

FAITH.

"According to your faith be it unto you." Matt. 9:29, R. V. This language was spoken by Christ in answer to the cry of two blind men. In it is revealed the fact that their faith was the measure of the blessing they would receive. As the Lord connects all blessing in the way of salvation with faith, it is the measure of what we receive now as well as to those blind men. If it is done unto us according to our faith, we may not have much done unto us because of the smallness of our faith. This will raise the very important question: "What is faith and how produced?" As it will not be disputed that we have a capacity for faith this question will not be discussed, so I will pass on at once to the question as to how faith is produced. With this part of the question answered, what faith is will be easily seen.

There are three things necessary to produce faith. There must be testimony or evidence concerning the things to be believed. Paul after declaring that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and that the Scripture saith: "Who-soever believeth on him (Christ) shall not be ashamed," says: "How shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things. So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." Rom. 10:10-17. In Heb. 12:2 we have this language: "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." If these two texts are put together, their teaching will be like this: Jesus Christ produces faith in the heart by being the author of the Word by which faith comes. He is the witness who testifies. He is the Word of God that speaks to man. If it be true that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God, then it is not proper to call anything faith that may be produced by hearing, that is not the Word of God, or that Jesus Christ is not the author of. The testimony that is essential to faith is the testimony of God. Accepting the testimony of others, as Eve did in Eden when she accepted the testimony of the serpent, may be downright unbelief in God. In fact it always is where the testimony of another contradicts what God has said.

The second thing in order to faith is this: There must be a sufficient evidence accompanying the Word spoken as to carry the conviction to the mind of the hearer that the witness is telling the truth. This evidence rests largely on the character of him who testifies. If the witness is one who has knowledge of what he is saying, and is a truthful witness, but little more is needed. Both these qualifications exist in God. He certainly has the necessary knowledge of what he is saying, and is certainly truthful. In fact it is said that it is impossible for him to lie. God has so related the Spirit with his

convincing power to the truth, that when spoken, it is always accompanied with sufficient evidence of its worthiness to be received as the Word of God. These two things will produce what is called a "belief of the truth," and where the testimony is sufficient, it will produce faith thus far, whether we desire to believe the things spoken or not. It may be properly termed a state of mind produced by testimony. There is still another thing upon man's part besides hearing and believing the testimony, in order to bring the soul to where it may be said that the person is a believer in the sense of the text, and that is this: the person must trust him who testifies to do just what he has promised to do. The other two things may exist and yet the soul have nothing done for it, because it lacks the element of such trust as commits itself to God for the performance of the desired work. When a person does this, it always brings to the soul the substance of the thing that the evidence called for. Where souls declare that they trust God, or have faith in God, and yet do not receive the thing they are looking for, one of two things is always true: they either have not the testimony of God as the foundation for what they call "faith," or else they do not trust God to make His Word good. In either case it is not faith, and it is a misnomer to call it such. With this thought before the mind, it is evident that faith is the evidence given by the Lord relative to unseen things; things that we have to take the word of another for; the substance of things hoped for, as may be seen by Heb. 11:1.

If I may be allowed to put any kind of an explanation upon the words of this text I would say: Faith is God's testimony with reference to unseen things, which when so accepted by a person that they trust the Lord to make his word good he makes his word good, or fulfills his word, and the person so trusting comes into the possession of the thing promised, or it is done unto him according to his faith. These blind men had heard of Jesus. They accepted his testimony as true. If he was the Messiah, one of the things he was to do was to give sight to the blind. They called upon him to give them their sight. Their prayer was answered, and they came into the possession of the substance of the thing hoped for, which in this case was sight. When they thus came into this possession, they knew it.—Wesleyan Methodist.

WORLDLY ATTIRE.

"Be not conformed to this world." Rom. 12:2. Many who profess to be followers of the lowly Jesus conforms to the fashions of the world, ignoring God's command. Do you say, "I think it is all right if I can afford it?" Can you afford to spend money on ribbons, feathers, flowers, embroidery, ornaments or jewelry, which gratify the lust of the eye and the pride of life, which God says is not of the Father but of the world (I. John 2:16), when for every five dollars given to missions one precious soul is rescued from darkness? Even one or two dollars

a year spent on needless things, if spent for tracts and Bibles, might rescue many souls.

Perhaps you say, "What will people say if I do not dress in style?" Hear what God's Word says, "For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." John 12:43. Whom would you rather please? "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" Jas. 4:4. If your friends love you because you dress and look stylish, and would shun you if you should obey God's Word by not putting on "outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel," and should wear the "ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God great price" (I. Peter 3:4), whom would it pay to please?

Some say, "You might as well be out of the world as out of the fashion." We will soon be out of this world never to return; shall we live for God or for the world?

We hear it said, "I want to look decent." By all means do so, but one can be decently and modestly attired without worldly adornments. Women professing godliness wearing thin lace sleeves and neck cover, ribbons, ruffles, rings and huge hats arrayed gaudily, look indecent from a Bible standpoint.

Some say, "I wear these things, but not for looks. I never think about my dress." What inconsistency? If they are not for looks what are they for? Why spend so much money for naught? People say, "I wear my ring for my friend's sake." Real friends will not desire us to disobey God in the wearing of gold to please them.

Much precious time is spent in hard work to make clothes stylish, thus robbing those who need our service. Our own families are sufferers from this cause. To make their children stylish, mothers neglect their children's minds and hearts and bodily comforts, and their own minds and hearts are barren. Our neighbors are also neglected for the same reason, and the sick and suffering ones.

Do you say, "Why harp so much on this question?" For the above reasons, and because that pride, of which worldly dress is an indication, is an abomination to the Lord. "The proud he knoweth afar off." Thank God, there is power in the blood of Christ to deliver from pride and all other sins, an experience where there is "no thirsting for earth's pleasures, nor adorning, rich and gay," for we find the richer treasure of a purified heart.—Sel.

"Moody says that the first thing a man must do, if he desires to be used in the Lord's work, is to make an unconditional surrender of himself to God. He must consecrate and then concentrate. A man who does not put his whole life in one channel does not count for much, and the man who only goes into work with a half heart does not amount to much. We are living in an intense age, and if a man is to succeed he must set himself apart for the work and throw all his energy into it."