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FAITH.

Grace expresses the attitude and relation of God to a sinner. And grace justifies and saves the sinner. However, saving grace is not an irresistible fiat of the Almighty. Grace may fail of its aim and end. No sinner is justified and saved parforce. There must be a proper attitude and an adequate relation of the sinner who is being justified and saved to God who justifies and is saving him. Faith expresses this latter attitude and relation. "By grace are ye saved through faith," Eph. 2, 8. This means that salvation in individual instances, the saving of this or that particular sinner, requires the effectual operation of *two* forces. True, "the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," Tit. 2, 11, regardless of men's attitude toward it. The word of grace has been issued to all men prior to their knowledge and wish, Matt. 28, 19. There is a salvation, perfect and complete in itself, independent of the faith of the saved; comp. Acts 4, 12: "Neither is there salvation in any other," etc. Neither man's faith nor man's unbelief alter the fact of this salvation. The *Τετέλεσται* on Golgotha, John 19, 30, was spoken before unbelievers and scoffers. This cry has been ringing through the centuries. The "word of reconciliation" conjures up no mirage to pilgrims through this desert of sin, but points to the *fact* that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them," 2 Cor. 5, 19. This salvation "is finished." Whether its tidings are carried to the husbandman on his farm or to the trader

amidst his merchandise, or to the prowler on the highways, they always state, briefly and concisely, this fact: "All things are ready," πάντα ἔτοιμα, Matt. 22, 1 ff. The faith of the saved makes not a particle of difference, as far as the actual existence in fact of this salvation and its absolute completeness are concerned.

But the faith of the saved makes all the difference to the saved. "Unto us was the Gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it," Hebr. 4, 2. Οὐκ ὠφέλησεν, this statement determines the necessity of faith for personal salvation. I have been saved without my faith, I am, without my faith, called to a personal share in the salvation of all, but if I believe not, — οὐκ ὠφέλησεν!

Personal salvation, justification, then, is by *two* means: τῇ χάριτι διὰ τῆς πίστεως. The grammatical construction of both terms, which are equally related to ἐστὲ σσσωμένοι, shows that each enters into the act expressed by the verb by its own peculiar force. The simple dative expresses cause, διὰ with the genitive, agency. The terms are not independent of one another, but the cause works through this established agency, and the agency, for its effectiveness, relies on the cause. The dependence of faith on grace was shown in THEOL. QUARTERLY, vol. IX, p. 206. It is the concept of faith, its Scriptural content, and its energy in justification and salvation, that must now be presented for study.

Grace saves, and faith saves. Neither saves without the other, in particular instances. Saving grace postulates faith in the *subjectum operationis*. Faith has for its correlate grace, the atoning work of grace, and the word of grace. Saving grace does not become operative in the sinner unless by faith, and saving faith, apart from grace, lacks all energy. Faith is the only channel through which grace flows into the sinner's heart, and in this channel nothing can flow but grace.

Grace exists in God, goes out from God. Faith exists in man, goes out from man. The study of the concept of faith,

then, brings us away, — though not entirely, as will be seen, — from the mind and will and purposes of God, and takes us into the arcanum of the human heart, its qualities, powers, and activities; for it is there that the process of faith, the act of faith is taking place, and a state of faith exists. Rightly understood, faith is the human element in justification. Not, indeed, that quota of merit which the *subjectum operationis* in this process, sinful man, contributes out of his own store, or out of some borrowed store, to make up, together with divine grace, the resultant product of the sinner's righteousness; but that activity of the human mind, affections and will, which is brought into play on the part of the sinner, — we have specified in the preceding issue by what cause and in what manner, — and which reaches out toward the proffered hand of grace and toward the pardon and blessing which that hand extends, and which, through the mediation of the sinner's Advocate, results in an intimate union of the criminal with the Judge in this forensic process. God is gracious to the sinner; the sinner acknowledges with trustful satisfaction this attitude of God towards him. God bestows His pardon upon the sinner; the sinner places an implicit confidence in God's verdict upon him. Thus is justification accomplished, and man saved "by grace through faith."

The fact that faith possesses no merit, and cannot be viewed as an impelling cause in the article of justification; that it is a gift of God, wrought in us by the preaching of the word of grace and the Spirit of grace through that Word, does not signify that man is not active at all when he believes. On the contrary, faith represents the very intensest action of which the human mind and heart are capable. Faith is the human echo rising from the deepest caverns of the heart in response to the voice of the Gospel; it is the human answer to the divine call; the conscious and determined alliance of the heart to Him who has captured the heart. The believer in the act of believing is not an automaton; he is not acted upon only, but he acts, and that knowingly and willingly. Just as certainly as the

gracious inclination and decree of God and the gracious operation of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel represent a personal attitude and activity of God to the sinner, just as certainly the pleased assent and trustful reliance of the human will on God represent a personal attitude and activity on the part of the sinner toward God. The sinner's conscious and sincere declaration: "I know and believe," is grammatically and logically the statement of an act in which he, the sinner, is, knows himself to be, and desires to be, considered the agent, and the sole responsible agent. His mouth in this declaration is not a speaking-trumpet through which the thought of another is conveyed to the outside world; his heart is not a platform from which another delivers solemn statements of his conviction, but the speaker in this case is also the thinker of the words which he speaks and has willed to speak those words, and wishes to stand by his words, to be held to account for them, and to be judged by them. It is not denied, indeed, that *there is* another present and active in the speaker; and it is another question: How came the speaker thus to express himself? The point being urged now is this: when the believer declares: "I know and believe!" he predicates action of himself. The act or process of faith, though not of the sinner's creation, still is an operation of his inner energies. It is his own heart with its forces that is at work in this act; it is *his* faith. God loves, Christ redeems, the Holy Spirit calls and enlightens the sinner, but neither God, nor Christ, nor the Spirit believe for, or with the sinner, though they all aid him toward faith and induce, work faith in him. The Word, and the preacher of the Word, and the Church which sends the preacher, all show to the sinner the necessity of faith, and the way to believe; they also urge him to believe, but the sinner's faith, the act of his believing, though brought about and wrought through their instrumentality, is not performed by them, but by the sinner himself.

However, it is also theologically correct to claim for faith a personal activity on the part of the believer. For faith receives the righteousness of God; yea, faith is counted for righteousness

to the believer, Rom. 4, 22, and that in every instance of justification, v. 23. 24. Unless the sinner's righteousness is held by proxy, just as it was obtained by proxy, faith must be the sinner's personal act. Again, faith and obedience are, in many places, Scriptural synonyms. Obedience cannot be rendered through an agent. To argue that the statement: The sinner believes, means that the sinner is represented as a believer through another's effort, while, in reality, he is a disobedient person, would be manifest folly.

Accordingly, the faith of individuals in particular instances is mentioned and distinguished from that of others: Luke 1, 45: "Blessed is she that believed;" comp. v. 20: "because thou believedst not my words." "*Thy* faith hath saved *thee*," Matt. 9, 22. Mark 5, 34; 10, 52. Luke 8, 48; 17, 19. "According to *your* faith be it unto you," Matt. 9, 29. "O woman, great is *thy* faith; be it unto thee, *even as thou wilt*," Matt. 15, 28. "Where is your faith?" Luke 8, 25. "Jesus seeing their faith," Matt. 9, 2. "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth," Mark 9, 23. "If thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see," John 11, 40. "Reach hither thy finger . . . and be not faithless, but believing," John 20, 27. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not," Luke 22, 32. "Increase our faith," Luke 17, 5. We are told of Abraham's, Moses', Abel's, etc., faith, Hebr. 11. Rom. 4, 3. 18. James 2, 23. Paul speaks to his Romans of "the mutual faith both of them and him," Rom. 1, 12. "Thy faith" — "my faith," James 2, 18. Timothy's, Eunice's, Lois' faith, 2 Tim. 1, 5; the faith of Christians at Thessalonica, 1 Thess. 1, 8; 3, 2. 6. 7; 2 Thess. 1, 3; at Ephesus, Eph. 1, 15; at Colossæ, Col. 1, 4; at Rome, Rom. 1, 8; at Corinth, 2 Cor. 8, 7; at Philippi, Phil 2, 17; of many of the chief rulers of the synagogue, John 12, 42; of a great company of the priests at Jerusalem, Acts 6, 7 — these and many others are facts which are extolled and held up for encouragement and emulation in the sacred accounts of the early days of Christianity. It was certainly felt that in the act of a person's believing there

was a manifestation of personal force, which imprinted what we might call spiritual character on the respective Christian. And when Paul counsels a Roman church member: "Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself alone," Rom. 14, 22; when he rejoicingly states of himself: "I have kept the faith," 2 Tim. 4, 7; when we hear of certain persons' "first faith," 1 Tim. 5, 12, of the Corinthians' faith that is to be increased, 2 Cor. 10, 15; when we hear the agitated father in the Gospel appealingly address the Master: "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!" Matt. 9, 24, — is there not in all these instances a reference to an important event in the persons' inner life, in which they have consciously borne an active part? But this fact will more clearly and strikingly appear when we inquire of Scripture the content of an act of faith.

A number of Scriptural terms must be drawn into our present research,¹⁾ chief among them the terms *πίστις*, *πιστός*, and *πιστεύειν*. With regard to these three terms, in particular, profane usage is hardly relevant for determining their exact signification in Scripture. Classical Greek and Biblical Greek differ widely in their use of these terms.²⁾ A state of affairs exists, as regards the classical usage of this term, similar to that

1) The true content of the Biblical concept of human faith must be gathered from the native force and the Scriptural usage of such terms as *πείθεσθαι* (*πεποιθέναι*, *πέπεισθαι*), *πεποιθήσις*, *πιστός*, *πιστώ*, *πίστις*, *πιστεύειν*. By way of contrast the meaning of the term "faith" will appear also from such privatives as *ἀπειθής*, *ἀπειθέω*, *ἀπειθεία*, *ἀπιστος*, *ἀπιστέω*, and *ἀπιστία*, and from the compounds *ὀλιγόπιστος* and *ὀλιγοπιστία*.

2) "Faith has obtained a (new) signification through the appearing of Jesus Christ." (Cremer, *Bibl. theol. Woerterb.*, 7. ed., p. 748.) "With it" (this new signification) "the New Testament era as the era of the revelation of faith becomes distinct from the Old Testament era as that of education unto faith." (*Ibid.*, p. 750.) "Profane Greek offers us the term, but nothing more." (*Ibid.*, p. 745 sq.) "All this" (the Biblical content) "is not contained in the Greek *πίστις* as applied within the domain of religion, except the idea of acknowledgment, and even that how meagerly!" (*Ibid.*, p. 746.) "Homer knows a *πείθεσθαι* with reference to the signs and wonders of deities, but it is in no case the person of the gods, in regard to which *πειθόμενος* *πείθεται*." (*Ibid.*, p. 727.)

noted with reference to *χάρις*.³⁾ Both the Greeks and the Romans knew, and even worshiped *πίστις*, *fides*; but the idea which they connect with this term, when used in its passive sense, is reliability, trustworthiness, fidelity, credibility of matters and persons, or, when used in its active sense, confidence, trust, conviction, either as bestowed upon others, or as enjoyed from others.⁴⁾ Even when used with reference to religious matters, Roman and Greek writers express by "faith in the gods" merely the universal or national acceptance or recognition of the existence of deities, their power and supernatural influence, but not personal, subjective trust in the divine favor. Faith in the gods, with them, never signifies firm reliance and confiding trust in a gracious God, but the commonplace idea and attitude over and against the Unseen, the Supernatural.⁵⁾ The Roman goddess Fides was in no sense a personification of the Christian faith.

The number of Scripture texts in which the term *πίστις* and cognate terms are used, is very large. As not germane to our subject we eliminate from this number, firstly, all those

3) See THEOL. QUARTERLY IX, pp. 130. 131. CREMER: "Πίστις, faith, is a word that, if any, has become important for the history of the origin of the language of Christianity; for all elements which enter into the formation of a language, viz., the precedent of the Old Testament" (Cremer refers to the LXX rendering of אֱמִינָה by *πίστις*), "the signification of this word as understood by profane writers and when applied within the sphere of religion, and also the aptness of the word for reproducing the Christian conception, — all combine, in order, on the one hand, to offer to the spirit of the New Testament the suitable term, and, on the other hand, to fill this term with a specific content." (Ibid., p. 735.)

4) "The term *fides*, in common usage among the Romans, is understood in a somewhat different sense in the Holy Scriptures than it is usually understood by profane writers. For with the Romans *fides* usually signifies truthfulness in speaking and acting, or fidelity in the performance of promises. Cicero derives *fides*, etymologically, from the idea that something said or promised by someone is to be realized, as if the two words *fiat dictum* had become amalgamated in *fides*." (Flacius, *Clavis*, ed. ult. 1617. col. 307.)

5) Ovid's "Credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum" (*Met. 4.*) ("I do believe, nor is it with a shallow faith, that there is a race of gods"), is no more than a deistic notion. (Cf. Cremer, l. c., p. 739.)

texts which predicate *πίστις* of God,⁶⁾ secondly, all those which speak of human *πίστις* in purely human affairs,⁷⁾ and, thirdly, the *πίστις* of the diabolical spirits.⁸⁾ Our business is exclusively with that Biblical and theological quantity which enters into, and acts a certain well-defined part in the divine act of justification, and which is known as "saving faith," *fides salvifica, fides justificans*.

What is the content of this faith? It was stated before that the energies of the human heart are set to work in the act of faith. *Faith is, indeed, an affair of the heart.* "With the heart, *καρδία*, man believeth unto righteousness," Rom. 10, 10. "If thou shalt believe in thine heart, *ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου*, thou shalt be saved," v. 9. Philip, before sealing to the eunuch the righteousness of faith, made sure that he believed "with all his heart," *ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας*, Acts 8, 37. Mountain-moving faith is described as "not doubting in the heart, but believing," *μὴ διακριθῆ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ πιστεύῃ*, Mark 11, 23. Faith "purifies the heart, *τῇ πίστει καθαρῖσας τὰς καρδίας*, Acts 15, 9. Those who draw near to God in the new and living way consecrated to us by the blood of Jesus, come "with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience," *μετὰ ἀληθινῆς καρδίας ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πίστεως βεραντισμένοι τὰς καρδίας κτλ.*, Hebr. 10, 22. Believers "assure their hearts" before God (*πέισομεν τῆν καρδίαν*), 1 John 3, 19; their heart does not condemn them, *καρδία μὴ καταγνώσκη*, v. 20. 21. The justified by faith have "the love of God shed abroad in the hearts," *ἐκκέχυται ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις*, Rom. 5, 5; they are "given the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts," *ἀρροβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις*, 2 Cor. 1, 22. Their heart has by faith become the dwelling-place of Christ, *κατοικῆσαι τὸν*

6) E. g. Rom. 3, 3: "the faith of God" is God's trustworthiness in His promises. Comp. v. 4 and ch. 9, 6; 11, 29. — 2 Tim. 2, 13: "God is faithful," i. e., He keeps faith, even though we break faith with Him.

7) E. g. Matt. 23, 23: "faith" as one of the weightier matters of the Law; Luke 12, 42: "faithful and wise steward;" Gal. 5, 22: "faith" as a fruit of the Spirit in the daily renewal of the regenerate.

8) James 2, 19.

Χριστὸν διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις, Eph. 3, 17. The peace that comes after justification by faith "rules in the hearts," βραβευέτω ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις, Col. 3, 15, "keeps the hearts," φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας, Phil. 4, 7. Finally, in sanctification "hearts are stablished in holiness" unto the coming of the Lord, στηρίζαι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας, 1 Thess. 3, 13. At all stages of saving faith, thus, it is to the heart that the Lord addresses Himself, and that is seen to act in response to Him. *The heart is the organ of faith in man.*

Consistently with the above, lack of faith, unbelief, is charged against the heart. Cleopas and his companion were "slow of heart to believe," βραδεῖς τῇ καρδίᾳ τοῦ πιστεῦειν, Luke 24, 25. In the Gentiles there is "blindness of heart," πώρωσιν τῆς καρδίας, Eph. 4, 18. Pharisaical sanctimoniousness and hypocrisy reveals "hardness of heart," σκληροκαρδίαν, Matt. 19, 8, which precludes a believing acceptance of the true teachings of God's Word.

In all the passages cited the heart is viewed as a unit. It is not any one particular energy of the heart, *e. g.*, the intellectual faculty, that exerts itself in any act of saving faith, nor a combination of two or more faculties, *e. g.*, the emotion of fear or wonder roused by a process of reasoning, or a reliance based on reasonable certainty, or an intelligent yielding and trusting, but all and every force which the human heart is capable of exerting, the whole heart with all its energies that is made to act in faith, all energies acting simultaneously and harmoniously.

D.

(To be continued.)