

Temporary Faith

Matthew 13:20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

Matthew 13:21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

2 Peter 2:20 For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.

We read in Scripture also, of a *temporary* faith. By this faith, a man, with some degree of natural affection, receives the truths of the gospel, as both certain and good; but, as they have never been rooted in his heart, he soon after loses all the impression of them, and in time of temptation falls away. Such is the faith of those hearers of the gospel, who, in the parable of the sower, are compared to stony ground [Matth. xiii. 20—21.].

Their assent to the truth of the gospel, is accompanied by some slight and transient flashes of joy, by some hasty resolutions to reform their conduct, and by an external reformation, especially from gross sins. [2 Pet. ii. 20.]. Their faith is called temporary, because, "having no root in themselves," they endure only for a while. The faith of these believers rests, either upon the testimony of them who preach the word, or upon human arguments for the truth of it; and their joy commonly arises from a notion, that their happiness will be secured by what they hear.

The difference between this and historical faith, is, that historical faith does not influence the affections, at least, the affection of joy; for, though the devils tremble, yet they never rejoice: whereas, a temporary faith reaches the affections, and makes a man, either tremble at the threatenings of the law, or rejoice in the promises of the gospel.

(A View of Saving Faith from the Sacred Records by John Colquhoun, Edinburgh: Published by Thomson Brothers, 1824, 7-8, e-book, Text and paragraph structure modified)