

The Rewarder of Them That Seek Him

“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*

the kingdom of our Lord Jesus. Jesus said, “According to your faith be it unto you.”—Matt. 9:29

FAITH IS THE SOIL IN

which all other graces of the Holy Spirit take root and grow and, in this scripture, the Apostle Paul encourages us to exercise more faith throughout our Christian walk. By doing so, we are pleasing our Heavenly Father and are assured of receiving an abundant entrance into

THINGS NOT SEEN

The Apostle Paul explained, “Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” (Heb. 11:1) It is only from the standpoint of our spiritual vision, which is granted to us by our loving Heavenly Father, that this scripture

may be understood. Thus did the apostle write in his letter to the church at Corinth, "The things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."—II Cor. 4:18

With the child of God, faith is essential in respect to God and the promises that he has given us. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. 8:28) If we would rest on this, then whatever experience we might be having would take on an entirely different aspect.

THE BLESSED ASSURANCE

Faith is a heart reliance that is based upon a mental conviction, and that has not been positively proven to our natural senses. None of us have seen God with our natural eyes, or heard him speak audibly. Yet, we have a mental conviction of what he has done and is now doing for us. This indicates that faith is composed of two parts—an intellectual assurance and a heart reliance. The foundation of our faith is an intellectual appreciation of the fundamental principles of divine Truth. We know that God has an ultimate plan and purpose for the reconciliation of the sin-sick human family through the redemption of our Lord Jesus.

HEART RELIANCE

To possess this foundation, however, is not all there is in the attainment of faith. In order to have the faith without which it is impossible to please God, we must also develop the superstructure that is based on our heart reliance in the wonderful promises of God. He is the author of our being, and as our guiding light he invites our total confidence

and trust in his ability to lead us in our walk of faith. To simply believe that God exists is not enough to be pleasing to him. This thought is made clear by James, who wrote, “Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.”—James 2:19

Therefore, the faith structure which we, as true followers of our Lord Jesus, are to build upon may be compared to a house which has both a foundation and a superstructure. The foundation is not the complete house, and neither is it complete without a solid foundation. The house requires each part to make it complete, and so it is with our faith.

If we planned to build a house, we would first want to consult an architect who would draw up the plans and specifications to meet our requirements. After that, we would enter into a contract with a builder. When the contractor finished his work in due course, he would report to us that the house was ready for inspection. The architect would then look the house over and report whether the foundation and the specified materials were satisfactory and in accordance to the plan. However, if he found that the superstructure and the dimensions of the rooms were not built according to the original plan and that the materials were not used properly, the building would not be approved.

CONFORMED TO HIS IMAGE

We may use this illustration in connection with our consecration and the time when we entered into a solemn covenant relationship with God. We agreed that we will be faithful until the completion

of our course, as noted by the Revelator. (Rev. 2:10) We must be conformed to the image of Jesus even as the Apostle Paul explained. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren." (Rom. 8:29) As the consecrated followers of our Lord Jesus, we abide in him, and our Heavenly Father has provided us with all of the necessary instructions to complete our consecrated walk in newness of life, and to finish our new spiritual dwelling.

When we began our walk as New Creatures in Christ Jesus, we realized that we were under condemnation because of the disobedience of our first parents Adam and Eve, and sentenced to death. John explained, "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." (Rom. 5:18) Thus, by God's grace, we were enabled to see our condition, and he pointed us to the only way of escape through Christ Jesus. We accepted him and passed figuratively, from death unto life. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."—John 5:24

THE MASTERBUILDER

The question may arise as to whether we are using the provision our Heavenly Father has provided for our building. The Apostle Paul thus wrote, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation,

and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."—I Cor. 3:10-15

Paul is pointing out that we can build with material that will endure trials and fire, but we can also foolishly build with other materials that will not endure. We must build a character structure that will endure the trials of faith. This is very important to all of us who have made a consecration, and each one of us must answer individually. We want the great Architect of the universe to accept the work of our superstructure favorably.

A HEARING EAR

In his letter to the brethren at Rome, Paul explained, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17) This implies that one kind of faith is the result of knowledge, while another may be a fruit of the Holy Spirit of God. The former is a natural inherent quality, while the latter is an acquired quality, a grace of the spirit that is being developed.

Having a knowledge of the Scriptures does not always assure a person that he will go on to develop

a living and active faith. If this were true it would prove that all those who have the largest amount of knowledge would also have the greatest degree of faith. This does not necessarily follow. Some may have had a great deal of knowledge and a wonderful ability to tell it to others, and yet did not continue in the narrow way. Evidently, such lacked the other essential element of faith—a heart reliance upon God which would enable them to keep their consecration on the altar of sacrifice.

The faith which trusts in God is a faith that has been developed over time, and enables the Lord's people to endure trials, persecutions, and afflictions gladly. This is a special quality that many natural-minded people may possess. However, the majority are unable to believe or trust in God because they are not able to believe that which they cannot see.

ESTABLISHED BY FAITH

The Apostle Paul addressed this matter, when he wrote, "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you: And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith. But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil. And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you. And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and

not after the tradition which he received of us.”—II
Thess. 3:1-6

ADDING TO YOUR FAITH

This is also shown by the Apostle Peter where he says, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”—II Pet. 1:2-4

The apostle then points to the necessary steps in our consecrated walk of faith. Continuing, he said, “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love]. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”—II Pet. 1:5-11

TRUSTING GOD

Peter was with our Lord Jesus at the Mount of Transfiguration, and testified concerning the wonderful promises of God. We read, "We did not follow cleverly devised tales when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, such an utterance as this was made to Him by the Majestic Glory, 'This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased'—and we ourselves heard this utterance made from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."—II Pet. 1:16-21, *New American Standard Bible*

THE LOVE OF CHRIST

In connection with the wonderful love of our dear Lord and Savior, we read, "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and

length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.”—Eph. 3:14-21

Our loving Heavenly Father could not give us in our present condition anything of greater value than an understanding of his wondrous character, plan, and purposes. He has invited us to share his glory, to become joint-heirs with his only begotten and well-beloved Son. This power that worketh in us is the power of faith operating through the Holy Spirit of God.

It is through the exercise of the natural faith in Jesus that we passed from death unto life. What a transforming power this is. It means that although we are taken from the lower strata of society, we have the prospect, through the exercise of faith, to be elevated to the highest plane in the universe. The only faith that can accomplish this is the faith without which it is impossible to please God.

REWARDS OF FAITH

The rewards of faith are both present and future. We read, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (Rom. 5:1,2) That we, by nature fallen creatures, should be given an opportunity to strive and attain unto God’s eternal glory is beyond the power of the

human mind fully to grasp. Yet, this marvelous hope is clearly stated in the Word of God. The apostles could not tell us about the glory of God because they had not experienced it themselves. Thus did the Apostle John write, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."—I John 3:1-3

We are told that we can have the peace of God, and what greater blessing could anyone have than this during the present Time of Trouble over the earth. Men's hearts are failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. In proportion as we are able to realize this favor, and to trust that all things work together for good to those who love the Lord, it is our privilege to enjoy peace. Jesus assures us, "The Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God."—John 16:27

God wishes us to learn these lessons of faith, trust, and confidence in him, and thus to have his peace ruling in our hearts. There is fear and perplexity all about us in the troubling times in which we are now living. Yet, we may calmly exercise faith as to the outcome of the present distressful state of the world. From Luke's gospel, we read, "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the

powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption [deliverance] draweth nigh.”—Luke 21:26-28

How grand to realize that our Heavenly Father would take us into his confidence and reveal to us his plans and purposes. Thus does he make known unto us things that were hidden from ages and generations, but are now made manifest to his people. The apostle was advising us that the trial of our faith is much more precious than gold that perishes. If we exercise the faith without which it is impossible to please God, we will learn to put our complete trust in him and to accept the trials he has permitted us to experience as great blessings in disguise.

SONS OF GOD

When we consider the great love that is manifest in the heavenly calling in Christ Jesus, let us also give praise for the wonderful relationship we have with God as his sons. “That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”—Phil. 2:15

In his letter to the church at Rome, Paul said, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children,

then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”—Rom. 8:14-17

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

Sometimes the question may be asked why, if we have given our hearts to God, do we still have trying and difficult experiences. We learn gradually, and step by step, that these experiences serve as tests. They are permitted and designed by God to prove and qualify us for the work to which he has called us according to his purpose. We are called to the divine nature, the very highest plane of life, that which is possessed by our loving Heavenly Father himself.

The Apostle Peter emphasizes the nature of our High Calling in Christ Jesus, “To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”—I Pet. 1:4-7

RESTING IN THE LORD

In connection with these wonderful words of the Apostle Peter, we read, “It is your faith that is on trial now. In the calmer days, when the sun of favor shone brightly upon you, you were quietly laying the foundation of a knowledge of the Truth, and

rearing the superstructure of Christian character. Now you are in the furnace to be proved: summon therefore all your courage; fortify your patience; nerve yourself to endurance; hold fast to your hope, call to mind the promises, they are still yours; and ‘cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.’ ‘In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.’ ‘Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him,’ and faith has gained her victory.”—*Daily Heavenly Manna*, June 4th. ■