

CONFIDENCE ;

OR,

The Peace-Giving Power of True
Testimony.



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W. H. BROOM, 25, PATERNOSTER SQUARE.

Price One Penny.

CONFIDENCE ;

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The Peace-Giving Flower of True
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CONFIDENCE.

I RECENTLY met, while travelling by rail, a very simple illustration of the peace-giving power of confidence. We had arrived at a junction where some shifting of the passengers took place, and I observed a lady, in the same carriage with me, in much anxiety as to whether she was in her right place or not. I called one of the officials and said, "Does this carriage go right through to B—?" He instantly replied, "Yes." This little word completely hushed the lady's fears, and removed all her

doubt and anxiety. She became perfectly satisfied that she was all right, and her mind was tranquilized. Now, how was this? There was no change in her position or circumstances. *She* had evidently done nothing which could account for this immediate transition from restless anxiety to placid repose. What, then, was the basis of her peace? Simple confidence! She *believed* the official's "yes," and she got immediate *peace*; nor did she manifest any further uneasiness during the remainder of our journey. This is very plain. A word had fallen upon her ear—a simple word—a word which was true, whether she believed it or not; a word, the truth of which in no wise depended on her—this word

removed her fears, and gave her peace of mind. She had confidence in it—she believed it, and thus she got peace. She did not reason about it; she did not begin to say, “But what shall I do if I am not in the right carriage after all?” No; she simply believed, and thus, without a single misgiving, she sat still, assured that, in due time, she should reach the desired terminus. In vain might some ignorant fellow-passengers raise doubts and give false alarms: the official’s emphatic “yes” settled everything. Confidence in his word gave her quietness of spirit—a quietness which nothing disturbed.

Beloved reader, this is but a very feeble illustration of the truth to which I desire, by means of these

few lines, to call your attention. It does, however, illustrate, as I have said, the peace-giving power of confidence in the word of another, even though that other be but a feeble mortal like ourselves. In the case before us, we see that a word of three letters was a triumphant answer to ignorant statements, false alarms, foolish reasonings, and anxious thoughts. But that word was mixed with faith. She believed the truth of it; and we can easily see, that a single doubt in her soul would have been, so far as she was concerned, making the official a liar. If her doubts were true, his word was false; but if his word were true, her doubts were false. Thus it was with the lady and the railway

official. Let us now apply the case. We are all, by nature, on the wrong line of rail—a line which, if we persevere on it, will bring us, with more than railway speed, into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, and into eternal blackness of darkness. (See Job x. 21, 22; Mark ix. 43—47; Rev. xx. 12—15.) This is a solemn fact. It matters not what our circumstances may be. We may be surrounded by the comfort of a first-class carriage, or with the inconvenience of a third. *We are on the wrong rail*, and have, therefore, good right to be uneasy; yea, it would be madness to sit quiet while we are on the wrong rail. Nor can we make the wrong right. All our efforts could not effect that. We

may rush from side to side, window to window ; but all in vain. *We are on the wrong rail.* Yes, hurrying along with appalling rapidity. Some may not see this. Some may *persuade themselves* that they are all right, and that there is no *rational* ground for fear. They sit still and are quiet ; but oh ! it is the stillness and quietness of death, based upon sheer ignorance or open infidelity. They have never yet heard, from any divinely authenticated source, that their carriage will go right through to the heavenly terminus. On the contrary, the word of the Lord is against them ! That word which shall judge them at the last day judges them now. (See John xii. 48 ; Heb. iv. 12, 13.) It tells them that

they are sinners—that they have sinned—that they have sin on them—that they are out of the way. It tells them, on the other hand, that “God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, and cannot look on sin.” It is impossible that a single speck of sin can ever enter into the presence of God. If my reader has such a speck on him, he is unfit for the blessed presence of Infinite Holiness. This cannot be denied. He can neither get there, nor could he enjoy it if he were there. What, then, is he to do? How is he to get on that line of rail which will assuredly conduct him to endless bliss; and not only so, but fill him with perfect peace *now*? If God cannot let sin into His presence, and

I am covered with it, how am I to get in? The word of God tells me “He has put away sin.” (Heb. ix. 26.) How did He put it away? “By the sacrifice of Himself.” He cannot tolerate *sin*, but He loves the *sinner*, and therefore He put it away, that He might receive him in the full power of divine righteousness. God has dealt with sin in the cross of Christ, that He may not have to deal with it in the person of the believer: He has dealt with *it* in grace, that He may not have to deal with *him* in judgment. “Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” He has not only “put away *sin*,” but He has borne the actual “*sins*” of the “many” who put their trust in God’s word—who “believe the record that

God has given of His Son.” This gives peace. Christ has suffered for sin. “He died the just for the unjust.” God has been glorified about the believer’s sins: instead of entering into judgment with the believer in reference to his sins, He has actually reaped a harvest of glory by putting them away for ever. Where is the proof of this? The proof is to be seen at the right hand of the majesty in the highest. Whom do I see there? The One who was nailed to the cross—my Surety—my Representative—the One who, in grace, put Himself judicially where I was morally, even in the place of death and judgment. Christ took the sinner’s place of death and judgment, in order that the sinner might

take His place of life and righteousness before God for ever. Behold what manner of love is here! This is God's love. Instead of sending me to hell, which I deserved, because of my sins, He nailed His Son to the cross under my sins, in order that He might bring me to heaven in His own eternal righteousness. Hence, therefore, it is my unspeakable privilege to be able to refer everything, in the way of present security and future blessedness, to the cross, and to the love which the cross expresses. There, blessed be God, we find the end of *self*, whether it be a (falsely called) *good* self; or a (rightly called) *bad* self—all is at an end in the cross; and thus, being for ever done with self and its doom and destiny,

we begin with God. All our sins having been put away, we walk with God in the conscious possession of divine righteousness. We know Him in the full power of that most precious peace-giving name, "Jehovah Tsidkenu"—the Lord our Righteousness; and not only so, but being endowed with the Spirit of His Son, we cry, "Abba, Father." And then, if any objector should present himself from without, or any objection arise from within, what is our answer? Are we at any loss? Have we to look for an answer within or without? In self or in Christ? The cross is our answer; our answer to justice; our answer to law; our answer to sin; our answer to Satan; our answer to conscience; our answer

to every one, and everything; and such an answer, too, as that there cannot possibly be any rejoinder. Can justice object? When, where, or how could it be so gloriously vindicated and divinely satisfied as in the cross? Can the law offer any objection? It was magnified and made honourable, and had all its claims fully satisfied, in the cross. What, therefore, has it to object? Can sin raise an objection? It was for ever obliterated by the cross. Can Satan object? He was vanquished and confounded in the cross. Can conscience raise any demur? It is left without spot by the blood of the cross. Hence, therefore, the believer may repose beneath the eternal shadow of the cross, in the full

assurance that “there is neither enemy nor evil occurrent.” He knows that the blessed One who was nailed to that cross, beneath the weight of his guilt, is now seated amid the brightness of the majesty in the heavens—triumphant over all. He is our peace; who can disturb it? He is our life; who can destroy it? He is our righteousness; who can tarnish it? He is our hope; who can rob us of it? The apostle in the eighth of Romans, seems to range in triumph through the universe, yea, and through eternity, in search of an objector or an accuser, and he has only to come to the conclusion that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This is the gospel. These are the glad tidings. But on what authority do I get them? God’s word! Nothing less. True, it is by his grace—by the work of the Holy Ghost, that I believe it; but it is God’s word I believe. “We have not followed cunningly devised fables;” nor have we to rely on frames and feelings, though, no doubt, we shall have comfortable frames and feelings, in proportion to the simplicity of our faith in God’s word. The lady in the railway carriage had a comfortable feeling when she heard the official’s “yes;” and the poor sinner will have infinitely more com-

fort, when by grace he believes God's "Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus." "If," says St. John, "we receive the testimony of man, the testimony of God is greater." And what is the testimony? That "He hath given unto us eternal life." What is this life? Not in ordinances—not in the church—not in frames and feelings. "This life is *in His Son*." "He that hath *the Son* hath life:" "Every one that seeth *the Son*, and believeth on Him, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." "He that *heareth* my word, and *believeth* on Him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment (*εις κρισιν*); but *has* passed from death unto life." The moment a person, by grace, believes

the word of God, concerning Christ and His perfect sacrifice, he becomes linked with Christ—"one with Him"—"bound up with Him"—"complete in Him"—"accepted in Him." Christ is his life, and Christ is his righteousness. God only sees him in Christ, and as Christ. "*As He is, so are we in this world*" (which indeed is a wondrous truth); "*so are we in this world.*" Now this "gives boldness in the day of judgment."

If the Judge Himself is the righteousness in which I stand, then the day of judgment can have no terrors for me—yea, there will then be the full manifestation of the solid ground on which the believer rests. Will the judge condemn Himself?

The thought is monstrous. Well, “as He is, so are we.” Will He call in question His own work? Impossible. Well, it is on that very work the believer rests. For what should any one be judged? For sin. But has Christ not “put away sin”? The word says so. Has He left some behind? Assuredly not. But I have committed sins. What of them? Christ was once offered to bear them. Has He left some not borne? By no means. He bore them ALL. What have I to fear? Nothing. If I believe in Jesus, I am as safe as He can make me. The only question for the believer is, as to whether Christ’s work is perfect. God says it is, and hence the believer is perfect—yea, “*perfected for ever.*”

He stands before God in the perfectness of Christ's work. He has not a speck of sin on him in God's sight, and never can have, because Christ has "put it away," and confidence in that word gives peace—perfect peace—a peace as perfect as the eternal word of God, and the accomplished work of Christ. If the word of God can fail, or the sacrifice of Christ be proved defective, then the believer's peace can be shaken, but not otherwise. If, therefore, my reader has not yet found settled peace, it is simply because he has not yet believed God's word. This is the reason. A single doubt—a single fear—a single anxiety bespeaks, so far as it goes, a want of confidence in God's word, just as, in the case of

the lady in the railway carriage, a single doubt as to the rightness of her position would have proved a want of confidence in the official's "yes." And yet that official might lie; but "God cannot lie." (Titus i. 2.) He is "the only true God." (John xvii. 3.) "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall never pass away." "The word of the Lord endureth for ever; and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." "*For ever* O Lord, thy word is *settled in heaven.*" Experience may be defective—frames and feelings, however true and desirable, may pass away—heart and flesh may fail—but God's word standeth fast for ever; and the believer's peace is founded thereon. The perfectness of the peace depends

upon the perfectness of the word which imparts it. If one is true, so is the other; if one is spurious, so is the other. They stand or fall together. If the word of the Lord is settled for ever in heaven, the peace of the believer is settled for ever in heaven. Hence, if the heart gets disturbed, it is because confidence in God's word has been disturbed. Doubt and confidence cannot dwell together; for in every possible way in which we can contemplate them they stand in the most striking contrast. In the first place, if we look at them in reference to God, we see that doubt dishonours Him, and makes Him a liar; confidence glorifies Him, and sets to its seal that He is true. (Comp. John iii. 33, and 1 John v. 10.) There is no way in which we

can so effectually glorify God, as by putting our individual confidence in Him. “Without faith it is impossible to please God.” This gives faith a most important place. Indeed, it lies at the very foundation of our connection with God, and forms the great moving principle in the divine life. “Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God;” “He believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” If we look through the entire gospel narrative, we shall find that nothing ever refreshed the heart of the Lord Jesus like the faith of some poor convicted sinner. And though now He is no longer within the range of mortal vision, He can be refreshed in the same way by the faith of a soul that can trust Him for everything. We

might suppose that the true way in which to glorify God would be to work for Him; but His word, in every section of it, teaches us that the true way is to put confidence in Him. The confidence of the heart glorifies and gratifies God infinitely more than the labour of the hands; yea, without the former, the latter can only be an abomination in His sight.

Further, if we look at doubt and confidence in reference to ourselves, we find that doubt makes us miserable; confidence makes us happy; doubt sends us forth upon the wild, watery waste of sceptical and infidel thought; confidence anchors us securely in the peaceful haven of God's eternal and immutable truth; doubt renders us the slaves of Satan

and the world; confidence gives us the victory over both the one and the other. Thus we see how impossible it is that doubt and confidence can both dwell in the same heart together; as well might the sun's meridian splendour dwell with the profound darkness of midnight.

But again, the poor railway official, however sincere and truthful, might be ignorant. He might not know which was the proper carriage, or the proper line of rail. Not so God. He knows every one and every thing perfectly. He knows what sin is, what man is, what the world is; and He knows what the blood of Christ is, what His own righteousness is, and what the value, authority, and stability of His own word is: He knows the end from the beginning.

His infinite mind scans and takes in eternity. He cannot be deceived, He cannot be mistaken, He cannot lie. He is the true, the truthful, the infallible, the only wise, the living, the eternal God. Hence, He can say, “He that *believeth* shall not be confounded”—“shall not be ashamed, nor confounded, world without end”—“shall not make haste”—“they shall not be ashamed that wait for ME.” Though heaven and earth should pass away, though all creation were plunged again into chaos and wild confusion, the peace that is based on God’s word would remain undisturbed. A disturbed heart is an unconfiding heart. If God’s word is capable of imparting a perfectly settled peace, then the heart should assuredly enjoy a per-

fectly settled peace. This is self-evident. A disturbed peace, or a peace capable of being disturbed, was not the peace which Christ left us, because it was not the peace which He had Himself; and His own word is, “*My peace* I give unto you.”

And, my beloved reader, remember further, that confidence never reasons. A reasoning mind is not a confiding mind. The moment reason stirs, it interrupts the repose of confidence. If reason gets on the throne, confidence gets on the rack. When God speaks, reason’s “if” is blasphemy. Reason may cut and carve man’s word as it will; but in the presence of God’s word it must lay aside its cutting and carving, and take the place of perfect folly. How could

human reason penetrate the profound mystery of the cross! How could it enter into the glorious truth of a full and eternal salvation for the guiltiest sinner, by the death of the Son of God? How could it ever enter into the amazing thought, that the Creator of heaven and earth appeared in the likeness of man—the likeness of sinful flesh, and in that likeness bore the full penalty of man's sin—endured the curse of His own law—satisfied the claims of His own inflexible justice—drained to the dregs, yea, exhausted, on our behalf, the cup of His own righteous wrath? How could it comprehend or appreciate the wondrous counsel of redeeming love, which takes up a poor degraded sinner, and puts him in possession of divine life and

divine righteousness, in union with a risen and glorified Christ, so that the sinner is not merely pardoned, but actually counted as righteous as Christ Himself? In a word, how can reason enter into any one of these divine mysteries? Impossible. Faith alone can gaze on their brightness, and feed on their preciousness. The light which shines from the Bosom, the Cross, and the Throne, is far too dazzling for reason's feeble vision; it can only be taken in and enjoyed by that faith which takes God at His word, and endures as seeing Him who is invisible. There is nothing so unreasonable as reason, when it comes in collision with God's word; nor is there aught so reasonable as that man should peacefully repose "in every word that proceedeth out

of the mouth of the Lord." For a man not to have solid peace and certainty in his soul when God has spoken, is nothing less than the madness of a sceptical or infidel mind. All that I need in order to enjoy settled assurance, is to know that I am leaning on the word of the Lord. True, the Holy Ghost gives this knowledge; and He, too, gives the blessed enjoyment; but all the while it is the knowledge and enjoyment of *the Word of God* which He gives. It is that word He uses—by it He works—to it He points—on it He causes the heart to lean. It is by the word He comforts, sustains, strengthens, refreshes, cheers, nourishes, confirms, guides, warns, animates, and governs the believer in his course down here.

Would He dispel doubt from the poor trembling heart, or quell its rising fears? He uses the word to that end: "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" "Be not afraid, only believe." Would He cleanse and purify the believer's practical ways? It is by the word He acts: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to *thy Word*." And again, "That he might cleanse her by the washing of water, by the word." Would He cheer the heart by the virtues of an imperishable hope? It is the word He uses; as we read, "Thy word on which thou hast caused me to hope." In short, the word is everything. It imparts life. (1 Peter i. 23; James i. 18.) It nourishes life.

(1 Peter ii. 2.) It preserves from error; as we read, “By the words of thy mouth I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer.” Well therefore may it be said—

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid up for faith in His excellent word.”

Yes, truly it is a firm foundation, and all who build upon it with simple, child-like confidence, will assuredly enjoy a simple, child-like peace. May my reader know the truth of this experimentally, and thus in his case “the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, QUIETNESS AND ASSURANCE FOR EVER.”

C. H. M.

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