juggernaut as his country's and his own god; but thinks that a more powerful deity, even his tutelary divinity, gave to the Englishman his Indian conquests. It is doubtful whether even the ancient Jews believed their God Jehovah the only God, or whether they did not rather regard him as the greatest of gods.

But Christ revealed a God who protects and governs, not this or that nation, but all men,—a God of impartial, universal benevolence,—a God, who is everywhere present, and to whom acceptable worship may rise from every portion of the world. The simple rites which the gospel enjoins demand no peculiar soil or climate or state of society. Wherever there is a well, fountain, or river, there may the infant or the convert be initiated into the church of Christ. Wherever fellow-disciples can meet for a social repast, there may the Saviour's dying love be commemorated. Christianity enjoins no expensive or burdensome offering. The sympathizing heart, and, where it can be extended, the liberal hand, are its only acceptable oblations. It demands no pilgrimages, no pompous assemblies or solitary fasts. Wherever the Christian is, his God is with him, around him, within him. And whether by day or night, in the closet or the market-place, in silence or amid confusion, whenever and wherever he would offer praise or prayer, the supreme Object of praise, the Hearer of prayer will accept and answer. The gospel imposes no fatiguing and unprofitable round of ceremonies. Every man, who is industrious and faithful in his avocation, honest in his dealings, pure in his conversation, lives in the constant observance of the Christian ritual. It enjoins obedience to no difficult and complex code of laws. Its great law of love,—love to God and man,—all can understand, all can keep, all must keep if they would be happy. Its privileges, too, may be enjoyed by all of every nation, in every place. The divine protection is extended over all. The sun of God's favour may enlighten every mind. The influences of his Spirit may pervade and sanctify every soul. The love of Jesus may be shed abroad in every heart. And wherever the Christian dies, whether on sea or on land, whether beneath the torrid rays of the tropical sun or on the ice-bound shore of the Arctic ocean, whether in the bosom of his family or among strangers, Christ, the resurrection and the life, is waiting to receive him to heaven. In fine, the rites of

Christianity may be observed, its duties discharged, and its privileges enjoyed, wherever be the home, the sojourn, or the death-bed of the believer. And this characteristic of our religion, as we have already observed, is one of those circumstances which eminently fit it to become a universal religion.

SECRET SINS.

Taking into view the insidious nature of secret sins, remembering how much less we are protected against them, how fearful are the consequences they bring in their train, how plainly they are denounced by the word of God, how important is it for us to keep it constantly in our remembrance, that we are to watch for them, if we would guard against them. If we would keep our hearts with diligence, if we would "perfect holiness," so far as it is permitted us in this trial state, we must do it, not in the fear of man, but in the fear of God. If we would truly judge ourselves that we may not be judged, then must we make conscience the vicegerent of the Most High within our breasts, and learn to look upon ourselves in the same light that God himself looketh upon us. The question, "Is my sin open or secret?" will not be one that we shall for a single moment entertain; but our simple inquiry must be, "Wherein do I transgress? What duties to my neighbour, to God, to my own soul, have I omitted? What law of God have I broken? What temper, feeling or thought have I allowed to influence me, that is inconsistent with the spirit of Christ and the injunctions of the Gospel?" In our hours of sober thought we shall endeavor to ascertain our real condition, and not satisfy ourselves with the inquiry, "How are we in the world's esteem?"

If you would know the value and importance of thus communing with your own hearts, I would have you think, my friends, in how short a time the estimation of the world will be a matter of comparatively small importance to any one of you. How little will it avail any one of us in that solemn hour when the soul is passing from its earthly probation to meet the award of the Judge of all the earth, how little will it avail that we have been successful in hiding our sins from the observation of the world. How flimsy the veil will appear that has covered up our moral deformity from the view of those with whom we have sojourned during the short pilgrimage of the present life, as we reflect that the hour is at hand when every secret shall be brought to light, every hidden purpose made known to the saints that dwell in the courts of heaven. At the tribunal to which we shall all be summoned, that judgment-seat of Christ before which, as the Scriptures assure us, we must all appear, it will not be the voices of our fellow-men that will produce our condemnation or our acquittal, but the voice of our own conscience must testify whether we have done good or evil. The sound of human applause, however loudly it may have swelled our praise ere we passed the boundaries of time, will bring no cheering consolation to the soul that has been desolated by secret sin, and must now depart from the presence of the Lord. The remembrance of it will be but a hollow mockery of our anguish of spirit. If we have lived and acted only that we may be seen of men, verily we have had our reward. The man who sins in secret while he bears himself before the world with an air of seeming goodness, may think that he is successful in imposing upon his fellow-men; but upon whom does he more cruelly impose than upon himself? Who so cheated as his own soul? Who shall suffer such consequences of his deception as he himself must endure? The whited sepulchre, beautiful to the outward view but within filled with "dead men's bones and all uncleanness," is but a faint emblem of his condition. Behold those whited walls thrown down, and the corruption which they covered up all laid bare, and you see the condition of the hypocrite in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men's hearts.

I repeat it then, my friends, think not lightly of secret sins. Be not satisfied with your spiritual condition because the condemnation of the world has not fallen upon you. It is only when your hearts do not condemn you, that you have any just grounds for confidence before God. It is only when your consciences are free, and you can say in truth before Him who looketh upon the heart, that it has been your effort to live and act constantly as in God's presence and in reference to your accountability to him, that you have diligently sought the paths of wisdom, that you have made Jesus the great exemplar of your life, it is only then that you may feel that you have done what you could to fulfil the commands of God and answer the ends of your being.—*Rev. Jonathan Cole.*

[From the Christian Citizen.]

THE RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS IN HEAVEN.

The following passages are from a letter addressed to a friend of the transcriber, who, being a few months since favored with the occasional privilege of social intercourse with Dr. Thomas Dick, ventured to request from him his views on a subject relative to which she felt a deep interest. As a tacit privilege was gained from the venerated writer to extend its perusal, it is believed he will not consider the use now made of these extracts, any compromise of epistolary confidence.

ACROS.

As to the question "whether friends and relatives recognize each other in Heaven," it would require a long dissertation instead of a short letter to enter fully into the subject. In few words we might argue, that if the disciples Peter, James, and John recognized Moses and Elijah, (whom they had never seen before,) on the Mount of Transfiguration,—if the apostle Paul shall recognize his converts as his crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord Jesus,—and if our knowledge in heaven shall not be diminished, but increased to an indefinite extent, then we may rationally conclude that the redeemed who knew and had intercourse with each other on earth, shall also recognize each other in the heavenly world; though the *modus* or manner in which they will be enabled to form this recognition is beyond our power at present to describe. But we need not doubt that it is within the power and intelligence of the Divine Being to confer faculties and perceptions for this purpose; and if such endowments are requisite for our complete happiness in that state, we need not doubt, from a consideration of the Divine benevolence, that they will actually be furnished.

Were I to enter particularly on this subject, I might first consider the presumptions respecting it which reason suggests. I might endeavor to trace the sentiments which have prevailed in all ages and nations in reference to this question. In looking beyond the grave, all nations have connected with that state the expectation of *conscious* and *renewed* intercourse with their earthly companions. Socrates delighted himself in the prospect of conversing with Orpheus, Musæus, Hesiod, and Homer. Cicero exulted in an anticipated reunion with Cato amidst the assembly of the great and good. The Gentoo widow commits herself to the flames, that she may be replaced with her husband in the other world; and the mother in the Pacific Islands mourning for her children, comforts herself with the belief, that after her own death, she shall meet them again. In such concurrencies of opinion among mankind we have a presumption suggested by the light of nature, in support of the opinion that friends in a future world recognize each other.

It surely must appear extremely probable, that persons who have been trained on earth in one common faith, and who have walked in affection and unity, should not meet as perfect strangers to each other in the mansions of their common Father in the world above. Having pursued in harmony and love the same path of daily obedience, and having been instrumental in instructing, comforting, and edifying each other on earth, it surely is highly improbable that they should lose all

recollection of such Christian communion and personal fellowship, as that they should be deprived of the pleasure of recounting to each other "all the ways in which Jehovah led them in this wilderness." The saints will, we may suppose, carry along with them to the heavenly regions all the moral and intellectual faculties they now possess, and by which they were united on earth; and we cannot but suppose that when these faculties are expanded and invigorated in the heavenly world, they will enjoy the satisfaction of comparing their feeble and limited efforts, while in this sublunary region, with the ardors of love which will glow in heaven, and with the expansive range which the intellectual powers will take in that state of perfect vision and enjoyment.

The next source of argument on this subject would be derived from the sacred Scriptures. In Matt. xxvii. 52, it is stated that at the time of the Saviour's resurrection "the graves were opened, and many bodies of the saints arose, and came out of their graves, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Now it can scarcely be supposed that these saints will be deprived of all remembrance that they were distinguished from among the general mass of mankind as the first trophies of the Redeemer's conquest over the grave,—or that the friends whom they visited will never again have an opportunity of exchanging communications with those who once visited them in so extraordinary a manner.

The same inference may be drawn from such passages as the following: "In my Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go I will come again and receive you to myself," &c. These and similar passages seem to imply that Christ's disciples would be again united as part of one great family. For if he had told them that they should never recognize one another more, when they came to the heavenly mansions, instead of comforting their hearts, it would have filled them with deep sorrow.

Matt. viii. 11.—"Many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." Will Abraham not know Isaac or Jacob, or will those who sit down with them not know that they are associated with these venerable characters? It can hardly be supposed: for we are told by Luke, "Ye shall see Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," &c. The parable of the rich man and Lazarus appears almost decisive on this point. The rich man is represented as recognizing both Abraham and Lazarus, as recollecting the circumstances of his former state, and Abraham appears to these recollections.

1 Thessalonians iv. 13-18.—The object of this passage is to convey comfort to the minds of Christians who have lost pious relatives, that they should not "sorrow as those who have no hope." What is the "hope" here intended? Undoubtedly the hope of regaining and recognizing their friends at the resurrection of the just. 2 Sam. xii. 22, 23. "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." This may be considered as an avowal of David that he was convinced he should rejoice and recognize the child he had lost, in a future world. Many passages of Scripture seem clearly to prove that at last, and particularly at the judgment-seat of Christ, a general recognition will subsist between the Apostles and preachers of the Gospel, and those who attended on their ministrations; and consequently the saints of God who were acquainted on earth, will distinguish each other in the heavenly world. But in order to shew the full force of these and many other Scriptures as applying to the question under consideration, a number of explanations and reasonings in reference to them would be requisite, which the limited compass of a letter will not permit.

May it be our happy lot to meet in that glorious world; to join the general assembly and church of the first-born,—Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, the innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect.

THOMAS DICK.

THE ADVANTAGES OF SICKNESS.

"The advantages of sickness!" what a preposterous idea, says the bright young girl as she bends over the page a face glowing with health, and the cheerful animation with which health decks the young. "The advantages of sickness! who can have chosen such a theme? The very title is enough for me; I have no desire to read more of it;" and she turns away with a merry laugh to something more in accordance with her gay mood. But a day is coming, bright being, when you may repeat again those words, from a sincere heart, taught by experience that there is meaning in them. For the kind Father has ordained that to all shall the hour of sickness come, and blessed are those whose hearts are ready to receive its holy teachings.

To the Jews, sickness, with its hours of agony and weakness, seemed a messenger of punishment for sin, a sign of the anger of God. But by the light of Christianity, we see in sickness and sorrow the hand of a kind parent who "chasteneth those whom he loveth." We know that sometimes, with the sinking and exhaustion of the frail body, the soul is purified and gloriously elevated; that often the sick man seems surrounded with a halo of light, and the frail being lying there filled with a more than earthly peace and joy.

Truly, often, too often, do we see in sickness the stern law of retribution, which says to man, "As thou sowest, so shalt thou reap,"—when disregarding all the laws of health and temperance, he plunges into excesses which leave him with a worn-out frame to toss upon the bed of pain. God's laws cannot be slighted with impunity. It should be a duty to attend to the health of the body, for it is closely connected with the health of the soul. But sickness cannot be wholly guarded against. It sometimes visits every one, and sad indeed is it for him who despises the lessons which it brings, and whose soul is not made stonger by its discipline.

Even the most thoughtless must rise from the bed of pain and exhaustion, with a more vivid sense of the privilege of health. Something like gratitude must fill the heart even of him who has through his former life received God's gifts, unmindful of the source from whence they came. He must feel, for the time at least, that a more than mortal hand has laid him on that couch of pain, a more than mortal hand has raised him up. Who that has ever passed many weeks of sickness and exhaustion, can ever forget the joy of feeling well? Shut up in the darkened room, each day the world seems to grow narrower. We can hardly believe, that in the street people are rushing to and fro, intent on business or pleasure, good or ill,—so still and quiet is that little spot to which we are bound. No one who has not himself felt it can tell the joy that comes with the return of strength. Each motion brings pleasure. The consciousness of living in health again, free to move about once more in the open air, to revel in the sunshine, again to feel one's limbs grow strong and elastic, and the weight removed with which ill health so often cumbers the spirit;—such a pleasure as this even the dullest, the most callous heart must feel. And many will then be ready, if not before, to look upon sickness as a friend, for having taught them that, which, but for its teachings, they might have been long regardless of, the great blessing of health and strength.

How often too, when sickness comes, do we find with it a kindness and sympathy which we have yearned for in health, but which was hidden from us until sickness called it forth! How universal is the sympathy for sickness. How it arouses, even in hearts that are strangers to the invalid, a glow of pity, and a desire to render to the sick one all possible assistance. How constant are the inquiries until the danger is passed. How often is it said, "I did know that I had so many friends until I was sick."

And what a tide of affection is poured out upon us by the loved ones whose hearts are racked with anxiety because we are in pain. What touching pictures of self-forgetfulness and devoted love does the sick chamber summon up; of a love never wearied with watching "the last star out" by the side of the sufferer, knowing no fatigue while danger is there. Surely sickness is a blessed revelation to us of the affection which makes life so precious.

But more even than this can sickness do for us, if our hearts are ready to receive its

lessons; for it weighs us in a balance, and then can we see in what are our spirits wanting. In those quiet hours when weakness and exhaustion have cramped and bound every bodily energy, it holds up a glass before our soul and we can see ourselves as we really are. In health we are in the midst of business or pleasure, and a thousand things continually absorb our attention. We find but little time to look within, and we are too apt to be deceived.

We have thought ourselves well schooled in patience, perhaps; but we find, when the trial comes, our patience soon exhausted. We have heard of suffering borne without a murmur, of long years of languishing passed in cheerfulness, and we have been so thrilled with admiration, we have felt so deeply the greatness of such fortitude that we have earnestly determined that we too would be girded and ready to bear, when our hour should come: and we find ourselves broken down, our energy and cheerfulness gone, after a few days only of suffering. We have seen repining too in sickness. We have heard the sick one murmuring that God should make his lot so hard, that he was deprived of the free air, when so many around him were rejoicing in it, in health and strength; and this too, when surrounded with comforts; and we have hoped and prayed that our faith would be stronger than his; and now we find our faith too failing us. A few days of sickness have shewn us much yet to do, where we thought much already accomplished. It has shewn the spirit to be weak as well as the body. Shall we not be thankful for this knowledge of ourselves, which this dread sickness has brought us?

Is not sickness too often made an excuse for indulging ourselves in our faults and weaknesses? How often it is said in the presence of children, "You must not mind if he is cross to-day, for he is sick." Would it not be better to teach a child that he is always to use self-control?—to teach him as he goes on in life, that the trial of sickness is sent by an All-kind Father, not to annoy him, but to be borne patiently and thoughtfully and willingly, and that by its means his character may be strengthened and improved.

We must all prefer health to sickness. We may look back upon sickness as upon a friend who may have done us much good, and we may not regret that we have gone through the experience of those days and hours of pain; but we must naturally look forward to it with dread. None can desire to lose the vigor and strength of health. No one can part with it without sadness. But God sends it in kindness and because He loves us. He sends it because He would shew us at last that He has made us in His own likeness. Because by it he would lead us to the "green pastures and still waters" of the true spiritual life. He would have us feel that though health and strength are gone, and every avenue to earthly pleasure shut up, yet that none of these things are essential to the spirit's life. We are to be independent of all these. He would have us feel that we are to live in the body, and yet out of it, and above it. For all these pains and pleasures beside to the body, and that is soon to be laid aside; but that higher life still goes on into eternity, and here on earth must have its beginning.

This earthly life may be filled with pain and sorrow, as to some among us it is; and terrible to many a one would be the rising of the sun that brought but a new day of suffering, if it were not for that blessed example of him who bore his sufferings so gloriously; who knew not where to lay his head, and yet was so peaceful; who said to his friends, when the hour of mortal agony was drawing near, "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Health and prosperity seem so essential to us when we are in possession of them, and it is so difficult then to feel that they are transitory, should we not find ourselves too much absorbed in the business and pleasures of mortal life, too thoughtless of the life beyond, if sickness did not come with its solemn warning, to tell us that life is more than the enjoying of this world?

"Is pain an evil? yet large spirits have made it the platform for the development of the greatest virtue;" and though it must ever be dreaded, shall we not receive it when it comes, willingly, because it is God-sent, and meekly take to our hearts the teachings and warnings it brings with it? striving to say, in the spirit of those beautiful lines,

"My God, I thank thee; may no thought
E'er deem thy chastisement severe;
But may this heart, by sorrow taught,
Calm each wild wish, each idle fear."

And if, through it, our spirits are strengthened, and elevated, and weaned from earthliness, shall we not call it a friend and a blessing?—*Religious Magazine.*

NOTICE.—Subscribers to the BIBLE CHRISTIAN in Great Britain and Ireland will please forward the amount of their subscriptions to the Rev. David Magennis, Mount Pottinger, Belfast, Ireland.

The Bible Christian.

MONTREAL, JANUARY, 1847.

PEACE BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES.

[To many of our readers the language of this article, and the two others which follow it, will not be entirely new. They are extracts from a Sermon preached on the morning and evening of the first Sunday of the New Year, in the Unitarian church of this city. The aim of the discourse was to review several of the more prominent events of God's Providence during the past year, to deduce profitable lessons therefrom, and to show how a beneficent Deity ordereth all things in wisdom and love.]

This time last year, in this city, throughout this country, over the most important portion of this continent, and in the parent land across the Atlantic, men all talked of war,—of a possible war,—of a probable war,—in which the people of Britain and the United States were to be involved. The constituted authorities amongst us were constructing militia lists, our newspaper columns, and placards on the corners of our streets, invited able-bodied men to join battalions, industrious citizens were looking out for military uniforms, and seeking swords to hang by their sides. On the other side of the frontier the men in power assumed a threatening aspect, talked of undoubted rights, when their alleged rights, in their entire extent, were extremely doubtful; whilst men out of power, but mighty in the fulness of their moral force, reproved their rulers, and warned them against provoking war. From the other side of the Atlantic came offers of peaceful compromise, which failed to satisfy. Accredited ministers negotiated, but in vain. The political horizon was darkened. The black cloud of impending war flung its gloomy shadow across two countries of kindred blood.

Thus it was a year ago. But since that time the cloud has passed away. Peace has been established during the past year. This, then, is an event worth reflecting upon. That we have escaped the desolating curse of war, should surely be a matter of devout gratitude. In connection with this topic—the lately-apprehended war between Great Britain and the United States—two or three considerations present themselves. First, with regard to the cause of the apprehension. An immense tract of country of no immediate use to either, lay between the acknowledged and occupied possessions of the two nations. One claimed it in part, the other claimed it in full. It was simply a question of disputed boundary. And many thought that it could not be settled without an appeal to arms. This was the cause of the apprehension. Now let me ask, in the next place, should it have been a sufficient cause between two such countries? Both nations consider themselves enlightened, wise, and fully alive to their own interests. Both profess the religion of Jesus Christ. Between two such enlightened countries, then, I ask again, should such a cause have been sufficient to make men think of war, talk of war, and prepare for war? Clearly not. War undertaken under such circumstances would have been an open folly and a flagrant sin. In view of their temporal interests, we could convict them of the first. In view of the laws of the Gospel, we could convict them of the second. Great Britain and America have each an active, enterprising, and industrious population, one nation is the parent, the other is the child, and they are worthy of each other in the position they hold among the countries of the earth. They are engaged in an extensive and mutually profitable commerce. Now consider the effects of war upon communities such as theirs. It would come upon them

like the earthquake upon the smiling and cultivated plain. It would unsettle and disturb the face of society. Men's minds would be distracted from their usual avocations. The family circle would be invaded and the strong hands called forth to fight. The artisan would leave his hammer for a firelock. The operative would be summoned from the noise of the factory to the clamour of the camp. The merchant and the manufacturer, instead of having their minds exercised with the ordinary business of the counting-house, would be harrassed with pressing anxieties for their country and their all. The national resources, strengthened and improved by the season of industrious peace, would be weakened and squandered. The noble ships which sail from shore to shore with well-filled holds and well-thronged cabins, could no longer pursue their way with safety on the waters. The deep-mouthed cannon would lie in wait for them on the ocean, and these agents of prosperity and friendly intercourse would be menaced or destroyed. Now, would the advantages to be derived from the possession of a tract of unoccupied territory, which neither party required, be sufficient to compensate for the inconvenience of the loss here set forth? Surely not. Would it not be open folly, then, to incur so much loss for the sake of a portion of gain, in itself, at present, almost imaginary?

But we have said that in such a case we could convict them likewise of sin by the laws of the Gospel. It may be evident I think to every reflecting mind that had the Christian code of morals been thoroughly imbibed and duly appreciated in both countries, no such apprehensions of war could have existed. I need not remind you of the disinterested and peaceful requisitions of Christ. "Peace on earth and good will towards men" was the song of the angelic choir which ushered the birth of the Christian's Lord into the world. And peace, forbearance, and disinterested love, were the burden of his teaching from his first appearance on the Mount of Beatitudes to his last appearance on the Mount of Calvary. To impress mankind with the grand idea of God as a beneficent and impartial Father,—to unfold the animating doctrine of the universal brotherhood of man, was a leading aim of the mission of Jesus. In giving prominence to the passive, peaceful, and benevolent virtues, and leading men to look to God as the loving Parent of all, he laid the foundation of a system at complete variance with all warfaring and strife. And in this he gave evidence of his divine wisdom. For it is from the angry passions of man that his greatest unhappiness comes. Jesus taught men to submit to anything and everything rather than give these passions scope. Smitten on the right cheek, they should turn to the smiter the left, rather than indulge in revenge. Stripped of the coat, they should give the cloak likewise, rather than reciprocate such acts of aggression and plunder. Compelled to travel one mile, they should go twain, rather than yield to stullenness, ill nature, or the quarrelsome spirit. So it should be with individuals who profess Christianity. And so it should be with nations likewise, for nations are but individuals in the mass. Now if these principles had pervaded the countries in question, should there have been any anxiety or uneasiness about a war? I cannot see how there should. The professed religion of both Great Britain and the United States is that of Christ. To violate or contravene the laws of his Gospel is confessedly sinful. To have engaged, then, in such a war, would have been a sin as well as a folly.

But some may ask, Are we to overlook national greatness and national honor? I answer that we are to overlook and avoid everything that would conflict with Christianity. But what constitutes national greatness? What is national honour? Are we to understand by the former the extension of territory? Is a nation to be accounted great in proportion to the number of square miles it can reckon as its own? Are we to understand by the latter the feeling which prompts

us to resent every real or supposed wrong? Is a nation's honour to be upheld by showing its superiority in physical force and the power of destroying its enemies? No reflecting mind has any answer for these questions but one. A nation's greatness and honour do not depend on these things. A nation's real greatness, and true honour, are to be found in the intelligence and virtue of its people, in their industry and honourable enterprise, in their progress in the useful and ornamental arts and those sciences which expand and exalt the mind, and in their respect for that religion which imparts to the whole, ornament, dignity, and grace. Hence the evidences of a nation's greatness are not to be seen in the extent of its territory, the strength of its armies, or the number of its forts and arsenals. We are to judge of its greatness by its merchant seaports, its busy factories, its well cultivated fields, its halls of science, its seminaries of learning, and its Christian temples frequented by sincere, reverent, and enlightened worshippers. The evidence of a nation's honour is not to be seen in its jealous sensibility, or in its swiftness to resent its wrongs. We are to judge of its honour by its scrupulous integrity in giving every man his due, and by its sacred sense of justice, which holds the balance equally between the poor and the rich, and which throws the shield of protection over the cottage of the peasant as well as over the palace of the prince. National honour, in the common acceptance of the term, is an *ignus fatuus*,—a glittering nothing,—shining in the moral darkness of the world, misleading nations into war, with all its attendant calamities and crimes.

In the case under consideration, we have seen that the cause of the apprehension should not have been sufficient to create any anxiety, if the principles of Christianity had been properly apprehended and appreciated. And here we may enquire, Should any cause be sufficient to drive two countries such as Great Britain and the United States into war? I cannot think so. If ever these nations go to war, there must be a tremendous shame, and a terrible sin somewhere. All war is useless. It is the barbarous remnant of a barbarous age. If myself and my neighbour cannot agree upon a question of property, that is no good reason why I should shoot him, or he shoot me, that the survivor might decide the matter according to his own way. If we cannot settle the question amicably ourselves, or by the aid and advice of friends, there are tribunals of law and equity to which we refer it, and to whose decision we yield. Now as I have already said, nations are but individuals in the mass, and all their disputes, whether of property or of policy, might and should be settled in a similar way. Law and equity might and should take the place of the bayonet and the cannon ball. Wise and thoughtful men, guided by established rules and right principles, should be the arbiters in such matters, not heated and passionate multitudes drilled to the use of deadly weapons. Moral means should be resorted to in such cases, not mere physical force. Christianity should rule and be respected, not a mere barbarous custom.

In the case before us the calamity of war has been averted. The threatening cloud has been swept away, and the sun of peace still shines upon us. In this event of the past year we have abundant reason for gratulation and thankfulness. If this had not taken place, we might have been now deploring an interrupted commerce, or mourning the absence or untimely fate of acquaintances or friends. We should rejoice, moreover, not merely on our own account, and that of the country with which we are connected, but because of the evidence which such an event affords of the growing sentiment in favor of permanent and universal peace. In both Great Britain and America this sentiment is gaining ground. During the past year many a friendly message was passed between the two countries deprecating all war, and inviting mutual efforts to secure constant peace. Boston in the old world exchanged messages with Boston in the new. Worcester with Worcester. Plymouth with Plymouth. Various Sunday schools on either side of the Atlantic exchanged similar messages, and bodies of Christian ministers also received and sent, the like olive branches. Thus, not only has the cloud been dispersed, but it has left the sun of peace shining more securely than before.

THE NEW PLANET.

But the events of God's Providence, as they have been disclosed to our view during the past year, have, of course, been various in their character. We have already glanced at some matters connected with the policy of nations and the proceedings of religionists. We shall now pass to a distinct and different topic, and notice it briefly. It could not be overlooked in a review like the present. I allude to an important discovery of the past year—the discovery of a new planet.

Hitherto we had supposed that our solar system was bounded by the orbit of the planet Uranus. But science has cast her far reaching eye deeper into the depths of space, and found another travelling orb lying far beyond. This discovery extends the limits of our solar system to four times its former dimensions. Says Dr. Chalmers in his astronomical discourses, "The planetary system has its boundary, but space has none." This is true. But who can undertake definitely to fix the boundary of the planetary system? Until about half a century since the world knew but six primary planets. Now it has twelve.—I should rather say thirteen, for besides the discovery of the large planet, another small one has recently been brought to light.—It is a little more than half a century (in 1781) since Uranus was discovered by Herschel. This addition made seven primary planets in our system. The remaining six have all been brought to light within the present century,—that which now forms the boundary, lying at three times the distance of Uranus from the sun, being the discovery of the past year. The distance of Uranus from the centre of the system is calculated at eighteen hundred millions of miles. The distance of the newly discovered planetary orb from the sun, must, therefore, be five thousand four hundred millions of miles. The revelation here made is immense. The contemplation thereof, overwhelming.

Of all the physical sciences astronomy is the grandest. As we stand beneath the shining concave of a nocturnal sky and raise our eyes to the ten thousand starry points which stream their light upon the earth, and reflect the while, that every one of these may be a world as large or larger than our own, traversing through space in obedience to the same law which guides our own, and filled like our own with millions of intelligent inhabitants, does not the mind bow and sink beneath the overpowering weight of the conception? Every age, I am aware, is prone to vaunt itself on its scientific achievements, but I think we are amply justified by facts when we speak of the rapid strides of astronomical science in the present age. Half a century since, the powerful telescope of Herschel accomplished wonders. It penetrated the depths of nebulous masses and brought forth clusters of stars. Other nebulae it could not resolve, and at that time the great astronomer himself pronounced some of these absolutely unresolvable. But how vain are such judgments! The present age has proved their vanity. When the levithan instrument of Lord Rosse was directed to certain of those nebulae, before its resolving power they "burst into stars." Thus it is that assiduous and persevering science extends her sway, and reaches deeper and deeper into the infinite and unknown.

Discoveries of this character naturally prompt the question—where shall these cease? And who shall attempt to answer such a question? Borrowing the language of an eloquent living writer,* we may ask, "Who shall assign a limit to the discoveries of future ages? Who can prescribe to science her boundaries, or restrain the active and insatiable curiosity of man within the circle of his present acquirements? We may guess with plausibility, what we cannot anticipate with confidence. The day may yet be coming when our instruments of observation shall be inconceivably more powerful. . . . They may lay open to us the unquestionable vestiges of art, and industry, and intelligence, in those countless worlds which we see floating in space around us. We may see summer throwing its green mantle over these mighty tracts, and we may see them left naked and colorless after the flush of vegetation has disappeared. In the progress of years or centuries, we may trace the hand of cultivation spreading a new aspect over some portion of a planetary surface. Perhaps some large city, the metropolis of a mighty empire may expand into a visible spot by the powers of some future telescope."—These are bold surmises.—But who shall say they are not justifiable? None would venture to pronounce dogmatically against them who has paid any attention to the progress of science. Stupendous and magnificent is the universe of God. And every fresh discovery which brings to view more worlds and systems, constrains the pious and contemplative mind to a yet profounder reverence for Him whose power created all, and whose wisdom controls all.

* Dr. Chalmers.

CLOSING EXTRACT.

I cannot close these somewhat lengthened remarks without reminding you, that there is another world much nearer to you all, and much more important to you all, than the outward universe. I mean the world within you—the world of your own souls. What have you gained there during the past year?

What progress have you made in true and vital holiness? Remember that the soul is destined to outlive the policy, the disputes, and the physical calamities of nations, and all earthly alliances, be they ever so extensive, for evil or for good. Remember that it will survive when the planets and "the stars shall fade away, and the sun himself grow dim with age." And remember, too, that here it is in training for its portion throughout the interminable future which lies before it. What a solemn monition is conveyed in this thought! I cannot review your souls' progress during the year that is past. I can only review my own. The task is strictly a personal one. God alone can know whether we do it honestly. But it is an important work, and I recommend you to perform it. Ponder thoughtfully on the past, act with a sincere and single eye to duty in the present, and resolve righteously for the future. And piously invoke on every thought, and act, and resolution the blessing of Him who alone can build you up in every good word and work. With such a discipline, year after year will roll over your heads to find you growing in grace and goodness, and as the outward universe is reflected in the serenity of pious souls, you will perceive, indeed, that the Lord crowneth the year with loving kindness and ordereth every event in wisdom and in love.

MINISTRY AT LARGE IN BIRMINGHAM, ENGLAND.

(From the Boston Monthly Magazine.)

We have lately read with great pleasure the second annual report of Rev. J. G. Brooks, Minister at large in Birmingham. The report is replete with the tokens of the sound judgment, good feelings, untiring industry of Mr. Brooks, and indicates most clearly that in his appointment our friends of the Unitarian faith in that city have laid our whole denomination, if not the world, under new obligations. We may well rejoice that so excellent a fellow-labourer is added to the distinguished corps of ministers at large in Great Britain. We know, both through the reports of enlightened Americans, and still better from the admission of intelligent Englishmen of the Established Church, that liberal Christianity is nowhere producing better, greater, or more generally acknowledged results than in the ministers of this class in London, Liverpool, Manchester, &c. Who does not feel thankful that Birmingham has entered into the race with her sister cities? Who will not offer an earnest prayer for her and their equal and continued success? We should be happy to quote very fully from Mr. Brooks's report. The plan pursued in his ministry is that familiar with our ministers at large, embracing a Sunday-school and chapel service, sewing and evening schools, reading-rooms and libraries, lectures and social gatherings. There is but one opinion in regard to the expediency and efficiency of these agencies for our own large towns and cities; but let it be remembered that our brethren abroad are maintaining such things in the land of Oliver Twist and Little Nell, and who can question for a moment the effects of the enterprise?

We must content ourselves at this time with a single extract from the Report in question. It shall be upon a point of great interest and importance, to which no little attention has been called by the press of our own country, and upon which no pains should be spared in guarding against every tendency to perversion or abuse. We mean "the Ragged Schools." We have been told of the establishment of one in Boston; but trust, for the credit of our city, that it is not so. We are sure that hopes are entertained, if steps are not already taken, in many places, for the opening of such schools; and we beg every one to listen to Mr. Brooks before proceeding any further in a course that does not appear to be founded in reason, justice, or humanity.

"I might multiply instances; but these are sufficient to show our great difficulties and the importance of these schools in such localities. Still I most strongly object to their receiving the degrading name of 'Ragged,' though this is now becoming so fashionable. Brand these children as Pariahs, accustom them to the name, and the great danger is, that as such they will always be content to remain. They are too low already, and we ought not to multiply difficulties in the way of their self-elevation. If we do our duty to them, the children will improve and become fitting objects of our Christian sympathy and aid. "We must, as far as possible, bring them in contact with higher classes than their own, accustom them to more improving influence, and thus destroy the isolated feelings and habits which mark them as a separate and despised caste. When this is done, the character of the school is changed, and consequently the name becomes a degrading misnomer.

"During my visit to London, last April, I paid a visit to one of the Ragged Schools, and there the above thoughts were deeply impressed on my mind. I was surprised to find the police in attendance to preserve order among the pupils; thus giving the strongest assurance that the teachers felt little or no confidence in their scholars; but little love and no respect. How is it possible that love can exist without confidence on both sides? And how is it to be expected that moral power, the true element of success, in these and all other schools, should exert its true influence when allied in such close union with the constable's staff? I could not help contrasting the singular disorder and want of respect, with our own orderly and busy schools."

Dr. Tuckerman maintained this principle through the whole of his ministry. All his condutors or successors in this country and Great Britain, we are glad to say, have virtually coincided with him. We are confident that, with Mr. Brooks, they may trace no small portion of their success to this single but all-important feature of the Ministry at Large.

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Montreal, December, 1846.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

BY THE REV. WM. WARE.

In his Epistles, Paul treats at large of the faith that justifies, or of justification by faith, as being the cardinal doctrine of the gospel. Such we believe it to be.

The doctrine which it is his purpose to exhibit and to enforce on the Roman converts was one which stood opposed, not to good works or holiness, but to the Jewish idea of being saved by the law of Moses,—by a careful observance of the rites, sacrifices, and minutest ceremonial of that law, denominated the *works of the law*. That was no Christianity, Paul contends, but mere Judaism. The Christian is saved or justified, he contends, not by such works or observances, but by faith,—a faith, as all his Epistles show, not which is a mere barren act of the mind supernaturally originated, but one that (in the only way possible) shows itself to be faith by its fruits. The Jew was, under Moses, justified by works; yet even he was not justified by works of the law alone. The Jewish religion was a system of morality, as well as of forms. To all his observance of the ritual, he must superadd virtue, or it was all as nothing. This everywhere appears in the Old Testament, and especially in our Lord's discourses with his countrymen in the New. But to him the works or observances of the law were absolutely indispensable; he could not, as a Jew, be justified before God, except he was faithful to the *whole* law,—to the moral law indeed, but equally so to the Levitical.

Christianity superseded the law of Moses. The ceremonial law was now dead. It was now under Christ faith simply, without rites. There was under Judaism faith in God, in his providence, in his word, in the future world,—but there were the *works of the law* also, alike imperative. Now, under Christ, there was faith, but none of those works; there was faith, as before, in God, his providence, his word, the future life, and in Jesus also, as the accredited messenger of God, and in the new forms of truth which he delivered. Justification, or salvation, now, under Christ, must come of this faith alone, without the works of the old law,—faith, I say, without those works; not without works of obedience, for then it were no longer faith at all, but without the works of the Jewish law.

This principle of faith in Christ, to the exclusion of all reliance on the observances of the Jewish law, Paul maintains to be the great principle of Christianity, as under the old law it was *faith, and the works of the law* also. Such we believe to be the great doctrine or fundamental truth or most comprehensive way of stating the Gospel. *Justification, or salvation, by faith,—justification or salvation by belief in God and Christ, and acting and living accordingly*—this we believe to be the sum of Christianity,—this, the Christian doctrine of justification by faith. It is the great natural principle of, as we may say, all good religion,—there can be no religion without this. It is all good religion with it. It was the religion of Abraham, and saved him. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; it could not be otherwise. He stood justified by his faith. But what was the faith? It was faith which was an actuating principle of conduct, or real belief. He believed God, and the consequence was, that in obedience to the command of God he was ready to offer up his son Isaac. It was believing and doing, both in one, and he was accepted. And so everywhere, and in all times and places, he who first believes that God is, and requires a certain obedience, and gives it, is justified. Nothing else can be essential,—neither form, nor rite, nor other doctrine. Such faith is itself a complete and necessary justification. If he believed in God, and that he requires a certain obedience, and did not give it, such faith surely could never justify and save. It would be just as if he did not believe at all. It would be a faith without works of the moral law, belief, that is, without believing, and would be unavailing, or rather a damning, faith; it would be believing a truth and living a lie.

To illustrate this point. I believe, for example, that industry will save me from poverty. This is my faith. No matter what it is raises that belief in me, whether it come of instinct, or authority, or observation of life, it is enough that I believe that industry will save me from poverty. For if I am governed by that belief, if I act, that is, according to my belief, *I am saved*, or justified. If I did not act according to my faith, if I did not *work*, of course there would be no salvation: I should remain as poor as ever. Faith without works is dead. It can save neither body nor soul, neither in this world nor in the world to come. But faith that is followed or accompanied by works not only saves; it is a necessary principle of salvation; it cannot help saving you; no room remains for the operation of any other principle or doctrine. Such a doctrine as that of the Atonement [as commonly promulgated] cannot exist.

If I believe, no matter on what ground, but on some ground felt to be good and sure, that moderation and temperance will save me from disease, or, having fallen into it, will rescue me from it, and I act and live accordingly, *I am saved*; my faith is a justifying or saving principle.

And that, when the term faith is used in this way (and in the New Testament whenever this subject is spoken of), it necessarily includes the idea of a certain action consequent upon the faith, is clear from this, that by excluding it the proposition becomes a self-contradictory one. I believe, for example, being in imminent danger of death, yet earnestly desiring life, that a certain medicine will save my life. But is this belief, if I do not take the medicine? We can hardly separate the idea of acting from that of believing. Can it be said that I believe in the power of the compass to guide me over the waste of waters, and in the darkness of night and storm, and give me safe deliverance, if I did not steer my vessel as it points, but according to my own will or conjecture? But if I obey it, am I not, of necessity as it were, saved?

Such as this principle of faith is, in these several instances, is it in religion. If I believe in God and Christ, and act accordingly,—or believe them also, believe what they say,—my faith will justify or save me. I shall be held as just or right in what I have done. And here, as in the other instances, we cannot separate the idea of action from that of believing. It is a mere idle proposition to say I believe in God, or Christ, and do not act accordingly, do none of those things which I believe to be enjoined as essential; just as it would be to say, I believe that a draught of water will save my life, and yet not drink the water. My refusing to drink the water, would show I did not believe, whatever I might say; and the Christian asserting his faith, but refusing the obedience of the Gospel, shows he does not believe, whatever he may say, and that his faith cannot justify or save. And so every Christian, naming the name of Christ, but denying him in his life, shows that he does not believe, and therefore cannot be saved. He says that he believes in the waters of life, yet does not drink them. Who dare say such an one believes? He does not believe. The only faith that justifies, is the faith that obeys.

Perhaps this particular phrase, justification by faith, would never have been used, so liable as it is to misconception, had it not been for the pertinacity of the Jewish converts in adhering (though they would fain be Christians) to the law of observances also. But for the necessity of opposing the Jews in this, and insisting that faith in Christ, with its natural concomitants, was enough, without superadding the ceremonial law, Paul, like his Master, might have spoken only of faith and holiness, of belief and righteousness, as the grounds of acceptance with God, without contrasting them with the works of the Jewish law, by which no man other than a Jew could be justified, and which, through a misconception of the sense in which he used that phrase, laid the foundation of that astounding doctrine, that, in past ages, at least, has so much prevailed,—that good works, namely, virtue, or holiness, are of no avail, are but as filthy rags; faith alone, and independently of such works, justifying a man in the sight of God. But no one can read the Epistles with attention, or understand the position and feelings of the Jews of that time, and not perceive how unavoidable it was that the Apostle should come forward, not only with his authority as an Apostle, but with his arguments as a man, to defend the new church and its doctrine against their aggressions,—against their pertinacious endeavours to engraft their old law of ceremonial works upon the new law of Christian faith.

Once more, afterward, in the Middle Ages, errors again grew up around this subject, and justification by faith, not indeed in the sense in which we are now explaining it, was again the reasserted doctrine of the Reformation,—reasserted this time against the Romish dogma of merit,—of laying claim to eternal life as what was justly due, and actually purchased and paid for by alms deeds, gifts to the treasury of the church, self-inflicted penances, mortifications of the flesh, and so on. The doctrine of justification by faith lays stress, indeed, upon all sorts of good works; but it differs from the Romish doctrine in two particulars: first, inasmuch as it does not admit that, perform as many virtuous acts as we please or can, we can ever lay claim to eternal salvation as our equal due; it is still, it maintains, of grace,—a gift far exceeding any human merit; and secondly, inasmuch as it denies all merit to mere ceremonial or other acts, unless they are the fruit of a right principle. Acts of virtue flowing from any corrupt motive, outward forms of worship, how numerous soever, except they are the expression of a genuine piety, are vanity or worse. It is not and cannot be the works alone that justify or save; but good works that are the fruit of a

genuine faith, that proceed from a good principle. This is very obvious. For suppose I distributed largely of my substance to feed the poor, or was liberal in support of the church, or filled the world with the noise of my zeal, or covered the earth with missionaries of the truth, but only because in these ways I turned apparent virtues to my own worldly account, the faith that issued in such works could never justify. The root must be good, or the fruit is corrupt.

If these things are just and true, how, we may well ask, can there be any other doctrine in religion than this of justification by faith? It expresses the whole of religion in the briefest conceivable form and language. It appears to exhaust the whole of both speculative and practical religion.

How else, then, let us ask, first, than by this doctrine can a man be justified and saved? and, secondly, how can it be that he shall not be justified by faith?

I. How else can a man be justified?

How wonderful that it could ever be thought, that any other quality or possession could save the soul beside virtue, or holiness! and that, if by a divine teacher salvation were ever ascribed to faith, in a single word, without further explanation, it could be supposed for a moment to be any faith but such as comprises virtue as a part of it! How melancholy to consider that that great and blessed hope which God has set before us—of living again after death in more glorious scenes, where knowledge, and virtue, and happiness shall be experienced in measures now beyond our conception—should suffer the degradation it has, even among the followers of Jesus!—the degradation of its possession being made to depend upon every thing else almost, rather than upon that purity of heart, that solid virtue, that likeness of Christ, from which alone we are sure it can proceed. The least reflection, we should suppose, would convince the mind that, as it cannot be happy, or saved, or justified, even in this life, but through virtue; it could not, for the same or stronger reason of the same kind, in any other life. But while it has felt the truth of the first part of this proposition, and acknowledged that we are here truly blessed only as we are morally upright, spiritually risen with Christ, the future happiness has, at the same time, with a strange and unaccountable inconsistency, been made conditional upon acts or states of mind with which virtue may have nothing to do. Earth can be enjoyed and truly possessed, it is admitted, only through holiness; heaven, many ways beside. Earth can be inherited only by the meek, the peacemakers, the pure in heart; heaven, even by the violent, the unjust, the impure, provided they have conformed to certain other requirements, fulfilled certain other conditions, held certain doctrine, belonged to what is styled the true church.

And when asked, therefore, how else a man shall be saved or justified than by a genuine faith in Christ, producing the fruits which alone show it to be genuine, we answer, readily, in no other way possibly, we believe. It is justification by faith, by a faith that believes, and acts as it believes, which we hold to be the Gospel method, the Christian doctrine of life and salvation. Without hesitation, we reject all other doctrines that are ever substituted for this. In this, with joyful confidence, we place our trust. And we ask, in the last place, accordingly, in the assurance that only one answer can be returned,—

II. How can it be that a man shall not be justified by faith?

We believe he is justified by faith, and that no other conditions are imposed or necessary to be complied with. A proper faith cannot but justify and save; it achieves the whole work; no more remains for any other principle to effect. To revert, in illustration, to an example already used;—if poverty and want are evils from which I wish to be saved, and I firmly believe that industry is the principle of conduct that will save me from them, and I act accordingly, I am saved; and so far as that particular evil which I dreaded is concerned, there is no more to be done. No other doctrine, principle, or act can do more for me; the benefit is secured, the salvation is effected, the justification is complete. Nothing remains to be added; I am saved from the evil, and, by that faith I had, was necessarily saved. They are connected together as cause and consequence. To believe so was of necessity to be saved.

Is it otherwise in the matter of Christian faith? We ask if it can be otherwise than that a man shall be justified by faith? Is it not here, as in the instance just given, a necessary principle of justification? I believe in Jesus Christ, in his commission from the Father, in his authority as the Son of God. I not only believe in him, but I believe him: What he has taught and enjoined I believe. I believe that he has shown the true path to heaven. I believe that all the evils which overwhelm the soul

after death, he has shown me how to escape. I so implicitly believe in him, and believe him also, (that he is true in all he has called upon me to do as his believer,) that my actions and my whole life are in accordance with my faith. I have believed and have acted according to my belief. How can it be that I shall not be justified? I have believed the precepts of Jesus, and acted accordingly. He showed me how to walk and live; I believed him, and walked and lived accordingly. I believed in the virtues he enjoined upon me, and sought them. I believed in the destructive nature of the sins he taught me to shun, and eschewed them. I believed him when he enforced upon me the love of God and the love of man as comprising the sum of the commandments, and I fixed in my heart God's love and the love of my brother-man. I believed him, in a word, when I said, "These (the wicked) shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal," and I followed after righteousness with my whole heart. Such being my faith, shall it not to me, as to Abraham, be counted for righteousness? Has it not saved me? Has it not justified me? What can any other principle, act, or doctrine do for me more, which my faith has not already done? Is not the benefit secured, the salvation effected, the justification complete? Not that any obedience of man can be such as to lay claim to salvation. There can be no proportion whatever, any more than between finite and infinite, between man's best obedience and the recompense of eternal life; that recompense is of grace. Not that any obedience of man can be such as to lay claim to salvation; but that, by the best obedience he can give, he complies with the conditions prescribed,—prescribed not by the justice, but by the boundless compassion of God, who knows our frame and remembers that we are dust,—and so may humbly hope for a life to which merit could never lay claim, but which mercy has freely promised, and freely bestows, upon our imperfect, but sincere, obedience.

If such as has now been stated be the character of the faith to which justification is ascribed by Paul, viz: such a belief, confidence in another, as to constrain to a corresponding obedience as absolutely a part of that confidence, we cannot be surprised that often by our Lord salvation is assured to Faith alone. They who had faith in Jesus, who believed him when on earth,—see to what it led them!—to what labors, to what disinterestedness, to what sacrifices, to what sufferings,—to what deaths! Their faith was also righteousness. And now to what a high and holy life is the believer in Jesus drawn! The true believer in Jesus now, as at first, renounces all to follow Christ. He is not obliged to leave now, as at first, father or mother, or estates. He may retain them all; but he is obliged to renounce and deny himself in view of the requirements of the Gospel. If he believes not only in Jesus, but what Jesus has said, he necessarily (else he does not really believe) denies his evil desires, passions, envy, lust, and pride. He puts on the righteousness of Christ, as well as assumes his name; he receives his spirit, and it possesses and rules him wholly. Nor, to effect his salvation, is any other doctrine or principle needed. Just, precisely just, as believing in and believing the compass saves the mariner, and cannot but save him, so believing in and believing Jesus saves the sinner, and necessarily saves him; and as the seaman, in the tempest and darkness of the midnight ocean, tossing amid a thousand dangers, can be saved in no other way, so the Christian, driven about and beset by yet worse evils, can be saved in no other way; but let him only believe and he shall be saved.

Then why are we not saved? Why is it that the night has come and we are not saved?—that salvation is as far off as when we first believed? Because we have not believed. Our belief is a name, a pretence, a form, not a reality, not a faith of the heart, and so not possibly a justifying faith. Whose life almost does not show that he does not truly, fully believe in Jesus? Are these believers of Jesus whom we behold contradicting every day both his life and his spirit? who, by their vices, their sloth, their ingratitude, their worldliness, their earthly and sensual lives, crucify the Lord afresh,—are these believers? No, but the most genuine of unbelievers. They may be believers in him,—that, testimony may compel them to be,—but they are not believers of him. They give the lie to his spirit and his precepts. Let them believe with the heart, and it shall then be counted to them for righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

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