

the blessing that was to come to all nations through his seed. We exult with Job in the assurance to which he gave utterance long years before the Redeemer was born, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25). We point to the prophecies of Isaiah concerning the rod which would come out of the stem of Jesse, and concerning the virgin who should conceive and bring forth a Son and call his name Immanuel, God with us. We know and teach the other prophecies of Isaiah, of Jeremiah, of Zechariah, of Daniel, of Micah. But we also rejoice in the added testimony which is contained in modern revelation, and in the Book of Mormon, testimony that the gospel plan was given from the beginning, that Jesus and his redemption were taught from the beginning, and that God, his gospel, his love, his plan of salvation are eternal, unchanged, and unchangeable.

Latter Day Saints believe that there is only one name whereby men may be saved, the name of Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God. They believe that there is only one gospel through which that name may be declared, the gospel of Christ, which was preached to and through Adam, with a promise that that gospel should continue and be preached to the end of the world as in the beginning: the gospel that was preached by Enoch, by Noah, by Abraham, by Moses, and by the prophets and patriarchs of the Old Testament. Christ is the central figure of the Old Testament for us in a way that is not possible for those who lack the witness of those added Scriptures which have been given to us through the modern prophets.

We call again on men everywhere to repent, to believe on the name of Jesus Christ their Redeemer, to have faith in him, to be baptized in his name, and to receive also of the baptism of his Holy Spirit. We point to him and repeat the promise that whosoever cometh in at the gate and climbeth up by him shall never fall.

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Faith— The Way to Salvation

Now as I said concerning faith—that it was not a perfect knowledge, even so it is with my words. Ye can not know of their surety at first, unto perfection, any more than faith is a perfect knowledge. But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith; yea, even if ye can no more than desire to believe, let this desire work in you, even until ye believe in a manner that ye can give place for a portion of my words.—Alma 16:149-151.

WHAT a monstrous and intolerable world this would be if there were no faith—if nobody trusted anybody else for anything! No one would care to consult a doctor, or to take the medicine prescribed by the doctor and compounded by the pharmacist. No one would ever extend credit, or accept a check, or ride in a train or bus or elevator. No one would dare to send his child to a teacher. All activity would cease; all production would stop; all trade and commerce and travel would cease; all social contacts would be discarded; all schools would close. But we have faith that men will pay their debts and honor their checks; that they know how to diagnose disease and compound prescriptions; that they know how to build and maintain in safe repair our cars, our trains, our buses, our elevators. We trust people to be the kind of people we can safely associate with socially; we assume in faith that our

teachers can be trusted to shape the minds and characters of our youth.

Faith is a principle of life. It is not passive, or negative, or quiescent; it is active, dynamic, constructive, affirmative, aggressive. It is the principle which moves men to great achievement, to noble living, to the conquest of evil. Faith is reliance, trust, confidence, hope, assurance. Faith is betting your life that there is a God, and trusting him to supplement the best effort which you can muster with his power to complete what you have begun in his name. Faith is the principle which binds men to God for action.

Men must have faith in something. Even those who claim to have no faith in God base their lives on an assumption which cannot be proved—on the assumption that natural law is eternally dependable and unchangeable. There is no way of *proving* beyond the shadow of a doubt that it is; but we base our lives in every conceivable way on the premise that water will always be wet and fire hot; that lead will always be heavy and helium light; that the sun and moon and stars and earth will continue in their accustomed orbits. Think of the confusion and loss of life which would ensue if the seasons on which we depend for all our agriculture should suddenly be reversed; if the water on which we depend to fight fire should suddenly take on the properties of gasoline; if the rubber with which we insulate our power lines should suddenly begin to conduct electricity. If natural law were not dependable, we could not exist on this earth or in this universe. Every one of us, saint or sinner, believer or unbeliever, theist or atheist, bases his life on the assumption that natural law is dependable. In a physical and scientific as well as a spiritual way, then, we literally live by faith.

THE RESULTS OF FAITH

Most of the great and revolutionary discoveries and inventions in the scientific realm have been the result of faith.

Men of science postulate a theory; then they set to work to experiment in an infinite number of ways to make the theory in which they have faith work out in experience. A good example is Edison's invention of the incandescent lamp. His theory was that somewhere in the universe there should be a substance which in a vacuum would glow hot under an electric current to produce light. The scientists of his day called him a fool, and pointed out that combustion was necessary to produce light, that combustion could not take place in a vacuum; if it did, combustion would destroy the filament which produced the light. Edison's faith clung to his theory and after hundreds of experiments, using hundreds and hundreds of possible substances, he found a substance that would glow red hot in a vacuum as a current passed through it, and we had the first crude incandescent bulb. With the same faith, men of science are today still seeking a cure for cancer, for heart disease. Other men of science are delving into the mysteries of atomic energy. Sooner or later, such dynamic, aggressive faith finds its answer, produces its fruitage; and the thing hoped for becomes a reality. The following definition of faith is scientifically as well as spiritually accurate: "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrew 11:1).

WHAT FAITH CAN DO FOR YOU

Faith is a saving principle. It can lift a man out of his sin and degradation and helplessness to a new life, through the power of Jesus, his redemption, and his atonement. We have characterized it as the "key to salvation." The buoyancy of a life preserver is a saving principle; but the drowning man who hasn't enough faith in the saving power of a life preserver to grab hold of it and hang on cannot be saved by it. Faith in the ability of the life preserver to save him is the key to his salvation. The sinner who has no faith in Christ or in his saving power, who refuses to lay hold on

Christ and cling to him until the end, that sinner cannot be saved by Christ; and since he cannot save himself, he is lost. In a very real sense then, faith is the key that unlocks and makes available to men all the rich treasures of salvation.

Faith is the key to salvation. Faith saves those who will exercise it unto salvation. It will not, cannot, save those who do not use it. "By grace are ye saved through faith," wrote Paul to the Ephesians (Ephesians 2:8). To the Romans he wrote, "Thou standest by faith" (Romans 11:20). In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews is this thought: "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."

By faith men are justified, or forgiven, and accounted righteous in spite of their previous life of sin. Justification may be briefly explained as follows: God is a perfect being; his law is perfect; he demands perfection in those who would serve him and dwell with him. Yet all men are sinful; we are heirs of sin and death; and in addition to inheriting the effects of original sin, we all commit personal sins for which we alone are responsible. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Because God knew that no man could live perfectly by himself, he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, the perfect one, into the world to make atonement for us, that all men who would exercise faith in him might reap the rewards of perfection, and be accounted perfect through him. Justification is a change of status from a wrong to a right relationship with God, not because of our own works, or our own righteousness, but because of the atonement of Christ. No man can be justified by works, because no man can perfectly keep the law. We are justified only by our faith in the perfect Christ, and in the power of his atonement.

Being justified through faith does not mean that we become instantly and completely righteous with never any more desire to sin; nor does it mean that we can never again fall

into sin. But on the other hand, unless a righteous life follows justification, there has been no justification. One of the proofs that justification has taken place is that good works result from an exercise of the active, dynamic, aggressive, constructive faith of the believer. Good works of him who is saved demonstrate the quality of his faith and the justification it has brought.

FAITH AND SANCTIFICATION

Justification leads to sanctification, the process by which the believer is freed from sin and enabled to realize the will of God in his life. He who is under the burden and guilt of sin cannot devote himself to God; but when that burden and guilt are lifted, when the sinner is justified through his faith in Christ, then that man may become sanctified, completely consecrated to the service to God. He is no more common or unclean; he is no longer devoted to common or profane things, but he is a "vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work" (II Timothy 2:21). "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

We receive the Holy Spirit through faith. Paul declares in the third chapter of Galatians that the just shall live by faith, and that we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Jarom, a Book of Mormon writer, says that those who are not stiff-necked and proud "and *have faith*, have communion with the Holy Spirit, which maketh manifest unto the children of men, *according to their faith*" (Jarom 1:9). Paul speaks of the "earnest of the Spirit," or the advance or token payment given to the believer to give assurance that the complete reward and salvation will some day be his, and adds, "By faith ye stand."

It is through faith that we receive the blessings which we need and petition God to give. James says of him who would

ask God for wisdom, "Let him ask in faith, nothing wavering" (James 1:6). Jesus told his disciples that faith even as a grain of mustard seed could move mountains by bringing together the will and power of God and the will and power of men. In the Book of Mormon the prophet Moroni says: "Behold I say unto you, that whoso believeth in Christ, doubting nothing, whatsoever he shall ask the Father in the name of Christ, it shall be granted him; and this promise is unto all, even unto the ends of the earth" (Mormon 4:84). And the voice of modern revelation through Joseph Smith is, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in faith . . . ye shall receive" (Doctrine and Covenants 28:2 c).

Faith brings the signs which follow the believer.

"Faith cometh not by signs, but signs follow those that believe. Yea, signs come by faith, not by the will of men, nor as they please, but by the will of God. Yea, signs come by faith, unto mighty works, for without faith no man pleaseth God."—Doctrine and Covenants 63:3 a-c.

It is by faith that miracles are wrought; and it is by faith that angels appear and minister to men. If there are no more signs or miracles following the believer, then there is no faith, and there can be no salvation—for salvation can come only through faith.

BEYOND FAITH

Faith is not knowledge; for when we have knowledge, when we know, we no longer need to exercise faith. But without faith there can never be knowledge of the things of God. We cannot find God, we cannot please God, we cannot know God, unless we first believe that he is, and have faith in the Savior whom he sent into the world for us. We cannot know that a seed is good unless we plant it in the faith and hope that it will grow; then when it sprouts and begins to grow, we know that it is a good seed. We cannot *know* that faith in Christ

will save us unless we exercise that faith. "Ye cannot know of their surety at first. . . . But behold, if ye will awake and arouse your faculties, even to an experiment upon my words, and exercise a particle of faith" (Alma 16:150, 151), letting the desire to believe work in you, your faith will increase and grow until it becomes perfect knowledge in the kingdom of God.