

[An article of Gordon H. Clark from The Home Evangel]

A Common Delusion

“Now you take this tip straight from me,” says Mr. Speculator, “but Economic Sulphous. It is selling on the Exchange at 6 ¼. Within three months it is sure to be 15 and probably more. I have put every last cent I have into it. I certainly am sitting pretty, for I'll double my life's savings in three months.”

Now, fear breaks down personality, but this man who put his faith and hope in Economic Sulphous had no fear. Fear paralyzes thought and action. This man was not paralyzed. He had vigorously formed his plans for the future. He faced the world with confidence. He suffered no maladjustment. He was a well-integrated personality. He had conquered fear. But suppose Economic Sulphous goes bankrupt, wait –

Another gentleman said, “I used to have no time for religion. I looked on it as old fogey nonsense. For a while my release from the old ideas added zest to life. But only for a while. Then the meaning in life seemed to fade; fears and doubts came and I was torn by conflicting opinions. But at my father's death-bed, something happened. I gained assurance that my father could not have ceased to exist. I came to see that God was the Infinite, the Only Power, the All. This conviction banished fear; I was no longer a distraught personality slowly slipping into insanity. I became integrated. I can look at the world with courage and confidence. Man has improved. It may take a million years; but God is All, and all must turn to God. It is all well with my soul.”

But is it? Let us see. Compare the above two gentlemen.

Three months later "Economic Sulphous" had gone bankrupt. You see, Mr. Speculator's faith and hope were no guarantee against a rude awakening. They had the wrong object. Perhaps three years later the other gentleman who thinks he has found life will depart this world and stand before the Judge of all the earth. He had faith and hope – we may even grant that he had charity too. But what was the object of his faith? It was a bankrupt stock, a bankrupt abstraction?

It is true that he had banished paralyzing fear; perhaps he had not been anxious for the morrow; he had been as they say, "a well integrated personality." But all this is no guarantee against a rude awakening. This sort of vague faith may seem to integrate personality, but of itself it pays no dividends. Some sort of abstract religious conviction may insure against insanity, but of itself it will not win you eternal life. *The important matter is, what is the object of your faith? On what do you base your hope? Peace of mind is a snare and a delusion if wrongly grounded.*

God does not accept just any old kind of religious faith. What God requires is faith in Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ, God's only Son, said "*I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.*" The old hymn contains the truth:

My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame (of mind),
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Can you meet these qualifications set by God? What *way* are you taking to Heaven? There is only one way; some by-path will not do. In what do you place your faith? On what do you ground your hope of eternal life?