
Words of Truth

Faith Which Worketh By Love

By: Brian A. Yeager

How important is faith? The penman of the book of Hebrews wrote: *“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). John wrote: *“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”* (Revelation 21:8).

The fact that God cannot be pleased and that man cannot be saved without faith is a point of truth taught throughout the ages. The fact is, the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ tie this together. Notice how: *“Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end; While it is said, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief. 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 3:12-4:2; cf. Numbers 13:1-14:38).

Paul wrote: *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith”* (Romans 1:16-17).

So, after the short series of lessons above, you can see that salvation without faith is impossible. Now, our lesson is much more than this though. We should know that faith, by itself, is useless. The fact is, faith must be productive. Faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). Again, throughout the ages you can see that faith is shown through works (Hebrews 11:1-12:3). What we will now examine is what the engine is that causes faith to work!

Faith Becomes Active Through Love

Biblical love and faith are inseparable (I Corinthians 13:13, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 3:17, Ephesians 6:23, I Thessalonians 1:3, I Thessalonians 5:8, II Thessalonians 1:3, I Timothy 1:5, I Timothy 1:14, I Timothy 2:15, I Timothy 4:12, I Timothy 6:11, II Timothy 1:13, II Timothy 2:22, Philemon 1:5, James 2:5, and Revelation 2:19). Love is the spiritual component that causes faith to work. The fact is, that is what Paul told the churches of Galatia: *“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love”* (Galatians 5:6).

There was once a congregation that was busy at work. The Lord told them that He knew the works being done among those in this congregation. They fought against error. They could not bear those that were evil. However, they were not good enough for the Lord just because they did works. They had left their first love (Revelation 2:1-7). For faith to be real with works that are pleasing to God, love has to be involved.

Faith And Works Without Love Is Nothing

Doing something and having faith that it is pleasing to God is not enough (Matthew 7:21-23). People can easily recite that if you love God you must keep His commandments (John 14:15-24 and I John 5:2-3). It is not that simple though. It is not enough to believe and be busy in the Lord’s work. The motive, action, and relationship must have the component of love. Faith and works have to have the component of love [charity] mixed in.

The congregation in Corinth had, used, and abused their spiritual gifts (I Corinthians 12:1-31 and I Corinthians 14:1-40). In that context, notice what they were told: *“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. 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, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing”* (I Corinthians 13:1-3).

Conclusion

Are you in love with the Lord? The Lord relates how we should love Him to two earthly relationships we should be able to understand. Those are that of a Father with His children and marriage (Galatians 3:26-29, Ephesians 5:22-33, and I John 3:1-3). If we err, it hurts our Lord in a way that an adulterous spouse hurts his or her mate (Jeremiah 3:1-14). That is why He calls saints in sins adulterers and adulteresses (James 4:4). Do you love Him in a like manner? Does your faith work by love the way God defines it?