

30 04 23

Faith –Pt 3 Faith and the Christian

This is our third and final teaching on the word “faith”. In our previous study we established three points– (I) Jesus Christ is the author and finisher of our faith, and (ii) we are saved by faith, (iii) we are justified by faith. In this teaching we establish an additional three points– (i) Faith without works is dead, (ii) Christians have faith which works by love, and (iii) the trial of our faith works patience.

It is from our search of the scriptures that we establish our three points–

1. Faith without works is dead

[14] What [doth it] profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?

[17] Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. James 2: 14, 17.

2) Christians have faith which works by love

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

3. The trying of our faith works patience

“Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience” (Jam.1: 3).

Illustration

I will not forget the opening words spoken to encourage young aspiring Christian ministers during my first weeks at BCNZ (now Laidlaw college). The lecturers pointed out that our time will be a trial of our faith, where our faith is stretched beyond its previous limits. At that stage of my spiritual journey I did not know that heresy taught at college would cause many to lose their faith. Add heresy with no knowledge that we are to live by the faith of the Son of God (from last week), and I am not surprised that my wife left college only knowing that God existed.

Questions of the scriptures

i) How do we decrease our faith? ii) How do we increase our faith? (iii) what is a consequence to having little faith.

Answers to our questions from the scriptures

i) Error can overthrow the faith of some, and so severely decrease our faith.

“Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some” (2 Tim.2: 18).

ii) Paul exhorted Timothy (preacher/teacher) to be a good minister, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine (which builds strong faith)

“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained” (1 Tim.4: 6).

iii) One consequence of little faith is our armour is all–but– ineffective, therefore we cannot stand against the devil.

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” (Eph. 6: 16).

Let us remember that sin quenches the Holy Ghost that dwells in us, and as faith is a fruit of the Spirit, when we immerse ourselves in heresy or walk in the sins of our flesh– our faith will diminish. But on the opposite side of the coin– when we are zealous for truth and righteousness, then we will experience great boldness in the faith and “patient waiting” (2Thess.3: 5) by faith. To God be the glory!! Amen!