

Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Therefore whoso heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.—Matt. vii: 21, 24, 25, 26, 27.

Now, if anybody in this congregation has built his house upon a sandy foundation—upon which so many millions have built their houses—according to Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world, his house will fall, and great will be the fall thereof.

What did Jesus mean by this saying to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God?" It appears that there must be a second birth—and that birth is not simply believing in the Savior. A radical change must take place in the soul to fit man to enter the kingdom of heaven, according to the teachings of Jesus. Jesus exemplified His sayings in His practice. He was a little different from a great many preachers: He did not say to the people, "Do not as I do, but do as I say." He showed the way, and walked in it and said they were to follow Him. He gave His word to the people as He received it from the Father; and as the Father commanded Him, so did He. He practiced what He preached, and He left us an example that we should follow in His steps. We read that when Jesus entered upon His ministerial career He went to the river Jordan, where a man by the name of John, called John the Baptist, was administering the ordinance of baptism. This man John is declared to have been a great prophet. He came as the forerunner of the Savior. He came to prepare the way before Him. He taught the people in Judea and Jerusalem and in the regions round about, and he made a great many converts. But when people came to him to learn of him, he rebuked them for their sins, and he told them that they must turn away from these sins and repent. He came to preach repentance and "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." He was baptizing the people in that part of the country when Jesus came to him. We read in the third chapter of Matthew that Jesus asked to be baptized of him, and the record says:

But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him;

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—Matthew iii: 14, 15, 16, 17.

Here was the pattern that Jesus set for the people to follow. He went to one having authority from God, a prophet of God, a man called and ordained of God as a minister and as His forerun-

ner; and this man John said, "He that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Jesus went to this man and was baptized of Him in the river; and when He was baptized He came up out of the water (showing that He must first of all have gone down into the water); and the heavens were opened, and the Holy Ghost descended upon Him. He went into the river and was born of water; He came up out of the water and was born of the Spirit. Here is an example that He set to all the world, and He proclaimed to Nicodemus, in the words I have read to you, that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." You see, there is something more than believing—or, rather, if you do believe, you believe in the sayings and commandments of Jesus as well as in His personality and His atonement. "If ye love me, keep my commandments," said He.

Belief is merely the beginning of religion. But if that belief is true, if it is real, if it is living faith, then it is the beginning of the path to salvation. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest," said the servant of God to the man who demanded baptism at his hands, as we read in the 8th chapter of Acts of the Apostles. Philip had preached Christ and Him crucified to the man, and as they went on their way it says they came to certain water, and the man said to Philip, "See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." Why was the eunuch baptized? Because baptism was a part of the doctrine of Jesus, and he could not believe in Jesus unless he believed in baptism. He was baptized in the same way that Jesus was baptized: he went down into the water and was buried by baptism; and being buried in the liquid grave from his old life, he was born of the water when he came forth from the womb of the waters into the air, and then he was prepared to receive the Holy Ghost.

This is the simple doctrine of Christ, that all His Apostles preached wherever they went, and there were no differences among them in regard to it. Peter did not go among the Jews preaching one Gospel, and Paul to the Gentiles preaching another Gospel. They both preached the same. What was it? Read their writings and you will find it is exactly the same as Peter taught on the day of Pentecost, which we read about in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The disciples were gathered there on one occasion, and the Holy Ghost was poured out upon them in great power, and they received that endowment from on high that Christ had promised. Jesus told His disciples to tarry at Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high, and then the Gospel should be preached in all the world, beginning at Jerusalem. We read that on the day of Pentecost they were all with one accord in one place, and suddenly there came the sound "as of a rushing mighty wind," and it filled the place where they were

sitting." "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance," and the people who had gathered to Jerusalem to worship from the various nations round about, came running to hear this strange thing. Peter then stood up and proclaimed to them the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. He declared to them that the person whom the Jews with wicked hands had slain was the very Messiah, the Son of God, the Christ. He bore testimony that He had lived, that He had died, and that He had been raised from the dead, and that they had seen Him.

"Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Evidently they had some idea that they ought to do something, and not merely believe in this Messiah and His atonement, and they wanted to know what they were to do. That appears to be the cry of all humanity when the soul is awakened by the light of the Lord to perceive the truth of the fact that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God, the Savior of the world. They want to do something. But modern divines cry out, "Do! there is nothing for you to do. Only believe and you shall be saved, and heaven is yours forever; for God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." But did Peter answer in that way? Oh, no. In the 38th and 39th verses of this chapter we read:

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.—Acts iii: 38, 39.

Here is the one Gospel of Christ, the one plan of salvation, the strait and the narrow way that leadeth unto everlasting life. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, repent of your sins, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and then you shall receive the Holy Ghost. And if you really and truly believe in Jesus Christ, you will do that, because Christ commanded it, you will believe in His sayings as well as in His existence.

You read the Acts of the Apostles carefully, and you will find wherever the Apostles went and preached in the name of Christ they preached that same doctrine. They called upon the people to repent; then they baptized them; they laid their hands upon them and the Holy Ghost came upon them. I quoted just now from the 8th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; let me cite your attention to another verse or two in the same chapter. We are told there that Jesus went and preached Jesus in Samaria, and it says that when the people heard his words and believed, they were baptized, "both men and women." Baptism seemed to be a consequence of their belief; for that was a part of the doctrine of Jesus Christ. It goes on to say:

Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

Who, when they were come down, prayed