

FAITH
BEFORE FEELINGS.

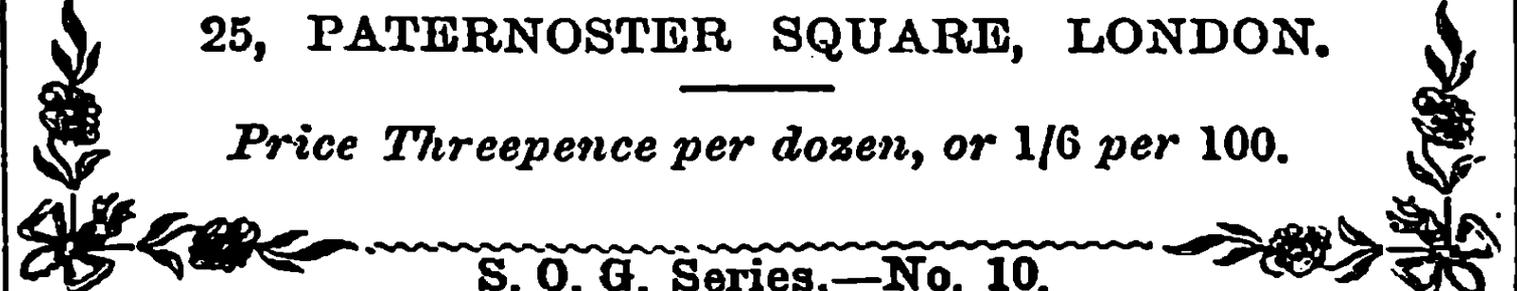
BY

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FAITH BEFORE FEELINGS.

THERE is all the difference possible between *saying* in your heart and *believing* in your heart ; the former is the fruit of unbelief, and the latter of trust in God.

So long as a soul is saying in its heart, it is looking for signs and wonders ; namely, expecting to see a vision, or have a remarkable dream, or feel some wonderful feelings. Now, souls in this state never are certain of their salvation, and no wonder, as such a state is produced by unbelief saying such things in the heart, which the heart is guilty of listening to.

If you will turn to Rom. x., you will see these words, "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, *Say not in thine heart.*" Why not ? "Because the word *is in thine heart.*" What for ? That you may "*believe in thine heart.*"

Having the Word in your heart is not enough to save you ; therefore we read, in Luke viii. 12, “Then cometh the devil, and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, *lest they should believe and be saved.*” Again we read, in Heb. iv. 2, “The Word preached did not profit them, *not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*”

So you see that it is not enough to hear the Word preached, nor even to have the Word in your hearts ; it must be mixed with faith, or it cannot profit you.

How solemn to think of the devil being present at every gospel preaching, and that all who listen to the gospel without believing it allow the foul fiend of hell to put his filthy fingers on the Word, and to take it away, “lest they should believe and be saved.” Ah, well he knows that every earnestly-anxious soul believing the word of the gospel will be saved, and therefore he watches for the opportunity to take it away out of the heart, that they may not be saved.

Oh, poor, troubled, anxious souls, keep not yourselves in this state any longer! "Say not in thine heart" through unbelief, but believe in thine heart that God delivered Christ for our offences, and raised Him again for our justification, and thou shalt be saved.

Look at the three blessed *shalts* in Rom. x. 9: "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."

"But surely we must feel it first," says somebody. This is all the fruit of saying and reasoning in your heart, the fruit of putting feelings before faith, and reminds me of a couple of cases I once met with in visiting.

In the first house sat a woman busy sewing. I had seen her at the meetings, where God was working, saving precious souls, and I knew her to be anxious to be saved; but her difficulty was that of thousands of others: she wanted to feel that she was saved before she could believe that she was saved. Her own

words were, "How can I know I am saved until I feel it?" I asked her to take the cotton with which she was sewing out of the needle's eye. This done, I asked her to lay aside the needle, and try to sew with the cotton alone. She smiled as she heard me ask her to do an impossible thing, and saw that the needle must come before the cotton; and that just as the cotton followed the needle, so faith must come first, and that feeling follows faith.

The second case referred to was a young woman, who had for years been anxious about her soul. She was the child of Christian parents, and she told me that she had "wept, prayed, repented, been a member of class, and done her best for years; but that she could not feel she was saved."

I saw at once that she also, like the first case I have spoken about, was putting feelings before faith.

I was asked to take tea with her and her friends. At the tea-table I was placed between her and her elder sister,

who was making tea, and asked to pass a cup of tea to our anxious friend. Having received the cup of tea to pass, I held it in my hand, saying at the same time to the one for whom it was intended, "Now, when you feel this cup of tea inside you, tell me, and I will give it to you."

She replied, "How is it possible for me to feel it before I have taken it?"

"And yet," I said, "you want to feel salvation before you have taken it."

She saw at once where she had been making a mistake, and that unbelief was at the bottom of it all. She left the table, and retired to her bedroom, where she confessed to God her sin of unbelief, and before she rose from her knees she accepted God's salvation by simple faith. The next time we saw her she told us that she had believed with the heart unto righteousness, and was now able to make confession with the mouth unto salvation.

I doubt not that many who may read this paper are in the same condition of

soul as the two I have named, and from the same cause, that they are putting feeling before faith. May God show such that it is all unbelief, and deliver you from this God-dishonouring, Christ-dishonouring, Holy Ghost-dishonouring, heaven-forfeiting, hell-filling, and soul-damning *unbelief*.

“Hark! the voice of Jesus calling—
 Come, ye laden, come to me;
 I have rest and peace to offer—
 Rest, thou labouring one, for thee:
Take salvation—
Take it NOW, and happy be.”

“*Believe* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,” and when you are saved, you will know it; for Christ came “to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins,” and how could you possibly be in possession of such divine knowledge without feeling happy? Once more, in closing, I would press upon you that it is and must be **FAITH BEFORE FEELINGS.**

H. M. H.