

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

THE FAITH OF ABRAHAM.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON TUESDAY EVENING, SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1865, BY

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AT THE NEW SURREY TABERNACLE, WANSEY STREET.

“And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”—Genesis xv. 6.

THE dear Saviour, when looking to the eternity of his glory, prayed to be glorified with the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. The glory he had with the Father before the world was, was, first, the church of God; that church chosen in him before the world was; and that church that he thus had before the world was he prays to be glorified. Also, the work he had to perform, his mediatorial work, was another part of the glory, and that work went forth from everlasting, and by and in accordance with that he prayed to be glorified in the future. And that inheritance which he now possesses, and which the saints were to have, laid up in his hands before the world was, he prays to be glorified with the same. Thus you will find that that religion that existed in God's counsel before the foundation of the world is the same religion that runs through the Bible from the beginning to the end; the same religion by which Abel was saved; Abel was saved by faith, for unto Abel it was of faith, that it might be by grace; and as the first believer was thus possessed of faith that it might be by grace, and the promise sure to all the seed, so the topstone at the last shall be brought home with shouting of “Grace, grace unto it!” These are the reasons that we are directed so much to the patriarchs as patterns of that real religion that shall go on saving men down to the end of time. Hence, among the rest Abraham is a very conspicuous sample or example of that faith by which alone we can be saved; in a word, we must be of the same faith with Abraham, we must be of the same spirit with Abraham, or else where Abraham is we can never come. And to be like Abraham is to be like Jesus Christ; for Abraham was of one mind with Jesus Christ, and to be like Jesus Christ is to be like God, for Jesus Christ is the image of God. Hence you will recollect, in that scripture in Zechariah when it is said, “He that is feeble among them in that day shall be as David.” Now you must banish from your minds there all thoughts of the man called King David; the word *David* there has no reference to David literally, at all; the word *David* is the Hebrew word for *beloved*; therefore, “He that is feeble among them at that day shall be as the beloved;” that is, he shall be as Christ Jesus: “and the house of the beloved shall be as God;” and then, to show after what order they shall be as God, it saith, “as the angel of the Lord before them.” I am now saying very great things, poor creatures as we are, yet it is a truth that the quickening power of the Spirit of God, and that Christ becoming our sanctification and our justification, for the life we have is of God, the sanctification we have is of God, the justification we have is of God, and the truth we have is of God, thus conforming us to the likeness of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is the image of God. And the wondrous harmony that will to eternity subsist between Christ and

God, and the people and God by Christ Jesus, will carry out in perfection that great scripture, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity;" there this wondrous unity will be realized in all its perfection and glory.

Having said so much,—enough, I think,—to show that our text embodies everything that is important to us now, and will be important to us for ever, I will now go through the subject as concisely as I can, for I will not keep you unreasonably long. I will notice, in the first place, *what Abraham believed*; secondly, *how he believed it*; thirdly, *the privileges of such faith*; fourthly and lastly, *the practices of such faith*.

I notice then, first, *what Abraham believed*. Now the first thing I notice that Abraham believed was in the Lord Jesus Christ,—“He saw my day, and was glad.” And I shall be glad too if I can call your attention to that respect in which Abraham believed in Jesus Christ. Do not let us pass this point lightly over, for it is a matter of vital importance. If you believe in a false Christ, or in the true Christ in a perverted form, then your soul is deceived. You must believe in the same kind of Jesus Christ as did Abraham. Let us see, then, the kind of Jesus Christ in whom he believed. We turn to the preceding chapter, and there we find Melchizedek meeting Abraham sacramentally, with bread and with wine; and this Melchizedek is a type of Jesus Christ, first in the eternal perfection of his priesthood. So that Abraham believed in the eternal perfection of Christ's priesthood; Abraham believed that Christ had by his one offering perfected to all eternity those that were sanctified, or set apart by God the Father before time commenced its mysterious course and events. Abraham believed in this eternal perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ. I will not occupy your time here in quoting scriptures from the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the apostle works this matter out very clearly. Now what doth this say? Why, it says that Abraham was so sensible of what he was by the law of God—for, although the law of ten commandments did not then exist, yet the law of holiness, the law of righteousness, the law of solemn and human responsibility existed, and Abraham felt that he stood responsible to the great Judge of all for his sins; Abraham felt that there was a law of holiness and a law of righteousness which he had nothing but an unholy and an unrighteous nature to meet it with; and so far from Abraham, by anything he could do, getting rid of any of his sins, the longer he lived the greater sinner he was, for there is not even a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not. Now Abraham, it is fairly and clearly implied, was thus sensible of his solemn responsibility as a sinner. Who, then, will take my responsibility? Who will take my sins, and for ever destroy them? Who will bring into my soul an untarnishable holiness? Who will bring to me an everlasting righteousness? Who will be responsible for me, to present me at the ultimate tribunal, without spot, or fault, or wrinkle, or any such thing? While Abraham was thus ruminating, meditating, cogitating, searching, trembling, fearing, the Holy Spirit revealed to him the day of our Great Melchizedek; he saw the Saviour's day, he saw it, and was glad. Ah, he says, there go all my sins into the great and bottomless Atlantic of his blood; there goes all my responsibility; he is the Surety of the better covenant; he will bring in everlasting righteousness, and he will swallow up death in victory, putting a life into the place of that death that can never die. Abraham thus believed in the positive necessity of and suitability of the eternal priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ. But mark another point here; I should say here what I have often said before, and I wish you all to take notice of it, that the Levitical priesthood is never called a royal priesthood, but that Christ's priesthood is called a royal priesthood; because the Levitical priesthood could not reign over sin, and consequently could not turn a Jewish priest into a king. Why could not a Jewish priest become a king? Why could not a Jewish priest acquire a throne, a

sceptre, a kingdom, a palace, a government? Why not? Not one of them obtained the throne, because their sacrifices could not put down the rule of sin, nor the rule of Satan, nor the rule of death. But Jesus Christ's atonement, his priesthood is called a royal priesthood, because he hath put down sin, and Satan, and death, and the curse; he hath put down all the powers of darkness; he hath ended tribulation, he hath brought life and immortality to light, and now he reigns unrivalled, he reigns in universal dominion, he hath reached that power which is universal," he hath power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given unto him." And before I step into the next point, I cannot but stop to make one remark here,—what a happy people that are united to such a priesthood! Am I a believer in such a Jesus as this, that has finished all my transgression, that has made an end to all my sin, that has made reconciliation for all my iniquity, that has brought in everlasting righteousness? Is it any wonder that the church should say, "He shall lie all night betwixt my breasts"? Oh, how will I embrace him, and love him, and adore him, and worship him, and sing of him, and talk with him, and walk with him, and boast of him! Any wonder that a well-instructed scribe in the things of God should say, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"? Furthermore, Abraham believed not only in this Jesus Christ as to the eternal perfection of his priesthood and its royalty, but he also believed something else—that this priesthood would change the law; for where there is a change of the priesthood there is of necessity a change of the law. There is a great deal more in these words than may at first sight appear. First, he has changed the law of sin; Jesus Christ has so changed the law of sin that though sin burden us, and grieve us, and plague us, and hamper us, and bring us, as the apostle saith, into bondage, so that we cannot do the things that we would, yet, in consequence of what Christ has done, the law of sin is so changed, that though it has power to burden and trouble us as long as we live, it has no power to damn us, it has no power to curse us, it can find no hell for us; Christ has drunk hell dry; there is no hell for the man that believes in Jesus. Sin in its damning and reigning power is gone; the law is changed, and sin now can find no law by which it can have a fatal dominion over the believer. Sin shall not have dominion over you; it will be your enemy, it will be your plague, it will be your trouble, but it will not be your monarch; Jesus Christ shall be your king, grace shall be your queen, and her empire she will maintain. And so sin shall not have dominion over you; not under the law, but under grace. And now I am going for one moment upon the ground of contradiction upon which unhappily it seems to be my lot sometimes to be found; but I assure my brethren in the ministry that I do not run into such contradiction from caprice. But the ground of the contradiction which I am about to run now is this;—most ministers say that the sins of the Lord's people are worse than other people's sins. I beg to deny it; for the man that is brought into oneness with Christ, there are some sins which that man could commit while he was in a state of nature that he cannot commit now. While he was in a state of nature he could tread under foot the Son of God; he cannot do it now; he could count the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, a common thing; he cannot do it now—just the reverse; sacred, more and more sacred, does the Saviour's blood become the nearer we come to those realities. Thou hast prepared all heaven for the reception of unnumbered millions of sinners, whose very song to eternity shall be, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory for ever and ever." Again, the Christian who is thus united to Christ, with all his faults he cannot hate God's truth. Go to the Christian under the worst circumstances possible, he cannot hate God's truth; no, Peter, who denied the Saviour, did not sin against him with

malice. Why, while his tongue denied him, his heart loved him. The denial came from his wicked nature, under Satanic influence. Satan got Peter into his sieve, but he was obliged to empty him out of it again, he could not make him go through. Peter used awful language, but he did not mean a word of it. Peter served the devil as hypocritically as some people serve the Lord Jesus Christ. "Simon Peter, lovest thou me?" "Yes, Lord, I do." What a mystery! How is this? Because he was under the power of that atonement that had taken the venom out of sin, that had taken the malice away, that had taken the enmity away. "Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Again, this priesthood not only changed the law of sin, but also the law of God; that is, changed the position of the law of God;—I will speak to be understood if I can;—that is, the law of God without Christ is a fiery law, but now the law is a quiet law; the law of God without Christ is an unfulfilled law, but by Jesus Christ it is a fulfilled law; the law of God without Jesus Christ is a non-established law, but by Jesus Christ it is established; point out to me, if you can, one quality of the divine law that is not established by the wondrous work of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Do we then make void the law through faith?" God forbid; it is the only way of establishing the law in all its honours, bringing in the promises like blessing after blessing rolling in upon us to all eternity by what the Saviour hath done. Also the Saviour has changed the law of tribulation. You that do not believe in Jesus Christ, you that have no concern about your soul, your troubles are all curses to you; your troubles are taking from you one comfort after another, and one advantage after another, till your troubles will by-and-bye take your life from you, and leave you to lie down in eternal privation; and thus your troubles work together for evil. But you that receive Jesus Christ, and love his name, why, he has so changed the law of trouble that your troubles will work your deepest advantage, will work your highest good, and will often make you pray to your best Friend when otherwise you would not have prayed at all; it will often make you sit down like a little child to hear God's word in all simplicity and sincerity. Whereas, without this pressure, without this trouble, perhaps you might have been, as a Christian, in too light and frothy a state either to hunger or to thirst much after the mercy of God. So that you will find that even present troubles often consolidate the mind, bring you to the knee of prayer, endear the Saviour, endear his truth; yea, so far advantageous have some of the people of God found their troubles to be, that one saith, "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." Thus, then, Abraham believed in Jesus Christ, in the eternal perfection of his priesthood, in the royalty of that priesthood, and in its power to change the law—that is, every law that was against us he has so changed as to make that law for us, so that the Lord goes on now giving judgment from time to time in favour of this people. What is the pulpit but a kind of magisterial bench? What is the minister but a kind of divine magistrate? and what that minister binds on earth shall be bound in heaven; what that minister looses on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Here, for instance, is a poor sinner going to hear the word. He sees and feels what he is; he longs for mercy, believes the truth, admires the Saviour, loves God. The minister characterizes him by these features, drops in a word of mercy, drops in a word of pardon. Why, says the man, I went in a captive, I am come out free; I went in like the three in the fiery furnace, bound hand and foot, and I am come out now quite at liberty; yea, my feet are made like hinds' feet; I can now run through troops, leap over walls, and glory in the God of my salvation. That is the minister loosing you on earth; and if you are thus loosed on earth, then you are loosed in heaven; that same thing that you realize here is settled for you in heaven. If, on the other hand, you are bound in enmity, and love that enmity; bound in

darkness, and love that darkness; bound up in the world, and love that world; or bound up in your own righteousness, and hate the very sound of God's grace. Then the minister is commanded to take you testimonially, and bind you hand and foot, and cast you into outer darkness—that is the way he must deal with you; and if you should be made sensible while he is casting you out that you are out, you will then be glad to part with your own righteousness, and to come in a poor and needy creature, like the rest of the saved; and then you will cease to be angry with the prodigal because the Father was good to him; you will join with the poet, and say,—

“ If I lisp a song of praise,
Each note shall echo, ‘ Grace, free grace.’ ”

Now is this the kind of Jesus Christ you believe in? Is this the Jesus Christ that you receive into your soul? If so, you are one with Abraham; if it is not so, you are not one with Abraham, and there I leave you.

The second thing that Abraham believed in was one of the most sacred things that can come before us. I suppose, next to the person of Christ, next to the work of Christ, next to God himself, there is not a more sacred thing comes before us in the whole compass of the Scripture than the next thing that Abraham believed in. Do you ask what that is? My answer is, The sworn covenant of the everlasting God. What is there so sacred as that covenant? There is nothing you can think of, apart from Christ and from God, more sacred than that covenant. And do you wonder at it? It is a covenant of boundless love. If you swear to an object in intensity of love, doth not that love give a sacredness to the oath that nothing else can? And so the blessed God thus swore by himself, entered into this sacred and solemn vow to bless, and that oath is an oath of almighty, of eternal, and of immutable love. In that Abraham believed. Again, another thing that makes that oath so sacred is the way in which it was to be confirmed—namely, by the work of Christ. The Lord has sworn not by the Levitical priesthood, for that could not bear up the oath nor sustain the covenant; but he has sworn by Christ Jesus. “ The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.” Then again, thirdly, if you look not only at the love, and at the work of Christ that sustained this oath, but look at something else, the everlasting welfare of all that God loves depends upon the sacredness of that oath. Do not misunderstand me when I tell you, and I tell you in all solemnity, and on scriptural grounds, that the work of Christ never did, and never will, and never can save a single soul if God do not, in his faithfulness to his promise, carry that death into effect. He died; and if it were left, as blind guides tell us that it is, for men to receive or reject him, men to make use of him, men to help forward or impede him—alas! alas! if such a doctrine were true not a soul could be saved. No; God has sworn to carry out the death of Christ,—“ Thy people shall be willing ”—it is a part of my sacred engagement—“ in the day of thy power. The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in the day of his wrath; he shall fill the places with the dead bodies;” that is, he will make the gospel victorious: it is a figure taken from the body that must be transferred to the soul, that just as in war a man is killed literally, so in this spiritual warfare a man is killed spiritually. Here is Saul of Tarsus; he was alive without the law; he was alive in a false hope; he was alive in all the native hostility of his nature: presently the law met him, and spiritually slew him; his natural fleshly hope died, his fleshly religion passed away—“ sin revived, and I died.” Now by the living God is carried into effect the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence the dear Saviour, when he would remind us of this resting, not with the creature, but with the Holy Spirit, and with God the Father, saith that “ He,” the Holy Spirit, “ shall take of mine, and show it unto

you," and that "my Father seeketh such to worship him." Now Abraham believed, then, in this sacred oath, in this immutability of the counsel of God. What can be more sacred? And it is a truth worthy of remark—I have often noticed it—that every Christian comes ultimately to settle down in the very things that are so supremely sacred to God. Now some of you young Christians, you are not yet far enough on, perhaps, to know much of your need of divine immutability, and therefore as yet it is not much to you. Hence some young Christians have said of me, and said to me, "You," say they, "go too far." The secret is they have not yet gone far enough, and there I rest the matter; and I say to such, You have not gone down far enough into self yet; you have not gone down far enough into the ruins of nature yet. When you get into prison, come to be knocked about, and torn about, then you will seek for some minister that shall go as far with the remedy as your experience goes with the disease; and see how wise you look then. You will come into the vestry, and say, "Dear sir, I want a word with you, or rather two words I want with you, sir; one is to ask your pardon, and the other is to tell you what the Lord has done." "What are you going to ask my pardon about?" "Why, I did not like you some time ago, thought you went too far; but I have had so many trials and troubles since, that now I find it is just the thing for me. The experience I have had would lead many ministers to deal with my case as the priest and the Levite did—pass by on the other side; but you have come to me, poured in oil and wine, taken me up, carried me to an inn, and shown that the Master would be responsible for my debt; and I should like to join the church now." "Well, don't be in a hurry; just stop a few weeks, and see whether you mean it or not." And I recollect once seeing even a caricature very expressive, one saying to the other, "Is he in earnest? Does he mean it?" And so we must lay hands on no man suddenly. So if you are brought somewhat to your senses, let us see how you can walk now; don't care about talking so much, but let us see whether you stick to the truth or not; because some are like Jonah's gourd, they spring up in a night and they perish in a night. So then you must winter with us, and then summer with us, and, if needs be, winter with us again; and if when you have been thus tried you should love the truth with all your heart and soul, then we will deal with you the same—namely, receive you with all our hearts and souls; but not before.

The third thing that Abraham believed in was the happy state and destiny of a numerous spiritual posterity. The Lord took him abroad and directed his attention to the heavens—and of course a much larger number of stars are visible in that clear atmosphere than here,—and said, "Look now toward heaven and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them; and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be." That is another thing, then; that Abraham believed in, and that has been in a great measure fulfilled. There are some people say, "It is a bad sign if you have many people to hear you." Why, even our little congregation at the old Surrey Tabernacle, a minister who had a very small number of people to hear him said, "If you were sent of God you would not have so many to preach to; it is a bad sign." "Well," I said, "you and Jesus Christ differ very much; he had compassion upon the multitude, and fed them; but you send them all to hell." Rise from your carnal security; remember that our God is omnipotent; remember that his riches are not one-millionth part exhausted yet, nor ever will be. Let us hope that the glorious gospel of God will go on expanding east, west, north, and south. And if you should not need to enlarge this chapel for me after a few years, I hope you will for somebody else. I hope the time will come when you will reckon this a very little chapel. They are going to build some houses behind. I hope the time will come when you will have to down with the houses, lengthen the chapel, lengthen the cords, strengthen the stakes. I

pray that the Lord will send you some man with an iron pair of lungs and a soft heart, a silvery tongue, fiery and heavenly eloquence, and that thousands will be able to listen to the same. Abraham believed, therefore, in a numerous spiritual posterity, and so do we. Some people think that we high-doctrine people wish to go to heaven with our half a dozen old friends, and there the matter would stop; whereas, God is our witness, we would take the whole world with us if it were his will to call them by his grace; and when we had done that we would take the devil himself if God should turn him into an angel; and we would take fallen angels if God should raise them up. Why, we high-doctrine people, our charity knows no bounds; I make no hesitation in saying that it knows no bounds. But at the same time we dare not delude ourselves; we dare not say that God loved Esau as he did Jacob; we dare not say that he constituted Ishmael the child of promise as he did Isaac; we dare not deny his discriminating grace. But my commission is, and so is the commission of every one sent of God, to preach the gospel to every creature. I do not care who hears it, the more the better. Ah! but say, if they hear a great many sermons, and do not savingly believe, it will increase their damnation. Who told you that? Where did you get that from? Not from the Bible; that's a mistake. Read your Bible again, and I will never believe, and there is no man, or woman either—and they are very eloquent sometimes, ladies are—but there is no man or woman under the sun can ever persuade me that God's real gospel will do any harm to the natural man. Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures from his youth. Now let me come to my own experience, because I shall soon be a patriarch if I live a few years longer. Let me come to my own experience. There are persons before me now that were brought in their parents' arms when they were infants to the Surrey Tabernacle, and the little things, because their parents liked me, they, from some mysterious feeling, liked me too; and they liked to come, and it had a great influence upon their life and affection as they grew up. By-and-bye grown up you are; presently, all at once, either from some book, or hymn, or chapter, or text, or sermon, conviction darts into your mind. "Ah!" say you; "this is the first time I have heard this minister; my parents brought me here, and what he has said has kept me from many evils, done me much good; but this is the first time I ever saw my lost condition; this is the first time I ever felt my woe; this is the first time I ever heaved a sigh. "God be merciful to me a sinner." Now, then, go away and charge us high-doctrine men with being uncharitable if you can. No, my hearer, we glory in the spread of the gospel; the gospel, like the sun, throws its rays abroad; like the atmosphere, for every living creature to breathe; and like the mighty ocean, that supplies the gigantic reservoirs that fertilize the earth. Such are the characteristics of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. I hardly dare trust myself to amplify this point farther, then, that Abraham believed in the happy state and destiny of a numerous spiritual posterity. There is something very suggestive: the Lord says, "Tell the stars if thou be able to number them; so shall thy seed be." I am aware that alludes, in the first place, to the numbers; but does it not suggest another idea? Are not the people of God called stars? and were they not there represented thus to denote that they should be eternally like Christ? Doth not the Saviour say, "He that overcometh"—and they know that victory is by faith in Christ—"and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers; even as I received of my Father. And I will give him the morning star;" that is, I will give that soul to be like me. Christ is the bright and morning star. "And the posterity of Abraham shall shine forth," saith the Saviour, yea, even "as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "So shall thy seed be as the stars."

Now don't say one word against high-doctrine people; after all, would not you like to be one of these stars? How you would laugh at the man that threatens to pull one down; how you would laugh at the man that throws stones at the stars; how you would laugh at the man that would attempt to stop a star in its course! So these heavenly stars, they all move in their destined orbits; but, to use a few astronomical terms, they are sometimes in their detriment, and sometimes in their fall very low; sometimes in their peregrinations very wandering, sometimes stationary, can go neither backwards nor forwards; sometimes in fortification, and sometimes in exaltation; sometimes in combustion—burnt with fiery trials, and at other times rushing forward in their glorious orbits, shining with all the splendours of eternity: when mortality by-and-bye shall be stripped from the soul, then shall they shine forth as the stars for ever and for ever; rise at the last great day, when mortality shall put on immortality, corruption put on incorruption, weakness put on strength, the natural put on the spiritual, then shall they rise to shine and to set no more.

Why, say you, did Abraham believe all this? I can tell you this, it would take a considerable sized vehicle to hold all the books that learned men have written to prove that the patriarchs knew nothing at all about the resurrection, and yet the dear Saviour gives us to understand that that very doctrine was included in the bush; that even there the doctrine of the resurrection was included. Abraham not know the resurrection? Why, he looked for a city! Do you say he looked for Jerusalem? Then, if he looked for a literal Jerusalem, he never obtained it; if he looked for a literal Canaan he never obtained it, not so much as to set his foot upon. But if he looked, which he did, for that eternal city and that eternal glory, he saw that Calvary's cross, and the resurrection of Christ, and the final blessedness of the people, were all arranged and put together, and so he believed in the Lord. So much, then, for the first part of our subject, I will not be so long upon the remaining parts.

Now the second is, *how Abraham believed these things*. First, he believed them by the regenerating power of the Spirit of God, indicated in his calling by faith. Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should afterwards receive for his posterity as an inheritance, went out not knowing whither he went; so that he believed by effectual calling. You observe the calling was effectual; it called Abraham from two places—first, from Ur of the Chaldees, and secondly, from Haran; it called him from two places. And just so now; here is the sinner called, and he comes out of the profane world, he can no longer be at home with swearers and profligate men, and the man thinks he has got far enough now; he falls among free-willers, or the duty-faith school, some delusion or another, and there he sits down and he stops a few years, as Abraham did at Haran. The Lord comes the second time with "Abraham, this is not the promised land." "Well, but they tell me, Lord, it might be if I liked to make it so." "Ah, but it is not though; you must not stop here, you must go farther yet; get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and all that may be dear to you after the flesh; dear as they are to you after the flesh, there is something must be dearer still." And so he came out from the second. Just so now: how many are called by grace, come out from the profane world, fall into the hands of the professing world. There is so much talked about religion, surely this is the right place, surely I am right now. But by-and-bye the Lord brings him out of that, and brings him among the despised few, the poor and the needy, makes him feel that his safety lies entirely in that God in whom Abraham believed. Thus he believed by effectual calling. But this is not, perhaps, very definite; I am fond of something I can almost see. Now let me say, then, friends, quietly, that he believed not only by regeneration, but that he believed understandingly; he understood what he believed. Some people now do not understand even what

they profess to believe. They know as much about it as the man did that told me he was surprised that a sensible man like me should believe in such things; and I said, "Do you know what I do believe?" and he said "No." And just so it is with many that profess to believe, and they do not know what they believe. Now, then, Abraham believed understandingly; he understood what Christ was, he understood what mercy was, he understood what grace was, he understood what the promise was. He is included among the people that believed in the promises, understanding those promises, not having received them in their actual fulfilment, but saw them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and understood that those promises were yea and amen by Jesus Christ. And so in the strength of those promises Abraham lived, Abraham died, and we have God's own authority to say that Abraham is now sitting down in the kingdom of heaven, to leave that happy scene no more for ever. Third, he believed lovingly. I would not give a rush for the man that does not love what he believes. Why, I love eternal election with all my soul; I believe it with all my heart, and love it with all my soul; I believe in Christ's eternal victory with all my heart, and love it with all my soul; I believe in regeneration with all my heart, and love it with all my soul; I believe in the service of God with all my heart, and love it with all my soul. "I love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth." Ah, what place on earth is so delightful to the saint when God grants his presence in the public ministry of the word? the minister happy, the people happy, Christ precious, burdens rolled away, fetters taken off, clouds passed over, diseases healed, and sometimes the people, ere they are aware, their souls make them like the chariots of Ammi-nadib. They say, "Oh triumphant faith!" and if the congregation sometimes, when thus blessed, could express their feelings, they would break out and say with one harmonious voice, "Thanks be unto God, that always causeth us to triumph in Christ," and so their souls are thus made happy. He loved what he believed, and so do I, red-hot. I don't love with a cold love, I can tell you, a poor, mawkish namby-pamby, if you wish it—trust it may be so—humble opinion—don't know, but hope it may be so; why, I would not give a farthing for ten thousand tons of such love, nor would the Saviour either. He says, "Thou art lukewarm, thou art neither cold nor hot, I would thou wert cold or hot." Let us know what you are. "But because thou art lukewarm," such a namby-pamby, mawkish, miserable love, "I will spue you out of my mouth;" you taste nasty; insipid, cold love. Whereas God's love is a living and burning love, and so he will make his ministers as a flame of fire, and his people too; their hearts shall sometimes burn within them, and they shall say, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way?" Thus Abraham believed lovingly. And what did love do? Why, it led the ancients to achieve wonders; it led them to lay down their lives for the truth, and it leads the people now to work in the service of God. What, those mean, poor, humble, high-doctrine, obscure, hidden nobodies in that old Surrey Tabernacle, they build a chapel? Not they; they may whisper about it. And what sort of a chapel are they going to build? One that shall cost £10,000. Then I am sure they will never get the money; where's the money to come from? never get it. But two years ago the people began, and have already, out of their own pockets, without any extraneous help worth naming, have already paid nearly £7,000. And now that we shall increase a little in number, I hope you that mean to come here will catch a little of our fire, and then we shall pay off the remaining debt, build some houses, have some schools, help other ministers, and do all the good we can. The fact is, if you come to us you must be hot; we shall burn you out else; no namby-pamby here, depend upon it; if you come here you must come red-hot, bring the

fire with you, the holy fire from off the altar, nothing else will do. "Ah! but then suppose I should have a great deal of trouble?" That will make your love, if true, burn the higher. "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it; love is strong as death." Abraham, then, believed lovingly, and also, of course, decisively.

But I must go to the next point—*the privileges of faith*. I had intended to point out four privileges of faith that stand connected with our text, all included in the word righteousness, "imputed to him for righteousness." Now there are four privileges of faith connected with our text. The first privilege was that God was his shield and his exceeding great reward. Oh, my hearer, if thou art thus, like Abraham, a believer in the truth, then God is thy shield, he will defend thee; and he himself must be overcome before thou canst be fatally conquered. In ancient warfare a man was never reckoned beaten till he gave up his shield; and so you will never be beaten till you give up your faith; and when you give up the faith, the shield of faith, then you are beaten. A man may be knocked down fifty times a day, but if he hold fast his shield, rise and at it again. God may be overcome at the first, but he shall overcome at the last. Thus shall we sing in passing through this valley of tears, victory after victory.

"The righteous shall hold on his way." "And be thine exceeding great reward." He will be your portion, he will be your God, he will be your strength, he will be your infinite and eternal all. The second (for I put those two together) privilege of faith set before us here is sacrificial assurance that he should inherit the land. "Whereby shall I know I shall inherit the land?" The Lord taught him to offer sacrifice; the heifer, perhaps, to point to the sinlessness of the Saviour; the goat, perhaps, to point to the Saviour in the likeness of sinful flesh; the ram, perhaps, to point to Christ in the nobleness of his manhood; and the dove and the young pigeon, to point to Christ in his humility and meekness; and this was the sacrificial assurance that he was to possess the land. Now, then, apply it; the idea is this,—if the blood of Christ can bring you to heaven you shall go there; if the sacrifice of Christ can raise you to God's presence, you shall go there; if the salvation of Christ can save you,—saved, if a believer, you shall be. That was the sacrificial assurance. The third privilege of faith which I will name, not name any more, was a sure covenant—we have already noticed it; the Lord made a covenant with Abraham on that day, and that covenant was positive. And so, the more you are conversant with Calvary's cross, the more glorious will the covenant ordered in all things and sure appear to you.

But lastly, *the practices of faith*. One, of course, was to abide by the truth. Abraham never gave up the truth. He uttered, as our good brother said this afternoon, falsehood concerning his wife; but he did not give up the truth, though; no, it was not in that matter that he was false. So, if we possess true faith, the practice of it will be to walk in God's ways, and to abide by him. And you, as a people, have already shown your love to the Lord by what you have done; this house stands as a witness thereof, amidst, I was going to say, thousands of other things. But another part of the practice of faith is this;—there are many men in this assembly that could handle the point I am going to handle now better than I can, namely, the practice of faith; that is, there are some of you could tell me how much it would cost for a heifer, and a goat, and a ram. Now some of you commercial men can understand; cannot you reckon up? Yes, I think I have an idea. Well, now, I do not know what their cost would be; all you have to do to-night is just to put into the plate as you go out about the price of a heifer, a goat, and a ram. Well, suppose we say £10, come; suppose we say that; I have no doubt I am under the mark, but suppose we say that. Now, then, look at it; Abraham was called upon thus to offer sacrifice; he did sacrifice what

cost him something, and he blessed God for the honour that he was called upon to serve God acceptably at all. So, then, I have told you this part of the practice of faith; and if some of you cannot give the price of all three to-night, give the price of the heifer to-night, and the price of the goat to-morrow night, and the price of the ram on Thursday night; come, that will make up the whole. I want you all to be as much like Abraham as possible; if you are like him in principle I want you to be like him in practice, and like him in living, and like him in dying, like him to all eternity. Amen and Amen.

N.B.—The Collections and Donations at the Opening Services through the week amount to £800, in addition to the Collection of £37 at the Communion Service on Thursday Evening, in aid of the Fund for the Erection of the Aged Pilgrims' New Asylum.