FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF SALVATION: BEING HELPS FOR THE ANXIOUS AND FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS

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Fundamental Truths of Salvation: Being Helps for the Anxious and for Young Believers by Edward Dennett

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EDWARD DENNETT

FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF SALVATION: BEING HELPS FOR THE ANXIOUS AND FOR YOUNG BELIEVERS





THE following pages are designed to meet the need of those who have been awakened and quickened by the Spirit of God; and therefore the writer has sought to explain "the way of salvation" as simply and as clearly as possible. On this account he has not been anxious to avoid repetition, if in this way he could succeed in simplifying his subject. But he has not been satisfied alone with directing the soul to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" but, as the table of contents will show, has added instruction upon some of the fundamental teachings of the Scriptures-such elementary instruction as is needful for babes in Christ. It may occur to some that other subjects might have been in-The writer also thought so; but upon further consideration was led to judge otherwise, especially as there are numbers of books already in existence which deal with more advanced truth.

His desire is, that those who read these pages may compare every statement made with the Scriptures; and that while reading they may be enabled by the Spirit of God to "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save their souls" (James i. 21); and it is his prayer, that the Lord may condescend to use them for His own glory, for without His blessing it will have been written, and will be read, in vain.

BLACKHEATH,

December, 1875.

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FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF SALVATION.

CHAPTER I.

SOUL-ANXIETY.

WE desire in these pages to meet the need of those who have been awakened out of the torpor of spiritual death, and whose chief concern is to know how to obtain peace with God. Their state may be best described as one of soul-anxiety. There are always numbers in this condition, and especially now, when the gospel of the grace of God is so widely preached on every hand. It is not only those who are so wrought upon as to be compelled to cry, "What must we do to be saved?" but there are many others also who, under an outwardly calm and placid demeanour, hide severe distress of soul. The depth and intensity of feeling will vary in different people and under different circumstances. With some it will be anxiety, and nothing more; with others there

^{*} The substance of this chapter has appeared elsewhere.

will be a real distress of mind and heart; while in other cases there will be positive anguish of soul. But whatever the depth of the feeling—be it more or less—if there be any conviction of alienation from or guilt before God; if there be any sorrow for sin, together with even but the faintest desire for pardon and reconciliation with God; if, in other words, there be any bowing before God in the place of self-judgment, there is that real spiritual anxiety of which we speak; for such a state of mind can only be produced by the Spirit of God.

The instrumentality employed to bring about this state of soul is, in one form or another, the word of God. This may not be always apparent; for sometimes a hymn, sometimes a simple question from another, sometimes the recollection of a prayer, sometimes the appeal of a preacher of the gospel, may be used as the arrow of conviction; but in all these cases it is really the word of God, embodied in these several forms, which the Holy Spirit wields to awaken the careless soul. His own word is, as far as we know, the only weapon which God uses for this end; for He is pleased "by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. i. 21); and hence the apostle says, "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both

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Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor. i. 23, 24.)

Several illustrations of this may be collected from the Acts of the Apostles. On the day of Pentecost we find Peter presenting, in preaching, Christ crucified, risen, and exalted, and charging his hearers with the sin of rejecting and crucifying Him whom God had raised from the dead. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 36, 37.) The apostle Paul was humbled at the feet of the Saviour in a special and extraordinary way; but it was also by the presentation of Christ, though in revelation, and not in the preaching of the word. Take the case also of Felix. We are told that when the apostle reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled; and though the effect in this instance seems to have been but transient, it yet shows us the power of the word of God over the soul. The Philippian jailer might seem at first sight to be an exception to the rule; but there can be little doubt that the supernatural occurrences of that eventful night, when Paul and Silas were in his charge and custody, were