

179. The Holy Ghost Brings Us to Faith in Christ.

No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. /
Cor. 12, 3.

What is firm faith in Christ and His redemption? Is it merely taking for granted the fact that He died for the sins of the world, that He wrought salvation for sinners in general? O no! True faith, the faith that prompts us to call on the name of the Lord, the faith that is necessary for salvation, is infinitely more. It is not merely declaring one's belief in the truth of the message of the Gospel; true faith is the firm belief of a sinner that Jesus died for *him*; it is trusting in the merits of the Savior. This firm confidence of the heart is the essential part of faith. It is only when I am convinced that Christ died also for me, that He redeemed also me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, — it is only when I firmly believe this that I have the faith which saves my soul.

How are we to acquire this faith? The answer to this question is, You need not — indeed, you cannot — acquire faith of yourselves; God Himself must and will give you faith, the saving faith. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." We confess: "I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith." Oh, then, resist not the Holy Ghost!

Prayer.

O God the Holy Ghost, who proceedest from the Father and the Son and with them art co eternal in one undivided substance, we worship Thee, we honor, praise, and magnify Thee, we thank Thee for all Thy bounties; especially, that by grace Thou hast called us and brought us to the holy Christian faith and still unceasingly dost perform Thy work in us. Because we cannot by our own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, our Lord, or come to Him, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst teach us, guide us into all truth, preserve and strengthen us in the true faith, and finally give us the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls. Amen.

Made by the Holy Ghost Thine own,
Who wrought the saving faith in me —
Now to be Thine, yea, Thine alone,
O Lamb of God, I come to Thee.

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