

Sunday Reading.

From the American Messenger.

FAITH IN CHRIST.

Unbelief is a heinous sin, God abhors it. It is the master sin of the human heart. It breeds and fosters all wickedness. No iniquity is alone; no sin is solitary. But this evil is the parent of all others. Christ, said the Spirit, "will reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me." If this sin were renounced, others could not reign. God's denunciations against it are fearful: "He that believeth not, is condemned already." "He that believeth not, shall be damned." Through this sin, how many Lazaruses perished in the wilderness!

But faith is a great gift of God. It is a precious grace. By it is the life of the soul. It is a rich fruit of Christ's mediation. He is its author and finisher. He is its cause and its object. The agent who works it in us is the Holy Spirit. He glorifies Christ by bringing us to put all our trust in him.

Whoever has this faith shall not be destroyed. "He that believeth shall be saved." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This is the sum of gospel injunctions: "This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." It is not wonderful that all true Christians make much of faith. Inspired writers do the same.

WHAT THEN IS FAITH IN CHRIST? What does it do when we believe on the Son of God? On this point many err. The learned and the unlearned may here make sad mistakes. The matter is of the greatest importance. Let every man be candid with his own soul.

Sometimes faith in Christ is called *looking* to Christ. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." To come to Christ is to have such positions as would lead us, if we were on earth, to come to him in person, and apply to him for salvation on his own terms. Thus we should approach him sincerely, humbly, and earnestly. The poor woman came to him very stealthily; but she came and touched him, and got the blessing. The Canaanitish woman came with the lowest esteem of herself, but true humility is never offended in Christ, and true earnestness cannot be driven away from Christ.

Sometimes faith is called *looking* to Christ. "Look unto me, and I will be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none like me." "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced." "Run with patience the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus." "Behold the Lamb of God." Of old, the Israelites, bitten by the fiery serpent, was bidden to direct his eyes to the brazen serpent, and as many as looked were healed. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have eternal life."

Sometimes faith is spoken of as *receiving* Christ. "Thus Zaccheus received him not only as his guest, but kindly as his countryman, but joyfully as his Saviour. Christ is freely offered, and we gladly take him as offered. He is held out to us in the gospel, and we lay hold of him; the Lord our righteousness, as the true God and eternal life, as all our salvation. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believed on his name."

Again, faith in Christ is spoken of as *trusting* to him. We see from our sins and from the avenging wrath of God, to lay hold on the hope set before us in the gospel—Christ is our city of refuge. In him we are safe from the flaming sword of justice. He is our hiding-place from the tempest, our covert from the storm. We run to him, and his blood atones for us, his righteousness covers us, his grace is sufficient for us, his intercession avails for us. In him we can never be reached by the destroyer.

Those who have faith in Christ *trust*, and *rest* in him. Their faith reposes on him—they lean upon him. "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth." This true faith in Christ has some remarkable characteristics.

1. It refuses all other helps, hopes, refuges, and mediators. It divides not its love and confidence between Christ and a host of others, or any other. "Thou must save, and thou alone." To look elsewhere is inconsistent with reliance upon him. He saves wholly, or not at all. His blood may not be mingled with our sufferings, nor his merit with our merits, nor his merit with our deservings. "There is none other name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved." "Other foundation hath no man laid." Build on the rock, or not at all.

2. Genuine faith is not temporary, but lasts and holds on its way. It cleaves to Christ through good and through evil report. It holds him fast, and will not let him go. It will even bear tortures, not accepting deliverance purchased by a denial of faith in him. It will walk in darkness, and yet trust. It will cover itself with sackcloth and ashes, and cry, "Unbelief; but I will not renounce Christ." It is not only exclusive, it is also firm.

3. It entitles all the affections. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Devils believe, but not with the heart—"The act of faith is not in the brain, but in the heart; not that I wish to enter into any dispute concerning the part of the body which is the seat of faith; but since the word *heart* generally means a serious, sincere, and affectionate, I am desirous to show the confidence of faith to be a firm, efficacious, and operative principle in all the emotions and feelings of the soul, and a mere rational notion of the head," said the great Geneva Reformer.

4. Genuine faith therefore purifies the heart. It begins to drive away all holiness. It sets the soul to Christ, who is our sanctification as well as our righteousness. It begins the deepest devotion to sin. When tempted it cries, "How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" In the eyes of believers, sin is exceedingly sinful, and unbelief very lovely.

5. True faith in Christ also works by love. It draws its chief motives from the divine love. It attracts the affection of love to the soul. It says, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us," and then it gives him all it has, or is, or hopes to be.

6. It also gains and keeps the ascendancy over the things of time. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Faith looks not at things which are seen and temporal, but at things unseen and eternal. It draws its strength and firmness from the sight of things invisible—from an unseen Saviour, an unseen heaven, and an unseen eternity.

WANTED, BUSHELS OF DRIED PEACHES. T. M. FARROW. Dec. 9, 1855.

STATE OF NORTH-CAROLINA, ME. KLEBURG COUNTY. Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions, October Term, 1855.

John Allison and J. R. Daniel, vs. James D. Whitely. Original Attachment.

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STEADY PROGRESSION AT EAGLE CITY.

THE SUBSCRIBER has the pleasure to announce to the world, to whom he sends greeting...

The dreamer, speculating on coming events...

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