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Faith in God.
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FAITH IN GOD.

WHOEVER thou art that readest this page, allow the writer to address this question to THEE.

Art thou *young*—Dost *thou* believe on the Son of God? O that thou did! How the Scripture extols and recommends early Godliness! They that seek me early, says the Saviour, shall find me—find me—for there is an emphasis in the promise; find me, as others never will, never can, find me—find me in a thousand peculiar preservations, honors, advantages, and delights. And what a favorable season do you now enjoy!—the body in health and strength—the mind in vigor—the memory retentive—the affections warm—the heart tender—the cares and troubles of life scarcely begun—the days distant in which you will say, “I have no pleasure in them!” Oh! redeem the time. Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth. Enter immediately a course that is profitable unto all things; having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

Art thou *old*—Dost *thou* believe on the Son of God? Thy age requires respect; and I readily pay it—But thy state demands all thy fidelity.—And art thou, at the end of sixty, seventy, eighty years, ignorant of the Redeemer; whom to know is life eternal? Have all these departed seasons been passed only in vanity and vice? Is thy day

rapidly closing; and thy work, thy journey, not even begun? Does thine eye, in looking back, meet with nothing but guilt; and in looking forward, nothing but gloom? How I pity thy condition! It is time—it is high time to awake out of sleep. And blessed be God, it is not too late. I announce a Saviour who is able to save unto the uttermost; and who converted and pardoned the thief at the eleventh hour— Oh! seek him while he may be found; and call upon him while he is near. But if thou art old in grace; as well as in age, thy hoary head being found in the way of righteousness, is a crown of glory. And thy salvation is nearer than when thou believedst. The night, with thee, is far spent, and the day is at hand. Yet a little while, and what a blessed deliverance! What a glorious elevation! Till then, let faith and patience have their perfect work.— Recommend his service to others, from your own knowledge of its excellency.

Art thou *indulged* by Providence? Dost thou believe on the Son of God? Perhaps sickness led you down to the very gates of death; and you looked into eternity; and without hope in that world, you trembled, and cried, “Take me not off in the midst of my days; spare me, that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more.” And he heard your cry; and said “Return again, ye children of men.” And have you returned again to folly? And have you forgotten that the vows of God are upon you? And

what is a recovered body while the soul is full of moral disease? A reprieve, too is not a pardon, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Is the sentence still suspended; and the delayed execution will be attended with added terror and remorse. Perhaps thy business flourishes; thy grounds bring forth plentifully; thy cup runneth over. We do not wish you to despise the bounties of Nature and Providence; yea, you ought to be thankful for them. As to their use, they are valuable; but what are they as a portion?—How melancholy is the thought that you must leave them! And you know not how soon you may be torn from all your treasure. And, even in the midst of your fulness, are you not in straits? Do you not sigh over your very enjoyments? Does not success, as well as disappointment, tell you that this is not your rest? Ah! these failures of hope; these inward uneasinesses; are the inspirations of the Almighty to give you understanding. They are designed to turn you from your creatures, which are all vanity and vexation of spirit, to a Saviour, who is full of grace and truth. Acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee.

Art thou the subject of affliction? Dost thou believe on the Son of God? To be poor in the world, and be destitute of the true riches; to have no friend below, and no God above; to pass from the sorrows of time into a more miserable eternity—is a state so dreadful, that every feeling of be-

nevolence must be concerned to find a resource for its victims. And such we are happy enough to be able to open. There is the hope of Israel; the Saviour thereof in the time of trouble. His Gospel is sent to bind up the broken-hearted. Perhaps you are at your wits' end—Perhaps you are ready to curse the day of your birth—Perhaps you are tempted to destroy yourself. Beware of a cure that will be far worse than the disease. And you need it not. There is One near you whom you know not. He is now stretching forth his soft hand; he is now saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." This man shall be the peace when the Assyrian cometh into the land.

PASTOR'S COUNSEL.

DEAR FRIEND :

Not having an opportunity to speak to you personally, and believing advice needed, and on your part desired, I avail myself of this method to address you. I assume that your "heart is fixed to serve God," and that the great purpose of your life is to save your own soul, and to do good. To aid you in this effort, so right in itself, praiseworthy, and approved of God, is the design of this letter. In order that you may feel the importance of this work in which you are engaged, let the conviction take full possession of your heart, that Religion—in all it enjoins or prohibits; in all it promises or

threatens; in all the hopes or fears it inspires; in all the love, peace or joy it infuses—is of all important subjects, the most important ever addressed to an intelligent being. Such a conviction will secure for religion the attention it demands, and render cheerful the sacrifices of which it is so worthy. In accordance with this conviction; you will perceive that no plan is to be conceived, entertained or executed that can possibly compromise the claims of piety. A life of piety is to be the end at which you aim in all your plans, purposes, labors, joys or sorrows, successes or failures, amusements or recreations—in all, in everything, at all times, piety is to be the beginning, the continuance and the ending; absorbing and moulding and controlling the whole man. Do you ask is religion worthy of such entire devotion to its service? If you consider its Author; the wisdom and mercy it displays; the good it bestows and the glory it promises, you can but conclude it worthy of every sacrifice. Do not imagine that such a consecration to God and devotion to Religion will enslave you and render life unhappy. Such a life is truly free and truly happy. Freed from the dominion of sin, you have more liberty: freed from the condemnation of a guilty conscience, you have peace with God and can but be happy. Sin begets misery; Religion destroys sin. The more religion, the less sin: the less sin, the less misery and the more happiness.

Assuming that you have the conviction of the all-importance of Religion, and are purposing to offer your soul and body as a living and acceptable sacrifice upon its altars, I will attempt to give you some assistance in making this offering. I do not suppose you will attempt the impossibility of living an entire Christian life out of the Church of God, but, I suppose, acting in accordance with the conviction and purpose already expressed, you have either joined or intend to join some branch of the Christian Church, and thus assume all the responsibilities of a professed Christian: To meet the obligations thus imposed, you must be a daily student of the Bible. Nothing will compensate for ignorance of this Holy Book. You should read it entire every year; two chapters in the Old and one in the New Testament daily, and five on Sabbath, will complete the entire volume in a year. This will not require an ordinary reader more than half an hour per day. You will thus read the Bible consecutively; become acquainted with its contents, and have the truth of God at your command in time of need. Let the chief end, in studying the Bible, be, not controversy, but to learn the will of God concerning you, and the way to heaven. Commence, continue, and close every day with prayer. At night recount the acts and tempers of the day, and try them at the bar of your conscience, in the light of revealed truth, and as in the heart-searching presence of God. Do all things, and speak all you say, knowing that God sees and hears you;

and with reference to the "great day." Cultivate the spirit of charity, and recognize all Christians as belonging to the great spiritual family of God. Let a petition for the prosperity of the entire Church of Christ form a part of your daily devotions. Be zealous; not as a sectarian, but as a Christian; not to promote the interest of a party, but for the glory of God, and for the good of souls. Never attempt to unsettle any one's religious faith, nor permit any to attempt to change yours: regard every such attempt as an insult, to be treated with silent contempt. Avoid controversy and bigotry; they will destroy your piety, convert you into a religious mountebank; render you offensive to the good, and a pest to society. When possible, attend all the meetings of the Church. Let the world know you are trying in sober earnest to save your soul. Never be intimate with one whom you know to be opposed to experimental Religion; but be courteous and kind to all men. Never suffer yourself to jest about sacred things, or use words or phrases that even approximate to profanity.-- Never let the business of the week intrude upon the meditation of the Sabbath. Shun unchaste and impure conversation as you would a poison. If you ever become the head of a family at once erect the domestic altar. Avoid hearing preaching critically, but listen prayerfully that you may be edified. Never permit the Lord's Supper to be

spread before you without partaking of it. While you may not be able to believe that everybody does right, yet never return evil for evil, or permit the sun to go down on your wrath: forgive others as you hope to be forgiven. Never entertain the thought of leaving the Church under any circumstances. Should you backslide and become conscious of unfitness for the Church, do not leave the Church, but repent and pray till you obtain pardon and peace and are fit. Should members of the Church mistreat you, demand your rights—do right yourself—do all you can to settle the difficulty; but never, by friend or foe, by sin or the devil, be induced to leave the Church, unless you do not intend to do right, and are willing to give up all hope of heaven. Watch and pray, take up every cross; deny yourself; possess and practice every Christian virtue; try to be a model, that is, a Bible Christian, never forgetting that the creditability of Religion among your friends, your own character and reputation in a measure, your respectability, your interest and happiness, your usefulness, and above all, the salvation of your soul depend upon your Christian integrity. God has promised you grace to do this; ask and you shall have it.

Please keep this letter as an evidence of my heartfelt interest in your welfare, and a pledge of my sympathy and prayers, read it occasionally and may it do the good I design.—*Rev. Jas. H. Brent.*

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