

## MABEL CLEMENT

by

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### CHAPTER EIGHT

Condition or state of the Penitent Believer - Forgiven - Saved

The day had been lovely and the night was charmingly pleasant and beautiful. The moon walked up into the Heavens majestically, shedding forth her soft light; and the stars, as if eager to begin their vigils, early took their stations and began their nightly twinkling. The nocturnal luminaries never shone more brilliantly from the deep canopy of Heaven, and the night was never more inviting, or cheering to heart of man.

The sound of business had not died away, and the hum of voices was still on the streets of Sterling when little groups of men and women were seen wending their way to the capacious mansion of Andrew Clement. One of the principal topics of conversation during the day had been the discussion of the differences between Baptists and Campbellites by Dr. Stanly and Mabel Clement. The rehearsal by those who were present of matters debated the night before created a lively interest. Many came, and many more desired to come; but they feared they would be counted intruders. So they remained at home, hoping to hear rehearsals the next day. The house was well filled, there being between thirty and forty present. One of this number was Brother Jones, a man of fifty, rather sedate, particularly reticent in public, but seeming a little less taciturn than usual, observing as he took his seat: "I thought I'd drop in and discourage all that's wrong and endorse all that's according to the Bible and the Bible alone."

We need not look all around the room; but may observe that Mabel, Arthur, Mr. and Mrs. Clement all filled their respective places. Mabel was calm, but oppressed with a deep sense of her responsibility and weakness. The Doctor was evidently hopeful that the discussion would prove more pleasant and successful on his part than on the previous night. The spectacled man had glided in almost imperceptibly and was all expectation.

"I believe," said Arthur Manly, eager for the discussion to begin, "the question for us to consider tonight is this: What is the state or condition of a penitent believer, whom we settled on as a Scriptural subject for baptism."

"Yes," modestly responded Mabel.

"I must confess," said Dr. Stanly, "that I cannot see anything in that question to require so much time. I can, I flatter myself, answer that question in half a minute."

"It is really unfortunate, Doctor," said Mabel, "that you cannot see any more in the question than you do. But I hope you will give us your answer to the question first."

"My answer," replied the Doctor, "is this: The penitent believer has complied with two of three requirements that are equally essential to salvation, or pardon; and hence is in a fair way to be saved; but he is still in a state of condemnation, because there is one condition indispensably necessary to salvation (by which I mean pardon), that he has not yet met. I am sure this is a Bible answer; but if you can give one differing from this and sustain it by the Bible, I shall be most happy to hear you."

"I shall certainly give an answer very unlike yours; and I believe I can sustain it by the Bible," responded Mabel.

"Move off, then," replied the Doctor, "and remember you will be required to give a **'Thus saith the Lord'** for every assertion you make; for, while we most heartily accept all in the Bible, we just as heartily reject all not found in it."

"My heart's sincere desire and prayer to GOD is that we may unhesitatingly receive all that we find in the Bible and reject all doctrine not found in it," said Mabel.

"That's exactly right," said Brother Jones; "now hand out to us what's in the Bible and we'll joyfully take it, for GOD's Word is sweet."

"My answer," said Mabel, "is this: *The penitent believer is pardoned, justified, saved, righteous, has eternal life, has the love of GOD in his heart, has a pure heart and is adopted into the family of GOD.*"

"*Mirabile dictu!* My stars! he does not lack anything. Why didn't you take him on to Heaven," exclaimed the Doctor. The audience were astonished and in amazement looked into each other's faces. The Doctor moved his chair uneasily; the spectacled man rubbed his hands in rapture; the rest almost held their breath to hear what was said next. Mabel replied to the Doctor: "We will get the believer into Heaven by and by, Doctor; he is certainly on his way there and will get there without fail. In the meantime GOD has much work for him to do. Let us take this penitent believer, the only Scriptural subject for baptism, down to the river and baptize him. Now, just before Dr. Stanly leads him down into the water to administer the ordinance to him, we open the Bible to find what his condition is before GOD, so that we may know what to baptize him for."

"Baptism is not necessary at all," said the Doctor, "if what you say is true."

"It certainly is not necessary," responded Mabel, "to do what you claim for it. But to go on. What is his condition before he is baptized?"

"1. His sins are remitted. To the law and to the testimony, if we speak not according to His word, it is because we have no light in us. (Isaiah 8:20). If I do not prove it I do not ask anyone to believe it. My first proof-text is found in Matthew 9:2. "**They brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus, seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy: Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.**" This same case is spoken of by Mark 2:1-12. Here it is demonstrated, if possible, still more clearly that this man was pardoned on condition of faith. In v. 5: **'When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy: Son, thy sins be**

**forgiven thee.'** JESUS continued in verse 10: '**That ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins'** - in order that they might know He had power to forgive sins and did then and there pardon the palsied man, JESUS commanded him to rise, take up his bed and go into his house. The cured and pardoned man then rose up before them all, rolled up his bed, and, with unbounded joy, rushed off toward his home to happily surprise his friends. Now this man's sins were forgiven on condition of faith, and hence without baptism, for all this took place before he was baptized."

"But it seems this man was pardoned because his friends believed," objected Mr. Clement.

"I think it mainly points," said Mabel, "to the faith of his friends, and teaches us that JESUS will save our friends if we trust Him to do so with a faith that works as theirs; but the sick man also believed, for none can be pardoned without faith, since JESUS says: '**He that believeth not is condemned,**' and '**shall be damned.**'"

"It is as clear as a mathematical demonstration," said Arthur, "that this man at least was pardoned on condition of faith, and hence before and without baptism."

"Doctor, why don't you say something in explanation of these passages," said Mr. Clement impatiently.

"Pshaw! pshaw!" replied the Doctor; "I am astonished that it is so easy to pull the wool over your eyes. All this argument has nothing whatever to do with us or our dispensation. That man was pardoned under the Jewish, not the Christian dispensation. The first Christian baptism was administered on the day of Pentecost. It was then that baptism was established as the law of pardon; and since that day no one has ever been pardoned without it. Why take examples before Pentecost to show how GOD now pardons sin? Such conclusions are wrong, because the premises are wrong; it is mere sophistry and is easily exposed. Let us have proof on Pentecost day, or after it." Dr. Stanly said this with much sarcasm, struggling to put on a bold front, endeavoring to cower his fair opponent by a great show of courage and confidence. But she was calm and undaunted; hear her reply:

"Very well, Doctor, I shall, at your suggestion, pass beyond Pentecost. I meant to call up two other passages that, I think, prove that sins were pardoned during the Saviour's personal ministry on condition of faith without baptism. They are Luke 18:14 and John 8:24. But I shall pass them by as you are so anxious to reach Pentecost. But allow me to expose at least one error in your speech. You say the reason persons were pardoned during the Saviour's personal ministry without baptism is that baptism was not administered. Doctor, your theory drives you to this. It is unfortunate that you never read that JESUS made and baptized more disciples than John (John 4:1,2), and that JESUS and His disciples came into the land of Judea and there He tarried with them and baptized (John 3:22). These passages prove that baptism was administered in connection with CHRIST's ministry and by His direction. Who will dare say this was not Christian baptism?"

She paused, but none dared; so she proceeded as follows:

"JESUS made them disciples first, pardoned and saved them; and afterwards they were baptized.

This shows your position is untenable, because utterly unscriptural and false. But now we pass beyond Pentecost. I mean to show that faith (with what necessarily precedes it, of course,) is the condition of remission or forgiveness. Let us open our Bibles to Acts, chapter 10. We learn here that Cornelius was anxious to be saved. While he was praying an angel was dispatched from Heaven to say unto him: Send for Peter, **'who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and thy house shall be saved.'** (Acts 11:13, 14). GOD at the same time prepared Peter to quit his prejudices against the Gentiles, so that when the messengers from Cornelius came for him he was ready to go. He went on purpose to tell them what to do to be saved. Let us notice closely, then, what he said. *If GOD has sent an inspired apostle to tell an unsaved man what to do to get rid of, to be saved from, his sins, we should be all attention.* Arriving at the house of Cornelius, Peter found quite a number assembled to hear a man appointed by GOD to tell the people just how they are to get rid of their sins. They never had heard; this was the first Gospel sermon any apostle ever preached to Gentiles. I imagine it created quite a stir in the neighborhood. *They were there to learn how to be saved from their sins.* And Peter was there to tell them how. What did he tell them?"

"Why, he told them," interrupted the Doctor, "of JESUS the Saviour, told them they must believe in Him, and then baptized them and they were saved."

"Be patient, Doctor," replied Mabel; "we are not ready for baptism yet - keep out of the water; we will get there in due time. Peter was sent of GOD to tell them how to be saved; he told them about JESUS of Nazareth, about His life, His death, His resurrection and that He is ordained of GOD to be Judge of quick and dead. He then said: **'To Him give all the prophets witness that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins:** (Verse 43). If this language does not show that the believer, the person we are about to baptize, has the remission of sins, then I defy the Doctor and the world to produce language that will show a point beyond which sins are pardoned. *It plainly teaches that when one believes, he shall have the remission of sins. Thus the believer is a pardoned man.*"

"What will you do with baptism, then?" asked the perplexed Doctor.

"We are now ready for baptism, Doctor," said Mabel; "first pardon, then baptism."

"It is not true," replied the Doctor, angrily, "they had to be baptized in order to receive remission ere they got rid of sin? This is universally taught in the Word of GOD."

"Well, Doctor," inquired Arthur, "how do you explain the text? Do you give an unqualified contradiction to Peter and all the prophets? If so, I shall certainly believe them rather than you. This is all new and strange to me; but we in the outset agreed to abide by the Bible, and I for one mean to believe what it says, for it cannot lie. **'Let GOD be true, but every man a liar.'**"

"There are three plain truths in the text we all ought to notice," said Mabel. "First, pardon comes through the name of JESUS. There is no other name given under Heaven or among men whereby we can be saved. Second, the believer is the person who obtains this pardon or remission. Third, this fact (that the believer shall receive remission of sins) is testified to by Peter and all the prophets. *Learned men tell us there are twenty-one prophets. Now, just think of twenty-two credible witnesses all standing up in the courthouse and bearing witness to one fact. Why, If*

*the courthouse was packed full of people, every one would go out perfectly satisfied that their testimony was true. Well, here are twenty-two (including Peter) truthful witnesses, inspired of GOD, and hence infallible, rising up in different ages of the world and bearing witness to one fact, viz.: that believers shall receive remission of sins. How any man, or set of men, can have the hardihood to deny it, after all this heavenly testimony, is more than I can divine."*

"That's so," said Brother Jones; "that's so, sure, though I never knew it before."

"Why, my brother," said the Doctor, impatiently, "are you so silly as to take in that stuff?"

"Well, Parson," replied the irate brother, "you may deem me silly if you please for takin' in that stuff; but as it's Bible stuff it must be real good, and I mean to take it in - so there, sir."

"If Peter had held the doctrines we hold," said Arthur, "he would have told them to be baptized for - that is, in order to the remission of sins."

"Peter did tell them on the day of Pentecost," replied the Doctor.

"Yes, but here he is telling a people for the first time how to be saved from their sins; and yet he does not tell them they must be baptized. Sent of GOD to tell them what is necessary to salvation, he is as silent as the dead about baptism in order to remission. Peter was a poor preacher, if baptism is essential to salvation; for he just told the people to believe and they would receive remission of sins. According to the doctrine we hold and teach, what Peter said is absolutely false."

"Peter was not a Campbellite preacher," said Mabel; "he would have told Cornelius he could not be saved without baptism. I never heard a Campbellite preacher tell sinners how to be saved but what he told them they must be baptized. Do they not invariably preach that baptism precedes pardon?"

"That's so," said Brother Jones, "that's so, sure."

"Well, were they not baptized on this occasion?" asked the Doctor.

"Yes, Doctor," said Mabel; "but not till they had believed and were pardoned. Now, we know they believed, for the gift of the HOLY GHOST was poured out on them, and this was never given to unbelievers. Here is the whole thing in a nutshell:

1. They heard.
2. They believed.
3. Their sins were remitted.
4. The HOLY GHOST fell on them, imparting the gift of tongues.
5. They spake with the tongues and praised GOD.
6. Peter, discovering this, said: '**Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?**' This verse settles the question indisputably; the way is so plain that "**the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.**"

"I believe," added Arthur, "I am willing to rest my salvation on the truth of your position."

"Before this argument is dismissed for others," added Mabel, "I wish your attention to Acts 26:18. In this chapter Paul told Agrippa how he was converted; how he was on the way to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests; how JESUS appeared unto him to make him a minister unto the Gentiles, saying: '**Unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified**' - by baptism?' Nay, but I quoted it wrong. If it just said by baptism it would be unspeakably plain, but it does not say it. If it did say that the Gentiles receive forgiveness by baptism, all Campbellites would be as familiar with it as with Acts 2:38. But since it does not it is to them a strange and unfamiliar text. Now how did JESUS tell Paul that the Gentiles were to receive forgiveness of sins?"

"How? Hear the words of the ascended Son of GOD: '**That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith.**' Thus JESUS says we are to receive forgiveness by faith; but bold, bald Campbellism declares, contradicting the word of the MASTER, that though a man have faith he cannot have pardon without baptism. I do think this text is plain enough for children - plain enough for all who are willing to accept the pure, unadulterated Word of GOD as revealed in the Bible."

"That's so, sure," said Brother Jones.

Dr. Stanly was not a little chagrined; but, as he did not see how to evade this home-thrust at his much-cherished and loved system of theology, he bit his lip, concealed as far as possible his vexation and was wisely mute.

"I wish to know the meaning of 'sanctified,'" said an auditor.

Arthur examined the lexicon and replied: "It means separated, consecrated, cleansed, purified, etc. And the expression, '**inheritance among them which are sanctified,**' means portion or heritage among the cleansed, purified, etc. - that is, among the people of GOD. According to this passage the believer not only has the forgiveness of sins but is put on an equal footing with GOD's cleansed, purified people, having common inheritance with them. I think this passage caps the climax,"

"Before this subject is dismissed," said Mabel, "I wish all to notice the testimony I have arrayed to establish my position. I have given the plain and positive, unambiguous, unequivocal testimony of JESUS, Matthew, Mark, Paul, Peter, and all the prophets. They all testify that the believer standing on the bank of the river ready to be baptized is pardoned - *is in a state of forgiveness*. He who says the penitent believer is not pardoned contradicts all these heavenly witnesses. But now I am ready to establish the same fact expressed by a little different phraseology. Shall I proceed?"

"I want it distinctly understood," replied the Doctor, "I do not admit your conclusions, do not believe what you have said."

"Of course not," said Mabel, "if we all believed what these witnesses say we would be united."

"I think this point is settled beyond dispute," added Arthur.

"You may as well proceed."

"Go on," said Brother Jones.

"I call attention, then, to the fact that the penitent believer is one who is in a saved state," Mabel proceeded. "This means about the same as the first fact proven; but, as the Bible puts it in this form, let us study it thus together."

"Well, I wonder what will come next?" inquired the Doctor. "Saved indeed! Why, I am not saved yet - persons are never saved while on earth. We are saved in Heaven, not on earth. I say let us put more reason and common sense into this discussion or close it."

"We are not governed by reason and common sense particularly," replied Mabel; "we are trying to discover what the Bible teaches. If reason and common sense agree with the Bible (which I verily believe) we follow their leading; if they do not, we forsake them. You say, Doctor, that you are not saved yet; I really hope better things of you, for I have ever loved you and have believed what you said unhesitatingly, simply because I believed you knew and was a man of veracity. But I want more now than bold assertion. ***I, however, was in the Campbellite church without salvation; and it is possible that you, Doctor, are in the same destitute condition, but I hope not.***

But you say persons are not saved on earth, but in Heaven. That is something new to me. You are wrong here. If persons are not saved on earth they will never get to Heaven to be saved there. I thought JESUS came to earth to save; according to your theory, He might as well have remained in Heaven. The fact is JESUS saves people on earth and takes them to Heaven, because they are saved. You contend, however, that none of your flock are yet saved; I really fear there is much truth in what you say."

"I do not mean," replied the Doctor, "that my people are not in a state of pardon, but our salvation is contingent till we reach Heaven. GOD forbid that I should be so self-confident as to assert that I am now saved, or that it is absolutely certain that I will go to Heaven. It is blasphemy."

"Have the Saviour and apostles spoken of persons being saved while on earth?" inquired Arthur.

"They have," responded Mabel. "'**Thy faith hath saved thee,**' said JESUS to a poor, sinful woman. (Luke 7:50)."

"Then that settles the controversy," Arthur replied. "Now we want you to prove that the penitent believer is saved; give us your proof-texts,"

"Well," said Mabel, "I shall group my proof-texts. Here they are: '**Thy faith hath saved thee**' (Luke 7:50). '**Lest they should believe and be saved**' (Luke 8:12). '**Thy faith hath saved thee**'

(Luke 18:42). **'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house'** (Acts 16:31.) **'It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth'** (Romans 1:16). **'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe'** (I Corinthians 1:21). **'By grace are ye saved through faith'** (Ephesians 2:8). **'Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls'** (I Peter 1:9.) I have given eight proof-texts.

"I might give more; but these are sufficient. Anyone of them sustains my position; and as I am fortified by so much of GOD's truth, of course I shall not be routed and driven from my intrenchments. The texts are not ambiguous. I think anyone endowed by nature with a sound mind and a moderate share of common sense can see that they utterly demolish Campbellism. Now let us notice the first text, Luke 7:50. It was spoken to a woman that was a sinner, evidently a bad woman. She wept profusely, washed the Saviour's feet with tears, wiped them with the hairs of her head, kissed them with her lips and anointed them with precious ointment. JESUS said unto Simon, in whose house He was, **"I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven."** He then said unto the woman, **"Thy sins are forgiven."** But how JESUS? How did she obtain forgiveness or salvation? Was it by baptism? No! for JESUS said unto her: **"Thy faith hath saved thee."** Now there is no room for mistake here. This passage from the lips of GOD's own Son, who is the Saviour, teaches as plainly as language can that this woman was saved, not by baptism, but by faith."

"That's so," said Brother Jones, "that's so, sure. I think I'd despair of makin' it plainer than that."

"This is no way of learning what the design of baptism is," said the Doctor. "Why don't you come to the discussion of baptism?"

"We agreed to first inquire into the status of the penitent believer," replied Arthur, "and we must get through with it. If we find what is the character of the subject of baptism, we shall then be better able to decide what baptism is for."

"I hope the Doctor will not grow impatient," added Mabel.

"Let us thoroughly ventilate the subject, give it a most patient and penetrating scrutiny. Our salvation may depend on it; and we should be candid and thorough."

"That's right and fair," added Brother Jones.

"Now," continued Mabel, "let us notice the second text, Luke 8:12. It is the language of the Master in the parable of the Sower. He represents the Devil taking away from the hearts of men the truth which they hear, and for what? **'Lest they should believe and be saved.'** This passage is simple and easily understood. Suppose that JESUS had represented the Devil as hindering persons lest they should be baptized and be saved. Would not Dr. Stanly think this a capital proof-text? Verily, he would think it one of the most transparent in the Bible, letting in a flood of golden light on how to be saved! But it does not say that. JESUS says **"lest they should believe and be saved,"** teaching us if they believe they will be saved."

"I object to your text and your logic," said the Doctor. "It is true none can be saved without believing and, equally true, none can be saved without baptism. The believing leads on to

baptism."

"The evident object of the Devil," replied Mabel, "is to prevent believing, for he knows if men believe they will be saved. But, lest we be tedious, let us hasten on and pass over some of the proof-texts in order to get beyond Pentecost, for I have been listening for the Doctor to accuse me of being in the Jewish dispensation. I wish to show that this doctrine runs through the New Testament like a rich vein of gold. Let us examine Acts 16:30,31. Soon after Paul and Silas came to Philippi a certain damsel who was a soothsayer began to follow them, crying: **'These men are the servants of the Most High God, which shew unto us the way of salvation.'** She did this many days and thus announced the fact that these were GOD's servants sent to show unto the people the way of salvation. Perhaps a few believed it, many doubted or disbelieved it. But when the earthquake unbarred the doors, knocked off the shackles, loosing all the prisoners, and the jailer looked all the existing facts in the face, he firmly believed that soothsayer told the truth. This led him to fall at their feet a convicted sinner, sorrowing that he had thrust them into the inner prison and made their feet fast in the stocks, thus sinning against them and GOD. Trembling like an aspen leaf, he brought them out and said: **'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'** Paul and Silas knew how to answer that question, and as they did answer it, of course, their answer was correct. Surely none can doubt this. Their answer was full, complete, lacking nothing. They told him all it was necessary for him to do. What was their answer? **'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'** The only thing they told him to do was to believe; and they declared if he did he would be saved."

"Now there is no possible way to misunderstand or avoid this. It is so plain that children can readily understand it."

"That's so," said Brother Jones; "that's so, sure."

"Now let me show you," said Dr. Stanly, "that your theory will not hold water. According to what you propound as the Bible plan of salvation, it is not necessary for the sinner to repent; all you require of him is just to believe. I think if you will tie a few grains of consideration to your theory it will be utterly demolished by the weight of its own absurdity. Who ever heard of a sinner saved without repentance? Yet this your theory drives you to, and you argue it with might and main."

"It is very strange, Doctor," replied Mabel, "that you talk thus. Pardon me, but if you would put a few grains of remembrance into your mind you would not make such statements. We have proven by the Bible that repentance is necessary to faith that it ever precedes faith. Repentance and faith are not only sacred duties, but are inseparable graces wrought in the heart of the HOLY SPIRIT. Now the jailer had to repent in order to believe. Why did not the inspired apostles tell him to repent? Evidently because he was then repenting - at that moment his soul was swayed by the power of penitence, or sorrow for sin. See how he sprang in, trembling, fell at the feet of the apostles, brought them out of the prison and said: **'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?'** Who can doubt his penitence? The apostles, seeing he was filled with penitential sorrow, told him to do what yet remained (the only thing that did remain) for him to do in order to his salvation. They told him to believe, and declared he should be saved. Now, Doctor, if you support your theory you must flatly contradict and falsify the two inspired apostles. Who are right - Campbellites or Paul and Silas? Both cannot be right; this is out of the question. Of course the apostles are right."

"If the apostles had taught the doctrine that we teach, Doctor," said Arthur, "they certainly would, in answering that question, have said, 'Believe and be baptized.' If a poor sinner, trembling under a sense of sin, should fall at your feet and inquire, 'What must I do to be saved,' what answer would you give him?"

"Why, I would tell him to obey the Saviour, comply with His requirements, believe, repent, confess and be baptized for the remission of his sins," replied the Doctor, positively.

"Then you and the apostles hold theories that are at war with each other," said Arthur; "for they gave no such instruction."

The Doctor bit his lip and twisted his mustache as if he meant to tear it all out by the roots. The spectacled man twitched his chair tremendously and the stoop would have gone quite out of his back, had his body not sprung forward in shape of a curve that he might fasten his piercing gaze more clearly on the face of the mortified Doctor. The stare was bold almost to impudence and the Doctor fairly wilted under it.

"If Paul and Silas had been Campbellites," added Mabel, "they would have told the jailer that there was not a shadow of hope for him without baptism - that he must be baptized or he could not be pardoned, saved or enter the Kingdom of GOD. This Campbellites all teach and always teach. But the apostles did not teach this: so they were not Campbellites."

"That's so, sure," chimed Brother Jones.

"I put two passages together, because they are alike so far as the point we are discussing is concerned: **'It is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth'** (Romans 1:16). **'It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe'** (I Corinthians 1:21). These passages teach that the Gospel leads persons to believe. This is true; men cannot be saved without a knowledge of the gospel. They also teach that it is the good pleasure of GOD to save as many as believe. It does not say to every one that believeth and is baptized. Paul never said such a thing in his life. No! It remained for a very modern and a comparatively small denomination to make this belief the principal dogma of their teaching and to expect the world to receive their arbitrary dictum readily and feel hurt if they do not. But I need not try to simplify these passages; they are amply, sufficiently plain. Without note or comment they support my proposition and utterly demolish the main pillar of the Doctor's creed."

"My creed is the New Testament," said the Doctor. "That is all the creed I have."

"We all claim to have that; and I am showing you do not have it, but teach a theory, which is your creed, that is at war with the New Testament. Here is another passage on the point in debate: **'By grace are ye saved through faith'** (Ephesians 2:8). The text teaches three things:

1. We are saved by grace wholly.

2. We are saved now - saved on earth. The past perfect tense is used here, which, is to say, 'Have been saved.' Just remember Doctor's position about being saved only when we get to Heaven. 3.

We are saved through faith. Faith is the channel through which salvation flows to us. One more passage and I have done: "**Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls'** (I Peter 1:8,9). Now these passages fully sustain my proposition, the penitent believer is saved. This fact is as plain as daylight to all unbiased, unprejudiced minds. If we are willing to accept the Word of GOD unchanged, unmodified, unqualified, the passages I have quoted ought to carry conviction to our judgment."

"I would hate to risk my hope of Heaven on faith without baptism," said the Doctor. "He who disregards the commands of the Son of GOD, hazards his immortal soul! The fact is, he cannot be saved and all the argument, or rather sophistry, of earth cannot make him so."

"You wrong me, Doctor," replied Mabel; "*we do not rest our hope of Heaven upon our faith; but by faith we place all hope upon JESUS. By faith we wholly trust in, rely upon JESUS for salvation. Nor do we disregard any command of our Saviour. We labor as diligently and faithfully as you to keep the commandments; but we do not try to save ourselves, as you do by keeping them. Obedience to them is not essential to salvation, but to duty.*"

"JESUS says, '**Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.**'" said the Doctor. "If we do not keep them we are His enemies. Baptism is one command and we cannot be friends of JESUS till we keep it."

"As soon as we become friends of JESUS," replied Mabel, "we obey Him, and this obedience proves we are his friends. You say we are not friends till we keep His commands. Which? Baptism? Why select that? Why not select some other of the many? I dispute your statement. We are not to obey while enemies, but after we become friends and because we are such. If we refuse to obey we prove thereby we are not the friends of JESUS."

"It is getting late," said Arthur, "and we had better adjourn till 8 tomorrow evening, and then proceed with the discussion."

This seemed to meet the approbation of the company and in little groups they were soon wending their ways homeward, some chatting freely, others silently pondering what they had heard and wondering what would come of it.

Arthur and Mabel were left in the parlor sitting on opposite sides of the room. He rose, crossed the room, and sat down by her side. He took her not unwilling hand in his and said:

"Mabel, I marvel at your knowledge of the Scriptures and the consummate skill with which you handle them. I cannot understand how you so readily meet objections, expose fallacies, and so clearly, forcibly, irresistibly explain the Scriptures in sustaining your positions, that there is really nothing to be said on the other side. How is it to be accounted for?"

"GOD helps me," she said, while the tears flowed down her beautiful cheeks. She never looked so beautiful to Arthur as then. A celestial light shone in her face. "I owe much," she continued, "to my aunt and cousin; but GOD helps me in answer to prayer. O Arthur! what a joy to pray!"

"I fear I do not understand the business of prayer," said he. They were choked with emotion. He kissed her hand and went silently out.

~ end of chapter 8 ~

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