

The properties of faith

By Thomas Brooks

I shall now in the next place shew you the properties of that faith that accompanies salvation, and they are these that follow.

1. IT PROMOTES VITALITY

[1] *The first property* of that faith that accompanies salvation is this: *it puts forth itself in vital operation*. It makes a man full of life and activity for God, it will make a man diligent and venturous in the work and ways of God. Faith is a most active quality in itself, and so it a Christian most active. It is a doing thing, and sets the person doing. Faith will not suffer the soul to be idle. Faith is like the virtuous woman in the last of the Proverbs, who puts her hand to every work, who would suffer none of her handmaids to be idle. Faith puts the soul upon grieving for sin, upon combating with sin, upon weeping over sin, upon trembling at the occasions of sin, upon resisting temptations that lead to sin, upon fighting it out to the death with sin, Zech. 12.10. Faith puts a man upon walking with God, upon waiting on God, upon working for God, upon wrestling with God, upon bearing for God, and upon parting with anything for God. Faith makes religious duties to be easy to the soul, to be delightful to the soul, to be profitable to the soul. Faith makes the soul to be serious and conscientious in doing, to be careful and faithful in doing, to be delightful and cheerful in doing, to be diligent and faithful in doing. The faith that is not a working faith is no faith; the faith that is not a working faith is a dead faith; the faith that is not a working faith is a deluding faith; the faith that is not a working faith is a worthless faith; the faith that is not a working faith will leave a man short of heaven and happiness in the latter day. Faith that accompanies salvation is better at doing than at thinking, at obeying than at disputing, at walking than at talking: Titus 3.8, "This is a faithful saying; and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works." Faith will make a man endeavour to be good, yea, to be best, at everything he undertakes. It is not leaves but fruit, not words but works, that God expects; and if we cross his expectation, we frustrate our own salvation, we further our own condemnation. Faith makes the soul much in doing, abundant in working, and that partly by persuading the soul that all its works, all its duties and services,

shall be owned and accepted of God, as in Isa. 56. 7. "Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people." Faith assures the soul that every prayer, every sigh, every groan, every tear is accepted. And this makes the soul pray much, and sigh much, and mourn much.

Again, faith spreads the promises of divine assistance before the soul. Oh! says faith, here, O soul, is assistance suitable to the work required. And this makes a man work, as for life; it makes a man work and sweat, and sweat and work.

Again, faith sets the recompense, the reward, before the soul, Heb. 11.25, 26. Oh, says faith, look here, soul, here is a great reward for a little work; here is great wages for weak and imperfect services; here is an infinite reward for a finite work. Work, yea, work hard, says faith, O believing soul, for thy actions in passing pass not away; every good work is as a grain of seed for eternal life. There is a resurrection of works as well as of persons, and in that day wicked men shall see that it is not a vain thing to serve God, they shall see the most doing souls to be the most shining souls, to be the most advanced and rewarded Oh, the sight of this crown, of this recompense, makes souls to abound in the work of the Lord, they knowing that their labour is not in vain in the Lord, 1 Cor. 15.58.

Again, faith draws from Christ's fulness; it sucks virtue and strength from Christ's breasts. Faith looks upon Christ as a head, and so draws from him; it upon Christ as a husband, and so draws from him; it looks upon him as a fountain, and so draws from him; it looks upon him as a sea, as an ocean of goodness, and so draws from him; it looks upon him as a father, Col. 1.19, and so draws from him; it looks upon him as a friend, and so draws from him, John 1.16. And this divine power and strength sets the soul a working hard for God; it makes the soul full of motion, full of action. In a word, faith is such a working grace as sets all other graces a-working. Faith hath an influence upon every grace; it is like a silver thread that runs through a chain of pearls; it puts strength and vivacity into all other virtues. Love touched by a hand of faith flames forth; hope fed at faith's table grows strong, and casts anchor within the veil, Rom. 15.13. Joy, courage, and zeal being smiled upon by faith, are made invincible and unconquerable. Look, what oil is to the wheels, what weights are to the clock, what wings are to the bird,

what sails are to the ship, that faith is to all religious duties and services, except it be winter with the soul.

And thus you see, that that faith that accompanies salvation is a working faith, a lively faith, and not such a dead faith as most please and deceive themselves with for ever.

2. IT GROWS

[2] *The second property* of that faith that accompanies salvation is this: *it is of a growing and increasing nature*. It is like the waters of the sanctuary, that rise higher and higher, as Ezekiel speaks. It is like a tender plant, that naturally grows higher and higher; it is like a grain of mustard-seed, which though it be the least of all seeds, yet by a divine power it grows up beyond all human expectations, Mat. 13.32. Faith is imperfect, as all other graces are, but yet it grows and increases gradually: Rom. 1.17, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." As a gracious soul is always adding knowledge to knowledge, love to love, fear to fear, zeal to zeal, so he is always adding faith to faith. A gracious soul knows, that if he be rich in faith, he cannot be poor in other graces; he knows the growth of faith will be as "the former and the latter rain" to all other graces; he knows that there is no way to outgrow his fears but by growing in faith; he knows that all the pleasant fruits of paradise, viz., joy, comfort, and peace, flourish as faith flourishes; he knows that he hath much work upon his hands, that he hath many things to do, many temptations to withstand, many mercies to improve, many burdens to bear, many corruptions to conquer, many duties to perform. And this makes the believing soul thus to reason with God: Ah, Lord! whatever I am weak in, let me be strong in faith; whatever dies, let faith live; whatever decays, let faith flourish. Lord, let me be low in repute, low in abilities, low in estate, if only thou wilt make me high in faith. Lord! let me be poor in anything, poor in everything, if only thou wilt make me rich in faith. Lord, let the eye of faith be more opened, let the eye of faith be more quick-sighted, let the eye of faith be the more raised, and it shall be enough to me, though Joseph be not, though Benjamin be not.

It was the glory of the Thessalonians, that "their faith grew exceedingly," 2 Thes. 1.3. A growth in faith will render a man glorious in life, lovely in death, and twice blessed in the morning of the resurrection. So will not a growth in honours, a growth in riches, a growth in notions, a growth in opinions. The faith that accompanies salvation

unites the soul to Christ, and keeps the soul in communion with Christ. And from that union and communion that the soul hath with Christ, flows the divine power and virtue that causes faith to grow.

Yet that no weak believers may be stumbled, or made sad, let them remember,

(1) That though that faith that accompanies salvation be a growing faith, yet there are some certain seasons and cases wherein a man may decay in his faith, and wherein he may not have the exercise and the actings of his faith. This blessed babe of grace may be cast into a deep slumber; this heavenly pearl may be so buried under the thick clay of this world, and under the ashes of corruption and temptation, as that for a time it may neither stir, nor grow, as might be shewn in Abraham, David, Solomon, Peter, and others.

(2) Secondly, Remember this, that the strongest faith at times is subject to shakings, as the strongest men are to faintings, as the stoutest ships are to tossings, as the wisest men are to doubtings, as the brightest stars are to twinklings. Therefore, if at certain times thou shouldest not be sensible of the growth of thy faith, yet do not conclude that thou hast no faith. Faith may be truly present when it is not active. There may be life in the root of the tree, when there is neither leaves, blossoms, nor fruit upon the tree; the life that is in the root will shew itself at the spring, and so will true faith break forth into acts, when the Sun of righteousness shall shine forth, and make it a pleasant spring to thy soul. And thus much for this second particular.

3. IT BELITTLES THE GLORIES OF THE WORLD

[3] *The third property* of that faith that accompanies salvation is this: *it makes those things that are great and glorious in the world's account to be very little and low in the eyes of the believer*. Faith makes a believer to live in the land of promise as in a strange country, Heb. 11.9. It is nothing to live as a stranger in a strange land, but to live as a stranger in the land of promise, this is the excellency and glory of faith.

Faith will make a man set his feet where other men set their hearts. Faith looks with an eye of scorn and disdain upon the things of this world. What, says faith, are earthly treasures to the treasures of heaven? What are stones to silver, dross to gold, darkness to light, hell to heaven? Mat. 6.19, 20. No more, says faith, are all the treasures, pleasures, and delights of this world, to the light of thy countenance, to the joy of thy Spirit, to the influences of thy grace, Ps. 4.6,7. I see nothing, says David, in this wide world, only "thy commandments are exceeding broad." Faith makes David account his crown nothing, his treasures nothing, his victories nothing, his attendants nothing. Faith will

make a man write *nothing* upon the best of worldly things; it will make a man trample upon the pearls of this world, as upon dross and dung, Heb. 11.24-26. Faith deadens a man's heart to the things of this world: "I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me," says Paul, Philip. 3.8; Gal. 6.14. This world, says faith, is not my house, my habitation, my home; I look for a better country, or a better city, for a better home, Cor. 5.1,2. He that is adopted heir to a crown, a kingdom, looks with an eye of scorn and disdain upon everything below a kingdom, below a crown. Faith tells the soul that it hath a crown, a kingdom in reversion; and this makes the soul to set light by the things of this world, 2 Tim. 4.8. Faith raises and sets the soul high. "And hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus," saith the apostle, Eph. 2.6. Faith makes a man live high: "Our conversation is in heaven," Philip. 3.20; and the higher any man lives, the less, the lower will the things of this world be in his eye. The fancy of Lucian is very pleasant, who places Charon on the top of an high hill, viewing all the affairs of men, and looking on their greatest, richest, an most glorious cities, as little birds' nests. Faith sets the soul upon the hill of God, the mountain of God, that is, a high mountain; and from thence, faith gives the soul a sight, a prospect of all things here below. And, ah! how like birds' nests do all the riches, braveries, and glories of this world look and appear to them that faith hath set upon God's high hill. Faith having set Luther upon this high hill, he protests that God should not put him off with these poor low things. Faith set Moses high, it set him among invisibles; and that made him look upon all the treasures, pleasures, riches, and glories of Egypt, as little birds' nests, as mole-hills, as dross and dung, as things that were too little and too low for him to set his heart upon. Verily, when once faith hath given a man a sight, a prospect of heaven, all things on earth will be looked upon as little and low. And so much for this third property of faith.

4. IT PURIFIES THE HEART

[4] *The fourth property* of that faith that accompanies salvation is this: *it purifies the heart, it is a heart-purifying faith.* "Purifying their hearts by faith," Acts 15.9. Faith hath two hands, one to lay hold on Christ, and another to sweep the heart, which is Christ's house. Faith knows that Christ is of a dove-like nature; he loves to lie clean and sweet. Faith hath a neat housewife's hand, as well as an eagle's eye. Faith is as good at purging out of sin, as it is at discovering of sin. There is a

cleansing quality in faith, as well as a healing quality in faith. Sound faith will purge the soul from the love of sin, from a delight in sin, and from the reign and dominion of sin, Ezek. 16. "Sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. 6. 14, 21. Now faith purgeth and cleanseth the heart from sin, sometimes by pressing and putting God to make good the promises of sanctification. Faith takes that promise in Jer. 33.8, "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me"; and that promise in Micah 7.19. "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea"; and that promise in Ps. 65. 3, "Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away"; and that promise in Isa. 1.25, "And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin"; and spreads them before the Lord, and will never leave urging and pressing, seeking and suing, till God makes them good. Faith makes the soul divinely impudent, divinely shameless. Lord! says faith, are not these thine own words? Hast thou said it, and shall it not come to pass? Art thou not a faithful God? Is not thine honour engaged to make good the promises that thou hast made? Arise, O God, and let my sins be scattered; turn thy hand upon me, and let my sins be purged. And thus faith purifies the heart.

Again, sometimes faith purifies the heart from sin, by engaging against sin in Christ's strength, as David engaged against Goliath, 1 Sam. 17.47, not in his own strength, but in the strength and name of the Lord of hosts. Faith leads the soul directly to God, and engages God against sin, so that the combat, by the wisdom of faith, is changed, and made now rather between God and sin than between sin and the soul; and so sin comes to fall before the power and glorious presence of God. That is a choice word, Ps. 61.2, "From the ends of the earth will I cry to thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Look, as a child that is set upon by one that is stronger than he, cries out to his father to help him, to stand by him, and to engage for him against his enemy; so faith, being sensible of its own weakness and inability to get the victory over sin, cries out to Christ, and engages Christ, who is stronger than the strong man, and so Christ binds the strong man, and casts him out. Faith tells the soul that all purposes, resolutions, and endeavours, unless Christ be engaged, will never set the soul above its sins, they will never purify the heart from sin; therefore faith engages Christ, and casts the main of the work upon Christ, and so it purges the soul from sin. Luther reports of Staupicius, a German divine, that he

acknowledged, before he came to understand the free and powerful grace of Christ, that he vowed and resolved an hundred times against some particular sin, and could never get power over it; he could never get his heart purified from it, till he came to see that he trusted too much to his own resolutions, and too little to Jesus Christ; but when his faith had engaged Christ against his sin, he had the victory.

Again, faith purifies the heart from sin, by the application of Christ's blood. Faith makes a plaster of Christ's blessed blood, and lays it upon the soul's sores, and so cures it. Faith tells the soul, that it is not all the tears in the world, nor all the water in the sea, that can wash away the uncleanness of the soul; it is only the blood of Christ that can make a blackamoor white; it is only the blood of Christ that can cure a leprous Naaman, that can cure a leprous soul. This fountain of blood, says faith, is the *only* fountain for Judah and Jerusalem to wash themselves, to wash their hearts from all uncleanness and filthiness of flesh and spirit, Zech. 13.1. Those spots a Christian finds in his own heart, can only be washed out in the blood of the Lamb, by the hand of faith.

Again, faith purifieth the soul from sin, by putting the soul upon heart-purifying ordinances, and by mixing and mingling itself with ordinances: "The word profited them not," saith the apostle, "because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it," Heb. 4.2. Faith is such an excellent ingredient, that it makes all potions work for the good of the soul, for the purifying of the soul, and for the bettering of the soul; and no potion, no means, will profit the soul, if this heavenly ingredient be not mixed with it. Faith puts a man upon praying, upon hearing, upon the fellowship of the saints, upon public duties, upon family duties, and upon private duties; and faith in these comes and joins with the soul, and mixes herself with these soul-purifying ordinances, and so makes them effectual for the purifying of the soul more and more from all filthiness and uncleanness. Faith puts out all her virtue and efficacy in ordinances, to the purging of souls from their dross and tin; not that faith in this life shall wholly purify the soul from the being of sin, or from the motions or operations of sin; no, for then we should have our heaven in this world, and then we might bid ordinances adieu; but that faith that accompanies salvation doth naturally purify and cleanse the heart 1 degrees from the remainders of sin. Sound faith is always a-making the heart more and more neat and clean, that the king of glory may delight in his habitation,

that he may not remove his court, but may abide with the soul for ever. And thus you see that that faith that accompanies salvation is a heart-purifying faith.

5. IT MELTS THE SOUL

(5) *The fifth property* of that faith that accompanies salvation is this: *it is soul-softening, it is soul-mollifying*. Oh, nothing breaks the heart of a sinner like faith. Peter believes soundly, and weeps bitterly, Mat. 26.75; Mary Magdalene believes much, and weeps much, Luke 7.44. Faith sets a wounded Christ, a bruised Christ, a despised Christ, a pierced Christ, a bleeding Christ before the soul, and this makes the soul sit down and weep bitterly: "I will pour upon the house of David the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him" (all gospel-mourning flows from believing), "as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born," Zech. 12.10. Oh! the sight of those wounds that their sins have made will wound their hearts through and through; it will make them lament over Christ with a bitter lamentation. Men say that nothing will dissolve the adamant but the blood of a goat. Ah! nothing will kindly, sweetly, and effectually break the hardened heart of a sinner, but faith's beholding the blood of Christ trickling down his sides. Pliny reports of a serpent, that when it stings, it fetches all the blood out of the body; but it was never heard that any ever sweat blood but Christ, and the very thought of this makes the believing soul to sit down sweating and weeping. That Christ should love man when he was most unlovely, that man's extreme misery should but inflame Christ's love and mercy, this melts the believing soul. That Christ should leave the eternal bosom of his Father; that he that was equal with God should come in the form of a servant; that he that was clothed with glory, and born a king, should be wrapped in rags; that he that the heaven of heavens could not contain should be cradled in a manger; that from his cradle to his cross, his whole life should be a life of sorrows and sufferings; that the Judge of all flesh should be condemned; that the Lord of life should be put to death; that he that was his Father's joy should in anguish of spirit cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"; that that head that was crowned with honour should be crowned with thorns; that those eyes that were as a flame of fire, that were clearer than the sun, should be closed up by the darkness of death; that those ears which were wont to hear nothing but hallelujahs should hear nothing but blasphemies; that that face that was white and ruddy should be spit upon by the Jews; that that tongue that spake as never man spake, yea, as never angel spake, should be accused of blasphemy; that those hands which swayed both a

golden sceptre and a iron rod, and those feet that were as fine brass should be nailed to the cross; and all this for man's transgression, for man's rebellion: Oh! the sight of these things, the believing of these things, the acting of faith on these things, makes a gracious soul to break and bleed, to sigh and groan, to mourn and lament. The faith that accompanies salvation is more or less a heart-breaking, a heart-melting faith.

6. IT OVERCOMES THE WORLD

(6) *The sixth property* of that faith that accompanies salvation is this: *it is a world-conquering faith, it is a world-overcoming faith.* 1 John 5.4, "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that over cometh the world, even our faith," Faith overcomes the frowning world, the fawning world, the tempting world, and the persecuting world; and this it doth thus:

(1) Faith, by uniting the soul to Christ, gives the soul an interest in all the victories and conquests of Christ, and so makes the soul a conqueror with Christ: John 16.33, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace; in the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." We have to deal but with a conquered enemy; our Jesus hath given the world a mortal wound; we have nothing to do but to set our feet upon a subdued enemy, and to sing it out with the apostle, "Over all these we are more than conquerors," Rom. 8.37.

(2) Faith overcomes the world by out-bidding sights; faith out-bids the world, and so makes the soul victorious. The world sets honours, pleasures, &c., before Moses, but his faith out-bid the world. It presents the recompense of reward, it brings down all the glory, pleasures, and treasures of heaven, of that other world, and sets them before the soul; and so it overtops and overcomes the world by out-bidding it. So Christ, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despising the shame," Heb. 12.2.

(3) Faith overcomes the world by telling the soul that all things are its own. Says faith, This God is thy God, this Christ is thy Christ, this righteousness is thy righteousness, this promise is thy promise, this crown is thy crown, this glory is thy glory, these treasures are thy treasures, these pleasures are thy pleasures. "All things are yours," saith the apostle, "things present are yours, and things to come are yours," 1 Cor. 3.22. Thus the faith of the martyrs acted, and so made them victorious over a tempting and a persecuting world, Heb. 11.35.

(4) Faith overcomes the world by valuing the things of this world as they are. Most men overvalue them, they put too great a price upon them, they make the world a god, and then they cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." Oh, but faith now turns the inside of all creatures outward, faith presents all worldly things as impotent, as mixed, as mutable, as things of a moment to the soul, and so makes the soul victorious. Faith makes a man to see the prickles that be in every rose, the thorns that be in every crown, the scabs that be under every gown, the poison that is in the golden cup, the snare that is in the delicate dish, the spot that is in the shining pearl, and so makes a Christian count and call all these things, as indeed they are, "vanity of vanities," and so the believing soul slights the world, and tramples upon it as dung and dross. And lastly,

(5) Faith overcomes the world, by presenting Jesus Christ to the soul as a most excellent, glorious, and comprehensive good, a good that comprehends all good. Christ is that one good that comprehends all good, that one thing that comprehends all things. All the beauties, all the rarities, all the excellencies, all the riches, all the glories of all created creatures are comprehended in Christ. As the worth and value of many pieces of silver is collected in one piece of gold, or in one precious jewel, so the whole volume of perfections which is spread through heaven and earth is epitomised in Christ; and the sight and sense of this makes the soul to triumph over the world. Faith presents more excellencies and better excellencies in Christ than can be lost for Christ, and so it makes the soul a conqueror.

I have been long upon these things, because they are of much weight and worth: I shall be the briefer in what follows. But before I leave this point, I shall give you these hints:

Strong faith and weak faith

In the first place, I shall give you some hints concerning strong faith.

In the second place, I shall give you some hints concerning weak faith.

My design in both is, to keep precious souls from mistaking and fainting. Concerning strong faith, I shall give you these short hints:

(1) *The first hint.* Strong faith will make a soul resolute in resisting, and happy in conquering the strongest temptations, Heb. 11.3; Dan. 6.10.

(2) *The second hint.* It will make a man own God, and cleave to God, and hang upon God, in the face of the greatest difficulties and dangers, Rom. 4.18; Ps. 44.16-18. So Job will trust in God though he slay him, Job 13.15, 16.

(3) *The third hint.* It will enable men to prefer Christ's cross before the world's crown, to prefer tortures before deliverance, Heb. 11.3.

(4) *The fourth hint.* Strong faith will make a soul divinely fearless, and divinely careless; it will make a man live as the child lives in the family, without fear or care, Ps. 23.4. Dan. 3.16, "We are not careful to answer thee, O king; our God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and he will deliver us." Micah 7.7-9.

(5) *The fifth hint.* Strong faith will make a man cleave to the promise when providence runs cross to the promise, Num. 10.29; 2 Chron. 20.9-11. Ps. 60.6, 7, "God hath spoken in his holiness," saith David; "I will rejoice: I will divide Shechem, and mete out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine, and Manasseh is mine," &c. Though David was in his banishment, yet his faith accounts all his as if he had all in possession, and that because God had spoken in his holiness. His faith hangs upon the promise, though present providences did run cross to the promise.

(6) *The sixth hint.* Strong faith will make men comply with those commands that do most cross them in their most desirable comforts, Heb. 11.8,9, and 10.34; Gen. 22.

Now, O precious souls! you are not to argue against your own souls, that surely you have no faith, because your faith doth not lead you forth to such and such noble things. Thou mayest have true faith, though thou hast not so great faith as others of the Lord's worthies have had.

The philosophers say that there are eight degrees of heat: we discern three. Now, if a man should define heat only by the highest degree, then all other degrees will be cast out from being heat. So if a man should define faith only by the highest degrees and operations of it, then that will be denied to be faith that indeed is faith, as I shall presently shew.

In the second place, I shall give you some hints concerning weak faith.

(1) *The first hint.* A weak faith doth as much justify and as much unite a man to Christ as a strong faith. It gives a man as much title to and interest in Christ as the strongest faith in the world. The babe hath as much interest in the father as he that is of grown years. A weak faith gives a man as good a title to Christ, and all the precious things of eternity, as the strongest faith in the world. A weak hand may receive a pearl as well as the strong hand of a giant. Faith is a receiving of Christ, John 1.12.

(2) *The second hint.* The promises of eternal happiness and blessedness are not made over to the

strength of faith, but to the truth of faith; not to the degrees of faith, but to the reality of faith. He that believes shall be saved, though he hath not such a strength of faith as to stop the mouth of lions, as to work miracles, as to remove mountains, as to subdue kingdoms, as to quench the violence of fire, as to resist strong temptations, as to rejoice under great persecutions, Heb. 11.33-35. No man that is saved is saved upon the account of the strength of his faith, but upon the account of the truth of his faith. In the great day Christ will not bring balances to weigh men's graces, but a touch-stone to try their graces; he will not look so much at the strength as at the truth of their graces.

(3) *The third hint.* The weakest faith shall grow stronger and stronger. A weak believer shall go on from faith to faith. Christ is the finisher as well as the author of our faith, Rom. 1.17; Heb. 12.2. Christ will nurse up this blessed babe, and will not suffer it to be strangled in its infancy. He that hath begun a good work will perfect it, Philip. 1.6; I Pet. 1.5. Christ is as well bound to look after our graces as he is to look after our souls. Grace is Christ's work, therefore it must prosper in his hand; he is the great builder and repairer of our graces; he will turn thy spark into a flame, thy drop into an ocean, thy penny into a pound, thy mite into a million, Mat. 12.20, and 13.32. Therefore do not sit down discouraged because thy faith is weak. That which is sown in weakness, shall rise in power. Thy weak faith shall have a glorious resurrection. Christ will not suffer such a pearl of price to be buried under a clod of earth.

(4) *The fourth hint.* A little faith is faith, as a spark of fire is fire, a drop of water is water, a little star is a star, a little pearl is a pearl. Verily, thy little faith is a jewel that God doth highly prize and value; and thy little faith will make thee put a higher price upon Christ and grace than upon all the world, Mat. 18.10; I Pet. 2.7. Well I remember this, that the least measure of true faith will bring thee to salvation, and possess thee of salvation, as well as the greatest measure. A little faith accompanies salvation as well as a great faith, a weak faith as well as a strong. Therefore do not say, O precious soul, that thou hast not that faith that accompanies salvation, because thou hast not such a strong faith, or such and such degrees of faith. A great faith will yield a man a heaven here, a little faith will yield him a heaven hereafter.