

## **LIVING BY FAITH**

### **Galatians 2:20**

#### **I. The meaning of faith.**

- A. There are three basic definitions or ideas important to understanding the meaning of faith:
  - 1. Belief, certainty, or conviction of a truth or a proposition.
  - 2. There is the confidence in a person's trustworthiness or in the person himself;
    - a. This involves the idea that the object of faith can be counted on to provide what is needed.
    - b. A "man of faith" is one who trusts God.
  - 3. A third basic meaning of faith is fidelity to a trust or commitment.
    - a. This involves the idea that the subject of faith can be counted on to do his duty.
    - b. A "faithful man" is one who can be trusted by God.
- B. The usage of "pistis" (faith) and "pistos" (faithful) in the New Testament reflects all three ideas of the meaning of faith.
  - 1. Belief (Acts 8:12; Romans 10:17).
  - 2. Confidence (James 1:6; Romans 4:3, 18-22).
  - 3. Fidelity (1 Corinthians 4:2; Revelation 2:10).
- C. This is very significant to us.
  - 1. The three components are all progressive:
    - a. Belief (intellectual acceptance) is the important beginning point (Hebrews 11:1, 6).
    - b. Belief grows into confidence (giving oneself to God) (Philippians 4:10-13).
    - c. Confidence grows into fidelity (unswerving loyalty to God) (2 Timothy 4:7-8).
  - 2. Each of these progressive steps is based upon solid evidence concerning the God's own character.
    - a. God has demonstrated His credibility (Titus 1:1-3).
    - b. He has demonstrated His dependability (Romans 8:31-32).
    - c. He has demonstrated His worthiness of our allegiance (2 Timothy 1:8-12).
  - 3. We can have faith in God and be faithful to Him because He is a faithful God (2 Thessalonians 3:3).

#### **II. Faith is a way of life.**

- A. It is a confessing faith.
  - 1. The Christian's faith is a confessing faith - one that is continually confessed by the way we live.
  - 2. Because of that, perversions of faith must be avoided.
    - a. We can't have a counterfeit faith (Matthew 7:15).
    - b. We can't place our faith in self (Proverbs 16:25).
    - c. We must avoid a self-righteous faith (Luke 18:9).
    - d. We can't have a partial faith (2 Chronicles 25:2).

- e. We can't have a skeptical faith (James 1:6).
- 3. Making the "good confession" implies commitment (1 Timothy 6:12).
  - a. It is a complete pledge of faith.
  - b. It is one that must be held fast (Hebrews 10:23).
- B. It is a life of faith.
  - 1. To be "in the faith" is also to be "of the faith," which shows that faith is a real factor in the Christian's way of life (2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 3:9).
  - 2. Life in Christ is the life of trusting reliance on God.
    - a. We must realize that faith in God is closely tied to love for God.
    - b. 1 Thessalonians 1:3.
  - 3. A person of faith renounces any other means of confidence or security, such as:
    - a. The flesh (Philippians 3:3-11);
    - b. Self (2 Corinthians 1:9);
    - c. Earthly prosperity (1 Timothy 6:17).
  - 4. A person of faith totally relies on God (Psalm 40:4).
  - 5. Life in Christ is the life of trusting obedience to God.
    - a. Abraham is a great example of this (Hebrews 11:8).
    - b. Psalm 143:8.
- C. We benefit from faith (Romans 15:13).
  - 1. Joy and peace don't come from the absence of conflict in life, but from faith's ability to cope with such.
  - 2. Faith also imparts other active benefits to life:
    - a. Diligence in work (1 Thessalonians 1:3);
    - b. Willingness to sacrifice (Hebrews 11:24-26);
    - c. Strength and courage (Ephesians 6:16);
    - d. Boldness and confidence (Ephesians 3:12).
- D. We must maintain our faith (Revelation 2:10).
  - 1. It is not enough to have had faith at one time.
    - a. The life of faith begun is virtually worthless if it is not completed.
    - b. Colossians 2:5; Hebrews 6:12.
    - c. We can begin well but get hindered (Galatians 5:7).
    - d. It is like beginning to build a chair but stop with only two legs in place.
  - 2. What happens to our faith is crucial.
    - a. There must be growth (Luke 17:5).
    - b. There must be testing (James 1:2-3).
    - c. There must be an adding to (2 Peter 1:5-11).
    - d. There must be a standing fast (1 Corinthians 15:1-2).
  - 3. We need to remember that faith is essentially forward-looking (Hebrews 3:6, 14).

From a sermon by Tom Moore