

How To Believe

By Dr. S. A. Keen

"All things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

The faith which saves the soul is believing what God says, and believing it because he says it. God's Word is his testimony concerning the divine purpose to save the soul that believeth in Jesus. "If we receive the witness of men (which we do), the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

But you ask: "Can I trust the Word of the Lord?" Why can't a human heart trust the Word of the Lord, if it will? God certainly does not enjoin as a sole condition of salvation a thing which is impossible for us to perform. There is only one state of heart in which it is impossible for it to believe the Word of God, and that is when it is unwilling to submit to God. The soul that gives itself up to God can believe his Word, if it chooses to do so.

But you say: "I have thought that saving faith is the gift of God." Such is not the teaching of the Bible. It does say that "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." But this reaches that the whole scheme of redemption—that of salvation by faith—is by the gracious favor of God, and not that the faith by which salvation is secured is the gift of God.

The ability to believe, and the power to trust God, belongs to every man, through the involuntary help of the Holy Spirit, vouchsafed by the atonement. But the exercise of this gracious capability devolves upon us. We have the power to believe, and have presented to us the Word of God, which is to be believed; and when we choose to believe that Word, that is faith.

It is a cheat of Satan to keep souls seeking salvation, either in conversation or entire sanctification, from the blessing they desire, by persuading them that they can't believe, and that God must give them faith before they can believe.

The soul can believe God. He has not fixed an unreasonable and impossible condition of salvation when he says: "Believe ... and thou shalt be saved." He only requires what we can perform.

Faith being the exercise of the power we possess to believe God's Word, it is a voluntary act. The soul must recognize that it can believe; must choose to believe, must say, "I will believe", and persistently reckon pardon or purity its own on God's Word, in the fact of every temptation to doubt, arising from any source whatever. In every struggle for salvation the soul will believe something: It will either believe the Word of the Lord as whispered to it by the Holy Spirit, or it will believe the word of Satan whispered by his tempting voice.

Are you a seeker of pardon? Take some promise of God's Word; make up your mind to believe it. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." You say, in the response of faith: "Lord, I choose to believe this; I will believe this; I do believe I am saved."

Are you a child of God seeking full salvation? Seize upon some declaration of God's Word, such as "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin"; apply it to your own heart; confess to yourself, to Satan, and to God, that it is true to you, even you, because the Lord hath spoken it.

The method of faith is for the soul to recognize that it can believe God's Word, then choose to believe it, which always carries it over to the consciousness: "I do believe."

The King's Highway

Believing is our part; saying is God's part. All the blessed effects of faith, pardon, adoption, entire sanctification, are the Lord's doings, and are marvelous in our eyes; and they are all possible to him that believeth on the Son of God.

The Search Light Of Heaven

Scripture: Psalm 139: 23a. "Search me, O. God."

Rev. B. L. Brown

These words were uttered by the Psalmist David, expressing his desire for God to search him and to lay bare and erase anything that failed to meet God's approval. Evidently, David wanted nothing between his soul and the Saviour.

I think it would be wise for every Christian to cry with David, "Search me, O God." And when the "Search Light of Heaven" is focused upon our lives, we would be forced to cry. "Create in me a clean heart O, God, and renew a right spirit within one." Ps. 51:10.

Let us go farther in this verse and discover together some very significant truths.

I. Illuminating Light—"Know my heart." vs. 23. Nothing can be hidden from God. He sees all and knows all. David realized this when he said. "Thou ... art acquainted with all my ways." "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." Ps. 139: 3,7,8. Yes, the whole Bible is a mirror which not only shows us the greatness of God, but the gruesomeness of sin. Sin must wither and flee when it is faced with the power and purity of God.

The "Search Light of Heaven" illuminated the dark, cruel heart of Paul while he was on his way to Damascus to harass the Christians. When Paul saw the "Light" he saw himself as a "chief of sinners". His cloak of self-righteousness fell off and in its place he received the righteousness of Christ.

II. Penetrating Light—"Try me, and know my thoughts." vs. 23c.

The light of God goes deeper than the surface of our lives.

As the skillful surgeon performs an operation by first cutting through the outer tissues of skin and hence penetrates to the stricken organ, so God wills to perform a similar operation upon the soul. First, he cuts away and discards, as the Psalmist declared, our "wicked ways" such as carelessness, indifference, and coldness, which prevent spiritual growth.

III. Purifying Light — "He healeth all thy diseases." Ps. 103:3.

The soothing, healing oil which God provides is applied to the believer as soon as the spiritual operation is completed. The scripture declares that the believer is "purified by faith." Acts 15:9. I believe the Psalmist was led to a higher level in his walk with God. He now was prepared to follow the:

IV. Prevailing Light—" ... lead me in the way everlasting" vs. 23rd.

Even though David was led through dark shadows of affliction and sorrow he was still conscious of the "prevailing light." Whether he was "beside the still waters" of fellowship and communion with God, or at the battle front of temptation, the Light of Heaven was his sustainer.

Meductic, N. B.

★ ★ ★

There is this difference between consecration and entire sanctification—the one is what we do ourselves by divine aid; the other is what God does in us.

—Thomas Cook.