

The Science of Cultivating Faith

No. 1

"The knowledge of what the Scripture means when urging upon us the necessity of cultivating faith, is more essential than any other knowledge that can be acquired."

In order to be able to know what the Scripture means when urging upon us the necessity of *cultivating* faith, it is essential to know, first of all, *what is faith*.

Plainly, it must be to little purpose to urge upon a person the necessity of cultivating faith, while that person has no intelligent idea of what faith is. And it is sadly true that, though the Lord has made this perfectly plain in the Scriptures, there are many church-members who do not know what faith is. They may even know what the *definition* of faith is: but they do not know what the *thing* is; they do not grasp the idea that is in the definition.

For that reason, the definition will not be touched now; but, rather, there will be cited and studied an illustration of faith,—an instance which makes it stand out so plainly that all can see the very thing itself.

Faith comes "by the word of God:" to the Word, then, we must look for it.

One day a centurion came to Jesus, and said to him: "Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but *speak the word only*, and my servant *shall be healed*. . . . When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great *faith*, no, not in Israel." Matt. 8:6-10.

There is what Jesus pronounces *faith*. When we find what that is, we have found faith. To *know* what that is, is to know what faith is. There can be no sort of doubt about this; for Christ is "the Author . . . of faith," and he says that that which the centurion manifested was "faith;" yes, even "great faith."

Where, then, in this is the faith?—The centurion wanted a certain thing done. He wanted the Lord to do it. But when the Lord said, "I *will come*" and do it, the centurion checked him, saying, "*Speak the word only*," and it shall *be done*.

Now what did the centurion expect would do the work?—"*The word ONLY*." Upon what did he depend for the healing of his servant?—Upon "*the word ONLY*."

And the Lord Jesus says that *that is faith*.

Now, brother, sister, what is faith?

Alonzo T. Jones.

The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Vol. 75, No. 49, December 6, 1898, p. 782.