

BELIEVING WITH THE HEART NO. 519

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 12, 1863
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

*“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness;
and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”
Romans 10:10*

EVERY star in heaven yields its ray of light to cheer the mariner upon the watery waste, but there are leaders among that sparkling host—stars of the first magnitude—whose golden lamps are so dexterously hung, and withal trimmed with such excessive care, that they offer way-marks to the wanderer by which he may be able to steer his vessel to the desired haven.

So all the promises of Scripture are full of comfort. In their sphere, they glow and glisten with the warmth and light of love. But there are “bright particular stars,” even among these—promises, conspicuous as Orion, brilliant as the Pleiades, fixed as Arcturus with his sons. Brethren, you know those soul-saving texts to which I refer, which are radiant with comfort, and have in them such a blessed combination of simple words and comforting sentences, that they guide multitudes of sinners to the port of peace in Jesus Christ.

My text, I think, is one of these. At least, the doctrine which it teaches—that of salvation by faith—is the very polestar of the Gospel. And he who steers by it shall find the heavenly shore. Be not at all displeased that such a truth should again be proclaimed in your hearing. The physician who is about to go abroad, and knows that he shall not be able to procure more drugs, lays in a store of all the valued medicines in pharmacy, but he buys the largest stock of remedies for the more common diseases of the body.

And so, my brethren, we are bound in our ministry to preach upon all sorts of subjects. We ought not to bring out things *old* and old, but things new and old. Yet still the preacher must dwell most upon that doctrine which is the most required, and is most likely to heal the sin-sick soul. We believe that for every one converted under another doctrine, there have been ten brought to Christ by the simple preaching of salvation by faith. Although every truth in Scripture is like a mesh of the great Gospel net, the great truth of justification by faith makes up so many meshes that it constitutes the major part of the net, and holds within its influence great multitudes of fishes.

God help us to cast this net today on the right side of the ship. While I let down the great dragnet, you take your share in the Gospel fishery, and pray that God may send the fishes into it, and may His name be praised this day both in heaven and on earth.

The text very simply divides itself into two parts. *Faith* and *confession*. The two are joined together, let no man put them asunder. “With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

Three things on each of these topics. First, upon *faith*. We have here set before us, either in the text, or in the context, the *object of faith*, the *nature of faith*, and *its result*.

I. THE OBJECT OF FAITH is clearly mentioned in the context.

The preceding verse runs thus, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” From which it is evident that Jesus Christ, dead and risen, is the foundation of faith. The *object of faith* is probably the most important subject of our contemplation.

I believe there are many who think too much of their faith and too little of the object of it. For many a weary month, they are questioning whether they have the right sort of faith—whereas they would do a great deal better if they looked to see whether their faith rested upon the right foundation. For after all, while faith is important, the foundation of that faith is all-important, and we must look most to that.

Now, soul-saving faith rests, according to a thousand places in Scripture, upon Christ—upon Christ in all His characters, works, and offices. Faith, first of all, rests upon Christ, as *incarnate*. What was sung by angels becomes the song of the poor depressed spirit.

Jesus, the Son of God, was born in Bethlehem's manger—God was made flesh and dwelt among us. Faith believes this great mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh—believes that He, by whom the heavens were framed, and without whom was not anything made that was made, did for us men and for our salvation, come down from heaven to tabernacle in the virgin's womb.

Faith so believes this as to draw comfort from it. For, says Faith, "If God thus became man that He might come into nearness with our nature, this deed of love attracts me, gives me confidence toward God, and bids me approach the Lord with boldness, inasmuch as God comes to me."

*"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find;
The holy, just, and sacred Three
Are terrors to my mind.*

*"But if Immanuel's face appear,
My hope, my joy, begins;
His name forbids my slavish fear,
His grace removes my sins."*

Faith next sees Christ in His life. She perceives that He is perfect. In obedience, sanctified wholly to His work, and although, "Tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin." Faith delights to admire and adore Him in His complete obedience to the law of God. And she perceives with rapture, that in every jot and tittle, He has fulfilled it, magnified it, and made it honorable.

Faith, with holy boldness, cries, "This righteousness shall be mine, Christ has kept the law for me. Evidently He was under no necessity to do this of Himself, but being found in fashion as a man for my salvation, He with the same end and object kept that law." Faith looks to that righteousness of Christ, and like the apostle, she learns to say, "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

But chiefly, Faith looks to Christ as offering up Himself upon the tree. She stands at the foot of the cross, watching that mysterious, that matchless spectacle—God made flesh, bleeding, dying—the Son of God wasted with pangs, torn with agonies, and unutterable throes—obedient, even unto death. She watches Him with the expectancy of hope, and the emotion of gratitude, both of which bring the tears streaming down her cheeks.

She hears the expiring Sin-bearer cry with a loud voice, "It is finished." She adds a glad, "Amen. It is finished!" My soul believes that there is enough in those wounds to wash away my sin—enough to avert the thunders of an angry God—enough in that righteousness to cover me from head to foot, and win for me the smile of infinite justice. O blessed cross, you are the one pillar of our consolation. Faith builds her all on this chief cornerstone.

But beloved, Faith has never done with Jesus, where He goes, she follows hard after Him. Her eye track the body of the Savior to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. She beholds that body, on the third day, instinct with life, rolling away the stone and bursting its cerements. "Jesus lives," says Faith—and inasmuch as Christ was put into the prison of the tomb as a hostage and bail for His people, Faith knows

that He never could have come out again if God had not been completely satisfied with His substitutionary work.

*“If Jesus ne’er had paid the debt,
He ne’er had been at freedom set.”*

Faith, therefore, perceives that if Christ is risen, the soul is justified. God has accepted Christ on my behalf—His resurrection proves it. And I stand accepted in the Beloved, because Jesus Christ has risen. If you believe in this sense in your heart—that God raised Him from the dead—you shall be saved. Borne aloft as on eagle’s wings, Faith is not afraid to pursue her Redeemer up to His Father’s throne.

Her illuminated eye beholds Him in His session at the right hand of God, sees Him pleading as the great High Priest before the mighty Father’s throne and expecting until His enemies are made His footstool. Faith builds upon His intercession and dominion, as well as upon His death and resurrection. He is able also to save them to the uttermost who come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.

Mark, my dear brethren, the whole foundation upon which Faith rests is, Christ living in the flesh, Christ dying in that flesh, Christ rising from the dead, Christ pleading in glory on behalf of sinners. Not so much as a hair’s breadth of Faith’s foundation is to be found out of Christ Jesus. Faith does not build on its own experience. It rests on no graces, raptures, meltings, communings, fightings, or prayings. Its chief cornerstone is Christ Jesus.

Faith never builds on any knowledge which it has obtained by research—on no merit which it fancies it has procured by long and ardent service. It looks altogether beyond self and out of self. Christ Jesus, and Christ Jesus alone, is the object of its confidence. Sinner, what do you say to this? There is nothing in you, but there needs be nothing. Can you trust Jesus?

Jesus, the Son of God, becomes your brother, bone of your bone, and flesh of your flesh. Can you not trust His love? Jesus, the Son of God, dies on the cross. Can you not trust that blood, that agony, that death? Look, sinner! From head, and hands, and feet, the blood is streaming. It is a Divine Being who thus suffers. It is none other than God over all, blessed forever, who is nailed to that tree.

Can you not believe that there is merit enough in agonies like these to stand in the place of your sufferings in hell? Do you not believe that justice gets an ampler recompense from the wounds of Christ than it ever could find in all your wounds, even if you had been beaten from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head, until you had been nothing but wounds and putrefying sores?

Methinks you will reply, “I believe that upon Calvary God received a greater glorification of His law than in all the agonies of all the damned in hell, though they suffer eternally the infinite anger of God.” I ask you, sinner, can you not believe that Christ’s perfect righteousness is enough for you? Can you see a flaw in it? Is it not fair white linen? Is there a spot? Is it not made of such precious material, the divine work of a divine Savior, that nothing can match it?

If you had it, sinner, do you not think you would stand before God without so much as a spot or wrinkle? And I ask you, sinner, do you not believe that if Jesus pleads for you, you will be saved? Can He stretch out His hands and say, “Father, save that sinner,” and will God refuse to hear His prayer? If you give Him your cause to plead, do you think He will be an unsuccessful Advocate? Why, man, with all the unbelief that is in your heart, I hope you will believe that if Jesus, who was the very heart of God, shall espouse your cause, He cannot plead in vain.

I think I hear you answer, “Oh, yes, we believe all this. We believe that this is ground for the fullest confidence to saints, but may *we* rest upon it? Are we to understand that if we trust in Jesus Christ, because He was a man, and because He lived, and died, and rose again, and pleads, we are saved?” Soul, this is just what I would have you understand.

If you have no good thoughts or feelings. If hitherto you have been the most damnable of rebels against God, if up to this moment your hard and impenitent heart has been at enmity against God and

against Christ, yet if now, this very day, you will believe that Christ incarnate, Christ died, Christ risen, Christ pleading, can save you—and if you will rest your soul upon that fact—you shall be saved.

God, the infinitely loving Father, is willing to receive you just as you are. He asks nothing of you. O prodigal, you may come back in your rags and filthiness, notwithstanding that you have spent your living with harlots, notwithstanding that the swine have been your companions, and you would fain have filled your belly with their husks. You may come back without upbraiding, or so much as a word of anger, because your Father's only begotten Son has stood in your stead, and in your place has suffered all that your many sins deserved.

If you will now trust in Jesus, the Lord, who loved you with unspeakable love, you shall be this very day received into joy and peace, with a Father's arms about your neck, accepted and beloved, with your rags stripped from off you, clothed in the best robe—with the ring upon your finger, and the shoes upon your feet, listening to music and dancing—because your soul which was lost is found, your heart which was dead has been made alive.

This, then, is the object of faith—one only Savior, doing all, for all who trust Him.

II. Next, we have in the text, the NATURE OF FAITH.

This is obvious. We are told that, "*With the heart* man believeth unto righteousness." This is not introduced by way of making a subtle distinction. Sometimes ministers make so many distinctions about faith, that true seekers are much perplexed. I am very jealous of myself this morning, lest I should do the same.

I have read sermons upon natural faith and upon spiritual faith, and I have been persuaded that what the preacher called natural faith, was as much spiritual as that which he distinguished as the faith of God's elect. The less distinction we try to make here, I think, the better, when Jesus Christ has broadly put it, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Where He makes few distinctions, but openly puts it, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," we ought not to be making and multiplying theological points of differences.

Still, dear brethren, the text does say, "*With the heart* man believeth." And this is somewhat strange, because we generally attribute the act of faith to the mind, to the understanding. The understanding believes certain facts, which appear to it to be worthy of credence, but our text puts saving faith upon the heart, and makes it to be a work of the affections rather than of the understanding.

I take it this is done for this reason—first, in order merely to state that faith—saving faith—*must be sincere*. We must not merely say, "I see the thing is so," but we must heartily believe it. It must not be a notional faith which a man professes, because his mother was of the same persuasion, or because living in a Christian land, he would be somewhat singular if he were to set up to be an infidel.

Our faith must be a hearty, honest, sincere persuasion of the truths which we profess to believe. If I say to myself, "Well, I have no doubt the Christian religion is true. I dare say it is"—but if I do not in my heart feel and know it to be true, then my faith will not save me.

Doubtless, the word "heart" is put in here to make a distinction between doctrinal faith and the faith which accepts Christ. Why, I have the misfortune to know scores who are well-read in divinity. They can get on excellently in all the scholastic parts of theology. They are orthodox—ay, orthodox to the last turn of the scale—and they fight like lions and tigers for but one hair of the head of a creed.

And yet, they will never be saved by their faith, because their belief is merely a belief of certain abstract propositions which never affected their nature. which, to speak honestly, they do not believe after all. Those dogmas which they accept as truths have no relationship to them. Their unregenerate hearts cannot perceive the true bearing of those doctrines upon themselves, consequently, they receive them as lies.

If you put a truth out of its proper place, you make it either marvelously like a lie, or else really a lie. And if I hold certain doctrines merely as having respect to some particular persons, but not as having any reference to me, and if I hold them so that they do not in any degree influence my character and touch my heart—then I hold them falsely—I turn the truth of God into a lie and my faith can never save

my soul. True religion is more than notion, something must be known and felt. And faith is something more than acceptance of a sound creed—it is believing *with the heart*.

But now, I hope I shall not darken counsel by words without knowledge. Let me try, if I can, to explain what I think believing with the heart is.

Beloved, you know very well that the first work of God the Holy Spirit in man is not to teach him doctrines, but to make him feel a great hungering and thirsting, a great emptiness within himself. He is vexed with an uneasiness, a perpetual pining, and longing, and groaning after a something, he scarcely knows what. Now, that is his heart set in motion by the Spirit.

His heart, like the needle, touched with the magnet, cannot rest, because it has not found its pole. It has been mysteriously touched, it does not know how or why. But this it knows—it has a restlessness in it, and trembles after a settled and abiding peace. It is the heart, you know, which is thus sore troubled.

Now, when the Lord Jesus Christ is set forth in our hearing as being a perfect and complete Savior, able at this very moment to pardon all sin, and to give a perfect righteousness—to give us this day a salvation which is complete—and which will be complete when time shall be no more, then the heart says, “Why, that is just what I have been wanting.”

Just as the flowers which have been shut up all night, as soon as ever the sun is up, open their cups as if they felt—“There! that is what we were wanting! Hail, glorious sun!” So the breaking, yearning, longing, thirsting heart, says, “Ah, that is what I need. You, O Christ, are all I want—more than all in You I find.”

Then, that heart says, “Come to me, Jesus, come to me. Be Thou mine, I would entertain You. If You would but come under my roof, I should have my poor humble heart made happy as the gates of heaven.” The heart stretches out its arms to Christ, and Christ comes into that heart, and the heart presses Him close to itself. That is believing with the heart. It is the heart’s own conviction that Jesus Christ is just what it wants.

Many of you have a true faith in Christ, and yet you have never read “Paley’s Evidences,” nor “Butler’s Analogy.” It would not hurt you if you did, but you never did study such books, and perhaps you never will. You hardly know upon what ground the Bible is accepted as true, and hence, cunning infidels give you a good shaking when they get hold of you upon that point.

But there is one thing upon which you can never be shaken—you feel the Gospel *must* be true, because it just suits the wants of your heart. If any man should say to you when you are thirsty, “Water is not good,” you would say, “Give me more of it. I have a thirst in here that makes me desire it.” By an irresistible process stronger than logic, you can prove to yourself that water is good because it quenches your thirst.

Just so with bread—when you are hungry, if you come to the table and a philosopher should say to you, “You do not understand the ground upon which bread nourishes the human frame. You do not know anything about the process of digestion, and the method of assimilation, and how the bones are nourished by the phosphorus, and by the lime, and by the silica contained in the flour!”

You would say, “I do not know. I do not care particularly to know. But one thing I know, I am sure bread is good to eat if I am hungry, and I will show you.” And you seize the loaf and begin to cut and eat. So it is with the believing heart. The heart is hungry, therefore the heart feeds upon Jesus. The heart is thirsty, therefore the heart drinks the living water, and so the heart believes unto righteousness.

Again, there is another explanation. Is it not, dear friends, man’s heart renewed by divine grace which is led to perceive the difficulty of reconciling the apparently discordant attributes of God? Do you not remember well that day when your heart said, “God is just. It is right He should be”? and your heart seemed as if it would kiss the hilt of the sharp sword justice.

You said, “Lord, though it is my own damnation, yet I would adore You, because You are holy, holy, holy.” Your heart said, “Lord, I know You are merciful, for You have told me so. I see in the lovely works of Your hands, in the bountiful cornfields laden with the yellow grain, in this fair sunshine ripening all the fruits—I see proof that You are a good and gracious God. But Lord, I cannot understand

how You can be gracious, and yet be just. For if You are just, You are sworn to punish, and if You be gracious, then you will forgive. How can You do both? How can you punish and yet forgive?—smite and yet receive with tokens of affection?”

You came up to the sanctuary one day when your heart was just in that state—in a quandary. Your heart was like the city of Shushan, it was perplexed. But you heard the preacher show clearly that Christ became the substitute for man, and paid to the last drachma all that mighty debt which man owed to God.

You saw the wounds of Jesus, and you understood how an angry God had all His justice satisfied in the agonies of His beloved Son, and your heart said, “There, that is the very answer I have been wanting. I perplexed myself, vexed myself. I had a jealousy for the justice of God. My conscience made me jealous for it. I had a longing toward the mercy of God, my heart made me long for it. Now, I see how righteousness and peace have kissed each other, how justice and mercy fall about each other’s neck and are reconciled forever.”

And your heart says, “This is the thing. Here is the master-key which unlocks all the doors of doubt. The divine finger which draws back the bolts.” Oh! the joy and gladness with which your heart laid hold upon a Crucified Redeemer, saying, “It is enough. I am satisfied, I am content, my trouble is removed.” So you see it is not difficult to understand how the belief can be a belief of the heart.

But I want you to notice yet further, that believing with the heart implies a love to the plan of salvation. I will suppose that one of you today, troubled with thoughts of sin, shall go home, and you shall reach your chamber, and sit down and think over the great plan of salvation. You see God choosing His people from before the foundation of the world, and choosing them though He knew that they would be lost in the fall of Adam.

You see the Son entering upon a covenant relationship towards them and engaging to be their Surety to redeem them from wrath. You see Jesus Christ in the fullness of time coming forth as that Surety and fulfilling all His engagements. You see the Spirit of God working to teach man his need, influencing him to accept the plan of salvation. You see the sinner washed and cleansed. You mark him kept, and preserved, and sanctified and perfected—and at last brought home to glory.

While you are thinking over this work of the Lord, you say to yourself, “Well, I do not know that I have any interest in it, but what a blessed plan it is! How sublime! How condescending! How admirably suited to the wants of man! and how excellently adapted to bring out and glorify every attribute of God.”

As you are thinking it over, there is a tear in your eye, and something whispers, “Why, such a plan as that must be true.” Then, the sweet promise flashes across your mind, “Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.” And your heart says, “Then, I will believe on Him—that plan is worthy of my credence, that system, so magnificent in its liberality, is worthy of my loving acceptance.”

You go down on your knees and say, “Lord, I have seen the beauty of Your great work of grace, and my soul is in love with it. I have no quarrel against it. I submit myself to it. Let me be a partaker in it. Jesus, let the virtue of Your precious blood stream on me. Let the power of the cleansing water, which flowed with the blood, come and kill the power of sin within me. ‘Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief!’”

That is believing with the heart. It is believing because the heart is led to see that this must be true, and therefore, by a process of logic that is more subtle and more mighty in its magic influence than the logic of the brain, the soul, the whole mind, the whole powers of the man are compelled, blessedly compelled to yield obedience to it.

What is true, dear friends, of us when we commence our spiritual career, is true all our lives long. Soul-saving faith is always the belief of the heart as well in the full grown Christian as in the new-born babe. Let me appeal to some of you who have been years in Christ. What, my dear brethren, is your testimony today to the truth as it is in Jesus? Does your heart believe it?

I think I see some grey-headed man rise up, and leaning upon his staff, he says, “In my young days I gave my heart to Christ, and I had a peace and joy such as I had never known before, though I had tried

the pomp and vanities, the pleasures and allurements of sin. My heart can bear its witness to the peace and pleasantness which I found in religion's ways. Since that time, this brow has been furrowed with many cares, and as you see, this head has become bleached with many winter's snows, but the Lord has been my heart's stay and confidence. I have rested on Christ and He has never failed me.

"When trouble has come in upon me, I have never been bowed down under it, I have been able to sustain it. I have had bereavements,"—and he points to the many graves he has left behind him in the wilderness—"but I have been helped to bury wife and children, and faith has enabled me to say with bursting heart, 'The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.'

"I have had many conflicts, but I have always overcome through the blood of the Lamb. I have been slandered, as all men must be, but I have taken *that* with all my other crosses upon my shoulders—and I have found it light when I have carried it by faith. I can say that such is the hallowed serenity and calm which the religion of Jesus gives to my heart at all times and all seasons, that I do believe it, not as a matter of head, but as a matter of heart. My heart is itself experientially convinced that this cannot but be the religion of God, seeing that it works such wonders for me."

Remember, dearly beloved, this is the right way to believe in Jesus, because this is the way in which you can believe in Him when you come to die. You have heard of the renowned bishop, a true servant of our Lord and Master. On his dying bed, memory reeled. He had grown old and forgotten everything. His friends said to him, "Do you not know us?" There was a shake of the head. He had taken sweet counsel with them, walked to the house of God in their company, but he had forgotten them all.

Next, the children clustered round the hoary father, and they beg him to remember them. But he shakes his head, he had forgotten them all. Last came his wife, and she thought was it possible that she should be forgotten? Yes, he had forgotten her and shook his head again.

At last, one said in his ear, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ?" The response was instantaneous. That charming name had brought back consciousness from its innermost retreat to the more outward temple of the mind. "Know Him?" said he, "Yes, He is all my salvation and all my desire." You see it was the heart that knew Jesus. And though the heart may know the wife and the child, yet never can the heart know the dearest earthly object as it knows Christ.

The letters of earthly names may be larger than the name of Christ, but the name of Christ is cut deeper. All other names may be cut deep through many skins of the soul, if I may use so strange a metaphor, but that name is cut into the core, right into the core of the soul. He that believes with his heart has Christ in him, not *on* him—Christ *in* him, the hope of glory.

My dear hearers, you who have not believed in Jesus, I have tried not to puzzle you with refinements, but to talk in simple style. I think it is a very blessed thing that the text says, "*With the heart* man believeth," because some of you might say, "I have not *heard* enough to be a Christian." If you had not any head at all, if you had a loving heart you could believe in Jesus.

You may say, "Why, I never had any very great natural parts." No great natural parts are wanted. You may say, "I never had any education," and by the way, I do like to see smock frocks here, I would to God that more would come—"I never had any education. I went to a national school, and they taught me many things, but I do not recollect them."

Well, suppose you do not recollect them—you have a heart, and some of you have bigger hearts than many who have let their brains swell while their hearts have shriveled. You can believe with your heart. Your heart can see that Christ is such a Christ as you want—that pardon and mercy are just what you require—and your heart can say, and may God the Holy Spirit make it say, "I accept Christ. I trust in Christ. I take Christ to be my all in all."

This precious word, "With the heart man believeth," sets the gate of heaven wide open to those who are of the least capacity, who seem to be on the very verge of idiocy, if there should be such persons here. Even those who write themselves down as being the biggest fools that ever lived, such fools as these may still believe. "The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein."

III. Now I must conclude, intending to take the second half of the text next Sunday morning, if God spare our lives. I take the most necessary first. You may go to heaven without confessing—you cannot go to heaven without believing. So we have the believing first and the other can come next.

I have to close by noticing THE RESULT of faith. “With the heart man believeth UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS.”

The text means that the man who believes in Christ is righteous—he is righteous at once, in a moment. He is righteous in the germ. When God makes up the account, He has two books. The one is the black book in which He writes down the name of the ungodly, the unrighteous. You may look that all through, and though that man has been a thief, a whoremonger, and adulterer, though he has been the biggest sinner that ever defiled society and polluted God’s air, you may look that book through, if that man has been led to believe with his heart—his name is not there among the unrighteous.

You cannot find it there. It is not in that book. You must get the other. You look into the Book of Life, and there is the name of Noah, Daniel, and Ezekiel, John the Baptist, and so on. You say, “You do not expect to find that man’s name there, do you?” I do. If that man believed in Jesus Christ with his heart, he has believed unto righteousness, and his name is there among the righteous men, for he is righteous first of all in the germ.

God has put into him an unquenchable spark of righteousness. He has dropped into that man’s heart a vitalizing force which never by any possibility can die, which has made him righteous in part already, and which will go on until it has sanctified him, spirit, soul, and body—and made him completely righteous—in the real sense of the term righteous—righteous in the sense of holiness through the sanctification of the Spirit.

But there is another sense. The moment the man believes in Jesus Christ, he is in the righteousness of Christ—perfectly righteous. He has put upon him the Savior’s garments. You heard Mr. Weaver say on this platform—I thought it was a good illustration—that one day he met with a very poor man who was in rags. This man, being a Christian, he wished to befriend him. He told him if he would go home with him, he would give him a suit of clothes.

“So,” said Richard, “I went upstairs and took off my second best, and put on my Sunday best, for I did not want to give him my best. I sent the man upstairs, and told him he would find a suit which he could put on, it was my second best. So after he had put on the clothes, and left his rags behind, he came down and said, ‘Well, Mr. Weaver, what do you think of me?’ ‘Well,’ I said, ‘I think you look very respectable.’ ‘Oh, yes, but Mr. Weaver, it is not me. I am not respectable, it is your clothes that are respectable.’ And so,” added Mr. Weaver, “so is it with the Lord Jesus Christ. He meets us covered with the rags and filth of sin, and He tells us to go and put on not His second best, but the best robe of His perfect righteousness.

And when we come down with that on, we say, ‘Lord, what do You think of me?’ And He says, ‘Why, thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.’ We answer, ‘No, it is not me, it is Your righteousness. I am comely because You are comely. I am beautiful because You are beautiful.’”

So we may conclude by saying with Watts—

*“Strangely, my soul, art thou array’d
By the great sacred Three!
In sweetest harmony of praise
Let all Thy powers agree.”*

All this is by believing—nothing but believing. After believing will come the confessing and the doing. But the saving, the righteousness, rests in the believing, and in nothing else.

*“Nothing, sinner, do,
Nothing great or small;
Jesus did it all,*

Long, long ago.”

Come to Him as He is. Take Him as your complete righteousness and you will have believed with your heart unto righteousness.

God add His own blessing, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Next Sabbath, Mr. SPURGEON hopes to take up the second sentence of the text.]

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.