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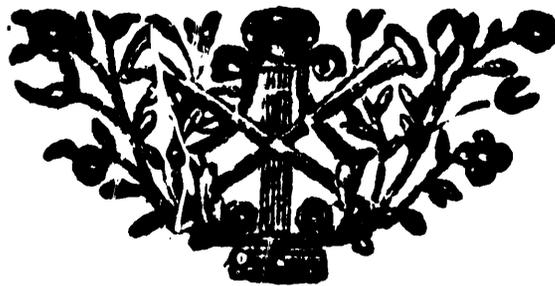
OR,
SAVING FAITH

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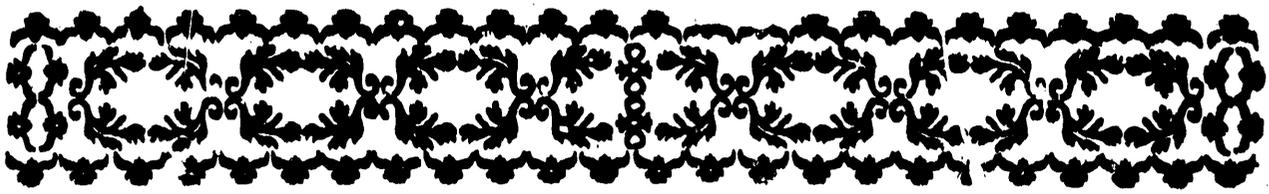
COUNTERFEITS :

AS DELIVERED PUBLICLY IN SEVERAL
DISCOURSES----ANNO M.DCC.LXII.

BY TIMOTHY ALLEN, A. M.
AND V. D. M.



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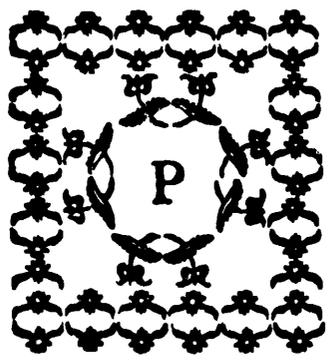


The MAIN POINT, &c.



JAMES ii. 20.

FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD.



PERFECT obedience to the most holy law, is the fixed medium of acceptance with its author. And the impossibility of such obedience, in those who are any way chargeable with sin, made the necessity of CHRIST'S appearance in human nature, for the purposes of such obedience, as well as sacrifice ; that God might be just, and yet the justifier of them who believe in JESUS. But as man was originally formed for such obedience in himself, his pride still stimulates him that way ; and though, in respect of his original abilities, he is become like the beasts that perish, he still trusts in himself that he is righteous. This was the spirit of those to whom St. *Paul* says, " by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." And again, " a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of JESUS CHRIST." On which

which he soon succeeded to convince the *Galatian* churches, and in their turn the *Roman* too. But this method of acceptance with God not being natural, they made no long stand in the simplicity of its profession; so that when St. *James* came to prosecute the same design, he found the word among them was, "Do ye believe?—Do ye own the faith of CHRIST?" And whosoever made an affirmative answer, was a good christian, without regard to the distinguishing qualities of his faith, or its influence on heart or life. So they were generally believers, and as generally careless, ungodly liver's. To them, in this light, St. *James* cries out, "Can faith save you?—Faith without works is dead."—"This is not the sort of faith which *Paul* taught, but another, a counterfeit, a dead sort." So that these two apostles speak of different things, and not contradictorily of the same thing. St. *Paul* speaks of true faith, St. *James* of a counterfeit and most dangerous sort of faith to be depended on. The former denies works to be the ground of a sinner's justification in the sight of God. The latter requires them as the saint's vindication of his profession in the sight of men. One says, the sinner's works can't save him; the other says, the saint's works must prove him to be what he pretends. St. *James* found the christians of his time made high pretensions to faith, and actually had a great deal of what they called by that name; yet, says he to them, ye may know 'tis a counterfeit sort by your unevangelical tempers and lives; whereas if your faith was right, its fruits would justify it; such a sight of divine righteousness and grace would be imported in it, as could not fail to shew your own vileness, and so take away the occasion of pride, and make you deeply humble. It would also give such sight of the purity of the

divine

divine nature and law, as would transform your spirits into the likeness of God, and make you holy, like his most holy law ; whereas the faith you have, leaves you earthly, carnal, vain. The effect which a man's faith has upon his temper and life, proves what sort it is. Ye see, therefore, says he, " how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." That is, not by being able to say that he believes, for that is not the evidence of true faith, nor will justify any one's pretensions to it ; the devils can with great truth say they believe. When there is nothing but belief, in a man's religion, no *divine truth*, or genuine virtue of its spirit ; and so no transforming effect, no holy fruits, 'tis thereby determined to be delusive. If faith be without works 'tis dead. All this is as true now, as it was in St. *James's* time. That faith which of its own nature makes a humble, self-loathing, self-denying, and of course a grace-exalting bent of mind, and so a life evidently bearing the heavenly impress, is as surely saving, as the word of God is true ; and the want of these in any one's belief, as evidently proves the contrary. This, methinks, might give surprize to many, and make them each begin to say, " the LORD have mercy upon
 " me ! What shall I do ? I see I have faith plenty,
 " I believe all things, in general, which the bible
 " teaches ; but alas ! I don't find it affects my
 " heart or life much. I am proud, vain, worldly,
 " passionate, negligent of duties, yet believe all the
 " time ; I fear my faith is dead, and that I am de-
 " ceived in my religion to this very day. My life
 " certainly stares against me ; I don't find my faith
 " is humble and sanctifying. I can have it as well
 " in a careless way, as any ; and don't this look like
 " ~~dead faith indeed~~ ? I don't find peace toward God ;
 " something

“ something within tells me I am not right; and
“ I not yet in the gall of bitterness, and under the
“ bonds of iniquity, without God, without CHRIST,
“ and without hope in the world! And so have
“ been every moment of my past life in immediate
“ danger of eternal burnings, having never had one
“ thing about me, with which God is pleased; always
“ deceiving myself with this notional faith.”

But perhaps all this is only surprize, and you are not yet convinced that your faith is false, and so damning instead of saving. Perhaps you don't see that your belief is essentially defective; but rather that it might do, if you had more of it, or if you had lived more agreeably. Perhaps you don't see, that, as readily as you have entertained the faith you have, you are thoroughly averse to that which is divine; and that true faith never begins with any thing less than omnipotence; and that God never bestows it, but on such as have wholly lost sight of all ability and goodness in themselves. On this supposition, how great the dangerous and growing distance between your soul and saving faith to this day? And what reason have those who can pray to cry out and say,
“ O thou God of the spirits of all flesh! who seest
“ and judgest the secrets of all hearts; who know-
“ est, perfectly knowest, the inward state of every
“ soul here, and what sort of faith we are risking our
“ eternity upon; be pleased, for the sake of that per-
“ fect atonement, to shine in these dark souls this
“ day, to give them the light of the knowledge of
“ the glory of God, as it appears to faith, in the face
“ of JESUS CHRIST. And suffer no proud, self-right-
“ teous delusion to prevent genuine conviction and
“ light, by the plain account of true and false faith
“ which may now be exhibited. And as every heart
“ is

“ is naturally bent against it, with all its might, ’till
 “ conquered by mere power of truth, so let thy
 “ power now be glorious in its going forth from
 “ conquering to conquer, ’till every heart of thy
 “ chosen shall bow to this only faith of the great
 “ Redeemer, *Amen.*” Let us now attend to the following distinctions between true and false faith, *viz.*

I. True faith commences at the very time when the sinner first finds all his soul needs, in the bible’s account of JESUS CHRIST, neither sooner nor later ; but a dead faith never commences at that time.

II. True faith always affects the mind in a manner answerable to the nature of its objects ; a dead faith never.

III. True faith produces just such effects, as the scriptures ascribe to true faith ; but a dead faith produces none of them. It has no sort of divine influence at all.

I. TRUE faith then begins when CHRIST with his own truth, and glorious sufficiency is first made known to the sinner. By which it will appear that dead faith has no such commencement. Here,

1. WE shall shew that there is an absolute and universal necessity for CHRIST to be specially made known to a person in order to his salvation. And then,

2. THAT this must be by faith, or in believing the gospel, and that there is no other way for a sinner to be saved.

3. SHALL give some account of the manner in which such faith is wrought.—Which will shew the nature and work of faith in the sinner’s justification, and that it is peculiar to divine faith.

I. THERE is an absolute necessity of a revelation of CHRIST to the sinner for his salvation. Now if

we are not well assured of this necessity, the doctrine of faith, as the alone mean of justification, will be to us as the doctrine of the cross was of old, to some a stumbling block, to others foolish. Not being convinced of our moral ruin is the grand reason why the doctrine of faith as taught in the scriptures, is so little regarded; they who are whole need not the physician. Let us take then ~~the~~ hint or two of evidence, that this ruin is ours.

(1.) If death reigned from *Adam* to *Moses*, that is, for two thousand five hundred years, over such as never committed one actual transgression; then human nature must be in a fallen guilty state; but death did so reign.--*Rom. v. 14*. Now death is the greatest punishment that ever was inflicted; such punishment those subjects deserved, if God is righteous in all his executions; but as they had committed no actual transgression, how could they deserve it, unless by an universally corrupted and ruined nature! And yet that same punishment hath passed upon all men, because all men, in that same sense, have sinned. There is therefore no way or name under heaven, given among men, by which they may be saved, but that of *JESUS* of *Nazareth*, *Acts. iv. 10, 12*. Nor any salvation by him, but through faith, *Eph. ii. 8*. 'Tis no evasion of this argument to say it was only bodily death that so reigned as the apostle says; because death of the body is great punishment, and so the argument is the same, *viz.* 'tis inconsistent with the nature of God and his government to punish those who are not guilty.

(2.) If we have all a natural freedom to sin, but no such natural freedom to be holy and heavenly; then our natures are sinful and not holy. This is evident to common sense. But nothing that worketh abomination

nation or maketh a lie, can, as such, enter heaven; nor can we be renewed from such state, but through faith.—Therefore, he that believeth, shall be saved, and he who believeth not shall be damned, *Mark xvi. 16.*

(3.) If one died for all, then were all dead, *2 Cor. v. 14.* Now though the *all* for whom CHRIST died, is to be understood in the most restrained sense, for the elect only; it will doubtless be allowed that they are not naturally in a worse state than the non-elect; but then the consequence is, all are as surely dead in sin by nature, as that CHRIST died for any.—Only therefore in him who raiseth the dead is there any possible hope of salvation.

2. THE only way to be saved by him, is through faith. Faith is believing God. Hence *Abraham's* faith is thus described, (*Rom. iv. 3*)—'tis a believing the record which God has given of his son,—*1 John v. 10, 11.* True faith is such a belief as makes its objects, present and certain realities in the mind; just as it is in believing a common fact,—*Heb. xi. 1.* Of consequence, a believer is one who is affected with divine things, just as if they were present realities, even as a common fact affects us as a common truth, when we believe it; and by this he stands distinguished from all subjects of counterfeit faith in the world, *1 John iii. 10.* Now we must be saved through such faith only, or by our own goodness altogether, or partly by both. But,

1. Not by our own goodness altogether; for if we were without sin at all, and our obedience was quite perfect, we could merit nothing, 'tis all already due; what can we then do, now that we are altogether sinful? Nay, our utmost can't begin to answer the native demands of the most holy law, because they

are all perfect, and we are so in nothing. And if we can't begin, what can we do? Beside, no person in the world is naturally willing to be holy, "the carnal mind is *enmity* against God, not subject to his law, nor indeed can be;" (*Rom. viii. 7*)--and if not willing, if enmity in the abstract, what can we do? Truly nothing at all.—Therefore, cursed is the man that trusteth in man, himself, or any other, 2. We cannot be saved partly by both; first, because we have no such goodness, as has been shewn; and also because no part of the glory of his grace, will CHRIST divide to another; (*Isa. xlii. 7, 8*)—therefore,—3. We are shut up to faith, to mere believing in the sense above described, for justification and acceptance with God. But now the question is, have we got this only saving precious faith? He who has, is now in a state of acceptance with God, and shall be found in CHRIST without spot and blameless.—But he who has not this only saving faith, is yet in his sins; all his life's transgressions are now lying against him in the book of God. What a dreadful catalogue fills out the long pages of that most voluminous record! Such as dare to trifle with cleansing blood, and free mercy, 'till righteousness terminates divine patience, will there find a long detail of crimes beyond their expectation! Sins of childhood, youth and riper years; of heart and lip and life; secret iniquities, which they thought no eye beheld; those which have galled their conscience, and they well remember; also thousands which (surprised to see) they thought long since forgot; millions more, which they hoped would be excused.—Nay, whole sheets are filled with their religious duties; not because they did them, but because profanely or proudly done. And the blackest charge of all is, "ye would not come to me, that
 " ye

“ ye might have life.” There is trusting to false hopes, self-righteousness and duties; crucifying CHRIST, despising the blood of the covenant; sabbaths and sermons trifled away; means and mercies always abused. Providence, word and spirit all profaned; sun and moon, house and friends, bed and board, life and health all abused to divers lusts and pleasures. And when they see hell subjoined to every page, and burning flames to every line, and no redeemer there, what will they do? The word of God condemns them; the perfect knowledge of the judge condemns them; and conscience from within, echoes truth to every charge. These are the three books by which the world is judged, and which for that purpose *Jobn* saw opened in the judgment. And when sinners, long called to faith by a kind redeemer, come to see these three records of divine authority, opened before them, they will turn their own accusers, and each amazed, begin to say, “ Oh stupid wretch
 “ that I was! Oh hardened rebel to this dreadful
 “ God! How long he called me, but I still refused!
 “ He warned, he waited, but I would not hear.
 “ Long time his bowels yearned, for he saw my state,
 “ he saw my danger, and this final day a coming.
 “ Indeed he told me all about it, but I chose my own
 “ delusions, was pleased with sin, and would not for-
 “ sake it. I know he offered pardon if I would be-
 “ lieve; he bid me trust his mercy, and I should be
 “ saved. But here, this heart held fast its idols, and
 “ would not let them go; yet hoped for heaven,
 “ dreaming of faith, of duties, and of sins forgiven.
 “ And now my time is gone, the door is shut, and
 “ he whose mercies I have abused, is now my judge,
 “ my dreadful avenger; no hope remains, there’s no
 “ escape; his eye sees through me, and his guards are
 “ round

“ round me ! The thunder rises ! Torment increases !
 “ My soul is sinking in the gulph of vengeance forever
 “ and ever !” There are they who despised the gospel,
 and despised the saviour ; were bid believe his truth, and
 trust his grace, but never did ; were often warned of
 certain ruin in every other way, but still would give ear
 to lying vanities ; they *must* lie in chains, *must* burn
 in hell forever and ever. More ages than this world
 has stood, won't bring relief. Their old heart re-
 mains, they have the same lusts and passions, the same
 taste and averſions, which always governed them ;
 yea, they are incensed and increased, old reſtraints are
 taken off, and reſtleſs fury burns within ; felt diſap-
 pointment, and black diſpair inflames and rages all
 their powers ; and theſe by diſtortion always grow-
 ing, *muſt* from nature and juſtice make that hell eter-
 nal.

Nothing leſs than all this, is the certain conſe-
 quence of deluſion in point of faith :—For God will
 bring every thing into judgment ; and “ he that be-
 lieveth not ſhall be damned.” This ſhould excite the
 grand inquiry,—how ſhall I become acquainted with
 true faith ? Or, how ſhall we know whether our faith
 is living or dead faith ? Which brings me to,

3. THE third thing propoſed, *viz.* To give ſome
 account of a ſaving change as wrought in the ſinner's
 heart ; which will ſhew that it is peculiar to divine
 faith. Here we ſhould ſpeak,—1. Of the ſinner's be-
 ing brought down from his towering hopes of accep-
 tance with God, by his own righteouſneſs, to ſee him-
 ſelf as he is, in order that mere mercy might have all
 the honor of his ſalvation. We have already ſhewn
 that all are naturally dead in ſin ; in which ſtate, they
 are either ſo ſtupid as not to apprehend danger, or
 ſo far blinded with their notions of goodneſs in
 themſelves

themselves, as to hope for deliverance thereby.—They are either hardened to ease in *Zion*, or are rich and increased in goods, and so have need of nothing; though in fact they are wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind and naked; not a moment's peace of conscience; always under wrath.—Know nothing of the comforts of the Holy Ghost, or of communion with God, nor taste any sweets in holy religion.—Their hearts are pleased with sin, but cordially delight in nothing that is divine.—And though they are always unhappy, their hearts being like the troubled sea, never at rest, knowing nothing of the nature of peace; yet they have a strange sort of easiness, and frost-bitten pleasure.—They make themselves secure, by a guard against thoughts of God, religion, and death; they make themselves hope things will end well, by false notions of God, and of their own goodness. In such like manner men lead their lives, not one person exempt, of any sort, 'till, it may be, God is pleased to alarm one, and that none of the best; for publicans and harlots shall go into the kingdom of heaven before those who think well of themselves. The means of this alarm are the words of God, with their inseparable attendants the Holy Ghost. The occasion may be taken from death, sickness, word read or preached, signal providence, or dictate of conscience; but the power of God is not restrained to all these, he may seize a person in the midst of his career, as *Saul* going prosperously to *Damascus*. Often the effect of this alarm, is only reformation of known sins, or setting up the practice of some known duty. And this naturally becomes a new ground of pride and self-righteousness; for the sinner knowing no better ground of trust, always puts importance upon what he thinks good in himself; here therefore many, doubtless
 very

very many, sit down, and here they die. But the scriptures, which are our grand rule in these matters, assures us, not only that God can, but that he often does, with little or no distinction of time, give the sinner his killing wound, and his healing grace; for 'tis all the same with him, to say, "I kill, and I make alive," or to do the work. This was illustrated in the forementioned case of *Saul*; the woman of *Samaria*; the thief on the cross, and others; and was represented in the resurrection of *Lazarus*, and other like instances. But a state of sin, guilt, death and wrath, must be seen and felt, for the whole need not a physician; and CHRIST came only to save such as are lost, and to none can he be precious but those who feel that character. This was the case of the convinced jailor, and the thousands at *Peter's* sermon, *Acts* ii. 37.—Some are by light of truth compelled to come forth sooner, others later.—Some go along kicking against the pricks, resisting light and conviction. 'Tis a metaphor taken from a dull ox, who will rather kick against the pointed goad, than yield to work, and quicken his pace; though by trying to repel the goad, he only hurts himself the more. Convictions make no alteration in the sinners moral state, no more than a person's continuing to feel pain in the rising of a distemper, cures it. They are the sinner's sight of himself, and when he is brought to see himself compleatly fit for immediate damnation, free grace will be glorious, if he is delivered; for the excellency of the power will be manifest to be of God. And 'till this is the case, be it sooner or later, delivering grace will not appear. But when the sinner is brought to see himself lost, two things remarkably take place. *viz.*

1. His old excuses, in which he used to persuade himself

himself there was some reason, now appear to be willing, discontented evasions of known truth and duty, and so greatly enhance his guilt. These fig leaves, not only will not cover him, but he sees himself, by so much the more exposed to wrath for them; they are now numbered among his great iniquities, and serve eminently to condemn him, as evidence in fact of the pride and enmity of his whole heart against the truth.

2. His duties and good qualifications, as a reason of hope, totally disappear. Before his convictions, yea always 'till now, he thought there were some good things about him, which kept his self-righteous spirit alive, and which shewed itself. 1. By an habitual conceit that God intended to be merciful to him. 2. By a turn of mind against those who did not think well of his moral state; and consequently by a disposition to cherish those who flattered his hopes. 3. By his habit of thinking there were some worse in the sight of God than himself. 4. By his inward disaffection to discourses or books which strenuously excluded *all works* in justification; and his real pleasure when some consideration for them was asserted. 5. By his thinking it hard that such as he should be doomed to eternal hell.—But now he views himself as a sinner, a hearty helpless sinner, his conscience and the law testify of a righteous judge, but he sees no beauty in him that he should be desired; for in this, those views of God which legal fear gives, are essentially different from those of faith and love. By the former he is viewed as an avenger, by the other as a father and a friend. One keeps the soul under slavish principles, and shuts out love; the other brings the soul in sight of rich favour, and casts out slavish fear. Of consequence, the former forbids
delight

delight and pleasure in any duty or service of religion ; the latter feels the ways of wisdom all-pleasant.

THE sinner thus come to himself, but not to God, to whom he never saw himself farther off than now, finds, in opposition to all his former imaginations, that what he needs is a new heart to be created in him, and another, a right spirit to be put within him ; and he finds 'tis equally unattainable by him as to create a world out of nothing ; for he knows he has no ability or fitness for the work.—He is totally blind, to all the things of the spirit of God, he don't see or feel things as the bible represents them ; don't hate sin for its nature, but for its punishment ; don't love religion for its excellency, but only for the safety it gives hope of.—He sees he don't venture his *all* on the merit of CHRIST alone, or trust his truth ; *he has no faith*.—He can't trust the word of a God, he has tried every mean for it all in vain ; he is as full of pride and unbelief as ever, and his sin, guilt, and condemnation increasing by all he thinks and all he does.—Which introduces the following things, and in the following order, *viz.*—1. That the wound of his case is, he is wholly destitute of the first principles of holiness. This shews why his heart will not yield to God, 'tis because there is no principle or spring of right action there. He sees now why his duties could not help him, because they must be like himself, as wide from morally right, as unlike God, and the commanding law, as he himself is. Just so, he sees, of course, is the utmost he can do ; and so he finds 'tis not in man to direct his steps ; now he learns the mournful truth, “ thou hast destroyed thyself.” A clear conviction of this, will naturally,

2. Introduce a suspension of arms in his opposing, quarrelling heart. The sinner naturally practised his
 opposition

opposition by a living disobedience to the whole revealed will of God; and now since his convictions, his opposition has been especially pointed against faith, as the only means of justification; he has shewed his enmity by refusing to trust his polluted soul, his guilty conscience in the hand of CHRIST for pardon and cleansing. CHRIST has bidden the sinner to come to him, with all his sin and guilt, and he should be delivered; but the sinner has said, it will not do, he won't accept me 'till I mend a little; I must get rid of some sins first, and get some more goodness in my heart; so he has indulged his enmity against the way of salvation by faith alone. And because he could not get deliverance in his own way, he thought hard of God, of the gospel, of all who would not encourage him in his way of acceptance; and would not be pleased with the way of life, as concerted by the wisdom of God. But now, since he sees his heart, and all its propensities are thoroughly perverse, and all its schemes for acceptance just like itself, all directly contrary to God and his way, and as such, the very height of iniquity; he says, "No wonder God has not accepted me! I thought there was some reason and goodness in my duties, and schemes for acceptance, but I see, I am convinced, 'tis quite otherwise; I am all sinner, and all that's mine, is like myself; no wonder God could not regard any thing I did! Now I see "they that are in the flesh *cannot* please God." This is my case, he and I are *contrary* the one to the other. Oh! miserable state that I am in, to be pitied of all beings! Lost and can't help myself, blind and can't see the only help; proud and will not yield to JESUS CHRIST. And because God would not change to me, my heart has

C

" wrangled

“ wrangled against him, and all his ways, but espe-
 “ cially his way of saving sinners as written in the
 “ bible. But now I see the reason of all my misery is
 “ from my willing self.—3. Therefore nothing can
 “ be more just than eternal destruction to my soul ;
 “ not one thing done in heaven righter than this ;
 “ the sentence in its dreadful weight is just as right
 “ as God is right ; for these things were all revealed
 “ to me in the word of God, and made exceeding
 “ plain ; but I have gone all my life directly against
 “ their testimony. I have sinned willingly, know-
 “ ingly, allowedly against light, knowledge, warn-
 “ ings, love, and mercies. Such measures I have
 “ consented to, and been pleased with ; of course,
 “ the consequent punishment is my own, and God
 “ is just. If, according to his word, he dooms me
 “ now to eternal burnings, that blessed world, my
 “ guilty soul, and all creation must applaud it just.”
 The sinner don’t hereby consent to his own damna-
 tion, ’tis impossible, but is convinced of perfect reason
 in the curse of the law, and of perfect justice if it
 should be executed.

Now if mercy is displayed, in a revelation of
 CHRIST, in his own grace and perfect sufficiency, to
 the sinner’s actual apprehension ; and so he should be
 changed into the same image, the excellency of this
 work would be *manifest to this person* to be of God ;
 consequently all the praise must evidently belong to
 him ; which cannot be secured to the proper object
 in any other way. Now this is the grand design of
 divine goodness by the gospel, to secure happiness
 to believing sinners, and *all* the glory to sovereign
 grace.—Wherefore, when the sinner is brought to
 these views of himself, as *all-sinner*, and God a righ-
 teous judge, then mercy in full consistence with
 justice,

justice, referring to the atonement, says, "*deliver him for I have found a ransom.*" Then the spirit of all-revealed truth, in the same instant, presents to the sinner's mind, in the light of the word of truth, that glorious CHRIST, which the gospel always offered him, and with this manifestation to the understanding, he effectually touches the will, loosing it from its natural engagements and bondage, and turning the *sett* of it to holy objects; the first and chief of which, is, as was said, at the same time revealed in the understanding, and so is seen in his divine glories; the will thus loosed, under the agency of the Holy Ghost, determines all for him, makes an ardent choice of him, as a seen complete redeemer, on him the soul rests, and the affections immediately centre; *i. e.* he believes the word of God; of consequence, the soul must have light and love, and joy and peace. Such is that regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost which the scriptures speak of. Such is that receiving CHRIST by faith, or by seeing and believing what he has done for sinners, wherein the work of God in the sinner's heart primarily consists. At the instant of the sinner's thus seeing truth and reality in what the bible says of CHRIST and his righteousness, and so finding relief in it equal to his case, which is faith, he is justified. And so you have an account of the commencement of living faith, which from the nature of the case must exclude all other faith from any place in this affair. Such faith appears in every view to be right, by its universal correspondence to the bible, and answering all the intentions of divine faith.—Whereas every other faith leaves the subject destitute of all these operations and powerful effects.

II. THE second rule of trial is, true faith always affects

affects the mind, in a manner answerable to the nature of its objects; but so dead faith never does. In a general manner, both these sorts of faith have the same objects. The true believer, and the deceived believer, can subscribe the same confession of faith; they both believe there is a God, a Redeemer, a Holy Ghost, a bible of divine authority, a christian sabbath, a necessity of faith to justification, a future judgment, and approaching eternity, but the point in question is, which of these sorts of believers is suitably affected by what he believes in these cases, by this the belief itself is determined to be genuine. For substance and shadow are not more different, than these two notions of faith, according to *Heb. xi. 1.*

HERE we should descend to particulars; but will it be to any purpose? 'Tis to be concluded, that a number here are now resting on dead faith; and that this is far the greatest number, perhaps ten to one; probably much more. And this sort are so generally secure, and in their own opinion safe, that there is little reason to expect a fair hearing, especially in an affair so disagreeable as trials of the truth of faith. However the power of God makes use of hearing for the purpose of begetting faith, (as nature does in common cases;) and possibly conscience may have begun already to disturb some of you. Are there not some here, perhaps of the looser sort whose wicked lives have shocked and weakened the strength of their hopes; or whose consciences have had more influence against the stupifying tendency of dead faith; who have had some secret misgivings at what was spoken of the sinner's lost estate, his convictions, or his saving change? Did not your conscience, my hearer, tell you, "thou hast never known that, nor that; thou

“ thou hast never seen things so; never felt such a change? &c.”—May that divine mercy; that open fountain, which takes motive only from itself, accompany the following illustrations with conquering light to your souls, as well as sweet confirmation to every humble spirit.

1. BOTH these sorts of faith profess to agree, there is a GOD: A being of all perfection, who can do all things, and is worthy of all reverence and obedience, and whose eyes are in every place beholding the evil and the good. Now the question is, how does our faith of this divine existence affect us? Natural conscience will say, surely the belief of such a being should solemnize the heart, make it not only afraid of sin, but endear all his will, and humble the soul to habitual reverence and universal obedience. And the language of scripture is, “ Let all the earth fear the LORD, and all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him,” *Psal.* xxxiii. 8—And *Prov.* iii. 5, 6, “ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not to thine own understanding.—In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” Here let the conscience of every person speak, does your faith of GOD *so* influence and govern your heart, and life? What says conscience? Or do you find that in spite of all your belief about GOD, his power and presence, your heart will have its way? Will be stupid, vain and trifling, roving after sensual objects, cold and wandering in the most sacred employments? How then does your faith affect your heart in a manner answerable to the nature of its object? The object of your faith now, is the perfections and presence of Jehovah, but your heart is just as it was, or would be without such belief; no commanding solemnity upon it; you can have all your common thoughts

thoughts of God, without any effect at all upon your heart. Are not these the speaking lineaments of dead faith? Now living faith of this object, purifies the heart, cleanses from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and enables to perfect holiness in the fear of God, 2 Cor. vii. 1. There is joy and peace in believing. He who has not these effects, has a dead faith, 'tis not the very substantiating evidence of its object as true faith is, *Heb. xi. 1.*

2. BOTH sorts of believers say, that JESUS CHRIST is the only saviour. Dead faith yields a sort of assent to all the scriptures say about CHRIST, and may follow him for the loaves, *i. e.* for some worldly or selfish advantage; it would be thought to believe his sufficiency, suitableness and excellency, yea, it may call him the chief of ten thousands, and altogether lovely; but they are empty words; for it neither trusts his sufficiency, nor is pleased with his suitableness, nor loves his excellency. When a false believer goes to his God, the medium of his access is always the goodness of his heart or life, past duties, earnestness, honesty, the pityableness of his case, or some other personal qualification, but never CHRIST'S merit and righteousness alone. But a christian believes, and so is governed according to the scripture account of that only saviour. Does he save his people from their sins,--he who believes it repairs to him with all his guilty burdens for relief. Is CHRIST'S righteousness the only medium of access to God, and acceptance with him, living faith enables to rely on *that*, exclusive of all other placating considerations. If CHRIST executes the great offices of king, priest and prophet, divine faith looks to the first for all acts of power and sovereign dominion, both to subdue and destroy all its enemies, looks to, and depends on the second, for

for all pardon and cleansing; and on the last, for all light and teaching. Faith derives all its sin-subduing, heart-purifying, soul-enlightening virtues from the same CHRIST whom it believes to be exalted for that very purpose. As a christian believes him to be the chief of ten thousands, he treats him accordingly, by supreme affection, and all-governing regard. Indeed, choice and delight attend divine faith, in all its exercises towards its numberless divine objects: "Faith works by love." Are they, like the first and chief of them, all pure; then faith purifies the heart. Is CHRIST the LORD strong and mighty, faith takes sanctuary in all dangers, from all its adversaries, in him. As faith sees the will of GOD is our sanctification, so it sets the LORD, and his illustrious examples, before our eyes, and makes the soul ardent, by every means, after holiness. CHRIST is "the way" from all evil, to all good, accordingly he who believes it can rid himself of no sin, of no penal evil, but by him; can obtain no inward blessing or outward relief but by him. CHRIST is "the truth" of all he pretended, of all ancient types and prophecies, and of all the soul needs; accordingly faith trusts him without reserve, sees him in the long train of *Mosaic* types, and in all the prophets, and goes to him boldly with all its wants. In short, to them who believe he is precious, and so true faith stands distinguished from every counterfeit. "The life" that is in CHRIST gives being to faith, and all it does, wherein consists most emphatically its essential difference from every other notion of faith.

3. THEY both profess to hold the divine presence, necessary and universal efficacy of the Holy Ghost, in all spiritual and evangelical productions. A false professor holds the indwelling of the spirit of God, as
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the common privilege of christians, and can say for it, "if any man have not the spirit of CHRIST, he is none of his," *Rom. viii. 9* :—and yet he can be easy, year after year, in a total estrangement to him, and ignorance of his efficacies. He fancies himself to be taught by the word of GOD, which never gives divine knowledge, but as the Holy Ghost invigorates it for that purpose, and without which that spirit does never so teach. He hopes, however, he has some small measure of the spirit, (and small measures will serve them who desire none) because he is sober, performs duties, and has some concern about his soul; and especially if providence smiles upon him, and he has some unexpected deliverance, and prosperity, then he hopes this unseen blessing is somewhere about him; and he is much easier with these deluded suppositions than he would be if he really thought the Holy Ghost was there.—"Whereas true faith gives sense of impotence and helplessness to every divine efficacy with him: knows 'tis by the spirit of GOD that all its works are wrought. And accordingly, a christian opens to him, relies on him for all manner of divine efficacy with the word, its only immediate mean; and he has answerable experience, according to the variety of the word, and the needs of his heart and life, for he has "received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of GOD, that he might know the things which are freely given him of GOD," *1 Cor. ii. 12*. And these are not rare things, but matters of daily and hourly experience with a christian, and so his faith affecting him answerably to its object, determines it the only gospel faith. But this is such a sort of an affair, unnatural to mankind, that it may be asked, how shall I know whether I have the Holy Ghost dwelling in me, according to the promise of CHRIST, or not?

ANSWER.

ANSWER.—1. The indwelling of the spirit, is only manifest by the indwelling of bible truth, if therefore scripture truth dwells with you, and is wrought into the temper and habit of your mind, 'tis the alone work of the Holy Ghost, and the stated evidence of his indwelling, *John vii. 38, 39.—1 John ii. 27.*

2. Of consequence, if all ungodliness, and especially your own, is the object of your habitual aversion, and the contrary points of holiness, the objects of your soul's bias, 'tis evidence of this indwelling spirit, *Gal. v. 16, 17.*

3. THE spirit of CHRIST, is a spirit of prayer, of praise, and of free and intimate communion with God; if you have these, just as the bible requires and describes them, 'tis not only evidence he is there, but 'tis the very work of the Holy Ghost that you feel, and are actuated by, *Eph. vi. 18. Rom. viii. 26. Eph. v. 18, 19, 20. John xvi. 13, 14.*

4. BOTH these sorts of faith confess the divine original and authority of the bible; and yet one never affects the reader suitably to the notion of pure divinity. This is the reason why multitudes, who if an earthly king, or even a natural father, should speak, threaten, command or promise to them, they would receive impression answerable to the thing spoken, and the authority of the speaker; yet when they read or hear the bible, they have no answerable effect, though they say 'tis the word of God to them; and so the word, not being mixed with faith, never profits them. Their souls are not united to the truth they read, and so never get the sincere milk of it for nourishment, but wither and die in the midst of gospel plenty; just as when the digestive powers of the stomach are not employed on the food received, so no nourishment is secreted, the body must pine and die. At the

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same time living faith, viewing the holy book as a fountain of truth and light, the soul derives actual nourishment, feels its quick and powerful virtues, and it proves to be *the word of God*, by working effectually in them that believe. But to see the distinction, we should be a little more particular; and say,

1. THERE are in the word of God, commands, both moral ones, founded in the nature of their cases, and enforced by divine authority; and positive ones, founded only in the will of God. Dead faith owns all this, but never affects the reader with any commanding sense of authority in the precept, or yielding subjection in his heart. Whereas by true faith the mind sees authority and majesty, as well as reason and goodness in the command, and is bowed to unfeigned obedience, and so the word of the LORD is powerful.

2. THERE are also in the word of God, promises, both absolute ones, without any condition, because they contain the first qualifications, and are therefore the only fountain for those who have none; and conditional ones, which convey their goods to those actually furnished with their condition. An ungodly believer reads these as he does other scriptures, but has no sense of the rich treasures lodged in them, nor does his faith ever seize upon them, and draw them out. He reads about the covenant of grace, which is composed of these great and precious promises, but he regards it not as a summary of the loving-kindness of the LORD proposed to his soul; nor does ever bow to its bands, or taste its sweetest mercies. Whereas in all these is the life of true faith; and unless these gracious words of the covenant and its promises, with their divine certainty, had been the soul's relief, it must have perished in many an adversity.

3. THERE

3. **THERE** are doctrines also, by which the man of **GOD** may be thoroughly furnished to every good work. To these true faith gives heed as to the instructions of its **GOD**, its father, and its friend. By these a true believer is made light in the **LORD**, and wise unto salvation. They are a light to his feet, and a lamp to all his paths.—But they are daily a savour of death unto death to a dead believer. 'Tis with this sort of people, as of old with *Jerusalem*, the words of their peace are before their eyes, but the *things* of their peace, contained in those words, are totally hidden from their eyes, *Luke* xix. 42.

4. **THERE** are stories, examples, and penalties in the word of **GOD**, by which the different sorts of professors are very differently affected. Divine faith sees the whole moral system acted out in the two former, as it were, in instances before its eyes; and so seeing the will of **GOD** illustrated in them, is furnished with patterns for heart and life. It sees in these stories and examples scripture promises made out in facts, to faith of its doctrines, and obedience of its commands; and the penalties as surely executed on the want of both. But dead faith though it may be amused and diverted by them, never takes these admonitions. or gets such divine wisdom from them. And the scripture stiles them fools, who though they have so great a price in their hand, have no heart to improve it: so the effect produced by faith determines its kind.

5. **THESE** two sorts of faith agree in some sort of assent to the morality of the sabbath; that fixed memorial of creation and redemption; that picture of soul-rest in **CHRIST** now, and of endless rest with him in glory. Professing christians, in general, allow the whole day is the **LORD**'s; but dead faith is so little affected with its divine designation, that if interest

or humour calls, if pleasing example, custom, or company requires, in front of his belief, the professor can infringe upon its borders, trifle with its obligation, and serve himself with it, in thought, if not also in word and deed. If he escapes the civil lash, and popular censure, 'tis well enough; and yet affirms the sacred precepts about it, and the dreadful effects of its prophanation. Whereas belief of the holiness of the sabbath, will dispose and bind the heart to be in temper, and practice just what it is in profession. Both these sorts of professors read, and allow the divinity of that remarkable rule for sabbatizing in the fifty-eighth of *Isaiab*, and two last verses; and one of them feels divinely bound to act it out sincerely; they of this sort make a business of it, not in shew only, but in spirit, to keep holy the sabbath day. While the other never goes much further than appearances, and often in them visibly defective. Hence the wide difference so evident among professors about sanctifying the sabbath.—And to their different measures very different consequences correspond; the one sort has acceptance with God, the other has none; the one has peace on this head, the other has none; one is a sweet favour unto God, the other a stench; because to one sort the sabbath is a weariness, and their hearts tired with its restraints, say, “when will it be gone?” While the other does more than *call* it a delight; 'tis to them “the holy of the LORD and honorable.” And these employ the day, in every part, with a holy mind, and heavenly business; but the other are always destitute of both. So the former are approved of God, their conscience, and the law, while the latter are condemned of all. True faith is always operative, and influences soul and life according to its objects; but other faith is not so; and this makes the visible difference among professors.

6. BOTH sorts affirm a necessity of faith for justification in the sight of God, and a christian both sees what to believe for that purpose, and that there is necessity of it ; but the formalist never sees either. A believer knows that the merit of what CHRIST did, is his *only* and *sufficient* source of hope ; others can say it, but they never believe it. True faith in justification always corresponds exactly to the divine testimony concerning CHRIST ; such an atonement, such a righteousness, the sensible sinner feels need of, and this God requires him to believe ; and he who finds himself *all-sinner*, and all he can naturally do, *all-sinful*, will rejoice at sight of a righteousness, to perfection sufficient of itself, and wrought out on purpose for the believing sinner ; on this he trusts alone, by this he is made just, and on this score exclusively he has abundant acceptance. True faith always has the thing it believes, and produces the genuine effect, *Heb. xi. 1. Rom. v. 1, &c.* but dead faith gives no divine possession, produces not one divine effect ; so the believer is blessed with faithful *Abraham*, the other remains the same that he was. But it may be said, “ justification is to me a dark affair ; how shall I know whether I am justified or not ? ”

ANSWER.—I. Justification is not a matter of experience ; 'tis a great change, but 'tis merely relative. It lies not in the frame of the mind, but in the relation, which the person as a sinner bore to a righteous God, and his law. All the claim a sinner has on God, is wrath ; all the title he has in law, is curse. Now, in justification, that claim, and this title are totally solved ; his relation to God and the law, as a sinner, is made wholly void ; so he is dead to the law, that he might, in consistence with the law, be made alive unto God. Justification therefore is the absolving sentence of the judge. 2. By

2. By the gospel method of saving men, no person is justified, but upon knowledge of his hopeless ruin, as has been shewn, in every way, but by CHRIST, and what he has done ; for only by such knowledge is the natural preventive of saving faith removed ; “ the whole don't need a physician.” Doubtless, therefore, if thou hast never yet so come in sight of thy own self, thou art still unjustified : For with God, only the poor and needy find mercy.

3. JUSTIFICATION is naturally followed with freedom of conscience. In a state of sin, the conscience is always in bondage by guilt, which is its own feeling, that it must suffer for doing wrong. This felt necessity of suffering, takes its life and strength from God and the law ; but the sinner's relation to God and his law, as a sinner, is made void in justification ; of consequence the conscience must be freed from its guilty bond :---“ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God ;” *i. e.* the account is settled with the avenger, by what CHRIST did, now imputed ; whereas to his own view, he always knows he is the sinner still.

4. JUSTIFICATION is always followed by sanctification. Sanctification don't consist in outwardly doing right ; but it consists in such purifying of the conscience, as knowledge of divine objects necessarily makes ; “ beholding his glory we are changed :” which objects are no sooner known than loved, and so give spring to all practical holiness. Justification is in order of nature, but not of time, before sanctification ; “ whom he justified, them he glorified,” by beginning their heavenly holiness at the same time. As soon as God caused *Yoshua's* iniquity to pass from him, his filthy garments were taken off, and he was cloathed with change of raiment, *Zeck. iii. 4.*

Justification

Justification is instantly perfect, but sanctification only then begins, and increases to perfection in glory. True faith, just as it is, the substance of these things, effectuates the design of them, in the believer; in every point of which efficacy, it is entirely distinguished from all other faith.

7. THE subjects of living and dead faith both *say* there is an inseparable connection between holiness and happiness: But they differ widely in their notions of both parts of the connection. They alike read and profess, that “the pure in heart shall see God;” and the believer knows what that purity of heart is, as it stands distinguished from the most religious outward life in the world; he knows also the connected certainty of seeing God, and what it means, and that the connection takes place now, or never. Accordingly he hungers and thirsts after righteousness; cries out of the oppression of sin; longs for more purity, as the only way in which to enjoy God, the sum of all his happiness.—He wars against the first risings of sin in his heart, and his only relief from it, is in sight of atoning blood, from which alone springs up repentance and a sight of pardon.—His prayer is, *let the Lord speak, and make my heart sound in all thy statutes, then shall I not be ashamed.* Whereas other professors, if their lives are outwardly regular, in their own sense, they are well enough; holy enough; and if they can but make up an indolent *hope-so*, they are happy enough. As to such happiness as consists in the light of God, they put all that to the account of another life. So differently are they affected by their faith.

THESE two sorts of christians differ widely in their notions of good works; both hold a necessity of them, but one sort know they must be the produce of living faith;

faith ; in this sense is true, “ the living, the living, they praise thee, the dead praise thee not.” They who believe, maintain good works, *Tit. iii. 8* ;—while the other sort set down for such, all their sober, well-meant, religious actions, if not some others. To make a good work, the first sort consider the original, motive, and view of an action ; the other, only the seeming beauty of the thing done, regardless of its internal qualities, or relation to the law. Hence arise several observable events.

1. SOME professors, though they know their lives and manners are unexceptionable enough, yet can't be easy with themselves, because they don't see God, and feel the divine life ; their views are low and sensual, the love of God is not shed abroad in their hearts, nor they governed by faith, 'tis distressing, and they cannot be easy. Others, in the mean time, though they see and feel none of these things, as indeed they never do ; are easy and happy, as long as they can keep up their usual regularity and hope-fo's. This is their holiness, and their sense of it is their happiness : “ Verily they have their reward.”

2. SOME professors are ever apt to be jealous of their hearts, lest, after all, they should be some way seduced and deceived by them ; they have a watchful eye over them, they dare not trust them. Indeed for want of a sight of divine grace, are often fearful to admit the most precious things of the everlasting covenant, for their comfort and relief. While others are forward enough, very forward to catch a piece at wisdom's table, without regard to order ; if they can get hold of a promise, no matter by what right. This is a reason why the purest gospel-preaching is no more useful ; God's people are often shy to take the full latitude of its blessings for their help ; and false professors

professors *will* apply them for their hardening. The disciples all said, "LORD is it I," except *Judas*.--*Mark xiv. 19.*

3. SOME professors, in time of trouble, run speedily to the throne of grace, to the feet of mercy; they say each, "it is the LORD, what wouldst thou have me to do?" and hear him say, "by this shall the iniquity of *Jacob* be purged, and this is all the fruit, to take away his sin." Then comes prayer, "LORD humble me! cleanse my soul, and heal me!" And then, "remove thy stroke away from me." But others fly only to means, to schemes, in which to terminate their hopes. Or they sit down and say, "ah! 'tis the common lot of all men, and we must take our chance with the rest."

4. SOME professors heartily prefer the closest gospel preaching, they seek and prize it, and the more distinguishing it is, the better. But with others he is the best and most agreeable preacher, who dwells in generals; troubles not their ears with those nice and heart-disturbing distinctions. Their hopes are fair, and their hearts are easy, and they choose to have them kept so. If sinners are alarmed, they are disturbed; if saints rejoice, their envy rises. Indeed if all is quiet, they are well, but if *Zion* prospers, they repine: And if they themselves are urged with downright bible truth, they will not bear it. Yet all the while holding they are sinners, and must be holy, or no hope of heaven. So totally destitute of any thing answerable to their belief, are all false believers.

8. ALL profess to believe a future judgment and approaching eternity. And with some their faith makes them real, present things, and they are suitably affected with them. They have a view to the coming of the LORD, in all their ways; and to live like dying

and accountable persons for all they do and say. For "he that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as he is pure," 1 *John* iii. 3. But others know they must die, and after that come to judgment; yet they live on, in pursuit of sensual objects, corn, wine, oil; crying peace, peace, 'till sudden destruction comes upon them. They are concerned about many things, but least of all how to know CHRIST, and be found in him.---Of all this, the lives of the multitude are a flagrant proof; they hold these truths in their unrighteousness, and on them is the wrath of God revealed. Vain men! says St. *James*, "can faith save you?"

III. THE third and last trial proposed was, true faith produces just such effects as the scriptures ascribe to true faith.---But not one of them does any other faith produce.

I. ONE notable effect which the scriptures ascribe to divine faith is, that by mean of it a sinner is made a just person in the sight of God. And yet 'tis not possible any action of a sinner's heart should do this; for then 'tis something in that act, which gives it its divine worth and efficacy. And if any act done by a soul can from its own goodness and value justify a sinner before God, there was no need of CHRIST, according to *Gal.* ii. 21. This would make faith a work of the law, by supposing that act of the sinner, had in itself, some quality answerable to the nature and design of the law, which is an absurdity in terms, a natural impossibility; upon which therefore, and upon all such supposed works, the inspired apostle fixes despair of justification, *Rom.* iii. 20. Faith then justifies a sinner only as the perfection of CHRIST's lawful righteousness is its matter or thing believed. The case is this.---When a person is brought to see himself *all-sinner*, God makes him believe what the bible

bible says about CHRIST as the divine favour, by shewing him the truth of it, which he never would, or could see before; for faith is the gift of God, only to such as see themselves." In this believing, God justifies him, while yet ungodly, *Rom. iv. 5.* By accounting that perfect righteousness which CHRIST wrought for sinners, to this person, as he always said he would to such as believe it. And then, on the same account, he purifies his conscience, and takes him for one of his own people, *Eph. i. 4 to 7.* So he is said to be justified by faith, because it could not be done 'till he believed the justifying truth. But no sooner does he believe the truth, than that truth sets his soul at liberty: "The truth shall make you free." Now this faith actually operates just so to the sinner, as the scripture said it would. But there is no other faith which is capable of producing any such effect.

2. THE scriptures ascribe our title to all new-covenant goods, to faith. Believers are all the children of God by faith, *Gal. iii. 26.* They are heirs to all divine blessings by faith, *Eph. ii. 8.* Their whole salvation with all its mercies, is through faith, *2 Tim. iii. 15.* Whereas dead faith has no title, but to that wrath which is revealed against its own unrighteousness. But to be particular;

1. A BELIEVER has right to the favour and acceptance of God.---That believing sinners have divine rights the unerring word affirms.---*John i. 12,* "As many as received him, to them gave he *exousian* right, *tekna Theou geneſsbai,* to be children of God." *Rev. xxii. 14,* "They that do his commandments," which is the case of believers only, "have right to the tree of life," *i. e.* to CHRIST and all his benefits. The word is *exousia.* And by the same *right* they enter in through the gates, to enjoy all the privileges of
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the holy city. Their right by heirship is also very familiar in the gospel; "if children, then heirs." The word is *kleeronomoi*, for they hold by law all that is given them: Therefore, "heirs of God, and joint heirs with CHRIST," whose is the possession and distribution of all things. In the same sense believers "inherit the promises," have and hold them by right of heirship; so they have "an inheritance among all them that are sanctified."---And so every believer "inherits all things." Two things naturally prevent men of these rights; one is, the subject is a willing sinner, always sins with all his heart. But this preventive is removed entirely, when, upon sight of CHRIST, he is enabled to believe the lawful righteousness of the gospel: and when thereupon, by imputation, it becomes his own. For thereby he is perfectly justified, and instantly begins to be made holy. And though he will never have any lawful holiness, naturally his own; yet CHRIST having engaged by covenant to maintain and promote his sanctification to final glory, this believer is admitted into christian rights, as if he was a true natural son. His rights also are more sure, and more happifying, than if he was naturally a true son. The other thing which naturally excludes from these rights, is, the unsatisfied demands of injured justice and the law. But these CHRIST has fully answered, by atonement equal to their nature. There remains, therefore, nothing, on the part of justice, or the law, or on the part of the believer, to keep him out of favour; and he may now, hourly claim acceptance in the name and right of his redeemer, transferred to him, inviolably confirmed on him through believing. So now, "he who was afar off, is made nigh by the blood of CHRIST."---"He is our peace, who has made both one, having broken down
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down the partition, and abolished the enmity." Of consequence, " God is not ashamed to be called the believer's own God and father." Accordingly his constant language is, " come unto me," " walk with me ;" " ask what ye will and it shall be done," " trust in me nothing doubting," " I will give thee the desires of thine heart." " I have loved thee with an everlasting love," " I will never leave thee nor forsake thee ;" " but will deliver thee in six troubles and in seven ;" nay, " all things shall work together for thy good." Believers are not at liberty to use these rights or not, but are bound to claim accomplishments ; " *do as thou hast said ;*" " fulfill the word on which thou hast caused me to hope." But dead faith is as strange and ignorant to all these *things*, as an infant to philosophy, or a pagan to the love of God ; and never comes nearer than, " what hast thou to do to take my covenant into thy mouth ?"

2. FAITH has title to all necessary temporal goods. For this, God has engaged his infallible truth, " verily thou shalt be fed," *Psal.* xxxvii. 3.---" All these things shall be added unto thee."---" Trust in him and he shall bring it to pass."- -" He shall give thee the desires of thine heart."---" He healeth all thy diseases, redeemeth thy life from destruction, crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies, and satisfieth thy mouth with good things," *Psal.* ciii. Yea, no *good thing* will he withhold from faith. But it may be said, where then is faith to be found ? For who, or where is he, who is thus blessed with good things ?

ANSWER.—I. You must not judge of the rights of faith by every defect, or outward want of its subjects ; but by the express letter of its grants, made and secured to it in the covenant of truth.

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2. You are not to judge every professor to be a true believer ; nor any an unbeliever, merely for some outward trouble or want, for the poor in this world are often rich in faith, and their portion is safe and sure, though not all yet dealt out.

3. BUT if any man is lacking in the spiritual mercies of the covenant, 'tis evidence he is lacking in faith, to which these divine rights are all secured. But if he be needy of outward goods, 'tis no evidence he has not such, and all such as are necessary, good, and best *for him*, at present.

4. HE who would experience more of these rights of faith, must understand, believe, and put to trial what our LORD teaches—*Matt. xvi. 24 to 26*, “ If any man will come after me,” and so find what his joint heirship with me imports, “ let him deny himself, and take up his cross.” This is christianity ; faith first took place in total self-denial, and ever after pines, or prevails, on the use or disuse of this cardinal doctrine ; the old rule still stands as good as ever, “ according to thy faith be it unto thee.” And so it comes to pass, that as often, and in the same degree, as a christian seeks, or indulges his sensual or selfish life, he loses in the life of faith ; on the contrary, just so much as is ceded to this, is lost to that.

5. ON the whole, the rights of faith are all *certainities*, “ ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done.” The desires and prayers of faith, (and truly no other ever reach the ears of a covenant God) are filial, “ not my will, but thine be done.” Accordingly he who *knows* what, when and how, is best, has reserved the execution of all the rights of faith to himself, that they may *certainly* all take place, infallibly and universally, according to his covenant engagements, that no believer may ever be ashamed, world without end.

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Here is the patience of faith, waiting the will of God, in every thing, as the husbandman for his harvest. And here is one instance of the assurance of faith, always knowing that in due time we shall reap, if we faint not. Indeed, as a God of nature, he gives food to the ravers, and sends his sun and rain on the unjust; but as a covenant God, in which character especially faith has to do with him, the rule is, "*thou wilt prepare their heart, and cause thine ear to hear.*" But men generally finding many things flow from the God of nature, as such, care not on what right they come; so a covenant God is not in all their thoughts; these at best are dead believers.

3. FAITH has right to deliverance from troubles. "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me."---"Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth him out of them *all.*" On such truth, faith fixes, and is sure of deliverance; but as to when and how, is never sure beyond the letter of a promise. If the christian is prepared with patient faith, and so with mortification, or self-denial, enough to improve deliverance to the purposes of the promise, he may expect it speedily, because "he will exalt them *in due time*, 1 *Pet.* v. 6.---So true faith has harbour, and anchor-hold by which to ride out every storm; while dead faith, easy 'till trouble comes, is forced to sink, or fly like chaff before the wind.

4. FAITH has right to spiritual mercies here and hereafter.---"Grace and glory, and no good thing will be withhold from those who walk 'uprightly." The extent of faith's claims is the letter of the promises, and so for things not named there, it says, "if the LORD will, we shall live and do this, or that." Yet on spiritual goods especially, faith may insist, knowing already

already that the will of God is our sanctification," and that 'tis his good pleasure to give us the kingdom. Whereas dead faith insists on temporal goods, and hesitates only about spirituals.

3. THE scriptures ascribe assurance to faith---“ Let us draw near in full assurance of faith, *Heb. x. 22.* Now as faith is a believing the scripture account of things, so the assurance of faith, is the sensible clearness and strength of the evidence, on which faith in that case stands. Therefore the apostle, *Col. ii. 2,* calls it *the full assurance of understanding.* Consequently,

1. ASSURANCE of faith is not assurance of our own good or safe estate. Such assurance cannot in itself be distinguished from a false confidence, and if it could, would generally be of little continuance, and less use; nor does the scripture use the word in this sense at all. *Isa. xxxii. 17,* speaks of CHRIST'S righteousness, the consequent peace with God, and the sensible certainty of the things believed. As to *1 John iii. 19,* it speaks of the assurance of hope, which supposes the assurance of faith as above described. 'Tis as evident,

2. THAT in case of true faith, there is always as much assurance as faith, never more, never less. For faith is knowledge of divine objects, or things believed, and the evidence of truth in that case, makes faith's assurance.---So they must agree, and be inseparable. So the gospel came to the *Thessalonians,* in much assurance or sensible certainty, as to its matter, *1 Thes. i. 5.*

3. 'Tis as evident that hope, and its assurance, of which in *Heb. vi. 11,* differ much from the case of faith. Christian hope rises from a sense of interest in, or title to, those matters of promise which are objects of faith; and the assurance of hope, is the sensible certainty

certainty of such interest. Hence this is the grand object of self-examination; therefore the apostle, in the last-mentioned text, directs us to give diligence to have our hope clear. Experience makes hope, *Rom. v. 4*, but not faith; and this hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us: Of these dead faith knows nothing at all.

4. THE scriptures ascribe to faith, a remarkably humbling virtue. It beholds the glory of the LORD, and in the light of it shews the person to himself, "in thy light, we see light." Hence nothing more natural to a christian, than, "behold I am vile." In this, true and false faith differ, one has as much humbleness of mind, as it has of believing; the other has just so much religious pride. To one, a smile of God is the only mean of humbling; only the supposition of it, with the other, is the food of its pride. Supposed appearances of grace and love of God, have always just so contrary effects on them. The one always claims some goodness of heart of its own, the other never; so one has boasting, the other none. The subject of the one is always bad enough in himself to be condemned now, the other always too good. Therefore with the one, the judgments of God are right, but with the other, too hard.

5. THE scriptures ascribe to faith a peculiar efficacy to please God.---"Without faith 'tis impossible to please him, *Heb. xi. 6*. True faith hearkens to his voice, receives his testimony, regards his honour, trusts his truth, does his will, and these are its life and only delight; not one of which is true of any other faith. Nothing is more natural to the former than "thy will be done." The other always resists the manifest design of the will of God. The one submits

to his correcting hand, the other submits and pleases in nothing, "he is angry with the wicked every day."

6. THE scriptures ascribe to faith a purifying virtue, "beholding his glory, we are changed into the same image." It assimilates the soul to its objects; and of course, begets self-loathing, and abhorrence of every sensual taste. Thence the believer's prayer is, "cleanse me, O LORD, from secret faults;" "purge me with hyssop, that I may be clean." Dead faith may occasion a reformation of life, though, in that, its influence is from selfish views; but it never makes evangelical purity, because it never sees evangelical objects, the only patterns of, and incentives to holiness.

7. THE scriptures ascribe to faith, a divine life and spiritual growth.---"I live by the faith of the son of God," *Gal. ii. 20*, and "*your faith groweth exceedingly*," *2 Thes. i. 3*.---So now, a christian becomes fruitful in every good work, and increases in the knowledge of God, on'y through believing. 'Tis by faith that he grows in grace, and in the love of God; and so goes from faith to faith, gets clearer views of God, and consequently more self-emptying experience of himself; and so grows up toward the stature of such as be perfect. Whereas dead faith, never having divine life, can never divinely grow; hence the evident difference in point of life, spirituality, and growth among visible christians.

8. THE scriptures ascribe to faith, a strange power to bear up under trials. Faith is so the substance, and present evidence of the glorious power, and sufficiency of CHRIST, that it "strengthens with *all might*, in the inner man, unto all patience and long-suffering with joyfulness," *Col. i. 11*. This strength and support to the believer is by the spirit of truth, *Eph. iii. 16*.---So that he can endure as seeing him who is
invisible,

invisible, *Heb.* xi. 27. He has sense of a present God, "lo I am with you;" and so of his righteousness and mercy, his encompassing arms, his wisdom to order, and his sovereign power to save; with the never-failing truth of his covenant engagements, to issue this trouble for some divine purpose, "all things shall work together for good." Faith can see a necessity of this trial, in this manner, and at this time, "if need be ye are in heaviness." It knows there is a kind design, "whom I love I rebuke and chasten." Hence a christian can approve his troubles, "'tis good for me that I have been afflicted." In every furnace of affliction, true faith has one like the son of man, ever present. So it can be joyful in tribulation, and thankful for its kind design, and precious effects. While dead faith either murmurs or despairs, is senseless, or sullen under correction. Hence God often removes their stroke, saying "why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more."

9. THE scriptures teach us that access to God is by faith, *Eph.* iii. 12, "in whom we have boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of him." Faith has access to God in the following cases.

1. IN the habitual views of the mind. A christian knows that God, with all his perfections on, is where *he* is; "thou God see'st me." He knows the eye of God to see, his ear to hear, his arm of power to help, his mercy to pity, and his fulness to supply, are always present. A believer, considered in that character, knows that he lives and moves, and thinks and speaks in God. He can truly say, "I am not alone, because the father is with me." And yet he is no more terrified than the bush was burned; but has close access to him, sight and sense of him. He lives, and walks, and works, in fellowship with God, 1 *John* i. 7. This

is the life of the believer's life ; but the thought of it is deadly, to dead faith.

2. In ejaculatory communion.---The living christian is ever, now and then, whispering in the ear of his God, " Oh for more holiness ! Oh to have this heart, nature, humour, passion, more mortified through knowledge of thy glory ! Oh for direction in my way, for ordering my affairs, for help in this duty, for support in this trial, for strength to endure this hardship !" True faith has ever something to say to its God, pleading, praising, confessing, or something ; and something to hear from him in his word, by the spirit thereof, teaching, quickening, reproving, and such like. They who walk in the light, as God is in the light, have constantly such fellowship one with another, 1 *John*. i. 7 ;---that is, HE and they.

3. In devolving heavy burdens upon him.—" Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee." Many a time the christian's heart must sink under its pressing weights, of sin, cares, business, or affliction, if it were not for this relief. But faith seeing room and reason for it, and finding absolute need, delivers over its concerns according to the precept, and finds relief according to the promise. Dead faith can only ease the heart by sight of natural means, or supposed prevalence of some personal consideration with God, or by a mere indolent presumption of a favourable issue.

4. In special duties, whether publick, secret or private.—Faith has directly to do with God in duties, by it the soul comes to its seat, and orders its cause there. It comes to God himself, leaning on the beloved, and receives instructive answers from his word and works. While dead faith plays off, with its
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long dry forms and tools, and receives no answers, but from imagination, or pre-conceived design.

5. IN sudden and unforeseen occurrences.—Whether they are prosperous or adverse, faith instantly says, “ ’Tis the LORD, let him do what seemeth him good.” It can bid welcome to, and be thankful for, the most sudden corrective incident, as well as be humbly surprized with mercies. They alike shew that God “ is good, and doeth good, and his tender mercies are over all his works.” Yea, if the believer sees second causes, or wicked instruments in his affliction, he knows they may design evil by it, but that God means it for good. True faith will kiss the rod, and love the humbling stroke; in all which dead faith is just the reverse of it.

10. AND lastly.—Christian faith is victorious faith. “ This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith,” 1 *John* v. 4. Faith presents such reality and excellency in divine objects, as attracts the mind away from things of sense, and fairly solves their strong dominion. ’Tis faith raises the christian above the world, and daily carries him, with a gentle gale, over the frowns, the smiles, and shifting changes of the creatures. By this his corruptions are subdued; by this he conquers Satan and the world; by this he is supported in adversity, prevails at the throne of grace, and lives at ease, amidst all the enemies of his peace: “ For where the spirit of the LORD is, there is liberty;” “ and his soul shall dwell at ease.” But dead faith has either stupid security, or else has bondage through fear of death eternal. Faith has two scenes to conquer through, *viz.* this life, and the hour of death; in both of which unfailing conquest is already sure from the mouth of God, not with design to anticipate the utmost exertion of all its virtues, but to invigorate them.

1. FAITH has to conquer through the open violence, and the sly intrigues of its numerous enemies in the present life. For all this, its strength and skill is hid with CHRIST in GOD, "our springs are all in thee;" and "our sufficiency is of God." The believer then may boldly say, as numerous and mighty as his enemies are, "through God I can rush through an host," and through him "can leap over a wall." In this manner have God's people always found their way through this vale of tears; the road is the same, faith's enemies still the same, our sinful natures, and almighty helper both the same. Hence the history of the nature and situation, the trials and conquests of faith, in the sacred book, are most adapt to every one of us. 'Tis an ignorant mistake in this point, to dream that we stand on a higher stage of natural abilities and advantages, than gospel subjects a thousand years ago; it renders the bible of little use, and damps the heart, and perplexes the path of the believing warrior now. If the bible was a collection of lives and trials, strange escapes, and final joys, of some godly persons in this present age, commended to our certain belief, and constant imitation, with sufficient assurance to us of an equally happy issue; would it not seem a more engaging directory than it is now? The only reason must be because the path was streaked, and all the patterns set by human nature in its present state, and in our own times. Now faith sees exactly that advantage in the bible as it is; sees the facts in the same point of easy and engaging light, sees the examples for our instruction and imitation, equally instructive, equally imitable by the weakest christian. They are set before us on purpose "that he may run that reads;" and so calculated that "wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err

err therein." From this treasury the believer, whatever his other circumstances are, may be thoroughly furnished to every good work." From this armoury, equipped for the whole war,—“ Lo I am with you,” and “ my grace is sufficient for you,” will make any believer of them courageous, whatever is his exigency. Indeed a christian needs no more than to believe God, in order to be quite sure of all he can need, “ there is no want to them that fear him ;” “ he is ever mindful of his covenant,” “ and will withhold no good thing from them who walk uprightly.” And he has not only said all we need, but 'tis sure, “ his word is settled in heaven,” and “ he cannot deny himself.” These things only *believed*, will make the subject “ wax valiant in fight, turning to flight whole armies of aliens.” It will immediately appear, that the world and all the creatures, present things, and things to come, are within the rights of living faith. When 'tis seen to be the *word of God*, “ that *all things shall work together for good*,” and “ ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done,” and “ nothing shall be impossible unto you,” &c. then faith will be victorious in all trials, and not 'till then. Dead faith can't be victorious in any thing, because it can't take the bible for truth, so can't affect the subject by its spirit or grace, nor ever does.

2. DIVINE faith is victorious in death ; there it conquers the conqueror. The believer, like *Sampson*, and like his saviour, always conquers in death, and dies in his last conquest. Indeed death to a christian is a different thing from what it is to any other ; while 'tis a curse to others, 'tis a blessed privilege to him. But all the privilege he has in death, he has by what he believes ; the saviour's conquest becomes his own by believing it. He knows death
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in no sense can have dominion over him, because his own saviour, has conquered it in every sense, and in right of that conquest he triumphs. Indeed he don't expect to be hyed away, through endless tracts of pathless space, to a heaven beyond the stars ; but as what separated him from God here, was yielding to flesh and sense ; so what kept him out of the heavenly state, was his confinement to this body ; of course, release from that must be commencement of the heavenly state, absent from the body, is to be present with the LORD, 2 Cor. v. 6, 8. As God is present every where, and his immediate enjoyment is heaven, so all, but in the body, is glorious heaven. Faith sees this, and is sure enough of the blessed vision, and glorious enjoyments, the instant which succeeds his dissolution. In the midst of which God has promised, and faith enjoys " perfect peace," " the mind is stayed on him." When nature's bonds are loosed, he is at the church of the first-born in glory ; the same instant faith is swallowed up in vision, and the long struggling spirit leaping from its own confinement into boundless day and liberty, leaves the gasping cottage to the long-proved truth of God, for a glorious resurrection ; then to be resumed with glorious advantage, and everlasting pleasure ; itself claiming for Jesus' sake, the immediate and freely offered embracements of present divinity, and mingling itself, most welcome, with angels and the spirits of the just made perfect, sees the glory, feels the joys, and shouts the songs of that *Jerusalem*. Now it sees, in their boundless original, the wisdom, power, grace and love, that made and maintained it, enlightened, turned and guided it, strengthened and preserved it, from moment to moment, without weariness, to this never-to-be-finished rapture. The christian, now glorious.

glorious, remembers his sins, and wonders! Remembers his deliverances and comforts, and adores their native fountain! He sees the glories and the God he loved, and crowds his harp upon the highest key! He is now in heaven; and wherever the service of his dear-loved Maker and Redeemer requires his attendance, whether immediately tracing and adoring the searchless deeps of holy truth; or set to guard some pilgrim yet in flesh, *Rev. xxii. 9*; or darting on behests to further stars; whatever his special employment is, which doubtless is assigned to please and improve his natural turn of mind, he is in perfect satisfaction. And that which crowns every moment of that existence is, 'tis fixed beyond the reach of change, to the present undeceivable assurance of the inhabitant for ever and ever.

Now let us reflect a little on a point so much out of common view, and yet of such vast and critical importance. And what does the subject suggest more naturally than,

I. THEN he whose faith is a dead faith is yet in his sins, and every moment in danger of endless fire, let his religion, and his hopes be what they will. He is a child of wrath by nature, even as others, has as much need of being renewed and changed as any person in the world; but his dead faith has done exactly nothing towards it, to this very hour. It may have deceived him, but it has not saved him; it may have given him strong-grounded hopes, but it has given him no well-grounded hopes; "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is death." This is doubtless the case with the most of people, both old and young, and of every character; which will abundantly appear, by comparing their evident want of genuine christian experience,

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with the scripture character of *a believer*. Dead faith may seem right to him who has it, in almost every thing, but it never answers, as face answers to face in a glass, to the scripture account of saving faith. Indeed he who has it, never brings his faith fairly to trial in the bible court; "ye think (says our LORD) ye have eternal life there, but they are they which testify of me," *John v. 39*. He always first admits a favourable bias to his case, and then goes to the bible; as *Luke xvi. 15*,---"Ye are they which justify yourselves, but God knoweth your hearts, for that which is highly esteemed among men, is *abomination* in the sight of God." So he goes on "deceiving and being deceived," 'till he is "given up to strong delusion, to *believe* a lie." And doubtless multitudes go into eternity with this lie "in their right hand," therefore have they "no bands in their death." Now this was not said of abandoned wretches, as is often supposed, but of such false hopers, *Psal. lxxiii*. In this character there is a decree of eternity against him, "curst be the deceiver," for "he deceiveth his own heart, his religion is vain." The person we speak of is going towards destruction every moment; and though his dead faith makes him hope, "what is the hope of the hypocrite when God takes away his soul?" Reader if this be thy case, thou art of those "who think themselves to be something, when they are nothing, and deceive themselves." Thy dead faith makes thee easy, but it can't make thee safe; it can harden, but it can't quicken thee. With a deceived believer his hopes make him believe; but with a true believer his faith makes him hope. If these very hints don't at all alarm thee, let it mind thee, that to have confidence without evidence, or hope without sensible title, is proof of hypocrisy." 'Tis common

with unconverted believers, to hope their faith is true, but only low and weak; not considering that the lowest and weakest life of an infant always stirs, and breathes; but their dead faith never stirs, never breathes after God, holiness, divine communion, or any divine object as such; there is no beauty in them that they should be desired. They want ease, safety, happiness, but never want the right sort, never in the right way. Their relation to God is very different from that of christians, his wrath was never removed from the former, his love never shall be from the latter. To one sort he is a judge and avenger, to the other a father, friend, and saviour; accordingly dead faith makes a sort of fear of God, but makes no love to JEHOVAH, while living faith works all by love, and casts out slavish fear. To the subject of dead faith, let me say in pity, your faith is not comfortable, "there is no peace to the wicked;" it don't please God, "he is angry with you every day." It don't agree to the bible, because 'tis not the work of God; it looks elsewhere for food, for CHRIST'S words judge and condemn it, *John xii. 48.* It don't agree with the way of salvation by faith alone, it always inclines you to say, "I have done thus and thus, or been such and so," when you think of acceptance; so never rests on what CHRIST has done; so certain it is that when you appear before him, he will say, "I never knew you, depart from me ye cursed." And don't this alarm you? Don't your own reason tell you that dead faith can't save you? Why don't you stop and say, "what good will this profession, or these false hopes do me, since I am going to appear before God?" "Had I not better now, while I have opportunity, suspect the worst, call all my hopes in question, realize my danger, and try to see myself worse,

as much worse at heart, than the profane, as my proud religion has seemed to set me before them." For truly by this, have you always opposed and slighted the believer's CHRIST, and the true spirit, and happiness of the bible. Who knows, but of an heir of hell, as you certainly be now, you may yet become a christian and have everlasting life? Which will naturally excite the anxious enquiry,

2. WHAT should an unconverted person do, that he may get a living faith? Which gives occasion to observe, if you ever hear this question answered, by any directions, *to do*, at all, you may at once be sure, the answer did not come from the bible. Two things will always make this evident; one is, the directed doer, is already dead, 2 *Cor.* v. 14--*Eph.* ii. 5. The other is, living faith is GOD's gift, *Eph.* ii. 8.--*Phil.* i. 29. Men have natural power as creatures, and by it may perform actions, but 'tis not now in the power of nature to do any thing in the manner in which the gospel requires obedience; "without me ye can do *nothing*." To come to GOD is the work of faith, therefore says our LORD, "no man cometh to the father but *by me*." With this an unbeliever immediately quarrels, although it is as plainly scriptural as any thing at all; CHRIST "came not to send peace, &c." *Mat.* x. 34, &c.

QUESTION. Must an unconverted person then, sit still, and professedly do nothing; or go on in his sins allowedly, vexed with plain scripture?

ANSWER.—1. He who don't see himself as the scriptures describe him, will do nothing of this sort, *viz.* coming to GOD, or believing on any consideration.

2. HE who does so see himself, but is not pleased with it, will work in proportion to his conviction, and
nothing

nothing shall hinder him, and he will think himself better than he was before, in front of plain scripture.

3. HE who has this sight, and is pleased with it, which is the case only of a believer, knows that he did nothing evangelically 'till he believed the gospel, and that what he did do, was the food of his pride, and not the relief of his soul.

BUT you will say, what shall be said to a poor sinner?—Answer 1.—Say as the bible does, “The soul that sins shall die,” and “he that believeth not shall be damned.”—Say also, “CHRIST came to save sinners, even the chief,” and “he that believeth shall be saved.” 2.—If he ask for doing, tell him as the bible does, “the whole law;” that nothing less than *perfect righteousness* can begin to relieve him. Tell him, if he sit still here, he must die, but in the LORD there is righteousness and strength too. On the whole,

(1.) HE must see himself, heart and life, just such as the bible describes to be the objects of GOD's wrath, for want of perfect righteousness, which righteousness he cannot get but by believing.

(2.) HE must see CHRIST, just as the bible represents him, in all his own glorious fulness of grace and love, and lawful fulfilling righteousness, and be brought to rest, peace and pleasure in both these views.

(3.) AND for this purpose he must have a faith just such as the bible speaks of, or never can be saved.

(4.) HE may be assured that on his believing what the bible says of CHRIST and his righteousness, he shall be saved; and that GOD does enable thereto such as see themselves too vile for any other relief.

3. THERE are a few things which greatly increase our danger of delusion in this great affair. One is, ~~there~~ is an universal natural propensity in mankind

to *work for life*; it was an excellency in his original constitution, but is now his snare. Another, is as common a fondness for what in matters of religion, we call *our own*. A third is, that, as a consequence of the former, every part of the saving religion, to corrupt nature is all unnatural. The consequence is, every thing which in matters of religion, results from our own minds, as its original, is wrong; and nothing but what derives from God, through CHRIST, and so according to scripture, in matters of religion, is to be depended on; nor may we without guilt hesitate a moment about any thing that evidently does so. But then you will say, "straight is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leads to life," and, "no wonder few there be that find it." The delusions which are made out of this state of the case are numberless; we will be confined to two or three generals.

1. UNBELIEVERS generally persuade themselves they do believe.---And they may, in general, look on the bible as divine, but their belief lacks the above-mentioned discriminations of true faith; it has no such divine original, is of no such divine efficacy, don't agree with the bible-ascriptions to faith. The subject of true faith always knows it comes from above; others don't, nor ever can know this of their belief. Living faith, as its character, imports, lives and grows, which a dead belief does not. It makes delight in *all* divine objects, which theirs does not. There are two texts of scripture which this sort of believers *cannot* take pleasure in; one is, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." The other is, "depart from me ye cursed." And yet they will go on believing contrary to St. James, "that their faith can save them."

2. MULTITUDES agree that it will not do to ~~trust~~

to believing only, for acceptance with God; there must be concern, or reformation, or duties, or something beside barely believing the scripture righteousness. And this fulfills the text, *Isa. lv. 8, 9*, "Your ways are not my ways, as the heaven is higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways." Just so is the way of acceptance with God by believing CHRIST'S perfect righteousness alone, than the patch-work way, which can make delusion, and damnation, but cannot make justification and salvation;—as both *St. Paul*, and *St. James* bear witness, *Rom. iv. 3*, *James ii. 23*.

3. ANOTHER religious delusion which arises from our natural enmity against the gospel is, that if faith alone is the mean of justification, it must also be the whole of religion, and so we will do nothing in obedience to the commands, only believe what CHRIST has done; and so we are exactly at the religion which *St. James* had commission to destroy. CHRIST by his obedience perfectly answered the law as a covenant of works, and so paved the way for a sinner's acceptance, when he relies solely on that medium; consequently, no matter who, or what the sinner is, who so relies by faith, "though he were dead, yet shall he live."---No matter how vile a person, or how great a sinner. But CHRIST did nothing to the law as a rule of common living for his people.---Consequently, unless they are holy, *i. e.* of ardent choice, observe and obey the law in common life, it will prove they are not justified; but that their faith is the dead sort; for only by such works can their pretensions to faith be justified. If faith does not produce such works, 'tis dead, being alone, *James, ii. 17*.

4. WE may in the last place make some inferences from what has been said, of those who have living

1. YE did not acquire it.---“ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost,” *Tit. iii. 5.* “ Not for your sakes do I this, saith the LORD GOD, be it known unto you : be ashamed and confounded for your own ways,” *Ezek. xxxvi. 32.* A sight of this makes and maintains humility ; the want of it is the occasion and life of religious pride. And he who don't habitually see it, will suffer by the latter ; as he who does will be happy in the former.

2. GOD did not do all this for you, because ye were better than others. The glory of GOD is the best object of design for the creator, and all the creatures ; this may be secured by his saving the worst, rather than any other. With this view all scripture examples concur, as well as doctrines. There were many needy widows in *Israel* in the time of the famine, but only to a heathen one, was *Elijah* sent. Many lepers also, but only to a *Syrian* was healing given, *Luke iv. 25, 27.* At this, they of the synagoge will always have wrath ; but 'tis evident from the scriptures that real sinfulness is *no bar* to the salvation of him who believes the divine testimony about CHRIST ; though designed wickedness is always a qualification for hell. Consequently, men's notions of their own goodness may prevent their salvation, but their real badness, duly seen, cannot. Therefore they who are loaded down with sin and guilt, by coming to CHRIST, *i. e.* by believing the perfection of his merit with GOD, are welcome, *Matth. xi. 28.* And poor publicans, who can see nothing but badness about them, are accepted, rather than they who trust in themselves that they are righteous, *Luke xviii. 9 to 14.* If there-
fore we consider saving grace as taking any ~~more~~

from the subject, (which indeed it does not) it would be his sensible badness beyond any other. And to this agrees the pointed knowledge of fact in every child of God in the world. This was the case with *Paul*, who says he was the pattern for them who should afterwards believe unto life, and it must be so in all, that God may have the glory of saving sinners, *1 Tim. i. 15 to 17.*

3. HE don't maintain his kingdom in you because you make good use of his grace. His favour could not turn on such a hinge if it was true, grace in such a case, would lose both its name and nature. The fact is, he "worketh *all* our works in us," "both to will, and to do of his good pleasure," *Phil. ii. 13;* which is the apostle's grand argument on christian's duty. Similar to which is that to *Titus*, ii. chap. 11 to 14. So that the believer is a debtor for every degree of faith, and for every duty thereby performed. Therefore *James* says, iv. chap. 6, &c. He giveth more grace, viz. to the humble, and thence takes his argument to urge all manner of duties in the following verses. For says *John*, i. chap. 16, "of his fulness have we all received," "and grace" to improve "grace."

4. THE believer's province, is to endure, as seeing him who is invisible. God is a spirit, and so his nature, and all his perfections are hidden to every eye among men, but that of faith. But of believers it is said, "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass" (a looking-glass which shews the face truly, and close at hand, such is the word of God to faith,) "the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image." This beholding is of infinite use; it attracts and assimilates the beholder to the object; it solves his sensual attachments; it attempers the soul to holy employments, confirms it in obedience,

makes all the ways of wisdom pleasant; emboldens the soul to hazardous enterprizes, saying, "the LORD is at my right hand, I shall not be moved," *Psal.* xvi. 8. It makes him safe, "that he will fear no evil." Steadies him against all inferior frowns, or flatteries; furnishes such equal relief, that the christian language is "whom have I in heaven but God, and there is none on earth that I desire beside him." And though faith always sees that he is a consuming fire, the sight is solemnly sweetened by this view, and is the argument to hold fast, and serve him acceptably, with reverence and godly fear, *Heb.* xii. 28, 29. This view of divine glory, and its improvement, are peculiar to faith. This and every sight of the glory of God, is in the light of that covenant, of which faith knows "he is ever mindful." Therefore his severer attributes, are as sweetly precious as his milder ones, which is never the case of any other faith. In this light, to true faith, God is all father, own father, natural father. Hence all the freedoms, all the expectations, confidence, and sanctuary of believers. In these views alone the christian can endure in both serving and suffering.

5. 'Tis peculiar to a believer, in that character, to live in sight of himself: "In thy light we see light." This shews why faith can never make pride, but always "hides pride from man;" and so actual faith, and gospel-humility must be inseparable. Hence a proud christian is a natural falsehood. This clears the text, "he that trusteth to his own heart is a fool; and cursed is he who maketh an arm of flesh his trust." Nothing but faith can entirely shut out boasting. "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him." Hence also self-loathing, self-renouncing, and self-denying

denying are peculiar, and perfectly natural to christianity. So the christian's life must be entirely a life of faith ; and he must know in full latitude that all his springs are in God.

6. THEREFORE 'tis faith only, that can ever see, and habitually view JESUS CHRIST, as the bible represents him. No person but the believer can see all in God, and nothing in himself, therefore to none is he precious, but those who believe ; but to these nothing can be more so. A christian, from what he sees in God and knows of himself, sees the most absolute need of the righteousness and offices of JESUS CHRIST, in order that any of those treasures, should flow to him. There is fulness of grace and glory, but how shall a sinner get them ? (for such the believer always sees himself,) it can't be, but in a way that agrees to the nature of an unchanging God ; and how can there be such a way, since his unchangeableness naturally seals up despair to those who have sinned ? No way but through that atonement by means of which God is just, while he justifies the ungodly. This therefore is the believing sinner's only refuge, only medium of hope, for present, or future, temporal or eternal goods. Of all these things his only account is in the bible, this makes the word of the LORD precious : And the only medium of actual communication is believing that word ; hence faith is called precious. By this the christian constantly looks to God, considering himself a sinner, and as such having no right, but relying entirely on the truth of the word about the certain and perfect satisfaction, fulness and grace of CHRIST, there set forth to him ; and in this way only, receives all sorts of mercies which he has from a covenant God ; and to which he became entitled by the atonement which he believes as reported in
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the word. And if he is still needy and destitute of any spiritual blessing, 'tis wholly because he don't so come for it, "for he that asketh receiveth;" this is an absolute rule. And if he is destitute of any temporal mercy, 'tis certainly either because 'tis not good for him, at present, or because he don't ask for it. The latter is owing to some false riches; in the other case he can say without reserve, "thy will be done."

7. Of consequence, a christian must be one who has the highest veneration for the plain language of the bible. If the bible tells him, that men, and even all orders among them, are "children of wrath by nature," and "dead in trespasses and sins," with him, it shall stand for their moral character drawn by the direction of the Holy Ghost. Let religious pride, enmity, and profaneness join the opposition; he has two supports to his faith, one is divine report, the other is his own knowledge. The same upholds his heart against the empire of pride, in believing that we are, in the most absolute sense, "without strength," as to self-relief. If the bible teaches that we may be justified by only believing what God has said, it shall stand with every one who is going to heaven, for the saving article. If, in this affair, the word of God plainly excludes all manner of consideration for any thing done by men, he wrangles not one thought at it, for he has learned to believe whatever God says. If God has said, the whole of salvation is of mere grace, he takes it without dispute for a certainty. In short, whatever he finds the bible says, is instantly put beyond all debate, for he not only sees it the mind of his Maker, and Redeemer, but the grand and most sacred charter of all his hopes for time and eternity. Thus every christian approves, delights in, esteems, and to his power will maintain, what the plain

plain bible tell him is the will of GOD. If CHRIST puts importance on every jot and tittle of his word, so does his child, they have the same spirit. And indeed this distinguishes the sheep from the goats. No person, but a believer, can in the divine sense, say "thy word is truth," or "thy word is the joy of my heart," any more than he can call JESUS, LORD, without the spirit of GOD.

8. THEN a believer is one who lives by faith. Though we are fallen so far into the dreggs of RUIN, as that the TERM, *believer*, and the phrase, *live by faith*, are become matters of common banter and scoff, epithets of reproach, and even the drunkard's song; yet such is the light of reality in which divine objects are seen and known by faith, that instead of weakening by such means, it waxes stronger and stronger; "this path of the just is like a shining light which shineth more and more, 'till it" blazes "into perfect day."---And "the gates of hell cannot prevail against it." In front of all sorts of opposition, a christian believes the various and mighty evidences of a divine existence, and is accordingly governed thereby, he lives as if there was a GOD, and so his faith appears to be a rarity in the world. He believes what the scriptures say about the perfection of CHRIST'S righteousness, and its design to be the sole ground of sinners trust; and his belief in this case also governs him into single dependance on it exclusively; he knows every good gift comes out of that font, to it therefore, all his views repair, and of its "fulness he receives, and grace for grace." He lives in sight of the divinity of the bible, 'tis "the light of his feet, and a lamp to all his paths;" he believes it the stated vehicle of the Holy Ghost, so he hears it, reads it, feels it, and acts it out in common and divine life. He lives in sight of
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of uncertainty, and vanity, in all the things of this life; certainty and sufficient reality in those of another, in sight of himself *a sinner*, and of CHRIST, as his “ wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and everlasting redemption.” He serves God, endures as seeing him, and has a constant view to the recompence of reward. So his heart and life are governed by faith; he lives by the faith of the son of God. Of consequence,

9. A TRUE believer is distinguished from all others in that his works justify his faith. 'Tis as peculiar to a true christian to be governed by his belief, as it is to true faith to produce correspondent works. There is no way to support a claim to the christian character, but by scriptural fruits of faith. If a person appears to be divinely governed by his faith, 'tis evidence enough to men, that he is born of God. And the want of this not only leaves no such evidence, but is evidence enough of the contrary. So that a person may always judge of himself, and on all the necessary occasions be judged of by others, by the evident divine influence his religious faith has upon him. If christian professors appear not to be governed by the christian faith, 'tis evidence, let them have as much faith as they will, that 'tis of the dead sort, and therefore not operative:--“ Faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone.” If a minister or a magistrate, a parent or a child, a husband or a wife, a master or a servant, the youth or aged, who profess, or secretly think, they have the christian belief, have not the effects and fruits which the bible ascribes to its faith, in forms plain enough to be understood by all who read or hear them, their faith is condemned, because it don't make gospel works. A grand design of the bible is to shew plainly to all these distinctions of

of persons just “ what manner of persons, they ought to be ;” that by its plain divine directions, “ they may be thoroughly furnished to every good work,” in their respective places ; and there is in it a complete plain set of instructions to all these sorts of persons for this purpose, and nothing wanting. Now these instructions are *believed* or not ; if *believed*, that belief will infallibly bring out those very things in life ; if then those same things are not in life and conversation, ’tis certain they are not believed in the book ; therefore, “ by their fruits ye shall know them,” *Matth.* vii. 17 to 21. For whoever believes the righteousness of **the bible**, will “ be filled with the fruits of that righteousness, which are by **JESUS CHRIST to the glory and praise of God**,” *Phil.* i. 11. And they who don’t so believe, *Jude* says, “ their fruit withers, they are without fruit, twice dead.” To this purpose our Saviour says, *Matth.* xiii. 23, he who receives the seed of the word into good ground, **understands** it, and bears fruit accordingly. From this, **CHRIST** takes his rule of judicial conduct to **all under** the gospel ; if they bear fruit answerable to **their** means, ’tis well, but if not, they shall be **cut down** as barren trees, *Luke* xiii. 9. For he knows “ every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and cannot bring forth evil fruit,” and just the contrary is true of all the rest, *Matth.* vii. 17, 18. Hence that remarkable summary of the whole affair, *Col.* i. 3, &c. “ We give thanks to God, since we heard of your faith in **CHRIST**, for the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, which is come unto you,—and bringeth forth fruit—in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God, in truth.” Which makes the following things plain enough. *scil.*

(1.) THAT every person has his **common** character, as a candidate for eternity, with all the truths and duties which concern it, drawn before his eyes in the bible ; and beside this, has his special character, as minister, magistrate, husband, wife, parent, child, or any other in the world, drawn equally plain, with *all* the truths and duties which concern that also, in which he has the whole mind of God about him, in general and particular respects, and all he needs to be, and know and do.

(2.) THAT it is the whole duty, the happy privilege, and so the saving article, for each to believe the things, **that, in his general or particular character, as much concern him, as peace of conscience, acceptance, daily acceptance with God, and eternal salvation of his soul concerns him.**

(3.) THAT such as do **believe them, will infallibly be such in life and conduct, as the things respecting them, so believed, require they should be, and tend to make them. And consequently, that such believing makes persons, in all their characters, just such as the bible requires they should be ; and the not so believing is the universal reason why they remain unlike the bible in life and conduct ; defective and guilty in their places, and ripe for aggravated damnation.**

(4.) THAT this, of consequence, is the **grand manifest distinction between true believers, and deceived ones.**---“ In this is manifest the children of God, and the children of the devil : He that doth not righteousness, is not of God, 1 *John* iii. 10.

10. AND lastly.—The grand reason why all these things depend entirely and absolutely upon faith, is, that they may be perfectly free for any ; as free for the worst as any. God is no respecter of persons, he

he would as soon have a poor, despised, or profane person become a believer as any in the world ; *i. e.* he has no regard to the world's greatness or men's goodness. Those who are already publicans and harlots, are as welcome, as kindly welcome to believe and live as any at all ; nay, none are welcome 'till to their own knowledge they are as destitute of goodness as those : For CHRIST came not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance ; and has prepared destruction for such as sin, that grace may abound. Now the whole bible witnesseth this freeness of divine grace ; but how could it be, unless faith alone were the means ? The worst of men may believe what God tells them ; but what goodness can they have to commend them to favour ? and yet all the proclamation is to sinners. He calls sinners ; grace is offered to sinners, lost sinners, wretched, poor, blind, naked sinners, and for example gloriously saved *Saul*, the chief of them. They have no works at all but damning ones, but they can believe the gospel account of mercy brought by CHRIST, as well as any. And for this reason believing alone is the mean of acceptance with God.---“ Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise,” or matter of salvation, “ might be sure to all the seed,” *i. e.* to all who believe, and so appear to be of the elect, or seed of *Abraham*, “ not to that only which is of the law,” *i. e.* Jewish believers, “ but to that also which is of the faith of *Abraham*,” *i. e.* are Gentiles, and so have nothing else to depend upon but faith.--*Rom. iv. 16.*

THE consequence of all this is,

I THEY who have notions of a good heart in them, or any thing about them pleasing to God, without CHRIST, as received in faith, or in believing, can't be accepted.

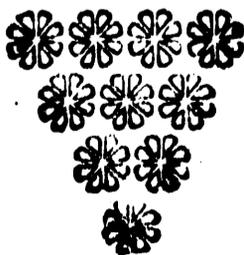
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2. THAT

2. THAT their mouths will be stopped, and they all guilt before God at last, because he did not require any point of personal goodness to commend them to his acceptance, but that they would believe his own account of grace and glory offered freely, and they would not.

3. THAT such as will believe his own account of CHRIST's perfect righteousness, and so see enough in it, and put their souls upon it, " shall not perish, but have everlasting life ;" however base the person, or however great the sinner ; and that for all these purposes the bible, its own Holy Ghost, the righteousness, strength, and free grace of CHRIST are near enough.

4. AND as a consequence of all, the righteousness of divine conduct will be perfectly clear, in the certain destruction of all who were too righteous to submit to salvation by faith, which rejects all personal goodness in justification ; and will be accordingly glorified by saints and angels forever. And *all* his perfections *as* glorious in the salvation of those who were destitute enough of self-goodness to depend on *mercy*. And so we find the ultimate design of divine revelation, is, that they who will not believe perfect truth, may be made manifest, and punished answerable to their contempt of divinity ; and that they who believe, and put themselves on mercy, may not fail of the utmost perfection and happiness of their natures by CHRIST ; and so GOD be glorious in all his works, through his only son our LORD, forever and ever,
A M E N.



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