

KNOWING AND DOING

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“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”
John 13:17

THE original scope of these words was just this—“If, as you say, you have understood the meaning of this—the washing of your feet by your Master—if you have comprehended My intention in so doing, then it will be to your lasting honor and happiness if you do the same. I have symbolically represented to you, by washing your feet, certain virtues. You shall be a happy people if these virtues are found in you and abound.”

And have we not abundant proof that our Lord spoke the truth, for where are churches as happy as where they are knit together in brotherly love, where they have laid aside contentions about priority and distinction, and where each one becomes a servant of all—every one willing to take the lowest place and no one contending who shall be the greatest. May we prove, as I trust in our measure we have already done, how true these words are, and never may Diotrophes be in our midst to strive for the preeminence, nor a root of bitterness spring up to trouble us. May we every one try to be like our Lord and happy indeed shall we be in such a case.

But the sentence before us is equally applicable to every other Gospel precept. If we understand anything which the Holy Spirit has revealed to us, happy shall we be, if we follow its practical intention—if, being first taught and instructed, we afterward practically exemplify in our life and conduct the things which we have learned. That is the one thought I propose to lay upon our hearts and minds this evening, and that one thought may be enough.

You will notice in the text that there are two “ifs”—“*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*” It appears, then, first, that *genuine and acceptable service to Christ should be based upon intelligent knowledge*—“*If you know these things.*” And secondly, that all *intelligent understanding of the things of God should lead us to the practice of them*—“*Happy are ye if ye do them.*” The first “if” shall be taken first—“*If you know these things*”—

I. ALL SERVICE OF CHRIST IS BASED UPON INTELLIGENT KNOWLEDGE.

Our first observation is that this is an “if” even in this country, “*If you know these things.*” Alas! even in such a city as this, where the Gospel is to be heard in all our streets, and Bibles are to be found in all our homes, it is so sad that tens of thousands do *not* know these things. They are so careless about what God has revealed, that they will not even cross the threshold to listen to the Word of God.

This day what a mass of Sabbath-breaking has grieved the Spirit of God! All around us there are those who are toiling hard six days in the week for themselves, and cannot give to their God, and I may add, to their truer and nobler selves, this one day in which to think of Him. He has written to them the great things of His law and they have trifled therewith.

He speaks to them and invites them to hear that their souls may live, but they would rather rest in their beds, or be found in any kind of pleasure sooner than seeking pleasure in the ways of God. Pity this poor city, you who know its sins. Pray for it, you who know its high privileges and solemn responsibilities. Work for it, you who have power with the heavenly Father, until at last the blessing shall come, and men shall no longer need to say to their fellows, “*Know the Lord.*”

Alas! this is an “if,” however, which does not merely concern those who are outside our walls. There are many who know not these things, though they hear about them—and the reason is because while they come to the place of worship, and the sound of the preaching glides across their ears, *they never give deep, earnest attention to it.*

They say that preaching is dull. Very possibly it is, and it is a wonder that it should not be duller still when people have no concern to get into its inner meaning, but find it quite enough to come and to go, like a door on its hinges. Full often from the humblest teacher something might be learned if we were but anxious to be taught. Or if we learned little by what he said, his very emotions might remind us, and one thought, however commonplace, might engender another—and it would not be altogether without profit to sit together in the assembly of the saints.

Oh! how negligently do some hear! They are thinking of their homes, of their horses, of their cattle, of their farm, and their merchandise. God gets no such attention from men as legatees give the lawyer when he reads the will. If men would listen to the preaching of the Gospel but half as well as they listen to sweet music, there might be hope of its being a blessing to them. But many understand not the things of God, because of their negligent hearing thereof.

Alas! too, there are some who attend at least with an outward attention which we cannot blame, but they know not the things of God, because they have not yet found out that the letter, that is, the external word, is a killing thing, and that *it is the inner and spiritual sense which is alone to be sought after.* To listen to a doctrine, for instance, is right enough, and to catch the theory of it and be able to repeat the definition may be in some respects valuable, but to get into the soul and spirit of that teaching of God, that alone is spirit and truth, and consequently food to the spiritual man.

Dead orthodoxy, mere doctrinal correctness—these will never land men in heaven, because they do not even put them into the kingdom of heaven now. Men who merely have these are like botanists who know not the flowers, but only know the names of the divisions and the orders. They are like physicians, who speak of drugs they have never seen or used, who would attempt to deal with men’s bodies before they had even studied anatomy or seen a bone.

We need to come to the tasting and handling of God’s Word. And all the hearing in the world will end in nothing, unless the soul gets closer still, and in the very soul and secret of the truth. Hence there is an “if,” an “if” about the best of hearers, about the most intelligent—“If you know these things”—you may have listened to them, have drunk them in from the earliest days of your life, but yet, unless the Holy Spirit has revealed them to you, flesh and blood cannot do so, and you cannot, therefore, know them.

It is greatly to be regretted that there are some persons who do not know the truth, because they have *no care to know at all.* They have a contempt for anything that God reveals. They are wise men. Therefore they spend their whole lifetime in studying a piece of rock, or in collecting specimens of beetles, or in any wonder. But to listen to the eternal JEHOVAH is quite beneath them. To hear what He has been pleased to say concerning Himself in His own Word seems to them to be trifling.

Have I not often met with men who would think it to be worth years of study to make the idlest possible conjectures about the formation of a limestone rock, who yet would laugh in one’s face if one began to speak about the soul and the things of the world to come? And these are wise men—at least according to their own estimate of themselves. Whether or not they are fools shall remain for the future to discover to them—may they find it out ere the discovery shall be too late.

Others never will become intelligent in the things of God *because they are prejudiced.* They have made up their minds that they do know, and he who thinks he knows will never learn. The conceptions which they received early in life, their training, the fancies which they have forged for themselves as being what should be the truth—these occupy their minds, and they cannot see the things of God because the mind has been blinded with other matters.

Would to God that we could be clear of prejudice, and clear of unholy contempt for God’s truth, and could come simply to Him, and ask to be taught as a child by the great Father, and lay bare our bosoms

that the Holy Spirit might cast out error from us, and might write the mind and will of God there clearly. Then, indeed, with such a humble submission, and a divinely earnest desire, there need be no longer an “if” as to whether we learn these things. There is an “if,” however.

Let us now observe that *we ought never to rest content while there is an “if.”* “If ye know these things.” My God, is it a question whether I know You or not, whether I know Christ or not, whether I know the revelation which You have given to us or not? Then begin to teach me now. Oh! sirs! it will not do to trifle with an ignorance which shall be our lasting ruin. We ought not to give sleep to our eyes, until we have asked to be taught of God. To be ignorant about the things of ordinary daily life is unwisdom, but to be ignorant about eternal life is stark madness.

An uneducated man stands but little chance in the battle of this life. A man uneducated for eternity—alas! how exposed is he to innumerable adversaries, how sure to fall, how certain to perish! Go, I pray you, men and brethren, go to the wise One for wisdom. Go to this Book for light. Go to the Holy Ghost Himself for divine instruction, and let it not be any longer with you a matter of question as to whether you are taught of God or not.

Oh! I would speak very earnestly here. I do not ask that you should be learned. I do not ask for myself that I may be profound. But I do pray that we may comprehend with all saints what are the heights and depths, and know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, or at least may know Him, and be found in Him, clothed in His righteousness, and accepted in His merits. It ought not to be an “if.”

But supposing that there is no “if” with any of us, *then what ground is there for gratitude!* If the Savior need not say, “If ye know these things,” but if we can say, “Lord You know that we love You, that we rest in You, that we serve You, that we have been taught of Your Spirit,” then there is no room for self-congratulation, no room for pride. What have you which you have not received?

Thank God, dear friend, that you were not born amidst the heathenism of Africa. Thank God that you were not left to the Sabbath-breaking of London. Thank God that when you did hear the Word, it broke through the outer door and came into the inner chamber of your soul. Thank God that that passage of Scripture was not sent to you, “Come and speak to this people, and make their ears heavy that they shall not hear, for their hearts are waxen gross.” Blessed be the distinguishing grace that enabled us spiritually to see and hear, who once were as incapable of this as the dead in their graves.

What comes of it? Why, if you know these things and have learned them by the Spirit of God, make it the method of showing your gratitude to try and be His instruments in teaching others. If you know these things, be not silent. If you know these things, wrap not up these blessed secrets in your hearts as though they were committed to you only for your own personal enjoyment, but in the name of Him who gave such a priceless gift, go and tell wherever your tongue can be heard, the good news of the salvation of Jesus Christ, if, perhaps, God may make you a blessing to some of His hidden ones, who as yet have not come to Christ.

Thus much about the first “if.” It looks to me like the first arch—and having passed through it, I can see another beyond me and I must pass to the second if I would get the happiness.

II. THE INTELLIGENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE THINGS OF GOD SHOULD LEAD US TO THE PRACTICE OF THEM.

“If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

This second “if” applies to all the things which we have been taught of God. Let me give you, however, a specimen. *Saving truths*—if you know them, happy are you if you do them. This is a saving truth—that whosoever trusts in Jesus Christ is saved. You know that. If there is anything you ought to know, you who come to this house, you ought to know that, for it is the staple of all our sermonizing every Lord’s day—that a simple confidence in Jesus Christ the Savior saves the soul. Happy are you, then, if you have exercised this simple confidence, for then you are saved. If you have trusted with the whole weight of your sin upon Jesus, you have the happiness of being saved, accepted, secure.

Saving truths ought every one of them be the first objects of practice. That same Spirit who teaches us the truth enables us to put the truth into action in our daily life. Dear hearer, have you been a hearer of

the good message, but have been a hearer only? If so, you have missed the joy of the whole business. I pray you go a step farther and believe and live.

After saving truths come *purifying truths*. Such is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's indwelling. The Holy Spirit dwells in believers, and where He dwells there should be purity, peace, holiness, and purging out of sin. You believe this, but happy are you if you seek so to act. If you pray that you may not grieve the Spirit of God, nor cause Him to depart from you, your daily anxiety shall bring its results and you shall be happy.

Then, there are certain *ennobling truths* in God's Word and happy are we if we do them. Such is the truth of divine adoption. Every believer is a child of God. Happy are we if we live like one, if we exercise the privileges of heirs, if we come to our Father with a child-like confidence, if we plead with Him as a dear son asking a generous Father to supply his wants.

Remember that every doctrine of the Gospel has a practice appended to it and that to get the happiness out of the doctrine you must put its preceptory part, or its practical inference, into action. You may be as orthodox as you please, but your orthodoxy shall be only like so many grapes untrodden in the winepress.

But if you cast them into your daily life, then shall the luscious juice run forth, and you shall be satisfied with favor, and be full of the goodness of the Lord. Bread on the table will not satisfy you, nor will mere doctrine. The bread must be taken and eaten, and assimilated, and then shall it comfort you. And so with the truth of God—it must be a part of yourself and be wrought out into your daily life—or else the happiness of it cannot be yours.

If there were time tonight, I would make an inventory of all the truths of Scripture and say after each one, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." If you know it to be a privilege to be united with God's people, come and join the church. If you know that Jesus bids you be baptized and come to His table to remember Him, I pray you be not disobedient, even to what you may think to be His least commandment.

Whenever you get the glimpse of a truth from God's Word, or in your conscience by His Spirit, never be a traitor to the heavenly vision. Depend upon it, it is a terrible thing to trifle with knowledge. Some men would not see when they might have seen—and they have been blind always. Many a man who might have led the van in the church of God, and have helped on a glorious reformation, has stepped back from the forefront because, perhaps, of some spurious charity with which he indulged the flesh—and he has gone back into the rear, to the vile dust from whence he sprang.

But he that is faithful to God, faithful to the convictions of his conscience, and carries all out into practice, shall be among those to whom the Master shall say, "Well done," at the last. I say to every truth in Scripture there is a practical conclusion and I beseech you to see to it that you hear Christ say, "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

Why is it that the practice of a truth is required to the enjoyment of the happiness which it brings? Answer—*this is always God's rule*. The ground is fat and full of bread, but the husbandman, by his tillage, must bring out the corn. Down deep in the bowels of the earth are the stores of gold and silver—there gleam the precious ores in quantities that might make even Croesus himself to blush for poverty.

But the metal starts not up from the soil by itself. It must be digged for—it must be cast into the furnace and separated from the ore. There shall be wealth in many nations, and trade shall bring comforts to all ranks, but the sea must be traversed, the sails must be spread, the voyage must be made. Labor everywhere shall bring enjoyment, but without labor there shall be none.

God is not the God of idleness. He speaks not to the earth to bid it bring food to the door of the idler. He commands neither the ravens nor any other of His creatures to bring bread and meat for the sluggards. There shall always be practice, and then the result of work shall be the reward. So must it be in the things of God—you must put them into practice to get the blessing they hold. The laws of nature are wonderful, and a knowledge of them desirable, but a knowledge of all the laws of nature would

never have reaped a field, built a house, found jewels in the mine, or even have made a steam engine without a furnace, a hammer, and strenuous toil.

All the knowledge with which a man can cram his brain cannot secure him in his daily needs until he transfers it from his brain to his right hand and sets to work with it. If you would get God's blessings, then, in nature or in grace, carry out the divine laws into immediate and energetic practice.

In the next place, for God to give the comforts of His promises to men who will not obey His precepts, would be to discourage all Christian effort. Every man would fold his arms and sit down. "If I am to have salvation without believing," says one, "why should I believe? If I am to have grace given me without using such grace as that which is already entrusted to me, then let me eat and drink, for grace will come to me, let me be as carnal as I like." But God will not so act, as to give graceless hearts such an excuse.

To give His blessing to those who do not practice His precepts would be, in fact, *to give a premium for sin*. The more knowledge, if that knowledge be not put into practice, the more light and the more sin, in consequence. Shall God reward a man who, sitting in the light, will not walk by the light? And shall He give enjoyments to those who know His will and who do not that will?

No, sirs, if blessing came to merely knowledge, I suppose the devil would be the most blessed of beings. Certainly, if the comforts of the Gospel came to those who understand the Gospel best, but who do not practice it, there would be some of the vilest of mankind who would be orthodox enough—who would, on such a rule, go to heaven. But they shall find themselves shut out when that judgment shall be given which proceeds upon this rule, "By their fruits ye shall know them."

You all see, without any reasoning from me, that it would seem strange indeed if God allowed the precepts of the Gospel to be trampled underfoot and then gave the same blessings to the rebellious as to the graciously obedient. It must not, shall not be. See we not, then, that our happiness from the things of God must come, not through knowledge merely, though that be the first stage of divine favor—we must not rest satisfied until we pass into the second stage—the doing of what we have learned.

We close with the question which the text naturally inspires—

III. WHAT IS THE HAPPINESS WHICH THIS PRACTICAL OBEDIENCE BRINGS?

Briefly, it is always a *blessed thing to be obedient to God*. The very soul of joy to the creature who wants to be truly happy is conformity to the will of the Creator. When God's will and ours keep pace together, it will be heaven on earth to us. It is only when our will jars with the divine mind that our soul's happiness departs, but when we are helped to lay aside self and say from our inmost soul, "Not my will, but thine be done," and so come to be ruled and governed entirely by the divine mind, then shall we be in paradise here below.

Added to this, to increase our happiness, if we do these things, *we shall have the blessings promised to the doing thereof*. We are no legalists. We do not believe in salvation by works, nor even in rewards given to men because of any merit on their part, but we do know that if Jesus says, "He that believeth shall be saved," then he that believes will get that salvation, and this will be the boon which he enjoys, and so with every other new covenant blessing.

Brethren, there is a happiness here in practical Christianity and there is a happiness hereafter. In mere nominal Christianity there is no happiness. Look at some of your professors. They have got religion enough to make them miserable. Their attendance at church-going or chapel-going—what is it but a bit of slavery? They would not go to church if they could help it, but they think it looks respectable. If they had their way, and the force of custom were withdrawn, they would not be found among the worshippers.

Look, I say, at many of them. The very sight of their Bible and Prayer Book seems to make their faces long and dismal at once. Prayer—is that a pleasure to them? To sing God's praise—is that a delight? Nay, far, far, far from it. And why is this? Because they have never by divine grace been led solemnly to trust in Jesus and earnestly to give themselves up to those truths which only in their

practical force and influence can make us happy—but which in their mere theory are “the letter which killeth,” and only in practice are they the spirit and life.

Oh! that some of you church members would put in practice what you believe! Oh! sirs, it is well enough to say that a Christian should be consistent, but if you are not honest in your business, what does your belief help you? It is well enough to say that a Christian should be godly, but if you are godless in your families—if family prayer is neglected and private prayer given up—what is the use of your beliefs, what the use of your perfect creeds?

You may talk until doomsday about what you believe or what you do not believe, but it is that part of your belief which gets interwoven into the warp and woof of your daily life, which affects your business, which really moves you, impels you, or restrains you, according to whether you would do right or wrong—it is this, it is this, it is this, and it is just this only that is worth the having.

Your dead religion—it is a corpse—bury it. Your living godliness, your vital godliness, the godliness that vitalizes you, and makes you live unto God and His truth—this it is to be sought after—and may God of His mercy grant it to each one of us. “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.”

And so we come to a conclusion by noticing that if the text were read in another form, it would read very solemnly, “If ye know these things, unhappy, wretched, ruined are ye if ye do them *not*.” I scarcely feel that I have either strength or will to enter upon the few sentences I meant to have uttered tonight. There are not many of you here who are ignorant of the Gospel. The most of this great assembly have read it and heard it, and if any should ask you, “What is the way of eternal life,” you could give them a very ready answer. And thank God, there are not a few of you who have put into practice this Gospel. You have looked to Jesus—you are resting in Him. You can say, while confessing many imperfections, that you desire to walk in the ways of obedience to Him who has redeemed you with His blood.

But painful reflection! There are many—very many—and you know who they are—who know these things, but do them not. Ten years ago, they were greatly affected by a sermon and they vowed repentance. The season passed away and their conscience became stultified—no good results came. Some time ago, at an earnest prayer meeting, they were again pricked in conscience, but this time they were not so wounded as before. And now tonight they are just what they have always been—willing hearers, attentive hearers, kind friends to the Gospel in some respects, contributing towards any godly enterprise, but still they have not surrendered to God by believing in Christ and so are still strangers to Him as the soul’s Savior.

And I have to ask them tonight whether it shall always be so, and if not always, then how long? “How long halt ye between two opinions?” And if it is not to be long, why not end it tonight? Oh! blessed Spirit, they do know. It is not this they want, but they want to feel. They do not love. They do not believe. Oh! give them these, that they may not go down into the pit with the accumulated responsibilities of abundant light. “If I had not come and spoken to you,” said Christ, “you had been without sin, but now ye have no cloak for your sin.”

Oh! the godly mothers of some of you will rise up against you to condemn you, for you knew these things, but you did them not. Some of you, your conscience will speak with a voice of thunder—it will roar like a lion on you when God condemns you, because you knew the Gospel and refused it—you understood the way of salvation, and you would not walk therein.

No place more terrible to be lost, than from the shadow of a pulpit. The more plain the Gospel, the more sure your ruin if you reject it. The more earnest the ministry that comes to you, with its notes of warning and invitation, the more horrible your overthrow if your ears refuse the words of JEHOVAH’S love.

Tonight, I pray you—and I think I speak in God’s name—cast in your lot with Christ and with God’s people. You are guilty, but He is gracious and delights to pardon. You feel unworthy, and you are, but Christ receives the most undeserving. Rely upon Him now. You have nothing else that will suffice. Oh! cast yourselves upon Him. Happy shall you be if you do this. Other doings without this were mere

legalism and vain, but this is the great work, the master work, the God-work, that you believe on Jesus Christ, whom God has sent.

Trust, then, in Him, and your peace shall be like a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. Trifle no longer. Listen no longer, merely with the outward ear, but now decide that if there be an inner sense, you will find it—if there be a secret truth, you will hunt it out until you secure it.

If there be a living Christ to pardon you and make you snowy clean, resolve you will find Him. If there be a road to heaven, determine to find and tread in it. “And now farewell sin, farewell self-righteousness, farewell the shallow pleasures of this world. Jesus, take my heart just as it is—I give it up to You—and help me to do now what I have never done before—to put in practice what I hear and carry out what I have been taught.”

So may God help you and we will meet in heaven, and we will say together there that this night’s text was true, “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” God help you to do them, now, for Christ’s sake. Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

HEBREWS 11

First, a definition of faith.

Verses 1-3. *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good report. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.*

There was no pre-existent matter, the world was made by God’s word, so that prior to the things which are seen, there existed that which is not seen. We, dear friends, when we are trusting in the unseen God, are going back to first principles—we are getting to that which is the essence and the source of all. The next verse illustrates the worship of faith.

4. *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaks.*

There is no worshipping God aright, except by faith. The most gorgeous ceremonies are as nothing in His sight. It is the faith of the heart which He accepts. Next we read of the reward of faith.

5-6. *By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

See this reward then—it pleases God—and that is reward enough for anyone of us. Next see faith’s safety.

7. *By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.*

Faith can outlive a deluge which drowns the whole world. She has an ark even when God’s wrath sweeps all the rest away. Next we learn the obedience of faith.

8-10. *By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed: and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*

Here you have the expectation of faith. Faith does not live on things seen—she lives on something yet to come. That which is to come she regards as eternal, not like a mere tent in which she dwells here, but a city that has foundations, fixed and firm. Next we see the strength of faith, that strength seen in the deadness of nature.

11-13. *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

That is a rich word, they, “embraced them.” They were far off and yet faith brought them so near that they seemed to receive them to their hearts and feel the comfort of them. Next is the confession of faith.

14-19. *For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly one: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city. By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called: Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead: from whence also he received him in a figure.*

Here you have the triumph of faith, one of the greatest victories that was ever achieved by faith, when a man was willing, at God’s command, to offer up his son, his only son, his son according to promise, his son in whom all the covenant was to be fulfilled. In the twentieth verse you get the discernment of faith, faith foreseeing—

20-21. *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come. By faith Jacob, when he was dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshipped, leaning upon the top of his staff.*

You remember his discernment, how he crossed his hands willingly that he might lay the right hand upon the younger son. Faith is always giving blessings to others, and she knows which way to give them, for God makes her wondrous quick of heart and quick of eye.

22-23. *By faith Joseph, when he died, made mention of the departing of the children of Israel: and gave commandment concerning his bones. By faith Moses, when he was born, was hid three months by his parents, because they saw he was a proper child; and they were not afraid of the king’s commandment.*

Here is the courage of faith—

24-25. *By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter: Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season:*

Here is the choice of faith—

26. *Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.*

Here is the judgment of faith, by which she judges wisely, choosing rather to be reproached for Christ than to reign with the world.

27-28. *By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible. Through faith he kept the passover, and the sprinkling of blood, lest he that destroyed the first-born should touch them.*

Here, again, you have the obedience of faith, taking God’s precepts and carrying them out.

29. *By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.*

There you have the difference between faith and presumption—faith goes through the sea, presumption is drowned in the sea.

30. *By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.*

Here are the weapons of faith, the warfare of faith, with nothing but her ram’s horn trumpet she encompasses the giant walls of the city and down they fall.

31. *By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not when she had received the spies with peace.*

Here you have faith uniting itself with the people of God—she perished not with them that believed not, for she had come out from among them and allied herself with the people of God by receiving the spies.

32-35. *And what shall I say more? for the time would fail me to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae: of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance: that they might obtain a better resurrection.*

Oh the victories of faith! When faith takes to working, how mightily she works.

36-37. *And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented:*

You have seen the works of faith and the sufferings of faith—now you see God’s estimate of faith. He counts the believing man to be far beyond the rest of mankind.

38-39. *(Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. All these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:*

It lay in the future to them far more than it does to us, for Christ has now come, and we look back to that glorious appearing of our Lord and Savior, but they had altogether to look forward.

40. *God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

For it never was God’s intention that any part of His church should be able to do without the rest of it, so that those who lived before the time of Christ cannot do without us—neither can we do without them.

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