

COMMUNICATED.

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned," Mark 16: 16

The above is the language of our Savior Jesus Christ, after he had commanded his apostles to go to all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. The subject of faith (belief and faith are synonymous terms) will be the first item I will call your attention to.

The term is so often misapplied that it may not be amiss for me to attempt an explanation. The first is called historical faith, which is a simple assent to the truths of revelation, and may be found in unregenerated men, who are sometimes said to believe. It receives this denomination, not because its object is limited to the histories of the scripture, for it comprehends also the doctrine but because it is an assent of the same kind which we give to any credible history and is a simple act of the understanding. This is the only faith which is produced by a rational demonstration of the truth of revelation, and hence we may observe, by the way, that those ministers who dwell much upon the evidences of religion are charged with mispending their time; because in the first place those whom they usually labor to convince entertain no doubt of christianity.—And, in the second place, although they should succeed in establishing conviction in the minds of their skeptical hearers, they would only make such believe as were Simon Magus, and many others who perished in their sins. The second is called temporal faith, such as persuasion of the truths of religion, impressions upon the conscience and affections. The parable of the sower is illustrative of this kind of faith, Mat. 13. The last kind of faith is saving faith, also justifying faith. The distinction given by Paul in his letter to the Hebrews, is as follows: Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen, (our good is the substance) faith is also the confidence of things hoped, because it assures us not only that there are such things but that, through the power and faithfulness of God, we shall enjoy them.

Faith is as a candle, it enables us to take hold of the precious promises of the scriptures; without it we cannot please God, by it the Elders obtained good report; by faith, or rather through faith, we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God; so that, things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered an acceptable sacrifice, Enoch was translated, Noah prepared an Ark, Abraham obeyed and sojourned in a strange land—the Land of Promise, Sarah conceived seed, Abraham offered up Isaac, Isaac blessed Jacob—read all of the eleventh chapter Hebrews.

We have, in a manner, explained the different kinds of faith and what

was accomplished by them—will now try to make an application. Who are the believers? "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed," Acts 13: 48. "And the Lord added to the church daily, such as should be saved," Acts 2: 47. Then, this would appear, that the Lord is the one who has wrought this, and to those whom he deemed it, shall receive it; and those who receive, receive a gift and a free gift, and it is not received at the time the world claims, when they are doing good, &c.,—but when dead in trespasses and sins. "By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God; not by works lest any man should boast." Good works are the fruits of faith, not the cause of it.—When we are enabled by the Spirit of God to see ourselves, we discover the sinfulness of sin, and often have used every effort to make peace with an offended God. We are ready to be banished from his presence forever, when all of a sudden we are enabled to see Christ, when a little hope springs up which enables us to cry to God for Christ's sake to have mercy, save or I perish. A little still voice is heard—be not afraid I am with you.

The burden is gone, the body receives strength, the heart is rejoiced, and we are made to believe that God for Christ's sake has pardoned our sins. The world will say—read the Bible and believe it. You can if you will, be baptized and you will be saved. I read the Bible but understood it only as I would other histories—could receive no comfort or understand to any advantage, but after I received faith by revelation I would read the scriptures, not only understandingly but with much comfort. I can look to no other but Christ, for there is no other name known or given under heaven whereby we must be saved. How are we to come? "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me," &c. You cannot come unto me except my Father draw you. He that hath heard and learned of my Father cometh unto me. Because ye are sons he sends forth his Spirit into your heart crying, Abba, Father!

There is but one principle by which God can be honored, and that is to say, that he will do all his pleasure, have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, &c. The doctrine of grace as it reigns, works to the praise and glory of God. All that we receive comes through Christ, and if we have justifying faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into his grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God: and not only so, but we glory in tribulation also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed—because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us: for we are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why

doth he yet hope for it? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose: for whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brothers. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified, and whom he justified, them he also glorified, &c.

EDGECOMBE COUNTY,
December 27th, 1872.

Dear Brother Gold:—

I will, with the help of the Lord, try to pen what I humbly trust he has done for my poor soul. If I was ever troubled about my sins it was at the early age of ten years old. When at that age my mother sent my sister and myself off on an errand one day, and I took along with me some parched coffee, more than I could eat and I buried it in the sand, and on my return when I got against it I told my sister I had done wrong, and picked up the coffee and carried it back and resolved never to do so again. Brother Gold, I was troubled from that day until I was delivered, at times, about my sins. Yet, I did not know what was the matter with me, but whenever I would get angry with my brothers or sisters or do any thing wrong I would ask the Lord to forgive me and promise to do better, but all of no effect. I delighted in attending parties and dancing, yet I felt it was a great sin; but as often as I went I would beg the Lord to forgive, and thought when I was older I would leave off the practice entirely. Often when I was dancing I would look around at the crowd and wonder if any one felt as condemned as I did. I often made promises to my dear mother that I would never dance again, she would encourage me in the resolution and thought it best for me. Brother Gold, I made promises and kept breaking them until I could not sleep, neither could I find rest anywhere. When I would close my eyes for sleep it seemed to me that my bed would sink into torment, and I would get up and walk my room, and cry and beg the Lord to have mercy on me, a poor lost sinner. A short time after this my first cousin asked me to wait on her; I asked if there would be any dancing and she said yes. I thought I would go and it should be my last, thinking the Lord would forgive me if I kept my promise which I intended to do certain, and told my mother it was my last time—and sure enough it was, but my troubles still increased and I would often ask the Lord what was the matter with me, for I thought after I stopped dancing I would see some pleasure, but there seemed to be no enjoyment for me at home or abroad. I felt like one alone in the world and wished I had never been

born. I thought that no one cared for me, not even my father did love me. I felt so troubled and depressed I asked God with a prayerful heart to give me a good kind companion and then I would have some one that did care for me—and all my troubles would be to an end. The Lord answered this request, and when I walked out to be joined in holy wedlock I went with a prayerful heart and felt that I wanted brother Bell to pray for me but could not ask him. I felt that I needed prayer—the change in circumstances made no change in my feelings. I was miserable everywhere I went. My husband would often ask me the cause of my sadness. I would tell him I did not know, for it seemed that I ought to be satisfied, you are willing to do anything you are able to do to make me happy. I proposed to Mr. Downing to buy land, this he could not do, but he went to Edgcombe County, near Lawrence Meeting House and rented land from uncle William Hodges. This was gratifying to me, to be near my relations. I promised Mr. Downing then I would be satisfied. He said, Fannie, I hope you will, for I hate to see you in so much trouble—and I moved up there, brother Gold, thinking I was leaving all my troubles behind me, but how far mistaken. I was no farther from God to one county than another. The second year we came up here, which was in 1871, I was walking the yard one day asking the Lord to have mercy on me when I heard a voice, saying: Revive the strong, comfort the weak, and after sinners call. I felt lighter and commenced singing. In a few days after that uncle William came to see me and asked me if I did not want to take the LANDMARKS—I told him I did. I thought when my paper came I could drown some of my grief by reading, but I was mistaken again—Satan told me I did not have time to read, that I had better be at work, and I laid the paper aside and commenced singing again. Brother Gold, I sang until I did not feel worthy to sing and was so troubled I wanted to move again, and my husband told me it seemed impossible for him to satisfy me. This hurt my feelings very much and I asked him what I should do, he plainly told me if I did not quit studying so much I would certainly die, and proposed to me to go to see the Doctor, perhaps he could relieve me—but I found no help from him. I would go to preaching and the preachers would describe my feelings so near it would give me a little hope, may be I might be a christian before I die, but I know a christian never felt as mean as I do. I would go home praying for mercy, for I felt like I had not a friend in heaven nor one on earth except my darling son Mackey. I even at times would feel like he was not, and would embrace him and ask him if he loved me and with child-like sim-