

Laying the Foundations – Part 3

Faith toward God

“Without faith it is impossible to please God, for everyone that comes to Him must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,” (Heb. 11:6). The life of a Christian is based solely in his trust of God. The difference between Christianity and every other religion is the “faith factor.” All other religions teach that if you work hard enough, you will attain to their idea of heaven. Christianity teaches that we receive our admittance to God by putting our faith in Him. This is the strength of being a Christian, trusting in God rather than in our own abilities. Then, we begin to produce good works of faith. Working hard does not produce Christ-likeness in our lives, Christ in our hearts by faith produces His nature in us. More specifically, we believe that the work Jesus did on the cross is what purchased our salvation. We cannot add to that in any way. He has done it, we believe it.

- I. **What is Faith?** Faith is knowing in your heart, without any doubt, that what you are believing for will happen. “now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen,” (Heb. 11:1).
 - A. Scriptural Definition.
 1. Faith is the substance of things hoped for.
 - a) The Greek word translated substance means “a substance which is real, a foundation, a substructure, a placing under.”
 - b) Hope is different from faith (hope is directed toward the future and is primarily in the heart, while faith is in the present).
 - c) Faith gives substance now. Mk. 11:24.
 2. Faith is the evidence of things not yet seen.
 - a) The Greek word translated evidence means “a proof, a conviction, that by which a thing is tested or proved; a courtroom term dealing with evidence presented in a case.”
 - b) This faith, which is offered as evidence, is based in the Word of God. Rom. 10:17.
 - c) You cannot see faith, but you know it is there. Rom. 4:17-20; Jn. 20:25-29, 11:40.
 - B. Usage Definition.
 1. Strong’s Concordance--Persuasion, i.e., credence; moral conviction (of religious truth, or the truthfulness of God or a religious teacher), especially reliance upon Christ for salvation.
 2. Webster’s--Unquestioning belief; unquestioning belief in God, religion, etc.; complete trust, confidence, or reliance, as children usually have faith in their parents.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is faith?

II. **The Foundation for Faith** Faith cannot be based on the philosophy of man, or what a person thinks up. It must be based on the Word of God. “now faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,” (Rom. 10:17).

A. The Bible’s Integrity. The Word of God is something solid to put your faith in.

1. God cannot lie. Heb. 6:18; Titus 1:2.
2. God will not break His promises. Ps. 89:34; Nu. 23:19.
3. God’s Word is settled forever. Ps. 119:89; Matt. 4:4, 24:35.

B. The Bible’s Authority. The Bible is the Word of God.

1. Men of God spoke and wrote it. Lu. 1:3-4; Rev. 1:2; Ex. 34:27.
2. They spoke and wrote by the inspiration of God. 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21; Rev. 1:1-3.

C. The Bible’s Examples. Hearing the Word of God brings faith. Rom. 10:17; Lu. 8:15; Jn. 20:30-31. Examples of this fact include:

1. Abraham. Heb. 11:8.
2. David. Ps. 106:12, 119:30.
3. New Testament believers. Ac. 4:4.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Give several scriptural references to show why the Bible is something solid to put your faith in.

III. **Faith receives God’s Gift of Salvation** Faith is the channel by which we receive what God has already given to us. The word grace means gift. “for by grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,” (Eph. 2:8).

A. Some Definitions.

1. Strong’s--Graciousness (as gratifying) of manner of act.
2. Vine’s--On the part of the bestower, the friendly disposition from which the kindly act proceeds.

3. Webster's--In theology, the unmerited love and favor of God toward man; divine influence acting in man to make him pure and morally strong.

B. Salvation by Grace. It is through faith that we receive salvation by grace. Through means "the channel of an act," and by means "the cause."

1. God has extended grace for salvation. Ac. 15:11; Rom. 11:6.
2. That grace is the gift of Christ dying on the cross. Rom. 5:15, 3:24.
3. God has extended that grace to all men. Titus 2:11.

IMPORTANT POINTS

What is the definition of grace?

IV. **Faith in What?** Salvation is by putting your faith in what God has done as it is revealed in the Bible. "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in they mouth, and in the heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," (Rom. 10:8-9). The Bible says that we are saved by believing in Jesus.

A. Works are Futile. You cannot get saved by works.

1. You cannot do anything in the flesh to get saved. Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16.
2. All of our endeavors amount to nothing. Isa. 64:6.
3. Abraham is an example of faith over works.
 - a) It wasn't by works. Rom. 4:13.
 - b) It was by faith. Gen. 15:6.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why can't a person be saved as a result of only doing good works?

B. Trust is Essential. You must trust God for you salvation.

1. The Word tells us God will save us by faith. 2 Tim. 3:15; Rom. 10:8; Hab. 2:4.
2. Christ is already our righteousness. Phil. 3:9; Rom. 10:3-4.
3. If we will just believe in Christ, we will be saved. Rom. 10:9-11; Jn. 20:31, 3:15, 5:24.

C. The Blood Shows Grace. The grace (or gift) that brought salvation was Jesus dying on the cross and being resurrected.

1. The sacrifice on the cross purchased our salvation. Eph. 1:19-20.
2. The blood paid for our sins, and we put our faith in it. Rom. 3:25; 1 Pet. 1:18-19.
3. So faith for salvation is simply believing that we are forgiven and saved through Jesus' shedding of blood.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe the gift that brought salvation.

V. **Living By Faith** After you are saved through faith in the cross, you must live by faith. "now the just shall live by faith. But if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him," (Heb. 10:38).

- A. Trusting. We cannot do anything in the flesh; we must trust God in everything.
1. It is sin to do something without faith. Rom. 14:23.
 2. We cannot please God outside of faith. Heb. 11:6.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Why is it impossible to live the Christian life without continuing in faith?

- B. Releasing. Victory in your life is through faith in God's provision. This faith releases one from the attraction of the world.

1. Our faith makes us overcomers. 1 Jn. 5:4.
2. Examples of overcomers by faith:
 - a) Three Hebrew captives. Dan. 3:17.
 - b) Caleb. Josh. 14:6-12
 - c) Paul. Ac. 27:25.
 - d) Many others. Heb. 11:1-40.

C. Resisting. Faith is the substance that resists the Devil. 1 Pet. 5:9.

1. Satan's attacks are aimed to destroy faith. Lu. 22:32.
2. Faith is maintained by the word of our testimony. Rev. 12:11.

D. Activating. Faith works by love. Gal. 5:6.

1. This faith assures success. 2 Chron. 20:20.
2. Faith is a fundamental duty. Jn. 6:20-29.
3. It is essential in prayer. Ja. 1:5-6.
 - a) We locate His promises in the Word.
 - b) The conditions attached to the promise must be met.
 - c) Actively claim the promise for the glory of God, that He might be exalted, and not for our own lusts. Ja. 4:3.

IMPORTANT POINTS

List and explain some facts about faith.

VI. **Faith Produces** Faith will produce good works in your life. "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also," (Ja. 2:26).

A. Obedience. Faith produces obedience.

1. This is for the glory of His name. Rom. 1:5.
2. Abraham is our example. Heb. 11:8-10

B. Good Works. Faith produces good works.

1. Faith without works is dead. Ja. 2:20.
2. That which is of faith brings forth true life. Isa. 6:3; Ps. 125:1.
3. After having repented from a life of dead works (sin), we put our faith in God which brings a life of good works. Heb. 6:1.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Describe in detail what true faith produces.

VII. Point of Decision Faith is the channel we use to receive the gift (or grace) that God has already given us. As we hear the Word of the Gospel telling us that Jesus died for our sins, we receive it by faith. That grace we received goes on to cause us to live a life of faith, which in turn produces good works, victory over sin, and answers to prayer. As faith takes our eyes off this present world and causes us to focus on things above, our dependency will rest more and more in Him.

PERSONAL APPLICATION – AN OVERVIEW OF THE CHURCH

1. Is my faith resting upon the Bible?

2. My overall purpose of being a part of the body of Christ includes....

3. When has faith produced obedience and good works in my life?

4. At this point of decision, I desire to receive all of God's graces through having faith in the Lord and His ability, and so I ask Him to....
