

LITTLE FAITH'S TROUBLES

Christian tel-
leth his com-
panion a story
of Little-Faith.

Broad-way-
Gate.

Dead-man's
lane.

Little-Faith
robbed by
Faint-Heart,
Mistrust, and
Guilt.

Then said *Christian* to his fel-
low, Now I call to remem-
brance that which was told
me, of a thing that happened to a
good man hereabout. The name of
the man was *Little-Faith*, but a good
man, and he dwelt in the town of
Sincere. The thing was this. At the
entering in of this passage, there
comes down from *Broadway-gate*, a
lane called *Dead-man's-lane*; so
called, because of the murders that
are commonly done there; and this
Little-Faith going on pilgrimage, as
we do now, chanced to sit down
there and sleep. Now there hap-
pened at that time to come down
that lane from *Broadway-gate*, three
sturdy rogues, and their names were
Faint-heart, *Mistrust*, and *Guilt*,
(three brothers) and they espying
Little-Faith where he was, came gal-
loping up with speed. Now the good
man was just awakened from his
sleep, and was getting up to go on
his journey. So they came up all to
him, and with threatening language
bid him stand. At this *Little-Faith*
looked as white as a clout, and had
neither power to fight nor fly. Then
said *Faint-Heart*, Deliver thy purse;
but he making no haste to do it, (for
he was loth to lose his money) *Mis-
trust* ran up to him, and thrusting his
hand into his pocket, pulled out
thence a bag of silver.¹ Then he cried

¹ Little-faith was robbed of his silver, his
sensible comforts, and almost deprived of

out, *Thieves, thieves*. With that
Guilt, with a great club that was in
his hand, struck *Little-Faith* on the
head, and with that blow felled him
flat to the ground, where he lay
bleeding as one that would bleed to
death. All this while, the thieves
stood by. But at last, they hearing
that some were upon the road, and
fearing lest it should be one *Great-
Grace*, that dwells in the city of
Good-Confidence, they betook
themselves to their heels, and left
this /good man to shift for himself.
Now after a while, *Little-Faith* came
to himself, and getting up, made
shift to scabble on his way. This
was the story.

2. **Hope.** But did they take
from him all that ever he had?

3. **Chr.** Now the place where
his jewels were, they never ran-
sacked; so those he kept still. But, as
I was told, the good man was much
afflicted for his loss; for the thieves
got most of his spending-money.
That which they got not, (as I said)
were jewels; also he had a little odd
money left, but scarce enough to
bring him to his journey's end; nay,
(if I was not misinformed,) he was
forced to beg as he went, to keep
himself alive; for his jewels he might

all spiritual life and comfort; and would
totally have been deprived of it, if *Great-
grace* had not stepped in to his relief.

*They got away
his Silver and
knocked him
down.*

*Little-Faith
lost not his
best things.*

1 Pet. 4. 18.

*Little-Faith
Forced to beg
to his journey's
end.*

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not sell; but beg and do what he could, he went (as we say) *with many a hungry belly*, the most part of the rest of the way.

4. **Hope.** But is it not a wonder they got not from him his certificate, by which he was to receive his admittance at the Celestial Gate?

5. **Chr.** 'Tis a wonder, but they got not that, though they missed it not through any good cunning of his; for he being dismayed with their coming upon him, had neither power nor skill to hide anything, so 'twas more by good providence than by his endeavor, that they missed of that good thing.²

6. **Hope.** But it must needs be a comfort to him, that they got not this jewel from him.

7. **Chr.** It might have been great comfort to him, had he used it as he should; but they that told me the story, said, that he made but little use of it all the rest of the way; and that because of the dismay that he had in their taking away of his money. Indeed he forgot it a great part of the rest of his journey; and

besides when, at any time it came into his mind, and he began to be comforted therewith, then would fresh thoughts of his loss come again upon him, and those thoughts would swallow up all.

8. **Hope.** Alas, poor man! This could not but be a great grief unto him!

He is pitied by both.

9. **Chr.** Grief! Ay, a grief indeed. Would it not have been so to any of us, had we been used as he, to be robbed and wounded too, and that in a strange place, as he was? 'Tis a wonder he did not die with grief, poor heart. I was told that he scattered almost all the rest of the way with nothing but doleful and bitter complaints; telling also to all that overtook him, or that he overtook in the way as he went, where he was robbed, and how; who they were that did it, and what he lost; how he was wounded, and that he hardly escaped with his life.

10. **Hope.** But 'tis a wonder that his necessities did not put him upon *selling* or *pawning* some of his jewels, that he might have wherewith to relieve himself in his journey.

11. **Chr.** Thou talkest like one upon whose head is the shell to this very day. For what should he pawn them? or to whom should he sell them? In all that country where he was robbed, his jewels were not accounted of; nor did he want that relief which could from thence be administered to him. Besides, had his

Christian snubs his fellow for unadvised speaking.

[*'No' only in 1st edit.]
He kept not his best things by his own cunning.
2 Tim. 1
14.
2 Pet. 2. 9.*

² Little-faith, though with great difficulty, got safe to heaven at last. He lost his best things, his jewels and certificate were safe; his life was hid with Christ in God, and he was made partaker of divine nature; and the reason why he lost not all, was not owing to any wisdom or policy of his own, but to the promise and power of God engaged to keep the believer from final perdition.

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jewels been missing at the gate of the Celestial City, he had (and that he knew well enough) been excluded from an inheritance there, and that would have been worse to him than the appearance and villainy of ten thousand thieves.³

Heb. 12. 16 12. **Hope.** Why art thou so tart, my brother? *Esau* sold his birthright, and that for a mess of pottage; and that birthright was his greatest jewel; and if he, why might not *Little-Faith* do so too?

A discourse about *Esau* and *Little-Faith*.
Esau was ruled by his lusts. Gen 25. 32.
Jer. 2. 24.
13. **Chr.** *Esau* did sell his birthright indeed, and so do many besides, and by so doing exclude themselves from the chief blessing, as also that caitiff did; but you must put a difference betwixt *Esau* and *Little-Faith* and also betwixt their estates. *Esau's* birthright was typical, but *Little-Faith's* jewels were not so. *Esau's* belly was his god, but *Little-Faith's* belly was not so. *Esau's* want lay in his fleshly appetite, *Little-Faith's* did not so. Besides, *Esau* could see no further than to the fulfilling of his lusts; *For I am at the point to die, said he, and what good will this birthright do me?* But *Little-Faith*, though it was his lot to have but a little faith, was by his little faith kept from such extrava-

gances, and made to see and prize his jewels more, than to sell them as *Esau* did his birthright. You read not any where that *Esau* had faith, no, not so much as a little; therefore no marvel if where the flesh only bears sway, (as it will in that man where no faith is to resist) if he sells his birthright, and his soul and all, and that to the devil of hell; for it is with such, as it is with the *ass*, who in her occasions cannot be turned away. When their minds are set upon their lusts, they will have them, whatever they cost: but *Little-Faith* was of another temper; his mind was on things divine; his livelihood was upon things that were spiritual and from above; therefore, to what end should he that is of such a temper, sell his jewels, (had there been any that would have bought them) to fill his mind with empty things? Will a man give a penny to fill his belly with hay? or can you persuade the *turtle-dove* to live upon carrion like the *crow*?⁴ Though *faithless* ones can for carnal lusts, pawn, or mortgage, or sell what they have, and themselves outright to boot; yet they that have *faith*, saving *faith*, though but a little of it, cannot do so. Here therefore, my brother, is thy mistake.

Esau never had faith.

Jer. 2. 24

Little-Faith Couldnot live upon Esau's pottage.

A comparison between the turtle-dove and the crow.

³ These jewels must signify faith in the righteousness of Christ, the new birth. The former gives us a title to the heavenly inheritance: the latter makes us meet for enjoyment of it. And without these no person can hope to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ The force of Peter's question is felt by every truly awakened soul, *Lord, to whom shall we go?* There is none but Jesus, from whom they can expect either pardon, peace, or happiness. This sense of their own need, of His suitableness, and the insufficiency of every thing else keeps them waiting on, notwithstanding all discouragement.

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14. **Hope.** I acknowledge it; but yet your severe reflection had almost made me angry.

15. **Chr.** Why, I did but compare thee to some of the birds that are of the brisker sort, who will run to and fro in trodden paths with the shell upon their heads: but pass by that, and consider the matter under debate, and all shall be well betwixt thee and me.

16. **Hope.** But, *Christian*, these three fellows, I am persuaded in my heart, are but a company of cowards: would they have run else, think you, as they did, at the noise of one that was coming on the road? Why did not *Little-Faith* pluck up a greater heart? He might, methinks, have stood one brush with them, and have yielded when there had been no remedy.

17. **Chr.** That they are cowards, many have said, but few have found it so in the time of trial. As for a great heart, *Little-Faith* had none; and I perceive by thee, my brother, hadst thou been the man concerned, thou art but for a brush, and then to yield. And verily, since this is the height of thy stomach, now they are at a distance from us, should they appear to thee, as they did to him, they might put thee to second thoughts.

18. **Chr.** But consider again, they are but journeymen thieves, they serve under the king of the bottomless pit; who, if need be, will come in to their

aid himself, and his voice is as the *roaring of a lion*. I myself have been engaged as this *Little-Faith* was, and I found it a terrible thing. These three villains set upon me, and I beginning like a *Christian* to resist, they gave but a call, and in came their master. I would, (as the saying is) have given my life for a penny; but that, as God would have it, I was clothed with armor of proof. Ay, and yet, though I was so harnessed, I found it hard work to quit myself like a man; no man can tell what in that combat attends us, but he that hath been in the battle himself.

19. **Hope.** Well, but they ran, you see, when they did but suppose that one *Great-Grace* was in the way.

20. **Chr.** True, they have often fled, both they and their master, when *Great-Grace* hath but appeared; and no marvel, for he is the *King's champion*. But I trow, you will put some difference between *Little-Faith* and the *King's champion*. All the King's subjects are not his champions, nor can they, when tried, do such feats of war as he. Is it meet to think, that a little child should handle *Goliath* as *David* did? Or that there should be the strength of an ox in a wren? Some are strong, some are weak; some have great faith, some have little: this man was one of the weak, and therefore he went to the walls.

21. **Hope.** I would it had been *Great-Grace* for their sakes.

Christian tells his own experience in his case.

Hopeful swaggers

No great heart for God where there is but little faith.

We have more courage when out, than when we are in

Psalms 5. 8.
[Prov. 28. 15]

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22. **Chr.** If it had been he, he might have had his hands full: for I must tell you, that though *Great-Grace* is excellent good at his weapons, and has and can, so long as he keeps them at sword's point, do well enough with them; yet, if they get within him, even *Faint-heart*, *Mistrust*, or the other, it shall go hard, but they will throw up his heels. And when a man is down, you know, what can he do?

23. Whoso looks well upon *Great-Grace's* face, shall see those scars and cuts there, that shall easily give de-monstration of what I say. Yea, once I heard he should say, (and that when he was in the combat) *We despaired even of life*. How did these sturdy rogues and their fellows make *David* groan, mourn, and roar? Yea, *Heman* and *Hezekiah* too, though champions in their day, were forced to bestir them, when by these assaulted; and yet notwithstanding they had their coats soundly brushed by them. *Peter*, upon a time, would go try what he could do; but though some do say of him, that he is the prince of the apostles, they handled him so, that they made him at last afraid of a sorry girl.

24. Besides, their king is at their whistle; he is never out of hearing; and if at any time they be put to the worst, he, if possible, comes in to help them; and of him it is said, *The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold; the spear, the dart, nor the habergeon; he esteemeth iron as straw, and brass as rotten wood.*

Job 41. 26.
Leviathan's
sturdiness.

The arrow cannot make him fly; sling-stones are turned, with him, into stubble; darts are counted as stubble; he laugheth at the shaking of a spear. What can a man do in this case? 'Tis true, if a man could at every turn have Job's horse, and had skill and courage to ride him, he might do notable things. *For his neck is clothed with thunder; he will not be afraid as the grasshopper; the glory of his nostrils is terrible; he paweth in the valley, rejoiceth in his strength, and goeth out to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth back from the sword. The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear, and the shield. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage, neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thundering of the captains and the shoutings.*

Job 39. 19.
The excellent mettle that is in Job's horse.

25. But for such footmen as thee and I are, let us never desire to meet with an enemy, nor vaunt as if we could do better, when we hear of others that they have been foiled, nor be tickled at the thoughts of our own manhood, for such commonly come by the worst when tried.⁵ Wit-

⁵ The falls of our fellow Christians should not puff us up with pride or cause us to imagine that we should have acted better, had we been in their case. These thoughts proceed from ignorance of our own weakness, and generally are forerunners of our fall; nay, we are fallen already when such self-conceited imaginations are suffered to

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ness Peter, of whom I made mention before; he would swagger, ay, he would; he would, as his vain mind prompted him to say, do better, and stand more for his Master than all men; but, who so foiled and run down by these villains as he?

26. When therefore we hear that such robberies are done on the King's highway, two things become us to do: *First*, to go out harnessed, and to be sure to take a shield with us; for it was for want of that, that he that laid so lustily at leviathan could not make him yield; for indeed, if that be wanting, he fears us not at all. Therefore, he that had skill, hath said, *Above all, take the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.*

'Tis good
to have a
convoy.

Exod. 33. 15
Psal. 3. 5, 6,
7, 8, &
27. 1, 2, 3.

Isa. 10. 4

27. 'Tis good also that we desire of the King a *convoy*, yea that he will go with us himself. This made *David* rejoice when in the *Valley of the Shadow of Death*; and *Moses* was rather for dying where he stood, than to go one step without his God. O, my brother, if he will but go along with us, what need we be afraid of ten thousands that shall set themselves against us? but without him, the *proud helpers fall under the slain.*

dwell in our minds. The falls of others, by showing us what the best are when left to themselves, should deeply humble us, cause us to fear for ourselves, and to seek more diligently to Christ for the strengthening influence of his spirit.

28. I, for my part, have been in the fray before now; and though (through the goodness of Him that is best) I am, as you see, alive, yet I cannot boast of my manhood. Glad shall I be, if I meet with no more such brunts; though I fear we are not got beyond all danger. However, since the lion and the bear have not as yet devoured me, I hope God will also deliver us from the next uncircumcised *Philistine.*

Isa. 10. 4

29. Then sang *Christian*,

Poor Little-Faith!
Has been among the thieves?
Wast robbed? Remember this;
Whoso believes,
And gets more faith,
shall then a victor be
Over ten thousand;
else scarce over three. †

NOTES:
