

The Walk of Faith

Lesson 6: Walking by faith in the Word of God

- I. The leading principles of a walk of faith (by way of review).
 - A. God is my God and Father.
 - B. Through faith in His Son, He's perfectly reconciled to me and my conscience is at peace with Him.
 - C. He loves me as He loves His own Son because He's united me to Him and hidden me in Him.
 - D. By His Spirit, He's enabled me to rest in His love for me.
 - E. His will has become mine and I desire to so walk with Him in His love as to maintain in my conscience the peace of God and in my heart the love of God.
 - F. I don't in any way think that my close walk with Him is in order to make any atonement for my sins or to be the least part of my justifying righteousness, because I have these already, and perfectly, in Jesus. Rather, it's the *enjoyment* of them that I want. I'm seeking for *more* of that peace with and love to the Father which is already mine in Christ.
 - G. And the way to enjoy more of it is to live—not by sight, or by feeling—but by faith, faith in His Word. Faith in His truths. Faith in His promises. Because faith looks at the Word and overlooks all seeming impossibilities. “Thus says the Lord.” That's enough for faith—because faith knows that *saying* and *doing* are same thing with an unchangeable God, Num 23.19-20
- II. **But** a common mistake in the life of faith is when we confuse faith with its fruits and confuse believing the Word of God with what follows upon that belief. For instance:
 - A. We sometimes make *assurance* to be of the essence of faith; but assurance is the fruit of faith.
 1. We're exhorted to make our calling and election sure and to be clearly persuaded that Christ loves us and gave Himself for us, 2Pet 1.10. But these are the fruits of believing. Faith is not assurance, but leads to it. Faith *assents* to the Word of God as truth and *relies* on Him to make good what He promises; and *assurance* is this faith grown to full stature, 2Tim 1.12
 - B. We sometimes make *proclamation* to be of the essence of faith, but bold proclamation is the fruit of faith.
 1. There are times when we can say with Paul, “Jesus loved me and died for me,” Gal 2.20. But when we walk in darkness and have no light (Isa 50.10), we can't say that with the same conviction, but only in faltering tones. These comforts aren't as strong in the times of heaviness and pain; although faith is actually strengthened in the face of trials.
 - C. We sometimes make *impressions* and feelings of the essence of faith; but feelings are the fruit of faith.
 1. The more we trust to our feelings, the less we live by faith, because *feelings are not faith*. I see the sun, I hear a sound, I feel an object. Faith has no place in these things because the essence of faith is in its believing a promise spoken, not a thing seen or felt or heard. Faith is defined by the property of the Word, which is a spoken thing and which calls for trust and reliance, regardless of what sense says, Heb 11.1-3
 2. And it's **only** when God's Word is *believed*, from the heart, that it ushers in the *fruits* of peace to the conscience (e.g. 1In 1.9) and joy to the heart (Ps 4.7; 119.162), since peace and joy are the fruits and results (not the root!) of believing.
 - D. These mistakes should be carefully guarded against because they can debilitate the children of God, leading us to think we have no faith because we have no assurance, feelings, &c.

1. But if we would return to the Word, “let God be true and every man a liar,” and put our hopes in that Word again, we’d see that our faith is alive and well.
 2. And if we would plant ourselves upon that Word of God and ask for God to improve and strengthen and grow our *faith*, we’d soon find the *fruits* of faith well in tow.
 3. While, on the other hand, if we focus on the fruits but neglect the root, we’ll find ourselves in great despair and battle much discouragement.
- E. *In short*, we need to attend to the means of sustaining and cultivating *faith* and let God attend to the *fruits* of that faith. **Because**, *in the end*, the only evidence we need of our faith is the evidence of our actually living and walking by faith in God’s Word, Js 2.14f
1. We may lack all comfort...but if we’re walking in faith in God’s Word, then we’re alive to God. We may lack all joy... we may lack all assurance... we may lack all sense...but just as a miserable man is no less a man than a comfortable man (since comfort isn’t of the essence of humanity), so a soul walking by faith in God’s Word in darkness and heaviness is no less a believing soul than a soul walking by faith in God’s Word under the sunshine of prosperity and abundant joy.
 2. Job was no less a child of God and no less loved by God during his dark years of heartache and pain and loneliness than during his pristine years of doubled provisions afterwards, because the *essence* of Job’s sonship to God had nothing to do with the outward conditions in which he found himself. His relationship to God as a son never changed, though his outward condition changed radically. Just so, living and walking with God by faith is a constant, consistent thing, regardless of our outward conditions.
- III. Every step we take in the Christian life is by faith, by the same faith with which we received Christ at the first.
- A. There’s never a change of object in our faith; it’s always *Christ*—the living Christ, the written Christ.
 - B. And there’s no change of faith in our Christian walk; it’s always the same *trust* in His written Word and the same *dependence* on His promised strength.
 - C. We receive all things in the Christian life by faith because all things come to us from Christ’s fullness as a gift on His terms. We have no right to any of those things, so we need to live by faith in God that He will give us what we need, when we need it.
 - D. The Christian walk is literally *an abiding fellowship with Christ*. From Him we daily and moment by moment receive *wisdom* to guide our steps, *guidance* to keep us in the Way, *courage* and *strength* to move forward in it, *victory* in battle, *mercy* in the face of what we deserve and *grace* in the face of what we need—and it’s all to be received by faith because there’s no other way possible for an undeserving sinner to receive good from God.
 - E. The daily experience of a Christian is to be made up of *trusting* in His Word, *relying* on His arm, *waiting* on His faithfulness, and thereby *going forward*. And as He makes good to us *all* that He’s promised, we enjoy peace with God in our conscience, love for God

in our heart, and the strength of God in our walk.

IV. Therefore

- A. Let us pray that God would save us from all mistakes concerning the faith of the gospel.
- B. Let us pray with the disciples that God would increase our faith, Lk 17.5
- C. Let us make the Word of God our daily study, by which faith comes and grows.
- D. Let us see that we trust what God has said and rely on it as a done deal, because with God, saying and doing are the same, cp. Ezk 24.14; Jn 6.63