

Pastor Russell's Sermon

SAVED BY FAITH, NOT BY WORKS

God's Arrangement For the Church's Redemption.

PASTOR RUSSELL AT HALIFAX.

Necessity For Faith—How It is of God and How We Co-work in Our Own Faith Development—How It May Be Developed or Retarded by God's People—During the Coming Reign of the Messiah Works Will Be the Basis of God's Judgment.



PASTOR RUSSELL

Halifax, N. S., Sept. 29.—Pastor Russell is here to address a Convention of Bible Students assembled from New England and the Provinces. We report one of his discourses from the text, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Ephesians II, 8). He said in part:

The relationship between faith and works in the matter of the Church's salvation has been a question of controversy for centuries. However, this, like other subjects once mysterious, yields to the clearer light of our day. Now we perceive the importance of both faith and works and the relationship they bear to each other. Faith is the all-important factor in God's sight, because in our fallen condition we cannot do perfect works and because God cannot consistently accept and reward any but perfect works.

God's arrangement for us, therefore, in Christ, is that He will judge us, not according to our works, but according to our faith. Nevertheless, good works are recognized as a demonstration of our faith. So surely as we have the proper faith in God and His promises it will manifest itself in works, even though we cannot do perfectly.

So St. James points out that Abraham was not justified without works, but was required to demonstrate his faith by his works, even though they were not perfect works and could not have justified him.

Age of Faith—Age of Works. If we call this Gospel Age the Age of Faith, none should misunderstand us to mean that works are now wholly ignored, but rather that works take the secondary place. Likewise, when we say that the coming Age of the Messiah Kingdom will be an Age of Works, none should understand us as meaning that faith will then be ignored. Works will then be the basis of the Lord's judgment in dealing with the world. Thus we read that they shall be "judged every man according to his works." (Revelation xlii, 12.)

Judgment according to works, yet not without faith, may perhaps appear to some of our minds as being the more reasonable, the more just form of judgment. However, when we come to note the difference between the conditions of the trial of the Church of this Age and the future trial of the world during the Messianic reign, we can see readily the reason for the different basis of judgment.

The Present Grace Age. In the present time the Lord is selecting from the world a special class to be the Bride of Christ, and He properly makes faith the test. (1) Because in the Divine estimation faith in God is one of the grandest elements of character, the one most essential to such as will be entrusted with high positions and authority in the Kingdom. (2) Because the judgment according to faith meets the various conditions of the present time as a judgment according to works would not do.

The Lord calls now for such as will walk in the "narrow way," demonstrating that if they had perfect bodies as Jesus' body was perfect they would be perfect in works as well as in faith.

In the next Age, the Divine plan will not be the selection of self-sacrificing ones for the Kingdom, but the blessing of humanity with an opportunity to return to the full perfection of human nature. They will be required merely to demonstrate their loyalty to God in the use of their lives faithfully in obedience to His Law. The reward for the sacrificers of this Age is to be glory, honor and immortality, the Divine nature and joint heirship with the Lord Jesus in His Kingdom. The reward for obedience to be given in the next Age will be human perfection in the image and likeness of God, with all the earthly inheritance originally given to Adam—lost through sin and redeemed by the merit of Christ's sacrifice. And since the objective points of the two Ages are different, so will be their methods and conditions.

We have already considered the conditions of the Church's trial; let us next notice how different will be the conditions of the world's trial, according to works, in the coming Age. The reign of Satan and sin now prevalent is to give way; Satan is to be bound for a thousand years that he may deceive the nations no more for that period. The darkness, ignorance, superstition and misunderstanding of God and His plans, etc., which have prevailed for the last six thousand years will pass away. Instead, "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His beams." The darkness of ignorance, superstition, etc., which at the present time covers the earth, and gross darkness the heathen, makes faith in the present time a very precious thing indeed which only comparatively few can or will exercise.

But, when the shadows and darkness shall flee away, when the True Light shall shine, when "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the great deep"—then faith will not be at its present premium, because it will then be very easy to exercise faith. Moreover, while perfect works are impossible now, because of our imperfections of the flesh, perfect works will gradually become possible to the world in the next Age, because as they progress in the light and in obedience to the laws of that Kingdom they will gradually be recovering the perfection of the flesh, mental, moral and physical. And as they recover these powers correspondingly more and better works will be required each year, each century, of their experience.

Finally, before the glorious Epoch shall conclude—before Messiah shall turn over the Kingdom to Justice—all the willing and obedient will have come to full perfection and hence to full capacity for perfect works and God will demand them; they will therefore be the standard or test in the world's trial Day—"They shall be judged every man, according to his works." In both these judgments we see Justice and Mercy harmoniously working together in the interests of those on trial, the differences between the two operations being such merely as adapt them to the conditions of the individuals on trial.

Come Now to Our Text. A glance at our text shows that it relates to the present Age and not to the period of Messiah's Kingdom. The Apostle is addressing those called to joint-heirship in the Kingdom, of whom he says in the context that "God in mercy hath quickened us with Christ and raised us up together to a heavenly station in Christ Jesus, that in the Ages to come we might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Without question these words apply to the Elect Church, and with equal certainty they cannot properly be applied to the non-elect world, whose opportunity for blessing belongs to the next Age and will come to them from the Father, through the Son, by the Church in glory.

Our text contains another statement which has been the cause of much dispute, namely, the one which declares that "we are saved by grace through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." It is easy to understand the forepart of this statement, that we are saved by grace, and easy also to understand the last part, namely, that we are not saved by works and that, therefore, none of us has any ground for boasting in our salvation. "By nature we were children of wrath, even as others." We were under the sentence of death and could not recover ourselves from that condition. Whatever, therefore, should be done for us to help us out of our condemnation and fallen condition would necessarily be of grace, and also of God. Now we come to the more difficult part of our text.

"That Not of Yourselves." How shall we understand the suggestion that the faith is not of ourselves but is the gift of God? Surely God does not exercise faith for us, and surely also He does not develop the faith in us by some miraculous power, for in either of these cases the saints would be merely machines, reacting as acted upon. This would neither develop nor prove character, nor in any wise fit and prepare us for the glorious work to which we have been called. How is it God's gift?

There is one view of this statement which we believe clears it of all mystery and makes it entirely harmonious with Divine Justice and our responsibility. It is this: Faith is possible only where there is a basis of knowledge; in proportion, therefore, as Divine providence grants us knowledge of Himself and of His great Plan, in that proportion is it possible for us to exercise faith in that Plan, and by our endeavors to demonstrate the strength and sincerity of our faith. While it is true that our knowledge depends in large measure upon our application in the study of the Divine Word—upon our use of the means and opportunities placed within our reach by a kind Providence—nevertheless there are millions of our race who have had no opportunity whatever for knowledge.

For instance, during the more than four thousand years from Adam to the days of Jesus, knowledge and opportunity for faith were very limited. For more than two thousand years God made no direct revelation whatever of His good intentions in respect to sending a Savior, and the delivery of our race from the bondage of sin and death. Then the Message sent was semi-private. To Abraham God declared His intention of blessing the world eventually, and further that this world eventually, and further that this blessing would come through Abraham's posterity. But what did the masses of mankind at that time know of that promise? Faith in that promise was counted to Abraham for righteousness; and the same with Isaac and Jacob. Ultimately the promise descended to the nation of Israel.

to a higher nature. So, says the Apostle, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election obtained it and the rest were blinded." Only the few had a sufficiency of faith to make use of their knowledge.

"If Our Gospel Be Hid." St. Paul declares that the Gospel is hidden from some during this Age, namely, from the perishing ones whom Satan hath blinded and these surely are the vast majority of the race. As Jesus declared to His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see and your ears for they hear." And thus it has been all down the Age for more than eighteen centuries. Only the few have been so highly favored by birth and environment, etc., as to be able to see and able to hear and appreciate the glorious invitation of this present time.

Furthermore, God's providence has been exercising apparently a discrimination in the sending of the Gospel Message. It went not alike to all parts of the earth. Beginning with Israel in Palestine it moved northward and westward to Greece and to Italy, and thus spread through and amongst the savage tribes of Europe, namely, to such as had "ears to hear" the Divine call to joint-heirship with Christ in the glorious Kingdom soon to be established. From Europe this Message, this knowledge, came to America; and now, within the last century in particular, it is reaching some of the many millions of India, China, Japan, Africa, etc., but still with the same limitations. It appeals only to a comparatively few in any nation—"He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear."

"Not of Yourselves." Ah, yes, we can see a force in the Apostle's words, "not of yourselves." It is indeed for ourselves to exercise faith when the knowledge comes to us, yet faith being impossible without knowledge, we were dependent upon God for it. How thankful we should be, how appreciative! How sympathetic we should be toward those who have not been so highly favored with knowledge or whose condition has been less favorable to the cultivation of the hearing ear and of the understanding heart! Truly God is electing and selecting, testing and proving the members of the Church of Christ.

Another phase of the subject well worthy of our notice is that our faith is largely a matter of development; first the seed, then the blade, then the ear, then the ripe corn. When God gave us the first impulse toward a knowledge of Himself and of His purposes, that was the seed from which faith might germinate if it fell into a heart or mind that was good soil for it. And even those whose hearts are good soil for the Message of God's grace and the Kingdom invitation find that they greatly need a certain Divine supervision, watch-care, in order to bring forth fruitage such as the Lord will be pleased to accept.

What would any of us be today without the grace of God assisting us in faith and in obedience? Surely the original faith would long since have withered and died. We must still say, By the grace of God we are saved, through faith, not of ourselves. It is the result of the knowledge granted and the Divine blessing poured upon us.

Growing in Grace, Etc. In full line with what we have considered is the Apostolic injunction that we must continue to grow in grace and in knowledge and in faith and in love, and to the extent of our ability in obedience and good works. And this growth in grace, this growth in faith, signifies a continued and further growth in knowledge. For instance, the promises of the Bible contain the spiritual food upon which we as New Creatures must feed in order to grow up to the required likeness of Christ—in order to be fitted and prepared in character and faith-development for a place in the Kingdom.

It should not surprise us, therefore, to find the Scriptures clearly teaching that the Bible contains nourishments exactly adapted to our requirements. St. Paul illustrates this matter by saying that in the beginning of our experiences we, as new born babes, should "desire the sincere milk of the Word that we might grow thereby"—grow in grace and in knowledge and faith and obedience. But he admonishes us also that we should not always continue to be babes, feeding upon the milk of the Word, but that by the use of it and the strength that is derived we should become strong in the Lord, become manly, attaining unto the full stature of manliness as members of the Body of Christ. And for this additional strength the Apostle tells us that we need more than the milk of the Word—we need the "strong meat" of God's Word, of God's promises, that we may grow thereby. And again, in all this finding and using of the "meat in due season" we are indebted to God.

Not only has He provided meat in due season in the Holy Scriptures, "that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished" and able to "rightly divide the Word of Truth," but additionally He has granted help amongst the brethren, that we may build one another up in the faith, until we all come to the full stature in Christ.

How evident then it is that our salvation through faith is not a matter of an instantaneous injection of faith into us in some miraculous manner, but a gradual development, as we have seen; and how evident it is that in the development of this faith we are to be co-workers together with God!

Let us, therefore, be very appreciative of the great privileges granted to us and use them wisely, lest we should receive the grace of God in vain and miss this great Prize which has been offered to us and which we have accepted and which God will be faithful to give to those who faithfully use the blessings of His provision.

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Makes No Fight on Prohibition.
The Socialist makes no fight on prohibition. But when the prohibition party attempts to solve the labor problem it flounders like a horse in the mud with a broken leg. It gets nowhere. Its promise of "exact justice to labor, without injury to capital," is an impossible absurdity.

The prohibition movement is largely a moral movement, so confessed. But you cannot have a successful moral movement at this stage of the game, under capitalism, and for the following reasons:

1. Anything and everything that business thinks will bring money to town will be supported by business. This has been demonstrated a thousand times.

2. The man who struggles for his daily bread will do anything, or favor anything, that will ease his struggle, or that he thinks will ease it. There is no moral force great enough to challenge the force of the strife for gain and the struggle for bread. This patent fact ought to penetrate the consciousness of even the prohibitionist.

Mr. A. H. Meese has tried his hand against Socialism but he has so much enthusiasm it blinds his perception. He ought to read up.

Socialist Party Ticket.
For President.....Eugene V. Debs
Vice-President.....Emile Sledet

Presidential Electors.
O. Henry Olsen, Deer Island; Geo. Dabrits, Falls City; C. W. Banta, Ashland; H. J. Butler, Portland; P. Lewis, Lebanon.

For State Officers—
U. S. Senator.....B. F. Ramp
Congress, First Dist., W. S. Richards
Justice Supreme Court.....C. C. Brix

Marion County Ticket.
Representatives—Henry Chapelle, G. H. McNeal, E. W. Ross, J. W. Jory, F. J. Von Behren.

County Judge.....E. C. Minton
Commissioner.....Lawson Hadley
Sheriff.....T. J. Clark
Clerk.....L. D. Ratliff
Recorder.....E. G. Lantz
Treasurer.....J. W. Hunt
School Superintendent, Dr. Armstrong
Assessor.....T. Y. McClellan
Surveyor.....J. B. Hoss
Coroner.....B. B. Pehr
Prosecuting Attorney.....J. E. Hosmer
Justice of Peace for Salem District.....R. R. Ryan

MOTHERHOOD SUGGESTIONS

Advice to Expectant Mothers

The experience of Motherhood is a trying one to most women, and marks distinctly an epoch in their lives. Not one woman in a hundred is prepared or understands how to properly care for herself. Of course nearly every woman nowadays has medical treatment at such times, but many approach the experience with an organism unfitted for the trial of strength, and when it is over her system has received a shock from which it is hard to recover. Following right upon this comes the nervous strain of caring for the child, and a distinct change in the mother results.

There is nothing more charming than a happy and healthy mother of children, and indeed child-birth under the right conditions need be no hazard to health or beauty. The unexplainable thing is that, with all the evidence of shattered nerves and broken health resulting from an unprepared condition, and with ample time in which to prepare, women will persist in going blindly to the trial.

Every woman at this time should rely upon Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, a most valuable tonic and invigorator of the female organism.

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Will be presented at the Grand opera house Monday, October 7, by the Woods & Chalker Co., headed by Miss Ouida Marion, as the "Giri" from U. S. A. The story deals with the romance of an American girl, and it gains interest each act as she travels various parts of the world. It is a departure from the ordinary lines of comedy-drama in its class and refinement. The company presenting the play is Woods & Chalker's best, and has a reputation for artistic ability and achievement. The story plays upon one's sympathy, but it is interspersed with bright comedy lines and startling climaxes which taken all together make a good evening's entertainment.

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