

The Biblical Explanation of Faith (2)

Introduction

- A. The word "faith" is used in the Bible to indicate a variety of concepts. For example the word may refer to the content of faith (the Bible), or to the product of faith (evidence or characteristic), or to a divine enablement that is given through faith (gift).
- B. In this lesson we wish to consider that use of the word "faith" which refers to the believer's response to God. This is undoubtedly one of the most important aspects of faith. We are to believe God, and to put His Word into practice, with an attitude of trusting Him.

I. The Importance of Faith as a Response to God.

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he that cometh to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. Hebrews 11:6

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. James 1:5-7

Observation: From these verses we understand the necessity of correctly responding to God. His Word is true and He can be trusted. This must be translated into our attitude and action by taking His Word at face value, conforming our lives to it and do it all trusting Him to fulfill His Word. God does not demand perfection but He does insist that we be honest with Him.

II. The Instruction Regarding Faith as a Response to God.

And the Apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith. And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root and be thou planted in the sea and it should obey you. Luke 17:5,6

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into His rest any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them, but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Hebrews 4:1,2

Observation: Faith, to grow, must be used. We must choose to trust God and to work out what that means in our attitude and actions. In particular the emphasis here is "mixing the Word with faith". This is exactly what we did in our salvation. We must confess that we often do not believe God nor do we trust Him! If we did we would live it!

III. The Description of Faith as a Response to God.

And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb. . . . And being fully persuaded that, what He (God) had promised, He (God) was able also to perform. Romans 4:19,21

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharoah's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction . . . esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches . . . By faith he forsook Egypt . . . Through faith he kept the passover . . . Hebrews 11:24-28

Observation: All of these verses teach us that faith is a decision, an act of the will, a choice to take God at His Word and practice it. The importance of this is beyond words. Faith is not a feeling. It is my decision to take God at His Word and evaluate everything on that basis.

IV. The Exhortations Regarding Faith as a Response to God.

And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains and have not charity (love), I am nothing. I Corinthians 13:2

But thou, O man of God, flee these things and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of faith I Timothy 6:11,12

Observation: These verses remind us that our faith must be accompanied by love and that it must be aggressive. There is an inseparable relationship between faith and love in the Bible. We cannot have one without the other (Galatians 5:6). Paul told Timothy to trust God in a bold and aggressive manner. There is no place for half-hearted responses and for timidity in our walk of faith.

V. The Warnings Regarding Faith as a Response to God.

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Romans 14:23

Holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck. I Timothy 1:19

Observation: These are serious warnings. The passage in Romans reminds us that we must be consistent and not violate what we believe is taught in the Bible. When we do what is inconsistent we cannot truly trust God in that act nor can we ask God's blessing upon us. Paul's counsel to Timothy has to do with those who were living a life in which they were violating their conscience. We cannot live out of fellowship with God and live by faith.

Conclusion.

A. Now we see more clearly that faith is essentially a decision, it is a choice to take the Word of God at face value and put it into practice, trusting God that He will fulfill His promises.

B. We must face ourselves with the daily responsibility to honor God by trusting Him. All failure to do so is a serious sin.