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## **A Puritan Prayer**

### **The Deeps**

Lord Jesus, give me a deeper repentance, a horror of sin, a dread of its approach. Help me chastely to flee it and jealously to resolve that my heart shall be Thine alone.

Give me a deeper trust, that I may lose myself to find myself in Thee, the ground of my rest, the spring of my being. Give me a deeper knowledge of Thyself as saviour, master, lord, and king. Give me deeper power in private prayer, more sweetness in Thy Word, more steadfast grip on its truth. Give me deeper holiness in speech, thought, action, and let me not seek moral virtue apart from Thee.

Plough deep in me, great Lord, heavenly husbandman, that my being may be a tilled field, the roots of grace spreading far and wide, until Thou alone art seen in me, Thy beauty golden like summer harvest, Thy fruitfulness as autumn plenty.

I have no master but Thee, no law but Thy will, no delight but Thyself, no wealth but that Thou givest, no good but that Thou blessest, no peace but that Thou bestowest. I am nothing but that Thou makest me. I have nothing but that I receive from Thee. I can be nothing but that grace adorns me. Quarry me deep, dear Lord, and then fill me to overflowing with living water.

## **News of the fellowship**

### **Bible League Rally**

We were pleased once again to have a South Wales Bible League Rally. This time we held the meeting on Wednesday the 9<sup>th</sup> of June. The Rev. John Thackway spoke again very helpfully on the authority of Scripture. What a vital theme to consider in the light of the present departure from the Word of God. We had refreshments afterwards and Bible League literature was available. It is hoped to hold this meeting annually.

### **After church Fellowship.**

In May we sang favourite hymns and held a quiz. It was good to have a contingent of young people from Providence Chapel . Cheltenham who were holidaying in the area. They certainly appreciated the warmth of the fellowship here at Peniel Green.

In June Mr. David Broom gave his testimony of how the Lord dealt with him over a period of years and especially through a serious motor cycle accident. It is good to know that the Lord is still at work in lives.

In July we again sang favourite hymns and had a quiz on the significance of places in the Bible. The team on the Pastors right narrowly won! The Pastor wishes to make a public apology-Gaza is a Philistine town!

### **Missionary support.**

We have once again sent gifts to the following:

1. Eastern Europe-via Marge Norris.
2. E.M.F. - Andrew Birch •Spain. David Haziell ( Poland) Antonio De Noia (Italy)
3. Protestant Truth Society.
4. Protestant Alliance.

Mr Graham Haddow has now returned home from his service in Austria. He will be living in Meltisham, Wiltshire.

We do try and address missionary concerns every first Wednesday in the month. Please note that there are copies of the E.M.F. magazine to give information for prayer.

### **Sunday School**

We are seeking to address the whole area of Sunday afternoon Sunday school. Much prayer is needed.

### **Infrastructure.**

Work has been completed in the entrance way to the church. The wooden cladding was removed and the walls re-plastered. We still hope to deal with the external church notice board.

We hope to obtain a few more chairs with arms for the older members of the congregation. Any other significant matters that arise will be mentioned at the prayer meeting.

### **Men's fellowship**

There has been a lot of interest in recommencing the men's fellowship. Consequently we plan three meetings this year on a Thursday evening. The first is scheduled for Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October at 7.15.p.m. when Rev. Brian Higham will give a talk on David Jones of Llangan. The next meeting will be held in February 2011.

### **Ladies Bible Study**

The ladies bible study will recommence on Tuesday 7th September. It is hoped that we will have a good beginning for the new session.

### **Personalia**

Pearl Llewellyn and Christian Hentzschel were married on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July. Charis and Matthew were married at Bethel Church on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> . We say a fond farewell to Charis who, of course, has been at Peniel Green since the family arrived in 2003 . We pray for both couples in their future lives together.

### **Dafydd Morris**

We continue to remember Mr. Morris who is due in the Crown Court in Swansea on October 4<sup>th</sup>. We pray that the Lord will be with his servant.

## Diary

### Lord's Days:

September					
	5th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - p.m
	12th	–	Pastor		
	19th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
	26th	–	Pastor		<i>after-church fellowship</i>
October					
	3rd	–	Pastor	–	Communion - p.m
	10th	–	Pastor		
	17th	–	Rev. Robert Cordle (Bedfordshire)		
	24th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
	31st	–	Pastor		<i>after-church fellowship</i>
November					
	7th	–	Pastor	–	Communion - p.m
	14th	–	Pastor		
	21st	–	Pastor	–	Communion - a.m
	28th	–	Pastor		<i>after-church fellowship</i>

**Please note** –we seek to hold the after church fellowship hour after the evening service on the last Lords Day of the month.

### **Pastor's engagements**

Sat Oct 2nd Speaking at Salisbury Conference

Sat Oct 16th Speaking at Reformation S. West Ministers and officers fraternal - Plymouth

Sun Oct 17th Preaching at Bedfordshire

### **Advanced notices**

Hosting Protestant Truth Society Public Meeting - Christianity and Roman Catholicism - Preacher Rev. J. Brooks (P.T.S.) -Tuesday 14th Sept. 7.15.p.m.

Baptismal Service - to be announced.

Men's fellowship Meeting-Thursday Oct. 21st - 7.15. p.m.

## **A LAMB of CHRIST'S FOLD**

By The Late Miss Sarah Farmer

It was on a visit to a humble cottage that I, by chance, as some would say, heard of Mary Blagdon. But I will not call it chance; for I think it must have been ordered by an All-wise Providence, that I might learn of her, formerly my scholar, the two all-important lessons—viz., how to bear affliction, and how to die.

It may be well to speak of her first as a scholar. When I became a Sunday-school teacher, Mary was among the number committed to my charge. She was remarkable for her good behaviour, her quiet and gentle deportment, and was ever attentive to what was said; but her attendance was very irregular, the reason of which I afterwards found out. She had no shoes of her own to wear; in fact, she always appeared very thinly clothed. From her irregular attendance, it cannot be supposed that she was forward with her book. She could hardly join her letters together. After she had been in the school about twelve months, her father left L——, to reside in a neighbouring village.

I heard no more of Mary until the time before mentioned, which was in the year 1845. I was then informed that she was in a rapid consumption. I went to see her; and, oh! what did I see? What shall I compare her to? A skeleton, a mere shadow! She was grown so tall in the four years, that I hardly knew her again. Her countenance was pale and emaciated, except when flushed with the consumptive bloom. She instantly recognised me, and said, “You were my teacher. I am so glad to see you. Oh that I had gone more constantly to school! It is true I often had no stockings or shoes to put on; but what did that signify? I could have gone without any.”

I enquired the state of her mind as regarded eternity. She replied, “I have no desire to live in this world; it is such a wicked world. But I want to know

that my sins are forgiven, and that I belong to Jesus.” Here she burst into tears, but continued: “I am the chief of sinners; my sins seem greater than any one’s. My chief desire for wishing to come to L—— was, I thought I should be more likely to see some friend who would instruct me in the way of salvation.” But she was not so ignorant as she supposed herself to be; for she had been taught of the Holy Spirit that needful lesson—the depravity of the human heart. She had also a correct knowledge of the plan of salvation; though she had not obtained it of mortals, for no one visited her, nor was she a good reader. It was quite evident she was taught of God. I questioned her as to the nature of faith. She replied, “Oh, I often think I have none! My sins! my sins! they are as a mountain height! But I know that one drop of Jesus’ precious blood would be enough to wash them all away.

Many and frequent were the visits I afterwards made her; and though her words have imperceptibly glided from my memory, yet the expressive countenance, which spoke more than pen can describe, will never be forgotten. Her frame daily grew weaker, and her breathing more and more difficult. The medical gentleman who attended her said that her lungs were so far gone that she breathed as if through a sieve; yet, amid such weakness and sufferings, not a complaint or murmur escaped her lips. But gratitude flowed in abundance for the least kindness shown her. She seemed to drink deep into the spirit of the meek and lowly Jesus, whose young disciple, I hesitate not say, she was. He was preparing her fast for celestial regions. Her faith in Him grew strong. Oh, how she loved the name of Jesus! She always wept when she spoke, of Him. With what eager attention would she listen to His sacred word, when read to her! Oh, she loved to think of that world where Jesus dwelt in all His glory, and longed for an entrance there, that she might behold it! She often said she hoped to find her mother there, who died when Mary was quite young, and also her sister, who died some time after. She entreated her brother to leave off his wicked ways and told him the consequences of sin. Her anxiety for her father was great; she wept over his sins, and prayed for his soul. “Ah!” said she, one day as I sat by her bedside; “all I can do is to pray for them, and that I

have done, and will do, as long as I remain here.” She also reminded her aunt, at whose house she was staying the last two months of her life, of the necessity of being born again. “I cannot repay you for your kindness,” said she; “but I can pray to God, and He will be sure to reward you. I hope you will follow me to heaven.” She delighted much in hearing prayer ascend from her bedside to the throne of grace. A person went one evening to see her, and, it being late, promised to call the next day, and read to her. She replied, in a tone of surprise and disappointment, “What! can’t you stop to pray?” At another time a person was speaking of her age: she said, with emphasis, “I am young in years, but old in sin.

Through indisposition, I was prevented from seeing Mary for three weeks. When again restored, I bent my steps toward the lowly cottage where she resided.

“‘Twas evening, and the setting sun  
Was sinking in the west;  
The cottager, his labour done,  
Returning home to rest.”

As I descended the hill, I looked around on the harvest-field. It was on the 21st of August. The reapers had been employed gathering in the precious fruits of the earth. The thought flashed across my mind, “Perhaps I shall see Mary no more; this may be the last time.” It was too true. The Lord of the harvest came that same night, and ordered her to be gathered into the safe garner in heaven. As I entered the chamber where Mary was lying, what a scene met my view! Mary was dying! A solemn silence reigned around. The sun was setting in all its beauty, magnificence, and splendour, and casting its last departing rays on Mary,—a striking emblem of the dying young Christian, whose sun was about to set, never more to rise in this world, where it had had so many dark clouds to struggle through. But I think I never beheld a lovelier sight. Her forehead and lips well contrasted with the sheet that covered her, and her cheeks were dyed deep with the rose’s hue; her hair hung carelessly over the pillow on which her head was reclining, bathed in cold streams that

ran down her face—viz., death sweats. As I gazed on that countenance, which once was full of agitation, but now calm and serene in the very article of death, I could not but adore Him who had said to the troubled waves, “Peace, be still.” She appeared to be in a sweet sleep. But when I arose to depart, she tried to raise her hand, and could not. I took hold of it. She gave me a gentle pressure, moved her lips to kiss me, fixed her eyes steadily on mine; a smile passed over her features, while she faintly whispered, “Good-bye, good-bye.” I cannot express what I felt; but the feelings that came over my heart are in my memory yet.

The first sound that fell on my ear when I awoke in the morning was, “Mary is dead!” Though I rejoiced to know that her captive spirit had got its liberty, and was safely lodged in its native home; though I believed her to be in the presence of Him whom, when unseen, she adored; and though the fourteen years that she spent in this world was one scene of unabated sorrow, yet nature could not but weep for her. To memory she was dear. With Mary I had spent some of the happiest moments of my life. I remember her saying once, “I wish all the world knew Jesus.”

Her aunt told me that after I left she revived, and, knowing her time was short, wished to have it spent in the most profitable manner. She desired the person who sat up with her to read, which she did the greatest part of the night, but, feeling weary, lay down. The anxious child, wishing to improve every moment of the time that remained other short life, entreated her to get up, exclaiming, “Read, read; it will not be much longer. Read about death.” She read for the space of ten minutes, when Mary requested to be turned. Whilst in the act of turning her, she sank back on the pillow, and was heard to say, “Ah! I thought so. Come quick, quick, quick!” probably meaning, “Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly.” A struggle ensued, the tent fell, and the heaven-born, longing spirit fled to that world where it fain would be, on August 31, 1845.

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**The Fourteenth Salisbury Conference**

Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd October 2010 (God willing)

Venue: Emmanuel Church, Wilton Road, Salisbury

Theme: Stand Fast in the Faith

Chairman: Rev Malcolm H Watts (Salisbury)

Guest Speakers: Francis J. Harris, Neil Pfeiffer, and Pooyan Mehrshahi.

\* Stand Fast: the Doctrine and Practice. The great need in this our day to be fortified against subtle attacks of the enemy and to resist all attempts to shift us from our ground, whether in matters of doctrine or practice. Friday 1st October at 7.30 pm.

Speaker Malcolm Watts, Minister of Emmanuel Church, Salisbury.

Malcolm Watts will introduce the theme of the Conference. He will consider the scriptures enjoining this duty and explain what is meant by steadfastness, particularly in view of the present crisis within Evangelicalism. Faithful men will no doubt be censured as strict, precise and even divisive; yet only by standing fast will we be able to serve God, the Cause of Truth and our own generation. In this address the call will be issued to maintain and defend those things most surely believed among us.

\* Stand Fast for Authentic Evangelicalism. The Decline and Fall of Traditional Evangelicalism: identifying reasons for its collapse with a critical assessment of the New Evangelicalism which has taken its Place. Saturday 2nd October at 10.30 am. Speaker Francis J. Harris, former Minister of Uxbridge Road Tabernacle, in London, and of Providence Baptist Chapel, Cheltenham.

Mick Harris, in his address, will give a broad overview of Evangelicalism in the post-war years, considering both its strengths and weaknesses. He will also take a critical look at the New Evangelicalism which had within it, from the beginning, the seeds which have sadly brought forth totally different views of Evangelical Truth, Worship, Preaching, Holiness, and Devotion. The Old and New Evangelicalism will be compared and attention given to their marked differences. The address will draw attention to the strengths of the Old and the weaknesses of the New Evangelicalism and issue a call to "prove all things" and "hold fast that which is good".

\* Stand Fast against Current Attacks on the Church. Problems presently facing our Churches: the need to recognize them, understand them and deal with them both scripturally and spiritually. Saturday 2nd October at 1 pm. Speaker Neil Pfeiffer, Minister of Peniel Green Congregational Church, Swansea.

Neil Pfeiffer, after making reference to the true nature of a Gospel Church, will analyze some of the difficulties which arise in even the soundest of churches. He will suggest reasons why they often arise and draw from the Scriptures the Lord's prescribed ways of dealing with these difficulties. In this address there will be emphasis on the need for the minister, other officers and all the members to experience a close walk with God and to know the Holy Spirit's gracious presence and ministry, enabling the whole church to respond to problems in the right way, with concern for God's glory, the purity of the church, the maintenance of Truth, the upholding of the testimony

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and the love of the brethren. The presence of the Lord, although not making churches immune to problems, is certainly what is essential to overcoming them and preserving the church's unity.

\* Stand Fast in Hope for the Days to Come. Dangers ahead: the need to prepare our churches and the need to be encouraged in God and by the promises of his Word, retaining, even in the darkest days, an optimism born of faith and hope. Saturday 2nd October at 2.30 pm. Speaker Pooyan Mehrshahi, Minister of Providence Baptist Chapel, Cheltenham.

Pooyan Mehrshahi will be looking to the future; and on consideration of present disturbing trends in our churches, he will seek to anticipate the dangers we are likely to face in times to come, such as the development of 'contemporary worship', further dilution of Truth, continued lowering of standards, increasing antinomianism, yet more worldly compromise, and lapses into tragic extremism of one kind or another. This address will show how best to confront these dangers; and it will draw attention to other present and more encouraging signs in our churches which, together with Scripture's bright prospects for God's Cause, strengthen our resolve to keep faithful and hope for a better and more glorious day.

\* On the Sabbath, 3rd October, John Thackway, Minister of Holywell Evangelical Church, will be the preacher at both services, 11 am & 6.30 pm, and he will also be speaking at an After Church Meeting at about 8.30 pm.

\* If you arrive early on Saturday there will be tea and coffee served from 9:30 am to 10:15 am, in the meeting room at the rear of the church building. This can be accessed via the door on the left hand side of the premises.

\* There will be a lunch break on Saturday, 12 noon - 1 pm. Please bring a packed lunch with you, tea and coffee will be provided.

\* Following the conference at approximately 4 pm on Saturday light refreshments will be served.

\* There will be a bookstall.

\* All of the conference sessions will be recorded and made available on DVD, CD or tape. A form will be provided on the day to place an order, which will be dispatched promptly to the given address. CDs or tapes of previous conferences are also available. Recordings of the sessions from several of the previous conferences are available online, here

### **Parking**

Parking restrictions apply along Wilton Road and in the immediate area of the Church. The car park off Wilton Road which has been used in the past is no longer available.

The Salisbury Park & Ride Service could be more convenient than trying to find parking in the immediate vicinity of the church. There is a Park & Ride car park situated at Wilton, just off the A36. From there the bus service (number 502) runs down Wilton Road, past Emmanuel Church. It is possible to alight at St Pauls Church, just a few minutes walk from Emmanuel. Inclusive in the price of the parking ticket the driver and up to six passengers can travel on the bus.

## OF A LIVING AND A DEAD FAITH

*By John Newton (1725-1807)*

*“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also”  
(James 2. 26).*

Whoever has read the Scriptures with attention must have observed several passages which, at first view, and till thoroughly examined and compared, appear hard to reconcile to each other. No instance of this sort is more remarkable than the seeming difference of judgment between Paul and James on the point of justification. Paul having said, “That a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law,” produces the example of Abraham to confirm his assertion. James (in the chapter before us), from the example of the same Abraham, draws a conclusion which seems directly to contradict this: “Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” Can any two opinions be more opposite in appearance? How then can both be true; or how can we believe both writers infallible in their doctrine, and influenced by the unerring Spirit of God? Must we cleave to the one, and reject the other? And if so, how shall we know which is the real truth?

We may confidently answer that the apostles are both right; their doctrine is equally from God, and does not clash in any particular. The darkness and difficulty is in the apprehensions of men, and not in the Word of God. Yet a difficulty there is, and I hope I shall not detain you unprofitably at this time by endeavouring to clear it, and afterwards to press upon you the words of my text as a proper inference from the whole.

When men who are strangers to Christian experience, and who trust more to their own sagacity and learning than to the Word and Spirit of God, attempt to resolve cases of this sort, they make strange work. And it is no wonder; for how can anyone explain what he does not understand? It would tire you if I should relate a tenth part of the conjectures of learned men upon this very subject. I shall mention one or two as a specimen. A writer of some eminence in the world confesses the difficulty I have noticed in its full strength. He allows and affirms that it is not only hard, but impossible, to reconcile the apostles to each other; and concludes that since it is impossible to hold both their sentiments, we must abide by him who wrote the last. This, from many arguments his learning furnished him with, he thinks to have been James. Accordingly, he gives up the other, and his doctrine of faith without works, to shift for themselves. He supposes that Paul, in the heat of his argument, carried the matter a little too far, and that James wrote afterwards to correct him.

But to show you (excuse a familiar expression) how doctors differ, and at the same time to warn even true believers against hastily judging beyond the line of their experience, I would observe that the great servant of God, Luther, soon after he began to preach the gospel, made a mistake no less bold and presuming on the other side of the question. He had felt the power of Paul's doctrine in his own soul, and would have defied an angel that should have dared to oppose it. Therefore when his adversaries pressed him with the authority of James, not having at that time light to give a more solid answer, he ventured to deny the authenticity of the whole Epistle, and rashly insisted, both in his sermons and books, that James never wrote it. But Luther, though mistaken in this point, was under the Lord's teaching; he went on from strength to strength, increasing in knowledge and grace; and when his judgment was better informed, he publicly retracted his former unguarded assertion.

Leaving, therefore, the authority of men, let us betake ourselves to the Word of God, and humbly seek the light of His Spirit, who is promised to guide His people in their sincere inquiries after truth.

Now, if you consider the scope and design of our apostles, and take in the context, I hope this seeming opposition will be soon removed. Paul is evidently treating on the great point of a sinner's justification in the sight of God; he shows that it cannot be of the law, because by the law all men were already condemned, and because then boasting could not be excluded; but that it was freely by grace, through the redemption that is by Christ Jesus.

His reasoning will appear to greater advantage by perusing the whole passage than by producing a few detached sentences. After he had summed up the evidence with respect both to Jews and Gentiles and pronounced his verdict, that every mouth must be stopped, and that the whole world stood guilty before God, he proceeds thus:

“Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness: that He might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”

And because the Jews had a high opinion of Abraham, he proceeds in the next chapter to show that Abraham was justified in the same way. "For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." The circumstance in Abraham's life referred to is when he believed the promise of God, that though he was then childless, he should be the father of many nations; and that particularly from him should proceed the Messiah, the promised Seed, in whom both he himself and all the families of the earth should be blessed.

James expressly treats of those who rested in a notion which they called faith, and accounted sufficient for their salvation, though it had no influence upon their hearts, tempers and conduct. He shows that their hope is vain, because such a faith as this the devils have. And he proves, by the example of Abraham, that his faith was very different from theirs, because it enabled him to perform the hardest and most painful act of obedience, the offering up his only son:

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can (this) faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be you warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled" - confirmed - "which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

It is exceedingly plain that he had not the same thing in view which Paul had; for the incident to which he here refers happened a great many years after Abraham had been declared justified in the sight of God.

The sum is: the one declares that nothing renders us acceptable to God but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; the other, that such a faith, when true and genuine, is not solitary, but accompanied with every good work. The one speaks of the justification of our persons - this is by faith only; the other of the justification of our profession - this is by faith not alone, but working by love, and producing obedience.

## THE FAITH OF DEVILS

*By Augustus Montague Toplady (1740-1778)*

*“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble“ (James 2. 19).*

One grand motive which induced James to write this Epistle was to stifle and repress a most dangerous error which, even in the apostolic times, began to gain ground among too many reputed followers of Christ. This error was that a mere naked assent to the truths of Christianity, considered as a doctrinal system, without having the heart affected and without having the life sanctified, would be sufficient evidence of their salvation, and prove them children of God.

Against this most dangerous delusion, the blessed Apostle James drew his pen. And the principal drift of this Epistle is not to counteract Paul (for all the divine writers speak one uniform, harmonious language), but merely to show the delusion which the Gnostics, who were the Antinomians of that age, were under, seeking to prove that mere head knowledge is requisite to stamp us heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

Hence we find the apostle at the fourteenth verse asking, “What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?” Observe with what caution James expresses himself. He does not say, “What will it profit a man to *have* faith without works?” for he knew that to be impossible. But the words are, What will it profit a man to *say* that he hath faith, without works? There is a vast difference between believing, and *saying* we believe. The man who professes himself a believer must offer something more solid than his own *ipse dixit* [dogmatic statement], than a mere verbal profession, if he wishes to be credited by those to whom that profession is made.

Were I to affirm that I am possessed of a neat hundred thousand per annum, not one of you would believe me. And why? Because I have nothing to show for it. I have no writings to produce as my authentic vouchers. By the same rule, when a man comes to you or me and says, “I have faith,” it is very natural for us to ask, “Where are your works?” If thou hast faith, thou hast it to thyself before God. Faith is a hidden principle until rendered visible by a holy life and conversation.

What does it profit a man barely to *say* that he has faith? It profits a man much to *have* faith, for if he *has* faith, he will also have a life correspondent to the holiness of that leading grace. Indeed, a man can never be holy till he has faith. To them, says Christ, who are sanctified by faith that is in Me.

There is no such thing as real holiness without faith; and there is no such thing as true faith without holiness. These two always go together; and none but a visionary self-deceiver, or an intentional hypocrite, would ever wish to put them asunder. Can faith, that is, can a bare profession of faith, save him, or prove him to be in a saved state? Far from it. Profession will only sink us deeper into

condemnation at last, unless Godm give us to feel and to possess those graces to which our lips lay claim.

Here, a Pharisee may step in and ask, "But will not works save us?" Indeed they will not. "Will not faith and works together save us?" No. Faith is the evidence, not the cause of salvation, just as works are the evidences, not the cause of faith.

\* \* \*

Let us consider in what respects does the faith of devils differ from the evangelical faith of the saints, or from that faith which is of the operation of God? (Col. 2. 12).

Much, every way: but, chiefly, in these:

1. The faith of the devils is only a mere assent of the understanding, unaccompanied by any cordial consent of the will and affections to the truth: a faith without regard to Christ, or any concern for the glory of God. They discern the traces of infinite wisdom shining in the gospel plan, but they feel nothing of Christ's suitableness and loveliness. They speculatively see, but it is only to hate and blaspheme (and, if it were possible, to counteract) the covenant-designs of the Trinity respecting the salvation of sinners.

Sorry I am to observe that we have some professors among ourselves who are for shutting out all feelings of grace for Christian experience. I dare do no such thing. On the contrary, I am persuaded that if a cold, dry assent to the written word be that faith which is connected with salvation, all the devils in hell are, and must be, children of God. But I cannot bring myself to have so good an opinion of Satan and his legions. Nor, consequently, can I suppose that faith to be saving which has nothing to do with spiritual feelings.

If once the feeling or inward perception of God's Spirit, as a convincer of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16. 8) were to be excluded from faith, there would presently be an end of all vital religion, and the power of godliness would take its flight from that day forward. What is conviction of sin? It is no conviction to me, unless I feel myself convinced of my sinfulness and inability. What is conviction of Christ's righteousness? No conviction at all to me, unless I feel the necessity and value of that righteousness. What are the comforts of the Holy Spirit? No comforts at all to me, except *I* feel them. Unfelt consolation is a contradiction in terms.

Hence we are taught to pray that, by the light of the same Holy Spirit who taught and illumined the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, we too may have a right judgment in all things pertaining to God, and be enabled evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort. But how can we rejoice in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, unless we feel and perceive His visitations? Where is the enthusiasm of believing that the blessed Spirit of God can make my soul feel no less vividly than the impressions of outward objects can make my soul perceive, through the organs of

sensation? For in the seventeenth article [of the Church of England] upon election, or predestination unto life, the church roundly affirms that the godly consideration of our election and predestination in Christ is full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and to such as feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of Christ. May we feel these workings more and more, mortifying the deeds of the flesh, and drawing up our minds to high and heavenly things!

2. The faith of the devils is a faith without repentance. Though they saw something of the glory of God before they fell, yet they do not repent of having fallen. My meaning is, they do not repent of having offended God; though the fear of punishment, resulting from self-love, may make them wish they had not sinned.

3. Theirs is a faith without love. Their language to the Almighty is, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of Thy ways." Whereas the cry of those who are endued with the faith of God's elect (Tit. 1. 1) is, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth mysoul after Thee, O God" (Psa. 42. 1).

4. The faith of devils is an Antinomian faith, a faith without holiness, a faith without good works, whereas the faith of God's people is a faith inseparably connected with holiness and infallibly productive of practical obedience. Whoever has Paul's faith will and must have James' works.

5. The faith of devils is a faith without desire. But that faith which the Holy Ghost works in the hearts of His people causes them earnestly to desire the favour, the presence and the image of God in Christ. Nothing will satisfy a renewed soul, but communion with God and conformity to Him.

6. The faith of devils is a faith without reliance. Though they know the mercy of God to be immense, and though they see the merits of Jesus

Christ to be all-sufficient, yet they have not one grain of reliance, nor wish they to rely, either upon the one or upon the other. Whereas they who believe through grace (Acts 18. 27) are enabled in some degree to trust the goodness, the covenant and the promise of God; to trust the blood, and obedience, and mediation of Christ; to trust the grace, the power and faithfulness of the Holy Ghost. They trust a little, and wish they could trust more. They build a little, and wish they could build higher and deeper on the merits of Christ. They not only give their assent to the history of His obedience and sufferings, but rely upon them and take shelter under them, as the sole procuring cause of pardon and salvation.

7. While the devils believe against their wills, and wish they were not forced to believe so much, the saints believe with their hearts unto justification, and are ever crying, "Lord, increase our faith!"

8. The faith of the infernal spirits does not look to the influences of the Holy Ghost, whereas that faith which the Holy Ghost inspires, as it comes from Him, so it leads to Him, and causes the soul to see, and to feel, and to rejoice, that all its strength, all its holiness, and all its happiness are treasured up in the faithful hands of that holy, blessed and adorable Comforter.

## The Removal of Offences.

### Matthew Henry's Commentary on Matthew 18:15-20

*15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.*

Let us apply it to the quarrels that happen, upon any account, among Christians. If thy brother trespass against thee, by grieving thy soul (1 Corinthians 8:12), by affronting thee, or putting contempt or abuse upon thee; if he blemish thy good name by false reports or tale-bearing; if he encroach on thy rights, or be any way injurious to thee in thy estate; if he be guilty of any of those trespasses that are specified, Leviticus 6:2,3; if he transgress the laws of justice, charity, or relative duties; these are trespasses against us, and often happen among Christ's disciples, and sometimes, for want of prudence, are of very mischievous consequence. Now observe what is the rule prescribed in this case,

1. Go, and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. Let this be compared with, and explained by, Leviticus 19:17, Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart; that is, "If thou hast conceived a displeasure at thy brother for any injury he hath done thee, do not suffer thy resentments to ripen into a secret malice (like a wound, which is most dangerous when it bleed inwardly), but give vent to them in a mild and grave admonition, let them so spend themselves, and they will expire the sooner; do not go and rail against him behind his back, but thou shalt in any ways reprove him. If he has indeed done thee a considerable wrong, endeavour to make him sensible of it, but let the rebuke be private, between thee and him alone; if thou wouldest convince him, do not expose him, for that will but exasperate him, and make the reproof look like a revenge." this agrees with Proverbs 25:8,9, "Go not forth hastily to strive, but debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself, argue it calmly and amicably; and if he shall hear thee, well and good, thou hast gained thy

brother, there is an end of the controversy, and it is a happy end; let no more be said of it, but let the falling out of friends be the renewing of friendship."

2. "If he will not hear thee, if he will not own himself in a fault, nor come to an agreement, yet do not despair, but try what he will say to it, if thou take one or two or more, not only to be witnesses of what passes, but to reason the case further with him; he will be the more likely to hearken to them because they are disinterested; and if reason will rule him, the word of reason in the mouth of two or three witnesses will be better spoken to him" (Plus vident oculi quam oculus--Many eyes see more than one), "and more regarded by him, and perhaps it will influence him to acknowledge his error, and to say, I repent."

3. "If he shall neglect to hear them, and will not refer the matter to their arbitration, then tell it to the church, to the ministers, elders, or other officers, or the most considerable persons in the congregation you belong to, make them the referees to accommodate the matter, and do not presently appeal to the magistrate, or fetch a writ for him." This is fully explained by the apostle (1 Corinthians 6:1-20), where he reproves those that went to law before the unjust, and not before the saints (Matthew 18:1), and would have the saints to judge those small matters (Matthew 18:2) that pertain to this life, Matthew 18:3. If you ask, "Who is the church that must be told?" the apostle directs there (Matthew 18:5), Is there not a wise man among you? Those of the church that are presumed to be most capable of determining such matters; and he speaks ironically, when he says (Matthew 18:4), "Set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church; those, if there be no better, those, rather than suffer an irreconcilable breach between two church members." This rule was then in a special manner requisite, when the civil government was in the hands of such as were not only aliens, but enemies.

4. "If he will not hear the church, will not stand to their award, but persists in the wrong he has done thee, and proceeds to do thee further wrong, let him be to thee as a heathen man, and a publican; take the benefit of the law against him, but let that always be the last remedy; appeal not to the courts of justice till thou hast first tried all other means to compromise the matter in variance. Or thou mayest, if thou wilt, break off thy friendship and familiarity with him; though thou must by no means study revenge, yet thou mayest choose whether thou wilt have any dealings with him, at least, in such a way as may give him an opportunity of doing the like again. Thou wouldest have healed him, wouldest have preserved his friendship, but he would not, and so has forfeited it." If a man cheat and abuse me once, it is his fault; if twice, it is my own.

**EPILOGUE**

**“A Sure and Certain Hope”**

*Hector M'Phail (1716-1774) was a minister in Ross-shire, Dr. Kennedy wrote how, on his death-bed, he became very dejected and, in that state of mind, he fell asleep.*

He dreamt that he was waiting, lonely and despairing, outside the walls of the New Jerusalem. Seeing the gate closed, and none near to help him, and none in sight to cry to for help, he had just lain down to die, when he heard sounds as of a company approaching the city.

Venturing to look up from the dust where he lay, he recognized Noah, Abraham, and all the patriarchs. As they drew near, the gate flew open, a glorious company from within came forth to meet them, and, in the midst of shouts of triumph, they entered. The gate again closes, and again he is left alone and helpless.

Soon he heard the noise of another company approaching. As they pass, he recognizes Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David, and all the prophets, a glorious and numerous band. Again the gate is thrown open, •an abundant entrance• given, and again he is left outside, and feels more desolate than ever.

A third company is heard approaching, composed of the Apostles and all the earliest Christians. They enter the city amidst rejoicing like the rest, and he, with less hope than ever, is still outside the gate.

A fourth company now appears. Luther and Knox are at the head of those who form it. They pass by like those that went before, are admitted into the city, and leave him alone and despairing without.

Quite close to him now comes a fifth company. He recognizes in it some of his friends and acquaintances, who had died in the lord; but though their shining skirts touch him as they pass, he could not venture to arise and join them. Again he sees the gate open and close; and now, at last, he lays himself quite down to die.

Then he hears the footstep of a solitary pilgrim, coming exactly to the place where he lies. Looking up, he recognizes Manasseh (the wicked king who repented and found forgiveness, 2 Chronicles 33). Summoning all his strength, he takes hold of his skirt, and he moves slowly towards the city, and, creeping on behind him, he knows the gate has opened, by the light of the city's glory shining on his face; and just as he thought he heard the sound of the gate closing behind him, he suddenly awoke. The lesson of this dream was presented to him hereafter in the sweet words of Paul - "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief".