

12 August 2018

Faith – Pt 5 Our faith produces works

This is our fifth study on the topic of faith. In our previous teaching we established that a person is a child of God in every age by faith in His word. In this study we establish (1) our faith comes from hearing the word of God, and (2) God gives every man a measure of faith depending on their function in the body, and (3) the fruit of the Spirit includes faith, and faith produces works.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Our faith comes from hearing and believing the word of God.

“But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom.10:16 & 17).

From day one as a believer – we believe God’s words (as per previous teaching) and are saved, but as we learnt previously – we are then justified by the faith of Christ.

2. God gives every man a measure of faith based on their function in the body.

“For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith...Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith” (Rom 12:3 & 6)

Yet we are to live by the faith of the Son of God – “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal.2: 20).

3. The fruit of the Spirit includes faith, and faith produces works.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith...” (Gal.5 : 22), c.f. – 1Thes.1: 3 – “Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father”. Also – 2Thes.1:11

Our faith works love.

“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love” (Gal.5: 6).

An illustration to help apply the teaching to our life today.

The father of modern missionary William Carey took his family to India to convert the heathen – he “had grossly underestimated what it would cost to live in India, and Carey’s early years there were miserable. When Thomas deserted the enterprise, Carey was forced to move his family repeatedly as he sought employment that could sustain them. Illness racked the family, and loneliness and regret set in: ‘I am in a strange land,’ he wrote, ‘no Christian friend, a large family, and nothing to supply their wants.’ But he also retained hope: “Well, I have God, and his word is sure.”

Question to think about.

Do you have sufficient faith to walk in William Carey’s footsteps?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

I would answer – no I do not. But the amazing thing about God is – He gives each of us the faith we need to fulfil all that He “hath ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph.2: 10), and remember – “we walk by faith, not by sight” (2Cor.5: 7).

In a similar way – Abraham’s faith produced works. James wrote – “Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works” (Jam.2: 18), hence faith without works is dead (verse 20). Why? Because when you have faith in God, in His word, then that belief takes place in your heart (Rom.10: 9) which motivates obedience to God and results in works – love, care, going, doing. Are you doing something that shows your faith in God? Let us remember that faith in God produces works! Amen!